

APPENDIX

Commentary on Philip J. Klass's "UFOs Over Iran"

See: Klass, P., "UFOs, The Public Deceived", Prometheus Books 1983, chapter 14.

The following commentary relates to page & paragraph numbers:

p. 113 para. 1: "If the flight crew's report was accurate in all details, then clearly this UFO was outfitted with an exotic weapon that could induce electrical-electronic failure Yet this posed a curious anomaly: If the UFO did indeed have such a remarkable defense at its disposal, why had it seemingly fired a rocket-missile against the F-4, which already had been rendered harmless? Did this mean that UFOs suddenly had turned aggressive and hostile?"

Comment: The "curious anomaly" seems to be a straw man erected to be knocked down. "Exotic weapons" and "rocket-missiles" are mere science fiction, and the argument is neither logically sound nor pertinent.

p. 113 paras. 2 & 3: "If there were any truth to the oft-repeated claims [that the US military or the government know UFOs to be extraterrestrial] this Iranian incident should have generated an appropriate response. Presumably the USAF would itself have launched an all-out investigation, importing a team of specialists from the United States and the late Shah would have been asked to impose official secrecy to keep all news of the incident out of the press. Yet none of these things happened.[original emphasis]

"Mooy's memorandum-for-the-record was not even classified (that is, stamped 'Top Secret') in the MAAG files. Later, when a copy was sent back to the U.S. and distributed to a number of agencies . . . [it] was classified "Confidential" - the lowest security level. There was no followup investigation of the incident by the USAF or MAAG personnel, according to Mooy. Nor were there any further MAAG dispatches on the subject from Tehran, although the incident was widely publicised in Iranian newspapers. Perhaps the best indication of how seriously the U.S. government was concerned . . . is that a copy [of the memo] was leaked to NICAP [National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena] soon after it was received in the U.S.

Comment: Whilst speculation about US government attitudes in hypothetical circumstances is not pertinent to the facts of the case, this theme is relevant to the later development of Klass' argument and therefore must be addressed.

Firstly, the absence of acknowledged follow-up information from Tehran is a point addressed in the attached case evaluation: this absence is ambiguous, and could be held to support a variety of interpretations. The stated absence of any US investigation is a conclusion based on one interpretation of the fact that no further information on the affair is available. This conclusion depends on the collateral assumption that such investigation would be conducted by local MAAG/USAF personnel, and conveyed in further unclassified dispatches from Tehran. These assumptions are questionable, and indeed conflict with Klass's own proposition that if US authorities had taken the UFO incident seriously then imported specialists would have been brought in to investigate under a security blanket so tight that total press-censorship, even in Iran itself, would have been an option. This scenario is perhaps a little extreme, but a level of secrecy could be inferred from the fact that when the second F-4 (which had had the major role to play in the incident) returned to Shahroki it was quarantined in an outlying revetment, and local USAF personnel and technical representatives of both McDonnell Douglas & Westinghouse were prevented from approaching it (see later). If something like the scenario which Klass believes ought to have been enacted was in fact enacted, then it would be highly unlikely that local company representatives or local USAF personnel would be invited to participate, and it would be entirely consistent if they were actively excluded. Of course there is no direct evidence that such a secret investigation did occur, which is why Klass states that it did not; but equally, if it was secret then by definition one would not expect there to be direct evidence. As regards Klass's hypothesis that the US would have asked the Shah to impose press censorship in Iran: 1) Klass states that the Shah was in fact not asked, although how he could know this is unclear; 2) all of the Iranian press stories which Klass quotes were published within about 36 hours of the incident - some within about 12 hours, and thus probably in preparation before Mooy was even able to prepare his memorandum - so that these are not counterinstances to the censorship hypothesis; 3) U.S.-instigated press censorship from a later date, even if considered as an option, would probably have been adjudged belated and to little purpose; 4) if any stories were censored it follows that they were not published - i.e., it is impossible to prove a negative; 5) Klass's assertion that censorship is a necessary condition of serious U.S. government interest is unfounded speculation.

As regards the fact that a copy of the Mooy memo was allowed to "leak" from a US government source, this could be taken to indicate that, as Klass suggests, the memo was not regarded as a highly sensitive document, a conclusion supported by the low-security classification assigned to it by agencies in the US. Whether the fact that the memo was not regarded as highly sensitive should be taken as meaning that the incident was not regarded as very important is another matter. By the time the copies of the memo were being processed through the in-trays of the CIA, DIA etc. the story was already widely known through the Iranian press, including English-language newspapers, who published articles describing all its essential features as early as September 20 - the following day. It is debatable if Mooy's memorandum-for-the-record, prepared subsequent to a debriefing which took place sometime on September 19, was by then even lodged in MAAG files, let alone transmitted abroad. Given that it had not been classified by MAAG at this time, and considering the extent of simultaneous IIAF press contact (partial transcripts of both F-4s' taped radio communications were published almost immediately in the Persian-language

