



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

TUCSON, ARIZONA 85721

INSTITUTE OF ATMOSPHERIC PHYSICS
BUILDING #81

June 5, 1980

Mr. Robert A. Moore

Dear Mr. Moore:

Dr. McDonald did not publish any further studies of the ring-shaped cloud that appeared over Flagstaff, other than the article in *Weatherwise* that you cited in your letter of June 2, 1980. He convinced himself and others here at the Institute that the cloud was caused by the release of water into the upper atmosphere by the detonation of a rocket fired from Vandenberg.

Dr. McDonald was interested in many problems at the same time and had a tendency to move quickly to new problems, putting off publication to a future time, if at all.

Incidentally, he was much disturbed by people who claimed that the cloud was actually a ring of angels carrying a divine message. That story has been propagated by a preacher whose views found their way into a book. Over the years, we have received letters from people who are interested in the religious significance of the cloud. In my view, there is none. The cloud originated in the manner suggested by Dr. McDonald.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Louis J. Battan".

Louis J. Battan
Director

LJB/msr