

and several young men who, through it, came to discover their own scientific vocation. And so, three cheers for Kardashev! And let William of Occam, that fine flower of the Middle Ages, return to his angels.

NOTES

¹ *Phénomènes Spatiaux*, No. 7, March 1966, p. 24.

² Michel, A., *The Valensole Affair*, FSR, November/December 1965.

³ See also *Phénomènes Spatiaux*, No. 13, September 1967, p. 2.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: In the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary we read: "The leading principle of the nominalism of

William of Occam [or Ockham] (was) that *for the purposes of explanation things not known to exist should not, unless it is absolutely necessary, be postulated as existing.*"

The section in italics is known as "Occam's Razor", and, as Waveney Girvan stated, in the Editorial of FSR, Vol. 10, No. 1, it is often quoted against us by scientists. The article continued: "the argument is based on what may be a false premise—namely that flying saucers cannot exist. Could we ever be told why they cannot?"

A NEED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL STUDY OF UFOs

by Dr. James E. McDonald

Our contributor, who is senior physicist, Institute of Atmospheric Physics, and professor, Department of Meteorology, The University of Arizona, responds to Soviet scientist Zigel's plea for "a joint effort of all the scientists of the world" to determine the nature of UFOs. ("New York Times" News Service story of December 10, 1967, by Henry Kamm.)

I STRONGLY endorse Dr. Zigel's plea for international scientific study of UFOs. It is now entirely clear that essentially similar objects of unexplainable nature are being seen all over the world. Investigations on a global scale are therefore urgently needed.

I am delighted with the recent establishment of a Soviet scientific commission to study UFO sightings in the U.S.S.R. It would be amusing if it should turn out that Russian scientists are the ones who finally convince the world that twenty years of assurances by the United States Air Force were completely unjustified.

Scientists throughout the world have tended to ignore the UFOs as if they were just so much nonsense. From talking to fellow-scientists here and abroad, I have seen that most of them have believed that Air

Force Project Bluebook was really studying UFOs with scientific competence. The trouble was that almost none of these scientists took time off to check for themselves. I did. What I have found is nothing short of alarming. Bluebook and its consultants have simply swept under a rug of ridicule and innuendo thousands of sightings from credible witnesses, sightings of objects that are neither swamp gas nor secret test devices, nor fireballs nor ball lightning.

In Australia and New Zealand last summer, I had a chance to interview dozens of witnesses. The UFOs down there are characterised by the same patterns and behaviour as those which have been reported for years in the United States. Now there's evidence that similar sightings have been going on in Russia. From UFO investigators in France, England, Canada, Scandinavia, Japan, Australia, and elsewhere, I get the same feeling of urgent need for rapid escalation of a scientific study of UFOs that I see in Dr. Zigel's recent plea.

It is unwise, possibly even unsafe, to delay any longer in getting some really high-calibre investigations of UFOs under way. My early hopes that Dr. Condon's investigations at the University of Colorado might fill this need have been disappointed. Dr. Condon appears to be more interested in the kooks and crackpots than in the reliable reporters of UFOs. Perhaps a Russian panel can help us change our attitudes about all this.

(continued from page 3)

about it—through which the silvery shape was still clearly visible—changed to a deep, brilliant red, the protrusion at the base standing out black against the blinding colour. The UFO shot straight up into the air at tremendous speed and vanished almost immediately. It did not reappear during the rest of Mr. Hunter's journey.

Although he sometimes read science fiction, Mr. Hunter told the investigators that he took no interest in unidentified flying objects, and had read only a few newspaper reports about them which he had regarded hitherto as nonsense.

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