

# FLYING SAUCER OVER CLUJ, ROMANIA

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**Our contributor, an engineer, prepared his article in French. Gordon Creighton, who made the translation, comments that the spelling "Romania" is today held to be correct, and should be used in preference to "Rumania".**

I WISH to place on record one of the more spectacular sightings of an unknown flying craft, for I am of the opinion that the relevant photographs will serve to enrich the fund of knowledge already accumulated over the years regarding this epoch-making problem.

The case is that of the UFO photographed on the outskirts of the Romanian town of Cluj<sup>1</sup> towards the end of the summer of 1968, the pictures being among the best and most interesting ever taken in the world. At the outset, I wish to draw special attention to the fact that the analysis of these pictures has raised some very remarkable and scientific problems. I shall attempt, below, to interpret some of these, and this may lead to fuller analyses at a later date. But firstly, the facts:

## Description of the Occurrence

On the morning of August 18, 1968, the technician E.B. had decided to go, with his lady friend Z.M. and two other friends, to spend a pleasant Sunday far from the noise of the town. The weather being very fine and the sky clear, they decided on the forest of Baci, which covers the hills lying to the west of Cluj and which, by reason of its rich vegetation, has always given much pleasure to Nature-lovers.

At about noon the small party stopped in a clearing full of flowers, far from the more frequented routes. Having set up their camp, and feeling hungry, they decided to light their little fire and prepare food. E.B. was to get firewood. When he had gone but ten paces or so into the forest, he heard his girl friend call him saying that she wanted to show him "something". Returning to the clearing, he was told by her to look up at the sky, and, to his astonishment, he suddenly beheld there a great round metallic object which looked silvery in the sunlight. It was flying over the forest without making the slightest sound, and in a peculiar manner.

E.B. remained watching it in silence

for ten seconds and by then he realised that it was "something" very remarkable and he rushed to the rug lying on the grass to get his camera. In great haste he set the time and aperture and pressed the button. His next photo was taken more calmly, as the object was moving slowly. He thus had the time to observe that it reversed direction in its flight and also that its luminosity altered, details which are shown well on the photographs. He had to take the last two shots in haste again, because the object suddenly accelerated and shot upwards and vanished rapidly. The time was 1.23 p.m. There was not the least breath of wind blowing, and the silence of Nature continued unbroken except for the songs of the birds in the forest.

The whole party had stood in silence watching the strange evolutions of the unknown object. Once it had gone, the preparation of the meal, and later the pleasure of their excursion were uppermost in their minds, and the powerful impression made on them by the two minutes in which they had watched the machine in flight gradually faded.

Returning home, E.B. was occupied with daily problems and gave no more thought to the happening in the forest. Only ten days later did he develop his film, having taken other pictures in the meantime until the film was used up. In fact he was in no hurry, for he did not know what to do with the pictures, fearing ridicule. The only person known to him who could enlighten him regarding what he had seen was myself, and I had been away in Bucharest for two months, returning to Cluj only after August 26.

I thus was able to see the first prints of the photographs after September 1, and I realised that it was something extremely important.

## The Investigation

Aged 45, E.B. was known to his colleagues as a serious and honest man, though perhaps a little too self-centred. An officer in his earlier years, he was

now a technician in a Cluj constructional engineering enterprise. In this latter capacity I had known him for almost two years, our relations being purely professional. I happened to know already that the UFO problem did not interest him and that he viewed it all with scepticism. I knew definitely that there was neither documentary material nor were there any books on UFOs in Cluj that he might have consulted, and I knew that the rare reports in the press could not have been of any great concern or interest to him in that respect.

His lady friend, Z.M., aged 34, a civil servant, was also known among her colleagues as a serious person and also as one who had no interest in UFOs.

I began by questioning the witnesses, and learned the following additional details:

—The clearing where the photos had been taken is 47 km. from Cluj as the crow flies, and to the WSW of the town.

—The air temperature *in the sun* was around 36°C.

