

out, whereupon the voices ceased and the hatch abruptly closed. According to Michalak, when he later touched the object's hull, the fingertips of the rubber gloves he was wearing melted. The object then reportedly began to spin violently, and finally ascended, expelling a sharp blast of heat that burned through the man's shirt, searing his abdomen.

Shortly following the incident, Michalak was treated for burns at a Winnipeg hospital, and also suffered from severe nausea, headache, dizziness, as well as a persistent, noxious odor which seemed to emanate from his lungs. Within seven days, he lost 22 pounds. Later, a rash developed over the man's throat and upper chest that lasted for three weeks. In September, Michalak was hospitalized, complaining of dizziness and a constricted throat, and as late as July, 1968 - 14 months after the initial incident - he was again hospitalized for observation and diagnosis. Prior to his reported UFO encounter, Michalak had been in excellent physical condition.

Dr. James E. McDonald, who prior to his untimely death in 1971 served as Senior Atmospheric Physicist at the University of Arizona, said of the Michalak case:

"I have investigated cases myself where the individual has claimed he saw and touched a landed craft. I have not had any reason to doubt the credibility of these individuals. I firmly believe that there is something of the greatest scientific interest involved. The increased number of incidents of this sort almost suggest a pattern. I don't understand it, but the pattern is there, nevertheless."

Another still unsolved case occurred on the evening of October 4, just off the coast of Shag Harbor, Nova Scotia. Numerous persons witnessed an unknown lighted object, 60 feet in diameter, descend toward the ocean. Moments later, several local RCMP constables confirmed the presence of the unknown object resting on the water, some 200 to 300 yards off shore.

A Coast Guard vessel and several fishing boats were later dispatched to the scene, but before they could arrive, the object moved seaward and disappeared. All that reportedly remained was a 40-yard wide patch of yellow foam, which local fishermen were at a complete loss to identify. Following a

subsequent three-day search of the area by Navy divers, the Department of National Defence announced that no trace of the object had been found, despite persistent rumours to the contrary.

By the end of 1967, Ottawa was faced with many unsolved UFO cases, like those mentioned above. The Department of National Defence, having directed most of the investigations, was forced to admit publicly in later years that "certain reports suggest that they (UFOs) exhibit a unique scientific or advanced technical research." (This conclusion may be found in the Department of National Defence's current official statement on UFOs.)

Not surprisingly, however, Ottawa once again chose to turn its back on the UFO phenomenon. In February, 1968, the National Research Council agreed to become the government's official "archive" for all existing and future UFO reports. A file was hastily set up later in an office of the Council's Upper Atmosphere Section (Astro-physics Branch) in Ottawa. In essence, the Council assumed only custodial duties, and accordingly agreed neither to solicit actively nor to investigate regularly UFO sightings. (This policy continues even today.)

The government's actions did not go unnoticed. On February 6, 1969, MP Barry Mather (New Westminster), speaking on the floor of the House, ardently criticized the National Research Council's handling of the UFO phenomenon. He added:

"I believe that in Canada we should have a more tangible policy regarding UFO investigations. I think the government should table all information available pro and con about these phenomena. I think we should also consider that our own little earth is now sending out flying objects, and if life exists on other planets the flying objects which the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. are sending into space may very well appear to that form of life to be unidentified flying objects."

And how does the government counter such charges?

Dr. Allen G. McNamara, Head of the Upper Atmosphere Section (NCR) in Ottawa, is currently the government's chief spokesman on UFOs. According to Dr. McNamara:

"Our responsibility is to receive, file and keep in orderly arrangement re-

ports that are received by the government. Now if there is any value in what's there, it's completely free to anybody who wants to make use of it. Either by other government agencies, or by citizens. We don't care."

Regarding UFO investigations: "We do not feel, in general, that there's any point in us spending any time and energy chasing all over after such vague reports. I think we have better things to do. I do not think the evidence warrants doing anything other than what we're doing now. That's the size of it."

Professor Rupert H. MacNeill does not agree. Professor MacNeill, a geologist, has served on the teaching staff of Acadia University (Wolfville, Nova Scotia) since 1951 and is currently the Maritime representative for the National Research Council's Associate Committee on Meteorites.

"I may be wrong. I may be barking up the wrong tree. But my opinion is that there are definitely things that are being seen that we know nothing about, and as far as I'm concerned, they're definitely real. They've got to be!"

"Now if we don't know what these things are, and if we can find out, we should do so. And the only way to do it is to have somebody who's interested and competent enough in physics and all the rest to zero in on it."

"We can't be like those in the 1800's who thought they knew everything. We've got to be sure we still don't know very much!"

And so, the UFO controversy continues. Statistics show that in recent years UFO sightings have been on the increase across Canada, as elsewhere throughout the world. Although a significant number of these sightings stubbornly continue to defy all explanations, Ottawa remains unconcerned.

Dr. Donald H. Menzel, a Harvard astronomer and leading UFO antagonist, was once asked what should be done with the many unsolved UFO cases on record. His reply: "Throw them in the wastebasket!"

It appears as though the Canadian government has chosen to do just that.

(Have you had an encounter with the unknown? If so, Gregory Kanon would greatly appreciate hearing from you. Reports should be sent to: P.O. Box 142, Armdale, Nova Scotia, B3L 4J9. All such reports will be handled with the strictest of confidence.)