Close Encounter Of The Wrong Kind

By Name Withheld

I read with interest your story about the giant spaceship that harassed the Japan Airlines 747 crew over Alaska last November and feel that the time is right to reveal a similar experience I had in my Cessna 150 over downtown Los Angeles.

I was taking my first long night flight to qualify for my private license. Of course, I had my instructor with me but since he (like most of them) had a second job to make ends meet, he fell aslape shortly after takeoff.

It better not say which airport we left from since the FAA might be able to track him down and I don't want to get the old guy in trouble. Besides, he's hardly skipped any of the AA meetings lately.

Anyway, it was about eight o'clock at night — also last November — and I was cruising to our destination of Santa Monica Airport about 3,000 feet. I was marveling at the sight of all the Los Angeles lights twinkling below, especially around Hollywood, when I spotted it.

The thing was BIG, and I mean huge. It had lights all around it that looked like passenger windows, a red light sticking out on the left and a green one on the right. It also had what looked like three or four giants headlights that just filled the cockpit. It reminded me of that scene from "Close Encounters" where the guy in the pickup truck is bathed in light from a UFO behind him.

I made this roaring noise that I could hear clearly and which got louder as it approached me. I was scared, I don't mind telling you. I started to wake up my instructor but he gave me strict orders to leave him alone unless I got lost and was almost out of fuel.

I guess I kind of got transfixed by watching this unidentified object barreling toward me because I didn't do anything for a long time, just stared at it wishing I had a camera. But then it began to dawn on me that maybe it intended to ram me or maybe grab me with some sort of alien cherry picker and throw me in its cargo bay for later examination.

Anyway, my airplane doesn't have any running lights or radios (I bought it as a fixer-upper and hadn't gotten around to fixing anything yet), I figured I might be able to evade the UFO by some tricky flying like I saw in Top Gun.

I pulled the power back and nosed the plane over into a dive, watching the lights of Century City rush up toward me. I don't know exactly how low I got, since I couldn't see the altimeter but I was looking up at the Hollywood sign.

Anyway, I did get a terrific job because the UFO just kept going with a terrible WHOOSH and roar as it passed overhead. It had some sort of alien writing on it that, of course, I couldn't read but it looked something like this: "UFOs in ones." I started to wake my instructor up but I didn't need to since the turbulence from the UFO started throwing us around really good.

The plane survived the experience okay and I'm all right, my instructor is expected to be out of the hospital in a few weeks. I'm glad that he had decided to go to his AA meetings again. Maybe I shouldn't have told him what really happened.

OUR PLACE OR YOURS?

If you just have to have this UFO package (or are just a fan of giant walnuts), write to the FAA, 701 C. St., Box 14, Anchorage, Alaska 99513.
A night flight to remember
Veteran JAL pilot who never believed in UFOs does now
By HAL BERNTON
Daily News business reporter

A full moon shone in the arctic sky as Capt. Kenju Terauchi took off from Iceland Nov. 17 in a Japan Air Lines cargo jet loaded with French Beaujolais wine. He was bound for Anchorage on a route across Greenland to Elsmere Island, Canada, over the Beaufort Sea, then into Alaska air space above Fort Yukon.

For the first two and a half hours, the flight — crewed by Terauchi, co-pilot Takanori Tamefuji and engineer Yoshio Tsukuda — was uneventful. The sky was clear and the winds — except for some light gusts over Greenland — calm. Then Terauchi's jet cruised into Alaska, and he first saw the two belts of light.

They were an estimated three miles ahead of the plane, slightly to the left of the pilot's cockpit seat, and 2,000 feet lower than the plane. They emitted a steady amber glow. They hovered almost stationary, shifted from side to side, then pulsed across the sky in abrupt bursts of speed.

The objects, Terauchi believes, "were not made by human kind. They were of a very high technology and intelligence."

The events recounted by Terauchi in the 50 minutes...
FLIGHT TO REMEMBER: Veteran JAL pilot recounts sighting of strange company

Continued from Page A-1

after that first sighting of lights are some of the most bizarre in Alaska aviation history. Since first becoming public in late December, the reports have transformed this soft-spoken, 47-year-old, Anchorage-based pilot into an international celebrity, interviewed by People magazine, Tokyo television and more than a dozen other national and international publications.

Terauchi has lived quietly in a comfortable house in Anchorage, his base for the past three years. He spends several weeks a month flying polar routes between Europe and Alaska. During his time off, he enjoys fishing for red and silver salmon.

This week, Terauchi is home again. His phone rings often with reporters eager to hear about his strange November flight.

Terauchi has an impressive list of professional credentials to lend weight to his rather incredible tale. He has 28 years flying experience. He says he hasn't often navigated the Iceland-Greenland-Anchorage route, but he has routinely flown other trans-polar routes.

Until November, Terauchi says, he never believed in UFOs. Now, he does. He thinks they're sent by visitors from outer space. In fact, last November were spaceships of some unknown, extra-terrestrial origin. In interview after interview, he methodically makes his case, charting the events of the sighting on flight maps of the arctic sky.

One day, he's convinced someone else will see the lights, and his account will take on new meaning. "I think we have to keep this record..."

Terauchi's encounter began with his sighting of the two belts of amber lights. To check them out, he radioed Anchorage air traffic controllers. The controllers replied that no military or civilian flyers were in the vicinity.

The two belts of light continued to dance in front of the plane. Terauchi grabbed for his camera, but realized that taking a picture would be futile because there was not enough light to expose the film properly.

Five minutes after the lights first appeared in front of the plane, they suddenly moved farther out ahead of the plane, he said. He could then make out the shape of the crafts—cylinders wrapped in lateral lines of light from the two sides of the cylinder. The lines appeared to be exhaust outlets, and they alternately pulsated light from the two sides of the cylinder. They appeared to be controlled by computers, he said. As the two objects reversed direction, exhaust lights appeared to flare brighter.

Terauchi radioed the FAA flight control center in Anchorage. Three controllers monitoring radar saw that what they thought was an object at about the same reference point on their monitor, according to Sam Rich, an air traffic controller, and Paul Steucke, an FAA spokesman.

Steucke, however, said subsequent examination of the radar tape showed the object to be a split-image of the JAL plane. Rich said none of the controllers, at the time, thought that was the case.

As the plane flew over Fairbanks, the lights of the city gave Terauchi a better view of the new object. He says the band of light circled a huge walnut-shaped object that appeared to be twice the size of an aircraft carrier.

As the lights of the city faded, Terauchi again could see only the white band of light. To try to lose the object, he got permission from a controller to descend from 35,000 to 31,500 feet. The object descended "in formation," he said.

Then Terauchi, after consulting with the controllers, made two 45-degree turns to the right, then completed a 360-degree turn. The object remained in view.

As the JAL plane flew past Mount McKinley, controllers asked a Fairbanks-bound United Airlines flight to try to confirm the sighting. The United plane veered off to follow the JAL flight path at a lower altitude.

Just before the two planes passed one another, the white light disappeared.

"It was like a dream. Unbelievable," Terauchi said.

Mulling things over in the living room of his Anchorage home, Terauchi postulates that whatever he saw was friendly. "I can't understand how they knew we were friendly," he said. "I can't understand the technology, but it was not dangerous. It was completely controlled.

If he sees the objects again, he's ready to try communicating. Perhaps, he says, the wing lights, then two more.

In Morse code, he says, that's "Hi."
Did Alaska UFO just want

By JIM FAIN
WASHINGTON—Flying saucers are as pure a blessing as fresh air and snowflakes, but—in our churlish way—we insist on thinking they're out to get us.

The record proves these celestial sprites never harm a soul, though some humans do themselves in by chasing them too far, too high or too fast. Saucers are friendly, inquisitive, fun-loving. Only pointy-head bureaucrats call them UFOs.

When a Japanese cargo pilot spotted a giant walnut of a saucer, "two times bigger than an aircraft carrier," flying formation with him over the Arctic recently, he reacted with characteristic humanoid skittishness. He got FAA permission to take evasive maneuvers.

Silly, boy. No. My evades a saucer; To these fun-loving visitors from outer space, a plane's darting away is an invitation to dance.

I've followed 'saucers since their debut in 1947. In the late '50s, as an Air Force reservist, I had a desk in an intelligence shop next to the Project Blue Book officer who researched all saucer sightings.

He found the saucers curious about everything on earth, especially junk food. A gentleman in the Midwest once came upon several extraterritorials picnicking by a parked saucer. He sent in a sample of what they had been eating. Chemical analysis showed it to be pancake mix.

Any student of psychographics knows flapjack eaters are laid back and mellow. If saucer crews were mean-spirited ideologues like Patrick Buchanan, they would not eat flapjacks. They would breakfast on All-Bran and fried eggs like other curmudgeons.

Saucers contribute to the gross national product, providing weekly articles for the tabloids supermarkets sell. These frequently deal with food: as when a saucer several years ago hijacked a truckload of peanut butter. It was returned after tasting, much as a magician hands back your tie after appearing to mangle it. Though saucers are incorrigibly mischievous, there's not a mean or mendacious bone in them.

The current Weekly World News features a sketch of a female space alien under a headline, "UFO Crash Survivors on the Loose."

This lady was crashed, foun and may be the tabloid saucers invariably do harm coming extra-terrestrial.

Forget it. Earthlings get grim with germs.

Why do we fear saucers? Because we make our own imaginary entities to grasp the absurdity of things out to b

Tough airport marketing efforts

By SUE CROSS
Associated Press Writer
JUNEAU—Alaska officials have been trumpeting stopover business at the Anchorage and Fairbanks international airports as a big plus for the state economy, but they're worried about losing that advantage because of new aviation technology and competition.

Several travel promotion groups and nearly all of the Alaska Senate want to offset the changes with an aggressive marketing plan for the airports.

"If we don't do that, we're going to have an international airport system that, instead of making money as it does today, will lose money. When it starts losing money, the landing fees and fueling fees for domestic flights will go up and all of us will be hurt," says Dale Fox, director of the Alaska Visitors Association. Fox was in Juneau today to ask state officials to boost their airport marketing efforts.

A resolution (SCR5) asking the Cowper administration to come up with a promotional plan for the airports was introduced Wednesday in the Alaska Senate. It was drafted by Sen. Arliss Sturgulewski, R-Anchorage, and co-sponsored by 18 other senators.

A major angle of state tourism efforts has been to get international passengers from flights refueling in Alaska off their planes to visit the state enroute to their final destinations.

In addition, cargo flights make up 60 percent of the airports' business, and they must not be lost to other states, Fox said.

But according to the proposed resolution, Alaska airports' success in winning stopover business is being jeopardized by development of new aircraft capable of flying nonstop between Europe and the Orient.

Other airports around the Pacific Rim also are promoting themselves to get a greater share of markets for trans-Pacific flights, international tourism and air cargo, Sturgulewski said.

Fox said such promotions have long been run by the Seattle, New York, Los Angeles and other major airports cities as well as individual cities as an advantage of its major market than its own advantage.

"And all we are left with is Fairbanks and Juneau," said.

"Good thing for Anchorage and Fairbanks to come up with something special," said.
JAL captain tells of 2nd UFO sighting

In points to where he encountered lights over Alaska.

He reported seeing a glowing object that appeared to be hovering over the ground. The object remained stationary for about 10 minutes before moving off into the distance. The lights were so bright that they illuminated the surrounding area. He described the lights as being yellow and red in color.

The pilot also reported that the object was emitting a high-pitched hum. The lights were seen in the vicinity of Fairbanks, Alaska, on the night of August 27.

According to the pilot, the lights were in the form of a large rectangular object with a glowing center. He said that the object was about the size of a football field.

The lights were moving in a straight line and then began to spiral in a circle. The pilot said that the object was moving at a very high speed and was able to pass through the atmosphere without any apparent effect on the surrounding air.

Despite the pilot's detailed description of the lights, no official explanation has been given for the sighting. The incident is currently under investigation by the Department of Defense.
JAL captain tells of 2nd UFO sighting

Capt. Kenyu Terauchi reported his second sighting at about 7:30 Sunday, said Paul Steucke, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration. Terauchi was accompanied by a co-pilot and engineer on the cargo flight from London to a refueling stop in Anchorage.

Unlike the sighting Terauchi reported in November, the lights he saw Sunday did not show up on military or FAA radar.

Steucke said the co-pilot was at the controls when the lights were spotted Sunday. The co-pilot reported seeing the lights.

The flight engineer who sits farther back in the cockpit, indicated that he was uncertain whether he saw any lights at all, Steucke said.

"We asked him point-blank if this was like the Nov. 17 sighting and he said, 'No, no, there's no similarity between the two,'" Steucke said.

Terauchi said he saw the lights twice - Sunday once for about 20 minutes and again for about 10 minutes as his plane flew at 37,000 feet. The pilot said in both cases the lights approached from the front of the Boeing 747, went beneath the aircraft and reappeared to the rear.

Steucke said Terauchi notified an air traffic controller in Anchorage of the sighting. "His statement to the controller was 'irregular, light looks like a spaceship,'" Steucke said.

