

"GREAT CROSSES" OVER ROME AND WASHINGTON, D.C., IN NOVEMBER 1954

Gordon Creighton

IT seems to be a well established law that the true pioneers shall never get the credit. In Italy, for example, one of the very real pioneers in Ufology was my colleague, the Italian diplomat Dr. Alberto Perego, who did far more in the early years than many of those whose names we have heard trumpeted so much of late but he, so far as one can see, is totally ignored and forgotten by the Ufologists today, even in Italy.

For some years one of Dr. Perego's postings was as Italian Consul at Belo Horizonte, State of Minas Gerais, in Central Brazil, just a little later than the time when I was H.B.M. Consul at Recife, Pernambuco, in the North-East of Brazil. There was a vast amount of UFO activity in those days over our respective areas of Brazil, and it is not surprising that both Perego and I gathered a lot of the Brazilian material from that first UFO phase over the Western Hemisphere (1947 to 1951 or 1952).

In the early 1970s, after his retirement from Government work, Dr. Perego was the Director of a UFO Study Group which he had formed in Rome and which was known as the *Centre for Electromagnetic Aviation (CISAER)*. He wrote at least three books,¹ none of which, so far as I am aware, was ever translated from Italian and all of which were, like himself, generally ignored.

As everyone no doubt knows today, the summer and autumn of 1954 were notable for a remarkable UFO Wave over France,² in the course of which many hundreds of reports appeared in the French national and regional press, including accounts, as the final estimates show, of no less than 200 actual landings of UFOs, in some 40 of which the occupants (all small) of the craft were seen and encountered by French witnesses, often at very close quarters. Aimé Michel dealt with this Wave in his classic book *Mystérieux Objets Célestes*, 1958, (subsequently issued in expanded translation in the U.S.A. as *Flying Saucers And The Straight Line Mystery*).

All of these events happened thirty years ago, and in accordance with the Divine Ordinance, a very large number of those French eyewitnesses are now no longer in this world, which fact, so Aimé Michel informs me, has greatly facilitated the launching of a campaign, now under way in France, to prove that the whole thing was massive hallucination or fraud. I need not add that we see the evidence on all sides that a similar campaign is being conducted in the U.S.A. and Britain and other countries. The fine new theories — *piezo-electricity and perinatal traumata* (which for

convenience I prefer to 'telescope' as "*The Piezo-Perinatal Theory*") now have the "best people" all agog, and it seems safe to predict that "good money" will be available for anyone willing to support the cover-up by putting out this sort of stuff.

Much might be said regarding what lies behind all this, but such discussion could be more than a little dangerous.

The famous "French Wave" of 1954 did not end in France, since the entities responsible for such phenomena are apparently oblivious of what we call our "national frontiers". The result was that the Wave proceeded to spill over into Northern Italy, and culminated in some remarkable goings-on over Rome and the Vatican in the month of November.

We gave Dr. Perego's account of these matters in 1973, in *FSR Case Histories No. 15*, but have no hesitation about running his story again now in view of the fact that a remarkable American "parallel", only published in 1979, deserves to be examined.

I give below my translation of Dr. Alberto's account of what he saw over Rome in those early days of November 1954, and after that I give an abstract of the American account.

