

THE LEGACY OF 1952: **YEAR OF THE UFO**

by

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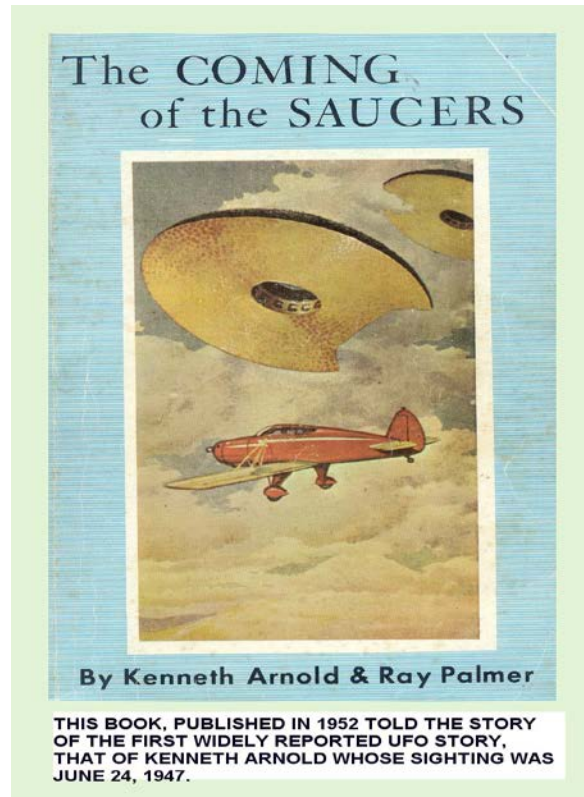
PROLOGUE

MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS AGO, during the most amazing flap of flying saucer sightings in the USA (and the world), the Air Force *almost* publicly stated that at least some of the objects seen during sightings of UFO sightings could be, literally, "interplanetary." However, during a large press conference in late July, 1952, instead of admitting that the Air Force couldn't explain all sightings and that some "high officials" essentially assumed that flying saucers were "interplanetary craft," the Air Force said that everything could be explained as natural phenomena and there was no conceivable threat to the USA. Thus the Air Force established a "tradition" which is part of the Legacy of 1952: there is nothing of real significance in UFO reports. We still live under this "tradition." Another consequence of the large number of sightings in 1952 was that the CIA convened the "Robertson Panel" which decided that saucer sightings are not evidence of interplanetary vehicles and established the second part of Legacy of 1952: UFO reports should all be explained and debunked. This report tells story of the 1952 sighting flap and how it caused the Air Force and CIA to effectively "slam the lid" on scientific UFO investigation.

Pre-History of 1952

The world first became aware of flying saucer sightings in the summer of 1947 with the nationwide and worldwide publication of the report of Kenneth Arnold's June 24 sighting of nine "discs" traveling rapidly past Mt. Rainier in the state of Washington. In the subsequent weeks well over a thousand sightings were reported in the local press accounts throughout the USA and in other parts of the world. The Air Force quickly became involved because some of the AF pilots (and many commercial pilots) were also witnesses. The Air Force quickly and publicly denied having any secret projects that could account for UFO sightings. This denial was also made privately at the highest levels to the director of the FBI (J. Edgar Hoover) when the AF asked the FBI to investigate sightings to find out if any could be attributed to communist subversive activities. The FBI investigated for a month or so and found no such evidence (yes, there was an "X" file). The FBI stopped actively investigating in the fall of 1947 but continued to collect information from the Air Force. The Air Force continued investigating, compiling

collections of sighting reports by AF pilots and other qualified observers. By the fall of 1947 the research staff of the Air Force Air Materiel Command (AMC) at Wright Field (Wright Patterson Air Force Base) had concluded that flying saucers were "real and not visionary" (statement in a report by General Nathan Twining, head of AMC at the time) and recommended that a special investigation group be set up to determine what they were and where they came from. In response to this recommendation the Air Force established its first UFO investigation group, called PROJECT SIGN, in early 1948.



During the spring and summer of 1948 the SIGN investigators analyzed the 1947 and 1948 sightings to determine if they could be evidence of advanced military technology. These investigators were experienced in all branches of aeronautics and would have recognized advances in propulsion and aircraft design shapes. Despite high level searches of USAF and Navy aircraft research projects, they could find no US project that could explain the saucer sightings. Furthermore, they rejected the idea that the Soviets (Russians) had leapfrogged our own technologies and created such highly advanced, highly reliable and probably atomic powered craft that they would dare to fly these craft over the United States. Although they could reasonably explain many of the sightings as misidentifications by the witnesses, they eventually concluded that the only reasonable explanation for some of the sightings was that the witnesses saw flying craft from an interplanetary source... the "ET hypothesis" in modern parlance. In the fall of 1948 this explanation was incorporated into a document entitled "Estimate of the Situation" and was sent through the chain of command from the AMC to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Hoyt Vandenberg. Vandenberg rejected the conclusion. Essentially he said to the Air Force's own experts in aeronautics, "Sorry, wrong answer." That meant that the experts had to find some other answer. They spent the next few months trying to shoehorn the truly unexplainable sightings into the "Russian" explanation, but failed to do so. Eventually, the projects that succeeded PROJECT SIGN, namely, PROJECT GRUDGE (1949-1952) and PROJECT BLUE BOOK (1952-1969), assigned all flying saucer sightings to one of the following 5 general categories: unexplained, insufficient information, misidentifications of known phenomena, hoaxes and delusions (mental states of the observer(s)). In order to "explain" the cases that were officially left unexplained the Air Force claimed (without evidence) that these, too, could have been explained if there had been more information. In other words, they implied that the unidentified cases were really cases of

insufficient information. (One wonders, then, why there were any cases labeled "unidentified.") However, a careful review of many unexplained sightings indicates that more than enough information was available for explanation, if that were reasonable or possible. Instead, in many cases the available information convincingly pointed AWAY from any conventional explanation.

As far as the general public was concerned, by late 1947 the official public position of the Air Force was well known: there was no interplanetary phenomenon causing flying saucer/UFO sightings; instead, they could all be explained as natural phenomena. The scientific community and the major news media, without any in-depth study of the sighting report information (which was held by the Air Force), agreed. A consequence of this was that witnesses, including highly credible witnesses such as commercial pilots and police officers, were often criticized or made the butt of jokes for reporting "impossible things." Nevertheless, sighting reports continued beyond 1948. Agencies responsible for security around nuclear power and atomic bomb installations were startled by sightings near secure areas starting in late 1948 and continuing through 1949 and 1950 ("green fireball" sightings and associated phenomena). In 1950 a special project (TWINKLE) managed to obtain film of unidentified, high speed, high altitude (150,000 ft !), 30 ft diameter objects flying over White Sands but this information was known to only a few people in military employ and the photographic evidence was suppressed.

Major General Charles Cabell was the Director of Air Force Intelligence in 1949-1951. In early 1949 he sent out a sighting form to all Air Commands and even to the FBI. He made it clear that he wanted everything investigated and he wanted to know what flying saucers were. However, he also wanted to "keep a lid on" to prevent public interest in the subject from generating spurious reports that would waste the time of his analysts. The GRUDGE staff went a bit farther and played down the importance of saucer sightings, implying that all sightings had mundane explanations. In the spring of 1949 Sydney Shallet, a well known writer, requested from the Air Force help in writing an article for the *Saturday Evening Post*. The article was to present the Air Force viewpoint on the flying saucer mystery that had begun in the summer of 1947. Shallet wanted access to reports collected by the Air Force and wanted to know the official opinions. Shallet talked to some of the Air Force people working at AMC and was given the clear impression that the Air Force didn't think much of the saucers and that investigating them was a waste of time. This impression was echoed in his two-part article appeared that on April 29 and May 7, 1949. To the general public, then, it appeared that the Air Force was not interested in flying saucers. However, this was not the case, at least at the top levels of the Air Force. Two days before Shallet's article panned saucers (pun intended), General Cabell sent a top secret report entitled *Unidentified Aerial Objects* to the Joint Intelligence Committee of the Air Force, Army, Navy, State Department, FBI and CIA. In this report he wrote:

There are numerous reports from reliable and competent observers for which a conclusive explanation has not been made. Some of these involve descriptions which would place them in the category of new manifestations of probable natural phenomena but others involve configurations and described performance which might conceivably represent an advanced aerodynamic development. A few unexplained incidents surpass these limits of credibility.

This statement clearly indicates that General Cabell took the subject seriously and furthermore, that he was allowing for the possibility that at least some of the credible reports could be of phenomena which were neither natural nor manmade. General Cabell's desire for thorough saucer investigations would have a major impact on PROJECT GRUDGE about a year and a half later (see below).

In late 1949 the Air Force issued a "final report" (the GRUDGE Report) which claimed that all of the several hundred sightings to that time had been explained. This report was later criticized by the General Cabell, who called it worthless "tripe," even though he approved of the press release which said that the Air Force had found no threat to the United States and was, therefore, closing the investigation project. It had not closed the project, however, as GRUDGE continued at a low level of activity into 1951.

In the fall of 1951 General Cabell became aware of a publicized sighting (at Fort Monmouth, NJ) which interested him because it involved radar. He asked for a briefing on the investigation of that case. At the briefing he was told that, for all practical purposes, the PROJECT GRUDGE was nearly inactive. At the

very least, it was not following his earlier instructions to investigate all sightings. Cabell was angry. He realized that those under him had lied about the project. He ordered that the project be reorganized and revitalized under new management.

This reorganization, which began in the fall of 1951 under the direction of Capt. Edward Ruppelt, was underway at the Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC) at Wright Patterson AFB when 1952 "hit." The name of the project was changed in March, 1952, to BLUE BOOK, a name that became famous as the years went by. Ruppelt was the director from late 1951 through 1953. While he was the director it was the most unbiased, scientifically-oriented and publicly known UFO investigation by the Air Force. (It is likely that there were other investigations which were not, and are still not, publicly known.) The Air Force officers and personnel who continued PROJECT BLUE BOOK (PBB) after Ruppelt were not as unbiased as Ruppelt and the scientific quality of the project deteriorated in the following years. (BLUE BOOK was formally closed in 1969 after collecting about 13,000 sightings of which about 700 were left as unexplained.)

In the spring of 1952 PBB was "up and running," but was completely unprepared for the onslaught of sighting reports that would begin in late April. In the months preceding the flap the typical reporting rate was generally lower than a dozen and a half reports per month. This is what the Air Force saucer project was accustomed to; this is a rate that they could handle. Keep this in mind as you enter...

1952, THE YEAR OF THE UFO

During the latter half of 1951 there were important changes in the UFO project at ATIC and also in Air Force Intelligence at the Pentagon. In November, General John A. Samford replaced General Cabell as Director of Intelligence (Cabell became the Director of the Joint Staff for the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon and a year or so later retired from the Air force and became an assistant director of the CIA). The new Air Force Intelligence Director soon learned that that the subject of UFOs received top level attention. There was also a change at ATIC: Col. Frank Dunn replaced the previous commander (Col. Watson). At the first meeting between Samford, Dunn and the New BLUE BOOK staff (Ruppelt), Dunn asked Samford if the United States had a secret weapon that could explain the saucer sightings. The answer was a firm no. (Recall that this was the answer given to the FBI in the summer of 1947.)

As you read through the following "UFO history" of 1952 keep in mind that there was already plenty of other news. The Korean war continued through 1952 (and many AF pilots in Korea sighted UFOs), the presidential election conventions were held during the summer and Ike Eisenhower was chosen to run against Adlai Stevenson; Eisenhower was elected in November. During the year atomic bombs were tested ten times by the USA and, to counter the Soviet Union's development of their atomic bomb, the world's first hydrogen bomb was tested (November 1, 1952; it destroyed the island Elugelab. President Truman pointed out that the "America stands in the shadow of another world war." So, there was plenty to think about without a major intrusion into world affairs by...something from out of this world!??

THE GENERAL'S SAUCER

On January 3, 1952, Brig. Gen. William M. Garland, Assistant for the Production of Intelligence, wrote a memorandum for General Samford with the title "**(SECRET) Contemplated Action to Determine the Nature and Origin of the Phenomena Connected with the Reports of Unusual Flying Objects.**" This memorandum begins as follows:

- 1. The continued reports of unusual flying objects requires positive action to determine the nature and origin of the phenomena. The action taken thus far has been designed to track down and evaluate reports from casual observers throughout the country. Thus far, this action has produced results of doubtful value and the inconsistencies inherent in the nature of the reports has given neither positive nor negative proof of the claims.**

Here we find a general in Air Force Intelligence (AFI) admitting that there was no negative proof of the claims. Yet the Air Force had been saying publicly for several years that there was "negative proof"...that all sightings had been explained. Clearly the men "on the inside" were more honest with each other than they were with the American people about the fact that they had not been able to prove flying saucers were only mistakes or figments of the imagination.

By this time it had become a standard procedure for the military to appeal to the Soviet Menace in order to legitimize requests for action and the expenditure of funds. General Garland, too, justified the added effort he would propose by referring to the potential Soviet threat, whether he believed it or not:

2. It is logical to relate the reported sightings to the known development of aircraft, jet propulsion, rockets and range extension capabilities in Germany and the U.S.S.R. In this connection, it is to be noted that certain developments by the Germans, particularly the Horton wing, jet propulsion, and refueling, combined with their extensive employment of V-1 and V-2 weapons during World War II, lend credence to the possibility that the flying objects may be of German and Russian origin. The developments mentioned above were contemplated and operational between 1941 and 1944 and subsequently fell into the hands of the Soviets at the end of the war. There is evidence that the Germans were working on these projects as far back as 1931 to 1938. Therefore, it may be assumed that the Germans had at least a 7 to 10 year lead over the United States in the development of rockets, jet engines and aircraft of the Horton-wing design. The Air Corps developed refueling experimentally as early as 1928, but did not develop operational capability until 1948.

Notice how "cleverly" the general has described the possible threat from Russian developments based on German war research and has concluded that the Russians might have a 7 to 10 year lead on the United States in producing advanced aircraft. Nowhere did he mention that the same argument had been rejected by experts in aeronautics in previous years because (a) the ATIC and AFI investigators in 1947 and again in 1948 could not accept the idea that the Soviets were that far ahead of us and (b) even if they were that far ahead they would never fly their advanced aircraft over the United States (we wouldn't do the reverse; if one crashed we would have access to their secret developments). Could it be that he didn't know about the previous rejection of the "Soviet Hypothesis?" Could it be that he was not sufficiently intelligent to deduce for himself that the idea of the Soviets testing their advanced aircraft over the United States was ridiculous? Or could it be that he actually doubted the Soviet Hypothesis but used it anyway to justify spending money on saucer investigation? (We will shortly see how this same ploy was used by a top defense scientist to get money for a trip to Europe to study, among other things, flying saucer sightings!!)

Having established a "credible" threat General Garland continued:

3. In view of the above facts and the persistent reports of unusual flying objects over parts of the United States, particularly the east and west coast and in the vicinity of the atomic energy production and testing facilities it is apparent that positive action must be taken to determine the nature of the objects and, if possible, their origin. Since it is a known fact that the Soviets did not detonate an atomic bomb prior to 1949, it is believed possible that the Soviets may have developed the German aircraft designs at an accelerated rate in order to have a suitable carrier for the delivery of weapons of mass destruction. In other words, the Soviet may have a carrier without the weapons required while we have relatively superior weapons with relatively inferior carriers available. If the Soviets should get the carrier and the weapon, combined with adequate defensive aircraft, they might surpass us technologically for a sufficient period of time to permit them to execute a decisive air campaign against the United States and her allies. The basic philosophy of the Soviets has been to surpass the western powers technologically and the Germans may have given them the opportunity.

In the preceding paragraph the general pressed two "hot buttons." One was the oblique reference to sightings of UFOs/saucers/strange phenomena over the atomic research installations, namely, green fireballs and the "disc variation" seen numerous times by dozens of witnesses starting in December 1948 and

continuing through 1949 and 1950 with occasional reports in 1951. These installations were considered the keystone to our development of defensive atomic weapons (note his use of the phrase "weapons of mass destruction"). Although the Air Force publicly played down the importance of these sightings, it is clear that, privately, the top officials were worried, or at least paying attention. The other hot button was the fact that the Soviets, now with a known nuclear capability, might have a delivery system superior to the bombers of the United States and her allies, and flying saucer sightings might be evidence of this superior delivery system.

The general concluded:

4. In view of the facts outlined above it is considered mandatory that the Air Force take positive action at once to definitely determine the nature and, if possible, the origin of the reported unusual flying objects. The following action is now contemplated:

- a) require ATIC to provide at least three teams to be matched up with an equal number of teams from ADC (Air Defense Command) for the purpose of taking radar scope photographs and visual photographs of the phenomena**
- b) select sites for these teams based on concentrations of already reported sightings over the United States (these areas are, generally, the Seattle area, the Albuquerque area and the New York-Philadelphia area) and**
- c) take the initial steps in this project during early January, 1952.**

It is obvious that the general wanted action, ostensibly to protect the United States from the possible Soviet advancements in aeronautical research. However, information contained in a memorandum written by Capt. Ruppelt and contained within his private papers, suggests that Garland may have had an ulterior motive, a hidden reason for wanting a better UFO investigation! According to Ruppelt, "Gen. Garland was my boss at ATIC from the fall of 1951 until I left. He was a *moderately confirmed believer*. (my emphasis) He had seen a UFO while he was stationed in Sacramento, California. He was Gen. Samford's assistant in the Pentagon before he came to ATIC..."

What's this? General Garland was a *witness* and a "*moderately*" confirmed believer? (As you read what the top generals were doing and thinking, please keep in mind the official position on flying saucers/UFOs: *because they don't exist, it is impossible to see one...so if you THINK YOU DO see one up there, LOOK AWAY [or, better yet, keep your eyes to the ground, always!]*)

One may conclude that his observation, at the very least, convinced him that something unexplained was "out there" and flying around. He may have privately rejected the Soviet explanation but used it anyway as a justification for research because he wanted the research done but didn't want to mention the "interplanetary hypothesis" that had been rejected in 1948 by General Vandenberg. This possibility gains further support from what he did only a month or so after this document was written: *he suggested the interplanetary hypothesis to writers of a LIFE Magazine article to be described!*

Ruppelt began the process of carrying out Garland's recommendations, but it was slow going. By the time things were starting to move in the late spring PBB was swamped with sightings. The investigation teams proposed by the general were never formed but a plan for instrumentally recording sighting information was carried out. According to a PBB staff Study (written in July), in June the Air Defense Command (ADC) issued a requirement that radar scope cameras be available to radar operators. During the spring and summer of 1952 the Collection Division of ATIC developed a stereo camera with a diffraction grating for color analysis of photographed objects. ATIC ordered 100 of these special cameras to be delivered in September. PBB planned to give these cameras to military and civilian control tower operators and to the Ground Observer Corps. Too bad these cameras arrived too late for the big flap!

INTERPLANETARY MARILYN



The April 7, 1952, issue of LIFE Magazine....an issue that would not soon be forgotten!!

The cover of this issue was an irresistible combination of sultry sex and saucers. It shows a dreamy...or is it sleepy? Marilyn (you know which Marilyn, and I *don't mean Manson!!!*), with her eyes half open and her luxuriously loose dress slid well down below her shoulders. She was the "talk of Hollywood," the cover asserted. For those who could remove their eyes from her provocative appearance there was, in the upper right hand corner of the cover, an equally provocative statement which must have come as a shock to many people: "*There is a case for interplanetary saucers.*"

I don't know how many copies of this issue were sold... but I bet they sold a bunch! (The magazine cost only 20 cents!)

WHAT? A CASE FOR INTERPLANETARY SAUCERS? **THE WRITERS MUST BE CRAZY!!!**

The case for interplanetary saucers was made in an article written by H. B. Darrach, Jr. and Robert Ginna. The title: "Have We Visitors from Space?" Next to the title was the attention-grabbing answer to this question: "The Air Force is now ready to concede that many saucer and fireball sightings still defy explanation; here Life offers some scientific evidence that there is a real case for interplanetary flying saucers." The article, based on a year long investigation by Ginna, included information directly from the Air Force file. Ginna had visited ATIC on March 3, 1952, and, with the complete cooperation of Captain Ruppelt and the PBB staff, he had reviewed sighting reports and analyses, some of which were declassified at his request. The authors also interviewed high level Air Force officials at the Pentagon. They were told that the Air Force was carrying on a "constant intelligence investigation" and would attempt to get radar and photographic data and that "attempts will be made to recover such unidentified objects." They were also told

that the Air Force was, for the first time since December, 1949, inviting "all citizens to report their sightings to the nearest Air Force installation." (I suppose the Air Force regretted that invitation about two months later!)

In the article the authors presented discussions of 10 previously unpublished sightings and concluded that Russian weapons, atmospheric phenomena, Skyhook balloons, secret weapons, hallucinations and psychological aberrations could not explain these cases. According to the authors, "These disclosures, sharply amending past Air Force policy, climaxed a review by LIFE with Air Force officials of all facts known...." and "The Air Force is now ready to concede that many saucer and fireball sightings still defy explanation." The authors quoted Dr. Walther Reidel, a German rocket scientist, who said that, in his opinion, these objects "have an out-of-this world basis." To top it off, the authors quoted an intelligence officer (Ruppelt?) as saying that "The higher you go in the Air Force the more seriously they take the flying saucers." A reader of the article might well have gotten the idea that top Air Force officers were thinking "interplanetary." (This is, in fact, what *Air Force Intelligence told the FBI* several months and many hundreds of sightings later! See below.) The article ended with a series of questions which pointed toward the interplanetary answer: "What power urges them at such terrible speeds through the sky? Who, or what, is aboard? Where do they come from? Why are they here? What are the intentions of the beings who control them? Somewhere in the dark skies there may be those who know!"

The LIFE magazine statement that the Air Force was taking saucers seriously was diametrically opposed to many previous, public AF statements but, of course, the LIFE article did not say that the AF had endorsed the interplanetary hypothesis. Even in private at ATIC there was no endorsement of the interplanetary hypothesis. In a Secret monthly Status Report on the activities of Project Blue Book, dated April 30, 1952, Capt. Ruppelt wrote "It should be noted here that the conclusions reached by LIFE are not those of the Air Force. No proof exists that these objects are from outer space." Actually Ruppelt should have been more specific in saying that the ATIC/PBB staff did not endorse the LIFE conclusion because, as he admitted in his 1956 book, "*The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*," other, high level Air Force officers did endorse that conclusion. According to Ruppelt, some "high ranking officers in the Pentagon - so high that their personal opinion was almost policy" did believe the saucers were extraterrestrial and expressed that opinion to Mr. Ginna. At least one of these high ranking officers was none other than General Garland! (Recall that Ruppelt, in his personal papers, noted that Garland had seen a UFO while he was stationed in Sacramento, CA.) Ruppelt also wrote the following: "(Garland) was the inspiration behind the LIFE article by Ginna. He gave Ginna his ideas and prompted LIFE to stick their necks out."

According to PBB records, the LIFE article was mentioned in more than 350 newspapers across the United States and ATIC received 110 letters concerning the article. LIFE itself received more than 700 letters over the next few weeks. The letters discussed old sightings and theories about sightings.

The PBB staff expected that the article would cause people to report all sorts of sightings. They braced for an immediate onslaught of new sightings, but it didn't come, at least not for several weeks. On the day after the magazine hit the stands Blue Book received 9 sightings, but then only a couple on the next day. (There was an increase in the sighting rate in Canada in April and there were also reports from Europe and quite a few from the Korean war zone.)

In the following days other publications disputed the LIFE article. In the April 12 issue, The New York Times criticized Darrach and Ginna for being "uncritical." The New York Times author claimed that the PROJECT GRUDGE report of two years proved that all sightings could be explained. Of course he did not know that General Cabell had described the GRUDGE report as "worthless tripe."

