

CNI News Survey Of Leading Pro-UFOlogists Is Very Illuminating

A recent survey of 32 prominent pro-UFO researchers and authors, 25 of them from the United States and Canada, provides useful insights on the views of UFOlogy's leaders. The survey was conducted by Michael Lindemann for his "CNI News," a bimonthly subscription Internet report devoted to UFOs. The survey posed 11 questions and provided multiple-choice answers for 10 of the questions. In response to the question: "What was the degree of progress achieved during the decade of the 1990s toward understanding the nature and significance of UFO phenomena?," only 15% of the respondents selected "great progress" while 42% chose "some progress." But 21% selected "no progress" and 15% chose "went backward."

When asked to cite the "most significant" UFO case of the last eight months, the lights-in-the-night-sky incident on Jan. 5 in Southwest Illinois [SUN #61/62, Mar./May 2000] received four times as many votes as any other incident. One question asked: "What is degree of significance or relevancy to UFO research of the following:"

- * Ancient Astronauts theory: 24% of respondents chose "high" and 33% picked "medium"
- * Crop Circles: 22% selected "high" and 16% chose "medium"
- * Livestock Mutilations: 22% opted for "high" while 44% chose "medium"
- * Alien Abduction claims: 54% selected "high" and 34% chose "medium"
- * Face on Mars: 13% of the responses chose "high" and 16% selected "medium"
- * Area 51: 13% of the respondents selected "high" and 28% chose "medium"

Lindemann's invitation prompted comments from some respondents, including the following brief extracts of potential interest to SUN readers:

- * Jan Aldrich (USA): "The press and some in the UFO field are willing to turn every light in the sky into some kind of great event."
- * Gildas Bourdais (France): "The current state of UFO research...remains weak in France...A recent effort to overcome the situation--the 'Cometa Report,' published in July 1999, signed by several high ranking military officers and rather prudent in its approach--met either with silence in the media, or bitter critics. The irony is that these critics came mainly from UFOlogical circles..." [For a critique of the French "Cometa Report," see SUN #60/Nov. 1999.]
- * Dr. Eric Davis (USA): "The state of organized UFO research has greatly improved with the entry of the National Institute of Discovery Science [NIDS] into the phenomenology enterprise." [SUN Note: Davis is a member of the NIDS staff.]
- * Dr. David Jacobs (USA): "In my 35 years as a UFO researcher, I have never seen the field so contentious and so fragmented...Against this bleak scenario, I have reason to be optimistic....The abduction phenomenon has provided a window into the subject that has given us unprecedented knowledge and understanding of its motivations and goals..."
- * Dr. Bruce Maccabee (USA): "In the long view, it is clear that we DO know a heck of a lot more in all areas of research than before. It is also clear that we don't know the 'final answer.' But this may be because (a) the totality of the evidence does not point to such an answer and/or (b) the answer...has been staring us in the face for years but...we are too stupid to realize it." [SUN endorses the latter explanation.]

UFOlogy's Scientists Ignore A Crucial Issue

One of the indelible "fingerprints" of pseudoscience is that the passage of time does not increase basic knowledge or understanding of a seemingly mysterious phenomenon. For example, we know much more today about AIDS and "Continental Drift," but have no more basic knowledge about UFOs or ghosts. This despite more than 50 years of UFO reports and their investigation by at least several dozen scientists, many of whom hold Ph.D.s in physics or astronomy, such as Dr. Bruce Maccabee, Dr. Peter Sturrock, Dr. Robert M. Wood, Stanton Friedman and the late Dr. J. Allen Hynek and Dr. James E. McDonald, to cite but a few.