Controllers and the supervisors immediately checked the radar screens for objects in the vicinity of the JAL flight. "There was nothing, and that was confirmed by military radar," Steucke said.

Steucke said FAA officials and experienced pilots reviewed the possibility that Sunday's sighting could have been caused by light bouncing off ice crystals in the atmosphere. Both times Terauchi reported seeing lights Sunday, his plane was flying over villages, Steucke said.

"The ground temperature in the area was about minus 23 and there was a temperature inversion at 23,500 feet," he said. "Temperature inversions in cold climates with ice crystals have been known to create a bouncing light effect."

Light from the villages could have reflected off ice crystals in the inversion and appeared to hover in midair, Steucke said.

As the plane approached and passed over villages, the reflected light would appear to go under the aircraft and reappear behind it, as Terauchi described it. Steucke said.

"Steucke said the bouncing light theory is only speculation and is not an FAA finding. In the case..."
ANCHORAGE (AP)—Federal Aviation Administration officials say they will send on to Washington their radar tapes and records from an inquiry into a Japan Air Lines pilot’s report that a UFO followed his plane over Alaska.

Because of public interest in the case, the agency interviewed the pilot, Kenji Terauchi, a second time Friday, said FAA spokesman Paul Steucke.

Terauchi told investigators three lights started following his Boeing 747 cargo jet Nov. 17 just after it crossed into Alaska from Canada, and stayed with him for 55 minutes.

He said two of the lights were about eight feet across, while the third appeared to be part of a darkened globe with a diameter of perhaps two aircraft carriers placed end-to-end, Steucke said.

The pilot said the large unidentified flying object registered on his cockpit weather radar. But images on military radar screens at the time were dismissed as “clutter,” and a blip that showed up on FAA screens was considered a coincidental “split image” of the aircraft, Steucke said.

A JAL spokeswoman said Terauchi was on a flight to Europe and was unavailable for further comment.

Flight 1628, with a crew of three, left Iceland on Nov. 17 with a load of wine bound for Tokyo from Paris. Terauchi and his crew picked up the plane in Iceland for the Polar leg of the flight to Anchorage.

The sky was clear as the jet, cruising at 525 knots, crossed into Alaska from Canada just northeast of Fort Yukon at 35,000 feet.

Terauchi said he then saw the wavering lights eight miles in front of his aircraft.

The pilot reported the lights were yellow, amber and green, Steucke said, but not red, the international color for aircraft beacons.

“His main concern was trying to determine whether he was overtaking another aircraft,” Steucke said. He said the pilot reported he dimmed cockpit lights to ensure he was not seeing a reflection.

After about six minutes, Terauchi reported the lights and air traffic controllers told him to take any evasive action needed. Terauchi decreased altitude to 31,000 feet, but said the lights went down with him “in formation,” Steucke said.

South of Fairbanks, Terauchi turned the plane in a complete circle to see if the lights would follow. They did, and moved to the left side of the jet, Steucke said.

The FAA and the military in Alaska use the same long-range radar in Fairbanks, Steucke said.

The FAA also uses sophisticated computer systems to remove clutter from radar images, but the military does not, he said.

“The military decided about a minute into this exercise that what it was seeing was clutter,” he said. The Air Force did not send up an interceptor and is not investigating the matter, Steucke said.

At the FAA center in Anchorage, controllers following the flight noted occasional second blips, or “split targets,” on the screen near Flight 1628, Steucke said.
Pilot's UFO sighting called a bright image of the planet Jupiter

NEW YORK (AP) — A Japan Airlines pilot who claimed to have seen an unidentified flying object alongside his airplane last November was actually seeing an unusually bright image of the planet Jupiter and possibly Mars, an investigator said yesterday.

Philip J. Klass said astronomical calculations show that on Nov. 17, when the pilot claimed to have seen the UFO, Jupiter was extremely bright and was visible precisely where the pilot reported that he saw the UFO.

Mars was just below and to the right of Jupiter, and may explain the pilot's initial report that he saw two lights, Mr. Klass said.

Mr. Klass, an editor with the magazine Aviation Week and Space Technology and a longtime investigator of claimed UFO sightings, said the pilot's claims that the object followed him as he made a 360-degree turn are contradicted by what he told flight controllers at the time.

John Leyden, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration in Washington, quoted from a summary of conversations between the pilot and ground controllers in which the pilot reported losing sight of the object after completing his turn.

The object reappeared a few moments later, according to the FAA summary quoted by Mr. Leyden.

The pilot, Capt. Kenjyu Terauchi, was over Alaska enroute from Europe, via Iceland, to Tokyo when he claims to have sighted the object.

Paul Steucke, a spokesman for the FAA in Anchorage, said that Mr. Terauchi told FAA officials in an interview that the object stayed with him as he turned.

Mr. Steucke said the FAA would be releasing the results of its own investigation in mid-February.

According to Mr. Klass, who reviewed a complete copy of the transcript, the pilot never reported seeing Jupiter or Mars, even though they were clearly visible.

Mr. Klass' report was issued by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal in Buffalo, N.Y., an organization of scientists who investigate claims of UFO sightings, ESP occurrences and other so-called paranormal phenomena.

Mr. Klass, who heads the organization's UFO subcommittee, is the author of "UFOs: The Public Deceived." He has been investigating UFO sightings for more than 20 years.

"Jupiter was only 10 degrees above the horizon, making it appear to the pilot to be roughly at his own 35,000-foot altitude," said Mr. Klass in his report. "Mars was visible closer to the horizon and to the right of Jupiter, but was not as bright, the report said."

"This is not the first time that an experienced pilot has mistaken a bright celestial body for a UFO, nor will it be the last," Mr. Klass said.

A United Airlines flight and an Air Force C-130 cargo plane that were in Mr. Terauchi's vicinity at the time of the claimed sighting were asked to look for the object, and neither reported seeing it.

"I think that the Japanese pilot should have been a little more skeptical when the United airliner and the Air Force plane reported seeing nothing," Mr. Klass said yesterday.

A reported radar "blip" near the Japan Air Lines plane was a spurious echo from the mountainous terrain underneath the aircraft, Mr. Klass said.

Mr. Terauchi reported a second UFO sighting in approximately the same area on Jan. 11. That sighting was explained by FAA officials as village lights bouncing off ice crystals in the atmosphere.

Mr. Terauchi later conceded that that was a reasonable explanation, Mr. Steucke said.
Driver aims at ferry but misses boat

Widow Jessica Rawlings missed the boat and narrowly avoided a disaster when she drove her car down a ferry slip — and straight into the water.

The 74-year-old Poole, England, woman was rescued by courageous bystanders who waded into the icy water in 60 feet to pull her from the water.

"It was not from this earth," says pilot of jumbo jet after close encounter off Alaska

By DICK DONOVAN

The U.S. government at first confirmed, then mysteriously denied that a huge UFO, described as bigger than two aircraft carriers, was tracked on radar as it played a bizarre cat-and-mouse game — with a Boeing 747 jet!

FAA air traffic controllers had flatly stated they had tracked the gigantic spacecraft for more than 32 minutes as it followed a Japan Air Lines cargo flight bound for Anchorage, Alaska.

Then, in a surprise official flip-flop, an agency spokesman said the eerie blip that zipped helter-skelter across the radar scope was merely a duplicate image of the 747.

That bit of mumbo jumbo, however, flies in the face of eyewitness accounts of the jet's three-man crew that had been kept secret for six weeks — until a crewmember leaked the story to the press.

According to a vivid and detailed account of the incident by veteran JAL pilot Kenju Terauchi, his 747 was flying in clear skies at 35,000 feet and cruising at 525 knots when three walnut-shaped UFOs, the huge one and two smaller ones, streaked out of the heavens.

"We could all see the UFOs very clearly," the 47-year-old pilot said. "One was very large... two times bigger than an aircraft carrier. It barfed our 747.

"The UFOs were flying parallel and then suddenly approached very close. They moved with amazing speed."

flight control reports, the UFOs dogged the 747 for at least 32 minutes.

Terauchi, however, said the ships followed him for 400 miles.

Terauchi, whose flying career spans 20 years, said he and his crew tried to escape the UFOs by following FAA instructions to descend 4,000 feet and make several evasive maneuvers.

But the 747 jet was no match for the maneuvering ability of the spacecraft.

"They were still following us," Terauchi said, and FAA radar at that time confirmed that at least one of the UFOs remained nearby.

FAA investigators questioned the 747's crew in Anchorage and said they are "normal, rational, professional" people with no drug or alcohol problems.

But Terauchi said his only conclusion is that the three UFOs he saw on that November 17 flight were not from earth.
JAL pilot sees lights in the sky

Object doesn't show on military, FAA radar

**By DON HUNTER**
Daily News reporter

For the second time in two months, a Japan Air Lines pilot has reported seeing an unknown object flying near his airplane over barren interior Alaska.

Capt. Kenju Terauchi reported the second sighting at about 7:30 a.m. Sunday morning, as he, a co-pilot and a flight engineer flew at about 37,000 feet, said Paul Steucke, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration. As on the night of Terauchi's first report in November, he was flying cargo in a Boeing 747 from London to a refueling stop in Anchorage.

There are more differences than similarities between the two reports, however.

Unlike last time, the lights Terauchi saw Sunday morning did not show up on military or FAA radar screens. The pilot himself told FAA investigators there was "no similarity" between the flashing amber and white lights he saw Sunday and the massive flying object, that Terauchi reported trailing his aircraft for hundreds of miles on Nov. 17, Steucke said.

As on the first sighting, Terauchi was accompanied by a co-pilot and a flight engineer. They were not the same crew members, Steucke said.

Steucke said the radar aircraft's flight engineer, who sits farther back in the cockpit, "indicated he was uncertain whether he saw any lights at all," Steucke said.

"We asked him point-blank if this was like the Nov. 17 sighting and he said, 'no, no," Steucke explained.

See Back Page, SIGHTING

**SIGHTING:** Lights in the sky

Continued from Page A-1

there's no similarity between the two,)" Steucke said.

Terauchi reported seeing the lights twice Sunday morning, once for a period of about 20 minutes and once for about 10 minutes. In both cases, he said the lights approached from the front of the 747, went underneath the aircraft and reappeared behind it, Steucke said.

Terauchi radioed word of the sighting to an air traffic controller in Anchorage.

"His statement to the controller was 'irregular lights, looks like a spaceship,'" Steucke said.

Controllers and their supervisors immediately checked radar screens "to see if there were any objects around the JAL aircraft," Steucke said.

"There were none, and that was confirmed" by military radar, he said.

Steucke said FAA officials and experienced pilots speculate that Sunday's sighting could have been caused by a weather phenomenon called "bounce light effect."

Both times Terauchi reported seeing the lights, the airplane was flying over villages, Steucke said.

"The ground temperature in the area was about minus-23 and there was a temperature inversion at 23,500 feet," he said. "Temperature inversions in cold climates, with the light from the villages could have reflected off ice crystals in the inversion and appeared to be hovering in mid-air, Steucke said. As the plane approached and passed over the villages, the reflected light would have appeared to go under the aircraft and reappeared behind it, as Terauchi described the lights he saw Sunday, Steucke said.

Steucke said the bounce-light theory is only speculation, not an agency finding. "Those of us involved in this talked about it," he said. "People who are experienced at flying mentioned that it is not an infrequent occurrence."

On Nov. 17, Terauchi reported that two brightly lit objects and a much larger third object — roughly twice the size of an aircraft carrier — trailed the JAL plane for more than 300 miles as it crossed into Alaska from Iceland.

Terauchi said the objects changed altitude with him and paced the jet for nearly an hour. In Anchorage, air traffic controllers monitoring the JAL plane's progress saw what appeared to be the radar tracks of another flying object in the air space near Terauchi's plane.

Both incidents are under investigation, Steucke said.

Terauchi could not be
JAL crew reports 'strange' sighting

The Federal Aviation Administration today said it couldn't explain strange flashing lights that spooked the crew of a Japan Air Lines 747 cargo plane as it flew over northern Alaska last month.

"We are not investigating as there is nothing to investigate," said Paul Steucke, FAA spokesman in Anchorage.

He said the military has been unable — or unwilling — to provide any information.

"They're saying nothing," Steucke said.

The incident began at 6:19 p.m. Nov. 17 as the JAL plane was headed for Anchorage on a flight from Europe via Iceland on its way to Tokyo. As the aircraft entered U.S. airspace at the junction of the Canadian border and the Beaufort Sea, the pilot reported seeing unusual white and yellow flashing lights.

The lights were approximately 8 miles away, at the same altitude of 35,000 feet and traveling at the same speed and in the same direction as the JAL plane, the pilot reported.

Steucke said the pilot called the air traffic control center and asked if there was any reported traffic in the vicinity. A controller replied that there was no known traffic in the area, but that he had an unidentified blip on his radar.

Steucke said a subsequent review of the radar tapes did not reveal any such object, but that the controller insisted it was there.