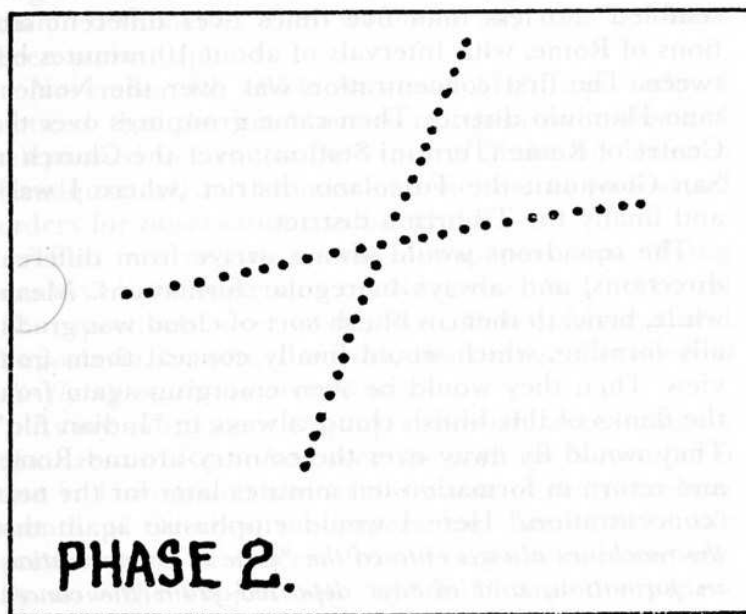
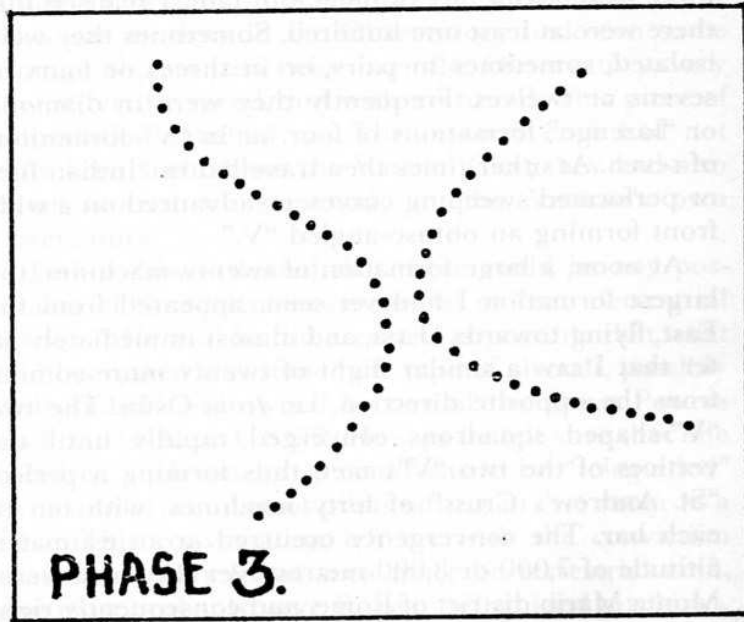
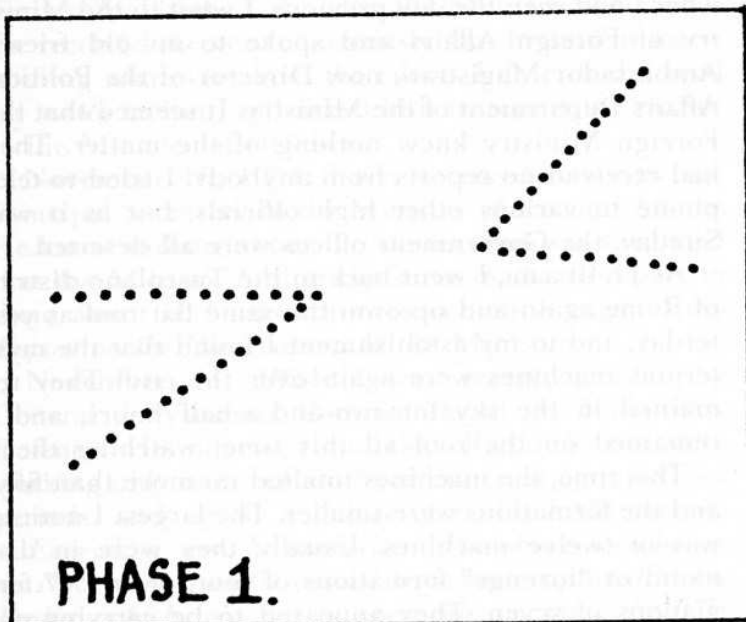
I. THE GREAT "CROSS" ABOVE THE VATICAN IN 1954

DR. ALBERTO PEREGO

Now that we have had plenty of opportunity to see the ridiculous conclusions reached by the Condon Commission, I suggest that an opportune moment has come for us to consider what happened in the skies over Rome on Saturday and Sunday, November 6-7, 1954. For the occurrences of those days constitute a mass sighting of the very greatest importance, and yet one which is still totally unknown to many serious and eminent students of our subject, largely perhaps because my own Report on the matter at the time and my three books¹ were published in Italian (all now out of print) and have never been translated into English. And no reports of the phenomena of November 6 and 7 ever appeared in the Italian press.