Ettela'at and reprinted in English in the *Tehran Journal* the next day, September 21), the likely estimate of US agencies at a later date would be that the document, which anyway was only a preliminary summary of complex events, had been effectively compromised as a source of secure intelligence. There would be no point in classifying it "Top Secret", and indeed such a move might be counterproductive, only fuelling suspicions of a cover-up. Whether any additional material was in fact covered up is of course impossible to prove without evidence which, *ex hypothesi*, would be subject to that cover-up. The "national security" exemptions of the Freedom of Information Act allow government agencies the latitude to withhold information from public access by defining it as an issue of "national security", a fact which Klass implicitly concedes when he argues that the availability of even one unclassified memo and the absence of total press-censorship points to a lack of government concern.

p. 114 para.1: "[Major General Kenneth P. Miles, USAF, chief of MAAG, Tehran, forwarded, at Klass's request] a photocopy of the unclassified Mooy memorandum, as well as several articles on the incident . . . Miles added: 'I share your view that there is no evidence to suggest that the earth is being visited by extraterrestrial spaceships.'"

Comment: Neither the view which Miles endorses, nor the assumptions underlying the view which he and Klass dispute, are pertinent to the facts of the case.

p. 114 para.2: "One of the [Tehran newspaper articles] quoted a Mehrabad airport controller as saying that the UFO was flying at an altitude of about 6,000 feet over the southern part of sprawling Tehran, alternately flashing red, blue and green lights. Yet Mooy's memorandum, based on information offered by the second F-4 crew, said the first F-4 had been 40 nautical miles north of Tehran when that airplane encountered mysterious electrical-electronic problems."

Comment: Klass is incorrect to state that Mooy's memorandum is based only on information supplied by the second aircrew at their debriefing, and there is no justification for the assertion that the description of the first intercept is based on the second-hand recollection of this second aircrew. Klass does this because he wants to suggest, and later develop, the idea that the second aircrew were untrained, sleepy, confused and prone to make mistakes. By nurturing the impression that the entire memo rests on their recollections, he is then later free to imply that several details are questionable. The information noted by Mooy in his paras. 1, 2 & 11, for example, plainly comes from other IIAF documents, or operations officials - such as Director of Operations Lt. Gen. Azerbarzin himself - who were conducting the debriefing, and details of the first intercept may presumably have come from the same sources.

The Mehrabad controller's statement re-quoted by Klass comes from a newspaper story. Klass will elsewhere, and correctly, decline to credit newspaper stories in preference to the official memorandum, and should in conscience do so here.

However, granting the accuracy of the newspaper story insofar as it goes, the indicated contradiction is false. Firstly, the sequence of ground and air observations covered by the

Mooy memo spans something like 1½ hours, and the newspaper quotation does not state the time at which "the UFO" was flying over the south of Tehran (Klass's adjective, "sprawling", is a journalistic device to maximise the impression of distance). Secondly, even if the quoted visual sighting over the south of Tehran does relate to a time when one of the F-4s was in pursuit there is no justification for the assumption that it was the first F-4; and according to Mooy's memo the second F-4 "continued a course to the south of Tehran" in pursuit of the object. Thirdly, the first visual sightings (there were many) were relayed by Mehrabad tower to the IIAF Command Post at 0030; the first F-4 took off from Shahroki (130 miles SW of Tehran) at 0130; and at Mach 1 the aircraft would have taken until about 0145 to reach the intercept point 40 miles N of Tehran, or nearly 1½ hours after the first visual reports from the Shemiran area. Thus, there is no suggestion of simultaneity and the contradiction proposed by Klass does not exist. If the same "UFO" first sighted visually was subsequently intercepted by the first F-4 the implication is of an object heading N from Tehran at this time, which is consistent with:

p. 114 para.3: ". . . Based on these tapes [of the first F-4's radio communications with Mehrabad as paraphrased in a newspaper article] the first F-4 flew over Tehran at the speed of sound . . . and the pilot called the Mehrabad tower when he first spotted the UFO. [Lieutenant] Jafari described the UFO as being 'half the size of the moon . . . It was radiating violet, orange and white light about three times as strong as moonlight.' Although the pilot was flying at maximum speed, he said that 'on seeing him coming the UFO increased its speed,' that is, he was unable to close on the bright light."

Comment: Note that the F-4 approaches over Tehran, that is, on a N heading in pursuit of the object, which appears to accelerate ahead of him. Note also, however, that this account is based on a partial quotation of an article in the English-language newspaper the *Tehran Journal*, which itself is quoting in translation an article from the Persian-language paper *Ettela'at* which, in turn, is a blend of quotation and paraphrase is from a transcription of the audio tapes.

p. 114 para.4 "[According to the same article] Mehrabad tower told him [Jafari] to return to base if he could not close on the object and the pilot agreed to do so, but a few moments later he radioed: 'Something is coming at me from behind. It is 15 miles away . . . now 10 miles away . . . now 5 miles . . . It is level now, I think it is going to crash into me. It has just passed by, missing me narrowly' The newspaper said that 'the disturbed voice of the pilot . . . then asked to be guided back to base. It was at this time that a second plane was ordered to take off.' This account indicates that there was not any mysterious malfunction of the electrical-electronics equipment aboard the first F-4, contrary to the account in the Mooy memorandum. The explanation for this discrepancy is that Mooy and Johnson sat in on the debriefing only of the second F-4 crew, and this misinformation must necessarily have resulted from the fact that the two crews had not had a chance to compare notes prior to the debriefing."

