

UFO UpDates

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'Its All Here In Black & White'

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Bob Pratt's Last E-Mail To Brazilian UFO Magazine

From: A. J. Gevaerd - Revista UFO <gevaerd.nul>
Date: Fri, 25 Nov 2005 08:52:13 -0200
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Subject: Bob Pratt's Last E-Mail To Brazilian UFO Magazine

I'd like to share with you the last e-mail Bob sent me, as it'll be of interest of many UFO researchers on this List. In the message, which I hadn't time to answer - unfortunately - Bob was commenting on Operation Saucer, conducted secretly by the military in the Amazon, from September to December 1977.

A few weeks ago, the major TV network in Brazil, Globo TV - the 4th largest in the world - aired an astounding 45 minute documentary about Operation Saucer, recreating facts and attacks by aliens in the Amazon. I served as consultant to it and had permission to have the program entirely subtitled in English.

The program is a Spielberg-like quality show, with great effects but a few mistakes that can be easily absorbed in the whole context of the show. It was seen by over 80 million Brazilians and was debated on every list, in every forum here, as well as most of the country's population becoming aware of such things.

You can download the English-subtitled documentary for free from the FTP of the Brazilian UFO Magazine, located at:

<http://www.ufo.com.br/publico/>

Once you hit that, click over [Linha Direta_25_Agosto/](#), and then click again over [Program Linha Direta..>](#). I am sorry that it is a 300 Mb file, but it is the shortest version I could manage to have.

Those of you interested in a DVD quality copy of the show, without the subtitles in English, should visit:

<http://www.ufo.com.br/publico/>

then [Linha Direta_25_Agosto/](#) and then click on [VTS_01_1.VOB](#) and [VTS_01_2.VOB](#). These are two parts of the show with 1.5 Gb total.

Below is Bob's e-mail about it.

A. J. Gevaerd
Brazilian UFO Magazine
www.ufo.com.br
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Hi A.J.

Please see the attached message about [Linha Direta's](#) program about Operacao Prato, and let me know what you think. Thank you.

Bob

bobpratt.nul

Hello A.J.

Thank you for sending me the video of [Linha Direta's](#) program on Operacao Prato with English subtitles. I thought the show was very interesting and that the actors do a fine job.

I have a problem, though with the script. There were some serious inaccuracies and I wonder if you are aware of them.

I am not an expert on Operacao Prato and doubt that anyone is. With the possible exception of Colonel Camilo (head of A2 in Belem in 1977-78), those who did know what happened are now dead, which is a terrible pity because there is much we would like to know about the operation.

As I told Michael Weber, Operacao Prato is unique in the history of the UFO phenomenon. It resulted in well-documented proof that UFOs are real. Never before or since has such a long series of sightings and encounters been officially investigated by the government of any country, especially one the size of Brazil. Now if you can get FAB to open those files to the public.

The [Linha Direta](#) program focused on Hollanda, his actions and reactions, especially about being told to end Operacao Prato. But to me, the story of Operacao Prato was how UFOs dominated the skies around Colares Island and terrified the residents for more than four months.

UFOs flew wherever they wanted to with impunity. They appeared in the form of brilliant lights, often in the shape of balls and discs, moving swiftly or slowly or hovering and often executing sharp maneuvers. Sometimes they shot out beams of light that hit people, burning them. At times, UFOs were seen diving into the waters of Marajo Bay and coming out, and sometimes fishermen saw blue lights moving around under the water.

The terror in the region was such that mayors of several villages appealed to the Air Force for help. The Air Force, charged with protecting the skies of Brazil, responded by sending a small team of intelligence agents to see what was going on and try to calm the people.

From what I was able to learn, the Air Force did not send in a team to study UFOs. Brigadier Protazio, the air base commander, simply wanted to know what was going on and wanted proof that UFOs were flying through the skies. Despite the documented testimonies, photos and films, he told Daniel, Cynthia and me in 1999 that he never got that proof, and dismissed the whole thing as simply a matter of hysteria and a malfunctioning light beacon a kilometer off the Colares beach. (Protazio told us he believed UFOs were real and said he had read General Uchoa's books.)

