

STATINTL

31 August 1960



Reply to your Note Regarding Gordon H. Scherer

1. We have investigated this with the Air Force and find that Mrs. Golden telegraphed the Secretary of State along the same lines. She has been carrying on correspondence with the Air Force for quite some time on the general subject of UFO's. (Attached is their reply to Mrs. Golden.) The State Department referred the telegram to the Air Force who, in turn, answered Mrs. Golden to the effect that the U.S. Naval Attache evaluation indicates that the picture was false. The photo was taken by a free lance photographer noted for his trick photography. It was not, as Mrs. Golden states, developed in the presence of anyone.

2. I do not believe we should concern ourselves with questions in Mrs. Golden's letter that do not concern CIA; therefore, we have covered only those questions. The Air Force is responsible and is doing a very good job of public information in this field and it has been our past procedure to refer all matters to them when it does not implicate CIA.

3. I think our Naval attache's final comment on the whole affair sums it up very well: "It is the reporting officer's private opinion that a flying saucer sighting would be unlikely at the very barren island of Trindade, as everyone knows Martians are extremely comfort loving creatures."

4. Attached is a draft reply for Congressman Scherer per your request.



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DIA and NAVY review(s) completed.

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29 August 1960

Dear Mrs. Golden:

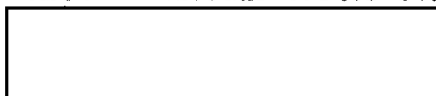
Your telegram of 16 August 1960, addressed to the Secretary of State, concerning a Brazilian UFO picture has been referred to this Office.

For your information, the U. S. Navy evaluated this picture as a hoax and official records indicate this was trick photography. No witnesses were present while the photographer developed the negatives.

Sincerely,

LAWRENCE J. TACKER
Lt. Colonel, USAF
Public Information Division
Office of Information

Mrs. Catherine Carter Golden



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Comeback OI-3d
Reader OI-1

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INFORMATION REPORT
OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

SERIAL NO.

39-58

DATE OF INFORMATION
21-27 Feb 1958

DATE OF REPORT
11 March 1958

OPNAV FORM 3820-2 (REV 8-54)

FROM
U.S. Naval Attaché, Rio de Janeiro

SOURCE

Contact
Press

EVALUATION REQUEST NO.
B-2

SUBJECT
BRAZIL - Navy - Flying Saucer Photographed from ALMIRANTE SALDANHA

RFI No 9600.

Encl: (1) Set of 4 Brazilian Navy photographs of subject

1. Announcement. On 21 February 1958, two of the leading newspapers in Rio de Janeiro printed photographs showing alleged flying saucer photographed from Brazilian naval ship, ALMIRANTE SALDANHA, at approximately midday on 16 January 1958 while the ship was anchored off Trindade Island some 600 miles east of Rio de Janeiro. The ship at the time was engaged in research as part of Brazilian Navy participation in the International Geophysical Year.

2. Photographer. The photographs themselves were taken by a free lance photographer, Almiro Barauna, using his Rolleiflex camera set at speed 125., lens opening 8, and were developed in a laboratory in ALMIRANTE SALDANHA. This gentleman has a long history of photographic trick shots and is well known for such items as false pictures of treasure on the ocean floor. Another time he prepared a purposely humorous article, published in a magazine, entitled "A Flying Saucer Hunted 'e' at Home", using trick photography. Barauna, after the release of his latest "flying saucer" photographs, told the press that the Navy secret service had interrogated him for four hours concerning his photos. "The negatives were projected in large size on a screen. If there was any trick, the gigantic projection would have revealed it. After questioning by officers of the Estado-Maior, the Chief of the Secret Service, the senior officer present said to me, 'I am going to ask you a few questions. Don't be

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INFORMATION REPORT

OPNAV FORM 3820-2 (CI) REV. 6-551

CLASSIFICATION	FROM	REPORT NO.	DATE
CONFIDENTIAL	U.S. Naval Attaché, Rio	39-58	11 March 1958

offended because I don't doubt the authenticity of your photos but I need to hear from you. If you were going to make a flying saucer appear on a negative, how would you proceed?' Comandante, I am an able photographer specialized in trick photography-but not one would withstand close and accurate examination."

3. Brazilian Navy Stand. Immediately after the photographs of the flying saucer were publicized, the Brazilian Navy refused to make any official statement confirming or denying the incident. However, proofs from the original negatives were sent to the other armed forces and to the President via an officer-messenger who related the complete story. According to the press, the narration so impressed Mr. Kubitschek that he became convinced of the veracity of the happening.

