



(USAF photo; 21 June 1968, Flushing, Queens, N.Y.).

# UFOs

## The Air Force and the UFO

by David R. Carlson

**U**NIDENTIFIED flying objects (UFOs) do not constitute a new phenomenon. One of the earliest reports may be that found in the Old Testament. Chapter One of the Book of Ezekiel describes a fiery sphere that appeared out of a whirlwind and was probably witnessed by the prophet in ancient Chaldea (now part of Iraq) in 593 B.C.

According to Jacques Vallee in *Anatomy of a Phenomenon*, Tshi Pen Lao, of the University of Peking, has discovered certain granite carvings on Hunan Mountain and on an island in Lake Tungting, possibly made around 45,000 B.C., depicting cylindrical objects in the sky and people with large torsos.

Evidences of ancient UFO visitations also are cited by author Erich von Däniken in *Chariots of the Gods?* to support the thesis that representatives of a highly developed civilization visited the earth up to 40,000 years ago. His strongest

arguments are derived from physical evidence in South and Central America, Egypt, and Asia. On the Plain of Nazca in Peru is a strip of level ground some 37 miles long and 1 mile wide. Von Däniken says that flying over the area, you can see large lines "laid out geometrically, some of which run parallel to each other, while others intersect or are surrounded by large trapezoidal areas..." From the air, he says, you get the impression that "the 37-mile-long plain of Nazca...was an airfield!"

He also says that texts on gold plaques found at Ur in Chaldea tell of "gods" resembling men who came from the sky and presented the plaques to the priests. And, in the Mayan edifice at Palenque in Yucatan is a stone relief that was carved sometime before the city was abandoned (for no apparent reason), about 600 A.D. With considerable detail, the carving shows a cutaway view of what we now easily recognize as a vertically launched rocket with a pressure-suited astronaut at the complex controls.

It strains the credibility of any conventional logic to explain the ancient maps that in the 18th century belonged to an officer in the Turkish navy, Admiral Piri Reis. Von Däniken admits that the Turkish admiral's maps are not originals but "copies of copies of copies," but he says, "even if the maps dated from only the 18th century, when they were found, these facts are just as unexplainable. Whoever made them must have been able to fly and also to take photographs!" Modern cartographers have verified the remarkable accuracy of these maps. Everything within a radius of 5,000 miles of Cairo is reproduced correctly. Farther from the center, the continents become increasingly distorted, as they do on a typical photograph taken from space. The coasts of North and South America and even the contours of the Antarctic are precisely delineated on Piri Reis' maps, though South America is distorted lengthwise as it would appear on a satellite photograph.

Von Däniken states that these maps not

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