Comment: Again we have the suggestion that an error, if error there was, can be laid at the door of the second F-4 crew. There is no basis for this in the Mooy memorandum. Mooy states that the first F-4 lost instrumentation and communications and the error, if error there was, could as well have been Mooy's. If Klass were right and the aircrews "had not had a

chance to compare notes" then the information stated by Mooy in the same paragraph - that the first crew had visually acquired the object at 70 miles and closed to 25 miles - could not have come from the first F-4 crew via the second F-4 crew. Even if we suppose that all the information in this paragraph did come from the second F-4 crew, then there are really only four possibilities: a) they were relaying accurate information from the other crew or an intermediate source; b) they were relaying inaccurate information in good faith; c) they were lying; d) they were the source of the information but it was misunderstood, by Mooy and/or someone else. If the newspaper account is to be taken as the whole truth, then they were not relaying accurate information. Presumably the airmen did not make up a story out of whole cloth, so that if the electronics malfunction did not occur, and if they stated that it did, then someone else gave them inaccurate or ambiguous information. Alternatively, information relating to the second aircrew's own intercept may have been mistakenly interpolated by Mooy into his account of the first intercept. Wherever the information originated there is no basis whatever to infer any failure of judgement or honesty on the part of the debriefed aircrew, and the newspaper story should be interpreted with caution.

p. 114 para.4 cont.: "It also is important to note that the glowing object that Lieutenant Jafari reported seeing was 'coming at me from behind.' Since he, presumably, was chasing the bright light in the sky at the time, which would have been dead-ahead of him, the object coming at him from the rear seemingly was quite unrelated to the object he was chasing."

Comment: This is "important" to Klass because he regards it as inconsistent or in some other way diagnostic of error or untruth. Why this should be so is unclear; if Jafari is reporting two separate UFOs, then he is reporting two separate UFOs. But there are other interpretations: Jafari could have meant, for example, that a secondary object was 'coming from behind' the primary object, not from behind his aircraft, similar to the behavior later reported by the second F-4; the context of the translated quotation would have to be studied to exclude this interpretation. In fact, however, the sequence of events bears closer scrutiny. The pilot was advised to turn back to Shahroki and stated that he was complying, then "a few moments later" he reported the object coming from behind. Given the chain of quotation, translation and interpretation leading up to this account, Klass's "few moments" could well have been enough time for the pilot to have initiated his turn before reporting the object on his tail. There is no justification for Klass's assumption that he was still watching the primary object "dead-ahead" at this moment.

p. 115 para.1: [According to the Tehran Journal's paraphrase of its translation of the second F-4's radio transcript] 'the pilot reported having seen the UFO and told the control tower that it had reduced speed. The pilot said the plane was working well and he was preparing to fire missiles at the UFO. After a moment's silence he said he had seen a "bright round object, with a circumference of about 4.5 meters, leave the UFO." A few seconds later the bright object rejoined the mother craft and it flew away at many times the speed of sound.'

Comment: Klass points out that there is no mention here of the communications and weapons control failure reported by the aircrew in their debriefing, nor any mention of the radar contact so specifically described in the same debriefing. In particular he argues that if

the F-4 had lost UHF contact with the tower as reported it would have interrupted these radio communications. As Klass later admits (p.116 para.1) it must be "prudent" to give more credence to the official memorandum of the debriefing than to a newspaper account. It is therefore unclear what point he is making. However, for the sake of argument it should be noted that according to the debriefing the electronic failure did not occur until after the secondary object described above had approached the F-4, and thus is outside the timeframe of the radio talk quoted. The fact that the newspaper chooses to collapse the entire sequence of subsequent events into one bland sentence is hardly evidence of anything except the perennial failings of journalese. The newspaper paraphrase of the tapes may add colour to the first-hand debriefing record, but it is plain that it should not be taken as a complete and authoritative source, omitting as it does a great many other aspects of the incident, and conflicting as it does with other newspaper stories quoting other "official sources", *vide*:

p. 116 para.1: "Despite this disclaimer from an unidentified 'official source,' it seems prudent to put more credence in the Mooy memorandum, since it is based on notes taken during the debriefing of the second F-4 crew, although it is clear from the Mehrabad tower tape recording that the second crew's account of what happened to the first F-4 contains serious errors."