As the lights continued to pace the 747, the pilot requested permission to change altitude. As he descended to 31,000 feet, the lights followed "in formation," Steucke said.

The pilot then requested permission to make a 360-degree turn to see if the lights would follow. Upon completing the maneuver, the pilot reported losing contact with the lights.

Steucke said radar operators in Fairbanks picked up nothing on their screens in the vicinity of the JAL flight. And he said a United Airlines flight headed toward Fairbanks spotted the JAL plane but saw nothing else in the sky nearby.

Military authorities were notified of the sighting within a few minutes of the initial report, but it's not known what — if anything — they did about it, Steucke said.

The JAL crew members were interviewed by the FAA upon arrival in Anchorage. Steucke said they all appeared to be "well-trained, professional, rational and not affected by drugs or alcohol."

He said all three reported that the blinking lights accompanied their plane for about 50 miles across the northern Alaska sky. The entire incident lasted about 30 minutes, Steucke said.

As for the time lag since the incident, Steucke said: "We didn't exactly broadcast it until the news media dug it up."
FAA can't explain lights in the north

The Associated Press

The Federal Aviation Administration said Tuesday it couldn't explain strange flashing lights which spooked the crew members of a Japan Air Lines 747 cargo plane as it flew over northern Alaska last month.

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The incident began at 6:19 p.m. on Nov. 17 as the JAL plane was headed for Anchorage on a flight from Europe via Iceland, on its way to Tokyo. As the aircraft entered U.S. airspace at the junction of the Canadian border and the Beaufort Sea, the pilot reported seeing unusual white and yellow flashing lights.

"The lights were approximately 6 miles away, at the same altitude of 35,000 feet, and traveling at the same speed and in the same direction as the JAL plane," the pilot reported.

Steucke said the pilot, called the air traffic control center, and asked if there was any reported traffic in the vicinity. A controller replied that there was no known traffic in the area, but that he had an unidentified blip on his radar.

Steucke said a subsequent review of the radar tapes did not reveal any such object, but that the controller insisted it was there.

As the lights continued to pace the 747, the pilot requested permission to change altitude. As he descended to 31,000 feet, the lights followed "in formation," Steucke said.

The pilot then requested permission to make a 360-degree turn to see if the lights would follow. Upon completing the maneuver, the pilot reported losing contact with the lights.

Steucke, said radar operators in Fairbanks picked up nothing on their screens in the vicinity of the JAL flight. And he said a United Airlines flight headed toward Fairbanks spotted the JAL plane but saw nothing else in the sky nearby.

Military authorities were notified of the sighting within a few minutes of the initial report, but it's not known what -- if anything -- they did about it, Steucke said.

The JAL crew members were interviewed by the FAA upon arrival in Anchorage. Steucke said they all appeared to be "well-trained, professional, rational and not affected by drugs or alcohol."

He said all three reported that the blinking lights accompanied their plane for about 50 miles across the northern Alaska sky. The entire incident lasted about 30 minutes, Steucke said.

As for the time lag since the incident, Steucke said: "We didn't exactly broadcast it until the news media dug it up."
NASA worker tracks UFO reports by pilots

By HAL BERNTON
Daily News business reporter

The mysterious flashing lights sighted by the crew of a Japan Air Lines cargo jet last November aren't the only strange things pilots have seen through their cockpit windows.

In the past 20 years, more than 3,000 sightings of UFOs have been reported by pilots, according to Richard Haines, a NASA scientist who tracks UFO sightings by pilots in his spare time.

"Some of them are very spectacular and very significant from the standpoint of getting a better idea on how to characterize the phenomena," said Haines.

He said the sightings are reported by military, civilian and commercial pilots who fly both national and international routes. UFO reports from Alaska pilots are relatively rare.

The sightings tend to occur in cycles that peak about every five years, Haines said. For the past two years, sightings have been in a trough.

Haines said many of the reports fall into two main categories.

"But I had to look at the data as an open-minded scientist and pretty soon realized that we are facing something totally different." NASA currently doesn't investigate any UFO sightings. But Haines, working out of his Los Altos, Calif., home on his own time, has clipped newspapers, interviewed pilots and talked with controllers to amass reports of more than 3,000 sightings.

Haines said he hopes to fly to Anchorage to investigate the Nov. 17 sighting by Capt. Kenju Terauchi, pilot of a JAL cargo plane en route from Iceland to an Anchorage refueling stop. The report was made public in late December.

Terauchi, a 47-year-old pilot with 20 years of experience, told United Press International that two small brightly lit objects and one enormous object - the size of two aircraft carriers - followed his jumbo jet for 400

SIGHTINGS: UFO reports

Continued from Page A-1

One category involves UFOs that suddenly appear within view of the cockpit and then disappear very rapidly. "The airplane is flying along essentially minding its own business. Then something comes up and does barrel rolls around the airplane."

Many other reports, including the Nov. 17 sighting by the JAL crew, involve UFOs that tail aircraft for periods ranging from a minute to more than two hours.

Haines' interest in UFOs results from his more than two decades spent working in NASA's man-in-space program. In the early 1960s, as he began studying visual optics in space, he encountered many reports from pilots who claimed to have seen UFOs.

"I thought I could explain all these strange phenomena as nothing more than strange lighting," said Haines, who now studies "human factors in space" at NASA's Ames Research Center in Mountain View, Calif.

"But I had to look at the data as an open-minded scientist and pretty soon realized that we are facing something totally different." NASA currently doesn't investigate any UFO sightings. But Haines, working out of his Los Altos, Calif., home on his own time, has clipped newspapers, interviewed pilots and talked with controllers to amass reports of more than 3,000 sightings.

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UFO sighting still a mystery

By ROBERT ENGELMAN
Scripps Howard News Service

A Federal Aviation Administration probe of a UFO that showed up on an air controller's screen in November was set back when a radar recording failed to show the craft's signal, an FAA spokesman said Friday.

Agency officials Friday also interviewed for a second time a Japanese pilot who was helped by an FAA air controller to evade what he said was an unidentified flying object over Alaska in mid-November.

But the UFO sighting remained a mystery, with FAA and Air Force sources saying it was unlikely that the origin of the craft described by Kenji Terauchi would ever be determined.

Terauchi, a veteran pilot ferrying JAL Flight 1628 from Iceland to Japan, told United Press International last Tuesday that on the evening of Nov. 17 he had been shadowed for more than 30 minutes and for nearly 400 miles over Alaska by a mysterious aircraft much larger than his own plane.

The object, which Terauchi said was twice the size of an aircraft carrier, was accompanied by two smaller aircraft, the pilot said. The night was clear, and FAA investigators who questioned the crew concluded in a report that they were rational and professional and showed no evidence of drug or alcohol use.

Anchorage FAA spokesman Paul Steucke said the agency was investigating the matter further only to find out if unknown aircraft had violated the Japan Air Lines plane's airspace, not to ascertain if the unknown craft had extraterrestrial origins. He said he did not expect Terauchi to add to the information in press accounts.

But Steucke confirmed that an FAA air traffic controller had spotted the unknown craft as a "weak, intermittent signal" on his own radar. The signal appeared within eight miles of the JAL aircraft and at the same speed and altitude.

When the recorded radar transmission was replayed later, however, there was no image of any aircraft except for the commercial airliner, Steucke said. He said it was possible the signal from the UFO was strong enough to be picked up while the incident was occurring but not strong enough to register on the radar recording system.

Officials with the Air Force's Alaskan Air Command initially told the FAA air controller they, too, could see the object's radar signal. But Friday, Capt. Larry Jenkins, a command spokesman, said the signal didn't last long enough to be confirmed and that the command now attributed the signal to electronic clutter.

"We're not doing any further investigation," Jenkins said.

The FAA has no systematic procedure for evaluating reports of unidentified flying objects. The Air Force once did, but abandoned such investigations more than 15 years ago, Jenkins said.

A spokesman for the North American Aerospace Defense Command in Colorado said officials there had no radar signal that could correlate with what Terauchi described and were not investigating the incident.

Terauchi and his crew of two told the FAA at 6:19 p.m. on Nov. 17 that they were fast approaching the lights of a large flying object and requested help in avoiding it.

An FAA controller, spotting the signal of the mysterious craft on radar, directed the JAL pilot to take evasive action, at one point approving a 360-degree turn to shake the object.

Steucke said both objects appeared to be traveling about 550 mph at 35,000 feet in altitude and traveled together for more than 350 miles.

"I haven't seen anything like this (situation) before," said Steucke, who has lived in Anchorage for 12 years and worked in the FAA for four. He said theories on the origin of the mysterious object varied from "a UFO to somebody else's (foreign) military aircraft."
The Federal Aviation Administration has stepped up efforts to determine the cause of wavering lights that led a Japan Air Lines jet across Alaska’s sky for nearly an hour in November.

"We’re looking at it to ensure that nobody didn’t violate airspace we control," spokesman Paul Steucke said Sunday. "We looked at it about six weeks ago, but then we’ve gotten a lot of public interest, so we went back and re-interviewed the pilot. He provided us with additional information."

Veteran pilot Kenji Terauchi told investigators Friday through an interpreter that three small lights that were perhaps no larger than eight feet across. He said the third light was on an aircraft, a huge darkened globe with a diameter of perhaps two aircraft carriers placed end-to-end, Steucke said.

The pilot said the large UFO showed up on his cockpit weather radar. But images on military radar screens at the time were dismissed as "clutter," and a blip that showed up on FAA screens was analyzed as a coincidental "split image" of the aircraft, Steucke said.

Radar tapes, transcribed interviews and radio messages are to be sent to the FAA in Washington, D.C., later this week for review, Steucke said.

A JAL spokeswoman Sunday said Terauchi was on a flight to Europe and was unavailable.

Flight 1626, with a three-man crew, left Iceland on Nov. 17 with a load of wine bound for Tokyo from Paris. Terauchi and his crew picked up the Boeing 747 in Iceland for the Polar leg of the flight to Anchorage.

The evening sky was clear as the jet, cruising at 525 knots, crossed into Alaska from Canada, just northeast of Fort Yukon. At 6:19 p.m. (AST), as the plane flew at 35,000 feet, Terauchi said he saw three lights eight miles in front of his aircraft.

The pilot reported the lights were yellow, amber and green, Steucke said, but not red, the international color for aircraft beacons.

"The two smaller ones moved a little bit, changed their angle. The larger ones did not show up on the weather radar on board," Steucke said. "The larger one did. It appeared to him it might be possible that the lights might be exhaust pipes, they kind of wavered but did not blink. His main concern was trying to determine whether he was overtaking another aircraft."

Steucke said the pilot reported he dimmed cockpit lights to ensure he was not seeing a reflection.

"He flew for about six minutes before he decided to report anything," Steucke said. "I can’t say I blame him for that."

Terauchi radioed Anchorage FAA air controllers, who direct all aircraft traffic.

The pilot reported the object was staying with him and controllers told him to take any evasive action needed. Terauchi decreased altitude to 31,000 feet, but the lights went down with him "in formation," Steucke said.

South of Fairbanks, Terauchi turned the plane in a complete circle to see if the lights would follow. "That was pretty clever," Steucke said. "It allowed him to eliminate any natural phenomenon which would have stayed stationary."

The lights vanished, heading east, when the JAL jet was about 80 miles north of Anchorage, Steucke said.
Investigators give November UFO

The Federal Aviation Administration has stepped up its investigation of waver ing lights that dogged a Japan Air Lines cargo jet across Alaska's night sky for nearly an hour in November, an official said Sunday.

"We're looking at it to ensure that nobody didn't violate airspace we control," said FAA spokesman Paul Steucke. "We looked at it about six weeks ago, but since then we've gotten a lot of public interest, so we went back and re-interviewed the pilot."

The veteran pilot, Kenji Terauchi, told investigators two of the lights were small, perhaps no larger than eight feet across. He said the third light was on an aircraft, a huge darkened globe with a diameter of perhaps two aircraft carriers placed end-to-end, Steucke said.

Terauchi said the large UFO showed up on his cockpit weather radar. But images on military radar screens at the time were dismissed as "clutter," and a blip that showed up on FAA screens was analyzed as a coincidental "split image" of the aircraft, Steucke said.

Radar tapes, transcribed interviews and radio messages are to be sent to the FAA in Washington, D.C., later this week for review, Steucke said.

A JAL spokeswoman Sunday said Terauchi was on a flight to Europe and was unavailable.

Flight 1628, with a three-man crew, left Iceland on Nov. 17 with a load of wine bound for Tokyo from Paris. Terauchi and his crew boarded the Boeing 747 in Iceland for the Anchorage leg of the trip.

The evening sky was clear as the jet, cruising at 525 knots, crossed into Alaska from Canada, just northeast of Fort Yukon. As the plane flew at 35,000 feet, Terauchi said he saw three lights eight miles in front of his aircraft.

The pilot reported the lights were yellow, amber and green, Steucke said, but not red, the international color for aircraft beacons.