THE INTERPLANETARY ASSUMPTION

Ruppelt's claim that at least some high level officers actually believed saucers were interplanetary is confirmed in an indirect way in a memorandum written on April 29, 1952. This document was written to justify a trip to Europe by Dr. Stephen Possony and Lt. Col. Edwin Sterling, both members of a special study group that had been organized to study "advanced delivery systems," i.e., advanced aircraft. Possony, an Air Intelligence Specialist with high level connections in the Pentagon, and Sterling, Chief of the Special Study

Group, requested a 5 week trip to visit various military headquarters in Europe. They began their memorandum by stating that the Air Force can remain effective only by anticipating future developments of enemy weapon systems. However, they wrote, "there is no tenable and convincing estimate of future Russian delivery systems" and, furthermore, "current estimates do not reflect the possibility that the Russians may have overtaken the U.S. in advanced guided missile research and development." The memorandum then describes the activities of the Special Study Group in this regard and includes a statement which shows that saucer sightings were definitely not ignored:

The Special Study Group has undertaken a comprehensive study of Russian capabilities in the field of advanced delivery systems. This study is expected to determine the nature of such systems, their strategic implications and probable time tables as to development and operational availability. As an important side product, it is hoped that some much needed light can be shed on the vexing 'flying saucer' problem.

It is obvious that this memorandum justifies the trip by appealing to the "Soviet menace" in a manner similar to the previously discussed memorandum written by General Garland about 4 months earlier. This memorandum is unique, however, because it contains an argument *against* the interplanetary hypothesis in order to make the Soviet Hypothesis seem reasonable. In essence it says that saucers could not originate from nearby planets or be from far outer space because astronomers would see them coming. Therefore, perhaps saucers came from the Soviet Union. However, this document also points out the difficulty with the Soviet Hypothesis: "Nothing in this argument is designed to brush over the improbability that the Russians have such a considerable lead over the U.S. In order to fly saucers over the U.S. the Soviets would have to be at least 20 years ahead of us. They would have attained such superiority by keeping a large scale development in complete isolation, even during the last war." In other words, the memorandum provides reasons to reject both hypotheses.

The following statement from the memorandum is the most interesting, since it reflects the thinking "at the top" of the Air Force:

In connection with flying saucers the Group is attempting to develop a proper framework for fruitful analysis. The Air Force cannot *assume* (my emphasis) that flying saucers are of non-terrestrial origin, and hence they could be Soviet.

Whoa, there. What about that assumption? Let's stop and look at that last sentence again. Rewrite it a bit: **The** (high level) **Air Force** (officers) **cannot** (simply) **assume that flying saucers are of non-terrestrial** (i.e., of extraterrestrial) **origin and hence** (ignore them because there still is a slight possibility that) **they could be Soviet** (aircraft). The fact that Possony and Sterling included this statement in their memorandum means that the "impossible" may have been true: some top Air Force officers, or at least one officer (Garland) *assumed* that saucers were interplanetary and therefore disregarded the Soviet secret weapon hypothesis. (I suppose this could explain why the top Air Force officials seemed to treat the saucer sightings casually: they knew the saucers were interplanetary vehicles, about which they could do nothing, so it was "best" to try to get the public to ignore them.)

In order to justify his trip to Europe for saucer investigations, Possony first argued against the interplanetary hypothesis and then he made it seem plausible that the Soviets had in some unimaginable way achieved a 20 year lead on the U.S. in the development of "advanced delivery systems." This "reverse" argument worked. He got his trip, probably because the most important person he had to convince was none other than General Garland! (Note: Ruppelt, in his private notes, characterized Possony as a "believer" who had a direct "channel" to Gen. Samford and who traveled around the USA and Europe studying advanced weapon systems and collecting UFO reports. It appears from other writings by Possony that what he "believed" was that many of the sightings actually were of previously unknown or poorly understood natural phenomena rather than interplanetary craft. However, whichever the case, it is clear that Possony advocated scientific study of UFO reports.)

Several days after the above April 29 letter to General Garland, Lt.Col. Sterling wrote to Colonel W. Burgess at the Headquarters of the Air Defense Command. In that letter, *which is still* (2004) *partially*

classified, he referred to his work with Stephen Possony on air defense problems: "By 15 August 1952, Dr. Possony and I expect to complete a project dealing with possible advanced aerial delivery systems and related problems of air defense." He then described the project as a "comprehensive study of Soviet capabilities in the field of advanced aerial delivery systems" and noted that, as a result of their study, "it is hoped that some much needed light can be shed on the vexing 'flying saucer' problem."

A reasonable question to ask is, why would anyone in the Air Force assume that flying saucers were interplanetary in spite of the repeatedly stated official, public Air Force policy that no flying saucer ever investigated provided evidence of new or unknown technology and there was no evidence of a threat to the United States from flying saucers? I can only guess that the answer to this question is that there were sightings which were not only unexplainable but which also contained details of object shape, color, size, speed, etc. that implied the object was not a natural phenomenon but a created, I hesitate to use the term "MANufactured," flying craft. An example of such a sighting is the 1949 Rogue River case in which five witnesses, two of which used binoculars, saw a pancake shaped object approach, hover, rotate and take off like a jet without making any sound. No means of propulsion were noted. My investigation of this case is described in in the Appendix.

THE FLAP BEGINS

By the end of the April the sighting report rate on a daily basis had picked up and Ruppelt and the Blue Book staff attributed this to the LIFE article and the resulting press interest. What Ruppelt didn't know was that this was just the beginning of a sighting flap, the magnitude of which had never occurred before and (as of this writing in 2004) has not occurred again, a flap that would make this the *year of the UFO*.

It was pointed out above that the sighting rate in the months preceding the flap was low, less than one report per day. It is instructive to list the number of objects reported per month to see how this sighting flap developed. (Note: this list gives the number of objects reported by witnesses. Many of these objects were subsequently identified, so they are not all True UFOs.) According to the *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*, which is the final report of the Air Force sponsored UFO study at the University of Colorado in 1967-1968 (E.U. Condon, Director, Bantam Books, NY; January, 1969; page 514), the monthly numbers of sighted objects, starting with January, 1951, and going through June, 1952 are:

January, 1951 – 25, February – 18, Mar. – 13, Apr. – 6, May – 5, June – 6, July – 10, Aug. – 18, Sep. – 16, Oct. – 24, Nov.-16, Dec.-12, (total of 169 for 1951);
January, 1952.- 15, Feb.- 17, Mar.- 23, Apr.- 82, May - 79, June - 148.

It should be noted that the AF statistics changed year by year as a result of re-evaluation of sightings. The 1955 report written by the Battelle Memorial Institute under contract to PBB, known as Special Report #14 (SR14), separated the number of sighting *reports* (i.e., the number of witnesses) from the number of sighted *objects*. (There is a 1:1 relation between reports and witnesses; however, there could be several witnesses to a given object.) To synthetically lower the numbers of sightings in the first 5 years PBB and the Colorado University report quoted the number of *objects* seen according to SR14 rather than the actual number of reports. Also, there are differences between the official PBB sighting statistics for the first 5 years and the SR14 statistics. For example, the numbers of *reports* received (the category named "All Sightings" in SR14) and the corresponding numbers of *objects* seen ("Object Sightings" in SR14) covering the same time period as the above list, 1951 to 1952, are as follows:

January, 1951 – 27 reports (18 objects); February – 15 reports (9 objects); Mar. - 6(6); Apr. – 3(3); May – 5(4); June – 1(1); July – 9(8); Aug. – 20(16); Sept. – 18(15); Oct. – 28(19); Nov. – 17(12); Dec. – 11(10);
January, 1952. – 15(13), Feb. – 18(17), Mar. – 27(23), Apr. – 103(82) and June – 176(148).

Evidently the name of the data table in the Condon Report, "Number of UFO Reports Received each Month..." should be changed to "The Number of Objects Seen Each Month." The fact that the number of *objects* sighted is lower than the number of *reports* indicates that, on the average, there was more than one

report, i.e., more than one witness, per sighted object. In other words, many sightings were not single witness. (Graphical data from SR14 are presented in the Statistical Postscript at the end of this paper.)

The sudden upsurge in April, May and June is obvious. The increased rate began in Canada in April and then slowly moved southward into the USA during June. There were also sightings in Korea (mostly by active military) and in Europe. What was happening? Were people going crazy? Did a magazine article and the associated publicity cause ordinary people to report any unfamiliar objects they might see in the sky? That's what ATIC and Capt. Ruppelt thought, or at least that's what they said they thought, but it was clearly not the whole story.

Many sightings clearly were not a result of the LIFE article. For example, on May 12 UFOs were seen at the Savannah River atomic bomb fuel processing plant. According to an FBI teletype message,

At approximately 10:45 PM, May 10, four employees of Dupont Co., employed on the Savannah River plant near Ellington, S.C., saw 4 disc shaped objects approaching the 400 area from the south, disappearing in a northerly direction. At approximately 11:05 PM, above mentioned employees saw two similar objects approach from south and disappear in northerly direction. At approximately 11:10 PM one similar object approached from the northeast and disappeared in southwesterly direction. One more object sighted about 11:15 PM traveling from south to north. Employees described objects as being about 15 inches in diameter having yellow to gold color. All of these other objects were traveling at high rate of speed at high altitude without any noise. The... object which approached the 400 area from the (northeast) was traveling at altitude so low it had to rise to pass over some tall tanks in 400 area. This object was also flying a high rate of speed and noiseless. Witnesses stated observed objects weaving from left to (right) but seemed to hold general course. Also stated due to speed and altitude they were only visible for few seconds.

PBB lists this sighting as unidentified.

In early July an article in LOOK Magazine presented a reversal of opinion. In the January, 1951 issue of LOOK, author Robert Considine had trashed the subject, claiming that the Air Force had explained everything (according to the Final Report of PROJECT GRUDGE) and that witnesses were essentially kooks and nuts, deluded or publicity seekers. But now, the author of the July, 1952 article, J. Robert Moskin, took a more positive attitude. He visited PBB two weeks after the publication of the LIFE article. He received full cooperation from the Blue Book staff. He quoted General Hoyt Vandenberg, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force as saying that as long as there were any unexplained sightings the Air Force would continue to study the problem. Moskin went on to summarize the PBB plans to obtain better scientific data. He pointed out that many atomic installations had been "visited" by UFOs but that there was no evidence that anyone, meaning the Russians, was spying on our country even though "this fear still lies deeply in some responsible minds." He also pointed out that the Air Force had given up trying to explain sightings as cold war jitters, societal tension, publicity about saucers or mass hysteria. Instead, the Air Force was sure that the answer would be found as misinterpretations of conventional objects, optical phenomena, manmade objects or extraterrestrial objects. Regardless of what the final answer might be, it was clear from Moskin's article that the Air Force was actively investigating, verifying the claim made in the LIFE article two months earlier.

Although PBB, after months of organizational work, was now prepared to handle the typical flow of sightings, it was "whelmed many times over" (i.e., over-overwhelmed) by what happened in July. During previous 6 months the sightings had been coming in at a rate of one every two days or so. In the latter half of April this increased to a rate of several per day and stayed that way until the latter half of June. Then the sighting rate increased to 4 per day, then 5 then 10. (Recall that the total number of *reports* for June was 176 corresponding to 148 *objects* sighted.) During the latter half of July it was running at more than 20 *per day* from all over the USA and some from foreign countries as well. (According to SR14, the total for July was 782 reports, corresponding to 536 objects sighted! During August the flap waned, producing a mere 397 reports of 326 objects and for the rest of the year the statistics were (from SR14): Sept. – 162 reports of 124 objects, Oct. – 92 of 61, Nov. – 67 of 50 and Dec. – 66 reports of 42 objects.)

However, it should be pointed out that the statistics listed in the above paragraph were developed in the months following the summer of 1952 during the Battelle study. An August 1 newspaper article from Dayton, Ohio, indicates what the PBB staff knew at the time. As of August 1 PBB was aware of only 432 sightings in 1952, whereas, according to SR14, there had been 1,234 reports of 898 objects by that time. Similarly, the monthly numbers of reports according to the newspaper article, were as follows: Jan. – 10, Feb. – 19, Mar. – 17, Apr. – 91, May – 70, June – 111 and July – (only) 114. These can be compared with the SR14 numbers given above. The same newspaper article provides the yearly numbers that were available at the time and these can be compared with the SR14 data presented as number of reports and (number of objects):

News: 1947 – 115 reports; 1948 – 163; 1949 – 159; 1950 – 147; 1951 – 141.

SR14: 1947 – 117 reports (79 objects), 1948 – 205(143), 1949 – 395(186), 1950 – 306(168), 1951 – 137 (121).

The point is that, during the time of the events, or "in the heat of the moment," the PBB staff was aware that the sighting rate had increased, but they had no idea of the full extent of it. For an organization that was accustomed to receiving 100 – 150 reports *per year*, to suddenly have that many reports *in a month* must have come as quite a shock. And the shock was just beginning!

(NOTE: TO READ THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, INCREASE PAGE SIZE TO 150% OR 200%)

SANTA ANA, CAL. REGISTER, Jul. 22

This Clipping From
SANTA ANA, CALIF.
REGISTER

JUL 22 1952 "Flying Saucer" Tracked Over Cleveland Field

CLEVELAND, Ohio—A control room operator said today "golden lights" have been sighted over Cleveland, and on one occasion he sent an airplane to look for something that appeared on a radar screen.

George Beers, senior operator on the midnight shift of the control tower at Cleveland Hopkins Airport, said "one night six of us watched from the darkened tower room while a light hovered north of the field. We don't know what it was but all six of us saw it."

"Another time I personally saw a light making a circular pattern over nearby Elyria. I picked it up on the radar screen and watched it."

"I sent an incoming airplane over to take a look and the thing disappeared from the screen."

On another occasion a tower operator and an incoming pilot both reported seeing a "light" moving in a direction much faster than the normal operational speed of any aircraft known to be in the vicinity.

"This incident was quite some time ago, and was reported to authorities at the time."

HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA TIMES JUL 24 1952

'Flying Saucer' Seen Above City Four Local Residents On McCullough Avenue See Fast-Moving Disk

Another "flying saucer", this one in the daylight, has been observed passing over the city by four McCullough avenue residents.

Herman H. King, 909 McCullough avenue, today gave a vivid description of an object which first appeared over the northwest side of town and proceeded in irregular fashion eastward and out of sight over Monte Sano at about 8:45 p.m. Tuesday.

Also witnessing the travel of the "saucer" were Mrs. King, Miss Mona King and Woodrow Garner, who resides at 907 McCullough avenue.

The object was described as appearing black when first sighted, and also having some resemblance to two cones placed mouth to mouth. Later, as it moved more nearly overhead, the appearance was more than of a dark disk. It did not reflect the sunlight.

It moved first up in a sharp vertical climb, then took an angular turn to head due east, and appeared to pass overhead at a terrific speed. It passed lower than the summer clouds in the sky at the

time.

Mr. King said he at first thought of a weather balloon, but that the speed of the object in passing was too great to have resulted from air currents. The object gave decided indications of being powered, but it left no vapor trail or exhaust.

The "saucer" was most definitely not an airplane, Mr. King states. There were no wings, and the pattern of movement was entirely different.

He described the movement generally as one which was vertical, with occasional leveling off. No noise could be heard from it.

One of the strange points about the observation to Mr. King, was that he had said only a few days earlier that all the "saucers" seemed to be seen at night, and that he would like to see one in daylight.

He has too many witnesses to be accused of imagination, however.

In fact, he adds now that he wants to see one at night and that his neighbors may see him doing a lot of porch sitting henceforth.

Mr. King is a fireman at Redstone Arsenal. Mr. Garner is employed with the post engineers division and Miss King is in the management improvement office.

BARTOW, FL JULY 25 Saucers (?) Get Closer to Bartow

A rash of reports that strange objects were seen sailing through the sky over Tampa between 10 p. m. Tuesday and 3:30 a. m. Wednesday reached MacDill Air Force Base officials and Tampa newspapers.

One of the observers was a Bartow man—Cleve Hamm Jr., who this month was named assistant state news editor of the Tampa Tribune.

Hamm told The Democrat that he was driving out the Bayshore Drive in Tampa about 11 p. m. Tuesday when he saw a "glowing object" in the sky.

He pulled off the road to watch. The elliptically shaped object had an "eery iridescent glow," Hamm said.

A newspaper reporter by profession, and therefore skeptical, Hamm tried to find some nearby source of the light.

ABILENE, TX JUL 23 1952 JULY 23

Abilene Family Sights Mysterious Flying Object

The R. J. Cooper family, 1217 Palm St., reported seeing a "flying saucer" over Abilene about 9:25 o'clock Wednesday morning.

"It was definitely not an airplane," Cooper said. "It was a round, silver object. It was headed west, traveling not too fast."

Mrs. Cooper and 6-year-old Cathy were in the yard and noticed the object first. They called Cooper to come from the house and see it.

"I thought they were just seeing things," he said. "I never had seen one of these flying saucers people have reported."

Cooper said he could not estimate the speed or altitude, but the object was low enough for him to tell that it was round. He judged it to be about 50 feet in diameter, "although I couldn't be sure at that distance."

The object stopped, "went up and down twice," then headed off "to the west and disappeared from view."

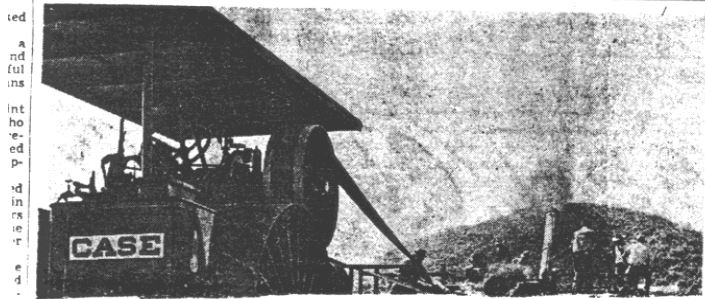
It was in sight from one to two minutes, Cooper estimated.

Cooper is manager of the appliance department at Star Merchandise Mart.

INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

MONDAY EVENING, JULY 28, 1952

30 PAGES 5 CENTS

HUNDREDS IN STATE
SEE 'FLYING SAUCERS'Franklin 'Dogfight'
Alerts State Troopers

Three "flying saucers" were spotted by hundreds of Hoosiers, including police and military personnel, over South Central Indiana early today.

The objects appeared to have a "dogfight" over Franklin and disappeared as dawn approached.

Troopers from three state police posts—Indianapolis, Seymour and Connersville—kept a running check on the saucers for more than 4 hours.

Authorities at Camp Atterbury

tion and called attention to the bounding object in the sky.

Franklin police alerted Wolfe. "I went out in the country with the police in a place where we could see clearly," the civil defense director said. "That was

The locations of the sightings read like a geography lesson. Between early morning July 20 and midnight July 22 there were sightings in New Jersey (7), Colorado (2), Illinois (2), Michigan (2), Pennsylvania (1), Kentucky (1), California (3), Texas (5), North Carolina (1), Florida (2), Georgia (1), Missouri (1), Massachusetts (5), Maine (1), Indiana (1), New Mexico (1), Alabama (1), Oregon (1), New Hampshire (1), South Dakota (1), New York (1), Maryland (2), Virginia (1), and Washington, D.C. (3). There were also two reports from Germany and single reports from Mexico and Morocco. Fourteen of these 51 sightings were from active military observers, six of whom were at Air Force Bases. Newspapers all over the country were reporting sightings. To the PBB staff it may have seemed that the whole flying saucer mess was getting far out of hand.

And, as if this weren't bad enough, the pot really began to boil when flying saucers were reported over the Nation's Capitol!

THE WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

The above phrase was used by Capt. Ruppelt in his 1956 book, *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects* (Doubleday, NY), to describe the chaotic situation when the press learned what happened in the Washington, DC area in July, 1952. Experienced radar air traffic controllers saw unexplained radar targets during the night of Saturday, July 19 and again a week later. Several times targets were detected by two independent radars, one at National and one at Andrews Air Force Base. These targets appeared as strong point returns rather than as diffuse blobby images that characterize the effects of "anomalous propagation" or "radar angels." (Anomalous propagation causes radar beams to bend downward and detect objects on the ground. Radar angels are airborne objects that reflect radar but are not aircraft. For example, birds and some weather phenomena can reflect radar and create spurious targets.) During the sightings F-94 jets were scrambled from Newcastle Air Force Base in Delaware. Usually the scrambled aircraft did not see lights associated with the targets but there were at least two visual confirmations. On the other hand, civilian aircraft flying in the area at the time reported several visual sightings of unusual moving lights, as did ground

observers. Although there were numerous unexplained sightings from around the country which could be described here, none had the political impact of the Washington, DC.

The events began at about 11:40 PM on Saturday, July 19 when the Washington Air Route Traffic Control Center (WARTCC) radar at National Airport detected targets which moved toward Andrews AFB (AAFB). Then at 5 minutes past midnight a phone call was received at AAFB control tower advising that there was an orange lighted object to the south. According to the official reports, a control tower operator, while talking to the person on the phone, looked south and saw the "orange ball of fire, trailing a tail...it was very bright and definite and unlike anything I had ever seen before....It made a kind of circular movement.... (then) took off at an unbelievable speed. It disappeared in a split second." The person on the phone saw the same thing. A few seconds later the tower operator "saw another one, same description. As the one before, it made an arc-like pattern and then disappeared." During the next 25 minutes, 5 AAFB personnel saw two more lights, reddish-orange in color, moving erratically on a generally southeastward track through the eastern sky. They were seen from 5 to 30 seconds on 3 occasions. At 1:20 and again at 1:25 fast moving lights with an orange hue and a tail were seen by AAFB tower personnel. At 2:35 WARTCC received a call from an airline pilot who said he had seen 3 objects near Herndon, Virginia, west of Washington, and reported that "they were like nothing he had ever seen."

A week later, on July 25 at 9:15 PM, WARTCC again detected from 4 to 8 anomalous targets "described by radar operators as 'good sharp targets.'" According to the AFOSI report, at 1:20 PM, 2 F-94's were scrambled from Delaware and one of the jets "reportedly made visual contact with one of the objects and at first appeared to be gaining on it, but the object and the F-94 were observed on the radar scope and appeared to be traveling at the same approximate speed. However, when it attempted to overtake the object, the object disappeared both from the pursuant aircraft and the radar scope. The pilot of the F-94 remarked about the 'incredible speed of the object.'"

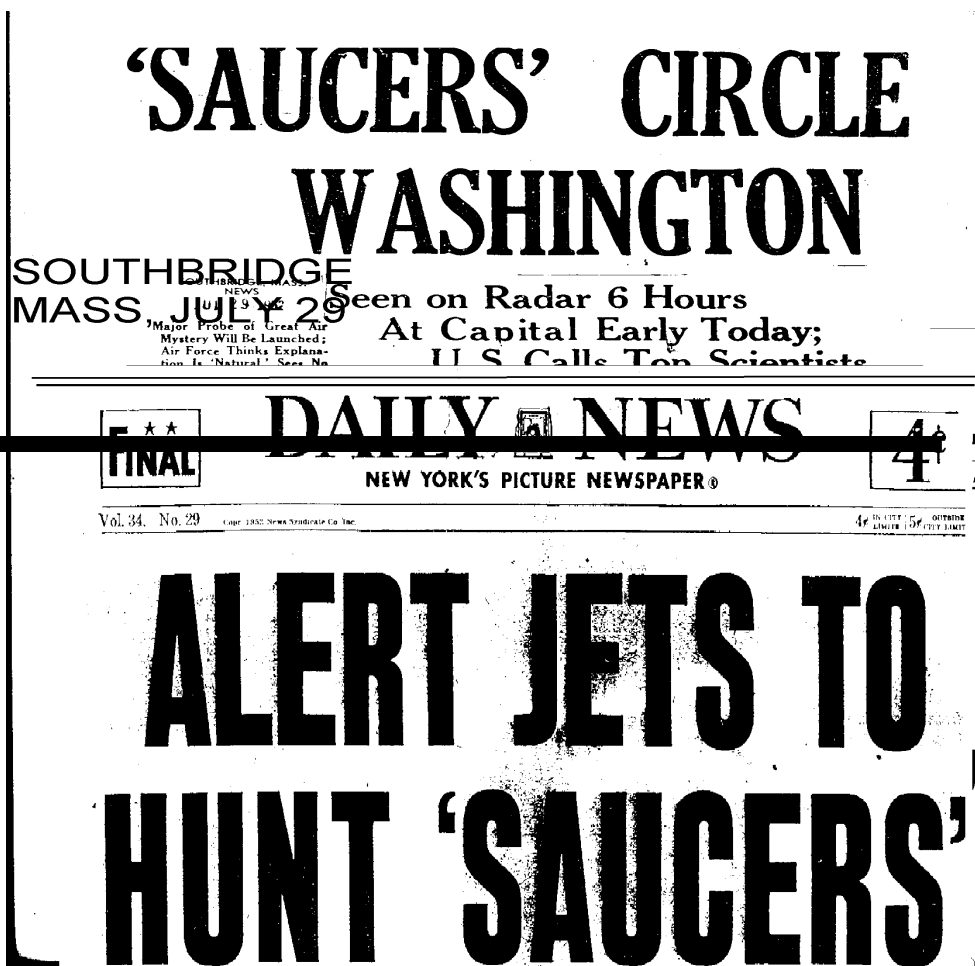
The next night was a repeat. At 8:15 PM, July 26, the pilot and stewardess of a National Airlines plane flying at 1,700 feet and 200 mph saw a lighted object, which appeared similar to the glow of a lighted cigarette (dull red) which passed "directly over the airliner." They estimated the object speed to be 100 mph. At 8:54 PM, AAFB radar began detecting 10 to 12 unidentified radar targets in the Washington area. An hour and a half later, at 10:23, WARTCC, detected 4 targets at various locations in the suburbs of Washington. According to a document not released until 1985, a Civil Aeronautics Administration official flying at an altitude of 2,200 feet at 10:46 PM saw "5 objects giving off a light glow ranging from orange to white." The same document says, "Some commercial pilots reported visuals ranging from 'cigarette glow' (red-yellow) to 'a light' (as recorded from their conversations with ARTC controllers)." At 10:38 PM the USAF Command post was notified of unidentified targets and at 11:00 PM two F-94's were scrambled. The document says that "one pilot mentioned seeing 4 lights at one time and a second time as seeing a single light ahead but unable to close whereupon the light 'went out.'"