Until August 1954, whenever I heard of stories of "Flying Saucers" I thought that these machines were secret aircraft developed by the Great Powers, and shared the common opinion of astronomers that any hypothesis as to the possibility of interplanetary aviation was quite absurd.

During August and September 1954 the Italian



The three phases of the formations seen over the Vatican, based on the author's sketches.

At 1.00 p.m. on October 30, as I was driving in my car past the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, I noticed a crowd of about a hundred people gazing up at the sky. I stopped, and looked up myself, and saw two small white dots moving in a southerly direction. Later I saw them vanish in opposite directions, and then they (or two others) reappeared and began moving northwards. My clear impression was that these objects were some kind of "aircraft", and flying at a height of about 2,000 metres. The phenomenon impressed me deeply, particularly the total absence of any noise from their engines. Was this, then, the "new kind of aircraft?" And, if so, whose were they, and why over Rome? The affair was duly reported in the Rome papers of the following day, October 31.

newspapers carried numerous reports of the massive UFO "visitation" over France, including accounts of many landings. Then, on September 17, a cigar-shaped object appeared and remained stationary for a few minutes over Rome, being seen by thousands of witnesses, and by October the "wave" had spilled over from France into Italy. For the one month of October 1954, the Italian press carried reports of no less than 200 sightings, and some 19 landings, all over or on Italian territory. And on November 11 the United Press said there had been 400 separate Italian UFO reports in the past 80 days.

I come now to the far more spectacular happenings of November 6 and 7, which never received the least mention in the press.

In Rome itself thousands of eyewitnesses excitedly discussed what they had seen, or besieged the newspapers with their stories. By now, however, the newspapers were beginning to be bored with the whole subject, and finally many eyewitnesses began to think it better not to talk any more of what they had seen.

At about 10.45 a.m. on November 6, I was in the Tuscolano district of Rome, when I again saw some of these "white dots." Many people around me had noticed them too. I went up on to the flat roof of a factory in order to get a better view of the sky and I stayed up there, with many other people, until 1.00 p.m., enthralled by what I do not hesitate to call the most stirring spectacle that I have ever seen in my life. I quote below from my notes made at the time:

But the most startling developments were yet to come.

November 6, 1954: Today, between 11.00 a.m. and 1.00 p.m., the sky of Rome has been crossed by several dozens of flying machines travelling at a height of around 7,000 or 8,000 metres. They were moving at variable speeds, which at times seemed to be as high as 1,200 or 1,400 km. per hour.

The machines appeared like "white spots," sometimes with a short white trail. At first I calculated that

there were about fifty of them, but later I realised that there were at least one hundred. Sometimes they were isolated, sometimes in pairs, or in threes or fours or sevens or twelves. Frequently they were in diamond or "lozenge" formations of four, or in "V" formations of seven. At other times they travelled in "Indian file" or performed sweeping curves, or advanced on a wide front forming an obtuse-angled "V."

At noon, a large formation of twenty machines, the largest formation I had yet seen, appeared from the East, flying towards Ostia, and almost immediately after that I saw a similar flight of twenty more coming from the opposite direction, i.e. *from* Ostia. The two "V"-shaped squadrons converged rapidly until the vertices of the two "V"s met, thus forming a perfect "St. Andrew's Cross" of forty machines, with ten to each bar. The convergence occurred at an estimated altitude of 7,000 or 8,000 metres over the Trastevere-Monte Mario district of Rome, and consequently **right over the Vatican City itself.**

Next, the whole "Cross" performed a three-quarter turn on its axis, becoming more of an "X". The "Cross formation" was retained for a total time of about one minute, and then broke away into two serpentine curves which moved off in opposite directions. (See sketches, as originally given in my book *Svelato Il Mistero Dei Dischi Volanti*, 1957). The whole operation had lasted about three minutes.