Although most UFO reports involve lights in the night sky, if any UFOs are extra-terrestrial craft, it is still NOT known whether the lights are associated with the craft's propulsion system or are simply an optional means used by ETs to attract the attention of Earthlings and make us aware of their presence. Because of the wide variety of colors and configurations reported, one might assume that the lights are used by ETs to attract attention. But if the color of UFO lights is related to a craft's propulsion system, conceivably the color may indicate whether the craft is accelerating, decelerating or cruising at constant speed. If ET craft use a propulsion system that interacts with the Earth's magnetic field, then perhaps the colors depend on the direction of UFO movement, i.e., one color when moving north, another color when traveling west.

Ever since the Belgian UFO flap of 1990, and the widespread publicity given to a questionable photo which seemingly showed a triangular-shaped UFO, there have been numerous reports of such craft--suggesting that ETs have finally come up with a new design of spacecraft. If so, analysis of the reported colors might reveal whether it has a new type of propulsion system. Yet today, despite many reports of triangular-shaped UFOs, none of the scientists active in UFOlogy--so far as is known--has tried to determine whether their lights and their colors are related to the (alleged) craft's propulsion or shape.

New UFO-Abduction Poll Yields Different Results Than 1991 Survey

A poll of 5,955 American adults, conducted in 1998 by the respected Roper Organization to assess how many might have experienced UFO abduction, has come up with significantly lower figures than a similar poll conducted in 1991 by the same organization using many of the same questions. The 1991 poll was financed by wealthy Las Vegas businessman Robert Bigelow; the 1998 poll was funded by the National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDS), which Bigelow created several years ago. Both sets of survey questions, chosen by two leading "abductologists" (Budd Hopkins and David Jacobs) were "loaded," i.e., they did not ask: "Has the following ever happened to you?" but rather "How often has this occurrence happened to you?" Those interviewed were given a choice of: "More than twice," "Once or twice," "Has not happened," or "Don't know."

The 1991 poll did not ask if the person believed or suspected that they might have suffered a UFO abduction. Instead, Hopkins and Jacobs decided that if a subject indicated that they had experienced at least four of five specific paranormal incidents that they probably had been abducted by a UFO [SUN #16/July 1992]. In the recent survey, significantly fewer persons indicated they had experienced such paranormal incidents than in the earlier poll. Shown below are the five "key questions" with the percentage of those who said they had experienced the paranormal incident in the 1991 survey shown in parentheses (), while the percentage who answered "yes" in the 1998 poll is shown in brackets [].

* *Waking up paralyzed with a sense of a strange person or presence or something else in the room: (18%) [11.6%]*

- * *Experiencing a period of time of an hour or more, in which you were apparently lost, but you could not remember why, or where you had been: (13%) [6.4%]*
- * *Feeling you were flying through the air although you didn't know why or how: (10%) [4.8%]*
- * *Seen balls of light in a room without knowing where they came from: (8%) [5.3%]*
- * *Find puzzling scars on your body and neither you nor anybody else remembering how you received them or where you got them: (8%) [4.5%]*

Based on the Hopkins/Jacobs assumption that if a person answered "yes" to four or all of these five "key questions" then that person probably was a UFO abductee, the 1991 poll showed that 119 persons, or 2% of the 5947 persons polled were abductees. This corresponds to 3,700,000 American adults. Based on the same Hopkins/Jacobs criterion, the 1998 poll indicates that only half as many American adults (1,850,000) have been abducted by UFOs.

"Technical Error" Challenges Validity Of Hopkins/Jacobs Criterion

The highlights of the more recent and earlier surveys are posted on the NIDS Website under the title of "Unusual Personal Experiences 1991 and 1998" [www.nidsci.org/news/roper]. NIDS briefly notes what it calls a "technical error" in the recent survey, which NIDS dismisses as "not considered serious enough to invalidate the results." Whereas the first survey asked how often the subject "had vivid dreams about UFOs," in the 1998 survey the question was reworded to ask if the subject had "been abducted by the occupants of a UFO." ONLY 20 PERSONS OUT OF THE 5,955 SURVEYED RESPONDED "YES," CORRESPONDING TO 0.3% OF THOSE POLLED AND ONLY 30% OF THE NUMBER DEDUCED BY HOPKINS/JACOBS. [SUN Comment: Thank goodness that only 555,000 American adults have been subjected to this traumatic experience.]

