

MEMORANDUM

To: D. A.K. DasGupta
Head
Safety Assessment and Control Section

Your File No.

Our File No. 1107-4-6

From: Mr. S.E. Hunt

Date: September 13, 1967

Subject: Determination of possible radiation hazards to the general public from the alleged landing site of an unidentified Flying Object near Falcon Lake, Manitoba

C O P Y

Introduction

On the 24 July 67 the Physics Section of this Division monitored on behalf of the R.C.M.P. Crime Detection Laboratory, Ottawa, samples of soil, burnt shirt and steel tape for possible radioactive contamination. A gamma-ray spectral analysis of the three samples revealed activity levels of up to approximately 0.54Ci of Ra²²⁶ or its equivalent. The samples had been collected from the alleged landing site of a U.F.O. near Falcon Lake, Manitoba. The information received by this Division on the 24 and 25 July 67 supporting this particular sighting and samples were vague and disjointed. Further light was shed on the matter when the undersigned had an opportunity to review the investigation report of the U.F.O. sighting submitted by S/L P. Bissky, (R.C.A.F.) through the courtesy of Inspector Hendrick during a visit to the R.C.M.P. Crime Detection Laboratory, Ottawa. Appendix A to this memorandum is a duplicate copy of S/L Bissky's report.

The task of assessing the radiation hazard to the general public from the landing site did not initially indicate that it would be necessary for this Division to involve itself in the R.C.M.P. and D.N.D. investigation. However, it soon became obvious to the undersigned that collection and co-ordination of all background information was essential due to the following:

- (a) The apparent lack of cooperation by the principals toward the military and police.
- (b) The exact location of the sighting had not been established at the time of the Division's initial involvement.

The undersigned flew to Winnipeg on the 26 July 1967 where he was met by Mr. D. Thompson of the Manitoba Health Department. Mr. Thompson advised the undersigned that a meeting had been arranged between representatives of the R.C.M.P. and D.N.D. and the Federal and Provincial Health representatives. This meeting was to establish what would be the best way to proceed.

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Field Investigation Report

26 July 1967, 1330 hrs. - R.C.M.P. Headquarters Winnipeg - Met with the Superintendent Shark, R.C.M.P., S/L Bissky, R.C.A.F., Cpl. Davis, R.C.M.P., and Messrs. B. Rendall and D. Thompson of the Manitoba Department of Health. A briefing of what had happened to date was given by S/L Bissky. This briefing was a very brief review of the investigation report compiled by S/L Bissky. A discussion followed the briefing as to what was the best way to proceed. The following actions were decided upon.

1. Messrs. Thompson and Hunt to visit Mr. Earl Campbell of the Manitoba Cancer Clinic to ascertain the exact location of the Radium burial ground at East Braintree.
2. Messrs. Thompson and Hunt to visit Inland Cement Company to find out if the company has any Ra²²⁶ sources.
3. S/L Bissky, Cpl. Davis, Messrs. Thompson and Hunt to visit Mr. Stephan Michalak at his residence around 1800 hrs.
26 Jul. 67.

26 July 1967, 1430 hrs. - Messrs. Thompson and Hunt met with Mr. E. Campbell of the Manitoba Cancer Clinic. Mr. Campbell showed photographs of the site and gave us the name of a Mr. R. Kemp who could guide us to the site. During his visit we checked, for radioactivity, some samples of soil and vegetation collected from a Beausejour U.F.O. sighting. The samples were checked on a scintillation counter. There was no evidence of any radioactivity.

26 July 1967, 1800 hrs. - S/L Bissky, Cpl. Davis and Messrs. Thompson and Hunt visit the residence of Mr. S. Michalak located 314 Lindsay Street. An attempt was made to persuade Michalak to take us to the site of the U.F.O. landing, however, at the end of the visit it still appeared unlikely that he would go as he felt that he would lose too much money by missing a days work. Mr. Michalak showed the undersigned samples of rock, soils and vegetation collected from the U.F.O. site. These samples were located in his basement. A survey of his basement showed no evidence of any loose contamination. Radiation fields were detected coming from the plastic bags containing soil and the remnants of Michalak's burnt shirt. Michalak was at first unwilling to part with the samples, but eventually allowed the undersigned to have part of the samples from each bag for further analysis. Mr. Michalak has no respect for contaminated materials. He handled the contaminated soil with his bare hands, and was made to wash his hands with great difficulty. During our conversation with Michalak he produced a series of photographs taken by Life Magazine representatives. These included photos of the site and colour photos of the burns on his abdomen and the scorced grid pattern on his undershirt. At the time of this interview, Michalak's wife and eldest son were present.

