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UFO CAUSES ARGENTINA TO LOCK DOWN RURAL AREA

A mysterious blue "fireball" caused Argentina's Navy and the Policia Provincial de Corrientes to lock down a rural area of the upper Rio Parana and deploy forces in an intense ground search. (Editor's Note: The Argentinian Navy patrols the Rio Parana, which forms that country's border with neighboring Paraguay.)

"Elements of the Policia Provincial, the National Gendarmes and the Naval Prefecture carried out a broad joint operation in the town of Saladas, near San Lorenzo," on the Rio Parana in northern Argentina, "in order to determine the truth of a complaint made by a man who, driving toward the community, saw a fireball falling to the ground bordering the Rio Parana."

"According to the report, filed yesterday (Thursday, July 14, 2005) at the Empedrado Cuartel (Barracks) of the Naval Prefecture, the glow moved from southwest to northeast. 'It was a fireball, like a small plane disintegrating after an explosion.'"

"This was the description of the UFO that the driver gave to the Prefecture duty officer. (Naval) Elements immediately reported this to the San Lorenzo Sheriff's Office, and the combined operation and information-sharing began shortly after."

"The sun was not quite up as the combined (operation's) personnel made their way across the alleged impact zone" outside Saladas. "They inspected the fields adjacent to the river, the ranches of the San Lorenzo rural area, but no one found traces of the object sought."

"Most of the local residents were interrogated, but none of them had even heard their dogs bark."

"It was then that the story of a member of the Road Control Police in Cuatro Bocas, near Saladas, became known."

"According to the police officer, an eyewitness to the event, the glow truly existed but at a greater height (altitude) than a private plane can reach in flight. This probability was dismissed in order to concentrate on the likelihood of a meteor impact."

"The search continued but no trace of the rock or space junk was found. A communique was issued by the Empedrado Prefecture to the (Navy) barracks at Goya, Bella Vista and Corrientes."

"By evening, nothing further was known about the matter, according to a report by Naval Prefecture spokesman Andres Ramirez."

The blue UFO "was the talk of the town over the radio, in bars and in newsrooms" throughout Corrientes province. "What was it that crossed the Chaco skies in the wee hours of the morning?

Phones rang off the hook at the local radio stations, suggesting that at around six in the morning, a 'fireball' crossed the sky at high speed, leaving a long blue trail in its path."

"The most frightened callers wanted to alert listeners to the possibility that a stricken aircraft was falling to the ground enveloped in flames, a report which was rejected by the Northeastern Air Region (Spanish acronym: RANE--J.T.) from the lack of any incidents involving a heavenly body."

"However, there are witnesses, not only in the (provincial) capital but also in the (Chaco) interior, who contacted (the Argentinian newspaper) El Norte to confirm that they had witnessed the passage of the 'heavenly fireball.'"

"One of the eyewitness accounts came from Sergio Acosta, who said that between 6:05 and 6:10 a.m." on Thursday, July 14, 2005, "while he was driving a truck, he noticed 'a powerful light that lit up the sky.'"

"He informed LT-16 Radio Santa Esmeralda that he 'looked upward and saw something like a giant star, flying at high speed, at an altitude that did not

exceed 1,000 to 1,500 meters (3,300 to 4,950 feet) in an east to west direction, until it became lost in the horizon."

"Apparently, he was so alarmed by the strange object's flight pattern that some details were burned into his mind. 'It lost a chunk of its luminous body in flight, and in its rear it had something like 'a little tail,' following it at a close distance, like a hot coal, as though it was a jet engine or a navigation light. But it was a very large object,' Acosta remarked."

"This was one of the most detailed accounts of the sighting. But there were at least four other witnesses who claim having seen the light with similar characteristics--and at the same time--crossing the skies."

"It was even said that one of the witnesses made a drawing of what he had seen."

"When asked if it could have been an airplane, he said it was unlikely because 'it was noiseless. It drew my attention because it was (flying) in total silence. I thought it was a shooting star, but I've seen shooting stars before, and they make a whistling sound. This one made no noise whatsoever.'"

"Furthermore, it wasn't fiery-colored but had more colors than a star, like a satellite, but very large and even titillated (flickered). It was so fast that it took between 6 and 10 seconds to cross the sky, which was completely clear."

"I saw this thing, and night was turned into day. It lit up everything,' said Cesar Gustavo Blanco to a local FM radio station. Blanco is a rural worker who was on his way to a farm field north of Napenay. Nervous after having seen the object, while he was trying to find an earthly explanation for it, he said, 'I turned off my pickup truck's engine because I was shocked, and there was no sound. But I could hear something, like a whistling sound, and I felt fear because this was really the sound of silence.'"