Comment: Klass has just quoted at length an article in the newspaper *Kayhan International*, September 21, which, on the basis of an unattributed government statement, contradicted almost everything that other newspapers had so far reported about the affair as well as a great deal of the Mooy memorandum (which at this time was not yet in the public domain). According to this account, all that happened was that one of the F-4 pilots saw a light which soon disappeared; there were no electronic outages, no secondary objects, no pursuit of the aircraft, and neither pilot made any attempt to open fire. The account of radio communications published in *Ettela'at* left the official "frankly puzzled." Klass's gesture in the direction of "prudence" is less than wholehearted, but one can quite see why he shrinks from endorsing this particular newspaper story when it calls in question the radio transcript against which he has found the second aircrew's debriefing account so wanting. The story is quoted to foment doubt about the Mooy memo, then irresolutely disowned, with Klass - appearing by sleight of hand to have his cake and eat it - conceding that there are indeed doubts. An inadmissible line of questioning has been stricken from the court record, but its effect lingers in the minds of the jury.

pp. 116 para.2 to 117 para.1: Klass details his attempts to obtain information on any follow-up investigation that might have taken place, seeking contacts with "IIAF officials who might be willing to assist in my investigation." He writes to Colonel John Wilson, USAF, who had been in Iran at the time; Wilson can add nothing. He writes to IIAF vice-commander Azerbarzin (who had been Director of Operations at the time and present at the debriefing), telling him that he is sceptical of the report; Azerbarzin does not reply. He writes to the Iranian Ambassador in Washington, Ardeshti Zahedi, telling him that he is sceptical; Zahedi never replies. A letter to an Iranian science writer is returned "seemingly unopened". He writes to a professor of astronomy at Tehran University who had been quoted in a *Tehran Journal* article about the affair, telling him that he thought there was a "prosaic explanation"; the

professor does not reply. He writes to a McDonnell Douglas technical representative in Tehran, but receives no reply. A letter to a Tehran executive of E-Systems Inc. is answered; but the "brief" response says that the writer can add nothing.

Comment: Klass becomes suspicious that this reticence is significant, and later (p.120 paras. 2 & 3) develops a conspiracy theory. The IIAF, he observes, was the multi-billion-dollar pride and joy of the Shah, and if (as Klass proposes) shoddy maintenance was leading to electronic glitches whilst aircrew training was so poor that pilots were "rattled" by bright stars and radar operators didn't know how to use their equipment, then "this would have been very embarrassing to IIAF officials - and to the Shah if it became public knowledge. This might also explain why USAF officials had not paid undue attention to the incident." To save embarrassment, suggests Klass, the authorities played up the UFO angle and made sure that the real problem was kept quiet.

Earlier, Klass has argued that if Iranian or (more particularly) US authorities had taken the "UFO" incident seriously there would have been a widespread clamp-down on information; this didn't happen, therefore the authorities did not take the "UFO" incident seriously. Now he is suggesting that there was indeed a widespread clamp-down on information, but this does not lead him to re-evaluate the logic of his own argument. Instead it is further evidence that the "UFO" incident was not taken seriously.

p. 117 paras. 2 & 3: Ambassador Zahedi was pictured in the *National Enquirer* smilingly accepting a cheque for charity worth \$5000 on behalf of the F-4 crews, selected by a panel of scientists as prizewinners for "the most scientifically valuable UFO case" of the year. The paper also stated: "Earlier this year Lieutenant General Abdullah Azarbarzin . . . told the *Enquirer* that virtually all communications, navigation and weapons control systems aboard the two Phantom jets were jammed by the UFO."

Comment: According to this newspaper the IIAF vice-commander, more than a year after the event, was personally certifying that the report of electronic anomalies in both F-4s, as given in Mooy's contemporary record, was correct. Klass italicises these words, stopping short of accusing Azarbarzin of a falsehood but implying confabulation at a high level. "It would be far less embarrassing Instead of possible humiliation, the IIAF flight crews later would be honoured for the best UFO case of the year by America's largest-circulation newspaper." (p.120 para.3) The most one can say is that this is speculation.

p. 117 para.3: "[Remote interference with fire-control electronics would be of] obvious import Yet USAF officials on the scene, who should have been gravely concerned if they accepted the IIAF crew's account at face value, seemingly were oblivious to the matter."

Comment: Whether or not any USAF personnel in Tehran accepted the account at face value is irrelevant to the facts of the case. And recording the facts as reported within hours of the event and forwarding them to interested US authorities with a promise of updated information when available is not being "oblivious to the matter." It has already been pointed out that, on Klass's *own* hypothesis, if US authorities took the report at face value it

would not have remained the responsibility of personnel at the local level but would have become the subject of a more secure intelligence operation. Further, we note again that USAF and company personnel on the scene were not "even allowed to get close to the [quarantined F-4 at Shahroki], let alone being asked to check it over" (p.118, para.2), which can be taken as meaning that they would have liked to, but that such unilateral local initiatives were prevented.