—The sky was completely clear, but there was, very high, a strange sort of vapour which they only noticed when the object had vanished at high altitude.

—The camera was a FED-2, with an INTERSTAR 2.8 lens. The film was the usual sort, 17 DIN.

—None of them had observed the object at the moment of its arrival. It was seen by them only when it was over the clearing.

—When observed, it was at a height that they estimated to be around 600 metres, at an angle of 85° to the horizon.

—Its flight path during the initial period was from NE to SW, and on a straight course. Then, when the object reversed course, its line of flight seemed slightly downwards towards the ground.

—In its flight, both horizontally and vertically when leaving, it kept changing its position in relation to the line of flight.

—As regards its appearance, I reproduce here E.B.'s written statement which he gave me and which was published in several newspapers: "The object had a metallic gleam, made no sound, and was constantly changing position and direction. It had no resemblance whatever to any of the bodies that I have seen so many times in flight, from balloons to jet aircraft."

—The diameter of the machine seemed to be in excess of 30 metres.

\* \* \* \* \*

All this was extremely interesting, but I had to make sure that it was not a hoax. I took the film and the prints, and went first to the best known photographer-reporter in Cluj. After studying them in his laboratory, he said he had no doubt as to their genuineness.

I then consulted a well-known Bucharest specialist, a photographic reporter with the Romanian National Press Agency, who happened to be in Cluj on other business. He confirmed the complete absence of any hoax, and he pointed out an interesting psychological aspect to me: this was that if an amateur photographer, such as E.B. is, had wanted to make a hoax, he would have put the object at the centre of his picture. But in the first and third photograph the object is almost at the edge, which fact shows how excited he was and his haste to snap the object.

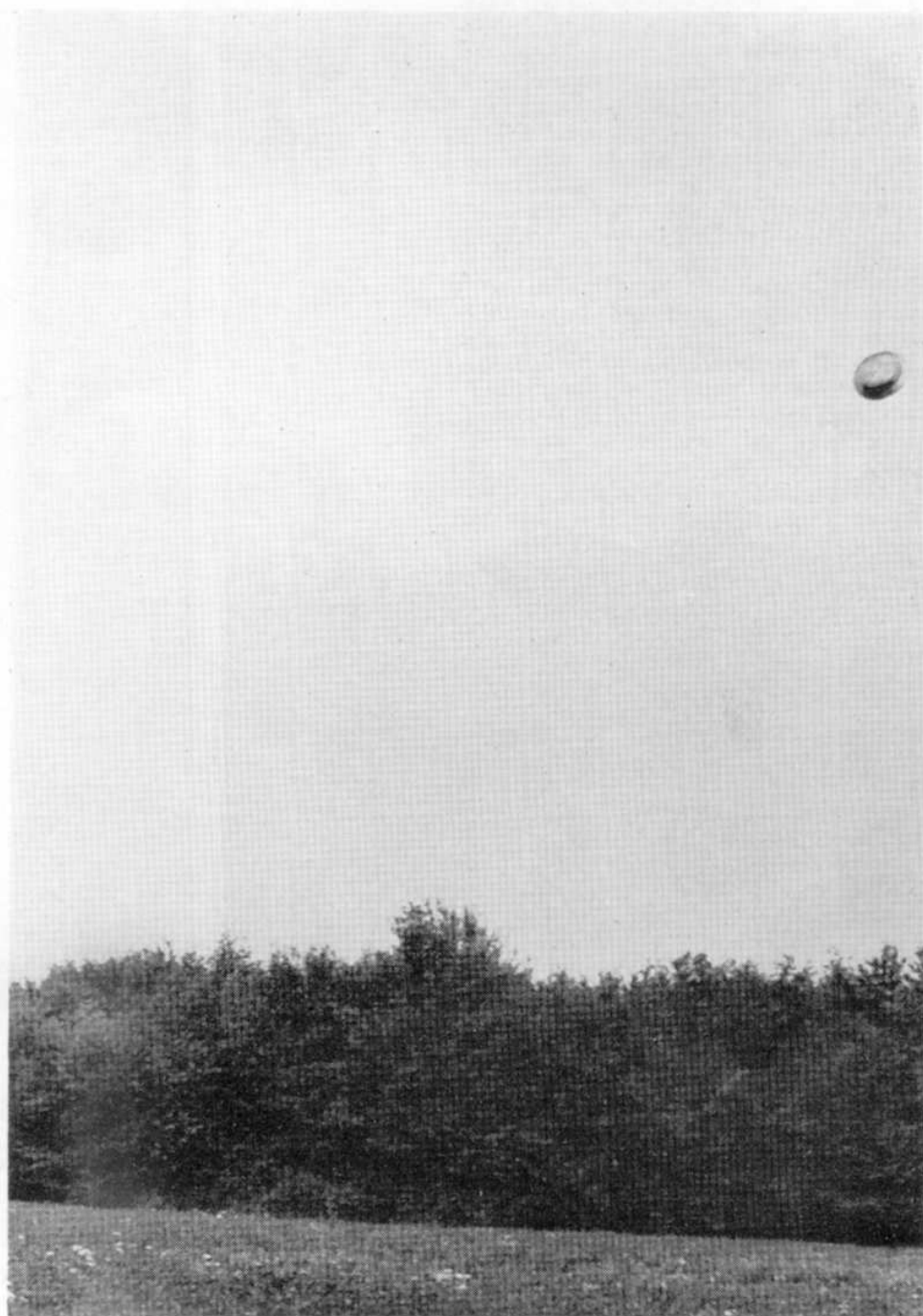
I also consulted an official laboratory in Cluj about the film. They had it analysed by their technical experts, using the latest methods, and found no sign of trickery.