Saladas is located 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Corrientes, the provincial capital, and 435 kilometers (261 miles) north of Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. (See the Argentinian newspapers El Litoral of July 15, 2005, "Police comb area after UFO sighting;" Las Noticias Corrientes for July 15, 2005, "Commotion over Chaco flying object continues;" and El Norte for July 15, 2005, "Fireball sweeps across skies over

the Chaco." Muchas gracias a Scott Corrales y Cristian Quintero del grupo Planeta UFO por estes articulos de diario.)

LUMINOUS UFO SEEN IN CENTRAL ARGENTINA

"The person in charge of a farm in Peru, a town in La Pampa province" in central Argentina "found himself witnessing the path of a low-flying luminous object that changed colors continuously from red to green and passing through an intermediate orange stage."

"It should be noted that this farm is crossed by a 132-kilovolt high-voltage power line that links the city of General Acha and Guatrache."

"The time was 7:30 p.m. and Alberto S. noted a mysterious spectacle of electrical arcing taking place over the high-voltage line in question. Filled with fear, he decided to return to the residential area where he discussed the event with other (farm) employees."

"On the next day, he returned to the site where the incident took place and found that a maintenance crew from the Administracion Provincial de Energia (APE) was already on-site. The repairmen were acting on a report related by the control station and were trying to ascertain the precise location and cause of the interruption in the power supply. Having located it, they proceeded with the needed repairs."

"The repairmen found that the connecting elements joining the two lines had melted and shrunk lengthwise, leaving only a small seven-centimeter (3-inch) chunk. These connectors, known as puentes (Spanish for bridges-- J.T.), are metallic and usually one meter (3 feet, 3 inches) long and 25 millimeters (1 inch) thick."

"While no evidence regarding the power failure was found at first, they found a (crop) circle approximately 5 meters (16.5 feet) in diameter outlined in the grass. They also found that the soil presented a high degree of hardness and compactness."

"After being told of the farmer's experience the night before, the technicians concluded that some kind of interaction occurred between the electromagnetic field of the 132-kilovolt power line and the energy field of an unidentified flying object."

Guatrache is in eastern La Pampa province, located about 500 kilometers (300 miles) southwest of Buenos Aires, the national capital. (Muchas gracias a Scott Corrales y Raul Oscar Chavez para estas noticias.)

NEW UFO FLAP BREAKS OUT IN UK

"A second unidentifiable flying object has been spotted in the sky above Bracknell," Berkshire, UK. "Last week the Bracknell News revealed that residents living near the Coppid Beech Hotel saw what they thought was an alien space craft. Now another witness has reported seeing a strange object in the sky above Bracknell and wants help in identifying what it might have been."

"Terry Campbell said he and his two colleagues were installing a new synthetic hockey pitch off Ringmead in Birch Hill around 3 p.m. on Sunday," June 26, 2005, "when he saw what he believes was an object in the shape of an ashtray in the sky. Mr. Campbell, a surface technician, said the sky was clear and blue. He said: 'Imagine a round ashtray--a deep round ashtray. It was stationary but the sunlight was glistening on that paintwork or metal work.'"

"Mr. Campbell added: 'It was like suddenly holding a mirror and flashing it on and off in your eyes--there was sunlight off the side of it.'"

"He said: 'To the naked eye, it could certainly be the third of the size of an average aircraft.'"

"Mr. Campbell said the team studied the object for about 15 minutes and it appeared to be hovering. Clouds then moved across the sky and, when they had cleared, the object was gone."

"Mr. Campbell said: 'There was nothing frightening or alarming about it other than the fact it was there. We didn't know whether it might have been a weather station or satellite or something.'"

"He said: 'There's hundreds of things up in the sky. There could be a logical explanation. If there's not, then obviously my eyes are open to the fact that there could be UFOs out there.'"

On Wednesday, July 13, 2005, at 4:40 p.m., Clare Smith was at her flat in the Hammersmith section of London when she looked out her bedroom window and saw something unusual in the sky.

"On a hot sunny day, with a few grey clouds scattered around, I was looking out of the window in amazement and spotted one strange object in

the sky," Clare reported, "I observed it very carefully. After a few seconds, it flew in a different direction. It couldn't have been an aeroplane."

"As it flew to my left, another flying object appeared, and then a few more, flying around each other. Around 10 flying objects were grouped together, silvery in colour. Hard to tell the exact shape as they were flying so far away, at the same level as more conventional aircraft. Their movement was fairly fast."