During the sightings on July 26 two members of the PBB staff, one of whom was a radar expert, were in the Washington area. They were notified quickly of the radar sightings and arrived at AAFB shortly after midnight. When they arrived they could see "7 good, solid targets." The radar expert checked with the airport radar and determined that there was a slight temperature inversion. A temperature inversion (when the temperature increases rather than decreases with increasing altitude) can cause "anomalous propagation," i.e. can cause a radar beam to bend downward and detect objects on the ground. The expert believed that the inversion was much too weak to cause targets as strong as these, so a second intercept flight was requested. By the time it arrived the strong targets had departed. That ended the Washington, D.C. sightings but the Air Force response was only beginning.

A PLAGUE OF UFOS

As far as the general public was concerned the first hint of something unusual happening in the skies over the United States came in the increase in local and national press reports of saucers. Press coverage of

the flying saucer phenomenon had been sporadic over the previous 5 years, even though the major news media occasionally carrying discussions pro and con (mostly con) about whether flying saucers/UFOs were really unexplainable or if they were just mundane phenomena (or hoax reports). But in the late spring and early summer the number of reports of recent sightings increased. For example, an Associated Press story datelined Dayton, Ohio, on July 17 reads, "An Air Force spokesman said today sixty reports of flying saucers have been received during the last two weeks. He could give no reason for the increase." The July 18 edition of the Washington (DC) Daily News had the headline "THE SAUCERS KEEP COMING" and contained a sighting report of 5 orange discs seen by the chief engineer of the radio station WRC. It also contained an admission by the Air Force that saucers had been tracked on radar at between 1,500 and 2,000 mph and that "jet fighters equipped with the very latest radar have been sent aloft to 'make contact' with the phantom objects, but all efforts to catch up with them have failed...". The Chicago Daily News carried a statement by a Lt. Col. in the Civil Air Patrol who said he "believes the objects are not natural objects and that he saw one a week ago." The Washington Daily News, on July 19, carried a quote by the Civil Defense Director at Dayton, OH, an Air Force Lt. Col., who said "There is something flying around our skies and I wish we knew what it is." Then on July 19 the national press reported the Air Force admission that people were really seeing something unusual, that the numbers of reports had doubled over what had occurred years ago and that the Air Force couldn't track all the saucers.



Some details of the Saturday and Sunday, July 19-20, sightings in Washington, D.C. were leaked to the press and were reported the following Tuesday. Captain Ruppelt, who was in Dayton, Ohio, at the time, was not told about these sightings. When he arrived in Washington, D.C., on routine business on Monday, July 21, he still did not know about them. It wasn't until he read the Tuesday morning paper that he realized something important had occurred. He immediately began phoning people to find out what had happened because he was responsible for supplying the technical backup for whatever the Air Force would tell the

WASHINGTON POST

JULY 27

Ghostlike Objects Chased By Jets Over Washington

Air Force Pilots See 'Unknowns'
But Are Unable To Overtake Them

WASHINGTON, July 27 (UP)—The Air Force reported Sunday that its jet fighters spent several hours Saturday night chasing ghostlike "objects" through the skies above the nation's capital.

The "unidentified objects" were first discovered on radar screens here at 9:08 p.m. EDT Saturday. Similar objects had been seen on the radar screens a week ago.

The Civil Aeronautics Administration's air route traffic control center said it saw from four to 12 of the "unknowns."

Officials quickly notified the Air Force, and two jet interceptors

Jet Pilot Gives Chase

The jets scrambled to the area of the "unknowns" which they reached at 11:25 p.m. One of the pilots, who was not immediately identified, almost immediately spotted four lights in the sky ahead of him.

He said he tried to overtake the lights but was unable to reach them. He said the lights were about 10 miles ahead of him and were unable to decrease this distance.

Jet fighters can fly more than 600 miles an hour.

The jet pilots stayed over the capital searching for the "unknowns." The CAA attempted to direct the pilots to the objects showing on its radar screen.

"Steady, White Light"

At 11:49, the pilot who saw the earlier lights again "made visual contact" with the objects. This time he described the strange phenomenon as a "steady white light." He said the light disappeared within a minute.

The second "object" was spotted, the pilot said, about 10 miles east of nearby Mount Vernon, Va., the home of George Washington. This time, the light was about five miles in front of him, he said.

An Air Force spokesman said the pilots "flew all over the sky trying to make new contacts with the 'unknowns,' as the Air Force called them."

At 12:15 Sunday morning, the two pilots left the capital area. They were replaced at 1:40 by two new jets.

The new jets patrolled the capital and nearby Virginia and Maryland until 2:20 a.m.

Objects Spotted Week Ago

"No further contacts either visual or radar were made by the Air Force planes although the unknowns were apparent on the CAA scope," the Air Force said.

Just one week ago Saturday, eight other unidentified "objects" were spotted on the CAA's radar screen over nearby Andrews Air Base. These appeared about midnight. Airlines pilots reported seeing lights moving up and down along the Atlantic Coast at the same time.

The Air Force was not informed of the objects last week and so did not send aloft any interceptors.

no F4s

just
few

press. Unfortunately he had no answers, only questions. His predicament was not helped when a general told him that President Truman wanted to know what was going on. Apparently, some of the radar targets had been over the White House restricted area. By late in the afternoon Ruppelt had an "answer" for the press: the Air Force would have "no comment" on the sightings because investigation was ongoing. According to Ruppelt, the next day the newspapers interpreted this as meaning that the Air Force "won't talk."

During late July the press activity related to saucer sightings and Air Force investigations increased on a daily basis. Local papers throughout the country were loaded with the reports of local sightings and

articles about UFOs. As just one example, the Indianapolis News carried the following front page headline on July 28: "Hundreds in state see 'flying saucers.'" The story reported that military personnel and police officers "kept a running check on saucers for more than 4 hours." Capt. Ruppelt, in his book *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*, claimed that 148 major newspapers throughout the USA carried about 16,000 stories about UFOs during the six month period from April through September. Dr. Herbert Strentz, who did his Ph.D. dissertation on press reporting of the UFO phenomenon, analyzed the BLUE BOOK records in 1966 and claimed that the *number of unduplicated stories was more like 30,000*. (Strentz, "A Survey of Press Coverage of Unidentified Flying Objects, 1947-1966," Northwestern University, 1970)

THE AIR FORCE REACTS: !!....ASK QUESTIONS LATER

The reports of the Washington, D.C., sightings of July 25 and 26 - 27 only added to the furor. The July 28 edition of the Washington, DC, newspaper carried the story "Air Force Alerts Jets to Chase Flying Saucers Anywhere in U.S." The article referred to the DC sightings and also described a sighting in New York state. Some newspapers carried a startling story, from the International News Service, which said that "...jet pilots have been placed on 24-hour 'alert' against 'flying saucers' with orders to '**shoot them down**' if they refuse to land. It was learned that pilots have gone aloft on several occasions in an effort to shoot the mysterious objects to the ground but never came close enough to use their guns."

The Associated Press on July 29 carried a story with the title "Whatever They Are, Flying Saucers Put In Busiest Week On Record." According to the article, "In the New York area, in Washington, DC, in New England and Ohio, reports came in of strange aerial objects that defied immediate explanation. The Air Force said that volume of such reports was the heaviest it has been in five years. Most of the sightings were made by relatively competent observers, by pilots, airport control tower men and civilian air defense spotters." The Air Force was sticking to its official position: "There is still no concrete evidence to prove or disprove the so called 'flying saucers.'" The same article carried brief mentions of sightings in the West Virginia area, Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine, and France.

The Washington, DC sightings attracted interest overseas. Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Great Britain queried his scientists. In a note dated July 28 he wrote, "What does all this stuff about flying saucer amount to? Let me have a report at your convenience." The British Ministry of Defense relied heavily on the 1949 report Project Grudge, the report that had been called "worthless tripe" by General Cabell. Basically they told Churchill that all cases could be explained and so there was nothing to it.

A WAR OF WORDS or A **WAR OF THE WORLDS?**

But in the Good Old USA, it was nearly a panic situation. What on earth - or off the earth - was causing all the sightings? The press and the public wanted answers, not soon, but now! The Air Force was about to give them some.

INTERNATIONAL NEW SERVICE JULY 29

Air Force Seeks Solution; Gives "Shoot Down" Order

WASHINGTON (INS) -- The

Government today ordered the Air Force to shoot down unidentified flying objects.

This Clipping From
CORVALLIS, ORE.
GAZETTE-TIMES

JUL 30 1952

Mysterious Objects Zipped Over Albany, Says Corvallis Man

"Mysterious objects," which have been zipping across other parts of the country, were reported as having zoomed over and past Albany Monday by Earl Ehrmann of Corvallis, district engineer of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph company.

Checking on an installation project in east Albany Monday, Ehrmann's vision was substantiated by Joe Wimmer of Portland, telephone engineer temporarily assigned here, and two unidentified men who passed by.

Three "white balls" traveling at a "tremendous rate of speed" were heading southward at 4:25 p.m. Monday, Ehrmann said. They were speeding so straight, he continued, that it appeared they were "on a string or track."

The ball-like objects were sighted for between a minute and minute and a half. Spaced in perfect triangular form, they raced across the clear, blue skies, he added.

Ehrmann reported that the sun shining on them made them more obvious. No vapor train was evident.

He didn't call them "flying saucers" because they appeared as balls. He surmised they weren't weather balloons because "weather balloons can't travel that fast."

Ehrmann estimated the objects were at an altitude of about 7 to 8,000 feet.

When he first sighted the strange objects, he said, "It's the best," then he continued, "I looked away and then looked again and they were still there."

DAILY EIGHTS OF JET

Two Local Residents Report Saucer-Like Objects in Sky

"Flying saucer" reports popped up in Ponca City today after unidentified bright objects were seen in the sky from two different locations last night.

The objects were seen about 8:30 p.m.

Miss Coteen Leehan, 1318 South Fifth, was returning from Tulsa with her aunt, Mrs. Vera Roark, and Mrs. Roark's daughter, Mrs. Robert Barr, both of Tulsa, when they saw "a big globe like a sparkler" which appeared to be hanging over the refinery area.

Miss Leehan said the object had no color and did not resemble a lighted airplane. Nor was it one of the familiar refinery flares.

It began to move and disappeared, probably because of high speed, she said.

At the time they noticed the hovering object, they were driving toward the new Arkansas River bridge from the east.

Miss Leehan described the object as fairly large. She said a 50-cent piece held at arm's length would barely cover the outline of the bright light from that distance.

A somewhat similar report came from Rosemary Johnson, 315 South Seventh, a student at Ponca City Junior High School.

She said she saw a bright light hovering over the St. Mary's School building across the street from her home.

The light swooped down over the school and then soared up in line with the moon, circling high in the air. After circling several times, the light disappeared in the clouds and did not reappear.

At one time, the light appeared to be from two closely-joined objects.

The Johnson girl also said she saw the running lights of a plane which appeared to be following the bright object. She said vapor trails indicated it was a jet plane.

PONCA CITY
OKLAHOMA
JULY 29

CORVALLIS,
WASHINGTON
JULY 29

Several days earlier, on July 24, Lt. Col. W. K. Smith in the Policy and Management Group of the Directorate of Intelligence had written a memorandum summarizing the situation from the point of view of Air Force intelligence. This memorandum was written at the request of Major General Samford and was sent to General White, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Air Force Operations. According to this memorandum there had been "between 1000 and 1050 (reports) since 1947." The memorandum attributed the recent influx of reports to the April LIFE magazine article and the subsequent press coverage. The memorandum stated that "there is no significance attached to the location of these sightings other than that they are random in nature." According to Col. Smith's notes, used in preparation of the memorandum, there were 180 unexplained sightings, only 53 of which "came from what are considered reliable sources." In other words, the fraction of unexplained sightings was nearly 20% and the "hard core" unexplained was about 5% of the total. (These percentages are comparable to what was determined over a year later by the Battelle Memorial Institute study, SR14, mentioned above.) It is important to note, especially for comparison with what was told to the FBI on July 29 (discussed below), that, through all of these trying UFO times, the Air Force stuck to its public policy: "there is no proof... no proof....no proof." The AF did this in spite of literally hundreds of sightings that defied explanation. This policy formed the basis for public statements such as mentioned above ("There still is no concrete evidence.....") and also for documents generated within AFI. However, as suggested in the previous discussion, and to be further elaborated below, the private opinions of at least some top AFI officials did not agree with this policy.

At the bottom of the memorandum General Samford had written a note to General White which said that a briefing by ATIC officers had been scheduled for July 29 "at such time as you may desire." As it turned out, General Samford was "lucky" that he had an already-prepared briefing because he did give one on that date.....*but not to General White!*

During this time UFO reports were coming like summer downpour. On July 28 ATIC received about 50 reports, of which 43 occurred on that day. The remaining 7 were older reports that had been delayed for various reasons. Months later the Project Blue Book staff discovered that this day had the largest daily sighting rate ever recorded by the Air Force. During the following week the sighting rate dropped back to less than 10 per day, which was still more than ten times larger than the rate before the flap. However, on July 28 Capt. Ruppelt, the PBB staff and AFI didn't know the sighting rate was about to decrease. For all they knew, the sighting rate might double again. They didn't know what to expect. It may well have seemed to them that a landing or a shootdown would soon occur. What would happen after that? *A War of the Worlds?*

July 29 began with more sightings, including one which provided further proof that radar could detect UFOs. A fighter-interceptor was flying on a routine training mission from Selfridge AFB in Michigan when ground control asked the fighter to check on an object picked up by the ground radar. This object was moving southward over Saginaw, Michigan, at a speed of about 625 mph, which was within the capability of jet fighter. Was it simply an intruding Canadian military jet?

The pilot began a right turn and the copilot picked up a radar target at 60 degrees to the right. The plane kept turning until the target was straight ahead and the radar locked-on to the object. The lock-on lasted for about 30 seconds as the plane flew at high speed toward the object. The copilot determined that the object was four miles ahead and at the altitude of the plane, about 20,000 feet. The copilot later said he saw "...the target ... putting off what seemed like a changing light in definite sequences of white, red and bluish-green. That is the only means of identification we had. From a bombardier, radar observer, navigator, I have never experienced any sighting like this before."

During this time ground control announced that it had both the jet and the unidentified target on the radar screen. Then suddenly the object broke the airplane's radar lock. Before the jet could react the object reversed its course. Ground radar, which had been tracking both the jet and the unidentified target, was startled to see the unidentified make a 180 degree turn and head northward toward Canada. The F-94 gave chase but could not catch up as the unknown increased its speed in an erratic manner. The top speed of the unidentified was unknown because the radar only determined its location once during every 10 second sweep. However, typically it would travel about 4 miles during that time (4 miles/10 seconds = 1,440 mph). This was about twice the top speed of the jet. The jet followed the object for about 20 minutes but then radioed that it was running low on fuel and would have to break off the chase. The jet turned home, at which

point the ground control saw that the speed of the unknown suddenly drop back to its original value. Months later Blue Book would leave this as an unexplained case. Two of the other sightings on the morning of July 29 occurred near Roswell, New Mexico and at Los Alamos. The Los Alamos sighting resulted in a scramble from Kirtland, AFB.

(Also on this day Ralph Mayher, a Marine stationed in Miami, shot a 16 mm movie film of an "ugly reddish" UFO that moved at a high speed. Mayher's sighting would be important 25 years later (!) when it became a key part of litigation against the CIA to force the CIA to release all of its UFO related documents, some of which are discussed below.)

THE AIR FORCE REACTS: PRESS CONFERENCE

Meanwhile back in Washington the press was in an uproar because of the July 28 announcement that the Air Force had directed pilots to shoot if necessary. Did the Air Force really mean it? Were things out of control? Had any saucer been shot down? What would the Air Force do if one were shot down? Everyone wanted answers and General Vandenberg was about to provide some. Vandenberg ordered Samford to hold a press conference to outline the official Air Force position regarding Unidentified Flying Objects. During the morning of July 29, Gen. Samford's press officer announced that a flying saucer conference would be held at the Pentagon late that afternoon. General Samford was about to give to the assembled press part of the briefing that had been prepared for General White. He was also about to accomplish in public what Vandenberg had accomplished in private four years earlier: General Samford would put a major damper on interest in UFO sightings by telling the press that no reported saucer was an interplanetary vehicle. And, intentionally or not, Samford was about to lie.

At 4 PM the longest post-WWII press conference to that date began. It lasted 80 minutes. Gen. Samford brought with him several military experts in radar, Capt. Ruppelt and Major General Roger Ramey. (Gen. Ramey had been the head of the Eighth Air Force when he invented and publicized the "weather balloon" explanation for the Roswell crash debris. Now he was Director of Operations of the U. S. Air Force.)

Gen. Samford told the assembled press that because American secret weapons did not cause the sightings the Air Force was obligated investigate them. He further said,

We have received and analyzed between 1,000 and 2,000 reports that have come to us from all kinds of sources. Of this great mass of reports we have been able adequately to explain the great bulk of them, explain them to our own satisfaction. However there have been a certain percentage of this volume of reports that have been made by credible observers of relatively incredible things. It is this group of observations that we are now attempting to resolve. We have, as of this date, come to only one firm conclusion with respect to this remaining percentage, and that is that it does not contain any pattern of purpose or of consistency that we can relate to any conceivable threat to the United States.



GENERAL SAMFORD

Gen. Samford gave few explicit answers to the questions from the press. The discussion concentrated on the Washington sightings even though the General and his "support team" did not have all the information needed to decide what caused them. Gen. Ramey provided some information about the jet scrambles and Gen. Samford advanced the opinion, ostensibly based on the work of Air Force radar experts, that an atmospheric "inversion" affected the radar by causing "anomalous propagation." This refers to an atmospheric condition that bends some of the radar beam downward so that it can detect objects on the ground, such as cars, thus causing the unexplained radar targets (a radar "mirage"). Various members of the press pushed hard to get a definite answer as opposed to an opinion, but he would not give a definite answer. He did say the Air Force was giving all reports "adequate but not frantic checks."

AMARILLO, TX JULY 29 **WANTED!** **\$500 Reward** For Information Leading To a Photo of a Genuine Flying Saucer

(Also see stories on Pages 10 and 11.)
Five hundred dollars for a flying saucer picture tip!
The Daily News believes there is more than fantasy in the stories of strange objects in the skies.

Only Sunday night, Air Force planes roared out on the trail of strange lights picked up by radar over Washington, D.C. At the same time, thousands of viewers reported watch-

ing strange objects in the skies of Indiana, and a state highway patrolman said they were so weird he didn't want to talk about them.

There also have been many reports of such phenomena in the High Plains region, to say nothing of the unexplained "fireballs" of New Mexico.

The Daily News enlists all its readers in a search for what we shall call flying saucers, for want of a better name.

But we want evidence. Many tips of strange objects in the sky undoubtedly have been occasioned by explainable phenomena—weather balloons, airplane landing lights and so on. But this newspaper is convinced that some of the reports are genuine.

So we stand ready to pay \$500 to any person who notifies The Daily News of any unexplained object in the sky—a "flying saucer," if you will—in time for one of our photographers to record it on film.

IRONWOOD, MICHIGAN JULY 30

GLOBE

JUL 30 1952

U. P. 'Saucer' Stories Denied By the Air Force

Jets 'Played Tag,'
With Discs, Report

By The Associated Press
The Air Force today denied reports that some of its jet fighters engaged in a 600-mile-an-hour tag game with a "saucer" or flying disc over Ironwood, Mich., last night. The reports, emanating from usually reliable sources, said in Selfridge Air Base jets were scrambled to investigate the mysterious aerial maneuvers.

JEETS CATCH UP
The informant said the jets caught up with the flying disc or saucers near the Upper Peninsula.

ARTICLE BY AF PIO, JULY 30

'Flying Saucers,' Whatever They May Be, Not Result Of U.S. Experiments; Air Force Anxious to Find Cause

The Air Force today issued a statement denying that the reports of flying saucers were the result of U.S. experiments. The statement said that the Air Force was not conducting any experiments that would result in the appearance of flying saucers. It also said that the Air Force was not aware of any experiments that would result in the appearance of flying saucers.

By AL CHOPP
(AF Information Representative)

WASHINGTON, July 30—The demand for copies of past press releases on "flying saucers" is said by the Department of De-

fense to be the highest since the Air Force's first statement on the subject of "flying saucers" in the fall of 1947. The United States Air Force took official notice of reports of so-called "flying discs" because the reports from the public indicated that the problem might be related to the Air Force responsibility for the defense of the United States.

On Dec. 30, 1947, the Air Force directed its Air Materiel Command, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, to set up a project to collect and evaluate all available facts concerning reported flying saucer incidents.

To perform this job the Air Materiel Command obtained the services of well-known scientists,

vestigated the Air Force, with the concurrence of the Army and the Navy, announced the findings of the "flying saucer" project. The evidence at that time indicated that the majority of the reports of unidentified flying objects could be accounted for as misinterpretations of various conventional objects, a mild form of hysteria, meteorological phenomena, or hoaxes.

There remained, however, a number of reported sightings that could not be thus explained, and the Air Force has continued its investigations.

As far as luminous phenomena are concerned, the recent development of special photographic

Gen. Samford rejected the interplanetary theory, implying that all the unexplained sightings were the results of natural phenomena. However, he could not be pinned down as to which natural phenomena because whenever he was asked questions about specific sightings he would plead a lack of information. There were no witnesses at the conference, not even the Blue Book staff members who were in the control tower at AAFB during the July 26-27 sightings. (Those staff members had indicated that the radar targets were like strong aircraft returns and not like diffuse "anomalous propagation" targets.) Because there were no witnesses at the conference, members of the press could not directly confront the General with witness testimony. Some of the reporters were aware of sightings by military personnel and sightings near the "vital installations." They asked the General about these, but he pleaded a lack of information. The most they could do was get him to admit that about 20% of the sightings had not been explained, an admission which was, by itself, quite startling.

SAUCERS ARE HOT AIR!!

WASHINGTON POST JULY 30, 1952

Air Force Lays Saucer Blips Here, to Heat



Air Force officials and "flying saucer" experts spoke at a long press conference yesterday. They are (from left) seated: Maj. Gen. Roger Ramey, operations chief; Maj. Gen. John A. Samford, director of USAF

intelligence; (standing, from left) Capt. R. L. Jones, Capt. Ed J. Ruppelt, Col. Donald Bower and B. L. Griffing. The investigation was brought about by recent radar sightings of "saucers" here.



MAJ. GEN. JOHN A. SAMFORD. Finds "saucers" no menace.