Klass's conspiracy theory has by now become quite sweeping, implicating Ambassador Zahedi, Gen. Azarbarzin, a Tehran University professor, a science writer, Middle East reps. of McDonnell Douglas and E-Systems, IIAF personnel all the way from Shahroki maintenance workshops to the vice-commander - even perhaps the Shah! - none of whom seem able or willing to help Klass in pursuit of his "prosaic explanation". He manages to contact Mooy by 'phone, but he only confirms that there was no further local action by USAF or IIAF personnel "that I am aware of", and certainly does not disclaim any part of the information in his original memorandum (p. 117 para.1). All of this is open to various interpretations. But if Klass is right in suspecting a cover-up, is the reason which commends itself to him the most plausible? His evidence comes from two anonymous employees of Westinghouse Electric (manufacturer of the F-4's radar) who had been in Tehran and Shahroki at the time:

p. 118 para.2 "The Westinghouse tech rep [at Shahroki] told me that only the second F-4 was briefly 'quarantined' when it returned to the base by being placed in a remote revetment This confirms that only the second F-4 experienced any seemingly mysterious UFO-induced effects."

Comment: This is speculation. What it confirms is that for whatever reason the second F-4 was quarantined in a remote revetment at Shahroki. His conclusion, that the report as written up by Mooy and endorsed by Aazarbarzin is false, is a *non sequitur*. However, having noted that no local US specialists were allowed near this F-4, Klass's interpretation of this proceeds by hearsay, ellipses and insinuations:

The F-4 was "briefly" quarantined, then "less than a week later . . . returned to active duty, seemingly none the worse for its UFO encounter." IAAF maintenance crews, according to what Klass's Westinghouse informant was told, "claimed that . . . the only thing they found wrong was that one of the radios had some static in it," which is "not an unusual complaint", adds Klass, implying that no unusual aftereffects of the UFO encounter can be brought as evidence. But then we have a change of tone, preparatory to the argument that poor maintenance must have caused the reported electronics outage, as well as the radar contact: the same tech rep was called in about a month later to adjust the plane's radar, which according to Klass implies that the radar might not have been working properly on September 19, causing a false target; also, it turned out that this F-4 allegedly had a history of power outages, so that it must have been quarantined in order to fix embarrassing glitches out of sight of foreign eyes. The suggestion is now that there was a great deal wrong with the F-4 when it flew back to Shahroki! This tells us more about Klass's journalistic technique than it tells us about the facts of the case - which here reduce increasingly to opinions quoted from Klass's anonymous Westinghouse informants whose own position in this affair is unknown. Indeed, reading carefully discloses that the story of

the F-4's poor service history comes from an anonymous rep in Tehran who looked into events at Shahroki "as far as he could", and is in turn relating what he had heard from an anonymous McDonnell Douglas rep at Shahroki. Thus Klass's account is itself based on a story retold at second hand, whose ultimate source (a McDonnell Douglas employee) has by implication already been called in question - because when the McDonnell Douglas rep in Tehran had failed even to answer Klass's letter about the incident this was one of the many "frustrating" rebuffs which caused Klass to suspect a cover-up! Indeed, what would these manufacturers' reps' vested interest be here when approached by a senior editor of *Aviation Week & Space Technology* with a predatory eye to exposing faulty avionics in their products? It would be to disarm any suspicion of design or manufacturing defects by passing the buck to IIAF maintenance technicians with stories about probable sloppy workmanship and inept aircrews. This is exactly what Klass's informants do: he quotes yet another anonymous company source to the effect that the IIAF was no more than a "flying country club for the sons of rich families"; the Shahroki electrical shop was "notorious for poor performance" offers another; pilots had almost no training at all in night flying; radar operators were "not too knowledgeable", were "not really trained" to use the radar or fire-control instrumentation and only wanted to "move into the front seat", argues a Westinghouse rep; and so on. And all this in the Shah's "pride and joy"! It seems a wonder that the IIAF were ever able to get two planes into the air in the first place.

p. 119 para.4: "One thing is evident: the second F-4 crew was clearly 'rattled'. This is obvious from their report that the target on their radar scope was at a range of twenty-five miles, but they were preparing to fire an AIM-9 air-air missile whose maximum range is only a couple of miles. . . . Thus their missile could not possibly have reached the 'target-blip' appearing on their radar."

Comment: Mooy's debriefing record clearly states that the primary target was at 25 miles when "*another* brightly lighted object . . . came out of the original object. *This* object headed straight toward the F-4 at a very fast rate. The pilot attempted to fire an AIM-9 missile at the object . . ." [Emphases added] Klass's confusion stems from his interpretation of a story published in the Tehran Journal which is too vague and compressed to be relied upon even if it did clearly contradict the debriefing - which it does not. This third-person narrative is based on translation of the Persian-language newspaper account of the taped radio communications and reads as follows: "[The] pilot reported having seen the UFO and told the control tower that it had reduced speed. The pilot said the plane was working well and he was preparing to fire missiles at the UFO. After a moment's silence he said he had seen a 'bright round object, with a circumference of about 4.5 meters, leave the UFO.' A few seconds later the bright object rejoined the mother craft and it flew away at many times the speed of sound." Klass concludes that "preparing to fire missiles" means that the pilot was at that instant about to push the button and engage the object at a range of 25 miles; but, even allowing that this phrase is a precise quotation of the pilot's words (for which there is no justification), "preparing" in this context is no more than a declaration of intent to open fire - which would suggest reasonable caution and may even have been required by the IIAF rules of engagement. When the secondary object unexpectedly headed straight towards his aircraft and the pilot did decide to launch a missile at it, he would have been unable to do so had he and his weapons-control panel not both been primed - i.e., "prepared".

p. 119 para.4: "Later I would be told that this second F-4 crew had been awakened out of a sound sleep and dispatched on the UFO mission, so it is entirely possible that their judgements may have been clouded by not being fully awake."