"The two smaller ones moved a little bit, changed their angle. The smaller ones did not show up on the weather radar onboard," Steucke said. "The larger one did.

"It appeared to him it might be possible that the lights might be exhaust pipes, they kind of wavered but did not blink. His main concern was trying to determine whether he was overtaking another aircraft."

Steucke said the pilot reported he dimmed cockpit lights to ensure he was not seeing a reflection.

"He flew for about six minutes before he decided to report anything," Steucke said. "I can't say I blame him for that."

Terauchi radioed Anchorage FAA air controllers, who direct all aircraft traffic in the state, except for planes near airports, Steucke said. Fairbanks controllers checked their screens but saw only Flight 1628, Steucke said.

sighting a second look

ANCH TIMES
United Press International

ANCHORAGE, Jan. 3—The Federal Aviation Administration has reopened its inquiry into what happened the night a Japan Air Lines Boeing 747 cargo crew reported seeing unidentified flying objects (UFOs) over Alaska, an FAA spokesman said today.

FAA investigators interviewed Capt. Kenji Terauchi, the pilot, for a second time Friday and are reviewing all radar records from the evening of Nov. 17, 1986, when an unexplained blip appeared on radar screens as the JAL crew reported seeing mysterious lights.

"The reason we're exploring it is that it was a violation of airspace," FAA spokesman Paul Steucke said. "That may sound strange, but that's what it was."

When the incident first came to light last week, the FAA reported that it was no longer investigating and considered the matter an unexplained sighting.

However, a thorough review of available data in the case began Friday and will continue this week, Steucke said, noting that he is calling it an inquiry, not an investigation.

"The object of the inquiry—of collecting all the data and interviewing people—is to identify the object, if possible," Steucke said.

"However, considering the type of data we have available, no one considers it realistic that we can identify the object," he added.

The decision to reopen the inquiry was made by the regional director of the FAA, Steucke said.

An unknown object appeared on radar screens monitored by the Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center, the Alaska Air Command at Elmendorf Air Force Base and in the cockpit of the JAL plane.

Air Force officials have dismissed the unidentified blip as "random clutter," but Steucke said the FAA's radar system is designed to remove this kind of clutter.
Controller says unknown image tracked on radar

Image seemed to be following JAL cargo plane that reported sighting of UFO

By HAL BERNTON
Daily News business reporter

Three air traffic controllers tracked on radar an image that seemed to be following the Nov. 17 flight of a Japanese Air Lines cargo plane, according to one of the controllers who helped monitor the radar.

The captain of the JAL plane reported that an unidentified flying object was tailing his aircraft at the same location as the radar image.

"All three of us thought there was a track," said Sam Rich, a controller who has worked for the Federal Aviation Administration for more than a decade. A track is what air traffic controllers call the radar image of an aircraft.

In previous news releases, the Federal Aviation Administration reported only one controller sighting the mysterious object — described by the crew as waverering lights — on radar. That controller, whose name has not been released by the FAA, mistakenly interpreted a split image of the cargo plane as a second object, FAA officials said following a review of radar tapes.

On Thursday, FAA spokesman Paul Steege said he had no knowledge of additional controllers who had tracked the UFO — reported by the JAL's pilot and two-man crew.

Capt. Kenju Terauchi said the UFO tailed their plane for more than 300 miles as it crossed into Alaska airspace on route from Iceland to an Anchorage refueling spot.

Terauchi told United Press International that he saw two brightly lit objects and a third enormous object — twice the size of an aircraft carrier — follow the plane.

"There did appear to be a track near the plane about where he (Terauchi) said there was. So we kept looking." Another controller then told the pilot to make a series of turns and a descent in an effort to shake the UFO. Finally, as the plane headed south from Fairbanks, the controllers lost track of the UFO.

Since the November incident, the FAA launched a major review of the radar tapes; initially confirming the controller tracking, then dismissing it as a split or double-image of the JAL plane.

Rich confirmed that double images often occur on the FAA radar screen, which relies on computer-generated data. But the plane didn't fly through the areas where the split images normally occur.

The JAL pilot isn't the first pilot to report strange things in that northern corridor. During the past decade, there's been about a half dozen reports of unidentified lights from civilian and military pilots. "It's pretty real to them (the pilots)," Rich said.
NASA worker tracks UFO reports by pilots

By HAL BERNTON
Daily News business reporter

"The mysterious, flashing lights sighted by the crew of a Japan Air Lines cargo jet last November, aren't the only strange things pilots have seen through their cockpit windows," said Haines.

"In the past 20 years, more than 3,000 sightings of UFOs have been reported by pilots, according to Richard Haines, a NASA scientist who tracks UFO sightings by pilots in his spare time. "Some of them are very spectacular and very significant from the standpoint of getting a better idea on how to characterize the phenomenon," said Haines.

"The sightings tend to occur in cycles that peak about every five years," Haines said. A NASA scientist, who tracks UFO sightings by pilots in his spare time, said the reports have been in a trough. Haines said many of the reports fall into two main categories: Getting permission from an air traffic controller to fly both national and international routes.

"The FAA controller, who monitored the JAL plane, Flight 1628, reported seeing two contrails on radar, as near as five miles from the aircraft. The traffic (UFO) stayed with the JAL plane through turns and descents," said the controller in a statement released by the FAA.

The identity of the controller, however, has not been released.

The Military's Regional Operations Control Center reported picking up the UFO on radar about eight miles from the plane. The military center then lost track of the UFO for 11 minutes, then picked it up on a flight of two, according to a flight chronology released by the FAA. It picked up the UFO as they dropped back and to the right of the plane, then lost radar contact.

More recently, Steucke has said that neither the military nor the FAA put any faith in the "early sightings." Steucke said that the FAA has not yet interpreted a single UFO as a threat. The military has not yet reported its radar images which simply clutter.
JAL crew reports 'strange' sighting

Associated Press

The Federal Aviation Administration today said it couldn't explain strange, flashing lights that spooked the crew of a Japan Airlines 747 cargo plane as it flew over northern Alaska last month.

"We are not investigating as there is nothing to investigate," said Paul Steucke, FAA spokesman in Anchorage.

He said the military has been unable — or unwilling — to provide any information.

"They're saying nothing," Steucke said.

The incident began at 6:19 p.m. Nov. 17 as the JAL plane was headed for Anchorage on a flight from Europe via Iceland on its way to Tokyo. As the aircraft entered U.S. airspace at the juncture of the Canadian border and the Beaufort Sea, the pilot reported seeing unusual white and yellow flashing lights.

The lights were approximately 8 miles away, at the same altitude of 35,000 feet and traveling at the same speed and in the same direction as the JAL plane, the pilot reported.

Steucke said the pilot called the air traffic control center and asked if there was any known traffic in the vicinity. A controller replied that there was no known traffic in the area but that he had an unidentified blip on his radar.

Steucke said a subsequent review of the radar tapes did not reveal any such object, but that the controller insisted it was there.

As the lights continued to pace the 747, the pilot requested permission to change altitude. As he descended to 31,000 feet, the lights followed "in formation," Steucke said.

The pilot then requested permission to make a 360-degree turn to see if the lights would follow. Upon completing the maneuver, the pilot reported losing contact with the lights.

Steucke said radar operators in Fairbanks picked up nothing on their screens in the vicinity of the JAL flight. And, he said, a United Airlines flight headed toward Fairbanks spotted the JAL plane but saw nothing else in the sky nearby.

Military authorities were notified of the sighting within a few minutes of the initial report, but it's not known what — if anything — they did about it, Steucke said.

The JAL crew members were interviewed by the FAA upon arrival in Anchorage. They all appeared to be well trained, professional, rational and not affected by drugs or alcohol.

He said all three reported that the blinking lights accompanied their plane for about 50 miles across the northern Alaska sky. The entire incident lasted about 30 minutes. Steucke said.

As for the "time lag since the incident," Steucke said: "We didn't exactly broadcast it until the news media dug it up."
Public interest spurs on FAA's UFO investigation

The Federal Aviation Administration has stepped up efforts to determine the source of wavered lights that logged at Japan Airlines Lines, Inc., jet across Alaska's light sky for nearly an hour on November 17.

"We're looking at it to ensure that somebody didn't violate airspace," we control AA spokesman Paul Steucke Sunday. "We looked at it about six weeks ago, but once then we've gotten a lot of public interest, so we went back and re-interviewed the pilot."

He provided us with additional information. Veteran pilot Kenji Terauchi, told investigators through an interpreter that two of the lights were small, perhaps no larger than eight feet across. He said the third light was on an aircraft, a huge darkened globe with a diameter of perhaps two aircraft carriers, placed end-to-end, Steucke said.

The pilot said the large UFO showed up on his cockpit weather radar. But images on military radar screens at the time were dismissed as clutter, and a blip that showed up on FAA screens was analyzed as a coincidental "split image" of the aircraft, Steucke said.

Radar tapes, transcribed interviews and radio messages are to be sent to the FAA in Washington, D.C., late this week for review, Steucke said.

A JAL spokeswoman Sunday said Terauchi, was on a flight to Europe and was unavailable.

Flight 1626, with a three-man crew, left Iceland on Nov. 17 with a load of wines bound for Tokyo from Paris.

Terauchi and his crew picked up the Boeing 747 in Iceland for the Polar leg of the flight to Anchorage.

The evening sky was clear as the jet, cruising at 525 knots, crossed into Alaska from Canada, just northeast of Fort Yukon. At 6:39 p.m. (AST), as the plane flew at 35,000 feet, Terauchi said he saw three lights eight miles in front of his aircraft.

"The pilot reported the lights were yellow, amber and green," Steucke said, but not red, the international color for aircraft beacons.

"The two smaller ones moved a little bit, changed their angle. The smaller ones did not show up on the weather radar on board," Steucke said. "The larger one did.

"It appeared to him it might be possible that the lights might be exhaust pipes or kind of wavered but did not blink," his main concern was trying to determine whether he was overtaking

Another aircraft," Steucke said.

Terauchi radioed Anchorage, FAA air controllers who direct all aircraft traffic. The pilot reported the object was staying with him and controllers told him to take any evasive action needed.

Terauchi decreased altitude to 31,000 feet, but the lights went down with him in formation," Steucke said.

South of Fairbanks, Terauchi turned the plane into a complete circle to see if the lights would follow. The lights were pretty clever," Steucke said. "It allowed him to eliminate any natural phenomenon which would have stayed stationary.

The lights vanished, heading east, when the JAL jet was about 80 miles north of Anchorage. Steucke said.

ANCHOR NEWS 1-5-87
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"We're looking at it to ensure that somebody didn't violate airspace we control," said FAA spokesman Paul Steucke. "We looked at it about six weeks ago, but since then we've gotten a lot of public interest, so we went back and re-interviewed the pilot."

The veteran pilot, Kenji Terauchi, told investigators two of the lights were small, perhaps no larger than eight feet across. He said the third light was on an aircraft, a huge darkened globe with a diameter of perhaps two aircraft carriers placed end-to-end, Steucke said.

Terauchi said the large UFO showed up on his cockpit weather radar, but images on military radar screens at the time were dismissed as "clutter," and a blip that showed up on FAA screens was analyzed as "a coincidental split image" of the aircraft, Steucke said.

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UFO sighting still a mystery

BY ROBERT ENGELMAN
Scripps Howard News Service

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Agency officials Friday also interviewed for a second time a Japanese pilot who was helped by an FAA air controller to evade what he said was an unidentified flying object over Alaska in mid-November.

The UFO sighting remained under investigation with FAA and Air Force officials saying it was unlikely that the origin of the craft described by Kenji Terachi would ever be determined.

Terachi, a veteran pilot, serving JAL Flight 1628 from Iceland to Japan, told United Press International last Tuesday that, on the evening of Nov. 17, he had been shadowed for more than 30 minutes and for nearly 400 miles over Alaska by a mysterious aircraft much larger than his own plane.

The object, which Terachi said was twice the size of an aircraft carrier, was accompanied by two smaller aircraft, the pilot said. The night was clear, and FAA investigators who questioned the crew concluded, in a report that they were rational and professional and showed no evidence of drug or alcohol use.

Anchorage FAA spokesman Paul Steucke said the agency was investigating the matter further only to find out if unknown aircraft had violated the Japan Air Lines plane's airspace, not to ascertain if the unknown craft had extraterrestrial origins. He said he did not expect Terachi to add to the information in press accounts.

But Steucke confirmed that an FAA air traffic controller had spotted the unknown craft as a "weak, intermittent signal" on his own radar. The signal, he added, was helped by an FAA air controller to evade what he said was an unidentified flying object over Alaska in mid-November.

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Officials with the Air Force's Alaskan Air Command initially told the FAA air controller they too, could see the object's radar signal. But Friday, Capt. Larry Jenkins, a command spokesman, said the signal didn't last long enough to be confirmed and that the command now attributed the signal to electronic clutter.

"We're not doing any further investigation," Jenkins said.