To me, the UFOs and their often hostile actions were the story of Operacao Prato, not Hollanda's reaction to the lights as Linha Direta's program indicated. The major inaccuracies in the Linha Direta program (that I see) are, in brief:

1. The fishing boat incident depicted in the beginning was never part of the Colares series of sightings.
2. The helicopter's encounter with a UFO that caused its rotor blades to stop and nearly crash never happened.
3. No religious procession through the streets was ever attacked.
4. The former mayor of Vigia said FAB set up machineguns and anti-aircraft guns. That didn't happen.
5. The Colares hospital's corridors were never filled with burn victims. The doctor treated 35 to 40 burn victims in some 90 days, or less than one every other day.
6. Hollanda was very interested in what was happening around Colares but he was not obsessed with them nor did he become hysterical.

The details:

No. 1. The depiction of the fishermen being attacked just before sunrise had nothing to do with Operacao Prato. It was based on an incident that occurred in April 1977 (more than six months before Operacao Prato began) aboard an old wooden fishing boat. The men were not fishermen but wood cutters who had gone to uninhabited Crab Island in the Bay of Sao Marcos, to get wooden poles to sell in Sao Lu=EDs. The island is hundreds of kilometers east of Colares. None of the four men on board saw a light of any kind and no one was zapped by a UFO. Three of the men awoke the next morning to find the fourth dead in his hammock. Two of the survivors were burned, one seriously. The survivors have never learned what happened to them. Dr. Silvio Lago put each of them under hypnosis twice one weekend (without the others present) but was not able to break what he called the mental block that prevented them from revealing what happened that night.

The producers of Linha Direta cleverly had one of the "fishermen" say they had to get to Alc=E2ntara the next morning. This was not true. In those days few Brazilians outside of the area ever heard of Alc=E2ntara (several dozen kilometers north of Crab Island), which had once been the colonial capital of Maranhao but in 1977 was little more than a sleepy village (I flew there once). However, as you know, in the late 1980s Brazil built the space port in Alc=E2ntara, of which Brazilians are justly proud. The only reason I can see for the producers' putting that in the program was to lead viewers into linking the incident with something from space.

A number of people in the Sao Lu=EDs-Crab Island-Pinheiro area were burned by UFOs in incidents similar to those in Colares and Vigia. The sightings lasted for four months (April, May, June and July 1977) before tapering off, and apparently the UFOs then moved on to the Colares area. Hollanda believed that after leaving the Colares area they went farther west into Amazonas.

No. 2. The helicopter's encounter with a UFO never happened. Linha Direta attributed the report to someone named Ant=F4nio Ferreira, who allegedly was on board. But there is nothing in the FAB files about such an incident, nor did Hollanda or Sgt. Pinto ever mention it. I'm sure they would have if it had happened. The only mention of an Ant=F4nio Ferreira in the FAB documents is this:

771123/09:30 to 10:30 - Colares - Ant=F4nio Ferreira, 35, literate, painter, Colares - Airship - reddish on the bottom and clear gray like metal on top, oval-cylindrical in shape, 1,200 meters high about 1,500 meters away, about one meter in apparent size and 50 centimeters in diameter moving SE/NE, moving faster than a jet. like small, wavy pulsing action, spinning.

Hollanda did tell us that in Colares a helicopter pilot told him he was going to take off, fly some distance away and then return with his spotlight focused on Colares to trick the inhabitants into thinking a UFO was coming. But the people heard the copter's motor and were not fooled. An old man came up to Hollanda later and said that when the helicopter flew away, a light followed it. Hollanda told this to the pilot. It frightened the pilot, who then chose to stay in Colares for the night and return to Belem the next day in daylight.

No. 3. No religious procession through the streets was ever attacked. Such processions did take place, with the people hoping the religious ceremony would help prevent the UFOs from attacking. In 1999 we interviewed Rosio Aranha de Oliveira and members of his family, including a daughter, Ana Celia, who was about six years old in 1977.

Ana Celia, by now a school teacher, said: "People made huge bonfires. Schools were closed. Every day at 6 o'clock a "procession" (an oracao) came out of the church. In that time, all of Colares stopped. The school was closed. The police station closed. At 6 o'clock (came) the procession to pray for protection and save the children. The women and children would go to sleep and the men would go out to watch. People and animals were attacked. My mother and I say the same thing. In that time there was no food. No one was fishing, terrible lack of food. And people would not go out to their vegetable gardens for crops. And everybody tried to go around in large groups. Nobody wanted to be alone. At 6 o'clock it got dark and we would go to sleep. At 6, groups of as many as 50 to 60 people would get together in one house, women and children. At night, people saw many UFOs flying and in formation. One time, I never forget this case, I heard men shouting and I ran to the door and opened it and saw many UFOs in formation and suddenly they went in all directions. People began to shoot into the sky-