Nature Upsetting Radar, AF Thinks, But Drastic Change In Study Is Ordered

By John G. Norris

Air Forces investigators disclosed yesterday they are satisfied the recent radar sightings of "saucers" over Washington stem from natural causes—probably the long hot spell.

Furthermore, said Maj. Gen. John A. Samford, director of USAF intelligence, a thorough analysis of all "flying saucer" reports over the last six years shows "no pattern of anything remotely consistent with any menace to the United States."

Samford and other Air Force experts spoke at a long press conference in the wake of a nationwide flurry of "saucer" sightings.

Appearance of well-formed "blips" on radar scopes indicating "unidentified targets" is by no means rare, Samford said. The Air Force has made "hundreds of fruitless interceptions" in the past, he revealed.

One theory, said Samford, is that these sightings are temperature "inversions" or reflections from the ground in hot and humid weather. Ionized clouds, ice formations and birds likewise have shown as moving targets on radar, he said.

"I'm satisfied in my own mind," Samford added, "that the recent sightings here result from heat inversion."

The Air Force intelligence chief also disclosed that the Government is changing its approach to its "saucer" investigation. Heretofore, efforts have been directed largely on finding some well-defined pattern among the great volume of reports that would give some clue to what is happening.

Among Moving Targets

But almost every report suffers from the lack of any measuring device to give scientists anything "to sink their teeth into," Samford said.

To help remedy this situation, the Air Force is: Ordering some 200 special cameras, with a defraction grid in front, which it will distribute around the country to photograph the mysterious lights that produce many of the saucer reports. These cameras can determine the chemical composition of the light source.

Planning to order, new-type Schmidt telescopes with a very wide aperture and accompanying cameras capable of taking continuous photographs of the sky. Costing from \$3000 to \$5000, these, too, would be strategically distributed to take pictures of "saucers."

Equipping pilots and observers with simple and cheap measuring devices to provide more exact information for scientific appraisal.

Back on Radar Scopes

The "unidentified targets" which appear on the National Airport Route Traffic Control radar scope the last two Saturday nights reappeared early yesterday.

Ray Nathan, CAA information officer, said from one to 12 of the "blips" appeared traveling at speeds of from 90 to 120 mph, in a northwest to southeast direction—from about Herndon to Andrews Air Base. They were not traveling downwind, indicating they were not balloons or "window" (tinfoil released from bombers to confuse radar observers).

There were no visual sightings and the radar spots were not observed on the Andrews scopes. No Air Force interceptors were sent aloft, but an Eastern Airlines plane in the air at the same place and time found nothing when asked to investigate.

Still another possible cause of the sightings under investigation by the Air Force was the discovery of large numbers of little strips of tinfoil at the Upper Marlboro Race Track and in the streets of Marlboro. They were first seen by F. J. Wilson, Jr., 18, a worker at the track.

Samples of the tinfoil were turned over to the Air Force by The Washington Post, and tentatively identified by Maj. Gen. Roger Ramey, USAF operations chief, as "window" or "chaff." A check is being made to determine if the foil was dropped by Air Force bombers in current Air Defense maneuvers. Normally, however, such radar counter-measures clutter up the scope instead of creating well-formed "blips."

Meanwhile, two scientists agreed with General Samford that the recent Washington saucer sightings were the result of the extremely hot weather. Dr. I. M. Lovett, director of the Fels Planetarium in Philadelphia, and Dr. D. H. Menzel of Harvard, predicted the sightings would disappear when the present hot spell is over.

General Samford said the Air Force has received from 1000 to 2000 reports on "flying saucers" since 1947.

Obviously trying to dampen any wild speculation about "men from Mars" or impending attacks on the United States from overseas, he said the Air Force is giving all reports "adequate but not frantic" checks.

"We have received many reports of incredible things from credible sources," Samford said. "But there is nothing to indicate that the things seen or reported to have been seen in the skies are vehicles, material things, missiles or anything else that might comprise a threat to this country."

And he flatly denied that the unexplained sightings could have resulted from any experiments or tests conducted by the United States.

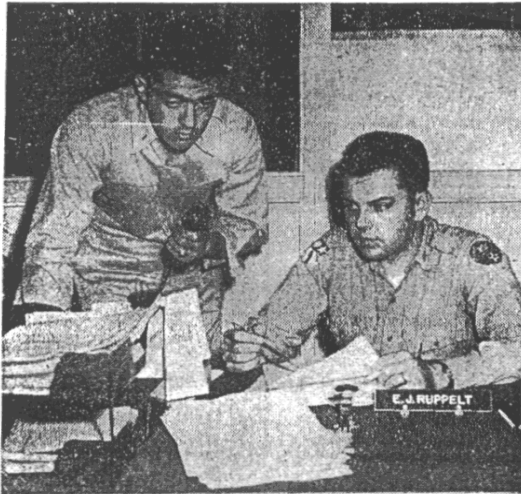
Lovett Sees Saucer, But Explains It as Searchlight Beam

July 30 By the Associated Press 1952

Even Secretary of Defense Lovett has seen a "flying saucer"—but he had an explanation for it.

Pentagon sources said Mr. Lovett was returning to Washington from New York Sunday on an airliner with persons who insisted they had seen a white disc whirling along beside the plane. Mr. Lovett, however, reportedly said he had been watching a searchlight playing into the clear, moonlit sky and at one point its cone of light caught a tuft of cumulus cloud, creating the impression of a circular body keeping pace with the plane.

The next day the major national press, in front page headlines, distilled the whole conference down to the simple answer which the Air Force wanted the public to believe about the Washington, D.C. sightings: summer heat had warmed the air above the earth's surface and caused temperature inversions which, in turn, caused the unidentified radar targets, and that was it. In short, saucers are "hot air."



AT ONE OF the four desks in the small, 30-by-15-foot rooms, partitioned off from the rest of the Air Technical Intelligence center, Rothstein and Ruppelt check off one of the 1,000 sightings reported to their office in the past two years.

432 Reports Given AF In '52 On Aerial Objects Sightings

WASHINGTON, July 31—(AP)—The Air Force said today it has received 432 written reports on "sighting of unidentified aerial phenomena" so far this year.

These were reports by civilians and by military personnel, sent through regular Air Force channels to the Air Technical Intelligence Center at Dayton, O.

In addition, there have been hundreds of oral reports and sightings which never were described in detail.

The Coast Guard said it has received from the Dayton center a photographic negative of what was described to it as a coast guardsman's sighting in the Salem, Mass., area July 16.

Prints of the photograph will be released tomorrow, the Coast Guard said.

The Air Force said earlier this week that some of the sighting reports, in the southwest and elsewhere, may have been the

result of armed services experiments with rockets and guided missiles.

But spokesmen said today there was no connection with a reported new super secret British guided missile. Some press reports told of such a weapon and the stories sparked inquiries as to whether it might be undergoing tests in America that would account for the strange things seen in the skies.

An Air Force spokesman said this British missile has not been tested here.

The number of written reports to the Dayton center in July had totaled 114, the most for any month on record.

The other monthly totals for this year: January, 10; February, 19; March, 17; April, 91; May, 70; and June, 111.

The reports appeared to have no seasonal trend. There were 115 in 1947, 163 in 1948, 159 in

PASCO, WASHINGTON

AUGUST 1 'Saucers' Said Aircraft From Other Planet

By VERN BAILEY

AN ARMY CAPTAIN told Kennewick Chamber of Commerce members Thursday that he believes the flying saucers are aircraft from another planet.

Capt. Maynard Missall, Inspector general of Camp Hanford, said, "I believe we may be receiving visits from intelligences of another planet."

This statement was made as the conclusion of a carefully built-up list of evidence drawn together by Missall.

He began his explanation of the flying discs by telling the group what the saucers are not. His reasoning was based upon four premises:

1. They are not hallucinations.
2. They are not products of U. S. research.
3. They are not made by foreign countries.
4. They are not the result of air temperature changes.

Missall elaborated briefly upon each of these statements. He then summed up the history of mysterious sighting of object since the middle ages.

When asked why the frequency of appearance in the last few years, Missall said:

"Experts tell us that it will be possible to do some space travel in 50 years. Isn't it also conceivable that there are intelligences on other planets that are proportionately ahead of us?"

"This would also explain the frequency of sighting over military and industrial installations," he said. "These intelligences are merely observing us, feeling us out, just as any wary opponent does before moving in."

A FORMER pilot, Missall said he is certain the Air Force at present has no power plant capable of the tremendous speeds ascribed to the mysterious discs. He read the group an Air Force report that hinted of a new elliptical airfoil in theoretical development that would permit unequal maneuverability.

The case of a pilot named Mantle was cited by Missall as one of the best proofs that the saucers are real. Mantle reportedly sighted a saucer while flying an interceptor over Alabama in 1950. He gave chase saying he was going to bring it down. He was never seen again. The wreckage of his plane was later found strewn a mile square area.

"This and many other sightings of the strange discs by wholly reliable persons have convinced the Air Force that the problem is no joke," said Missall.

A bit of irony was injected into Missall's speech when he confessed that he personally had never seen a saucer.

Missall concluded his talk by emphasizing that the things he had stated were his personal opinions, not the opinion of the Army or Air Force.

DAYTON, OHIO AUGUST 1

Most members of the press, being skeptical of saucer sightings and not being radar experts, accepted this simple answer, albeit with reservations. However, local press stories and few articles in the national press expressed a minority viewpoint that the Air Force was trying to debunk the whole phenomenon. Drew Pearson, a famous columnist, pointed out that the Air Force had now admitted for the first time that radar detections had occurred at the same time as visual observations. Pearson went so far as to suggest the objects might be from another planet. Other dissenting press organizations did not go that far, but did criticize the Air Force for boasting about scientific advances when it was clear the Air Force did not completely understand the saucer phenomenon.

During the following days and weeks there were scientists and radar experts who publicly disputed the General's explanation of the Washington sightings. However, their arguments did not carry the weight of the pronouncements of General Samford and his staff. No one outside the Air Force had all the information so his explanation could not be carefully examined for accuracy. When interviewed by civilian UFO researchers and representatives of the newsmedia many years later the air traffic controllers who were involved at the time still rejected the official explanation, saying that they were thoroughly familiar with the types of radar images which appear during periods of anomalous propagation, and the images seen that night emphatically were not anomalous propagation images.

Perhaps the Air Force felt that General Samford's conference was not enough to dampen the saucer frenzy because General Vandenberg was interviewed a day later and expressed his dismay at the continued "mass hysteria about flying saucers." Vandenberg told the press that the objects were not extraterrestrial craft nor secret weapons. He said that the Air Force had been investigating reports for several years and had found no convincing evidence. Then General Ramey appeared on television. He repeated what Samford had said at the big press conference and admitted the Air Force had been forced to come up with some quick answers to prevent a public panic.

To the "outside world" of the major news media it may have seemed that the Air Force had everything under control. Not so, to the "inside world." If the press had known what General Samford's staff was telling other "insiders" on the same day as the press conference the lid would have blown off *the UFO cover-up!*

SHIPS FROM ANOTHER PLANET

On July 29, several hours before General Samford's press conference, Gilbert Levy, Chief of the Counter Intelligence Division of the Office of the Inspector General of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI, a criminal investigation organization within the Air Force) decided to contact AFI to find out how the press had learned so much about the Washington, D.C. sightings. He may have wondered if someone had broken security and leaked the information. He reported the result of his "investigation" to General Carroll, the Director of AFOSI. His report is contained in the AFOSI section of the Blue Book file that was released in 1975:

- 1) In light of recent wide publicity concerning the (radar sightings at National Airport) I caused a check to be made for the purpose of determining the basis of recent releases to news media.**
- 2) We were advised by the Current Intelligence Branch, Estimates Division, AFOIN, (i.e., General Samford's office), which has staff responsibility with respect to these reports, that much of the publicity of the past few days is the result of a radar sighting of unidentified aerial objects by the Civil Aeronautics Administration at National Airport at 2115 hours, 25 July 1952. These sightings continued from 2115 hours, 25 July until 0010 hours on 26 July, and were described by radar operators as "good sharp targets." They were observed in numbers from four to eight.**
- 3) At 2320 hours, 25 July 1952, two (2) Air Force F-94's were dispatched from New Castle AFB, Delaware, for the purpose of intercepting objects which have been sighted by radar. One of the F-94's reportedly made visual contact with one of the objects and at first appeared to be gaining on it, but the object and the F-94 were observed on the radar scope**

and appeared to be traveling at the same approximate speed. However, when it attempted to overtake the object, the object disappeared both from the pursuant aircraft and the radar scope. The pilot of the F-94 remarked of (sic) the 'incredible speed of the object.'

**4) The Director of Intelligence advises that no theory exists at the present time as to the origin of the objects and *they are considered to be unexplained.* (my emphasis)
Much of the publicity has been based on authorized news releases by the Air Force.**

Oops! Pardon the slightly **red face** of Air Force Intelligence.

Now the cat is out of the bag. Re-read paragraph 4: the *Director of Intelligence* (General Samford) "advises" that *no theory exists* to explain the sightings which are considered to be unexplained.

That's not what he told the press only a few hours later! He told the press that he was satisfied with the "hot air" and "all natural phenomena" explanations.

In the absence of any other information one might assume that this is a mistake. Perhaps whomever Mr. Levy spoke to in General Samford's office mis-spoke or perhaps Mr. Levy misunderstood what he had been told. However, there is other information which is consistent with what Mr. Levy wrote. In fact, there is a lot more information that was withheld from the American people until it was released in the FBI X FILE! (Note: this information has been available since my Freedom of Information Act request obtained the documents in 1977. They are presently at the FBI web site: <http://foia.fbi.gov>. A more complete discussion of what was in the FBI files and its impact on UFO history is presented in *THE UFO FBI CONNECTION* by Bruce Maccabee, Llewellyn Pub, 2000.)

On the same day and perhaps even at about the same time as Mr. Levy's contact with AFI, the FBI also asked AFI for information about the sightings. Mr. N. W. Philcox, the FBI liaison with the Air Force, arranged through General Samford's office, to be briefed by "Commander Randall Boyd of the Current Intelligence Branch, Estimates Division, Air Intelligence, regarding research into the numerous reports regarding flying saucers and flying discs." (This is exactly the same branch that provided the above information to Mr. Levy!) This is what Mr. Philcox was told.

Commander Boyd advised that Air Intelligence has set up at Wright- Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, the Air Technical Intelligence Center which has been established for the purpose of coordinating, correlating and making research into all reports regarding flying saucers and flying discs. He advised that Air Force research has indicated that the sightings of flying saucers goes back several centuries and that the number of sightings reported varies with the amount of publicity. He advised that immediately if publicity appears in newspapers, the number of sightings reported increases considerably and that citizens immediately call in reporting sightings which occurred several months previously.

Agent Philcox erred in his statement that ATIC was set up to investigate saucer sightings. ATIC was set up at Wright Patterson Air Force Base with the mission to investigate all foreign aviation technology, particularly Russian aircraft. Blue Book was a project involving some of the ATIC personnel. Commander Boyd's claim that the number of sighting reports was correlated to press reporting on the subject was a statement of belief on the part of the Blue Book staff, but it had not been proven true. In fact, important evidence to the contrary would occur within days of this statement as the press kept up a barrage of sighting stories while the actual sighting rate actually dropped precipitously.

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : MR. A. H. BELMONT

FROM : V. P. KERRY

SUBJECT: FLYING SAUCERS

DATE: July 29, 1952

PURPOSE:

To advise at the present time the Air Force has failed to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion in its research regarding numerous reports of flying saucers and flying discs sighted throughout the United States.

DETAILS:

Mr. M. W. Philcox, the Bureau's Air Force Liaison Representative, made arrangements through the office of Major General John A. Samford, Director of Air Intelligence, U.S. Air Force, to receive a briefing from Commander Boyd, of the Current Intelligence Branch, Estimates Division, Air Intelligence, regarding the present status of Air Intelligence research into the numerous reports regarding flying saucers and flying discs.

Commander Boyd advised that Air Intelligence has set up at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, the Air Technical Intelligence Center which has been established for the purpose of coordinating, correlating and making research into all reports regarding flying saucers and flying discs. He advised that Air Force research has indicated that the sightings of flying saucers goes back several centuries and that the number of sightings reported varies with the amount of publicity. He advised that immediately if publicity appears in newspapers, the number of sightings reported increases considerably and that citizens immediately call in reporting sightings which occurred several months previously. Commander Boyd stated that these reported sightings of flying saucers are placed into three classifications by Air Intelligence:

- (1) Those sightings which are reported by citizens who claim they have seen flying saucers from the ground. These sightings vary in description, color and speeds. Very little credence is given to these sightings inasmuch as in most instances they are believed to be imaginative or some explainable object which actually crossed through the sky.
- (2) Sightings reported by commercial or military pilots. These sightings are considered more credible

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Continuing with Agent Philcox's report:

Commander Boyd stated that these reported sightings of flying saucers are placed into three classifications by Air Intelligence:

1) Those sightings which are reported by citizens who claim that they have seen flying saucers from the ground. These sightings vary in description, color and speeds. Very little credence is given to these sightings inasmuch as in most instances they are believed to be imaginative or some explainable object which actually crossed through the sky.

2) Sightings reported by commercial or military pilots. These sightings are considered more credible by the Air Force inasmuch as commercial or military pilots are experienced in the air and are not expected to see objects which are entirely imaginative. In each of these instances, the individual who reports the sighting is thoroughly interviewed by a representative of Air Intelligence so that a complete description of the object sighted can be obtained.

3) Those sightings which are reported by pilots and for which there is additional corroboration, such as recording by radar or sighting from the ground. Commander Boyd advised that this latter classification constitutes two or three per cent of the total number of sightings, but that they were the most difficult to explain. Some of these sightings are originally reported from the ground, then are picked up by radar instruments. He stated that in these instances there is no doubt that these individuals

reporting the sightings actually did see something in the sky. However, he explained that these objects could still be natural phenomena and still could be recorded on radar if there was some electrical disturbance in the sky.

Commander Boyd stated that about 3% of sightings constitute the "hard core" of the phenomenon. This percentage is consistent with the approximately 5% (53 sightings out of about 1,000) which Col. W. Smith said on July 24 came from "reliable sources." An example of such hard core sightings is the visual-ground/air radar airplane chase event that occurred near Saginaw, Michigan, on the very morning of Samford's press conference (see above) and the Rogue River sighting described in the Appendix. Although not a large percentage, these were the sightings which absolutely could not be explained without resort to such bizarre hypotheses as the idea that several witnesses could all go insane or hallucinate the same vision at the same time, perhaps even at the same time that instruments (e.g. radar, theodolite telescopes) malfunction, and then immediately after the sighting the witnesses and instruments would be normal again! Commander Boyd did not tell the FBI that at that time the fraction of unexplained sightings was about 20%, which included the 3% "hard core" sightings. Presumably the other 17% unexplained sightings had elements or features which would allow them to be possibly explained if enough reasonable assumptions about erroneous reporting were made. The hard core 3%, on the other hand, required unreasonable assumptions before any explanation could be offered.

Agent Philcox's report continued:

He stated that the flying saucers are most frequently observed in areas where there is heavy air traffic, such as Washington, D.C. and New York City. He advised however, that some reports are received from other parts of the country covering the United States and that sightings have also recently been reported as far distant as Acapulco, Mexico, Korea and French Morocco."

It is amusing to note Commander Boyd's claim that saucers were most often seen in areas of high air traffic, which typically are areas of dense population, because one of the reasons offered against the reality of flying saucers was this: "If saucers are real, why are they only seen by the unsophisticated witnesses in the countryside and not over cities?" The Battelle Memorial Institute study (mentioned above), which was going on even as Commander Boyd spoke, discovered many months later that there was a degree of correlation between the number of sightings and areas with military and civilian airports. However, this does not mean that there were more misidentified aircraft reported as saucers in the vicinity of airports. Instead, the correlation may have resulted from a greater tendency of people living near airports to look upward to see passing aircraft and to also see the strange objects in the sky.

Many (about 20) years after the Battelle study was published I discovered that the Battelle sighting data also showed essentially no correlation between population in an area and the number of sightings in the same area. That is, an area with several hundred thousand people could have the same number of sightings over the years as an area with millions of people. That is not what would be expected if the skeptics were correct in saying that many sighting reports were "people generated," that is from psychopathological people who reported hallucinations or other mental aberrations. The number of "people-generated" reports would be correlated with (roughly proportional to?) the population.

Continuing with Agent Philcox's report,

by the Air Force inasmuch as commercial or military pilots are experienced in the air and are not expected to see objects which are entirely imaginative. In each of these instances, the individual who reports the sighting is thoroughly interviewed by a representative of Air Intelligence so that a complete description of the object sighted can be obtained.

(3) Those sightings which are reported by pilots and for which there is additional corroboration, such as recording by radar or sighting from the ground. Commander Boyd advised that this latter classification constitutes two or three per cent of the total number of sightings, but that they are the most credible reports received and are difficult to explain. Some of these sightings are originally reported from the ground, then are observed by pilots in the air and then are picked up by radar instruments. He stated that in these instances there is no doubt that these individuals reporting the sightings actually did see something in the sky. However, he explained that these objects could still be natural phenomena and still could be recorded on radar if there was some electrical disturbance in the sky.

He stated that the flying saucers are most frequently observed in areas where there is heavy air traffic, such as Washington, D.C., and New York City. He advised, however, that some reports are received from other parts of the country covering the entire United States and that sightings have also recently been reported as far distant as Acapulco, Mexico; Korea and French Morocco. He advised that the sightings reported in the last classification have never been satisfactorily explained. He pointed out, however, that it is still possible that these objects may be a natural phenomenon or some type of atmospheric disturbance. He advised that it is not entirely impossible that the objects sighted may possibly be ships from another planet such as Mars. He advised that at the present time there is nothing to substantiate this theory but the possibility is not being overlooked. He stated that Air Intelligence is fairly certain that these objects are not ships or missiles from another nation in this world. Commander Boyd advised that intense research is being carried on presently by Air Intelligence, and at the present time when credible reports of sightings are received, the Air Force is attempting in each instance to send up jet interceptor planes in order to

He advised that the sightings in the last category (category 3 above) have never been satisfactorily explained. He pointed out, however, that it is still possible that these objects may be a natural phenomenon or some type of atmospheric disturbance. He advised that it is not entirely impossible that the objects sighted may possibly be *ships from another planet such as Mars*. (my emphasis) He advised that at the present time there is nothing to substantiate this theory but the possibility is not being overlooked. He stated that Air Intelligence is fairly certain that these objects are not ships or missiles from another nation in this world. Commander Boyd advised that intense research is being carried on presently by Air Intelligence, and at the present time when credible reports of sightings are received, the Air force is attempting in each instance to send up jet interceptor planes in order to obtain a better view of these objects. However, recent attempts in this regard have indicated that when the pilot in the jet approaches the object it invariably fades from view.

Oops, again! (Pardon the *redder face!*)

Ships from another planet? Surely you jest, Cdr. Boyd!

If the press had found out what General Samford's staff had told the FBI there would have been an explosion at the press conference!

Disc Jockeys Report Finding 'Saucer Pilot'

RACINE (UP)—Disc jockeys Ed Ruetz and Rick Edwards decided Wednesday that plat- ters and flying saucers don't mix.

Ruetz and Edwards, prop- ropriator of an early morning radio show called "Melodie Nuthouse," decided Tuesday to kid the reports about flying saucers.

"They gave an account of finding one at the Washington park golf course. They said it was controlled by a man two feet tall, who could say only 'hiyah, hiyah, hiyah,' when they tried to interview him."

PEOPLE BELIEVED THEM. Minutes after the show went off the air, switchboards at the radio station and at police and sheriff's headquarters were jammed with calls from wor- ried citizens. Many wanted to know if the man from outer space had been caught yet.

Authorities assured them that no space ships had landed. The radio station devoted part of each news broadcast during the day to an announcement that it was just a gag.

The incident recalled the Orson Welles fiasco of several years ago involving a story about men from Mars.

30 JUL 52

Two Scientists Link 'Saucers' to Weather

By the Associated Press 1952

PHILADELPHIA, July 30.—Two Philadelphia scientists agree that the warm weather may be respon- sible for the latest list of flying saucer rumors.

Dr. I. M. Levitt, director of Fels Planetarium, and Dr. Roy K. Mar- shall, director of education of the Philadelphia Inquirer's radio and television station, find no evidence that the saucers have ushered in a "Buck Rogers" age.