The FAA has no systematic procedure for evaluating reports of unidentified flying objects. The Air Force once did, but abandoned such investigations more than 15 years ago, Jenkins said.

A spokesman for the North American Aerospace Defense Command in Colorado said officials there had no radar signal that could correlate with what Terachi described and were not investigating the incident.

Terachi and his crew of two told the FAA at 8:19 p.m. on Nov. 17 that they were fast approaching the lights of a large flying object and requested help in avoiding it.

An FAA controller, spotting the signal of the mysterious craft on radar, directed the JAL pilot to take evasive action, at one point approving a 360-degree turn to shake the object.

Steucke said both objects appeared to be traveling about 550 mph at 35,000 feet in altitude and traveled together for more than 300 miles.

"I haven't seen anything like this (situation) before," said Steucke, who has lived in Anchorage for 12 years and worked in the FAA for four. He said theories on the origin of the mysterious object varied from "a UFO to somebody else's (foreign) military aircraft."
That was no UFO

THERE'S NO big mystery about the strange flashing lights, seen in the sky over northern Alaska by a Japan Airlines crew flying into Anchorage from Europe.

Sure, there's been a lot of talk about the possibility that the lights belonged to some strange unidentified flying object from another planet somewhere out there in space.

But we know that isn't true.

So, what if the eyewitnesses aboard the JAL Boeing 747 cargo plane reported that the lights followed, at about eight miles distance, even when the aircraft's altitude was brought from 35,000 feet down to 31,000 feet?

And what difference does it make if the lights followed the plane for more than 50 minutes as it sped from Canadian airspace down toward Fairbanks, on its path to Anchorage?

THAT JUST makes it all the more simple to explain. After all, this happened on the night of Nov. 17. And the flight path was on line with North Pole, Alaska.

Simple.

That was just Santa Claus up there at 35,000 feet on a training flight with his reindeer, getting ready for Christmas Eve.

And you'd think all those brilliant fellows over at the Federal Aviation Agency could figure that out, wouldn't you?
ON THE COVER 44
Young Prince Edward's sudden and surprising exit from the rigorous life of the Royal Marines has all Britain wondering: Is he soft or courageous? Is his old man, Prince Philip, a bully or a defender of proud, healthy tradition? After all, military service didn't seem to hurt the Princes Charles and Andrew. Still, it may just be time to rethink those centuries-old rules of royalty.

Cover photograph by Tim Graham/Sygma
Insets, left to right: Newspix International, ©Lionel Cherruauit, Robin Nunn, Photographers International

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THROUGH THE ALASKAN DARKNESS
KENJU TERAUCHI, A 747 PILOT, IS PURSUED BY A UFO—OR SO HE CLAIMS

As the Japan Air Lines 747 cargo jet winged through the night skies over northern Alaska last Nov. 17 there was no hint of anything out of the ordinary. For the three-man cockpit crew of flight 1628, the leg from Reykjavik to Anchorage was a routine milk run, though the hold was brimming with cases of Beaujolais for the Japanese market. Then around 6 p.m., with the plane cruising smoothly at 35,000 feet, Capt. Kenju Terauchi, 47, sighted "two columns of light" piercing the darkness about a mile ahead and some 30 degrees to his left. "I thought it might be a military aircraft," he recalls, "so I radioed Anchorage flight control to ask, 'Is there another plane near here?' Anchorage replied, 'The only traffic is you.'"

As for the pilot's account of the bizarre events that followed, Steven Spielberg could hardly have scripted it better. "Suddenly the lights came to within 500 to 1,000 feet of the plane," says Terauchi, who saw "two dark cylinders with row after row of spinning amber lights, one row spinning in one direction, the next in the opposite." These were no ordinary lights—"They were incredibly bright but cast no shadow," he insists. "I was sure it wasn't another plane; it moved so quickly that I realized it was not something human but had to do with very high technology, very high intelligence. I thought it might be a UFO."

An 18-year-experience JAL flier with 19 years experience, Terauchi was astonished at the spectacle, yet says he felt no fear. The twin cylinders "flew in formation, and I realized they had better control of their craft than I did, so there was no fear of collision." He watched mesmerized for three to five minutes as the UFO sped ahead and disappeared. In its place the pilot saw two white, fluorescent-like lights perhaps eight miles away. He flipped on his weather radar and got a faint blip on his screen. Gradually Terauchi's 747 overtook the apparition and, against the glow of Fairbanks' city lights far below, he glimpsed a startling silhouette—a giant ball "the size of two aircraft carriers" with protruding lights and a light band through the middle.

Since Anchorage air controllers had registered a radar target near flight 1628, they called for a backup radar check from the regional military control center. The U.S. Air Force controllers reported seeing a blip similar to Terauchi's, but called back a minute later to say the signal was gone. Terauchi nevertheless received permission to make any course changes "needed to avoid the traffic." As the 747 flew a 360-degree turn, says Terauchi, the UFO "followed along in the same beautiful formation." Finally, at 6:53, all sightings ceased, and flight 1628 proceeded to land in Anchorage without further incident.

Officials from the Federal Aviation Administration's Anchorage office and JAL promptly launched an investigation. Far from providing a reassuring
Controversy

explanation, the probe has served only
to deepen the mystery.
The customary explanations of sup-
posed UFO sightings—special climatic
conditions, refraction or reflection of
light from another source—have all
been suggested but none seems ap-
propriate. What about the radar
signals? The Air Force can't vouch for
what Terauchi saw on his weather ra-
dar and now attributes its own brief
blip to "electronic clutter," possibly a
radar echo.

More intriguing is what Terauchi's
crew, copilot Takanori Tamefuji and
flight engineer Yoshio Tsukuda, saw or
didn't see. Both sighted a peculiar light
tracking their plane, but neither wit-
essed the closer encounters with the
UFO. The pilot's suggestion that his
crew was too busy with flight duties
seems curious and, still more perplex-
ing, news reports suggest there was
minimal cockpit chatter of the "What-
was-that?" variety.
The FAA has discounted the possi-
bility that Terauchi might have halluci-
nated the whole experience due to fa-
tigue or the influence of drugs. And no
one has accused the crew of taking il-
licit sips from the cargo. Although the
crew was not tested, the FAA solemnly
reported that "crew members were
not influenced by drugs or alcohol."

Ultimately the issue hinges on the
credibility of Captain Terauchi, a one-
time Japan Air Self Defense fighter
jock and a pilot with an impeccable
record. No one could suggest a reason
why he might want to invent a cocka-
mamie yarn and risk professional ridi-
cule. Terauchi contends that other pi-
lots have seen things in the skies but
don't report them because doing so is
bad for one's career.

To date the FAA takes the position
that while Terauchi is a responsible pi-
lot, there is scant evidence to corrobo-
rate his strange sighting. But the cap-
tain is not done with UFOs. Just last
week, flying a similar cargo mission
from Europe to Anchorage, he said it
happened again. "Please record this," he
radioed air traffic control excitedly,
lapping partly into Japanese. "Irregular
lights, looks like a space ship." This
time there were no unexplained radar
contacts, though Terauchi's cockpit
companions (a different crew from
flight 1628's) again were uncertain as
to what, if anything, had happened. The
FAA will investigate. Watch this space.
—Written by Dan Chu, reported by
Nancy Faber
Strange Encounter Over Alaska

Was an FAA-confirmed sighting really a UFO?

It was big—bigger than anything known to fly, according to an experienced pilot who watched it from as little as eight miles off. It was fast—fast enough to keep pace with a 747 jet for half an hour as it flew over the empty Alaska wilderness. It was flanked by two smaller objects that maneuvered with it; together the three objects were about eight miles off, at the plane’s altitude of 35,000 feet. Terauchi radioed FAA controllers and received permission to descend to 31,000 feet. After a minute the controllers asked if the lights were still there. “It is descending in formation,” the pilot replied.

Terauchi said he glimpsed the full craft only once, in profile. “It was a very big one—two times bigger than an aircraft carrier,” he reported. He sketched it as walnut-shaped, with a wide flat rim and bulges above and below. According to FAA spokesman Paul Steucke of the Anchorage regional office, Terauchi located the object above and below. According to FAA spokes-

Although the Federal Aviation Administration confirmed last week that some sort of sighting did take place aboard Japan Air Lines Flight 1628, much of what happened remains a mystery. The incident began on the evening of Nov. 17, with veteran pilot Kenjyu Terauchi, 47, at the controls of the JAL cargo plane, which was en route to Anchorage from Reykjavik, Iceland, the middle leg of a Europe-to-Tokyo flight. The weather was clear as the jet crossed the Beaufort Sea off Alaska’s north coast. Suddenly Terauchi and his two fellow crew-

The ‘Onion Field’ Parole: Rose Bird’s Parting Shot

Californians may have voted to unseat Rose Bird, but the controversial chief justice of the state’s Supreme Court—

Last word: The chief justice of Los Angeles, police officer Ian Campbell, who was executed at point-blank range, was more than a Birkenhead. The incident was detailed in Jerome Agel’s best-selling novel “The Onion Field.” Both men were sentenced to death.

Powell and Smith were given life sentences, which made them eligible for parole. Powell kept his nose clean, and in 1977 the parole board said he could be released in 1982.

Hard times: The parole decision was reaffirmed twice, but when a citizens group mounted a protest, the board failed to follow through on its public vow to uphold the original decision. Still, it’s doubtful Powell will be on the street soon. Gov. George Deukmejian, an unrelenting critic of Bird’s, has pledged to name new and order hard-line to

Powell has managed to have one last

with his own on-board weather radar. Both Air Force and civilian flight controllers reported briefly seeing echoes of what might have been another craft nearby the JAL flight. But when radar tapes covering the period were replayed by FAA investigators, Steucke says, the reported echoes could not be found. The Air Force, he added, is now attributing the supposed radar sightings to “clutter.”

A mystery: Approaching Fairbanks, Terauchi steered his plane in a 360-degree circle, but the object stayed with him, finally disappearing as the 747 approached Anchorage. FAA officials interviewed the crew on the ground and found them, in Steucke’s words, “professional, rational, well-trained people.” The FAA confirmed the incident after inquiries from Japanese reporters, who heard about it from a relative of one of the crewmen. But it has closed its inquiry into the sighting. “It’s a mystery,” Steucke concedes, “but, really, we have nothing here to investigate. The controller saw what he saw... as far as what it could be, on the extreme side it could have been the proverbial unknown object, or possibly military aircraft from the United States, Canada or some foreign country.”

As for Terauchi, he told a UPI reporter that he believes the object he saw over the Alaska sky that night must have come from another planet with a civilization far more advanced than ours. Only that can explain, he says lightly, their interest in his cargo: cases of French Beaujolais wine.
Shooting down a UFO

WELL, shucks.
That darn UFO, says a fellow who apparently is one of the nation’s most respected investigators of unidentified flying objects, was just the planet Jupiter hanging low on the horizon.

That’s what confused the Japan Air Lines pilot as he flew south across the dark Alaskan sky last November.

Adding further to the illusion of something odd in the sky was the fact that Mars was just below and to the right of Jupiter at the time, says the UFO expert. And that led to Capt. Kenyu Ter-auchi’s report that he initially saw two strange lights.

THERE’S no reason for pizzazz.

Seeing what we wish were true

Dear Editor:
The mystery of the UFOs remains.

I’ve arrived at an explanation! People have dreams, or UFO encounters and then awoke to realize the experience was just a dream. Supposedly, an airline pilot was relaxing on the shore of a remote lake and suddenly realized the lights were a UFO and his dream.

At that moment, the pilot “sees” a UFO and it does impossible things. The “pilot’s friend” approaches and the UFO vanishes. The pilot would regard the experience as very real. While daydreaming, consciousness is not fully aware of reality and in such a state the dream mechanism in the brain could provide consciousness with a dream; in Freud’s terms, the fulfillment of a wish to see a UFO. Since the pilot would not realize he had been more unconscious than conscious and does not awake to remember having been in a dream the pilot would swear the incident to have been real.

The mystery of the UFOs remains until we are given to give authenticity to the event. As the pilot has many years of flying experience and a respectable reputation, his story tends to be believed by many because they too have a wish for UFOs to be true. They are no different from Star Trek fans and their obsession with science fiction.

Permit the dreams are seeing humanity’s future voyage into space and we will provide others out there somewhere with “encounters of the third kind.” If we would have a religious future, or an atomic holocaust, their realizations would be dream-like. In the search they would become created by the most sensitive dreamers. If we dream but think we think that money will solve our problems we’ll continue to destroy our future.

Whatever resists our efforts would be considered wrong, even evil and be just reason for a nuclear war.

Jack Hughes
WASHINGTON—Researchers, trying to document that the government recognizes the existence of unidentified flying objects, believe that Washington has tried to keep UFO information under wraps. "We've been dealing with a kind of cosmic Watergate," said UFO researcher Stanton T. Friedman at a briefing Friday on this weekend's "International Symposium on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena, 1947-1987." Friedman is one of the scheduled participants in the weekend session at American University coinciding with the 40th anniversary of the first reported UFO sighting on June 24, 1947. Friedman said that the government has been able to keep the lid on its UFO program, which began with the so-called Majestic-12 group under the Eisenhower administration, because only a few people keep the information.
Skeptics brace themselves for another attack of UFOmania

BY CURT SUPLEE
The Washington Post

Heads up, America. They’re here. Again.