27 July 1967, 1000 hrs. - Messrs Thompson and Hunt visited the Radium burial site at East Braintree (see Appendix B). We were guided by Mr. R. Kemp, Conservation Officer for the Renewable Resources Branch, Department of Mines and Natural Resources for Manitoba. Only one of the steel spikes used to mark the burial site could be located. However,

the area was easily recognizable from the photographs shown to us by Mr. E. Campbell (Manitoba Cancer Clinic). It appeared to us that the soils had not been disturbed as most of the area was covered with vegetation. Another two years will see the area completely overgrown with vegetation. No radiation checks were made as there was a minimum of three feet of sand covering the contaminated materials. The maximum amount of radium located at the burial site is in the area of 12 mgms.

27 July 1967, 1200 hrs. - Met S/L Bissky, F/O Smith, Cpls. Shepard and Reed, all of the R.C.A.F., Cpl. Davis and Constable Zacharias of the R.C.M.P., and Mr. Michalak at the Falcon Lake Provincial Park entrance. After lunch, the above mentioned plus Thompson and Hunt set out for the U.F.O. landing site. This involved crossing to the north side of Hwy. No. 1 and following the route as indicated on the attached map. The entire expedition took about 45 minutes to reach its destination. The site was confirmed as being the correct site by Constable Zacharias who had been taken to it by Mr. B. Thompson of the Winnipeg Airborne Phenomena Research Organization the night before. The landing area of the U.F.O. was recognizable from the photographs taken by Life Magazine, the origin of the circular outline of vegetation in the writer's opinion is debateable. A thorough survey of the landing area was carried out, using a Tracerlab SU14, Admiral Radiac 5016, and a Civil Defence CDV 700 survey meter. One small area was found to be contaminated. This was located across the crown of the rock. There was a smear of contamination about 0.5 x 8.0 inches on one side of the crack. There was also some lichen and ground vegetation contaminated just beyond the smear. The whole contaminated area was no larger than 100 square inches. All water run off areas were checked for possible contamination, but nothing was found. Samples of the contaminated rock and lichen were taken for further analysis. Photographs of the area were taken by Cpls. Shepard and Davis and Mr. Thompson. Since there was no serious health hazard involved due to the remoteness of the area and also due to the fact that the majority of the contamination was taken for samples, no further precautions were felt necessary at the U.F.O. site. Prior to returning to Winnipeg, it was decided that Messrs Hunt and Thompson would try and establish the source of the radioactivity by paying a visit to Mr. B. Thompson.

1 August 1967, 0900 hrs. - Samples from U.F.O. site and those taken from Michalak's residence were checked under a U.V. light in the Environmental Sanitation Laboratory in the Norquay Building. The samples taken from the U.F.O. site gave an indication that they were contaminated with Radium luminous paint. The samples from Michalak's house did not respond to the U.V. light. These samples were then packaged and sent to R.P.D. Ottawa for further analysis.

1 August 1967, 1330 hrs. - A visit was made to Inland Cement Company where Mr. S. Michalak is employed as an Industrial Mechanic. The purpose of the visit was two fold. Primarily we wanted to find out if the Company had used any radium sources in gauges and secondly to inspect the Company's Ohmart gauges using Cs¹³⁷. The latter will be dealt with in a separate report. Conversation with Mr. R. West revealed that the Company had never used radium sources ~~was~~ either in Winnipeg or Regina, where both he and Michalak had worked prior to moving to Winnipeg.

