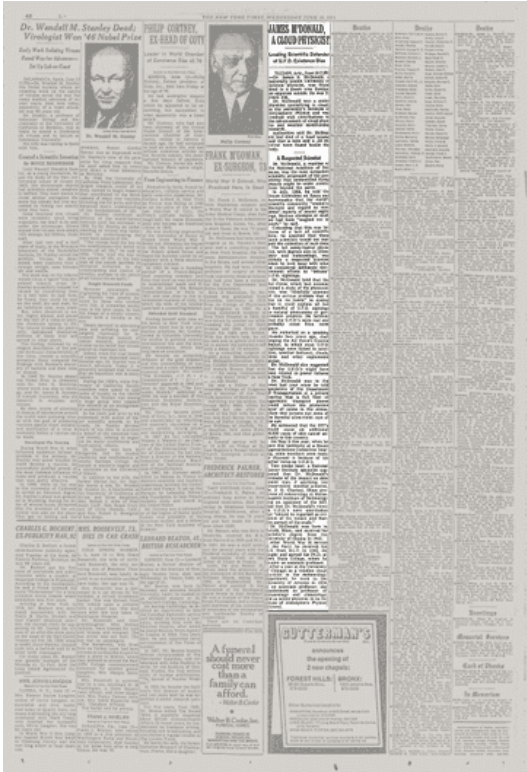


JAMES M'DONALD, A CLOUD PHYSICIST

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TUCSON, Ariz., June 15 (UPI) —Dr. James E. McDonald, nationally known University of Arizona physicist, was found dead in a desert area Sunday, an apparent suicide. He was 51 years old,

Dr. McDonald was a senior physicist specializing in clouds at the university's Institute of Atmospheric Physics and was credited with contributions to the advancement of cloud physics and weather modification research.

Authorities said Dr. McDonald had died of a head wound and that a note and a .38 revolver were found beside the body.

A Respected Scientist

Dr. McDonald, a member of the National Academy of Sciences, was the most outspoken scientific proponent of the possibility that unidentified flying objects might be under control from beyond the earth.

In July, 1968, he told the House Committee on Space and Astronautics that, the world's scientific community “tended to discount and regard as nonsense” reports of saucer sightings. Serious attempts at studies had been “laughed out of court,” he said.

Conceding that this was because of a lack of scientific data, he asserted that these same scientists would not support the collection of such data.

The tall sandy-haired physicist, with degrees also in chemistry and meteorology, was already a respected scientist when he took issue with what he considered deliberate Government efforts to “debunk” U.F.O. sightings.

Dr. McDonald held that the Air Force, which had commissioned a study of the phenomenon, was “blissfully unaware of the serious problem that it has on its hands” in stating that it could explain all but a handful of U.F.O. sightings as natural phenomena or government projects. He believed that the U.F.O.'s were real and probably come from outer space.

He embarked on a speaking crusade two years ago, challenging the Air Force's Condon Report, in ‘Which most U.F.O. sightings were linked to satellites, weather ‘balloons, clouds, birds and other explainable causes.

Dr. McDonald also suggested that the U.F.O.'s might have been related to, power failures in New York.

Dr. McDonald was in the news last year When he told specialists Of the Department of Transportation at a private hearing that a full fleet of supersonic transport planes would reduce the protective layer of ozone in the atmosphere that screens out some of the harmful ultra-violet rays of the sun.

He estimated that the SST's would cause an additional 10,000 cases of skin cancer annually in this country.

On May 2 this year, when he gave this testimony at a House Appropriations Committee hearing, some members were ready to discount it because of his earlier views on U.F.O.'s.

Two weeks later, a National Cancer Institute specialist suggested that Dr. McDonald's estimate of the impact on skin cancer was, if anything, too conservative. Another scientist, Dr. J. G. Charney, Sloan professor of meteorology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an opponent of the SST, said that Dr. McDonald's views on U.F.O.'s were unorthodox but "should be regarded as evidence of his honest and fearless pursuit of the truth."

Dr. McDonald was born in Duluth, Minn., and received his bachelor's degree from the University of Omaha in 1942.

After World War II service in the Navy he received his M.S. from M.I.T. in 1945. He taught and earned his Ph.D. at Iowa State College, where he became an assistant professor.

After a year at the University of Chicago as a resident cloud physicist in the meteorology department, he went to the University of Arizona in 1954 as an associate professor. His appointment as professor of meteorology and climatology and as senior physicist in its Institute of Atmospheric Physics followed.