After these strictly technical investigations, I sought to work out the logic of the movement of the various images, using enlargements. At the outset, the second picture had particularly caught my attention by its clear perspective, showing very clearly the natural setting and the UFO in flight over the forest. The third picture too showed clearly that it was impossible to have thrown the same object to such a height. And you can see clearly from the photos that it is the same object in all of them, and a very large one too.

The presence of the same trees and the same flowers on the pictures enables us to follow the flight. The sketch made was produced simply by superimposing the photos.

#### Sketch

At the same time, the size of the trees and branches and flowers also enables us to appreciate the large size of the object. E.B.'s estimate of a diameter of around 30 metres seems indeed right. By geometrical details in various points we can see that this estimate is in fact a minimum one. Finally, the presence of the same trees in the fourth photograph (which was



Photograph No. 1

not published, being retained by E.B. for its special features) demonstrates categorically that the film is authentic, namely by the final detail of the object vanishing upwards!

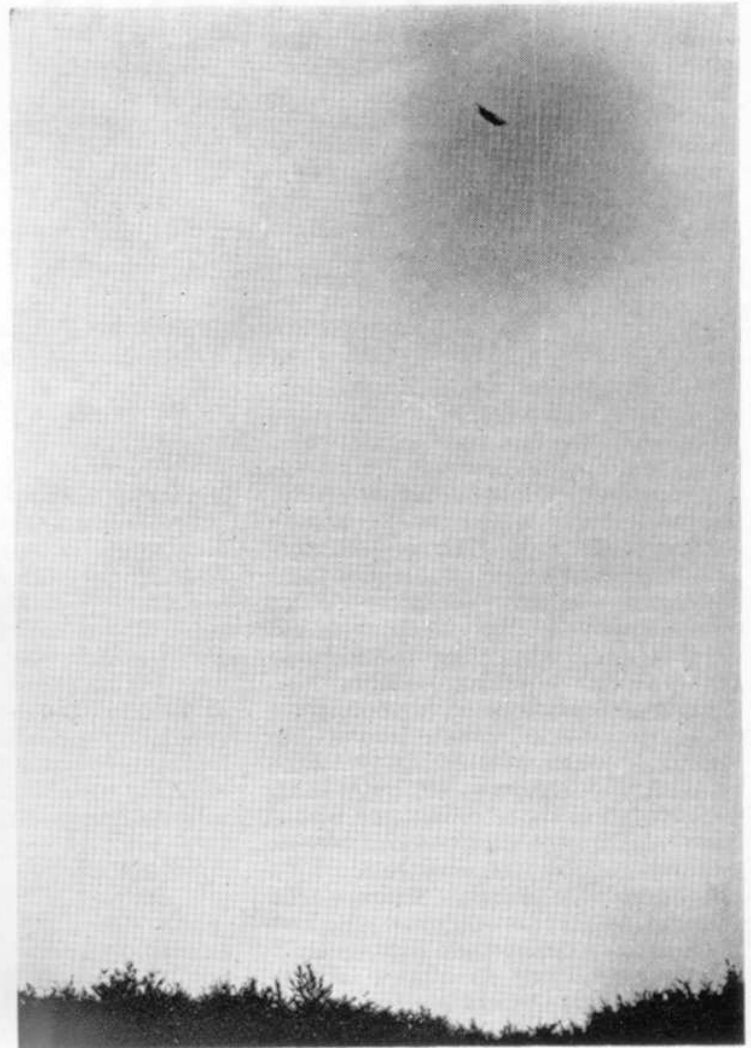
Trial comparisons of these photographs with other similar UFO photographs was for me the final proof. Frank Edwards' book, *Flying Saucers, Serious Business*, has three photographs of a UFO taken in California near Santa Ana in August 1965. They show an astonishing resemblance to the Cluj photographs: the same type of construction; the same proportions; the same manner of metallic construction; the same technical features. Only the size seems to be clearly different. Thus,

almost exactly three years apart in time (the Santa Ana photos were taken on August 3 and the Cluj photos on August 18), and at a distance of over 16,000 km. from each other, two men have captured on film images of strange unknown flying objects that are extraordinarily similar. There is not the remotest possibility of those two men ever having known each other or of having had the least dealings with each other. Indeed the second man never knew, or saw, or had the slightest knowledge about the photographs taken by the first man.<sup>2</sup>

The proof is so absolute that I sent the photographs to the news agency to be published. (To show our sincerity in