Dr. Levitt pointed out yester- day that, in warm weather, mir- ror-like atmospheric conditions might reflect street lights from miles away, causing the illusion of flying discs.

The "blips" reported on Civil Aeronautics Administration radar screens could be produced, Dr. Levitt said, by ionized clouds, or other natural phenomena.

Meteors, according to Dr. Mar- shall, as they build up a mass of ionized air, glowing at a tempera- ture of 3,500 degrees or more, would register on radar screens.

Dr. Marshall also pointed out that professional and amateur astronomers, although they spot dozens of meteors nightly, have never reported seeing a flying saucer.

Fighter Pilots at New Castle Stay Alert for More Saucer Reports

By Harry Lever 1952
Star Staff Correspondent

NEW CASTLE AIR FORCE BASE, Del., July 30.—The Air Force may now consider those unidentified objects in the sky as natural phenomena, but if the Capital's favorite family of "fly- ing saucers" return, Washington fighter pilots at this base are all set to ferret them out.

They are members of the 121st Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, us- ing F-94 all-weather night fighters equipped with radar. This group, made up mostly of men from the District area, is on temporary duty at New Castle, from its home at Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

The flyers are acting with the 142d Fighter-Interceptor Squad- ron in maintaining a 24-hour alert, lately especially concerned with keeping strange things out of the sky over the Washington area.

Strange Things Always. And regardless of the dictum of the Air Force, presumably strange things always will be seen in the local sky by respectable seg- ments of the population. Any newspaper switchboard operator will attest to that.

The Air Force says that what- ever has been seen probably can be traced to the trick reflection of light. But nobody has called off the 121st, and it stands ready to investigate when the alarm buzzer rings in the readyroom at New Castle.

Last Sunday morning, after two pilots of the 142d went aloft on orders to find out what those now- famous things were over Andrews, two men of the 121st took over the early dawn patrol. They were Capt. John C. Lang, of 7812 Dis- trict Heights Parkway, District Heights, Md., and Capt. Francis T. Evans, of 1101 Barnaby street S.E.

Not Easily Deceived. They cruised at 1,500 feet in their F-94's over Mount Vernon, where the alleged sky phantoms were supposed to be operating. Ex- perience combat pilots, they were not easily deluded by the flying ectoplasm. Here is Capt. Lang's report:

"I saw two little patches of clouds. And also a lot of shoot- ing stars. I even quipped to Na- tional Airport's Control Center about all those 'Stars Over Ala- bama.' I thought 'Meteors Over Maryland' was better. And mass hallucination even better than that."

Capt. Lang suggested, as the Air Force in essence did later, that the visions might have been a matter of light reflection, especially if the little clouds were ionized. This means the clouds were in condi- tion especially conducive to elec- tric charges or discharges.

Lights On Horizon.

He even mentioned the possibi- lity that the illusion of a stationary sky saucer could be created by lights on the horizon, or by the upturned headlamps of an auto- mobile.

Meanwhile, the men of the 121st kill time by playing cards or chess, looking at television and sleeping. Some of them actually live in an "alert van," a mobile housing unit replete with beds, cooling system and heater. The van stands near the F-94's to save precious seconds if the alert comes. The men are in sympathy with firemen.

Ponder Their Reactions.

Most of them wonder how they'd re-act if they actually encountered an unidentified object while on a mission. Here a couple of opinions:

First Lt. Mickey Jones, 3313 Terrace Drive S.E.: "I'd try to get a picture, if possible, with my gun- cameras. I'd use extreme caution. I'd report it all to Ground Control. From then on it would depend on circumstances."

Capt. Wayne Owens, of 5408 Fifty-sixth place, East Riverdale, Md.: "First it would arouse my curiosity. I would prepare for combat. I'd notify the authorities by radio. Then I'd proceed to in- vestigate."

"I'd sure as hell not want to be caught flat-footed."

Science May Get 'Saucers' Clue From Shower of Perseids

By Thomas R. Henry 1952
Science Editor of The Star

The "flying saucer" season prob- ably will reach a climax around midnight Tuesday, August 12, give or take a few days.

Then the earth in its orbit around the sun will pass through the wreckage of a disrupted comet. There may be thousands of shoot- ing stars filling the sky—each one a tiny fragment of rock or iron, plunging through the earth's up- per atmosphere at enormous ve- locities and burning rapidly to gas from the friction of the ex- tremely thin air.

This will be the annual Perseid shower. Some years it is very bril- liant. During recent years, how- ever, it has been quite disappoint- ing to astronomers, according to the Rev. Francis Hayden, director of the Georgetown University ob- servatory.

Some Meteor "Saucers"

Beyond question some of the "flying saucer" reports have been based on meteors, probably moving in "line of sight" with respect to the observer. In such cases such a shooting star may take on curi- ous appearances, sometimes ap- pearing like a large double star and sometimes, quite probably, as a flat disk.

This, of course, is quite inci- dental to the present flurry of flying saucer reports. Some of them do not fit into this hypothe-

JULY 30 STORIES

sis, or any other. Just now they are puzzling some of the foremost scientists engaged in upper air research, such as those at the Carnegie Institution of Washing- ton's high atmosphere observatory at Derwood, Md.

Constantly probing the upper atmosphere as a matter of routine, they have as yet observed nothing unusual but their radar apparatus is not adapted to detecting such objects. There are many things in the high atmosphere which will give radar echoes, it was explained by one of the Carnegie scientists. They come from rapidly moving clouds, from the trails of ionized gases which form the "tails" of shooting stars, or even from a sharp, abrupt change in tempera- ture.

Key Is "Navigation."

The crucial point, the Carnegie scientist explained, is to have reliable evidence as to whether the objects which have reported actually are being "navigated" in any way. This would be indi- cated, for example, by any abrupt change of direction. Meteor trails and the like move generally in a straight line. So do wind-driven clouds. They don't bob up and down or turn corners as some of the "flying saucers" are reported to have done.

Certainly a "flying saucer" would be a metallic object. It would return echoes in about the same radar spectrum as clouds or meteor trails but any image in the radar screen would be much sharper. The echo from a cloud, for example, would be quite diffuse. The difference would be apparent to any radar expert.

A few years ago, for example, a strange phenomenon was re- ported from a Canadian air sta- tion.

On the screen appeared clear, sharp echoes from airplanes. They were almost drowned, how- ever, in a great diffuse echo. It turned out that the planes were flying in a thin, ionized cloud which happened to be over the area at the time.

The Carnegie scientists, how- ever, are quick to admit they don't know and have no acceptable theory about "saucers." This, after all, is the strangest part of the whole phenomenon—the country's foremost experts can't explain what is reported by sup- posedly reliable observers. And they never see "flying saucers" themselves, or get any radar in- dications of metallic objects in the sky.

In retrospect it appears that the good General was not exactly leveling with the American people when he rejected the interplanetary hypothesis and suggested that the Washington sightings could be explained as temperature inversions and implied that all sightings would be explained as natural phenomena. There is no theory to explain these, Mr. Levy was told. Did he withhold the "interplanetary possibility" simply

to calm down the saucer hysteria? Or was it because the Top Brass didn't want the American public to know that some Unidentified Flying Objects are identifiable...as ET craft?

DECATUR, ILLINOIS AUGUST 2

Whatever it was Sighted Here

Company Guard Now Believes in Flying Saucers

A flying saucer—otherwise described as "unidentified aerial phenomena"—was reported over Decatur Thursday night.

Robert Kush, 1452 E. Prairie Ave., said he saw it at 11:18 p. m. Thursday when he was reporting to work as a guard at the Decatur Pump Co., 2750 Nelson Park Rd. "I never thought much about them before," Kush said, "but this sure made a believer out of me."

Kush described the whatever it was as a glowing yellowish-green disc. It was spinning, Kush said, and had a hump in the middle "just like a saucer."

It came toward the Pump Company factory from the southeast, just high enough to be seen over the trees, made a sharp turn over Lake Decatur and flew away to the northeast, Kush related.

He estimated its speed at "twice as fast as an airplane."

"It couldn't have been a falling star," Kush said. "It wasn't burning, it was glowing and there were no sparks falling from it. It held the same altitude and it turned and flew away."

Neither did it make any noise, he said.

The disc was tilted at about a 15-degree angle as it flew, he said. Kush estimated the object was in view for about a minute.

"I hope they find out what they are pretty soon," he said, "I'm curious now."

BUFFALO, NY JULY 31

Veteran Flier Convinced

Former Army Pilot Sees Flying Saucer by Daylight

A former Army Air Forces World War II pilot who was skeptical about reported "flying saucers" saw one yesterday and is now "convinced they exist." Richard R. Bevan of 1432 Kenmore

Ave., who piloted B-25s and P-38 planes in the 12th and 15th Air Forces in Italy, said he saw the object shortly before 9 o'clock yesterday morning as he drove in Sheridan Dr., near Main St.

Bevan who has 3,800 air hours to his credit and is now a member of the reserves said, "I was skeptical about the 'flying saucer' reports until this morning and even after watching it for five minutes I hesitated saying anything about it until now."

He said he saw the object as his machine topped a rise in the road. "My attention was drawn to it by a glint in the sky and I pulled over the side and took off my sun glasses," he said. "Sure enough, there it was," he added.

The Sun Oil Co. sales representative said it appeared elliptical in form and had no visible means of propulsion. He estimated it was about five miles distant and at a height of between 5,000 to 7,500 feet.

"It definitely was no aircraft as we know them," he stated. He said the object appeared to be flat and "hoyering." He estimated it was about 20 feet long and was made of a metal similar to aluminum in appearance.

Bevan said the "saucer" appeared to "oscillate a bit" as he watched and then either vanished at great speed or went behind a cloud.

"I firmly believed the persons who reported these things before were seeing things but I'm certain of what I saw and my skepticism no longer exists," he declared.

In addition to Bevan, four other Buffalonians said they watched "a big bright yellow glow" in the sky while sitting on the Kensington home.



RICHARD R. BEVAN

BIRMINGHAM, AL JULY 31

Saucer 'With Black Spots' Seen Over Binghamton

BINGHAMTON, July 31 (U.P.)—A flying saucer was sighted over this city Monday night by John Turner, 70.

"It was about three feet in diameter with black spots on its bottom," Mr. Turner said. "It was way up in the heavens and moving like a shooting star. It followed the horizon."

BUFFALO, NY AUG 1

Seen by Two Girls

A round object which was first seen by Theresa Colella, 16, of 146 Oakmont Ave., and Nancy Littlefield, 15, of 114 Oakmont Ave., as they sat on the steps of the Colella home.

Theresa ran into the house and called her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Colella, when they first sighted the object at 9:55 o'clock. Theresa said the first lighted object vanished and then a second appeared some distance away.

Theresa described both lighted objects as being slightly larger than a street

Soon after Samford's press conference Stephen Possony, the top level scientist and Air Force consultant mentioned before (who wrote in April, 1952, that the Air Force *could not assume that flying saucers were interplanetary*) provided his opinion on the increase in sightings. Notice in what follows that he starts off by assuming saucers are natural phenomena, which is consistent with Samford's opinion stated at the press conference but in contrast to his April memorandum in which he suggested that they could be Soviet devices. Notice, also, his direct refutation of Samford's claim that an "atmospheric inversion" could explain the Washington, D.C. sightings of July. (Actually, Possony was wrong in stating that there was no inversion. There was a slight inversion of a degree or two, but this was not enough to cause spurious radar targets.) He also pointed out that they couldn't rule out saucers as a possible threat. (His reference to warming of the northern hemisphere of the earth is interesting, considering that this was written over 50 years ago. This is another bit of evidence that the geniuses in science and other fields of endeavor are often far ahead of the general public.)

SECRET: 1 August 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL SAMFORD

SUBJECT: USAF Interest in Flying Saucers.

At the risk of boring you with a tedious subject, I want to submit a few ideas which may be helpful in making a proper decision.

What are the Flying Saucers?

It is a well-established heuristic principle that the unknown must be made intelligible by referring to the known. If we ask the question: "What known phenomena bear the greatest similarity to saucers?" The answer seems to be that saucer behavior follows the pattern of electromagnetic phenomena. Assuming for the time being, that the saucers are a natural phenomenon of some electromagnetic kind, and accepting the fact that saucer phenomena have occurred at infrequent intervals throughout history, we should inquire as to the cause of the increased frequency of the occurrence. (The increase is about 4000-fold from 19th-century reports, though elimination of current sightings would tend to reduce this figure). Since the increase in sightings started in 1946-7, it may be fruitful to tie the sightings to events preceding them and of which there were no counterparts at earlier periods. Prior to the upsurge in saucer sightings, the following new activities took place:

1. The carrying of radioactive particles into the upper atmosphere by means of atomic explosions and production;
2. The penetration of the upper atmosphere by guided missiles, new types of balloons, and perhaps aircraft;
3. The production of shock waves at higher altitude, due to the breaching of the sound barrier;
4. The increased output in radio and radar signals, including television;
5. The seeding of clouds for purposes of weather control;
6. The great increase in commercial and private flying.

Moreover, the present era is characterized by a general "warming up" of the climate in the northern hemisphere. Furthermore, the solar system may be passing through an area in the universe where there is a great deal of debris and where, therefore, an increase in the intensity of the meteoric bombardment may be expected.

It is probable that flying saucers are not caused by any single one of these factors, but by a convergence of causes. If the saucers are really electromagnetic phenomena, there is a possibility that they are connected primarily with atomic activities, and that they are caused by the encounter of radioactive particles and small meteors. In other words, they may be ionized air brought about by the entry of very small meteors into the atmosphere. During burn-up of the meteor metal, the natural degree of ionization may be increased greatly through available radioactive particles, with the possible result that after the destruction of the metallic core, there would be a gaseous rotating ion ball subject to movements in the atmosphere. This "interpretation" occurred to me after an illuminating

discussion with General Maxwell, and I emphasize it merely to indicate what type of approach the Air Force should take in tackling the phenomena.

Incidentally, there was no temperature inversion in Washington for a long time, and therefore, the mirage theory does not explain the latest sightings.

What is the Air Force interest?

1. The Air Force continuously will be "on the carpet" as long as no satisfactory explanation can be given. Should the saucer activity increase, pressure by the press and even Congress will be quite considerable.
2. We cannot yet rule out entirely that saucers do represent a threat.
3. If there is any validity to the assumption that the saucers are partly the result of atomic activity, the phenomenon would tie in directly with long range detection and if solved, might lead to an increase in our intelligence capability... I suggest therefore, that before the ATIC program be undertaken, a very small panel of scientists be brought together and be briefed on the documentation which is in the files right now.

(I presume that the "ATIC program" referred to here is the study carried out by the Battelle Memorial Institute which resulted in Project Blue Book Special Report #14, as mentioned above.)

By early August the UFO flap was tapering off. The sighting rate generally exceeded ten per day from July 19 through August 3 even though the publicity about the sightings continued at a high level. After that it dropped to five to ten per day through the rest of August. By the end of September it was below five per day. Months later the Project Blue Book staff determined that the sighting rate had, in fact, peaked about the time of the order to shoot and just before the press conference. Could it be that the saucers reacted to the fact that jet aircraft were now pursuing them whenever possible?

Although the sighting rate was diminishing, Air Force investigative activity was continuing at a high rate. At ATIC there were 8 full time people working on the sightings and the Battelle Memorial Institute had assigned 2 full time employees. There was also a panel of experts to be called upon as needed. Needless to say, the Blue Book and Battelle analysts were kept busy so the time lag between a sighting and its analysis could be months. Such was the case with a very famous photographic sighting that occurred on July 2, 1952, a sighting which had a major impact on the insiders.

MORE INTERPLANETARY SHIPS!

Navy Warrant Officer and Chief Photographer Delbert Newhouse and his wife were driving through Utah on their way to California. They were about 7 miles west of Tremonton when Mrs. Newhouse saw some strange looking objects moving erratically through the sky. She pointed them out to her husband. After 21 years in the Navy and 2,000 hours as an aerial photographer he knew what ordinary objects in the sky looked like, and these weren't ordinary. According to Newhouse, they were circular and looked like two pie pans, one inverted on top of the lower one. He hurried to get his movie camera out of the trunk of his car. During this time the objects were moving away from him and by the time he got the camera going they were quite far away. They made small images on the film, with no particular features. Newhouse turned his film over to the Navy for evaluation right away. The Air Force photo lab at Wright-Patterson AFB also studied the film. After several weeks of work they ruled out birds, balloons and other aircraft. No one knew what they were. Word of this extraordinary evidence worked its way up through the ranks and finally showed up in the FBI X-file! An FBI memorandum written on October 27 reads as follows:

Air Intelligence advised of another creditable and unexplainable sighting of flying saucers. Air Intelligence still feels flying saucers are optical illusions or other atmospheric phenomena but some military officials are seriously considering the possibility of interplanetary ships.

You will recall that Air Intelligence has previously kept the Bureau advised regarding

developments pertaining to Air Intelligence research on the flying saucer problem. Air Intelligence has previously advised that all research pertaining to this problem is handled by the Air Technical Intelligence Center located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio; that approximately 90 per cent of the reported sightings of flying saucers can be discounted as products of the imagination and as explainable objects such as weather balloons, etc., but that a small percentage of extremely creditable sightings have been unexplainable.

Colonel C. M. Young, Executive Officer to Major General John A. Samford, Director of Intelligence, Air Force, advised on October 23, 1952, that another recent extremely creditable sighting had been reported to Air Intelligence. A Navy photographer, while traveling across the United States in his own car, saw a number of objects in the sky which appeared to be flying saucers. He took approximately thirty-five feet of motion picture film of these objects. He voluntarily submitted the film to Air Intelligence who had it studied by the Air Technical Intelligence Center. Experts at the Air Technical Intelligence Center have advised that, after careful study, there were as many as twelve to sixteen flying objects recorded on this film; that the possibility of weather balloons, clouds or other explainable objects has been completely ruled out; and that they are at a complete loss to explain this most recent creditable sighting. The Air Technical Intelligence Center experts pointed out that they could not be optical illusions inasmuch as optical illusions could not be recorded on film.



**One frame from the film by
Delbert Newhouse, July 2, 1952**

Colonel Young advised that Air Intelligence still feels that the so-called flying saucers are either optical illusions or atmospheric phenomena. He point out, however, that some Military officials are seriously considering the possibility of interplanetary ships.

Oops, again! See the **VERY red face** of Air Force Intelligence! *Military officials are seriously considering interplanetary ships?* Had this been published in the newspapers in 1952 the history of the UFO subject would be different!

This FBI report clearly indicates the confusion within the middle ranks of the Air Force as to what was really going on. Experts in film analysis had ruled out optical illusions or atmospheric phenomena as an explanation for this film, and subsequent analysis has proven that optical illusions and atmospheric phenomena could not have explained this sighting. Nevertheless the Air Force couldn't get to the point of admitting what was obvious. Instead, it was holding out the hope ... that's the only way one can explain it, hope ...that saucer sightings could be explained as optical illusions and atmospheric phenomena!

Indiana News Story, Aug. 1

Jenner Assails Demos On Flying Saucer Bungling

Aerial "Mystery"
Will Now Become
Political Issue

French Lick, Ind., Aug. 1 (NS)—America's flying saucer mystery has become a political issue in the 1952 campaign, with charges that the Truman administration either has been unprepared to learn the origin of the saucers or that it has deceived the public.

The charges were made last night by Senator William E. Jenner in an address before the Indiana Trailer Coach Association at French Lick.

Jenner said:

"THE AMERICAN people don't know anything positive about the so-called flying saucers except that—once again—the Truman administration appears to have been caught flat-footed. For many months now, there have been reports that seemed to be much more than mere rumors regarding the saucers. But what has the administration, with all of its multi-billion-dollar facilities for military preparedness and research done about them?

"Not until now, it seems, has Washington taken the saucers seriously. Not until they were reported right over the White House itself has the little man with the world's biggest expense account chosen to bestir himself. Now—at long last—we get reports of frenzied activity by the pentagon to look into the matter. Washington is in such a dither that we have around-the-clock radar and jet interceptor watches set up to learn something about the illusive lights.

"IT IS ENTIRELY possible, of course, that some branch of our military service has been secretly experimenting with the saucers, and that they are devices of our own. But if that is so, then the administration has gone to great lengths to delude the people, to confuse the people, and now to drive many of them toward a state of near-panic."

Jenner then said:

"We have, then, either unpreparedness or deceit, both of which are typical of the Truman administration of bad government."

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ENTER, THE CIA!!!

Nineteen hundred and fifty two was also the year that the top secret Central Intelligence Agency decided to join the fray.

In previous years the Agency had paid only slight attention to the saucer/UFO sighting reports. They noted that such reports occurred in other countries and sometimes forwarded foreign sighting reports to the Air Force. They also noted the large number of sightings reported in the USA but, up to now, had basically ignored them. But the Washington, DC flap and President Truman's question about sightings in restricted air space were too much. They figured that something must be going on. Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), Walter Bedell Smith, decided that it was time to find out what was really going on out there!

The CIA had been monitoring the flying saucer sightings worldwide on a very casual basis since 1947. A memorandum written on March 15, 1949 indicates that the one CIA employee who monitored the sightings was unimpressed. The memo suggests some of the usual explanations (meteorological balloons, meteors, psychological effects) and rules out the possibility that secret aircraft or guided missiles by either the USA or the Soviet Union could account for the sightings. Another memorandum, dated March 31, 1949, mentions the conclusion of Project Sign, that sightings can be categorized generally as explained (misidentifications of conventional aircraft, balloons, natural phenomena or hoax) and unexplained, and goes on to offer the following possibilities for the unexplained sightings:

- a). **Natural terrestrial phenomena**
 - (1) **Meteorological (ball lightning)**
 - (2) **Some type of animal**
 - (3) **Hallucinatory or psychological phenomena**
- b). **Man-made terrestrial phenomena:**
 - (1) **Advanced type of aircraft**
- c). **Extra-terrestrial objects:**
 - (1) **Meteors**
 - (2) **Animals**
 - (3) **Space ships**

The memorandum concludes by mentioning the scientists involved in the investigation and their conclusions regarding the unexplained cases:

Studies on the various possibilities have been made by Dr. Langmuir of GE (General Electric Corporation), Dr. Valley of the MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Dr. Lipp of Project Rand, Dr. Hynek of Ohio State and (by the) Aero Medical Laboratory. That the objects are from outer space or are an advanced aircraft of a foreign power is a possibility, but the above group have concluded that it is highly improbable.

Following the date of this memorandum the CIA maintained a continuous but casual review of sighting data. Evidently there was nothing found of interest to the CIA for the next two years because there are no further entries in the CIA file until 1952. The 1952 concentration was, however, just too much to ignore.

On July 29, the same day as General Samford's press conference, Acting Assistant Director for Scientific Intelligence of the CIA, Ralph Clark, wrote a memorandum for the Deputy Director of Intelligence that stated that the CIA had been "...maintaining a continuing review of such reported sightings for the last three years" and stated that a special group had been formed to study the situation. Three days later a member of the study group, Edward Tauss, the Chief of the Weapons and Equipment Division of the Office of Scientific Intelligence, responded to Mr. Clark's request "for an overall evaluation" of the saucer situation. He said most of the large number of reports received by the Air Materiel Command (AMC) and the Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC) had been explained, but about 100 credible sightings had not been explained. He pointed out that there was no discernible pattern to the unexplained reports and offered his opinion: "it is

probable that if complete information were available for presently 'unexplainable' reports, they, too, could be (explained)." If his opinion were correct there would be no need for CIA involvement. However, he added a cautionary note which formed the basis for continued CIA involvement:

Notwithstanding the foregoing tentative facts, so long as a series of reports remains 'unexplainable' (interplanetary aspects and alien origin not being thoroughly excluded from consideration) caution requires that intelligence continue coverage of the subject.

He recommended continued CIA surveillance of the "subject matter" in coordination with AMC/ATIC and said that he had arranged for a briefing by ATIC personnel on August 8. He recommended that there should be

...no indication of CIA interest or concern reach the press or public, in view of their probable alarmist tendencies to accept such interest as 'confirmatory' of the soundness of 'unpublished facts' in the hands of the U.S. Government.

In other words, a form of "cover up."