On Monday, July 11, 2005, at 9 p.m., Mark Couch and his fiancée were out walking the dog in South Wigston, Leicestershire when they saw an unusual object "that must have been over the northwest of England or Wales."

"While walking the dog, my partner and I saw a bright light, similar in the sky to Mars on a clear night, which then dimmed and began entering the atmosphere in a vertical descent," Mark reported, "I thought it was a large meteor or rock. Then it slowed after a few minutes of rapid descent and changed direction to a northerly downward descent. From outside Earth's atmosphere, descending vertically, then moving horizontally west toward Ireland and the USA."

"After totally entering into the atmosphere, the object changed direction again to a southwesterly horizontal approach and trailed a long reddish jet of what looked like hot gases/fire."

"After 20 to 30 minutes, that jet was just a descending speck on the horizon, and the unidentified object looked like an orange scar on the sunset."

"I also noted that there was another 'scar' 90 degrees to the left at a slightly lower point on the horizon. The colour and shape were hard to tell, because of the distance. I know I didn't imagine it, and my fiancée saw the whole thing with me."

Also on Monday, July 11, 2005, at 4:45 p.m., Neill Drever was picnicking at Coniston Lake in the Lakes District of Cumbria with his wife and two-year-old son when something unusual happened.

"Nothing was seen or heard while my nine photos were being taken," Neill reported, "But when I uploaded them to my PC (personal computer--J.T.) I found lots of objects in the sky. As it was a perfectly clear day, with no clouds overhead, I can be positive that these pictures

were NOT taken by me. If they were, I would not have taken the photos, as the whole point was the sky was perfectly clear above the lake. There was nothing there."

"It may be nothing, but it seems very unusual to me, as we were there with my two-and-a-half-year-old son who loves planes. I'm sure he would've pointed them out to me if there were so many, as he has done so in the past."

On Friday, July 8, 2005, at 7:40 p.m., eyewitness Nash reported, "On an unusually clear July evening by the docks in Preston, Lancashire, I took a photo of the splendid view of the docksides in Preston on my mobile phone camera, as I and my wife sat on a beach by the water."

"Having viewed my photo, I noticed an unexplained object in the right-hand corner of my picture. It was no bird, no helicopter or plane, and I have the photos to prove it. There was no sound, no lights, but there it is- -a rather long black object in the sky, possibly triangular as viewed on my picture."

"If you could find out what it was, I think it would clear up a lot of confusion. Otherwise, this is really more mysterious than meets the eye." (See the British newspaper Berkshire News for July 14, 2005, "Another UFO flies over town." Many thanks to Robert Fischer for this newspaper article. The others were all Email Form Reports.)

UFOs SIGHTED IN THE CRIMEA

Crimea, the southernmost point of the Ukraine, reports a UFO outbreak along the Black Sea coast. According to Crimean ufologist Anton A.

Anfalov, "On Thursday, June 14, 2005, at 10:30 p.m., several witnesses along the south coast of the Crimea saw a lengthy but disk-shaped UFO emitting red light. The disk traveled in mid-air along the coastline of the Black Sea near Yalta and then began hovering around the peak of Mount Mogabi (elevation 804 meters or 2,655 feet). The UFO then crossed the sky southwest of Yalta and hovered above Aypetri Mountain. The disk then emitted two bright flashes of the mysterious red light, which were pointed towards the ground. After that, the UFO swiftly zoomed upward and vanished in the night sky."

On Saturday, July 2, 2005, in Simferopol, Crimean ufologist Yuri A. Pugachyev reported, "while standing on my balcony on the eighth floor

of Building 88, an apartment complex on Kievskaya Street, I saw a brightly- lit object emitting yellow light moving across a night sky saturated with stars over Simferopol. It was neither a satellite nor an airplane. The UFO remained bright during the several minutes of the sighting and moved away in a zigzagging trajectory."

Simferopol is about 40 kilometers (25 miles) northeast of Sevastopol in southern Crimea. (See the Ukrainian newspaper Krymskiye Izvestiya for June 22, 2005. Many thanks to Anton A. Anfalov for this these reports.)

ANOMALOUS TORNADO CAUSES PANIC IN SIBERIA

Tom Cruise's new movie War of the Worlds is being blamed for a strange incident in Khabarovsk, a port city in western Siberia.

"War of the Worlds has been blamed for a mass panic in Siberia after local residents mistook a tornado for an alien invasion."