NIDS offered no comment on the fact that more of those polled reported that they had seen a ghost than reported ever having seen a UFO--in both surveys. In the 1991 survey, 11% of those polled reported having seen a ghost compared to 7% having seen a UFO. In the more recent poll, 10% reported having seen a ghost and 7% having seen a UFO.

The results of the first survey were published in a 64-page report which was distributed to thousands of psychiatrists, psychologists and mental health professionals, and which informed them of lectures on UFO abductions then planned to be given in major cities. The report also was sent to major news media and generated considerable publicity. The results of the more recent survey have achieved scant publicity, including in the UFO media. A notable exception is a feature story on the recent NIDS survey by British UFO researcher Peter Brookesmith, published in the Spring 2000 issue of The Anomalist.

Friedman And Wood To "Debate" Authenticity Of Cooper's "New Majestic Documents" At MUFON Conference In St. Louis

A highlight of the upcoming MUFON conference in St. Louis is expected to come Saturday night, July 15, when Dr. Robert Wood and Stanton Friedman--both of whom are MUFON officials--challenge each other's views on the authenticity of the "new Majestic documents" which Tim Cooper (allegedly) obtained from covert sources [SUN #55/Jan. 1999]. Wood first learned of the Cooper documents via Friedman, and the two men have long been good friends. In the late 1960s, when Wood was a McDonnell Douglas Corp. official, he hired Friedman to try to "reverse engineer" UFO technology for possible use in the USAF's Manned Orbiting Laboratory program--which subsequently was cancelled.

How Sharp-Eyed Is Wood's "Questioned-Document Examiner"?

Dr. Wood responded promptly when he learned that British UFOlogist Timothy Good had publicly expressed doubts about the authenticity of two of Tim Cooper's Majestic documents--purportedly written in 1947 and 1952--because of similarities in letters that Cooper had written to Good in the fall of 1991. This prompted Wood to seek an assessment of these "similarities" from his favorite Questioned-Document Examiner--Dr. James A. Black. On Oct. 13, 1999, Wood made public Black's assessment in a press release which said that Black concluded that two of Cooper's [alleged] 40+ year-old Majestic documents and his 1991 letter had similar type font, suggesting that both were typed on the same make (Royal) of typewriter. But according to Wood, Black "discounted all aspects of similarity...as being what one would expect on two similar machines and two different operators. He did, however note one [common] defect in the small [lower case] 'L' that occasionally showed up." This attempted explanation assumes that the SAME flawed lower-case "L" went uncorrected by the typewriter manufacturer for at least SEVERAL DECADES.

Curiously, Black (seemingly) failed to spot an even more obvious flaw in the typewriter used to prepare one of Cooper's Majestic documents ("MJ-12 Annual Report") and Cooper's letters of Oct. 4 and Oct. 7, 1991, to Timothy Good. This is a slightly "elevated 8" (relative to adjacent characters) which was first reported and illustrated in the Nov. 1999 issue of SUN (#60). Although eight months have elapsed since a copy of SUN #60 was sent to Dr. Wood, this notable discrepancy--which suggests that Cooper himself typed at least one of his Majestic documents--has never been reported on the Woods' Majestic Website. Nor have the Woods made public the views of their "Questioned-Document Examiner" on this key issue.

Some of Cooper's Majestic documents purportedly are originals whose paper and ink signatures can be tested for authenticity by a qualified forensic chemical laboratory. (Tests of a diary, allegedly hand-written in 1947 by the uncle of a man who claimed to be a crashed-saucer witness, proved that the ink used was not introduced until the early 1970s [SUN #60/Nov. 1999].) The Woods reportedly have submitted some of Cooper's "original" documents for similar forensic lab tests. It will be interesting to see if Robert Wood reports all of these test results during his upcoming MUFON conference presentation.

