

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

9 February 2022

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Reference: EOM-2020-00228

Dear Requester:

This letter is a final response to your 6 January 2020 Mandatory Declassification Review request referenced above and submitted under Executive Order 13526 (hereafter, "the Order") for:

INTERVIEW WITH (DELETED) (DISCUSSES INTERVIEW OF 27 OCTOBER) (PUBD IS UNKNOWN Document Number (FOIA)/ESND (CREST): 0000015380.

We completed a thorough search for records responsive to your request and located one document which we can release in segregable form with deletions as marked on the basis of Section 6.2(d) of the Order.

As the CIA Information and Privacy Coordinator, I am the CIA official responsible for this determination. You have the right to appeal this response to the Agency Release Panel within 90 days from the date of this letter. Please explain the basis for your appeal. You may address appellate correspondence to:

Information and Privacy Coordinator
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC 20505

If you have any questions regarding this response, you may seek assistance by calling this office at 703-613-1287.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andra Barker".

Andra Barker
Acting Information and Privacy Coordinator

Enclosure

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Interview with Senator Richard B. Russell

1. On 27 October, Dr. Francis Clauser, O/SI consultant, and I interviewed Senator Russell relative to an observation of unconventional or saucer-like aircraft during his visit to Russia. The following is a statement of his observations with my comments. Dr. Clauser will submit separately his views on Senator Russell's statements but I believe he is in general agreement with the views stated herein.

2. The party was travelling between Baku and Tiflis on a train at the specific request of Senator Russell who made every attempt to journey by train when possible. (This tends to refute the theory that the train trip was arranged in order to stage the operation for Senator Russell's benefit.) About an hour and one-half out of Baku the subject, who was not feeling well, was resting in his compartment with the lights turned out while the remainder of the party was in the next compartment with the lights on. He suddenly noticed a greenish-yellow ball rising rapidly. He rushed into the next compartment stating that he had seen what he thought was a flying saucer. They turned out the lights and looked out the window but ~~initially~~ saw nothing and the rest of the party was initially skeptical. However, suddenly a second ball was noticed rising rapidly and then the other members of the party were convinced. The second object was initially seen at a minimum altitude of 700 to 800 feet, and while the first object was initially viewed at an even higher altitude. Nothing was seen on the ground with the exception of a search light which was about one-half to one mile away and appeared to be aimed at a very low trajectory almost at the train. The subject did not on either occasion see the form of the object, only this fiery ball. No firm estimate could be made of the size or distance of the ball because there were no reference objects. However, the subject had the impression that the object could have been as small as a rocket although no trail was left by the rising ball. The object gave the impression of whirling and appeared to follow a single trajectory with no break in its flight pattern. The subject did not see any lights, only the yellowish glow (this is contrary to statements of other observers). The search light did not appear to be following the object. About five to ten minutes after the sightings and after the subject had returned to his own compartment, the guard came in and pulled down


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the shades. No unusual attitude on the part of the guard was noted but it was dark. (This is in direct contradiction with the original dispatch and the statement of Mr. Gros.) Senator Russell was not present when the dispatch was prepared and sent from Prague, and as a consequence did not have a chance to verify the contents.

3. During his trip, the Senator also made a motor trip between Moscow and Borodino. During this ride, he observed six or eight caserns with military personnel. At one point, only 150 yards from the road he noted a radar on top of a mound with a big egg beater object about 20 feet away. He thought he saw a similar installation further from the road on another occasion. One of the caserns was about a mile away on the other side of the road. There was considerable evidence of construction although none that was obviously new. He believed that the radar that was positively identified was about 40 miles from Moscow (if a map had been available, this perhaps could have been pinned down more closely). The Russians were extremely reluctant to allow Senator Russell to make this trip and at one point, it was actually cancelled when Colonel Taylor of the Embassy requested permission to go along. However, Senator Russell stated that he would publicly denounce the Russian program of free travel as being a farce unless he was allowed to make this trip. The permission was then regranted. Colonel Hathaway and Mr. Efron were also along with the Senator on this trip.

4. The testimony of Senator Russell does not in my opinion support the theory that the Russians have developed saucer-like or unconventional aircraft. It is quite possible that the objects seen were the exhausts of normal jet aircraft in a steep climb. The fact that none were seen on the ground might indicate that the aircraft were in a dive followed by a sharp pull-up in such a way that nothing was seen until the exhausts were visible to the observers on the train. However, it is possible that the aircraft were indeed of the short or almost vertical take-off variety.


HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.
Assistant Director
Scientific Intelligence

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