2 August, 1967, 1400 hrs. - Visited Mr. B. Thompson at his residence at Oakdean Gardens, Suite 312, 66 Morrow Avenue. He advised us that he had no samples in his suite, but had some at his mother's place at 28 Frederick E, St. Vital. A series of rock and vegetation samples were checked, but showed no activity, Thompson then produced a soil sample that he had obtained from the Falcon Lake U.F.O. site. This sample proved to be radioactive. Levels up to 1 MR/hr were detected. Thompson was most reluctant to part with the sample so it was left with him. The sample was sealed in a plastic bag. A contamination check was made of the area where the samples were, using the U.V. light. The area was extremely cluttered with photographic equipment and a great deal of junk. Several areas responded to the U.V. light, but these did not prove to be areas of contamination, probably photographic emulsion splashes. Thompson appears to be a very sloppy worker.

During our conversation with Mr. Thompson it was established that he worked as a sales representative for a local outdoor advertising firm (Plaxlab Products Ltd.). His involvement with APRO was a spare time hobby. He stated that the Winnipeg chapter had approximately fifteen members, four of whom were investigating members. To be an investigating member, it is necessary to be 21 years or over. He stated that the remainder of the organization was made up of teenagers. The APRO organization appears to be a very loose knit organization. Thompson was unable to tell us the names of the other investigating officers. Prior to leaving Thompson, he advised us that he had taken some samples to the Nuclear Medicine Department of the Winnipeg General Hospital. He was unwilling to tell us who had checked the samples as he said the technician had carried out a spectral analysis without his superior's authority. He said that one sample showed a 1.4 mev peak. Two other very weak energy peaks were also detected. Thompson did not know where the samples were presently located. These samples had been given to Thompson by Michalak.

3 August, 1967, 1000 hrs. - A visit was paid to Hart Electronics, 196½ Osborne Street. This visit was arranged at the request of S/L Bissky who had received a similar request from Mr. Hart. A contamination check on Mr. Hart's car and store showed no evidence of contamination. Mr. Hart was concerned as he had helped Michalak collect and carry home some of the samples from the U.F.O. site. Mr. Hart appears to be very interested in "Intersellar Vehicles". He has apparently seen several such vehicles. He even shot at one while duck hunting near Beausejour. Mr. Hart advised us that he was in the process of developing a device which can be used for detecting "Interstellar Vehicles". He did not have the circuitry available as he had loaned it to a friend.

3 August, 1967, 11:15 hrs. - Messrs Thompson and Hunt visited the Nuclear Medicine Department of the Winnipeg General Hospital. Technician, Mr. George Dyck, was contacted. He stated that he had checked the samples submitted by Thompson. His superiors knew about the samples being checked, in fact, they still had the samples as they were going to do a second analysis on them to try and determine the isotope by its rate of decay.

Dr. F. Helmuth was introduced to us by Mr. Dyck. Dr. Helmuth had examined the burns that Michalak had received and he felt that they were thermal burns. He said that Michalak had been sent to Pinawa and put in the W.B.C. Although Dr. Helmuth had not seen the results, he understood that no ingested activity was found in Michalak. Dr. Petco at Pinawa had apparently contacted Dr. Helmuth and had suggested that Michalak receive psychiatric treatment. However, Dr. Helmuth didn't feel that this was necessary. Dr. R.J. Walton, Executive Director for the Manitoba Cancer Clinic, was asked by Dr. Helmuth to come over to meet us. Dr. Walton was pleased to let us have the samples as they weren't particularly interested in becoming involved in work of this nature. The only reason they checked these samples was that they had made the analysis before they realized what was going on. Thompson was checking the results of one analysis against the other. The samples will be returned to Ottawa with the undersigned.

7 August 1967, 0930 hrs. - A telephone call was made to the Manager of Plaxlab Products Limited. He advised the undersigned that they did not use any radium luminous or luminous paints for their products.

Conclusions

The undersigned does not intend to prove one way or the other whether a U.F.O. had been sighted as there are still too many unknowns. Secondly, in the opinion of the writer such ventures are outside the main interests of this Division.

There are however two conclusions that are of interest to this Division, they are as follows:

- (a) Radioactive contamination of rock and lichens was found at the alleged U.F.O. landing site. The origin of this contamination has yet to be determined.
- (b) The radiation levels measured were not high enough to create a radiation hazard to the general public.

(Signed) S.E.H.