Trouble began when moviegoers exited the theater in Khabarovsk on Saturday, July 8, 2005. As they were buffeted by strong, fierce wind gusts from a tornado west of the port city, people remembered the opening scenes of War of the Worlds, and they thought the alien invasion was happening in real life. The tornado was estimated to be an F3 on the Fujikawa scale.

"People of the Khabarovsk region jumped out of their cars and fled their houses in panic when the freak winds arrived, flattening trees and destroying property. But officials from Russia's emergency service said the destruction had been caused by a 'freak tornado' that ripped through the area."

"Officials blamed the fear of an alien invasion on the recent showing of the Tom Cruise film."

"Natalia Lukash, spokeswoman for Russia's Far Eastern Emergency Situations Center, said, 'It was a strange phenomenon, and many people jumped to the wrong conclusion and believed that it had been caused by an alien spaceship landing in the area.'"

"A team of experts has been sent to Khabarovsk to assess the damage."

Khabarovsk is located 760 kilometers (475 miles) north of Valdivostok. (See the Japanese newspaper

Asahi Shimbun for July 10, 2005. Many thanks to Angela Tarohachi for this newspaper article.)

RED LIGHT UFO SIGHTED IN CLEVELAND'S SUBURBS

On Sunday, July 10, 2005, at 11:30 p.m., a mysterious red light appeared over the western suburbs of Cleveland, Ohio and was seen by thousands of witnesses.

Cleveland ufologist Aaron Clark provided several accounts of the sighting.

"This evening I was coming home after dropping off my daughter's friend," one woman reported, "It was between 11:30 p.m. and midnight. I live on Big Creek Parkway in Middleburg Heights (population 15,542) between Smith and Bagley Roads. I had my two teenage daughters and my niece in the car with me. I noticed a bright red light in the sky above my house. It actually looked like the one on a TV tower except it wasn't blinking."

"I mentioned this to the girls. They were all fascinated. We stood in the driveway for approximately 20 minutes viewing the light. We got my husband's binoculars, but it just looked like a bigger red light in the binoculars. Watching the light, it looked like a star except it could get brighter and dimmer, and it appeared to be moving very slowly in the sky."

"My daughters kept saying it was a meteor, but I kept telling them that meteors move very quickly across the sky. I started wondering if it was a red star. Suddenly, it looked as though it were falling. It zipped through the sky with such speed. It appeared to be going north. Then it disappeared."

Another witness reported, "I'm not sure what we saw last night (Sunday, July 10, 2005). While working at Cleveland Hopkins Airport, we saw a red light in the sky just above the Ford plant in Brook Park (population 21,218). The light hovered for about 45 minutes or so. It was probably 2,000 to 3,000 feet (600 to 900 meters) in the sky. It was not a helicopter, a blimp or an airplane. It also made no noise. The Air Traffic Control (ATC) tower was called, and they didn't know what it was, either. Eventually, it turned and started moving east and eventually vanished in the sky. Also, it was a clear night. Any ideas?"

Eyewitness R.H. reported, "I saw it at 12:15 a.m. It appeared from the southwest. A very bright red

light that looked like a star or a planet. It didn't appear to be moving. At times it looked as though the light would go dim and go higher. After studying it for what appeared to be two or three minutes, it started to move south very slowly. And, as it moved off into the horizon, it just faded out of sight. At times it did change speed. I saw it here in Brook Park. At one point, it was not moving at all, or maybe at 3 to 5 miles per hour. I heard something about this incident on radio station WGAR 99.5 FM out of Cleveland." (Email Form Reports)

TWO UFOs SIGHTED IN BUFFALO, N.Y.

On Monday, July 11, 2005, at 9:30 p.m., eyewitness Tara H. "was watching TV in my bedroom with my five-year- old son" when she looked out the window and spotted a strange object approaching from the east. "The sky was clear. It was a pretty warm night, and there wasn't much wind," Tara reported, "I went to adjust my window fan to see if it was on High (power) when I looked up into the sky towards downtown Buffalo (population 292,648)." "I saw two strange objects which seemed to be floating in the sky. I grabbed my camcorder to see if I could zoom in on them to get a closer look. Upon doing so, and not knowing what they were, I squeezed the Record button to see if maybe I could get a better look on the playback. I think I got about 10 seconds of tape before they shot out of sight."

"They were very bright, looking just like white lights and had a triangular shape. Not sure about their speed. At first they were standing still, and then they moved so fast that I couldn't follow them with my camera."