NIDS Reports Analysis Of UFO Reports It Has Received

Last September, the National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDS), created by wealthy Las Vegas businessman Robert Bigelow, notified police departments and some media outlets around the country that it had created a 24-hour UFO Hotline to receive UFO reports from their areas. According to NIDS, *telephone calls that report UFOs are screened by NIDS investigators. Obvious pranks, delusional, and repetitive calls were excluded from further investigation. Meteor showers, missile launches, plausible astronomical positions and other well-known [prosaic] explanations were examined. In cases where up to 50 calls came in during a missile launch or a meteor shower only a single case was put into the data base. The data were then subjected to the Jacques Vallee credibility index...which assigns a numerical value to the quality of the investigator, whether a site visit was conducted and the number of additions needed to the data in order to conventionally explain the eyewitness testimony.*

In April, NIDS presented on its Website what is called *"a preliminary analysis" of 308 UFO reports it had since received and analyzed--but without any indication of which or how many of the UFO reports were triggered by meteor showers, missile launches or other prosaic causes.* Nearly 81% of the UFO sightings occurred during darkness, i.e., between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. and 51% of the incidents involved only one witness. Some other highlights of the NIDS analysis follow:

- * **Shape:** Round/Orbs = 34%; Triangular = 19%; Disc/Dome = 11%; Light(s) = 10%
- * **Time duration:** Less than 1 min. = 28%; 1-10 min. = 37%; 11-30 min. = 17%; More than 30 min. = 18%
- * **Dist. to UFO:** 0-600' = 36%; 601'-0.5 mi. = 16%; 0.5-5 mi. = 27%; More than 5 mi. = 21%

Estimated distances of unfamiliar objects--especially at night--are extremely unreliable. NIDS offered no estimate of what percentage of its UFO reports might have prosaic explanations. Most experienced pro-UFO researchers concede that 90-95% of all UFO reports have prosaic explanations. Alan Hendry, when Director of the Hynek Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS), reported finding prosaic explanations for ALL of 1,024 "nocturnal light" UFOs, as he reported in "The UFO Handbook."

Recent Experiment Debunks Claim That Organized Science Ignores UFOs Because It Doesn't Want To Challenge Existing Paradigms

UFOlogy's usual explanation for why "Organized Science" ignores the UFO mystery--allegedly because scientists are reluctant to investigate anything that might challenge the "basic laws of physics"--is shown to be false by a feature article in the June 4 edition of Britain's The Sunday Times. The article was headlined: "*Eureka! Scientists Break Speed of Light*," authored by the newspaper's science editor, Jonathan Leake. He reported that experiments conducted by Dr. Lijun Wang, at the NEC Research Institute in Princeton, N.J., (seemingly) demonstrated that a pulse of light had traveled 300 times faster than the speed of light. According to Leake, a pulse of light transmitted towards a chamber filled with specially treated gas had traveled 60 ft. across the laboratory before it had fully entered the chamber.

Leake noted that Wang's report, submitted for publication in Britain's highly respected Nature magazine, has generated controversy among physicists because "*if light can travel forward in time it could carry information. This would breach one of the basic principles in physics--causality, which says that a cause must come before an effect. It would also shatter Einstein's theory of relativity since it depends in part on the speed of light being unbreachable.*" However, the remarkable test results were not dismissed out-of-hand by leading physicists whom Leake consulted. Leake quoted Dr. Raymond Chiao, professor of physics at the University of California at Berkeley, who is familiar with Wang's efforts, as saying that he (Chiao) was impressed with the reported experiment.

In the traditional modus operandi of Organized Science, Wang's experiments will be analyzed in a search for more prosaic explanations, and more important, other physicists will try to replicate the experiments. If Wang's results are replicated, Organized Science will quickly abandon or adapt Einstein's relativity theory. And Wang will achieve immortality and probably a Nobel Prize.