Again, as I watched, I saw what appeared like a large bluish shadow forming in the sky ten minutes later and realised that it was a fresh concentration building up as, in formations and squadrons of four and seven and twelve they began to reappear. This time I was able to make a better count, and could see that they totalled at least one hundred. This time the concentration was in another part of the sky, and not directly above the Vatican.

I was overwhelmed by feelings of delighted surprise mingled with some anguish, and conscious of having been present at something new, something of supreme grandeur. These great squadrons of craft clearly possessed a new and revolutionary type of strength, which might well be far beyond anything that our conventional anti-aircraft guns or Air Forces could do against them. *But . . . to whom did they belong?*

At this point I noticed, descending from the sky, a strange shining filamentous material — the material which has subsequently become known as "Angel Hair." I was able to seize a handful of it. It looked like the fine twigs and filaments of a Christmas tree, but thinner, and very long. It was not like the filaments used in the last War by the U.S. bombers to disturb the enemy radar. It was not tinfoil, but rather a "glassy" sort of substance, which evaporated completely in a few hours.

November 7, 1954: Today, a Sunday, feeling surprised that the newspapers carried not a word about

what I had seen the day previous, I went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and spoke to an old friend, Ambassador Magistrati, now Director of the Political Affairs Department of the Ministry. It seemed that the Foreign Ministry knew nothing of the matter. They had received no reports from anybody. I tried to telephone to various other high officials, but as it was Sunday, the Government offices were all deserted.

At 11.40 a.m., I went back to the Tuscolano district of Rome again and up onto the same flat roof as yesterday, and to my astonishment I found that the mysterious machines were again over the city! They remained in the sky for two-and-a-half hours, and I remained on the roof all this time, watching them.

This time, the machines totalled no more than fifty, and the formations were smaller. The largest I noticed was of twelve machines. Usually they were in diamond or "lozenge" formations of four, or in "V" formations of seven. They appeared to be carrying out some kind of systematic reconnaissance, and "assembled" no less than five times over different sections of Rome, with intervals of about 10 minutes between. The first concentration was over the Nomentano-Flaminio district. Then came groupings over the Centre of Rome (Termini Station); over the Church of San Giovanni; the Tuscolano district (where I was); and finally the Tiburtino district.

The squadrons would always arrive from different directions, and always in regular formations. Meanwhile, beneath them, a bluish sort of cloud was gradually forming, which would finally conceal them from view. Then they would be seen emerging again from the flanks of this bluish cloud, always in "Indian file." They would fly away over the country around Rome, and return in formation ten minutes later for the next "concentration." Here I would emphasise again that *the machines always entered the "zone of concentration" in formation, and always departed from the concentration in "Indian file."*

Today I again saw the shining filaments falling from the sky.

The "concentrations" yesterday (November 6) were over the western parts of Rome (Monte Mario, Trastevere, Ostiense), so the "reconnaissance" of these two days must have systematically covered the whole city.

November 8, 1954; Once again, the Rome papers carry no comment about these happenings, and no reports. But the newspaper *Il Messaggero* has a report from England that the R.A.F. radar has detected squadrons of mysterious objects passing over England on November 6.² "At the British War Office, they are concerned," concluded this report in *Il Messaggero*. Another news item in the same issue of *Il Messaggero* reported however that "On November 4, a 'flying saucer' has landed at Nuoro, in Sardinia, Italy, and then departed with a faint hissing sound."

I called today upon General Pezzi of the Italian Air

Force, Chief of the Cabinet of the Ministry of Defence. He received me very courteously, but he said he knew nothing whatever about the events I described. I read my notes to him, and asked him to report the matter to the Minister of Defence.

November 10, 1954: I was received today by the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He knew nothing about the matter, and was surprised that the Military Authorities have made no report to them about it. I asked him to convey a copy of my *Report on the Observations* to the Minister.

November 11, 1954: I was received today by General de Vincenti, Commander of the Italian Air Defence. He informed me that Radar is normally working only over certain fixed zones, at certain fixed periods, and up to a radius of 6,000-7,000 metres.

Everything now becomes clear. The objects seen by me on November 6 and 7 cannot have been captured by the Radar, which was not in operation on those days. (It might also be added that, had the targets been higher than 7,000 metres, they would in any case not have been picked up.)