Comment: This is pure nonsense. No doubt if the crew had been wide awake for hours at the time of their 0140 scramble Klass would have argued that they must have been fatigued after a long day and ready to nod off!

And now (p.120 para.5 et seq.) we see why Klass has persisted in his quaint description of the secondary object reportedly emitted as a "rocket-missile" and a "missile-like object", although the report describes a highly manoeuvrable object which "fell in trail" with the F-4 at a distance of 3-4 miles as the pilot executed an evasive turn and dive, then "went to the inside of his turn" and headed back to the primary object "for a perfect rejoin." The phrase "missiles or rockets" is one used by an Eastern Airlines captain over Virginia in 1975 to describe what, according to the FAA, were "probably" fireball fragments, and Klass now quotes this case in illustration of the fact that pilots can sometimes report bright meteors as UFOs.

p. 121 para. 4 et seq.: "Is it possible that the missile-like objects reported by both of the Iranian F-4 pilots, and the glowing objects reported by ground observers near Tehran to have fallen from the sky or flitted across the sky, might have been meteor fireballs?" Klass then embarks on a discussion of other sightings from Morocco and Lisbon on the same night as the Tehran event that he takes to have been probably one-and-the-same fireball meteor.

Comment: This is pure red-herring as, eventually, Klass admits, because these reports "would not coincide with the timing of the missile-like objects reported by the two Iranian F-4 pilots, which would have occurred several hours earlier." Furthermore both Lisbon and Morocco are some 3,500 miles west of Tehran! Once again, the "missile-like" image is reinforced to help the reader follow his argument. He notes that an abnormal number of "fireball" sightings that night would be expected because there were two meteor showers underway at the time. Aside from the fact that there is a meteor radiant in any observer's sky on any night of the year (see B.A.A. Handbook, 1922), and neither the September Aquarids nor the Southern Piscids are major North Hemisphere showers, the reported fireball trajectories were W-E according to Klass; but the two object reported as "buzzing" the F-4s from ahead and behind (allowing that their trajectories would have been in part straight) would have been heading approximately N-S and S-N. The first F-4 was heading N when, according to Klass, the object passed him from behind (although, as has been argued, the aircraft at this point appears to have already turned back for Shahroki, which would suggest a heading N-S); and the second F-4 was pursuing the object on "a course to south" when a secondary object headed "straight" for him. Klass describes an "object coming at him [the first F-4] from behind (from the west) that passed overhead", although there is no justification for these details in the report. The pilot only described an object "coming from behind [his a/c or the UFO]", and indeed the phrase "level with me now" implies the object flanking him if anything, and certainly does not imply that it passed "overhead". Klass wants to paint a picture that fits with his meteor theory, including

inventing the E instant heading of the F-4, because the (possible) meteor sightings were of objects travelling W-E. In fact he even fudges this: the Moroccan "fireball", he says, was reported ". . . coming out of the W or SW on a NE heading similar to the [W-E] trajectory reported [from Portugal]." The Moroccan reports describe a heading either NE or north of NE, generally paralleling the Moroccan Atlantic coast; Klass inserts the "west or southwest" for effect.

Finally, the identification of the earlier Morocco-Portugal reports as meteor sightings is less than certain since consistent reports from numerous areas stretching in a rough line along the western Moroccan coastal zone, from Agadir in the south to Fez in the north, spanned about one hour. A typical sighting was made by a Moroccan official who personally briefed the US Defense Attache: he saw it from near Kenitra at 0115 local, travelling low and parallel to the coast at a very slow speed like that of an aircraft preparing to land. When distant it appeared to be disc-shaped, but when it passed closer to his position he could see it as a luminous tubular object. In reply to a request for assistance sent by the American Embassy in Rabat, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger stated that no U.S. aircraft were in the area, there was no record of any satellite re-entry and there were no prominent meteor showers, but speculated that the object may have been a sporadic fireball meteor on a rare tangential trajectory or an unlisted satellite re-entry. (Messages 250801Z Sep. 76 and 052041Z Oct. 76) However, if the reported times are correct these theories are untenable: sightings in Morocco occurred between 0100 and 0200; the object was reported from Portugal (in the same time zone and N of Morocco) just after 0210. Klass speculates that Portugal may have been using Daylight Saving Time whereas Morocco was not, which would place the Lisbon sighting at 0110 Morocco time, although he was "not able to resolve" this; but even if this were true it would not remove the 60 minute difference between first and last sightings in Morocco. (In terms of trajectories the Portuguese incident could have involved the same object. This one reportedly passed W-E. It was sighted by an aircrew bound from Lisbon to Africa and thus on a heading roughly S, and appeared to pass by within a few hundred yards of their aircraft, so that an object following the Moroccan coast NE could have crossed the nose of an aircraft flying south from Lisbon. This geometry would hold true either for a simultaneously-sighted fireball at (say) one or two hundred miles from the Moroccan coast, or for a slow-flying object in local airspace which was independently sighted later.) It is possible that most of the Moroccan times are in error and that a fireball was seen, but the case is far from proven on the available evidence and, in summary, these incidents are of extremely tenuous relevance to the events over Iran several hours earlier and 3,500 miles away.

p. 122 para.3: "[The F-4 crews] would be under considerable stress [and] if they saw meteor fireballs zipping across the sky, they could, quite understandably, conclude that these were rockets or missiles which the unknown object was firing at them."