University of Kansas Explains Why It Will Publish UFO-Abduction Book

Kansas University Press offers the following rationale for its upcoming publication of a multi-author book titled "UFOs and Abductions: Challenging the Borders of Knowledge," edited by David Jacobs: "Publishing this book under the [University] Press's academic imprint is a deliberate effort to build a much-needed bridge between the enterprise of serious UFO research and 'the academy' of scholars, scientists and science writers, etc., who (at least publicly) have largely ignored or derided this field of study, have denied it status as a legitimate field of inquiry. Whether this...derives from 'professional anxiety,' sincere skepticism, and/or suppressive effort, the result has been the virtual neglect of the field by the academy and its publishers." (Emphasis added.)

Contributing authors include Budd Hopkins, Dr. John Mack (whose chapter is titled "How the Alien Abduction Phenomenon Challenges the Boundaries of Our Reality"), Dr. Michael A. Persinger (who believes at least some UFO-abduction accounts result from electromagnetic excitation of the human brain), Dr. Thomas E. Bullard (whose chapter is titled "UFOs: Lost in the Myths") and two chapters by Jacobs. Notably missing from the new book's co-authors are California podiatrist Dr. Roger Leir and Derrel W. Sims, whose research has focused on surgical removal of "alien implants" from (alleged) abductees, and Whitley Strieber, author of "Communion" and several other books describing his (alleged) UFO abductions. University of Kansas Press says it *"feels quite strongly that this book ably accomplishes its stated aim. It's a start, hopefully even a shove, in the right direction."* SUN predicts the book will fail to achieve the publisher's stated objectives.

Firmage Delays (Again) Publication Of His Book: "The Truth"

When Silicon Valley multi-millionaire software expert Joseph P. Firmage first went public with his pro-UFO views in a voluminous Internet posting in early 1999, the cornerstone of Firmage's assessment was the Secret/Top Secret "new Majestic documents" obtained from Tim Cooper, whose authenticity had been strongly endorsed by Dr. Robert Wood and son Ryan Wood [SUN #56/Mar. 1999]. It was indicated that Firmage's assessment--titled "The Truth"--would be published in a hard-cover book by a small company, Granite Publishing, which specializes in books on exotic subjects. Granite's mid-1999 catalog stated that Firmage's book would be 544 pages in length, sell for \$39.95 and be available in the Fall of 1999. When a search of Amazon.com's Website last October failed to show the Firmage book, SUN queried Granite Publishing and was told that the book had been delayed until March 2000 because *"Firmage is adding quite a bit of new information that we felt was worth waiting for"* [SUN #60/Nov. 1999].

Recently, SUN again checked Amazon.com only to discover no listing for "The Truth." The only book listed for Joseph P. Firmage was an upcoming book titled "I Am," scheduled to become available in Sept. 2000. In early June, SUN sent an e-mail inquiry to Granite Publishing, requesting a status report on "The Truth" and asking whether it had been retitled "I Am." Granite's Pam Meyer replied that Firmage wanted to add some "very important" new material, so the pub date for "The Truth" has been extended to January 2001. She explained that "I Am," with beautiful graphics, is the fictional story about a woman who *"discovers her place in the universe."* Meyer's current estimate is that "The Truth" will be under 400 pages in length (compared to the original 544 pages) and sell for around \$24 (vs. \$39.95).

Since plans for Firmage's "The Truth" were first announced, the Woods have belatedly disclosed that Tim Cooper flunked a polygraph ("lie detector") test dealing with his Majestic documents--a failure whose significance the Woods have tried to minimize [SUN #59/Sept. 1999]. Late last year, Firmage's International Space Science Organization (ISSO) issued an Internet statement indicating that flaws in Cooper's Majestic documents show that they were prepared by the U.S. Government as disinformation to mislead Communist adversaries [SUN #61/Jan. 2000]. This allegation has been challenged by Robert/Ryan Wood who continue to endorse the authenticity of the documents [SUN #63/May 2000]. The foregoing plus the latest reduced page count prompts SUN to suspect that Cooper's new Majestic documents and the Woods' endorsement of their authenticity will no longer be the cornerstone of the Firmage book.