After a 10-year lull in public interest about UFOs, 1987 looks to be the Year of the Saucer — or, if not a whole cabinetful of cosmological crockery. According to leading susceptibility indicators, we’re in for a deluge of UFOmania that’ll make the Galveston flood look like a bathtub ring.

Three reputable publishers — Random House, Morrow and Atlantic Monthly Press — are releasing major, non-fiction accounts of human encounters with extraterrestrials this fall.

Popular infatuation with the UFO, sighted by a Japan Air Lines pilot over Fairbanks in November, has grown sky-high, forcing the Federal Aviation Administration into the multi-storey business of answering the ravenous demand the agency is now selling information packages for $194.30 each containing tapes of the crew statements by air controllers, the pilot’s drawings and color photographs of the craft.

Our membership has gone up 10 percent in the past two months,” says Walt Andrus, international director of the 1,500-member Mutual UFO Network, and our mail has doubled. People are realizing that there is something to this after all.

It’s been building for quite a while,” says Bruce Maccabee, TV research physicist and chairman of the Washington-based fund for UFO Research. And the new books, he believes, will provoke “an outcry for more information” from a galvanized public. The rejecters haven’t realized what’s going on yet.

Mass curiosity about paranormal freakery has hit its apogee. "Channelers" — a new species of medium purporting to lease their larynxes to astral spirits — are being taken seriously outside the tabloids. Citizen authors know more about Shirley MacLaine’s multiple past lives than Franklin Roosevelt’s one. Ora Roberts reports "born-to-torn" combat with Satan himself. Bookstores and newstands are doing a brisk business in supernatural subjects from aura to crystals.

The sour malaise and ’doomsday anxiety’ sweeping across the nation are of the sort that, in the past, have proved propitious for cosmic orient, in general, and airborne dinervare in particular. Two weeks ago, a puny 20-second flare over New York and Connecticut resulted in hundreds of phone calls. Add the darkling shambles of the Reagan regime (maybe they’ll skip that "Take me to your leader" stuff this time), and who knows what demons will rise from the barren psychic muck?

One thing’s for sure: They will be nothing like the wisecracking critters we claimed to see in the ’50s.

Whidell Stield, best known as a novelist.
FAA has no conclusion about UFO

By HAL BERINTON
Daily News reporter

The Federal Aviation Administration Thursday released the results of its investigation of the celebrated Nov. 17 sighting of UFOs by a Japanese Air Lines crew. There was first-person testimony from the JAL crew members, statements from controllers and reams of radar data. Everything but a conclusion.

"The FAA does not have enough evidence," FAA spokesman Paul Stauke said after the press conference. "The FAA originally said radar data confirmed a UFO sighting in the area. But after a lengthy review of tapes, the agency determined that three controllers on duty that day were mistaken — the radar did not pick up an object.

However, reporters who flocked to the press conference from as far away as Japan and Philadelphia did not go away empty-handed. Each received a free copy of the FAA's anthology of the event, a thick packet of documents, flying over McGrath. As two pilots examined a weather radar, they noticed a "target" out in front of them.

"Up at our altitude, (35,000 feet) ... you haven't had any UFO reports lately?" one of the pilots radioed the FAA controller.

The crew reported the target quickly moved off their radar screen at an estimated speed of 300 miles a minute. They reset their screen from a 50-mile to a 100-mile radius. They briefly snied..."
UFO: FAA releases reams of data from investigation, but comes to no conclusion about pilot's sighting

The FAA did not have ground radar coverage in the McGrath area, so there was no way to confirm the plane's sighting. Agency officials interviewed crew members after they landed, but formed no opinion about the Alaska Airlines sighting.

FAA officials Thursday had more to say about the November sighting of two small UFOs and an enormous "mothership." The JAL plane's initial report appeared to be partially confirmed by the controller tapes by New Jersey-based agency technicians that concluded the controllers mistakenly interpreted a split-image of the JAL plane as a second object.

"It is unfortunate," Steucke said, that the split image appeared "just when a pilot was reporting seeing something outside his aircraft."

Steucke said, the FAA launched its three-month examination of the November sighting to make sure some strange aircraft wasn't menancing the safety of the air traffic control system. Since the radar didn't pick up a second aircraft, the FAA now considers the air traffic system safe and the case closed.

"We are not in the UFO business and don't intend to be," Steucke said.

Does that mean the FAA doesn't believe the reports of the sightings from the JAL crew? Not at all. "As far as we know, the whole crew are people of integrity and did report what they saw accurately," Steucke said.

Kenju Terauchi, the pilot of the JAL plane, describes the sightings in almost mystical terms in a December report titled "Meeting the Future" to JAL management.

"Once upon a time if a hunter saw a TV, how did he describe it to other people? My experience was similar to this," he began his tale. "There was no danger, but it created many questions that a human being cannot answer."

Terauchi said he first saw two spaceships that hovered almost stationary, then rapidly pulsed across the sky.

"Most unexpectedly, two spaceships stopped in front of our face, shooting off lights. The inside cockpit shined brightly and I felt warm in the face," Terauchi wrote in his report to JAL officials.

Later, as the JAL plane flew over Fairbanks, Terauchi reported a third UFO, a huge spaceship the size of two battleships. He said the spaceship followed the JAL plane south of Fairbanks, then abruptly disappeared as controllers directed a United Airlines plane to check out the sighting.

In an interview with FAA officials, Terauchi said the November incident was the third UFO sighting of his 25-year career as a pilot. A fourth sighting Terauchi reported in January he later dismissed as the lights of a town reflected in the clouds by an air inversion.

Co-pilot Takanori Tamefuji and engineer Yoshio Tsukuba said the November sighting was their first. Both, in interviews with FAA officials, confirmed parts of Terauchi's account.

Tsukuba, the flight engineer, said he saw strange white and amber-colored lights that glowed with a strange intensity that "I cannot describe ... not even in Japanese."

But in two interviews with FAA officials, he said he didn't know whether the objects were UFOs. "When I was interviewed here the first time by FAA personnel," Tsukuba said in his second interview, "I was not sure whether the object was a UFO or not. My mind has not changed since then."

Tamefuji said he spotted the first series of lights about the same time as the captain, and that they followed the plane. But he said he'd not make out the large object spotted over Fairbanks because it followed on Terauchi's side of the plane.
Skeptics brace themselves for another attack of UFOria

By CURT SUPLEE
The Washington Post

Heads up, America. They're here again.

After a 10-year lull in public interest about UFOs, 1987 looks to be the Year of the Saucer — if not a whole cabinetful of cosmological crockery. According to Leading Susceptibility Indicators, we're in for a deluge of UFOria that'll make the Galveston flood look like a bathtub ring.

Three reputable publishers — Random House, Morrow and Atlantic Monthly Press — are releasing major non-fiction accounts of humans contacted, abducted or tortured by extraterrestrials.

Popular infatuation with the UFO sighted by a Japan Air Lines pilot over Fairbanks in November has grown sky-high — forcing the Federal Aviation Administration into the mail-order business. To meet the ravenous demand, the agency is now selling information packages at $19.43 each containing tapes of the crew, statements by air-controllers, the pilot's drawings and color photographs of radar images.

"Our membership has gone up 10 percent in the past two months," says Walt Andrus, international director of the 1,500-member Mutual UFO Network, "and our mail has doubled. People are realizing that there is something to this after all."

"It's been building for a while," says Bruce Maccacaro, a research physicist and chairman of the Washington-based Fund for UFO Research. And the new books, he believes, will provoke "an outcry for more information" from a galvanized public. "The negatives haven't realized what's going on yet."

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The sour malaise and doomsday anxiety seeping across the nation are of the sort that, in the past, have proved propitious for cosmic omens: In general and airborne fummery in particular. (Two weeks ago, a puny 20-second flare over New York and Colorado resulted in hundreds of phone calls.) Add the darkening shambles of the Reagan regime. They will skip that "Take Me to Your Leader" stuff this time, and who knows what demonic will rise from the hectic psychic muck?

One thing is sure: They will be nothing like the whistling-creatures we claimed to see in the 50s.

Whitley Strieber, best known as a novelist...
The case is "unadulterated hogwash," says Walt Andrus of the Center for UFO Studies in Glenview, Ill. Andrus and several other UFOlogists, after more or less research, concluded that Meier's story cannot be verified, that theUFOnessamath of the first book, "Missing Time," and there'll be another after "Intruders," though he concedes that "you have to ipso facto be crazy" to believe in his thesis. "But if this is true, then it's the biggest story there is."

Gary Kinder agrees. His book, "Light Years" (Atlantic Monthly Press, April), re-examines the notorious case of Edward Meier, a Swiss laborer who in the late 1960s and early 1970s convinced thousands that he was in constant contact with an amicable "friend from thePLEIADES.

Meier amassed hundreds of photographs of the aliens' crafts, thousands of pages of notes on their science and moral lore (ostensibly conveyed to him by Semjase, a comely and golden-haired member of the Pleiadian race), and videos of UFOs. Surprisingly, Meier also showed the original investigators in the Meier case (who hold the copyright to all of the film, tape recordings and other primary materials) were looking for someone to write a book. After seeing the films and photos in the fall of 1983, Kinder was hooked.

Three years, a modest advance and $30,000 in expenses later, he turned up a number of name-brand scientists, technical experts and eyewitnesses who stipulate that Meier's films, metal samples and recorded saucer sounds — whatever they are — are no simple hoax. (Research chemist Marcel Vogel, a 27-year veteran of IBM and holder of numerous patents, examined a metal specimen Meier allegedly got from the aliens. Though he wouldn't say it was extraterrestrial, he confirmed that "with any technology that I know of, I couldn't not achieve this one this planet.") By the end of the narrative, the colorful case becomes plausible, if not convincing. Though "the truth of the Meier contacts will never be known," Kinder says, "I thought the field fascinating. There really is something flying around out there. I'm convinced of that."

It's still a minority opinion in the science establishment: Astronomer-exobiologist Carl Sagan, who regards the search for intelligent life in the universe as "extremely important," thinks the odds against its landing here are, well, astronomical: Even assuming that our galaxy contains 1 million advanced civilizations, each one would have to send 10,000 missions a year just to find us among the billions of possible venues."

"But," says Kinder, "if you were to look at the UFO phenomenon — namely, "a genetically focused study of the UFO; Americans look to the skies while skeptics prepare counterattack..."
Did Alaska UFO just want plane’s wine?

By JIM FAIN
WASHINGTON—Flying saucers are as pure a blessing as fresh air and snowflakes, but—in our churlish way—we insist on thinking they’re out to get us.

The record proves these celestial spirits never harm a soul, though some humans do themselves in by chasing them too far, too high or too fast. Saucers are friendly, inquisitive, fun-loving. Only pointy-head bureaucrats call them UFOs.

When a Japanese cargo pilot spotted a giant walnut of a saucer, two times bigger than an aircraft carrier, flying formation with him over the Arctic recently, he reacted with characteristic humanoid skittishness. He got FAA permission to take evasive maneuvers.

Any student of psychographic knows flapjack eaters are laid back and mellow. If saucer crews were mean-spirited ideologues like Patrick Buchanan, they would not eat flapjacks. They would breakfast on All-Bran and fried eggs like other curmudgeons.

Saucers contribute to the gross national product, providing weekly articles for the tabloids supermarkets sell. These frequently deal with food, as when a saucer several years ago hijacked a truck load of peanut butter. It was returned after tasting, much as a magician hands back your tie after appearing to mangle it. Though saucers are incorrigibly mischievous, there’s not a mean or mendacious bone in them.

The current Weekly World News features a sketch of a female space alien under a headline, “UFO Crash Survivors on the Loose.”

This lady was on a starship that crashed in Brazil last summer, escaped from a detention center and may be on her way to the U.S., the tabloid says. Then, as humans invariably do, it speculates about harm coming to people through extra-terrestrial viruses.


Why do people insist on thinking saucers are hostile? Probably because we make everything over in our own image. We’re too guilt-ridden to grasp innocence, too fearful to appreciate radiance. Because we lack the zest to enjoy the absurdity of life, we make everything out to be as grim as we are.

Saucers are for merriment, high jinks, fun. Unlike the bashful Nessie of the Scottish loch or Yeti of the high Himalayas, saucers are spirited extroverts, sociable as puppies. Astronomers say a huge galaxy was born the other day. Small wonder the saucers are out in force, lighting up the heavens. What better way to mark the birth of new stars?

When the next flying saucer shimmers up to you, grab on and soar. If peanut butter sticks to your palate, ask for wine. The saucer that glommed onto the Japanese plane the other day knew exactly what it was doing. That 747 was loaded to its gannels with new Beaujolais.