"(Q. At the UFOs?) No, to scare them away. One UFO came near the village just 15 meters high. the objects moved very quickly. The children didn't know what was happening. We only heard from our fathers and the other men what was happening. We didn't know why we were going to other people's houses at night to sleep. At the time I had no reaction to what I was seeing. I dreamed about this and I still sometimes have dreams. For three years. Every few years I remember and begin to dream about it. The dreams are so vivid. The vividness doesn't fade. It was only later that I got scared."

sourced.

Ana Celia and her family stayed in Colares throughout the flap and certainly would have known if any procession was attacked. So would Dr. Wellaide.

Ana Celia's father, Rosio? who told me in 1979 that he had seen blue lights moving around under the waters of Marajo Bay ? told us in 1999: "It was rare that we went fishing (in 1977) and didn't see something on the edge of the forest. When a UFO stops over us it's like it is enclosed and then it goes away toward Marajo, and sometimes it goes slowly up and down. It's a red light and it blinks.

"The Chupa-chupa began with lights all over Colares. sometimes in shape of a hat, round, disc, like an umbrella. We saw things all over, Bacuri, Ponta do Machadinho, Praia do Correo . They seemed to come from way up high, from many places, from the sky, from the bay, from a horizontal position.

"They were huge, and they put out very strong light, like a beam of yellowish light. Everything was yellow. We just saw a big light because it was too bright to see a shape. but it was coming straight toward us. We felt a lot of heat from the light...

"The fishermen didn't go to the ocean to fish because they went to the forest to cut wood for the bonfires. The men didn't want to sleep at night because the bicho attacked and they were afraid to sleep, so they lit fires and cooked fish. Many people saw bright lights and fell down, fainted. We wanted to shoot the light. It attacks the nerves, get completely weak."

No. 4. Jose Ildone Favacho Soeiro, who was mayor of Vigia in 1977, said in the program that the FAB came in with machineguns and set up anti-aircraft guns, etc. Not true. Either he or someone else on the program also said FAB had more than 60 people. Also not true. There were just five agents and Hollanda, and occasionally a couple of doctors and one time a cameraman came from Brasilia.

Sgt. Alvaro Pinto dos Santos was one of the intelligence agents in Operacao Prato. The FAB team spent four months investigating, but Pinto was in Colares, off and on, for only about two months. In 1999 he told us: "The people there (in Colares, Vigia) asked for help. They wanted guns to shoot. Operacao Prato started October 22. We were there as much to talk to people. The people thought the UFOs were Japanese things, taking people out of the area so the Japanese could take over the land. People were really scared, terrified. They didn't know what to do.

"(Q. Were you chosen for Operacao Prato because you had special skills, like meteorologist, or other training?) No, it was only that we worked in the Second [A-2, the Intelligence section]. It was just that I was at the right place at the right time. I was a sort of a scrivao. We were sent in not because we had any specialties or anything but because we had reports of these happenings scaring people so badly that they were starving and were afraid to go out fishing.

"These (agents) were all sergeants. Flavio was a first sergeant. Afterwards, Camilo (then Colonel Camilo Ferraz de Barros, head of A2, who later retired as a brigadier general and moved to a farm in Minas Gerais) sent two doctors. one was a general clinician and the other was a psychiatrist. I don't know the names because I wasn't there then. This was after I was out of the scene that they sent the doctors. doctors of A-2.

"(Q. Where did you stay? Hotel, tents?) No, Flavio had a cousin who had a house and they gave the key to them. It was very close to the beach and we would sleep during the day and watched at night. Flavio cooked. he was a good cook. we fixed barbecue, made macaroni. We washed our own clothes in a sweet-water river than ran into the sea there and hung them on bushes.

"(Q. Did you use your own vehicles or FAB?) No, we had our own cars. it was a Variant, Volkswagen station wagon . our own cars.

"(Q. Did you carry weapons?) No, we weren't even in uniform. We were without arms or uniforms.

"(Q. Is it true you had to warn people not to shoot at the UFOs?) Yes, we talked to the people, explained to them that they couldn't shoot at them or things could get worse.