Maccabee's Critique Of UFO Skeptics Reveals His Own Credulity

Dr. Bruce S. Maccabee, a Navy physicist and long-time UFO researcher, will criticize the work of UFO skeptics--including SUN's editor--in his talk at the upcoming MUFON conference in St. Louis. Excerpts from Maccabee's MUFON critique, carried on the Internet in the April 16 edition of "CNI News," include an incident involving a Warren, Minn., deputy

sheriff, Val Johnson, who said his patrol car had been attacked and damaged by a UFO on a country road shortly after midnight on Aug. 27, 1980. Based on my own investigation and another by the Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS), as reported in my book "UFOs: The Public Deceived," I concluded: *"The hard physical evidence leaves only two possible explanations for this case. One is that Johnson's car was attacked by malicious UFO-nauts, who reached out and hit one headlight with a hammerlike device, then hit the hood and windshield, then very gently bent the two radio antennas, being careful not to break them, then reached inside the patrol car to set back the hands of the watch on Johnson's arm and the clock on the car's dashboard. These UFO-nauts would then have taken off Johnson's glasses, aimed an intense ultraviolet light into his eyes, and replaced his glasses, while being careful not to shine ultraviolet on his face. Or the incident is a hoax. There are simply no other possible explanations."* Maccabee quoted the foregoing from my book but opted to omit the next sentence which read: *"Nor are there any nearly identical incidents in more than 30 years of UFO reports."*

Then Maccabee offered the following comments: *"Klass' amusing version of the 'UFO/ET hypothesis' should not detract from the importance of his statement that, 'There are simply no other possible explanations.'* In other words, if it was not a hoax then there is no prosaic explanation for this sighting. Perhaps Klass realized that the hoax hypothesis was unconvincing at best and intentionally tried to make the UFO alternative seem silly....Sofar as I know, Johnson has never been charged with damaging the police car." **SUN Comment:** My "malicious UFO-nauts" scenario was based entirely on the physical evidence cited and Johnson's story, and Maccabee does not offer any alternative hypothesis. Maccabee is correct that Johnson was never charged but he fails to mention that Johnson refused to take a polygraph test about the incident.

Virginia Governor Sued For Not Providing Protection Against UFOs

Controversial pro-UFOlogist Larry W. Bryant, who lives in Virginia, and two associates filed a lawsuit on June 5 against Virginia Governor James S. Gilmore, charging him with neglecting his constitutional duty to protect his state's citizens from being abducted by UFOs. According to Bryant, *"Whatever the court decides in this case may affect how all Earth governments (and society) treat the UFO problem from here on out. We petitioners hope that the case will entice numerous UFO-coverup whistleblowers to come forward with evidence useful in combatting the [UFO] invasion's harm and threat to public safety."*

SUN Comment: It is not clear what Bryant really wants--besides publicity. Does Bryant want Governor Gilmore to deploy a multi-billion-dollar air defense system capable of shooting down any unidentified flying object that enters Virginia's airspace? If so, and if Virginia shoots down any ET craft, will the ETs retaliate ONLY against Virginia, against all 50 of our states, or the entire planet? And if UFOs avoid overflying Virginia, will its citizens be happy to be deprived of the chance of seeing a genuine ET craft?