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Tough airport marketing efforts

By SUE CROSS
Associated Press Writer
JUNEAU—Alaska officials have been trumpeting stopover business at the Anchorage and Fairbanks international airports, but state officials are asking state officials to boost their airport marketing efforts.

"Another state will be hurt," says Dale Fox, director of the Alaska Visitors Association. Fox was in Juneau today to ask state officials to boost their airport marketing efforts.

But according to the proposed resolution, Alaska airports' success in winning stopover business is being jeopardized by development airports cities as ting into "Anch" education.
We’re Going to Ruin the Ending: The Split-Radar Returns Did It

By Ken Wells
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Publishers who sell paperback mysteries for $2.98 may be envious of the Federal Aviation Administration’s regional office in Anchorage, Alaska. The office is offering a pricey mystery that’s drawing a lot of attention—a $194.30 unbound collection of reports dealing with the celebrated sighting of a UFO by a Japan Air Lines pilot over the Arctic Ocean last Nov. 17.

“We’ve sold 50 complete packages so far,” and received about 300 orders for portions, says Paul Steucke, an FAA spokesman in Anchorage.

Glossy Color Photos

In consideration of UFO-watchers whose resources aren’t astronomical, the agency will sell separately any of the 20 items in the collection. These include a $50 cassette recording of the conversation between flight controllers and the JAL crew during the 50-minute encounter, and a $56 set of glossy color photos of radar readouts. The prices are based on the cost of reproducing the materials.

Orders continue to roll in despite the FAA’s conclusion—in a separate report that costs nothing—that it couldn’t substantiate the sighting. Its technical experts in Atlantic City, N.J., said blips on a radar screen that appeared to confirm an object in the vicinity of the JAL jet were actually “split-radar returns”—shadows of the plane’s primary echo.

The conclusion was bolstered, says Mr. Steucke, by a report of a United Airlines pilot who, at the request of Anchorage flight controllers, flew near the path of the JAL jet at the time of the mysterious radar readings. He saw no other aircraft.

The FAA normally doesn’t get into either the UFO or the publishing business. But it investigated this incident because an aircraft might have ventured unreported into the airspace of the JAL cargo carrier, which was en route from Iceland to Anchorage, Mr. Steucke says.

A Pilot’s View

And though the agency routinely makes certain reports available, it has been as mystified by the demand for its costly documents as some people are by the sighting itself. But the graphic testimony of Kenji Terauchi, the JAL pilot who reported the sighting, probably hasn’t hurt sales.

He told the FAA immediately after the incident that he had been followed by two strands of lights, pulsating with amber glows, and a huge craft that appeared to be a “mother ship.” He later said the large UFO was the “size of two battleships” and appeared to be made by “a very high technology and intelligence.”

New Healing Salve

A healing salve prepared from blood is being developed.

A University of Minnesota surgeon, David R. Knighton, explains that after a burn, cut or other wound the body produces substances that trigger tissue regrowth and healing. Some of these healing factors have been tracked to the platelets, tiny plate-shaped particles that help blood to clot.

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A Pilot’s View

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He told the FAA immediately after the incident that he had been followed by two strands of lights, pulsating with amber glows, and a huge craft that appeared to be a “mother ship.” He later said the large UFO was the “size of two battleships” and appeared to be made by “a very high technology and intelligence.”

The conclusion was bolstered, says Mr. Steucke, by a report of a United Airlines pilot who, at the request of Anchorage flight controllers, flew near the path of the JAL jet at the time of the mysterious radar readings. He saw no other aircraft.

The FAA normally doesn’t get into either the UFO or the publishing business. But it investigated this incident because an aircraft might have ventured unreported into the airspace of the JAL cargo carrier, which was en route from Iceland to Anchorage, Mr. Steucke says.

A Pilot’s View

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Perceived Quality

“People like it aren’t available, thrive for a sim...
FAA Reopens Its Inquiry Into UFOs

Objects Violated Alaskan Airspace

ANCHORAGE, Jan 3—The Federal Aviation Administration has reopened its inquiry into what happened the night a Japan Air Lines Boeing 747 cargo crew reported seeing unidentified flying objects (UFOs) over Alaska; an FAA spokesman said today.

FAA investigators interviewed Capt. Kenji Terauchi, the pilot, for a second time Friday and are reviewing all radar records from the evening of Nov. 17, 1986, when an unexplained blip appeared on radar screens as the JAL crew reported seeing mysterious lights.

"The reason we're exploring it is that it was a violation of airspace," an FAA spokesman Paul Steucke said.

"That may sound strange, but that's what it was."

"When the incident first came to light last week, the FAA reported that it was no longer investigating and considered the matter an unexplained sighting."

However, a thorough review of available data in the case began Friday and will continue this week, Steucke said, noting that he is calling it an inquiry, not an investigation.

"The object of the inquiry is to collect all the data and interviewing people—is to identify the object, if possible," he added.

"However, considering the type of data we have available, no one considers it realistic that we can identify the object," he added.

The decision to reopen the inquiry was made by the regional director of the FAA, Steucke said.

An unknown object appeared on radar screens monitored by the Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center, the Alaska Air Command at Elmendorf Air Force Base and in the cockpit of the JAL planes.

Air Force officials have dismissed the unidentified blip as "random clutter," but Steucke said the FAA's radar system is designed to remove this kind of clutter.
ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — If you want an inside look at a Japan-Air Lines pilot's recent claim that he saw a UFO, the Federal Aviation Administration will send you everything you ever wanted to know about the incident for $194.30.

The complete package includes tapes of interviews with crew members, spaceship drawings by the JAL pilot and air controller statements, even four glossy color photos of regenerated radar data.

The unusual FAA mail-order offer is an effort to cope with enormous public interest in the November sighting, said spokesman Paul Steucke.

Since the pilot's claim was publicly disclosed, the FAA's Anchorage office has received information requests from more than 200 members of the news media, as well as 46 requests from individuals.

For those on tight budgets, the FAA's UFO package can be broken down into less extensive tidbits, from a $50 tape of the crew's radio transmissions to a 30-cent FAA form summarizing the sighting. Orders of less than $5 are free, and can be addressed to the FAA at 701 C St., Box 14, Anchorage, Alaska, 99513.

JAL Capt. Kenjyu Terauchi reported on Nov. 17 that his Boeing 747 cargo jet was shadowed by two belts of light as it crossed into Alaska airspace on a flight from Iceland to Anchorage.

In an encounter that lasted about 50 minutes, Terauchi also reported seeing a third aircraft, a huge spaceship which he said was the size of two aircraft carriers. He relayed the sighting to Anchorage FAA flight controllers, who saw what they thought was an object on their radar screens.

Philip J. Klass, an editor of Aviation Week and Space Technology and a longtime investigator of claimed UFO sightings, has investigated the incident and concluded that the pilot was actually seeing an unusually bright image of the planet Jupiter and possibly Mars.

The FAA is scheduled to release on Thursday the results of its investigation of the sighting.
ANCHORAGE, Alaska — If you want to know more about a Japan Air Lines (JAL) pilot’s recent claim that he saw a UFO, the Federal Aviation Administration will send you a whole package about the incident for $194.30.

The package includes tapes of interviews with crew members, spaceship drawings by the JAL pilot and air controller statements, even four glossy color photos of regenerated radar data.

The unusual FAA mail-order offer is an effort to cope with enormous public interest in the November sighting, said spokesman Paul Steucke.

For those on tight budgets, the FAA’s UFO package can be broken down. The agency is offering 20 individual items, ranging from a $50 cassette tape of communications between the controllers and the flight crew to a 30-cent copy of an FAA form summarizing the sighting. Orders of less than $5 are free.

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Philip Kluss, an editor with Aviation Week and Space Technology, has investigated the incident and concluded that the pilot was actually seeing an unusually bright image of the planet Jupiter and possibly Mars.
Strange Sighting Over Alaska Revives UFO Debate

J. ANTONIO HUNEESUS

The media's recent interest in a UFO incident in Alaska has shown that "flying saucers" are still alive and kicking. Despite four decades of official ridicule and academic indifference, it takes just one new good case to bring "ghosts" into the radar images. In this case, the 747's "double image" was studied by the Japan Airlines (JAL) Boeing 747 cargo jet, flying across the Arctic Circle between Reykjavik, Iceland, and Tokyo, provided just that case.

The incident occurred on the evening of November 17, 1986, yet it wasn't until New Year's that the story was leaked to the press. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the U.S. Air Force acknowledged initially that the UFO had been detected by ground radar in Fairbanks, Alaska. On January 4, FAA spokesman Paul Steucke admitted the agency was conducting a formal inquiry of the event and had interviewed the JAL crew for a second time.

The "official investigation" of the radar tapes later labeled it an "artifact," which in radar jargon means a "ghost," in this case the 747's "double image." Nonetheless, it was — in the late Dr. J. Allen Hynek's classification — a "radar/visual" case. Captain Kenji Terauchi's Japan Air Lines (JAL) Boeing 747 was cruising normally at 525 knots at 35,000 feet when, around 6 p.m., Terauchi sighted "two columns of light" about a mile ahead and some 50 degrees to his left. The pilot radioed the control tower at Anchorage to check if there was any other air traffic. Anchorage responded in the negative. "Suddenly the lights came to within 500 to 1,000 feet of the plane," said Terauchi. He described the lights as "two dark cylinders with row after row of spinning amber lights" which cast no shadows. "I was sure it wasn't another plane," he said later in an interview. "It moved so quickly that I realized it was something that had to do with high-speed technology, very high intelligence." Stranger things continue to happen.

The lights continued to happen. A blip was detected on the 747's weather radar, and the cylinders "swung in formation" with the jet. At this point, FAA spokesman Steucke explained later, "his (Terauchi) main concern was trying to determine whether he was overtaking another aircraft."

The pilot then requested from ground authorities permission to take evasive action, which was granted. It and permission to take evasive action, which was granted. It and may explain the pilot's initial report that he saw two lights, Klass said.

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What Pilot Saw was Really Jupiter, Says Prober

A Japan Air Lines pilot who claimed to have seen an unidentified flying object alongside his airplane last November was actually seeing an unusually bright image of the planet Jupiter. Possibly, the lights, as described by the Associated Press, were actually seeing Jupiter, an investigator said Tuesday in a dispatch by the Associated Press.

Philip J. Klass told AP that astronomical calculations show that on Nov. 17, when the pilot claimed to have seen the UFO, Jupiter was extremely bright and was visible precisely where the pilot reported that he saw the UFO. Mars was just below and to the right of Jupiter, and may explain the pilot's initial report that he saw two lights, Klass said.

Klass, an editor with the magazine Aviation Week and Space Technology and a longtime investigator of claimed UFO sightings, ESP occurrences and other so-called paranormal phenomena, said, "This is not the first time that an experienced pilot has mistaken a bright celestial body for a UFO, nor will it be the last," Klass said.

Klass' report was issued by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal in Buffalo, N.Y., an organization of scientists who investigate claims of UFO sightings. ESP occurrences and other so-called paranormal phenomena.

Klass, who heads the organization's UFO subcommittee, is the author of UFOs: The Public Deceived. He has been investigating UFO sightings for more than 20 years.

"Jupiter was only 10 degrees above the horizon, making it appear to the pilot to be roughly at his own 35,000-foot altitude," said Klass in his report. Mars was visible closer to the horizon and to the right of Jupiter, but was not as bright, the report said.

A report by the FAA in Anchorage was issued on Jan. 11. That sighting was asked to look for the object, and neither reported seeing it. "I think that the Japanese pilot should have been a little more skeptical when the United Airlines and the Air Force plane reported seeing nothing," Klass said Tuesday.

A reported radar "blip" near the Japan Air Lines plane was a spurious echo from the mountainous terrain underneath the aircraft, Klass said.

Terauchi reported a second UFO sighting in approximately the same area on Jan. 11. That sighting was explained by FAA officials as an object with a "suspicious" radar signature that might be a rock or ice crystal in the atmosphere. Terauchi later conceded that it was a reasonable explanation.
Los OVNIs Nuevamente Hacen Noticia con el Testimonio de un Piloto Japonés

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n incidente OVNI ocurrido recientemente en Alaska ha demostrado una vez más que el viento de los aviones voladores todavía genera interés público. A pesar de cuatro décadas de información oficial y académica hacia el fenómeno, hasta un caso nuevo de cierta calidad para que los medios de comunicación mencionen una vez más la antigua controversia OVNI.

El capitán Kenju Terachuchi, a bordo de un vuelo de JAL, reportó que a las 9:24 de la noche, mientras volaba sobre el aeropuerto de Anchorage, Alaska, su avión cruzó el camino de un objeto aéreo no identificado. El objeto describió como un objeto de color ambar que producía sombras y no era capaz de ser identificado por radar. El objeto ascendió y desapareció en el horizonte.

"Subitamente", explicó Terachuchi, "produció una gran cantidad de luz que iluminó el cielo. La luz era diferente de la luz que normalmente se encuentra en un avión. La luz era blanca y brillante, y produjo una sombra en el suelo. El objeto desapareció en el horizonte y nunca regresó.