THE CIA INVESTIGATES BLUE BOOK

CIA memoranda written by several study group members dated 14, 15 and 19 August provide details on what the CIA learned from ATIC and from the CIA's own study of sightings. According to the August 14 memorandum the CIA made its own check on the "U.S. secret project" explanation. The Chairman of the Research and Development Board denied, at the Top Secret level, that any U. S. development could account for saucer sightings. Not satisfied with this top level denial, the author of the memorandum pointed out "two factors which tend to confirm the denials - first, the official action of alerting all Air Force commands to intercept, and second, the unbelievable risk of such flights in established airplanes." (Note: even more than 50 years later, there are some skeptics who claim that many, if not all, unexplained reports are of sightings of top secret aircraft. However, that potential explanation was denied at the highest level when J. Edgar Hoover asked in the summer of 1947. It was denied again in early January 1952 when Col. Dunn asked General Samford, and yet a third time when the CIA asked in the summer of 1952. Whereas today there are some strange, experimental and/or secret aircraft that might give rise to "saucer" sightings, it must be accepted that there were no such aircraft in the '40's and '50's. [Of course, there were some sightings which turned out to be top secret aircraft, but those were not part of the truly unexplainable sightings.]

On August 20 the DCI was briefed on the flying saucer situation. He directed his staff to prepare a memorandum for the National Security Council which would state the need for an investigation and direct various agencies to cooperate in the investigation.

A document entitled "The Air Force Stand on 'Flying Saucers' - as stated by CIA, in a briefing on 22 August 1952" contains the following information based on the CIA visit to ATIC, headquarters of Project Blue Book:

I. The Air Force has primary responsibility for investigating the 'flying saucers.' The unit concerned with these investigations is a part of the Air Technical Intelligence Center at Dayton, Ohio, and consists of three officers (a Captain in charge) and two civilians. They receive reports of sightings, analyze and attempt to explain them. A standard reporting form has been prepared which is used on a world-wide basis. The Air Force Office of Special Investigations checks into each sighting attempting to determine its authenticity and the reliability of the observer.

II. (A) The Air Force officially denies that 'flying saucers' are:
(1) U.S. secret weapons
(2) Soviet secret weapons
(3) Extra-terrestrial visitors

II. (B) It is believed that all sightings of 'flying saucers' are:

(1) Well known objects such as balloons, aircraft, meteors, clouds, etc. not recognized by the observer

(2) Phenomena of the atmosphere which are at present poorly understood, e.g., refractions and reflections caused by temperature inversion, ionization phenomena, ball lightning, etc.

III. Not a shred of evidence exists to substantiate the belief that 'flying saucers' are material objects not falling into category II B(1), above.

IV. A study of 'flying saucer' sightings on a geographical basis showed them to be more frequent in the vicinity of atomic energy installations (which is explained by the greater security consciousness of persons in those areas). That by-products of atomic fission may in some way act catalytically to produce 'flying saucers' has not been disproved. The greatest number of sightings has been made at or near Dayton, Ohio, where the investigations are going on.

V. Of the thousands of 'flying saucers' sighted of which there are records, the Air Force says that 78% have been explained by either II B(1) or II B(2) above, 2% have been exposed as hoaxes and the remaining 20% have not been explained, primarily because of the vague descriptions given by observers.

VI. The Air Force is mostly interested in the 'saucer' problem because of its psychological warfare implications. In reviewing publications designed for Soviet consumption, there has not been a single reference to 'flying saucers.' On the other hand, several 'saucer' societies in the United States have been investigated. Key members of some of these societies which have been instrumental in keeping the 'flying saucer' craze before the public have been exposed as being of doubtful loyalty. Furthermore the societies, in some cases, are financed by an unknown source. The Air Force realizes that a public made jumpy by the 'flying saucer' scare would be a serious liability in the event of air attacks by an enemy. Air defense could not operate effectively if the Air Force were constantly called upon to intercept mirages which persons had mistaken for enemy aircraft.

While reading the above, one notes immediately the *lack* of a statement about the possibility of interplanetary visitors. The reader should realize that the CIA was given the official position of ATIC/PBB (colonels and below) which was different from the opinion of top Air Force intelligence officials (generals) in the Pentagon. The AFI personnel admitted to the FBI that there was a "hard core" amounting to about 3% of the sightings, such as many reported by commercial and Air Force pilots, which could not be explained and this led some top level officials to believe that at least some "saucers" could be interplanetary vehicles. However, the PBB personnel were very skeptical, even cynical, about UFO sightings, they did not tell the CIA study group about the "hard core" unexplained sightings. Instead the CIA representatives were told that "...20% have not been explained, primarily because of the vague descriptions." This was misinformation (OK, a lie) provided to the CIA by the Blue Book personnel. The fact is that the hard core 3% of the total number of sightings (15% of the unexplained sightings) had well reported, explicitly described details which prevented identification as known phenomena.

Instead of being told that saucers were most often reported in the vicinity of airports, as Commander Boyd had correctly told the FBI, the CIA was told, incorrectly, that saucers were most frequently seen near Dayton, Ohio. The Blue Book personnel did not tell the CIA representative that whenever a pursuing jet tried to get close to a saucer it invariably would fade from view, nor did they tell the CIA that the interplanetary hypothesis was not being overlooked. Instead, as the CIA perceived it, the Air Force had officially taken a rigid stand against the idea of "Extraterrestrial Visitors."

Why would the Blue Book personnel do such a thing? We know from the FBI documents that at least some of the Top Brass at the Pentagon did not flatly deny that flying saucers could be ET visitors. We also know that there was a considerable amount of highly credible testimonial evidence available to the ATIC personnel to show that not all sightings could be explained as II (B) above. We also know that the hard core unexplained cases did not have "vague descriptions" which prevented identification. In fact, the Battelle Memorial Institute study was finding the opposite: the unexplained cases had lots of details that prevented identification as mundane objects. (Furthermore, Battelle discovered a year later that, on a statistical basis, the better sightings, with more details and more credible observers, were more difficult to explain. In fact, Battelle found that 38% of the best sightings by military witnesses were not explainable! The statistical data are presented in the Statistical Postscript at the end of this paper.) So, the question is, why did Project Blue Book misinform the CIA? Was it because the Blue Book staff really believed there was no ET evidence at all or was it to prevent the CIA from looking more deeply into the saucer problem and perhaps discovering something the Air Force wanted to keep secret?

Although the document contains some incorrect information it also provides some information not found elsewhere. It states that a geographical study showed that saucer sightings occurred more often at nuclear installations. This contradicts General Samford's statement to the press that there seemed to be no threatening pattern to saucer sightings.

UFOS AND THE SOVIET THREAT

The comment about the "publications designed for Soviet consumption" (the Soviet press) not having any saucer reports, while the U. S. press was full of them, was intended to indicate a disparity that could work to the advantage of the Soviets if there were an attack. The importance of this disparity is clarified in the last sentence which indicates that public reporting of saucers during an attack on the USA could be a "serious liability," whereas the Soviets would have no such liability. In fact, in the next few months this would develop into three fundamental worries of the CIA: (a) a large flux of saucer sightings, whether saucers were "real" or not, during a time of national emergency could have a negative psychological impact on the American people, (b) saucer reports could act as "decoy unknowns," diverting the limited number of defensive aircraft from protecting against attacking aircraft, which would initially also appear on radar sensors as "unknowns," and (c) a large flux of saucer reports could clog defense communications channels. (Such thinking may seem silly now, but in the 1950's there was a continuing fear of a surprise Soviet attack on the USA. There was a limited number of communication channels and a limited number of defensive aircraft.)

One more thing to note in the CIA document is the statement that individuals and groups that promoted saucer studies had been investigated to check on the possibility of subversive activity. The reference to groups being funded by an unknown source indicates that the CIA suspected that some saucer groups might actually be funded by the Soviets. Evidently the CIA did not know that the FBI had already looked for subversion and hadn't found any in 1947. However, in the 1950's both the CIA and the FBI did keep track of some saucer enthusiasts and groups. (Yes, Big Brother was taking care of us!)

By early September the CIA staff had collected enough information to make an informal report to the DCI. Dr. H. Marshall Chadwell, the Assistant Director for Scientific Intelligence reported, on Sept. 7, that the study had been undertaken to determine "whether or not adequate study and research is currently being directed to this problem in its relation to national security implications" and what further work should be carried out. He reported that the only work on the problem was that being done by The Air Technical Intelligence Center under the authority of the Air Force Directorate of Intelligence. Chadwell wrote,

OSI (Office of Scientific Intelligence within the CIA) entered into its inquiry fully aware that it was coming into a field already charged with partisanship, one in which objectivity had been overridden by numerous sensational writers, and one in which there are pressures for extravagant explanation as well as for oversimplification. The OSI Team consulted with a representative of the Air Force Special Studies Group (Possony); discussed the problem with those in charge of the Air Force Project at Wright Field (PBB); reviewed a considerable volume of intelligence reports; checked the Soviet press and

broadcast indices; and conferred with three OSI consultants, all leaders in their scientific fields, who were chosen because of their broad knowledge of the technical areas concerned.

OSI found that the ATIC study is probably valid if the purpose is limited to a case-by-case explanation. However, the study makes no attempt to solve the more fundamental aspect of the problem which is to determine definitely the nature of the various phenomena which are causing these sightings, or to discover means by which these causes and their visual or electronic effects may be immediately identified. Our consultant panel stated that these solutions would probably be found on the margins or just beyond the frontiers of our present knowledge in the fields of atmospheric, ionospheric, and extraterrestrial phenomena, with the added possibility that our present dispersal of nuclear waste water products might also be a factor.

The consultant panel recommended the formation of a study group to analyze the fundamental sighting information, determine what fundamental sciences would be involved and make recommendations for further study.

Dr. Chadwell then got to the heart of the problem from the national security point of view. First there was the psychological aspect. The CIA could find no mention of saucers in the Soviet media, so the Russians were not being "conditioned" to believe in saucers by the Russian press, which was saying nothing about saucers. In the USA, on the other hand, the recent continual press interest and "pressure of inquiry on the Air Force" indicated that a fair proportion of the population had been "mentally conditioned to the acceptance of the incredible. In this fact lies the potential for touching-off of mass hysteria and panic." In other words, if a nefarious group of individuals bent on destroying the United States were to start generating and publicizing spurious UFO reports the US citizens might panic.

The second national security aspect was air vulnerability. There was the possibility that a flux of saucer sightings at a time of air attack could cause the Air Force to divert precious hardware (airplanes!) to check out spurious unidentified saucers when they should be flying toward the unidentified aircraft. Dr. Chadwell suggested immediate steps should be taken to improve the methods of quickly identifying unknown objects or phenomena. He also suggested that US intelligence agencies should determine the level of Soviet knowledge about the phenomenon so we could defend ourselves against attempts by the Soviets to use their knowledge to our detriment, while at the same time using our knowledge of saucers to our advantage. By this he meant using saucer sightings as part of psychological warfare against the Soviets. Finally, he recommended that the National Security Council should direct the CIA to begin a study along the lines he outlined.

Dr. Chadwell's memorandum to the Director apparently met with some favor because in early October the recommendations were formalized and sent to the DCI. Chadwell's recommendations were:

- (a) That the Director of Central Intelligence advise the National Security Council of the implications of the 'flying saucer' problem and request that research be initiated.**
- (b) That the DCI discuss this subject with the Psychological Strategy Board**
- (c) That the CIA, with the cooperation of the Psychological Strategy Board and other interested departments and agencies, develop and recommend for adoption by the NSC a policy of public information which will minimize concern and possible panic resulting from the numerous sightings of unidentified objects.**

REPORTS THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

A draft proposal was written for presentation to the Intelligence Advisory Committee (IAC) and Secretary of Defense, Robert Lovett. On December 2, Dr. Chadwell summarized the situation regarding the

NSC directive and included in his memorandum to the DCI the following statement which indicates a level of concern that goes beyond what the Air Force had conveyed to the CIA months earlier. (Recall that the sighting and film by Delbert Newhouse was well known to the intelligence community by this time, as indicated by the late October FBI document discussed above.) Chadwell wrote:

Recent reports reaching the CIA indicated that further action was desirable and another briefing by the cognizant A-2 (air intelligence) and ATIC personnel was held on 25 November. At this time, the reports of incidents convince us that there is something going on that must have immediate attention. The details of some of these incidents have been discussed by AD/SI (Associate Director of the Scientific Intelligence Division) with DDCI (Deputy Director of the CIA). Sightings of unexplained objects at great altitudes and traveling at high speeds in the vicinity of major U.S. defense installations are of such nature that they are not attributable to natural phenomena or known types of aerial vehicles.

What was that? What did he say? Did he say that the sightings are “not attributable” to natural phenomena or man-made aircraft? **Yes, he did!** Well, that bad boy! *Could it be that he was convinced?*

He went on to say that OSI was about to establish a **“consulting group of sufficient competence and stature to review this matter and convince the responsible authorities in the community that immediate research and development on this subject must be undertaken.”** Notice that he expected the “consulting group” would be able to convince the “responsible authorities” to immediately undertake research on “this subject.” This statement gives the impression that Chadwell was quite certain the consulting group would conclude, as he apparently had, that saucers were real objects flying around U. S. defense installations and other locations.

By this time the numerical scope of the UFO sighting wave during 1952 was becoming apparent. To get a statistical overview of what had happened, consider the numbers of reports and the numbers of corresponding objects (according to SR14) for every month from July through December: July - 782 reports corresponding to 536 objects sighted; August - 397 reports of 326 objects; Sept. - 162 reports of 124 objects, Oct. - 92 of 61, Nov. - 67 of 50 and Dec. - 66 reports of 42 objects. Clearly something unusual had happened, with the maximum strangeness occurring in July and August. (Adding all the sightings of 1952 together gives a total of 1,905 reports of 1,501 objects sighted during the Year of the UFO!) And, as pointed out before, roughly 1/5 of these were unexplained (roughly 1/3 of the Excellent sightings was unexplained; see the Appendix.)

Chadwell's proposal was accepted and, on December 4, the IAC was briefed on the problem. Present at the meeting were representatives of the Air Force, the Army, the Navy, the Department of State and six representative from the CIA, including Dr. Chadwell. General Samford represented AFI. Also present was Mr. Meffert Kuhrtz, acting for the Assistant to the Director, FBI.

The CIA version of the minutes of the IAC meeting shows only that the IAC approved having the CIA set up a review of the available evidence and scientific theories. General Samford offered cooperation of the Air Force Intelligence, but any further investigation beyond what the Air Force was already doing would depend upon the result of the scientific study. Mr. Kuhrtz' report to the FBI, written December 5, provides a bit more information. It says that Dr. Chadwell talked about a theory of saucers that had been suggested by a German atomic scientist (name censored from the released document). He also said that a “recent” saucer sighting in Africa “presents some evidence that the ‘saucers’ are not a meteorological phenomena, which theory has been held to date by the Air Force.” Mr. Kuhrtz said that details of the African report were not given but that he would try to get the details from the Air Force. (There is no indication in the FBI file that he actually got any details on the South African sighting.) According to Kuhrtz's report, the IAC approved the idea of having a group of scientists study the sightings and try to identify the saucers. This would be carried out under CIA direction. The IAC would not get involved unless the scientists determined that the saucers were devices “under control of our enemy.” (Presumably, then, if ET's controlled the saucers and if ET's were not our enemy, then the IAC would not become involved.) On December 23, Mr. Kuhrtz reported the

CIA had information about an explosion in Africa that had been picked up on seismographs. There were reports "of unknown reliability" that associated the explosion with a flying saucer.

During December Dr. Chadwell wrote several memoranda which show that he was impressed by the Tremonton Utah (Delbert Newhouse) film and several other sightings. He also met with several scientists to brief them and get their opinions. Most of them agreed that the subject should be studied, but Chadwell's memoranda do not indicate they were enthusiastic about studying saucer sightings. Also during December and January (1953) the CIA and ATIC (under Capt. Ruppelt) prepared for the big meeting that would decide the fate of the CIA study of UFO investigations. The CIA asked Dr. H. P. Robertson, a distinguished scientist, formerly of Princeton and the California Institute of Technology, and a consultant to the CIA, to establish a panel of "top scientists and engineers in the fields of astrophysics, nuclear energy, electronics, etc., to review this situation." AFI and ATIC offered full support and Capt. Ruppelt and the Project Blue Book staff prepared a briefing for the scientists. Unfortunately, the Battelle study was nowhere near completion (it wouldn't be finished for about a year), so the complete statistical analyses were not available.

It would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that this meeting was the equivalent, for UFOs/saucers, of the Inquisition, perhaps with Dr. Robertson as an unwilling Torquemada. The idea that flying saucers might represent something truly unknown, such as interplanetary craft, was scientific "heresy" of the first order. And the result of this saucer inquisition was analogous to the result of most of the cases tried before the Inquisition: the guilty party was found guilty and "termination" was recommended.

The meeting convened on Wednesday, January 14, 1953. Attending were Dr. Robertson, Dr. Samuel Goudsmit (co-discoverer of electron spin), Dr. Luiz Alvarez (professor of physics; Nobel prize winner many years later) and Dr. Thornton Page (professor of astronomy). Two days later Dr. Lloyd Berkner (physicist; radar engineer) arrived in time for the closing sessions. The ATIC representatives had spent weeks preparing for this meeting but because of time limitations were only able to present in detail about two dozen of the sightings which they considered to be their best evidence. Although the Blue Book representatives had told the CIA in the summer that everything was explainable (so go away and leave us alone!), by the end of December it was apparent to the Blue Book staff that this was not so. Therefore the Blue Book presenters (Capt. Edward Ruppelt, Maj. Dewey Fournet) tried to convince the CIA panel that there were unexplainable sightings. Two of these were the Newhouse film and the Washington, D.C. sightings discussed before. Despite the excellent analyses by Fournet and the others, the panel of scientists, after a few hours of study, concluded that **"reasonable explanations could be suggested for most sightings and 'by deduction and scientific method it could be induced (given additional data) that other cases might be explained in a similar manner.'"** One particularly egregious example of their explanations was that "birds" explained Delbert Newhouse's film, which the ATIC had said couldn't be explained. The claim by the photographic analysts that the images were too bright to be reflections from birds was discounted. The visual sighting by Newhouse and his wife of pie-pan like objects before he started filming was not even mentioned!

Obviously these expert scientists did not get the full picture in their several day review of the five year phenomenon that had generated thousands of reports. Hence their conclusions were based on a lack of information and a lack of understanding combined with a natural bias against anything unusual that wouldn't fit their scientific "world view." A prime example of a faulty conclusion based on insufficient information was that of Dr. Thornton Page. He argued that saucers couldn't be ET craft because such craft wouldn't appear in only one country. Of course he was correct: they would show up all over the world. What he didn't know, and apparently no one told him, was that saucers had been seen all over the world. The CIA was well aware of this fact from their own world-wide information collection activities.

The panel concluded that, even though they were not "real," the saucers were a danger for the reasons already cited above. An enemy could use an existing saucer flap or create one with balloons or some other devices in order to swamp the communications channels with sighting reports while using the objects as decoys for the actual attacking aircraft. To reduce the danger the panel recommended stripping the saucers of their special status and starting a *program of education and "debunking"* or explaining so the general public would be better able to identify normal aerial objects and phenomena. The panel believed that, once the subject had been *sufficiently debunked, the general public would believe that all the sightings had been explained and so there would be less interest in reporting.*

LEGACY OF THE ROBERTSON PANEL

The legacy of the Robertson Panel was “debunking.” The RP was spawned by the impact of the great UFO flap of 1952 on the CIA. It is likely that without the flurry of sightings in July the CIA never would have taken an interest in the subject and the CIA would have never investigated Project Blue Book. But the flap did happen and the CIA decided that PBB was not doing a sufficient job in determining the cause. To the CIA it appeared as if all PBB was doing was filing reports as either explained or not explained and not offering an explanation as to why there were sighting reports in the first place. To the CIA it appeared that the problem demanded a more thorough investigation so it set up the Panel. Although the PBB representatives had told the CIA in the summer that everything was explainable, by the end of December it was apparent to the PBB staff that this was not so. Instead of trying to convince the Panel that everything was explainable, the PBB presenters concentrated on unexplainable sightings. In spite of the efforts of the BB staff, the panel, in a few hours of discussion, essentially decided that there was nothing of real substance to flying saucer reports and recommended “debunking” the whole subject so that the American people would ignore UFOs. This recommendation of the panel was not widely disseminated but it did have an effect. The first effect was that the CIA no longer requested a national security directive to set up an independent UFO project. Instead, the CIA left everything to the Air Force and PBB (so far as can be documented!) . The second effect was that, after Ruppelt left the Air Force, PBB resumed doing what it had been doing before the big flap: filing sightings as either explained or unexplained. In other words, whereas Ruppelt had upgraded the PBB research in 1952, the Robertson Panel effectively shut it down again. (Had the RP concluded that there really were unexplainable sightings, the history of the subject since 1953 would have been different.) There was one difference in the PBB approach to the subject after the RP: the explained sightings were publicized. (The unexplained were never publicized). Furthermore, in support of the “explain and debunk” policy, during 1953 the Air Force issued two new regulations which virtually guaranteed secrecy about saucer sightings by military people. These documents restricted information release to those sightings which had been explained and threatened a fine and prison term for military people who revealed the details of unexplained sightings.

In the months and years following the Robertson panel the number of reports to PBB fluctuated from roughly 500 to roughly 1,000 per year. PBB claimed that all but about 3% could be explained and asserted that even those could have been explained if more information had been available. However, there was no supporting evidence for the claim that the unexplained reports could be explained with more information. Instead, the only good information related to this claim contradicted it. That information came from the Battelle study, completed many months after the Robertson panel. The Battelle analysts discovered, as mentioned above, that the highest quality sightings with the most credible information were the *least likely to be explainable*. The most obvious example of well reported sightings came from on-duty military witnesses between 1947 and 1952. Of the 3,201 total reports that were analyzed, 1,226 came from military and 1,975 from civilian witnesses. Of the 718 military sighting reports rated as “Excellent” or “Good,” 232 or 32% (of 718) were listed as “unknown” (U) while only 2% of the reports were listed as having “Insufficient Information” (II) for evaluation. By way of comparison, of the 508 military sightings listed as “Doubtful” or “Door” (least well reported), “only” 24% were listed as “U” and but a larger percentage, 7%, were listed as “II”. Of the 660 civilian sighting reports rated as “E” or “G,” 24% were listed as “U” and 4% were listed as “II” whereas, of the 1315 “D” and “P” civilian sightings, only 14% were listed as “U” while 17% were listed as “II.” This sort of statistical result, with the better reports consistently having a higher fraction of unknowns and a lower fraction of indeterminate sightings (after careful analysis) than the poorer reports, is NOT what is expected if all reports were based on misidentified phenomena, hoaxes or delusions. Instead, this sort of statistical result is to be expected if witnesses were seeing and reporting real objects “out there.” Further statistical information is presented in the “Statistical Postscript.”

And what happened to the CIA? Insofar as can be determined from the released documents the agency essentially ignored the saucer phenomenon from then on. They collected some sightings from around the world and occasionally reviewed the situation, but never again did the agency officially take the same interest that was shown in the fall of 1952.

As pointed out above, the RP scientists provided their own explanations for the unexplained sightings discussed by PBB (e.g., seagulls for the Newhouse film) thereby negating the hundreds of hours of analysis expended by the PBB staff and photoanalysts (and the visual reports by Newhouse and his wife!). However, the CIA explanations did not convince the Blue Book staff. On January 23, 1953, about two weeks after the RP, the PBB staff briefed the Air Defense Command (ADC) on the status of UFO investigations. At this briefing the PBB personnel admitted in private what they would never say publicly. Based on a statistical breakdown of about 1,000 sightings received through military channels in 1952 the Blue Book staff concluded that (get this!) *only 11% of the reports could be **positively** identified*. These reports fell into the categories astronomical, balloons, aircraft, other and hoaxes. Most of the remaining “explained” sightings were labeled as “**probably** identified” (17%), “**possibly** identified” (29%). There was also a *separate category for sightings which were indeterminate* (23%). That is, they couldn’t make a definite decision as to whether or not these sightings were identifiable because of “insufficient information.” Finally, 20% were “unknown.” Considering that a large proportion of the sightings had been generated by ADC personnel (pilots, air traffic controllers, etc.) on duty at the times of their sightings, the ADC officials, who were in charge of protecting the USA from a Soviet attack, may have been sorely dismayed to learn how many sightings were not immediately identifiable. It is to be noted, by the way, that the low percentage of positive identifications was not public knowledge. Whenever public statements were issued regarding the percentages of unknowns and knowns, the possible, probable and positively identified sightings and insufficient information sightings were **all added together**, thereby creating a false statistic which claimed that the largest portion of sightings (roughly 80%) as identified. The Air Force, appealing to the “logic” of the situation (based on the assumption that there was no evidence to show saucers were real), would then claim that the unknown sightings could have been explained, too, if there had been more information about them. In other words, they essentially reclassified the unknowns as insufficient information even though there was a separate category for those indeterminate cases and the unknowns could have been placed into that category initially, if the analysts had thought there was not enough information for a clear decision for or against identification.