Photograph No. 2



Photograph No. 3

this matter, I wish to make it quite clear that neither E.B. nor I have sought nor have we received the slightest material recompense for the photographs.)

#### Publication of the Photographs

After rigorous analyses, all the Bucharest newspapers of September 19, 1968, as well as two Cluj papers, published the pictures. That same evening, the national television network showed enlargements of the pictures. Next day, a television team was already in Cluj, and the interview given them by E.B. and his friend Z.M. went out the following evening on the TV. It is perhaps of interest to mention that the newspaper *Informatia Bucurestiului* also published the account of some psychological tests done on E.B.'s good powers of observation by a reporter.

But of course, as always, there were also folk who were hostile. But also, as usual, subjective in their approach, and not documented on the facts of the case. Thus, without seeing the photographs, the director of the local Observatory put out the idea that the object in the pictures was probably a meteorological

balloon. In several articles published in newspapers with a big readership, I showed the weakness of this hypothesis, which is clearly ruled out.

#### The Analysis of the Photographs

For myself, I think the Cluj series of photographs is of remarkable importance, both from the documentary aspect as also for the scientific and technical problems that they present. At the same time, alongside of the tens of thousands of registered UFO sightings in the world, these Cluj photographs have now arrived to pose the same fundamental questions to the present-day scientific community: namely, how are these perfect machines constructed, what is their strange technique by which they fly, what is the power used, who are the beings in them and who are their builders?

Obviously these questions cannot be answered now, but the analysis, even more thorough, of all sightings and all photographs and all material evidence, will yield important information for us.

What do we find in these Cluj photographs?

(a) The first photograph seems to confirm for us one thing that was already well known: the flying saucers are metallic craft designed according to admirable technical principles. For example, as is seen in this case, their attention to aerodynamics is evident.