November 12, 1954: At about 11.30 a.m. today I noticed that the machines were again over Rome. I telephoned to General De Vincenti of the Air Defence Headquarters, and he informed me that he had issued orders for observations to be made.

There are reports in the newspapers that "flying saucers" have been seen on November 9, 10, 11, and 12 respectively, over Chile, Peru, Brazil, Malaya, and Yugoslavia. *So why, I wonder, this strange silence about the flying machines over Rome?*

As my subsequent enquiries showed, large numbers of citizens of Rome had seen the craft on November 6 and 7. Throughout almost the whole of the preceding month of October, the papers had been full of the press reports of saucers from France and elsewhere. By now the subject was "old hat," and the papers claimed that they were no longer interested in the everlasting discussions of "flying saucers." Moreover November 7 being a Sunday, the newspaper offices were closed on that day, and since the authorities issued no information on the matter, it is easy to conclude that the newspapers never received any knowledge of the vast scale of the demonstrations over Rome on these two days.

My own first assumptions were that the saucers seen in such numbers above our Capital were either American or Russian new secret machines, but it was not long before I began to see that such a view was too untenable and could not be taken seriously.

A few days later, I paid a visit to the Astronomical Observatory at Monte Mario, where Professor Cimino admitted to me that during the last few days "... *something strange had been seen in the skies over Rome.*"

Then I visited the Vatican Observatory at Castel Gandolfo, near Rome. There the Director of the Specola Vaticana, Father Zilwes, informed me that at

about 11.00 a.m. on November 12 a Brazilian priest who was on duty in the Observatory had seen some strange objects pass twice over the Observatory, very low at terrific speed, and with no sound. This piece of information satisfied me. The mystery craft had not only been seen above the Vatican City; they had also been spotted by somebody at the Vatican's own observatory.

Father Zilwes denied that there could be any possibility of "interplanetary aviation" or "extraterrestrial visitors." He said he did accept it as possible that what had been seen was some new type of aircraft, possibly "teleguided" and owned by one of the Great Powers such as U.S.A. or U.S.S.R. He said he felt sure that one hundred such machines could easily be "teleguided" by a similar number of pilots sitting in one room in a Base. This conversation left me with the conviction that the objects I had seen must be terrestrial craft, and most probably were Russian teleguided machines. Whenever I heard of encounters with the UFO entities, for a long time I was satisfied to dismiss them as Tartars, Mongols, Chinese, Tibetans, and so on — all pilots of secret Communist machines.

When, two years later, I came finally to adopt the extraterrestrial hypothesis, I wrote to Father Zilwes, from whom, on November 20, 1956, I received the following reply:

"We have found very interesting material in your Report, which is possibly the most complete that has yet been made on the problem of the so-called f... s... *But why did so many scientists, whom I met at the Astronautical Congress in Rome, give no consideration at all to this problem?*"

My reply to Father Zilwes was very simple:

"*Because all the Governments keep this matter secret... And because all "scientists" receive Government salaries. So they prefer to keep silent...*" A.P.

II THE GREAT "CROSSES" OVER WASHINGTON, D.C. AS REPORTED BY COMMANDER ALVIN E. MOORE, USNR, B.S., M.A.

Commander Alvin E. Moore, based at the time in Washington, D.C., and employed on important Government work in a number of departments, also began to take an interest in the UFO Phenomenon from at least as early as 1951. He too is one of the real pioneers whom everybody is so anxious to forget today.

Educated at the U.S. Naval Academy and at three universities, he has had wide experience as a naval officer, and then in engineering, patent law, and government administration. He was at various times a nautical scientist with the Navy Department; an American Vice-Consul in Mexico; a U.S. Patent Examiner, specialising in aeronautical inventions; a patent

lawyer and patent engineer with the U.S. Army for the von Braun team of Space scientists at Huntsville, Alabama; and he has also engaged in private law practice.

Recalled to the Navy during the Korean War in 1950, he became a member of the Scientific Intelligence Department of the CIA in 1953 and remained with the CIA for some years, in the course of which he was able to see a great deal of secret UFO material. His university degrees are in Engineering and in History and in Law; he is a member of the bar of three courts, and he is the holder of more than fifty patents for aeronautical, marine, and building-construction inventions.