After learning what happened in 1952 one wonders just how many times the saucers would have to beat the Air Force over the head before it would admit they were real. Could it be that the people having delusions were not the witnesses but rather the Air Force intelligence experts who so desperately wanted to disbelieve the information which was pouring in from all over the United States... evidence that was right in front of their noses?

Or was this denial of evidence effectively orchestrated from above, from the Top of the military and government command structure in order to cover up something about flying saucers that certain government officials didn’t want people to know?

THE LEGACY OF 1952

The legacy of 1952 is a “tradition.” We live in the post-1952, post-Robertson Panel Era. At a time when, because of all the sightings, the public might well have been receptive to a positive statement from the Air Force, perhaps even expecting such a statement, the Air Force (General Samford) decided it was better to lie than to tell the truth: that many sightings could not be explained and “some military officials are seriously considering interplanetary ships.” Perhaps the authorities believed that the general population couldn’t “handle the truth.” But, for whatever reason, when the chips were down and saucers were flying in everyone’s face the Air Force stated that everything could be explained and there was no danger. This established once and for all the “tradition” that we have been living under ever since: there is nothing to “flying saucers” reports and all associated phenomena including photos, radar, abduction claims, etc.

EPILOGUE

In thinking back over all the events of that time period, with all the press publicity and news stories and theories about flying saucer/UFO sightings (which even relegated the Korean War to second page news in late July) and Hollywood movies [1951: The Day the Earth Stood Still, The Man from Planet X, The Thing;

1952: Red Planet Mars; 1953: Invaders from Mars, It Came from Outer Space, The War of the Worlds) I wonder, why didn't the world change? Why didn't nearly two thousand sightings over 3 summer months (and these are only the reports collected by the Air Force; there were probably many more sightings that were never reported) succeed in convincing everyone, Air Force included, that something truly strange was going on?

I think that the answer to this question is that the public statements by the Air Force, combined with the belief of the scientific community in general that the Air Force was doing a good investigation, resulted in the good, solid cases being essentially covered up. Few outside the Air Force knew that truly unexplainable sightings existed. At the same time, the natural tendency of the scientific community, the press and much of the general population was to reject, without absolute proof of its validity, the idea that any non-human intelligences could be flying around (this is the "self- cover- up"). The combination of these factors resulted in a general denial of the evidence, a denial that was canonized by General Samford on July 29, 1952.

It has long been my opinion that if we knew what really happened in the first 5 ½ years (June, 1947- December, 1952) we would know much or most of the "flying saucer story." However, during these years the Air Force established a "tradition" that UFO sightings were of nothing new, represented no danger, etc., and the press followed right along helping to solidify this tradition. Very few scientists had either the time or ability to access the raw data in order to form their own opinions and the sightings (raw data) were not discussed in science or technology journals, so the scientific community also generally agreed with the Air Force, helping to further establish the tradition. To a large extent this tradition is still with us preventing us from finding out what we would/could/should have known over 50 years ago!

We have wasted a lot of time trying to find "absolute proof," when sufficient evidence has been available since 1952. *Now it is time to wake up and figure out where we go from here!*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

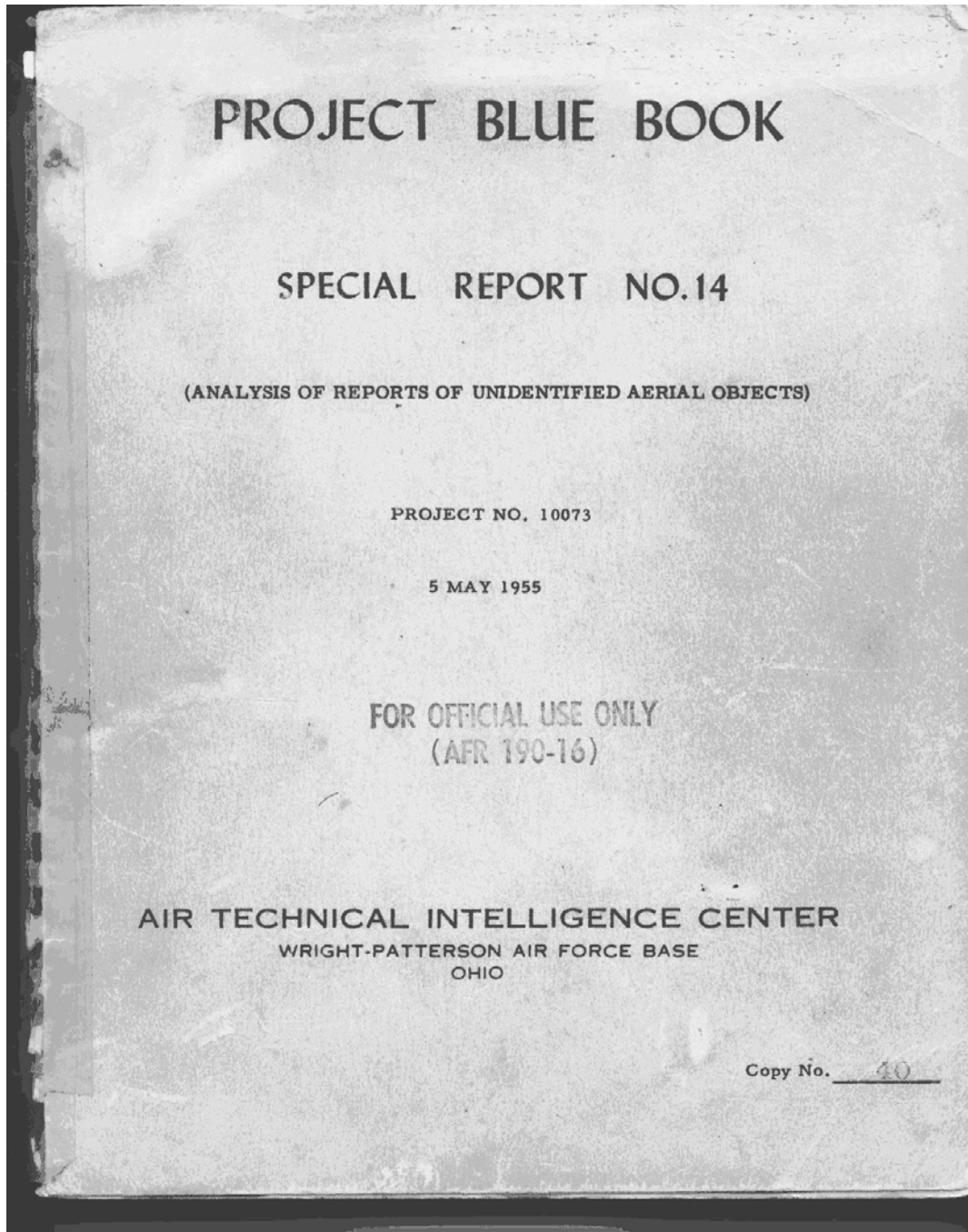
This article could not have been written without information from the following sources:

- The Air Force (Projects SIGN, GRUDGE, BLUE BOOK and the Air Force Office of Intelligence)
- Edward, J. Ruppelt's book *The REPORT ON UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS* (Avon, 1955) and the private notes that were not included in the published version of his book,
- The FBI, which (a) acted like a black hole for UFO data and (b) thoughtfully obeyed the direction of Congress to preserve all files at headquarters and (c) which, upon my request, disgorged itself of 1,600 pages of information (1977),
- The CIA which was forced, kicking and screaming, to divulge its secret UFO related activities of the early years (1978)
- Numerous newspapers which dutifully reported what common people, scientists and Air Force personnel were saying, whether it made any sense or not, and
- Loren Gross who, over the last 20 years or so, has compiled what is by far the most complete history of the early years of Ufology and who provided, within his publications, the newspaper clippings presented here.

Anyone who really wants to get a sense of the "Year of the UFO" and the preceding and following years should obtain the series of books by Loren E. Gross, Fremont, CA.

STATISTICAL POSTSCRIPT

The statistics for the years 1947 through 1952 are contained in Project Blue Book Special Report #14. This report made use of one of the first large computers to analyze UFO data. The Battelle and Air Force (ATIC) analysts started with about 4,000 reports from June 1947 through December 1952. They eliminated about 800 as being not sufficiently detailed for worthwhile analysis. The remaining 3,201 reports were analyzed according to sighting details and descriptions of the objects and according to the reliability and credibility of the observer(s).



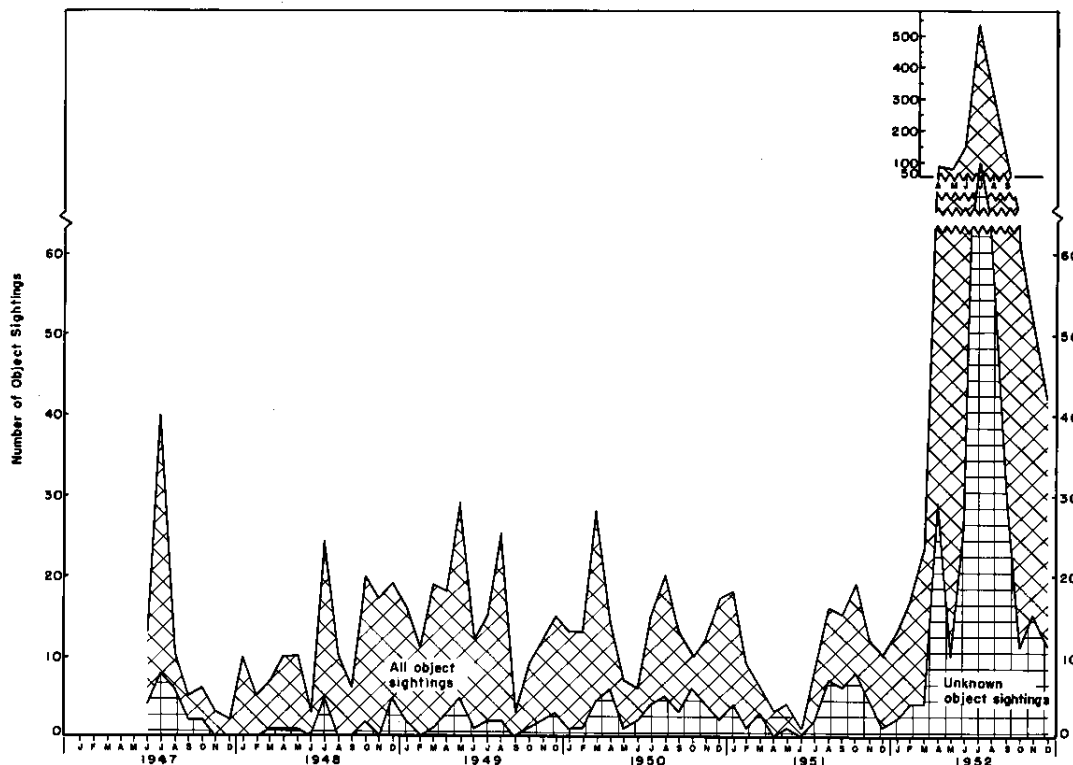


FIGURE 7 FREQUENCY OF OBJECT SIGHTINGS AND UNKNOWN OBJECT EVALUATIONS BY MONTHS,
1947-1952

C-7485

There are 240 statistical tables and about 30 graphical depictions of the data in this 1955 publication. One on these shows how object sightings varied with time. In order to understand these graphs it is necessary to know the definitions of "object" sightings and "all" sightings. "All Sightings" refers to reports made by individual witnesses, whereas "Object Sightings" refers to the number of objects seen. Because there often is more than one witness, the number of "all sightings" exceeds the number of "object sightings." (There is another definition also, "Unit Sightings" which is sort of an intermediate category.) Thus, there were 3,201 sightings reports which make up the category, "All Sightings," and the analysts concluded that these 3,201 witnesses saw 2,199 objects.

In the above Figure 7 from the report we see the number of "Object Sightings" as a function of time, month by month, for the 5 1/2 years. Note that the vertical scale is sixty sightings per month, which is satisfactory for representing the sighting variations until 1952, when the number per month reached over 500 in July (hence the break in the vertical peak. Note carefully that there are two graphs here: all Object Sightings (a total of 2,199, corresponding to 3,201 reports) and Unknown Object Sightings (a total of 434, corresponding to 689 reports).

The Battelle investigators placed sighting reports into three basic categories: Known (K), Insufficient Information (I.I.) and Unknown (U). The K category was, itself, divided into various explanations categories such as astronomical, (man-made) aircraft, weather related and other natural phenomena. Insufficient Information was a category by itself for sighting reports that were not sufficiently detailed to allow a decision that it was either definitely or probably identifiable or definitely not identifiable. The presence of this category is important because, as the report emphasizes, that means that the U sightings were not simply sightings

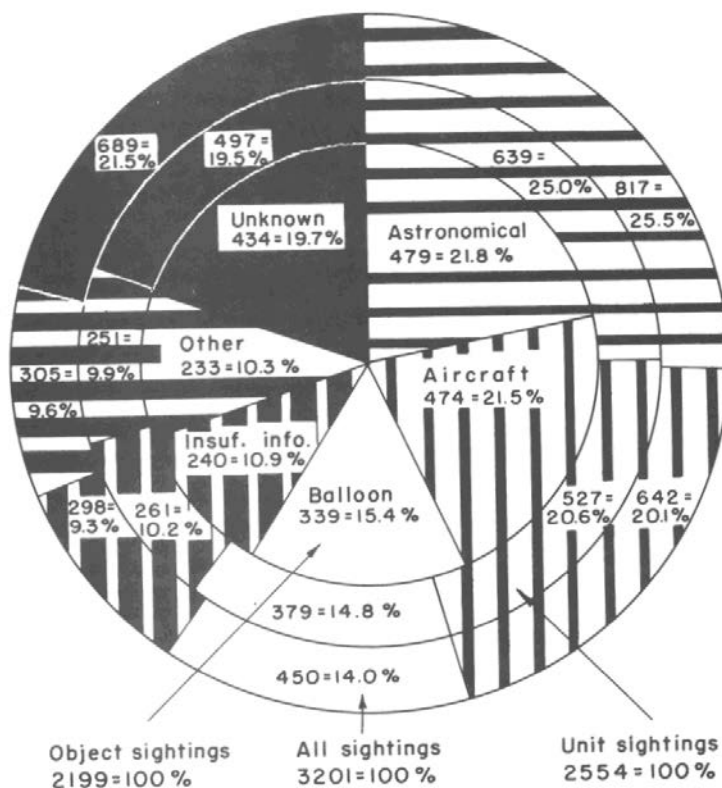
without enough information for identification. Rather, the U sightings contained some details that prevented identification as a known phenomenon.

The overall statistics for the five years of sighting data are presented in the pie graph below. The outer annulus is for "All Sightings," the inner circle is for "Object Sightings" and the "Unit sightings" lie in between. Not that, rather than grouping all the explanations together as Known, the data for the Knowns are presented as classes of explanation (astronomical, aircraft, balloons and other). Also segregated out are the Insufficient Information cases and the Unknown.

SPECIAL REPORT #14

FIGURE 2

Statistical Summary



From the chart it is easy to see that 689 reports ("All Sightings"; 21.5% of the reports) corresponded, in the opinion of the investigators, to sightings of 434 objects ("Unknown"; 19.7% of the objects). This large percentage of unknown cases was not reported to the press when SR14 was published, with a restricted circulation, in 1955 (at the same time as Ruppelt's book; possibly an attempt to counteract the effects of his rather positive history of the Project Blue Book?). The so-called "Summary" of the report was used as the press release. It did not state the summarized statistics for 1947 – 1952, but rather referred to the statistics for the 3 years that followed 1952 and emphasized that *after 1952 the percent unknown was less than 10%*. In other words, the press release did not inform the American people about what actually appears in the report (in data table A-1): 1947 – 24% of 117 reports ("All Sightings") were U; 1948 – 13% of 205 were U; 1949 – 14% of 395 were U; 1950 – 23% of 305 were U; 1951 – 32% of 160 were U; and 1952 – 23% of 2018 reports were unknown. In other words, except for 1948 and 1949, over 1/5 of the sighting reports was

unexplained. *This is an astounding percentage incorrect reports, if there was actually nothing new and novel being seen!* On the other hand, if there really was some new phenomenon flying around, possibly even "interplanetary craft," then this is understandable.

With regard to the quality of the sighting reports, the Battelle investigators divided the Object reports into four classes: Excellent (E), Good (G), Doubtful (D) and Poor (P). The Excellent reports (Objects) were made by the most qualified observers who had sufficient time to make good observations and presented a self-consistent report with many details. By contrast the Poor reports (Objects) were those for which the observer was inexperienced and the report itself was lacking detail or was not totally self-consistent. The Good and Doubtful cases fell in between. The chart below illustrate the very surprising (if there were no true UFOs flying around) result that the better quality the UFO report the more likely it was to be unexplainable.

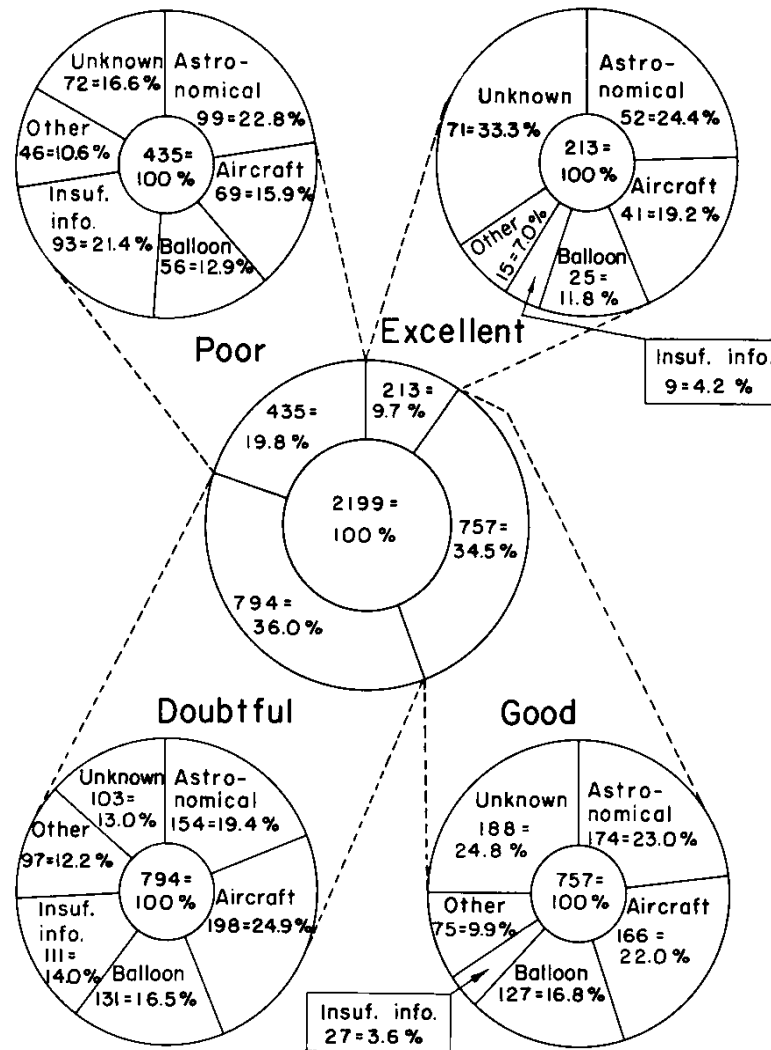


FIGURE 8 DISTRIBUTION OF OBJECT SIGHTINGS BY SIGHTING RELIABILITY GROUPS WITH EVALUATION DISTRIBUTIONS FOR EACH GROUP

The key result regarding sighting reliability and quality is most easily seen by comparing the top two pie charts in the above picture. Note that for the Poor Object sightings, 16.6 % were Unknown and 21.4% had Insufficient Information with the rest (63%) being explained. However, for the Excellent Object sightings, a surprisingly large 33.3% were Unknown and only 4.2% had Insufficient Information (with, again, about 63%

explained). The low number of I.I. sightings in the Excellent group is logical, since the best observers tend to provide the most credible information. The result presented above is consistent with the hypothesis that credible observers have rather accurately reported seeing incredible objects. The alternative hypothesis, that that credible observers have made the most mistakes in observation, leading to the largest fraction of Unknown sightings, contradicts the defined meaning of the "Excellent" classification. This fact of the data is further emphasized in the next chart which shows the breakout of military vs. civilian sightings. Many of the military sightings were by witnesses on duty at the time of the sighting. Note that this is based on "All Sightings" rather than "Object Sightings."

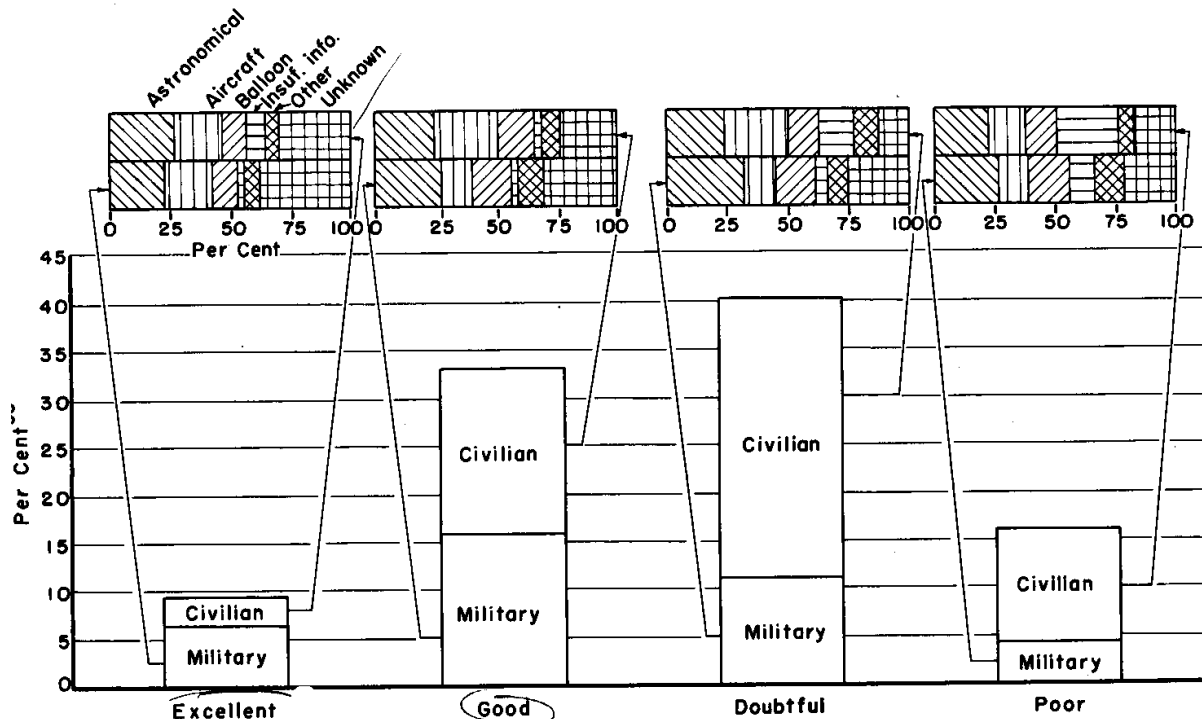


FIGURE 10 DISTRIBUTION OF ALL SIGHTINGS BY SIGHTING RELIABILITY GROUPS. SEGREGATED BY MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OBSERVERS WITH EVALUATION DISTRIBUTION FOR EACH SEGREGATION

A-7488

Although it is difficult to determine from the above chart, the data table (Table A58) in the Appendix of SR14 shows that fully 37.7% of the Excellent military sightings were listed as Unknown, whereas "only" 29.8% of the Excellent civilian sightings were Unknown. One can also see that most of the Excellent and Good reports were made by military observers, whereas most of the Doubtful and Poor sighting reports were made by civilian observers.