The angle at which the picture was taken gives us (for the first time with this particular type of UFO) a view of the upper part—which is flat. If we look closely for details, we can see that the surface of the craft is not perfectly smooth: there is a slight bulge on the left. What the purpose of this asymmetrical design could be is difficult to imagine, but it can serve to remind us of several of the cases mentioned by Frank Edwards in his book referred to above—cases in which the crew were seen to be making certain kinds of use of the upper surface.

The fact that lateral portholes are not visible, either on this saucer or on the Californian one (Santa Ana), raises serious questions as to the possibility of visual examination from the inside to the outside. Are these particular types of space-craft simply teleguided

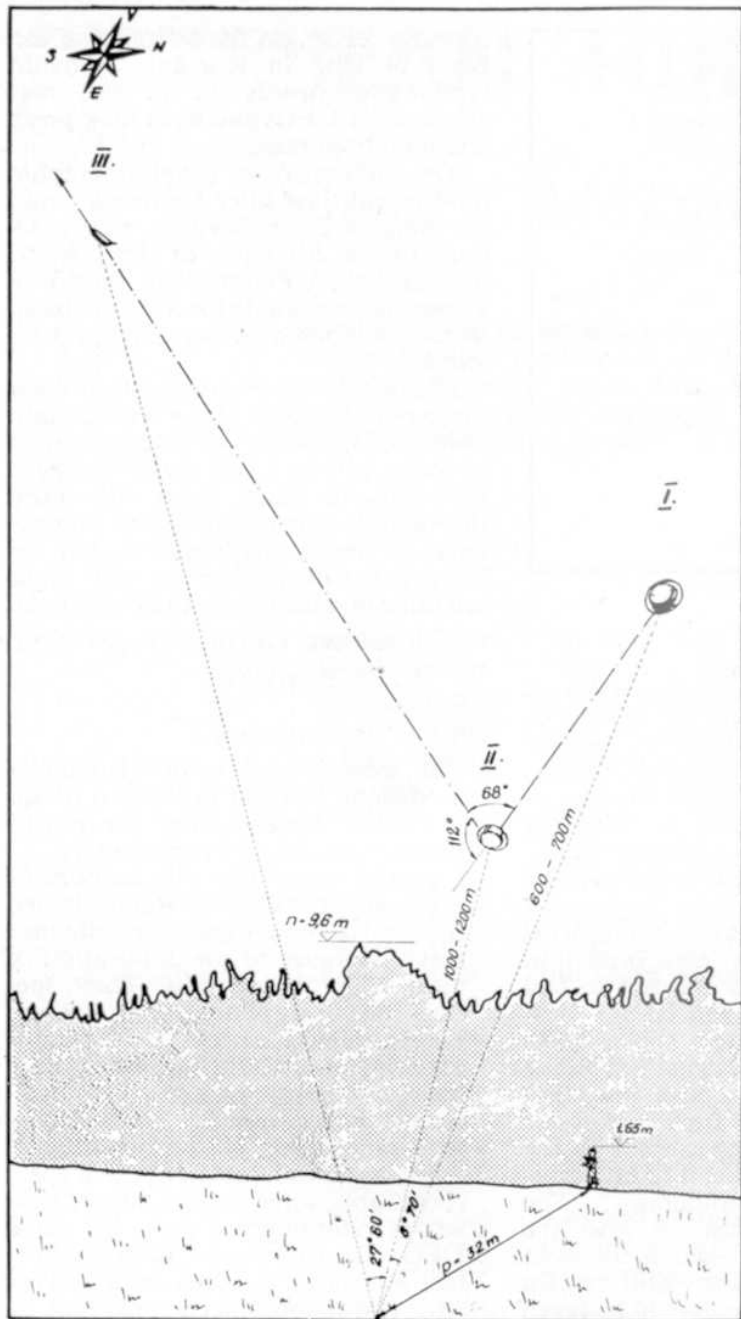


Fig. 1

and so not requiring visual systems? The considerable size of the object however leads us to deduce that it is not a simple teleguided affair. Is there no crew to use the large interior space? If however we accept the existence of beings inside it, then there must be some kind of visual system. Have they perhaps some sort of special device which cannot be observed from photographs? Naturally the problem calls for more thorough investigations, plus further photographic data and direct sightings.