Comment: That crew "stress" was "considerable" is as suppositious as the "soundness" of the sleep out of which Klass says they were woken. Moreover, the "firing" of "rockets" once again is a distortion of the facts as reported.

p. 122 para.4: "Under such stressful conditions, even experienced flight crews become unreliable observers The second F-4 crew admitted that they were

experiencing "some difficulty in adjusting their night visibility", according to Mooy's report, and they had difficulty attempting a landing at Mehrabad Airport, despite its modern lighting-landing aids."

Comment: The crew did not "admit" anything; they stated that their night vision had been affected. Klass is again attempting to erode witness competence by baseless insinuation. It is perfectly clear from Mooy's report that the problems with night vision occurred after the event and as a direct result of the brilliance of the object(s) (as the DIA evaluation notes) not from some pre-existing "stress". This misrepresentation is carried over into the landing episode, the reader being encouraged to believe that the crew were so "stressed" that they could hardly fly the plane, or even see the airfield! Mooy's report again makes clear that they orbited Mehrabad a few times to allow their night vision to recover, then "went out for a straight-in landing." This seems perfectly sensible. Doubtless Klass would diagnose unreasoning panic if they had landed without waiting for their eyes to become properly dark-adapted.

p. 123 para.1: "It might seem difficult to accept the idea that the F4's power system chanced to malfunction when the aircraft 'passed through a Mag bearing of 150 degrees from Mehrabad', as the crew reported But it seems to me equally unlikely that a UFO would decide to 'zap' the F-4 only when it was on one specific bearing relative to the airport. The F-4 crew report that an airliner approaching Mehrabad at the same time experienced a communications failure seems mysteriously related to the F-4 problems. But whereas the F-4 experienced malfunctions in many of its avionic systems - indicating electric-power-system problems - the airliner seemingly experienced trouble only with one piece of radio equipment."

Comment: It would be more "difficult" to accept Klass's proposal if he pointed out that the same failure happened "each" time on "several" orbits of the F-4. Clearly it is not the bearing from Mehrabad that is significant here but the location as defined by the intersection of that bearing and the orbital track of the F-4. This location is presumably where the airliner radio failure occurred - "in same vicinity (Kilo Zulu)". Klass also states without justification that the F4 crew reported this airliner's radio failure - presumably with the "stress" and "poor training" of the F-4 crew in mind. The debriefing contains no such suggestion. It seems unlikely that the F-4 crew would be the source of intelligence about events on board a civil aircraft with which they would have had no contact, and much more likely that this information, like other background supplied in the memorandum, came to Mooy via his other IIAF sources from Mehrabad control tower and/or the civil aircrew. Klass suggests that the F-4 experienced strikingly different effects from those reported by the airliner. But only the F-4's UHF radio failed in this vicinity, with some "fluctuation" in the inertial navigation system; not as Klass describes it "malfunctions in many of its avionic systems indicating electric-power-system problems". Why such phenomena, if related to the "UFO", should have happened is unknown, but plainly Klass's straw-man hypothesis that the "UFO decided to 'zap' the F-4" is irrelevant and anthropomorphic science-fiction.

p. 132. para.2: Klass passes on a suggestion offered by Mooy to explain the "beeping signal" detected by the searching helicopter next day in an area off to the west of the spot where the F-4 crew thought the bright light emitted by the primary "UFO" had

landed. Mooy observes that some large transport aircraft in service in the area carried emergency crash-locator beacons which transmitted a similar type of signal, and these had been known to eject occasionally during flight as a result of "severe turbulence". Moreover turbulence was often "experienced over the mountains near Tehran."

Comment: This is an interesting hypothesis, although some points need to be qualified. If it is logical that the UHF failure (which reportedly had occurred before when the F-4 approached within some 25 miles of the object in the air) was related to the location of the object whose position on the ground had been "observed and marked" by the aircrew before they came in to land, then it would follow that the bearing from Mehrabad of this landing location was 150 degrees magnetic. This would be SW of Tehran, not inconsistent with the fact that the F-4 had been pursuing the primary object "on a course to the south of Tehran" when it emitted the bright object which appeared to land. The "mountains near Tehran" which would be responsible for severe turbulence, however, are concentrated in the Alborz Range to the N and NW; whereas a bearing SW from Tehran indicates lower terrain in the direction of the Dasht-e Kavir salt pans some 50 miles from Mehrabad. This conjecture is supported by the description of the "landing" site as a "dry lake bed", and the topography would thus not be consistent with the severe mountain turbulence which, *ex hypothesi*, might prematurely eject a crash-locator beacon.