Buffalo, N.Y. is at the eastern end of Lake Erie, located approximately 295 miles (492 kilometers) west of Albany, the state capital. (Email Form Report)

UFO SEEN BY WOMAN IN LAKE OSWEGO, OREGON

On Monday, June 6, 2005, Eileen Mann was with her sister in Eureka, California (population 26,128) when she saw a luminous UFO. Imagine her surprise when, a week later, she returned home to Lake Oswego, Oregon

(population 35,278) she encountered the same type of craft.

"Upon her return to Oregon," her sister reported, "with her consciousness raised, she has observed a number of these craft from her yard in Lake Oswego, a southern suburb of Portland. And this is with a restricted view as she stood amongst large pine trees and was looking straight up." Lake Oswego is on Oregon Highway 43 about 10 miles (16 kilometers) south of Portland. (Email Form Report)

LUMINOUS UFO SEEN IN WINDSOR, ONTARIO

On Saturday, July 2, 2005, eyewitness Jason Smith reported, "Two of us were sitting on a patio" in Windsor, Ontario, Canada (population 197,694) "having a cigarette and looking out toward the sky. We saw what looked like a shooting star or a comet, heading northwest at a downward angle. We were facing south on Highway 101. We assumed it was a firework at first, but then realized it came from a much higher altitude. Only it seemed to come down right in front of me so close that you could see the surface of its body."

"My roommate returned from Toronto (about a four-hour drive--J.S.) at about 1:30 a.m. and immediately asked if I had seen it, too. He said he was driving the (Provincial Highway) 401 when he saw it. Its colour was a burning orange, and it moved from space to the ground in a fireball." (Email Form Report)

UFO WAS PHOTOGRAPHED OVER CULIACAN, MEXICO

On Sunday, July 3, 2005, "Juan Antonio Lopez Quiroa photographed an unidentified flying object over the city of Culiacan in northern Mexico at 11 a.m."

"The images were taken with digital photographic equipment, and with the peculiar detail that the eyewitness saw nothing unusual in the sky" when he triggered the camera. "In other words, we are dealing with another case of 'invisible UFOs,'" Mexican ufologist Dr. Ana Luisa Cid Fernandes reported.

Dr. Cid also reported another case in which she herself was the photographer. On Monday, May 23, 2005, at 7 p.m., Dr. Cid captured "an image of

a UFO hovering over Cerro Chiquihuite (hill) in the northern suburbs of Mexico City."

As with the Lopez Quiroa case, Dr. Cid said there was "nothing in the sky when I took the digital photograph."

Culiacan is the capital of Mexico's state of Sinaloa. The city is located about 550 kilometers (330 miles) northwest of Mexico City. (Muchas gracias a Scott Corrales y Dr. Ana Luisa Cid Fernandes para estas noticias.)

BIGFOOT APPEARS AGAIN NEAR TESLIN IN THE YUKON

"The legendary creature 'Bigfoot' has been spotted again, this time in Canada, where nine people in the Yukon community of Teslin claim to have seen" the hairy man- beast.

"According to the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. (CBC), the witnesses, some of whom were children, saw the hairy, human-like creature pass in front of a house window and then later behind an abandoned car area near some houses last weekend," i.e. between Friday and Sunday, July 8 and July 10, 2005.

"Those who claim to have seen Bigfoot, which is also known as a Sasquatch, said they heard the trees snapping and cracking" as it passed through the woods.

"'He ran through the backyard, and that's when I seen him,' said one man who was on his front porch at the time. 'You could see a big, black thing go by, and you couldn't see its head or something.'"

"'We weren't gonna tell anybody at first 'cause we thought everybody would just look at us and say we're all snakin' or we're crazy,' said another eyewitness. 'I wasn't too much for explainin' it at first but, once everybody started believin' us, it was not so bad. They wanted to see the (beast's) track. They wanted to see the hair and stuff like that. I wouldn't want to run into him in a dark alley or anything like that. Geez, it stands over 10 feet (3 meters) tall. It could probably tear my head off or something.'"

"The man said some evidence was left, including a footprint about twice the size of a human print, and a patch of dark hair that has already been sent to a conservation officer in Whitehorse for possible DNA research."

This was the second Bigfoot sighting for Teslin. In the summer of 2004, two men driving on a county road saw the creature emerge from the woods and cross the road ahead of them. (See WorldNet Daily for July 14, 2005, "Bigfoot spotted in Yukon." Many thanks to "Sourdough Pete and Cheechako" for this news story.)

CRAZY CROCS APPEAR IN THE BRIDGEWATER TRIANGLE

"A surprised alligator was captured in Brockton, Mass. (population 94,304), but a second gator remains at large in the area around Waldo Lake."