In 1979 he published his book *Mystery of the Sky-men* (Amherst Press) in which he reproduces the most important matters covered in the diaries which he kept from 1952 onwards. The following account will be found on pages 117 and 118 of that book:—

“On 9 November 1954, about 4.15 p.m., as I sat in a Government office, I invited the attention of a woman sitting nearby (Natalie Higbie) to a long, narrow, straight “skyribbon” of milky-white gas that stretched across the sky to our southwest. She came to my window, and then pointed to a much broader skyribbon which rose in the sky from its junction with the narrow ribbon, at seeming right-angles to the narrow band. Going closer to the window, I saw this one also. It rose toward the zenith and out of our sight from a T-junction with the narrow ribbon.

“When I left the office at 5 p.m. I saw in the western half of the sky — and mainly in the south-western quadrant — above the long, narrow, horizontal skyribbon — two huge X’s or crosses of pearly white vapor. I thought that in medieval days an observer of such huge crosses in the sky probably would have considered them an omen. They looked, however, more like X’s than crosses having right-angle parts; and I concluded that each of four flying saucer emissions of propulsion materials had crossed another to form the X’s above the horizontal ribbon-like line of gas or vapor.”

G.C.

Footnotes by G. Creighton

1. Alberto Perego: *Svelato Il Mistero Dei Dischi Volanti*; Roma 1957.
Sono Extraterrestri! Edizioni Alper, Roma, 1958.
L’Aviazione Di Altri Pianeti Opera Tra Noi; Roma, 1963.
All published by Dr. Perego’s CISAE (Centro Italiano Studi Aviazione Elettromagnetica, Via Ruggero Fauro 43, ROMA, Italy).
2. The British press for November 6, 7 and 8, 1954, also had reports of mystery squadrons of objects passing over Britain from East to West at great heights and only observed by radar, during the week November 1-7. Com-

menting on this, the Editor of *Fate Magazine* (British edition) for February 1955, said:

“Flying Saucers, which first converged over the American continent, are now concentrating on Britain. Now, here in London itself, there is more than oral testimony to go on. *Fate* can reveal this month that there is a flurry among Security “high-ups” over the latest saucer tracings being flashed on British radar screens. A wide group of screens have reported, and are reporting, strange tracks in the sky, moving East to West over the British Isles, flying two miles up, often at incredible speeds.

“First attempts to discount them as unidentified aircraft, stray balloons, carrier pigeons, meteorites, etc., have been abandoned.

“Flying saucer sightings follow an intelligent pattern, yet no aircraft known to man could fly or change direction at such alarming velocity. Why these objects should now show interest in Britain is a question to which the Air Ministry is furiously seeking an answer.

“Let it dwell on the warning in *Fate* last month by Lord Dowding, its old war-time Defence Chief:

“The most important thing I have to say is to give a warning against attempts to open fire on these objects . . . We should be guilty of criminal folly if we were to hinder a contact which might well bring untold blessings to humanity’.”

Several of the British press-reports at the time (the *Sunday Dispatch* was one of the papers concerned) said that the formations of mystery objects, as observed on the radar screens, rapidly changed position several times as they passed over London. According to these accounts, the objects were at first flying in the shape of a large “U” with the opening towards the front, but changed then to what was described in some reports as an “N” and in others as a “Z.” (An “N” on its side resembles a “Z.” There were inevitably people at the time who took this to be a clear admonition that the “Visitors” were telling Britain that she should adhere closely to the counsels of the United Nations, U.N. Dafter advice could scarcely be imagined, inasmuch as the U.N., renowned for its generation of “gas”, produces precious little “light”, and has shown itself to be totally impotent.)

Finally, as regards the differences between the accounts of Dr. Perego and Commander Alvin Moore, these are of course patent. For example, Perego says his great “Cross” consisted of actual formations of what seemed to be small white “craft”, whereas Moore speaks only of “huge X’s or crosses or pearly white vapor”.

Not much similarity, I agree. However, it occurred to me to check the dates, Dr. Perego’s *Diary* recorded the presence of UFOs over Rome on October 30, November 6, November 7, November 8, November 10, November 11, November 12 of 1954.