It is true to say, however, that this incident has no direct relationship with the events of the previous night, and none is being claimed. If the search helicopter did randomly pick up a radio beacon this is not evidence of anything except the finding of a radio beacon. It should be noted that the "beacon" signal was not in fact detected at the site marked as the landing point by the F-4 crew. There, "nothing was noticed", and it was when the helicopter circled "off to the west of the area" that the signal was first picked up and followed to the point at which it was strongest. The only part that this signal appears to have played in the affair - whatever it may have been; and a crash locator beacon remains a clear possibility - is that it fortuitously led the helicopter to a "small house with a garden" whose occupants, when questioned, confirmed that they too, like many other in the Tehran area, had seen a "bright light" and heard a loud noise during the night.

p. 123 para.3: Klass suggests that the primary object reported by both F-4 crews and the objects sighted from the ground might have been "a celestial object, perhaps the bright planet Jupiter. Certainly the second flight crew's description sounds like many other UFO reports, where the object proved to be a bright celestial body, and this would explain the F-4's inability to 'close' on the object.'"

Comment: Klass has long since ceased to address the F-4's reported radar lock-on during this "inability to 'close'" - indeed, he never addresses the radar target(s) at all, save to imply that the operator was probably confused and inept. Considered simply as a visual report there is some similarity to (say) a bright planet viewed along an inversion layer with consequently extreme scintillation, and it is true that Brigadier General Yousefi described an object which, from the ground, appeared "similar to a star but bigger and brighter".. But consider the different bearings involved: a Mehrabad tower controller told the *Tehran Journal* that at one point the object was over the south of Tehran, that is, on a bearing SW from the airport; yet the first F-4 pursued the object on a heading due N, looking "so bright

it was easily visible from 70 miles" and "half the size of the moon . . . radiating violet, orange and white light about three times as strong as moonlight." If this was Jupiter, then what was the object which the second F-4 pursued on "a course to the south of Tehran", exhibiting "intense brilliance" with a pattern of strobing coloured lights? Note also the localisation of the initial civilian reports "in the Shemiran area", which is suggestive of something in local airspace rather than something celestial.

p. 123 para.4: "If the prosaic explanation seems strained, consider the alternative: that the 'UFO' was an extraterrestrial spaceship with the remarkable ability to selectively disable many avionic systems on the F-4, only the radio equipment on an airliner, without causing any interference in any IIAF air-defense radars or the Mehrabad radio equipment. Despite this remarkable defensive capability, the 'UFO' decided to fire an 'old-fashioned' rocket-missile at the second F-4, which missed the airplane and landed on a dry lake bed without causing an explosion. And the next morning this rocket-missile mysteriously disappeared, leaving behind only a mysterious beeping radio signal, similar to that emitted by crash locator beacons."

Comment: Klass can see no alternative to his own scenario, other than "an extraterrestrial spaceship", which in another author might betray a certain poverty of imagination. But Klass is not so ingenuous, and in this concluding paragraph is erecting his last row of straw men: 1) The "spaceship" is at best an irrelevance; 2) what was previously a mundane set of faults attributable to an "electric-power-system-outage" is now mysteriously "selective"; 3) there is no information in any available report about what may or may not have occurred at any air-defense radar sites concurrent with the brief periods of avionics failure; 4) if there was no "interference" noted at any such sites, the relevance of this fact to avionics failures in three aircraft near Mehrabad would be at best unclear; 5) whether Mehrabad UHF radio reception suffered any concurrent "interference" is difficult to know when the only aircraft with which communication could have occurred (the F-4 and "the one civil airliner" in the area) suffered radio failure; 6) why any possible "interference" with Mehrabad UHF equipment should be a necessary condition of avionics failures occurring in these aircraft is unclear; 7) the "remarkable defensive capability" of the object and its ability to "decide" actions are pieces of anthropomorphic science-fiction; 8) "an 'old-fashioned' rocket-missile" is more science-fiction, and even the image which Klass intends to convey has no basis in the reported facts; 9) the complaint that the secondary object "missed" the aircraft assumes without justification that it was intended to "hit" it; 10) since the "rocket-missile" is imaginary there is no reason to expect any "explosion" on the dry lake bed; 11) it is untrue that "this rocket-missile mysteriously disappeared", since there is no evidence that such a device existed in the first place; 12) the "mysterious beeping radio signal" traced to a spot some distance from the site many hours later may well have been unconnected with the incident, and if this is indeed the case then nothing whatsoever is to be inferred from it.

Summary: Many of Klass's arguments are logically flawed, a number of "facts" adduced as evidence are found to be speculation and hearsay, and the overall framework of his scenario is in some important respects internally inconsistent. Most significantly, he fails to address the core quantitative details of the original radar-visual report in any way. In conclusion, Klass's analysis fails to clarify our understanding of the case.

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