"Michael Ralbovsky, a herpetologist for the conservation group Rainforest Reptiles, netted the four- and-a-half foot (1.4-meter) long animal about 5 feet (1.5 meters) from shore about 12:30 p.m. on Thursday," July 14, 2005.

"The search for the other alligator, which may be as huge as 6 feet (1.8 meters) long, continues in the lake and in the surrounding park. Officials speculate that the animals were just dumped by their owners" into Waldo Lake "when they became too big."

(Editor's Comment: That's the usual

"conventional" explanation for the crazy croc syndrome, a Fortean phenomenon that involves the sudden appearance of out-of- place alligators and crocodiles in locations far from their natural habitat.)

"It is against the law in Massachusetts to own an alligator without a special permit."

Brockton is on Routes 28 and 123 approximately 25 miles (40 kilometers) south of Boston, the state capital.

"Brockton is also in the heart of the Bridgewater Triangle," added UFO Roundup editor Joseph Trainor, "Since the Pilgrim days, this area has been notorious for its sightings of UFOs, Bigfoot, crazy crocs, giant black snakes and other Fortean. Prior to the War of the American Revolution, Brockton was known as North Bridgewater. This is the second crazy croc incident in the Triangle this year. Back in April (2005), environmental officials captured five alligators in one weekend at Bad Luck Pond in Rehoboth, Mass. Rehoboth is located about 13 miles (21 kilometers) southwest of Brockton."

In other out-of-place critter news, police in South Bend, Indiana (population 107,789) called off

their three- week search for the mysterious kangaroo that was spotted by several residents. "Officials called off a search for a kangaroo spotted last month (June 2005) near the South Bend Regional Airport. Leads have dried up since the animal was first seen on (Monday) June 27 (2005), officials said."

"'Until we get another call, we don't have anything to go on,' said Tammy Roberts, an officer with South Bend Animal Care and Control." (See the WJAR-TV Channel 10 News transcript for July 14, 2005, "Alligators spotted in Brockton park." Many thanks to Mary Lou Jones-Drown, UFO Roundup's crazy croc expert, for this news story. See also USA Today for July 15, 2005, "Across the USA-- Indiana," page 7A.)

CROP CIRCLES FOUND IN GERMANY

On Sunday, June 19, 2005, German cerealogist Andreas Muller discovered "a small ringed circle in a field of wheat at Koeln-Esch, near Cologne in Nordrhein-Westfalen state. The next day (Monday, June 20, 2005), I found several formations in an adjacent field about 300 to 500 meters (990 to 1,650 feet) away."

Then, on Tuesday, June 28, 2005, "a single dumbbell formation was discovered in a field of barley at Gondelsheim, near Karlsruhe in Baden-Wurttemberg state."

"Both formations were identical in size and were probably formed at the same time," Muller commented. (Danke Schoen zum Robert Fischer und Kornkreise.de.)

From the UFO Files...

1945: MASONIC BOMB

Saturday, July 16, 2005 was the 60th anniversary of the first atomic bomb explosion at the Trinity site in Alamogordo, New Mexico, which John J. McCloy called "probably of greater significance than the discovery of electricity."

However, sixty years later, there are still a few oddities associated with this world-shaking event. The road to Ground Zero began when chemist George Kistiakowsky finished "repairing the lenses" on "Oppie's gadget," the nuclear bomb prototype created by physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer. On Thursday, July 5, 1945, Oppenheimer sent a telegram to his colleagues,

Ernest Lawrence at Berkeley and Arthur Compton at Chicago: "Any time after the (July) 15th would be a good time for our fishing trip (bomb test) because we are not certain of the weather. We may be delayed as we do not have enough sleeping bags to go around. We ask you please do not bring anyone with you."

"Three days later (Sunday, July 8, 1945) the 'dummy' bomb at Los Alamos began a series of tests, each foreshadowing by a few days what would happen at Trinity. To start with, it was driven for miles over rock-strewn roads to simulate the journey down to Los Alamos. It came through this first experience unscathed."

On Thursday, July 12, 1945, at 3 p.m., "Philip Morrison (Oppenheimer's former student--J.T.), accompanied by a guard and a radiologist, removed the fissionable plutonium core from the vault...The core had been separated into several sub-critical (mass) pieces which were fitted into two special valises for the journey down to Trinity."

Morrison recalled, "Each one was protected against corrosion, against dropping into water, against overheating, against overcooling in every way we could think of. We regarded the test in the desert merely as an exercise for carrying out the same routines in the Pacific. But we were apprehensive about an automobile accident."