Note that he makes no mention of anything seen over Rome on November 9.

The time given by Commander Moore for his Washington D.C. sighting is “about 4.15 p.m. on 9 November, 1954.”

This curious coincidence of dates seems to be surely worth noting? (In Rome the clocks are about six hours ahead of those in Washington, D.C.)

G.C.

SPANNERS, MONKEY WRENCHES, AND THE UFOLOGIST

Richard Snyder

It is important to note that this contribution, from one of our American readers who has worked for several years on the staff of an important American observatory, was actually written by him in 1979, and is one of the many items which, for one reason or another, have been held up in the 'pipeline' or lost sight of in recent years. The writer still wishes to see it published in FSR, and I agree with him that what he has to say is of much value.

Be it noted, I repeat, that his article dates from long before the publication of most of Leonard Stringfield's findings, and from even longer before the publication of the book CLEAR INTENT. — EDITOR

IN European countries they are called "spanners" while in the United States they are known as "monkey wrenches". Either of these slang terms applies directly to those individuals, or groups of individuals, who knowingly, or unknowingly, confuse the study of unidentified aerial and terrestrial phenomena.

Simple logic must be applied when trying to fathom out the reasons for this when so called authority speaks. More than thirty years of investigation have met with explanations like a recording gone bad. *The constant denials and silly appraisals of situations which meet the exacting criteria for a bonafide report have produced a phenomenon as bizarre as the unknowns themselves.*

Irrefutable evidence

The most unbiased thinking today cannot, with clear conscience, shelve impeccable evidence as supplied by top notch witnesses such as the R.A.F., the U.S.A.F., and the host of other military and scientific personnel directly involved with unusual experiences. I certainly do not exclude the private individual as witness to inexplicable phenomena although it would appear that "those in the know", who have witnessed, are foremost in the eyes of a very leary public. Since there are virtually hundreds of cases involving trained observers, we should be aware that the "spanners" and "monkey wrenches" will be hard at it to twist the data, alter it, or dismiss it completely . . . and without any qualms as to why.

Shame that it is, the majority of mankind accepts Authority without question. This is commonplace the world over. Scientifically orientated investigators have found this to be a spanner which has found itself automatically in the soup. What we have thought to be a battle of authoritative egos now takes second place to the real intent, and egotism still runs rampant throughout scientific circles. I am only too well aware of this personally, as I have worked on the staff of a well-known Astronomical Observatory for several years past. However, I must point out emphatically that those preparing statements for news-releases involving explanations of the unusual, are "*appointed explainers*", not so much the egotists of yesteryear.

There is absolutely no way that a well detailed case, involving trained eyewitnesses, can be "*put to rest by spannering*". The eyewitness knows it. The investigator knows it. The general mass of humanity does not. The problem facing us who are in the investigative network is one of utmost concern — namely enlightenment of the public who have fallen prey to quite enough falsehoods already in matters politic and who, if not made aware of a most serious situation, will find themselves unprepared for that which is going to shock many a lifestyle.

Close encounter cases

The well established CE-III and CE-IV cases are the ones which belie the nature of the "unusual" that has impregnated the societies of this planet, past and present, on a daily basis. This situation is certain to continue into the future, and become more profound as it does so.

Little, if anything, comes by way of interpretation merely from lights observed in the sky which perform beyond our present-day technology. Even low-flying or hovering oddities, complete with funny-appearing occupants, tell us nothing whatsoever of their purposes for being here on this planet.

What does tell us something is the jibberish being forced into the minds of the recipients by the UFO occupants.

I wish at this point to interject how "spannering" of the simple CE-I and CE-II cases should surely take care also of any CE-III and CE-IV incidents that might arise. After all, if CE-Is and CE-IIs can be neatly nipped in the bud, who is really going to take the most important phases, CE-III and CE-IV, seriously?

It appears that spannering serves in fact a most important purpose: namely, to poke fun; to hasten a memory-lapse in those who might be interested; and to "move the dangerous subject" by means of a bit of authoritative insistence, "to a far corner of the room", as one might say.

By this same token, there is absolutely nobody who can convince me that the thousands of radar-trackings