"(Q. Did you have special equipment to determine distances and so forth?) Flavio used a theodolite to triangulate. He used a telephoto lens. tape recorders .we had those big reels that went around. and after we recorded it we wrote it out.

"(Q. Did you sometimes split up into teams, some men go to this village and others elsewhere?) No, when we went to a place we always went together. When I was there, there were only three of us, but afterwards. there were more. [Hollanda said he had five agents altogether.]

"(Q. Did you have radio equipment to stay in touch with the base?) No. We had the tape recorder, the typewriter. cameras and a theodolite. We had nothing. Flavio had a shorthand machine. [Hollanda said they had radios to stay in touch with each other.]

"(Q. How did they know when to go from Colares to another village? How would they know when things happened elsewhere?) The people told us. the people knew we were investigating and would coming running to us. and the police would tell us too. So we would go off to where something was happening."

No. 5. The Colares hospital's corridors were never filled with burn victims. Dr. Wellaide told Daniel in the late 1980s that she treated about 35 patients. She told me in 1993 that she treated about 40. In a Belem newspaper story last February, Carlos Mendes quoted her as having treated 80 burn victims, but Carlos made a number of mistakes in the story as well as in another one he wrote about that time about the FAB investigation. But with 35 to 40 burn victims in some 90 days, that's less than one every other day. I doubt that the hospital's corridors were ever crowded, with patients grabbing Hollanda's shirt and begging him to help them. (The Linha Direta program also gave the impression that Dr. Wellaide was a key figure in the FAB investigation, and I seriously doubt she was.)

No. 6. The program focused on Hollanda and made it seem like he was obsessed with UFOs and almost hysterical at times, and that

a sort of went to pieces emotionally after Brigadier Protazio (Protazio Lopes de Oliveira) ordered him to end Operacao Prato.

In addition, Petit said in Linha Direta's program that Hollanda was greatly depressed at times (especially after being told to stop investigating the UFOs), but I cannot figure how Petit learned that. I have gone over the transcript of your interview with Hollanda and can find nothing to indicate Hollanda was manic depressive (as others have asserted as well). I talked with Hollanda in 1979, 1980 and 1981 (spending four or five entire days with him in the Amazon on the last occasion) and even though at times he was in civilian clothes he was always a professional military officer who showed no signs of depression or obsession. (I also saw him in 1992 or 1993, and in 1997.)

Don't forget also that he died 20 years after the operation was ended! After Operacao Prato he finished his 36 years in the service and rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel before retiring. If he was having such emotional problems, I doubt that he would have been promoted that far.

If anyone was obsessed with UFOs, it was Sgt. Flavio. I spent parts of two days with him in 1979 and he was quite enthusiastic about UFOs. After Operacao Prato was ended, he frequently went to Colares, usually taking his family on weekends and vacations.

In 1999, Flavio's daughter Francimari told us: "He got everybody in the family enthusiastic about UFOs. We did vigils in Colares. We spent a month there on vacation and stayed in a cousin's house. We spread sheets out on the beach at night and took turns staying up to see if something came in the early hours of the morning. We saw UFOs coming out of the water near the farol (lighthouse beacon a kilometer out in the bay). We could see water dripping down as they came out."

I understand one of the other sergeants now lives in the south of Brazil and might be tracked down for further information about Prato. But I have also heard that he has joined a UFO cult, which may or may not color his recollection of what happened during Operacao Prato.

Mario Rangel told me that in Revista UFO No. 114 there is an article that said Hollanda was difficult to work with during Operacao Prato. Is that true? Who wrote the story and what was the author's source for that information?

Do you know a retired Naval officer named Comm. (or Com.) Jorge, and his wife Leila? They were friends of Hollanda in Cabo Frio and reportedly went to Hollanda's apartment soon after he died and learned that there were reports of neighbors hearing two gunshots, that there was blood all over the room and that Hollanda's hands were tied to the legs of the bed. Supposedly Hollanda and his wife had had a terrible argument with Cecilia, his wife, earlier in the day, that he had gone to a bar and had several beers, that the wife and his daughter Daniela and his infant son went out somewhere and came back later to find Hollanda dead. Not long after, the family disappeared.

I understand you have talked with Hollanda's sister (a dentist?) in Belem, either at the time of Hollanda's death or maybe when you went to Belem with the Towers Productions people. What has the sister told you about his death? Have you ever talked to his brother, or found Hollanda's wife and daughter?

Enquiring minds want to know.

Best wishes,

Bob

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