But that didn't stop Morrison from driving through downtown Santa Fe with two valises full of plutonium "in the back seat of Robert Bacher's sedan and, with one security car ahead of them and one behind, they set off for Alamogordo."

"I remember, when we were driving through Santa Fe, which was then quite a sleepy little town, I was just thinking about what an extraordinary thing it was to be driving along there in just an ordinary car and yet we were carrying the core of the first atomic bomb," Morrison recalled.

Fortunately, no one ran a red light on San Mateo Road and broadsided Morrison's car. Otherwise, everything east of Agua Fria Street would have been vaporized.

Oppie's gang had their next misadventure with the plutonium core at the Ground Zero tower.

"To protect themselves from the dust and the sand, the scientists at the base of the tower were working inside a tent which, after the heat and brilliance of the desert, had a cool ecclesiastical

feel about it. In the gloom the core was attached to a manually-operated hoist and raised above the explosive assembly before being slowly lowered into it. Yet again the atmosphere was extraordinary. Ticking geiger counters. The occasional instruction, nothing more. The critical parts of the core were held apart by so little that a knock could start a chain reaction (and an explosion--J.T.). Oppenheimer again hovered around the operators as they guided the core downwards. As it was lowered into the heart of the bomb, the ticking of the geiger counters mounted to a crescendo. The operation was halted to run a check on the rising neutron count, then continued."

Suddenly--near disaster. The plutonium core got stuck in the cylindrical trigger casing.

Oppenheimer goggled in disbelief. Both the core and the casing had been machined to exact specifications. Insertion had been tested hundreds of times with the 'dummy' bomb. Every single time, the core had slipped right into the casing. But not this time. The plutonium was stuck halfway in and halfway out of the steel well, splashing radiation all around the tent.

"Now what do we do?" one scientist asked.

Captain James Nolan, the aide to Gen. Leslie R. Groves, swore, "Of all the fucked-up details--!"

"We all thought it should fit because we'd tried it with dummies," Robert Bacher recalled, "But then we realized that this one was plutonium and was very hot and was producing heat so it had expanded a little. So, we decided to just wait to see whether the two pieces would arrive at some temperature equilibrium."

Finally the team got the core down into the trigger casing.

It was Captain Nolan, by the way, who "drew up a set of evacuation plans and took them to Groves at Oak Ridge (Tennessee) for his approval. Fall-out it seems had not been one of Groves' priorities, and he balked at the suggestion that (Army) troops and trucks be prepared for rapid evacuation of the Trinity site."

"What are you, a Hearst propagandist?" he asked Nolan."

"By this Groves meant that any preparations for evacuation in nearby towns would jeopardise security and the test could find its way into the following day's headlines. Groves had already

prepared a series of possible press releases depending on the size of the test."

(Editor's Note: True enough. In any American newspaper of July 17, 1945, you can read the cover story about "the explosion of an Army ammunition dump" in New Mexico.)

What Capt. Nolan didn't know, and neither did Oppenheimer and his scientists, was that Gen. Groves had already gotten Gen. George C. Marshall's permission to make "arrangements with the Governor of New Mexico to declare martial law throughout the area and also to carry out mass evacuation, should it become necessary."

But the strangest Trinity mystery is the selection of the test date. Who picked July 16? And why? "For most of the spring (1945) it had been hoped that the test would occur around July 4. In mid-June (when certain technical delays occurred) this was pushed up to July 13, and then--after a June 30 review--the date was again pushed 'to July 16 or as soon thereafter as weather conditions permitted."

Oppenheimer wanted a later date. On Monday, July 2, 1945, at 12:50 p.m., Gen. Groves phoned Oppenheimer in Santa Fe. "Oppie said they...scheduled (the bomb test) for the (July) 17th. Dr. O said the 14th was possible but was not sure. Dr. O thought the wisest thing was to schedule it for the 17th in which case they would be fairly sure of getting the thing done within a few days of that day...GG (General Groves) said he did not like the idea of a later date because of the various things that were involved. GG also said that it was extremely important that it be completed by the earlier date, because of the various things that were involved...GG then told Dr. O the reason why the earlier date had to be. Dr. O said that they would meet the earlier date (July 16) but it went against his own feeling."

"The cryptic report--'the various things that were involved'--though suggestive of a higher purpose is not definitive. At 3:30 p.m. the same day, Groves called James B. Conant, chairman of the National Defense Research Committee, about the same matter."

"Dr. Conant said that the Gen had done the right thing to stay along with the earlier date. Dr. C suggested that GG get in touch with (physicist Richard C.) Tolman and request him to exert his

efforts in getting Oppy and the men persuaded to the earlier date."