On 24 February, three days after the photos were first published in the press, the Navy Ministry finally made an official statement: "With reference to the reports appearing in the press that the Navy is opposed to divulge the facts concerning the appearance of a strange object over Trindade Island, this Cabinet declares that such information has no basis. This Ministry has no motive to impede the release of photographs of the referred to object taken by Mr. Almiro Barauna, who was at Trindade Island at the invitation of the Navy, and in the presence of a large number of the crew of ALMIRANTE SALDANHA from whose deck the photographs were taken. Clearly, this Ministry will not be able to make any pronouncement concerning the object seen because the photographs do not constitute sufficient proof for such purpose."

4. Statements of SALDANHA Personnel. On the morning after the photos of the flying saucer were published in the press (February 22), the ALMIRANTE SALDANHA departed Rio to continue its mission in connection with the IGY. Two days later, however, the ship docked at Santos (February 24) for voyage repairs and this was the first chance that newspapermen had an opportunity to interview officers and men aboard. The Assistant Naval Attaché was in Santos at this time in ~~such~~ connection with the visit of USCCC WESTWIND (Alusna Rio IR 36-58 of 10 March) and had an opportunity to visit aboard. The commanding officer, Capitao-de-Mar-e-Guerra (CAPT) Jose Santos Saldanha da Gama, had not seen the object and was noncommittal. The executive officer also had not seen it but, arriving shortly thereafter, had formed the opinion that those on deck had seen it. The captain had reported that his secretary, a LCDR, had seen it but this officer when personally questioned avoided discussing the matter. Later, it was learned that the photographer was accompanied to the dark room by an officer who waited outside the door while Barauna developed the negatives alone.

At the time of the official visit of the commanding officer of WESTWIND to ALMIRANTE SALDANHA, Captain Saldanha da Gama freely discussed the flying saucer and showed the original proofs to the callers but again did not commit himself.

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INFORMATION REPORT

OPNAV FORM 3820-2 (CI) (REV. 6-55)

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5. Publicity. The press reports after the publication of the photographs covered a great deal of newspaper space for about a week, tending to prove or disprove the authenticity of Barauna's photographs. DIARIO CARICCA reported that personnel of SALDANHA were under rigid orders of silence. O GLOBO published a story with photographs by photographer, Jean Manzon, of flying saucers (china) taken at Cabo Frio.

Federal Deputy Sergio Magalhães sent a note to the Navy Ministry on 27 February protesting the Navy's failure to secure sworn statements of witnesses. "For the first time in flying saucer history, the phenomenon was attended by large numbers of persons belonging to a military force which give these latest photographs an official stamp. Threats to national security require greater official attention and action," said the Deputy. In the middle of all the publicity, other "flying saucer" sighting reports came out including a naval officer who saw a flying saucer a month before sighting from SALDANHA off the coast of Espirito Santo. CO and crew of ATA TRIDENTE saw flying saucer several days before SALDANHA sighting but kept information secret.

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INFORMATION REPORT

OPNAV FORM 3820-2 (C) (REV. 6-55)

CLASSIFICATION	FROM	REPORT NO.	DATE
CONFIDENTIAL	U.S. Naval Attaché, Rio	39-58	11 March 1958

Preparing Officer's Comments:

1. Most flying saucer stories are not worth wasting much time or effort, but this story apparently substantiated by official Navy photographs taken in the presence of large number of Navy personnel under closely controlled and almost ideal circumstances should have absolutely proved the existence of an unidentified flying object. Unfortunately, further investigation provided only frustration at every turning. A number of Brazilian Navy officers profess to believe the story implicitly but whether they have more information than we is unknown.

2. There appear to be only two explanations for this peculiar incident:

(a) Some overwhelming power has told the Brazilian Navy not to officially verify this incident (which they should easily be able to do, if it occurred) nor to deny it (which they should easily be able to do, if it is a fake). I personally do not believe that anyone has told the Brazilian Navy to keep quiet about it because there has been no hint of such suppression in either Brazilian or U.S. circles; and also because I doubt their control of the individual officers and men is good enough to hold the line.

(b) The whole thing is a fake publicity stunt put on by a crooked photographer and the Brazilian Navy fell for it. This seems like the most likely considering Brazilian's love for sensationalism and gossip, their well known propensity for never letting the truth stand in the way of a good story, and general bureaucratic inefficiency.

3. In addition, the photographs furnished by the Brazilian Navy are unconvincing. Details of the land are extremely sharp but the disc is hazy and has little contrast and shows no shadow effect. It also appears that the object was inverted in photograph 2 compared to 1 and 3. Also the papers have mentioned extremely high velocities and there appears to be no lateral blurring as would occur with any reasonable shutter speed.

4. It is the reporting officer's private opinion that a flying saucer sighting would be unlikely at the very barren island of Trindade, as everyone knows Martians are extremely comfort loving creatures.

Prepared and forwarded:

M. SUNDERLAND
CAPT, USN

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