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Author(s): stringer V. Magas under the rubric ``Incidents``: ``How a UFO Was Downed``--first paragraph is editorial introduction]

Headline: Air Defense Forces Shoot Down Balloon Over Kola

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Subslug: [Article by stringer V. Magas under the rubric ``Incidents``: ``How a UFO Was Downed``--first paragraph is editorial introduction]

FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE:

1. [Article by stringer V. Magas under the rubric ``Incidents``: ``How a UFO Was Downed``--first paragraph is editorial introduction]

2. [Text] On 4 September this year our newspaper published a TASS correspondent article on the UFO seen 2 September by residents of Murmansk. But it turns out that the UFO was also being observed by the country's air defense servicemen. Our stringer reports what happened next.

3. As it approached the coast the spherical UFO came within range of air defense surface-to-air missile complexes. But it was not possible for them to open fire to destroy the ``uninvited guest`` because the target was over a heavily populated area. Therefore the superior command (and it had been receiving regular reports from the moment contact was made) ordered that observations be continued....

4. The UFO hovered over Murmansk and Severomorsk at a height of up to 29,000 meters without emitting any radio signals. By the morning of 3 September it had moved deep into the Kola Peninsula, and it was then that fighter squadron commander Captain First Class I. Sdatchenko was ordered to destroy the target. In actual fact, it was not a UFO at all but a balloon. The experienced pilot carried out the mission successfully--the balloon was destroyed at 0806 hours north of the town of Kovdor.

5. According to the pilot the balloon was enormous--up to 40 to 50 meters in diameter. This refuted the previous suggestion that it was an ordinary weather balloon. After the balloon burst, the containers it was carrying landed with the aid of automatically deployed

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parachutes. Border guards have passed them on to a scientific research institute to be studied. So far just one thing is known: The ``UFO`` was produced abroad.

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