Next, Gen. Groves phoned Undersecretary George Harrison at the War Department. "Gen. Groves said that he had a very strong urging from people in charge at the site (namely Oppenheimer) to postpone the (test) date for four days. Gen. Groves said that he had told Oppy that they had to have that first date (July 16) because of things beyond his control. Mr. Harrison said that was a sound decision...Mr. H then told (McGeorge) Bundy of the situation, and Mr. B said that other things were involved and the earlier date was the one."

Various things that were involved. Things beyond his control. It is all very cryptic. Afterward, "Oppenheimer was quite candid about the fact that we 'were under incredible pressure to get it done before the Potsdam meeting.'"

What was so important about Monday, July 16, 1945? Perhaps the answer lies with the man at the top, the new occupant of the White House--Harry S. Truman.

The former Missouri senator and Roosevelt's last vice president had taken the Oath of Office on Thursday, April 12, 1945, which made him the 33rd president of the USA. However, Truman was also a 33rd degree Mason and undoubtedly knew the significance of the date July 16.

Freemasonry has its ultimate origins in the religion of ancient Egypt. On July 16, the star Sirius rises above the horizon in Egypt. This event coincides with the rising of the Nile, making July 16 "New Year's Day" for the Pharaohs. Veneration of Sirius is also found in Masonry, where it is called "the Blazing Star," and is symbolized as a pentagram.

Curiously, U.S. Army tanks and other military vehicles during World War II, and for decades thereafter, displayed a "white star" insignia--a white pentagram--the Masonic "Blazing Star." It would be interesting to find out who in Washington D.C. approved that insignia for American military vehicles.

Following the successful test at Trinity, Truman was briefed on Saturday, July 21, 1945 by Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, also a Mason. Four days later, the president noted in his diary, "We have discovered the most terrible bomb in the history of the world. It may be the fire destruction

prophesied in the Euphrates Valley Era, after Noah and his fabulous Ark."

"Anyway, we 'think' we have found a way to cause the disintegration of the atom. An experiment in the New Mexico desert was startling--to put it mildly. Thirteen pounds of the explosive caused the complete disintegration of a steel tower 60 feet high, created a crater six feet deep and knocked down men 10,000 yards away. The explosion was visible for more than 200 miles and audible for 40 miles or more."

(Editor's Comment: There's that number thirteen again, yet another link to Masonry and hermetic magick.)

Brig. Gen. Thomas F. Farrell wrote, "The effects could well be called unprecedented, magnificent, beautiful, stupendous and terrifying...Thirty seconds after the explosion came first, the air blast pressing hard against the people and things, to be followed almost immediately by the strong, sustained awesome roar which warned of doomsday and made us feel that we puny things were blasphemous to dare tamper with forces heretofore reserved to The Almighty."

Physicist Ernest O. Lawrence described it as "a gigantic ball of fire rising rapidly from the earth," literally a "second sun" rising over the Jornada del Muerto desert, a man-made "Blazing Star" that just happened to rise on a Masonic holy day.

"The hot fury locked inside those billions of plutonium atoms burst forth in one instant of blinding yellow glare. Oppie's fingers dug into his eyes to keep out the pain no lens could stop.

Slowly his fingers, wet with tears, crept down his cheeks. He could see it now, the world on fire."

"The radiance of a thousand suns."

"The line came into his head from the Bhagavad Gita. The yellow ball of fire hovered, bellied out, rose, then turned to pale orange, to red, to blood red, rising now in a column, darkening and burning."

"The end of the verse came to him: I am become Death, the Shatterer of Worlds."

"The dark plume billowed into a great gray mushroom and, as they all looked up, the roar filled their ears and the heat blast nearly toppled them off balance. The entire astounding display had taken seconds--savage seconds in which an entire city could be obliterated."

And the planet Earth would never be the same again. (See the books The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb by Gar Alperovitz, Alfred A. Knopf Books, New York, N.Y., 1995, pages 124, 129, 148, 149, 150, 249, 250 and 251; The Swift Years: The J. Robert Oppenheimer Story by Peter Michelmores, Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, N.Y., 1969, pages 103, 107, 108 and 112; and J. Robert Oppenheimer, Shatterer of Worlds by Peter Goodchild, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Mass., 1981, pages 130, 141 and 151.)

Well, that's it for this week. Join us in seven days for more UFO, Fortean and paranormal news from around the planet Earth, brought to you by "the paper that goes home- -UFO Roundup." See you next time.

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