

WAS COLUMBIA DESTROYED BY THE 'FLYING ICE'?

By Robert K. Leśniakiewicz

As you know, the space shuttle *Columbia* was destroyed on Feb. 1st, 2003, at 14:00 GMT, above Texas state. Seven persons were killed in that terrible disaster, which occurred 62 km above our planet, when the shuttle came into the Earth's atmosphere with a speed of 16 Ma – ca. 5.5 km/s. The whole world was shocked by that event.

I have been an enthusiast of the astronomy and astronautic since my youngest years. I have read a lot of books, articles and I watched TV programs about the space flights. I have read also the science-fiction books. I have been keen on the astronomy. My promote work of the middle school was devoted to the *Apollo-11* mission.

When the *Challenger* shuttle exploded on Jan. 29th, 1986, I felt myself very bad. I realized that it was a military mission aimed against also my country – the Cold War was still on its way. But I was sorrowful because off a death of her crewmen and crewwomen. I could not believe that that disaster had been caused by a stream of the gas from her booster. Nobody in Poland could not believe in that. There was a horrible joke, which ran around the Western Coast of Poland:

- *Do you know, what was fond among the Challenger's debris?*
- *No – what?*
- *A hand with a shell's cotter on its thumb and the 'Pobyeda' watch on its wrist!...*

This joke shows us in the best way, whom Poles blamed for a sabotage on the Cape Canaveral ...

People are wrong thinking that the Cold War is over. It lasts still, but there change only its sides. Now, they are orthodox communistic regimes in Northern Korea, Cuba and members of the *al-Quaeda*, who want to terrorize the free world with the Mass Destruction Weapon. Of course, their aim # 1 is the Israel state. By the way, I remain a panic,

which burst in Austria and Germany a year ago, when they had noticed a strong flash of light in the sky. It was only the Bavaria Meteorite, but people thought that it was the Saddam's SCUD missile... So than a situation still remains the one of the Cold War times.

And the *Columbia* space shuttle disaster occurred in such political situation. She was the oldest one among a rest of the American shuttles. She was 22 years old. She took off in her last voyage to the ISS *Alpha* on Jan. 16th, 2003. Her crew consisted of five Americans, one Hindu woman and an Israeli pilot. They went to the ISS *Alpha* to realize scientific program together with American and Russian astronauts.

On the fatal day Feb. 1st, 2003, at 9 o'clock of the American time (14:00 GMT, 15:00 hrs of the Warsaw time), *Columbia* came into the Earth's atmosphere. It always is the worst moment of the all space-flights – a landing. The shuttle must come under a suitable angle for the atmosphere. She must turn to her 'stomach', which is protected by special, fireproofing plates. The shuttle must loose her orbital speed – 7.9 km/s. I do not think that a damage of the upper part of the *Columbia's* right wing was something significant.

At 14:00 GMT, she was 62,000 meters above Texas . Many people observed her return. Suddenly, the bright ball divided into several smaller points of light. The witness did not realized that there had been something bad with the shuttle. They could not believe in that. And next the shuttle's debris started to fall onto Texas and Louisiana fields...

At that time in Poland was 3 o'clock pm. Our state and commercial televisions broke their programs immediately. At 4 o'clock pm we watched the first pictures of the *Columbia* catastrophe on the TV news. It remained to me the Sept. 11th 2001 New York events.

People started to think about a reason of that accident. One author Mr. De Voron stated that Russians had destroyed *Columbia* with a strong laser beam emitted either from the *Tu-160* bomber or some satellite. Another author wrote that the shuttle was attacked by Aliens...

Personally, I think that the shuttle might be hit by:

- ❖ Meteor or meteorite;
- ❖ A fragment of the ‘cosmic scrap-metal’;
- ❖ Small icy meteor or icy micro-comet.

Of course, there almost 1 million of the small pieces turn around our planet on various orbits and 9,000 of them are as big as the tennis ball. They move with a speed between 7,9 and 11,2 km/s. Our cosmic ships were hit by them several times. A crew of the *Soyuz-11* Russian space ship was killed by such micro-meteor, which had made a little hole in the *Soyuz-11* capsule and three Soviet spacemen had died before they come into the Earth’s atmosphere...

I think that *Columbia* was struck by a small icy meteor or icy micro-comet. Scientists say that 20-30 such comets fell into the atmosphere a day, and make so called ‘pearl clouds’. It is quite possible that such icy ball crashed with the shuttle and finally disintegrated her.

Those icy ball dropped in Georgia , USA on Jan. 27th, and another one bombed a house in Hanover , Germany one day before. I am sure that Russian Space Agency is right and this accident is quite technological disaster. There is no place for mad Russian generals, man-ate Iraq terrorists or Aliens, however I am sure that that event was watched by UFO... - but it is another matter to discuss.

Generally, such pieces of ice from the sky were dropped in Toledo circumstances in Spain , Belgium , Skomielna Biala in Poland and Treviso in Italy – especially in the Northern Italy was bombed with 60 balls of ice in 2001. I think that such ‘rain of the icy blocks’ could be responsible for the shuttle disaster. And not only for that, because I think that some mysterious airplane crashes, which had had their places in some last years, were caused by those icy solids, which had come from the open outer space... They were not destroyed by UFOs or another mysterious phenomena, but by the ‘flying ice’. Pilots saw the giant hail which hit their planes and destroyed them as quick as they could not send the SOS... By the way, this phenomenon has been well known as one of the fortean phenomena for many centuries.

I am convinced that the airmen and spacemen should be very careful and keep eyes on blocks of the ‘flying ice’.

The End