GERSTEN/CAUS TO APPEAL U.S. DISTRICT COURT VERDICT

Peter Gersten filed a notice with the U.S. District Court in Phoenix on May 25 that he intended to appeal the recent verdict by Chief Federal District Judge Stephen M. McNamee, after Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS) supporters contributed the \$10,000 Gersten requested to reimburse him for his legal services and expenses. Judge McNamee ruled that the Pentagon and its Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) had conducted a "reasonable search" of their records for any information on delta-shaped, boomerang or other unusual-shaped aerial vehicles similar to those described in UFO reports--in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request that Gersten had filed in mid-1998 [SUN #63/May 2000]. Gersten filed another FOIA request to the Pentagon on April 21, seeking copies of the responses from all Defense Dept. employees who received copies of his 1998 FOIA request.

Short Shrift:

* Lindemann closes "CNI News" for new venture: "CNI News," a bi-weekly subscription Internet report devoted to UFOs, produced by UFO lecturer Michael Lindemann, has terminated its operations to enable him to join what he calls "a dynamic new media project that will...focus in a scientific way upon a wide range of important issues relating to the human future, including various kinds of mysterious or anomalous phenomena." He explained that further details on the new project cannot be released at present. SUN suspects that the new Internet project is being sponsored by Joe Firmage's International Space Science Organization (ISSO) or by Robert Bigelow's National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDS). Lindemann said his role in the new project will be as a writer/editor and that "much of what I produce will appear on the Web."

* Germany's Hesemann sharply criticizes MUFON: German UFO researcher Michael Hesemann, who has been a speaker at MUFON conferences, is unlikely to appear again as a result of his comments in response to the recent "CNI News" survey (p. 1). Hesemann commented: "In the past, organized UFOlogy [appeared] to be rather counter-productive. MUFON is the best example of a dinosaur destined to become extinct. Deeply infiltrated by dubious circles...MUFON is deeply inefficient....It was manipulated and started to debunk promising cases instead of starting an independent investigation. It became an instrument of propaganda instead of research." (Hesemann earlier endorsed the authenticity of the "Alien Autopsy" movie.)

* NIDS Deputy Administrator to speak at MUFON conference: The first appearance of a top official of NIDS--which is becoming more active in the UFO field--at a major UFO conference will come in mid-July when Dr. Colm A. Kelleher, NIDS Deputy Administrator, speaks at the upcoming MUFON conference. Kelleher, whose Ph.D. is in biochemistry, previously has focused his NIDS efforts on "cattle mutilations." NIDS uses ex-FBI agents as investigators.

* Did Mussolini create an "Italian MJ-12" in 1933?: Two Italian UFOlogists, during their recent appearance on a national TV show, claimed that Benito Mussolini created a covert organization of Italy's top scientists in 1933 to explore the UFO phenomenon. According to "Filer's Files," a weekly Internet column by George Filer, the Italian UFOlogists claimed that Mussolini managed to keep under cover an (alleged) UFO landing near Milan. In an alleged speech given by Mussolini in 1941, intended to deter the U.S. from entering the war in Europe, the Italian dictator reportedly said: "The U.S. should care more about an attack from an extraterrestrial civilization which could land on earth in a craft that people have never seen than about the Axis forces."

* NIDS official questions suggestion to exploit new satellite imagery: The recent availability of commercial photo-recon satellite imagery which can show objects as small as 3 ft. in size [SUN #60/Nov. 1999], which might photograph any ET craft in flight, prompted SUN to suggest to NIDS official John Alexander that NIDS exploit this newly available technology as a means of proving that some UFOs are ET craft. We suggested that "NIDS might offer, say, \$10,000 for any satellite photo that shows an unusual flight vehicle. That should spur photoanalysts to keep a sharp eye out for such objects." Alexander questioned such a financial incentive because "it would encourage fraud." Because we doubted that original satellite imagery could be tampered with, we asked: "Fraud by whom and via what technique?" Alexander never replied.

 NOTE: Opinions expressed in SUN are those of its editor--unless otherwise noted--and do NOT necessarily represent the views of any organization with which he is affiliated. We deeply thank Dr. Gary Posner for his help in proofreading.

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