

off in their car — with the UFO following. As Rutledge drove in terror, Scott kept watch out the rear window. They made it back over 100 miles of bush road in just 1½ hours, and it was only when they arrived at Grovedale, near Grande Prairie, that the sphere finally left them, soaring straight up and covering what seemed like several miles in an instant.

Three days later, still badly shaken, Rutledge reported the incident to the nearby Beaverlodge air base. "The base captain did say they'd picked it up on their radar at 10:25," Rutledge says, "and they traced it right from the point I had told them to Grovedale. It went off the screen at about 11:50 p.m., and he said they didn't know why it had taken so long to come that distance. I told them maybe it was slow for them, but I was going to beat the devil. I never had anything scare me like that before. I didn't sleep good for possibly two weeks. It shook me right to the roots."

Rutledge, an avid outdoorsman, later resigned from two executive positions he held with fish and game organizations in Alberta, and has since refused to go back to the area where he first sighted the UFO. When he learned that John Musgrave might in some way help him to understand, Rutledge didn't hesitate to contact him.

Musgrave, however, was only able to

help Rutledge see that he was not alone in having a UFO experience. A letter sent by Musgrave to the Beaverlodge base in Trumpeter, Alta. only proved frustrating. While Rutledge claimed that a captain had spoken at length with him about the base's tracking of the UFO, Musgrave's inquiry was answered only by the base commanding officer, Major G.V. Clements. The answer was short and blunt: "Our log does not show any unusual sightings for the date in question."

It gives some idea of just what Musgrave is up against when it comes to dealing with official bodies. Ever since the publication in 1969 of the Condon report, a multi-year study financed by the U.S. government, there has been no governmental support for such investigations short of the meagre grant the Canada Council offered. The Condon report concluded "...nothing has come from the study of UFOs in the last 20 years that has added to scientific knowledge... Further extensive study of UFOs probably cannot be justified in the expectation that science will be advanced thereby." Experts were later able to point out that 23 per cent of the cases described in the Condon research could not be explained, but the publicity surrounding the report's conclusions had a long-lasting dampening effect.

Musgrave has only historical access to

the best-known Canadian story of the government refusing to cooperate. That is the case of Stephen Michalak, who in 1967 encountered an unusual UFO at Falcon Lake, Man. and apparently suffered burns from it. His case was examined carefully by the federal government, the National Research Council, the Condon investigators and the Canadian Armed Forces, but when then-MP Ed Schreyer asked the government whether or not the results of the very formal investigation would be made public, the then-defence minister, Leo Cadieux, answered no, they would not.

Still, there are an ever-growing number of Canadians convinced that the UFO phenomenon is genuine. It is not just George Chuvale's claim that he saw one from his lawn the night after his loss to Muhammad Ali; there are also those like Dr. Frank Maine, the only scientist in the Canadian House of Commons, who firmly believe in the possibility that there is other life in the universe. The Liberal MP for Wellington South (in the Hamilton area) actually came out in support of photographs taken early this year by an Ontario high school student, Pat McCarthy, whose pictures of a sombrero-shaped object have since been called by the American UFO expert Dr. Hynek, "among the best ever taken."

Once Musgrave has taken his research as far as he can, he hopes to publish his findings in a book. He's well aware that there are some 200,000 or more Canadians out there who haven't the foggiest about what they once saw, but would be willing gladly to listen to any suggestions Musgrave might have. And since it's unlikely he'll ever actually prove we've had extraterrestrial visitors, his suggestions are basically what the grant is financing.

"When you think about what they could be, the possibilities are vast," he says. "It could be that they are taking vacations. It could also be that they are graduate students, or maybe they're just making pit stops for groceries and power, or they might be from some other dimension that spatially shares where we are and we accidentally see them from time to time. One of the most fascinating theories is that they are time trippers, maybe earthlings from thousands of years from today who have discovered the secret of time machines, come back, and are sworn by some code not to disturb us, hence the lack of contact between UFOs and man. Whatever they are, I hope to find out."

"You know, I sometimes think it's like looking through a slit in the fence at a ball game. I can't see the whole game — but I know one is going on."

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