(b) The second photograph however raises the most serious problems. To begin with, my attention was drawn to seemingly different aspects:—First, we note that, compared with the first photograph, the shape of the

object has now become somewhat vague, while all the other details in the picture (trees, flowers, etc.) have remained very clear, and yet, during the few seconds that have elapsed since the first photograph was taken, neither the atmospheric conditions nor the conditions pertaining to the operation of the camera have changed in any way.—Secondly, you can see that the image of the object has become bright and yet at the same time the shadow that seems to be thrown by the constructional details on the upper part of the rim seems almost illogical when compared with the shadow thrown in the first photograph.

In reply to the questions that I put to them later about these changes, E.B. said that, as he was getting ready to

take the second picture, he was able to watch how the object had reversed course in the air growing brighter and brighter, until it accelerated suddenly and shot away upwards.

We are familiar with numerous accounts of the brightness of the external surfaces of UFOs, especially at night. Was this the phenomenon that was now taking place here?

To secure further help on the question, I appealed separately to two University lecturers from the Cluj Institute of Fine Arts, both of them specialists in matters of natural lighting. With the help of one of them, and before a group of professors from the Institute, we projected the whole film, and also the individual photographs, on to a screen. After a discussion, each of the two specialists made some models of the object. On these models they studied the distribution of the light from a lateral source (here playing the part of the Sun). Their conclusions, arrived at separately, were identical: namely that in the second picture the object had indeed become luminous, but illuminated in itself, not from outside!

The problem of the UFOs' own luminosity is assuredly a remarkable scientific and technical one. How can so large a metallic surface suddenly become luminous, brighter than the light of the Sun at noon on a summer's day? What can be the purpose of this phenomenon?

The shadow however which appears on the upper portion of the rim also raises some questions. Is it simply the momentary result of the reversal of the object in the air and of the angle of the rays of sunlight striking the rim? Or is it perhaps a constructional detail which remained hidden behind the dome in the first picture and which now becomes visible as a shaded area? Is there a certain lack of homogeneity in the metallic material of which the craft is built, and which only shows up when the luminous effect comes into operation?

To arrive at a more realistic hypothesis, we should inevitably have to know first the source and indeed the purpose of this strange emission of luminosity.

The luminosity effect of UFOs—seldom disputed by the writers who in their books have presented UFO sightings and have written of the importance of the UFOs—has on the other hand almost always been taken as one of the main features that various people have seized upon in order to deny, as scientifically impossible, the real existence of these strange objects.

From this point of view, the photographs taken at Cluj constitute a piece of documentation of the very greatest importance, since here the phenome-