"Sorpresa", afirmó el piloto. "Esto es algo que nunca había visto antes. La luz era muy intensa y produjo un efecto inusual en el ambiente. La sombra fue visible por varios kilómetros y duró varios minutos.

"Es un fenómeno rareísimo", expresó Terachuchi. "Esto es algo que nunca había visto antes. La sombra fue visible por varios kilómetros y duró varios minutos.

"No creo que sea una aeronave convencional", continuó. "La luz era muy intensa y produjo un efecto inusual en el ambiente. La sombra fue visible por varios kilómetros y duró varios minutos.

"La sombra fue visible por varios kilómetros y duró varios minutos", insistió Terachuchi. "Es un fenómeno rareísimo que nunca había visto antes. La sombra fue visible por varios kilómetros y duró varios minutos.

El incidente ocurrió en realidad en la tarde del 17 de noviembre, pero la información sobre el mismo no fue revelada hasta hace tres años. El vuelo 1628, de JAL, se encontraba en la región de Anchorage, Alaska, cuando el piloto reportó el incidente. Según las declaraciones del piloto, el objeto fue visto por otros miembros del equipaje.

"El objeto era de color ambar y produjo sombras en el suelo. La luz era blanca y brillante, y produjo una sombra en el suelo. El objeto desapareció en el horizonte y nunca regresó. La sombra fue visible por varios kilómetros y duró varios minutos. El objeto fue visto por otros miembros del equipaje.

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FAA offers public an inside look at Alaska UFO sighting

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — If you want an inside look at a Japan Airlines pilot’s recent contention that he saw a UFO, the Federal Aviation Administration will send you everything you ever wanted to know about the incident for $194.30.

The complete package includes tapes of interviews with crew members, spaceship drawings by the JAL pilot and air controller statements, even four glossy color photos of regenerated radar data.

The unusual FAA mail-order offer is an effort to cope with enormous public interest in the November sighting, said spokesman Paul Steucke.

Since the pilot’s contention was publicly disclosed, the FAA’s Anchorage office has received information requests from more than 200 members of the news media, as well as 46 requests from individuals.

Orders of less than $5 are free.

“We wanted to be as responsive as we can to the public. We don’t want them to spend $100 for data they don’t need,” Steucke said.

JAL Capt. Kenjiro Terauchi reported on Nov. 17 that his Boeing 747 cargo jet was shadowed by two belts of light as it crossed into Alaska airspace on a flight from Iceland to Anchorage.

In an encounter that lasted about 50 minutes, Terauchi also reported seeing a third aircraft, a huge spaceship which he said was the size of two aircraft carriers. He radioed the sighting to Anchorage FAA flight controllers, who saw what they thought was an object on their radar screens.

The objects, Terauchi said, “were not made by humankind. They were of a very high intelligence.”

Philip J. Klass, an editor with Aviation Week and Space Technology, and a longtime investigator of UFO sightings, has investigated the incident and concluded that the pilot was actually seeing an unusually bright image of the planet Jupiter and possibly Mars.

The FAA is scheduled to release on March 5 the results of its investigation of the sighting.

Those interested in FAA reports or data on the sighting should write to the FAA at 701 C St., Box 14, Anchorage, Alaska 99513.
Anchorage

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The unusual FAA mail-order offer is an attempt to cope with enormous public interest in the November sighting, said spokesman Paul Steucke.

Since the pilot's claim was publicly disclosed, the FAA's Anchorage office has received information requests from more than 200 members of the press, as well as 40 requests from individuals.

For those on tight budgets, the FAA's UFO package can be broken down. The agency is offering 20 individual items, ranging from a $85 cassette tape of communications between the controllers and the flight crew to a 30-cent copy of an FAA form summarizing the sighting. Orders of less than $5 are free.

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Associated Press

Dean hardly wait, will see you more about SWAMP GAS
UFO buffs are offered tapes of latest sighting

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Part of those on eight budgets, the package can be broken into 20 individual items, ranging from a $50 cassette tape of communications between the controllers and the flight crew to a 30-cent copy of a FAA form summarizing the sighting. Orders of less than $5 are free. "We don't want them to spend $100 for data they don't need," said spokesman Paul Steucke of the unusual offer aimed at coping with heavy public interest.

JAL Capt. Kenjiu Terauchi reported Nov. 17 that his Boeing 747 cargo jet was shadowed by two belts of light on a flight from Iceland to Anchorage. During the 50-minute encounter, Terauchi also reported seeing a huge spaceship.

He radioed the sighting to Anchorage FAA flight controllers, who saw what they thought was an object on their radar screen.

The objects, he said, "were not made by humankind. They were of a very high intelligence."
UFO follows plane across Arctic Circle, crew claims

by United Press International

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — The crew of a Japan Air Lines cargo jet claimed that a mysterious UFO with flashing white and yellow strobe lights followed them across the Arctic Circle en route from Reykjavik, Iceland to Tokyo.

The three-man crew radioed air traffic controllers in Anchorage, reporting the huge UFO flying "in formation" with them and the Air Force confirmed an object briefly flew near the plane, Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Paul Steucke said Monday.

Although the Air Force radar briefly picked up a second object, Steucke said, FAA controllers in Anchorage and Fairbanks did not.

The strange sight reported by the pilot, copilot and flight engineer of JAL Flight 1828 remains a mystery.

The incident occurred Nov. 17 but was not made public until a news reporter questioned the FAA.

Following the UFO sighting, the plane landed at Anchorage International Airport and FAA security manager Jim Derry interviewed all three crewmen.

According to the FAA account, lights appeared only a mile from the plane as it crossed the Arctic Circle.

"They said they could not see the shape, only the lights," Steucke said of the crew's account.

The white and yellow strobe lights followed the Boeing 747 for 50 miles. The crew estimated they were 7 miles away. The lighting was not normal aircraft marking pattern, the crew reported.

Derry concluded the crew was not hallucinating and was not influenced by drugs or alcohol.
Living in an age of miracles

ORLANDO, Fla.--It was down spending a few warm holidays with a friend. His name is Gerald Rutberg, and I've known him since we were promising young men together. Rutberg would have made a great newspaperman. He had all the moves of a crack investigative reporter. He could be getting to the bottom of the Iran arms deal today but he chose to study the law instead.

"What I do," he has explained to me, "is try to keep people out of the joint." For the record, he has a winning percentage.

It was maybe two years ago when I got a call from another of Rutberg's friends telling me that Gerald had gone to the Mayo Clinic to find out why he was in so much pain all the time.

"He's been living on aspirins," the friend told me.

The news was terrible. Rutberg, so the initial diagnosis went, had cancer. He would have to undergo a dangerous operation to remove the tumor.

Even if he lived, the doctors said, he likely could be paralyzed from the waist down.

Rutberg couldn't make it that way, his friends agreed. This is a man of enormous energy who has been known to decide to go to a Super Bowl 3,000 miles away on the day of the game and pull off the whole thing, complete with tickets on the 50-yard line.

We prayed. We all cried a little, together, and then, privately. Rutberg is a lot of people's best friend. We got the miracle we prayed for.

When the tumor was removed it turned out not to be malignant after all. Rutberg emerged from the operation still able to walk. In a matter of months he was as active as ever.

"The first time I went to softball practice after the operation, and ran over and caught a line drive down the left-field line, I appreciated life more than I ever had before," he said.

There was just this one other thing. Doctors told Rutberg he might never be able to father children. The operation had had been known to render patients impotent or sterile or both.

Miracle No. 2.

The military decided about a minute into this exercise that what it was seeing was clutter," he said. The Air Force did not send up an interceptor and is not investigating the matter, Steucke said.

At the Anchorage FAA center, controllers following the flight noted occasional second blips or "split targets," on the screen near Flight 1629, Steucke said.

The lights vanished, heading east, when the JAL jet was about 80 miles north of Anchorage, Steucke said.

Feds to hear pilot's UFO account

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANCHORAGE—A Japanese pilot's account of being shadowed for almost an hour over Alaska by a UFO the size of two aircraft-carriers has been turned over to Federal Aviation Administration officials in Washington.

Because of public interest in the case, the agency interviewed the Japan Air Lines cargo pilot, Kenji Terauchi, a second time, FAA spokesman Paul Steucke said yesterday.

Terauchi told investigators three lights followed his Boeing 747 cargo jet Nov. 17 after it crossed from Canada into Alaska near Fort Yukon and stayed with him for 56 minutes, Steucke said.

The pilot said the lights were yellow, amber and green, Steucke said, but not red, the international color for aircraft beacons.

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Terauchi told investigators three lights followed his Boeing 747 cargo jet Nov. 17 after it crossed from Canada into Alaska near Fort Yukon and stayed with him for 56 minutes, Steucke said.

The lights vanished, heading east, when the JAL jet was about 80 miles north of Anchorage, Steucke said.

"His main concern was trying to determine whether he was overtaking another aircraft," Steucke said. He said the pilot dimmed cockpit lights to insure he was not seeing a reflection.

After about six minutes, Terauchi reported the lights and air traffic controllers told him to take any evasive action needed. Terauchi decreased altitude to 31,000 feet, but said the lights went down with him "in formation," Steucke said.

South of Fairbanks, Terauchi turned the plane in a complete circle to see if the lights would follow. They did, and moved to the left side of the jet, Steucke said.

The FAA and the military use the same long-range radar in Fairbanks, Steucke said. The FAA also uses sophisticated computer systems to remove clutter from radar images, but the military does not, he said.

"Imagine what she's going to say to me when she's 16 and I'm still calling her that," he laughed. Leah's mother is Beth, who is also a lawyer.

We had lunch together and she brought Leah along. Other dinners stopped by our table to remark on how well-behaved the little baby had been.

The new parents, fully aware of their blessings, beamed with pride.

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NASA worker tracks UFO reports by pilots

By HAL BERNTON
Daily News business reporter

The mysterious flashing lights sighted by the crew of a Japan Air Lines cargo jet last November aren't the only strange things pilots have seen through their cockpit windows.

In the past 20 years, more than 3,000 sightings of UFOs have been reported by pilots, according to Richard Haines, a NASA scientist who tracks UFO sightings by pilots in his spare time.

"Some of them are very spectacular and very significant from the standpoint of getting a better idea on how to characterize the phenomena," said Haines.

He said the sightings are reported by military, civilian and commercial pilots who fly both national and international routes. UFO reports from Alaska pilots are relatively rare.

The sightings tend to occur in cycles that peak about every five years, Haines said. For the past two years, sightings have been in a trough.

Haines said many of the reports fall into two main categories.

One category involves UFOs that suddenly appear within view of the cockpit and then disappear very rapidly. "The airplane is flying along essentially minding its own business. Then something comes up and does barrel rolls around the airplane," he said.

Many other reports, including the Nov. 17 sighting by the JAL crew, involve UFOs that tail aircraft for periods ranging from a minute to more than two hours.

Haines' interest in UFOs results from his more than two decades spent working in NASA's man-in-space program. In the early 1960s, as he began studying visual optics in space, he encountered many reports from pilots who claimed to have seen UFOs.

"I thought I could explain all these strange phenomena as nothing more than strange lighting," said Haines, who now studies "human factors in space" at NASA's Ames Research Center in Mountain View, Calif.

"But I had to look at the data as an open-minded scientist and pretty soon realized that we are facing something totally different."

NASA currently doesn't investigate any UFO sightings. But Haines, working out of his Los Altos, Calif., home on his own time, has clipped newspapers, interviewed pilots and talked with controllers to amass reports of more than 3,000 sightings.

Haines said he hopes to fly to Anchorage to investigate the Nov. 17 sighting by Capt. Kenju Terauchi, pilot of a JAL cargo plane en route from Iceland to an Anchorage refueling stop. The report was made public in late December.

Terauchi first sighted the lights shortly after the plane entered Alaska airspace. At first, the lights were directly in front of the plane, and Terauchi feared a midair collision, said Paul Steucke, Alaska spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration. Terauchi then obtained permission from an air traffic controller to try and evade the UFOs with several turns and drops in altitude. He finally lost the UFOs about 80 miles northwest of Anchorage, according to Steucke.

The FAA controller who monitored the JAL plane, Flight 1628, reported tracking the UFOs several times on radar, as near as five miles from the aircraft. "The traffic (UFO) stayed with JAL628 through turns and descents," said the controller in a statement released by the FAA. The identity of the controller, however, has not been released.

The Military Regional Operations Control Center reported picking up the UFO on radar about eight miles from the plane. The military center then lost track of the UFO for 11 minutes, then picked up "a flight of two," according to a flight chronology released by the FAA. It picked up the UFOs as they dropped back and to the right of the plane, then lost radar contact.

More recently, Steucke has said that neither the military nor the FAA puts any faith in the early radar sightings.

Steucke said that the FAA controller mistakenly interpreted a split-image of the cargo plane as a UFO and that the then-military now reports its radar images were simply "clutter."