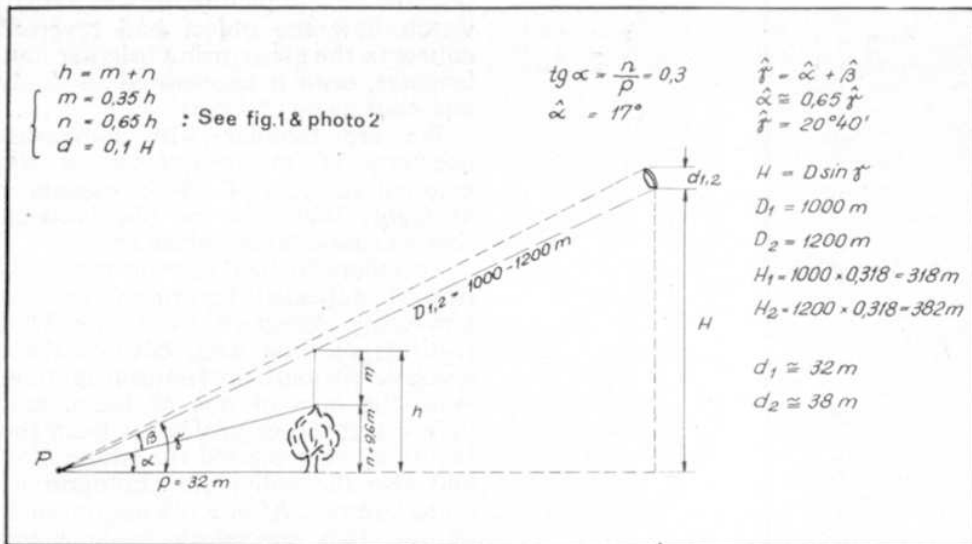


Fig. 2

non does not appear—as usually is the case—as a mere spot of luminosity in the sky, but was captured by the camera at a moment when the contours of the object were still visible. This fact rules out the possibility of subjective interpretation or the possibility of hasty dismissal as a fake.

(c) The third photograph, less spectacular, nevertheless also presents important problems which would appear to be fundamental themes for a future new flight technique. But, in order not to weary the reader, I will confine myself to mentioning only a few of them, leaving the discussion of the problem as a whole to be taken up again on a future occasion.

What is striking in this third photograph, right at the outset, is the almost vertical position of the craft. Is it logically acceptable? We are in truth so used to the idea of flight in a horizontal position for aircraft and also for UFOs too, but we must not forget that frequently airmen—and particularly pilots of fighter craft—are obliged at certain times to put their machine into a vertical position where it is

advantageous to them.

And, among the numerous sightings of UFOs, we do know of reports in which UFOs moved about in a vertical position or were vertical and stationary. Thus for example, I recall the photograph taken on April 2, 1966, at Melbourne, and published by Frank Edwards in his *FLYING SAUCERS HERE AND NOW*. No doubt such a position would seem to entail great inconveniences for any crew present in the craft, but perhaps it is not so bad for them after all.

The third photograph shows however one detail that is intriguing: on the upper part of the image of the UFO you can see a curious curvature of the rim. Has this any connection with the patch of shadow—difficult to explain—on the second photograph? The analysis of this detail, as also the colour of the rim—which is even brighter than the dome—still remain open problems that deserve to be taken up again later.

(d) By way of conclusion:

The three pictures of the strange flying object photographed over the

forest of Baciú, on the outskirts of the town of Cluj in Romania, provide remarkable proofs as to the real existence of UFOs and as to their great scientific importance.

The authenticity of the photographic film, established after thorough-going checking and verification, shows us that all the attempts to deny or to disregard the UFO problem constitute a regrettable attitude towards the basic ideas of contemporary and future science.

I hope that my presentation of these three photographs, along with certain aspects of the wealth of data contained in them, will be a real encouragement to others to study them still more thoroughly. The documentary importance of these photographs can be increased still further by the right scientific and technical studies of them.

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#### Notes

- 1 Cluj, second largest town of Romania. Known as Napoca in Roman times, it lies in Transylvania, the north-western province of the country.
- 2 I greatly regret that the authors of the repudiated Condon Report issued by the Condon Committee did not make reference to the publication of these Cluj photographs. Their specialist on testing photographs, William K. Hartmann, writes: "... photographic proof would require not only multiple photographs but also multiple photographers, unconnected with each other, not known to each other, at considerable distances apart (preferably some tens of kilometres) whose photographs show the same UFO. The Colorado University project knows of no such case". Were Mr. Hartmann sincere and had he known of the Cluj photos, he would probably not have written this. Will he now change his findings? [Extremely unlikely—EDITOR.]

## GOODBYE, Messrs. CHIPS?

The eminent scientist MAX PLANCK wrote, from bitter experience: "A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents *eventually die*, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it."

Quoted by Arthur Koestler in "*The Drinkers of Infinity*" (1968).