Special Report #14 also presented numerous statistical comparisons between the characteristics of the Knowns and the Unknowns, such as color, sighting duration, environment of witness (indoor, outdoor, in car, in plane, etc.), number of objects per sighting, shape, brightness and speed. Although one can argue over whether or not the types of comparisons they made were appropriate to the data, the fact is that they found statistical differences, not large, but clear differences, between the Knowns and the Unknowns, differences that were not reported in the Summary and hence were not told to the press.

The above statistics cannot be compared directly with the official "UFO FACT SHEET" published in 1970 after Blue Book Closed. This summary provides a list of the "TOTAL SIGHTINGS" and "UNIDENTIFIED" for each year from 1947 through 1969. The numbers of TOTAL SIGHTINGS and UNIDENTIFIED for the first five years are, respectively: 1947 – 122 sightings, 12 unidentified; 1948 – 156 sightings, 7 unidentified; 1949 – 186 sightings, 22 unidentified; 1950 – 210 sightings, 27 unidentified; 1951 – 169 sightings, 22 unidentified; and 1952 – 1,501 sightings, 303 unidentified. Comparison of these numbers

with the SR14 tabulated data shows that these are what SR14 calls the "Object Sightings" for the first five years. Thus one might assume that the numbers listed for the remaining years (1953 – 1969) are also numbers of objects sighted and the number of objects unexplained.

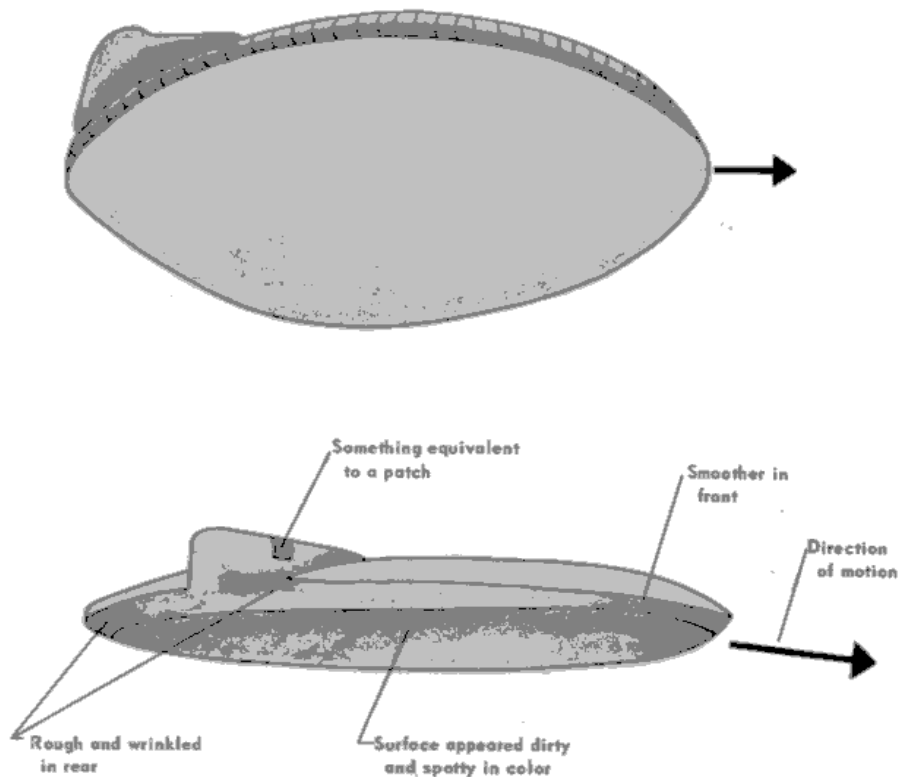
APPENDIX

The Rogue River Sighting

This was one of the sightings chosen by the Battelle investigators to include in the list of the 12 best sightings between 1947 and the end of 1952. It is presented in greatly summarized form in SR14.

Case X (Serial 1119.00)

An employee in the supersonic laboratory of an aeronautical laboratory and some other employees of this lab, were by a river, 2-1/2 miles from its mouth, when they saw an object. The time was about 1700 hours on May 24, 1949. The object was reflecting sunlight when observed by naked eye. However, he then looked at it with 8-power binoculars, at which time there was no glare. (Did glasses have filter?) It was of metallic construction and was seen with good enough resolution to show that the skin was dirty. It moved off in horizontal flight at a gradually increasing rate of speed, until it seemed to approach the speed of a jet before it disappeared. No propulsion was apparent. Time of observation was 2-1/2 to 3 minutes.



The above page from SR14 is the only information that was available when I began searching through the Blue Book microfilm record for the original documents describing the investigation of this case. The microfilm record contains the files of Project Blue Book and also the UFO investigation cases carried out by the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI). The AFOSI section of the microfilm is separated from the BB section.

In order to recover the details of this sighting I searched (in 1975-1976) the BB section of the microfilm file of Project Blue Book (BB). (The 92 rolls of microfilm can be read at or purchased from the National Archives in College Park, MD.) At the beginning of the BB section of the microfilm file (roll 1) there is a table of contents which lists the approximately 12,618 (object) sighting reports in chronological order. In the table of contents list are two reports dated May 24, 1949 (see the paragraph in the above page from SR14). These appear in the following manner, along with all other sightings: Date, Location, Observer and Evaluation. For 24 May 1949 one finds the following:

Date	Location	Observer*	Evaluation**

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24	Rogue River, Bend, Oregon (missing***)	XXXXXXX Multiple	Other (kites)
24	Rogue River, Oregon	XXXXXXX	Aircraft

NOTES:

*If a witness' name was listed it was crossed out before the microfilm copy was made. The XXXXX's preceding the word "Multiple" is the X'ed out name of one of the witnesses.

** The "evaluation" is the official explanation according to the Project Grudge staff. This evaluation was certainly not binding on the Battelle investigators. Note that the two sightings have different explanations, "kites" and "aircraft."

*** The word "missing" is handwritten indicating that sometime before the sighting list was made, records of the investigation had been removed from the Blue Book file. There is no way of knowing when this occurred, although it probably was during or after the Battelle study. Nor is there any way of determining who or what organization might have taken the files. Only persons with Secret clearance or higher were allowed to take original case file information.

REPORT MISSING?

As indicated in the table of contents list, the information on the multiple witness sighting of that date is missing from the BB section the microfilm file record. The information on the single observer sighting evaluated as "aircraft" is not missing, however.

The fact that there were two cases listed for the same day and the same location posed a question: which case should be identified as the sighting referred to in SR14? Without further information to go on, I initially assumed the multiple witness sighting, for which there were no records in the BB section of the microfilm, was the sighting referred to in SR14. The record of the other sighting stated the time as "approximately 1700 hours" and the location given was 1 1/2 miles up the Rogue River from (i.e., east of) Gold Beach, Oregon. This distance would be about 2 1/2 miles from the mouth of the river where it empties into the Pacific Ocean, the distance given by SR14 (see above). Because of the coincidence in time and place of the two sightings it seemed that the second sighting was an independent sighting of the same object as reported in the first listed sighting. But if that were true, it would mean that the object had been identified

as both "kites" and "aircraft," although neither of these looked like the object in the illustrations. If these cases referred to the same sighting of a single object, how could the identifications be so widely diverse?

THE "AIRCRAFT" SIGHTING"

The BB file on the second sighting contains a copy of an OSI interview of a lady who lived in Gold Beach. (Note: in previous writing on this case I have used Mrs. A because the name was crossed out in the Blue Book/AFOSI microfilm that was available from the National Archives. Even with new information – see below – the name is not known for certain. It might be Elizabeth McBeth.) In her interview, she stated

"At approximately 1700 hours, 24 May 1949, she and four other persons, while fishing on the Rogue River near Elephant Rock, approximately 1 1/2 miles above the highway bridge near Gold Beach, Oregon, sighted an object described as being round in shape, silver in color, and about the size of a C-47 aircraft. When first brought to Mrs. A's attention by one of the other witnesses, the object appeared to be three or four miles away. It was coming from the east, but later turned to the southwest. It appeared to be traveling at the same rate of speed as a C-47. It made no noise, left no exhaust trail, and made no maneuvers. The interviewee stated that she was not familiar with aircraft; therefore, she could not estimate with any accuracy the speed or altitude at which the object was traveling. Mrs. A made the comparison between the object and a C-47 because she is familiar with that type of aircraft; her son has pointed out C-47S as they flew over Gold Beach. "

This interview of Mrs. A was carried out on August 8, 1949 by Special Agent R. Hauser. The BB case index card, which includes a short summary of the case, states the following conclusion (or evaluation): "No data presented to indicate object could NOT have been an aircraft." Evidently the Air Force Project Grudge analysts paid no attention to the her claim that the object was "round in shape."

Although the sighting time and the rough description of the object seen by Mrs. A matches the time and general description of the sighting reported in SR14, there is no way to positively connect these two reports from the evidence in the BB section of the microfilm file.

What about the missing case? The only other possible source for information was the AFOSI section of the microfilm file. However, this section is not in chronological order. Hence I had to search through hundreds of sighting investigations reported in the OSI section. I spent many hours during several days reading these investigations and had just about given up on the hope of finding any information on the missing sighting when I started reading a report that seemed familiar. Then after reading the first interview in the report I knew I had found what I was looking for: the original interviews of all the witnesses, including Mrs. A. The information in the OSI section of the microfilm file shows that the two sightings should be combined into a single report of a multiple witness observation. Furthermore, the OSI file establishes the high credibility of this case and shows that the this case should have been categorized by the Project Grudge staff as Unidentified, not as "kites."

THE "LOST" INFORMATION

The first report of this sighting was made about 20 days after the sighting, on or just before June 14, 1949, to the Security Officer of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics at Moffett Field in California. This officer requested an investigation, which was subsequently carried out by OSI Special Agent C.E. Brooks and others during the following months. On June 24, a month after the sighting, Agent Brooks interviewed Mr. Gilbert Rivera. (Note: the name is deleted in the censored version of the Blue Book/AFOSI microfilm file. When this was first written in the late 1970's I referred to this witness as Mr. B. Other witnesses were

referred to as Mrs. A, Mr. D and Mrs. D. In 2006 I was informed of a microfilm version at www.bluebookarchive.org that contains the name of the witnesses. These documents are, however, very hard to read and leave uncertain the names of two lady witnesses.) Mr. Rivera worked in the Drafting Section of the National Advisory Committee, Ames Laboratory, Moffett Field. This report of this interview follows:

"On Tuesday, 24 May 1949, at 1700 P.S.T., Mr. Rivera and four other persons, while fishing two miles upstream from the mouth of the Rogue River, at approximately the same direction and distance from the town of Gold Beach, Oregon, sighted an object which is described as follows: when first sighted it appeared to be a glitter about four miles away laterally, at some 5000 feet above the ground which, at that point, was at sea level or approximately so. The object was then examined through a pair of 8-power, Navy- type binoculars. Observation time about 90- 120 seconds. Object appeared round and shiny, something like a 50-cent piece, viewed from below and to one side. Object's color was silvery and it appeared round in plan view. The object seemed to be solid with no visible openings and was about 30 feet in diameter, as nearly as could be judged. Just before Mr. Rivera handed the glasses to Mr. Don Heaphy the object made a turn on its vertical axis with no tilting or banking and started to move in a southeasterly direction. There was no sign of exhaust or propeller; no driving force could be seen or felt, and no sound was heard. The object at no time contacted earth or came any closer than 5000 feet, approximately, to the earth, and when last seen was disappearing in a southeasterly direction, accelerating to an approximate speed of a jet plane. There were no protuberances other than a slight fin which seemed to start amidship and come back flush with the trailing edge viewed as the ship drifted. No radio antenna or windows, portholes, or any other protuberances, gaps, or openings were visible. The only landmark near the sighting point was a rock formation locally known as Elephant Rock, approximately 700 yards northeast of the boat in which Mr. Rivera and party were anchored."

On June 24, Agent Brooks also interviewed Mr. Don Heaphy who operated a 1-by-3 foot supersonic wind tunnel at Ames Laboratory. This interview revealed the following information:

"On 24 May 1949, at 1700 P.S.T., approximately two to two and a half miles upstream from the mouth of the Rogue River, in a boat anchored approximately midstream, about the same distance east of the town of Gold Beach, Oregon, an object was sighted about 5000 feet above the ground in a direction approximately 60 degrees clockwise from north. Object appeared to be about one or two miles away. Mr. Heaphy observed the object about 30 seconds with the naked eye at which time he could see only a bright glitter, like a round mirror standing on edge with no apparent motion. Just as the object began to move, Mr. Rivera handed Mr. Heaphy a pair of 8-power, Navy-type binoculars through which Mr. Heaphy viewed the object. With the binoculars, the object resolved into a pancake-like shape, somewhat thicker in the center than the edges, perfectly flat on the bottom with a small fin or vane arising about midship and growing gradually higher to the rear, ending flush with a trailing edge as the object traveled. Flat surface was parallel to the earth. The object appeared to be made of aluminum or some other shiny metal, and while it appeared to be oval, it could have been perfectly round in plan section. There appeared to be no opening or protuberance of any sort other than the fin already

described. Object appeared to be roughly 25 to 30 feet in diameter. It was traveling in a southeasterly direction, about 170 degrees clockwise from north. It executed no maneuvers; no lights, no propellers, no landing gear, or any method of propulsion could be seen or heard. There were no clouds and the sun was at Mr. Heaphy's back at the time of the sighting. The trailing edge of the object as it traveled appeared to be somewhat wrinkled and dirty looking. Mr. Heaphy ventured that these might have been vents but he said he could not see them well enough to say for sure. With Mr. Rivera and Mr. Heaphy in the boat at the time of the sighting was (the other witnesses).

Note: Mr. Rivera and Mr. Heaphy stated their attention was drawn to the object by its glittering as at the time they were engaged in looking upstream to see if they could spot any feeding fish on the surface. It appeared to this agent that Mr. Rivera was a very reliable person, not at all easily excited, in fact, prone to be rather blase or indifferent. Mr. Heaphy appeared to be a sober, well-rounded person, very mature and not easily swayed by someone else's opinion."

SIGNED STATEMENTS!

Agent Brooks was not satisfied with the information in the above "casual interviews" that were made at the work locations of the witnesses. Therefore, on August 2, 1949, he obtained the following signed statements from the witnesses:

On 2 August 1949, Mr. Gilbert Rivera, Moffett Field, signed the following statement:

"On 24 May 1949, at approximately 5:00 p.m., while fishing with several friends about two and a half miles up the Rogue River from Gold Beach, Oregon, my attention was drawn to an object in the sky by Mr. Roy McBeth, one of the members of the party. To the naked eye this object appeared circular and standing on edge. I then focused a pair of 8-power, Navy-type binoculars and saw that it was indeed circular and that we appeared to be looking upward at the bottom side of it. As nearly as possible to tell, the object appeared about 5000 feet in altitude, and not more than a mile away. When I first observed it, object was moving very slowly. As I put the glasses on, it made a turn to the south, with no banking or leaning, and picked up speed. I then handed the glasses to Mr. Heaphy in order that he might see the object. Observed through the glasses, the object appeared to be made of silvery metal, either completely circular or somewhat oval. It was thin near the edges and thicker in the center. A triangular fin appeared to arise amidship and extended to the trailing end of the object viewed as it traveled. There were no openings visible and no sound was heard. There appeared to be no engines or motors, no landing gear, no other protruding parts other than the fin already described. The object was in sight for approximately one (1) minute. Sun was at our backs and there were no clouds."

On 2 August 1949, Mr. Don Heaphy, Moffett Field, California, signed the following statement:

"While fishing with a party of friends about two and a half miles up the Rogue River from its mouth at Gold Beach, Oregon, at approximately 5:00 p.m., 24 May 1949, my attention was called to

an object in the sky. The object was to the east of us about one (1) mile, at approximately 5000 feet altitude. With the naked eye, little but a glare and a silvery glint could be seen. But after watching it for approximately one minute and a half, I was handed a pair of 8- power binoculars by Mr. Gilbert Rivera. It was then possible to see that the object was roughly circular in shape and appeared to be 30 to 35 feet in diameter. It had somewhat the cross-sectional appearance of a pancake, being thicker in the center than at the edges. A small triangular fin started in the middle and grew gradually higher to the rear as the object traveled. When first sighted, it was moving very slowly. As I watched it through the glasses, it picked up speed and when it vanished from sight approximately 90 seconds later, it was traveling as fast or faster than a jet plane. As far as could be seen, it had no openings or protuberances of any kind other than the fin, and there was neither sight nor sound of any driving force. It was a clear day and no clouds in the sky, and the sun was at our backs as we watched the object which vanished in a southeasterly direction, mostly south."

Agent Brooks also obtained statements from six other people who had known one or the other of the witnesses for periods of time ranging from several months to several years. These character references concluded with statements such as "inclined to take seriously any statement Mr. Don Heaphy might make," "inclined to place considerable reliability in anything Mr. Gilbert Rivera might have to say," etc. The above interviews and signed testimonials were obtained by Agent Brooks at Moffett Field and Sunnyvale, California, on August 2, 1949.

Several days previously, July 26, 1949, in a completely separate interview, Agent T.H. Kelley obtained the following signed statements from Mr. and Mrs. Roy McBeth. of Lone, California:

Mr. McBeth: "During the latter part of May 1949, at approximately 1630 in the afternoon, while fishing in a boat on the Rogue River near Gold Beach, Oregon, together with [names of other witnesses] and my wife, my attention was attracted by a silvery object in the sky, traveling at a height of approximately 5000 feet in a southerly direction. The object, circular in formation as a silver dollar, traveled without sound at a speed greater than a high speed or jet plane. Mr. Rivera and Mr. Heaphy used a binocular to view the object, which was visible to the naked eye for approximately two minutes. Not using binoculars, I could not make out any irregularities of formation, or whether the object had a motor or motors, landing gear, or other items usually connected with a plane. It had no appearance of the conventional plane but in size would be of the diameter of the fuselage length of the DC-3 plane. I have fished in the general area a number of years and have observed various type planes flying in this area, but have never observed anything of this nature before."

(Note: 1630 is 4:30 PM.)

(Mrs. McBeth) "While on vacation near Gold Beach, Oregon, during the latter part of May 1949, and while fishing from a boat in the Rogue River in the late afternoon, my husband, Mr. McBeth, called the attention of the group to a silver object, circular in shape, crossing the sky at a high attitude and at a high rate of speed. I could not estimate its height and its size was as large as a large passenger plane

though shaped like a shiny circular disk. No sound was heard and it crossed our range of vision in two or three minutes. The day had been clear, visibility was good, and the sun was just setting. Other occupants of the party who observed the object were [names of the other witnesses] and my husband. There was no sound and the object traveled on a direct course."

CASE CLOSED

Several days after Agent Brooks obtained the signed statements from Mr. Rivera and Mr. Heaphy, he compiled the documents he had so far received and sent copies to the OSI headquarters, several other places, and to Wright- Patterson AFB, the headquarters of Project Grudge. He marked his file "closed," even though he had not at that time obtained a statement from the first witness (lady) as given above..

Several days later, on August 8, Agent Hauser interviewed Mrs. A in Gold Beach, obtaining the information presented above. Although this interview was subsequently included in the file compiled by Agent Brooks (and is to be now seen on the OSI section of the microfilm files), the Project Grudge investigators didn't realize the connection between the sighting of Mr. Rivera, Mr. Heaphy, and Mr. and Mrs. McBeth, and that of Mrs. A, even though the estimated times were the same (about 5:00 PM hours) and the locations were virtually identical (near Elephant Rock in the Rogue River, Oregon)!!

Thus, in the BB section of the microfilm file these two cases should be combined into one, and moreover, the identifications should be deleted: it certainly couldn't have been both an "aircraft" and a "kite." But the question arises, how did those identifications come about?

It is clear how the Project Grudge analysts explained the sighting by Mrs. A. Because she was a self-admitted, inexperienced observer, they simply ignored her claim that object was circular and then claimed that she had provided no information that would contradict the "Aircraft" explanation. Hence, it was an aircraft. The origin of the "kites" explanation was, however, a bit more complicated.

CASE RE-OPENED

During his investigation, Agent Brooks compiled the following supplementary information:

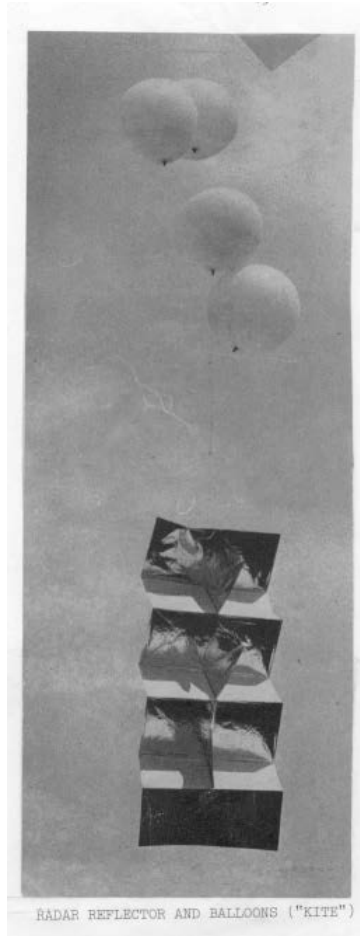
- 1) the (low altitude) weather charts for the area indicated the coast was clear on the date of the sighting;
- 2) the San Francisco Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA), the Oakland Airport, and the San Francisco Airport all agreed that there were many local carriers (about 160) that could have flown over the Gold Beach area but that less than 1% of these file flight plans, so it would be useless to try to locate a flight that could account for the sighting;
- 3) the Sixth Army and the Twelfth Naval District Intelligence did not possess radar installations near enough or powerful enough to have recorded anything at Gold Beach at that time;
- 4) the Air Force Early Warning Radar Stations in the Bay Area were not powerful enough to reach as far north as Gold Beach and these stations did not report anything as unidentified on the date of the sighting;
- 5) the 505th Aircraft Control and Warning Group at Silver Lake, Washington, did not have Gold Beach under radar coverage.

Of all the above listed supplementary information, the only part of direct interest, since there was evidently no radar coverage, is the confirmation of the witnesses' claim that the weather was clear. However, Agent Brooks did dig up an interesting bit of information which led to the "*final identification*," accepted by Project Grudge.

Quoting Brooks' report:

"On August 2, 1949, Air Force said that radar installations at Treasure Island and the military reservation at Fort Baker, both in the San Francisco area, send aloft radar testing devices known as "kites" twice each day, at around 1000 and 1600. These devices are of aluminum sheet, approximately five feet on a side, roughly diamond-shaped and containing a double set of triangular fins on the top side. These are carried aloft by gas-filled balloons approximately two feet in diameter when they leave the earth. When these devices reach high enough altitude, the expanding gases cause the balloons to burst and the devices known as "kites" fold and drift earthward. It is possible that one of these "kites" may have blown as far north as Gold Beach, Oregon on 24 May, 1949."
(Note: 1000 is 10:00 AM and 1600 is 4:00 PM.)

This is an "amusing" identification when one compares a "radar kite" with the object observed by the five witnesses.



Apparently the Project Grudge staff was willing to accept the "possibility" that one of these devices could have drifted northward, a distance of about 340 miles, on May 24, 1949 and that the witnesses could have mistaken the balloons and radar reflector for a pancake shaped object! (This has to be one of the most egregiously incorrect identifications made by the Grudge staff.)

Typical balloon ascension rates put a balloon at bursting altitude within an hour after launch. In order for the balloon launched at 4:00 PM to reach Gold Beach, about 340 miles north-northwest of San Francisco, by 5:00 PM, it would have to travel at about 340 miles per hour north-northwestward. In order for the balloon launched at 10:00 AM to reach the sighting location by 5:00 PM it would have to fail to burst after reaching its intended altitude and then it would have to travel steadily at almost 50 mph northwestward. Of course, if a balloon launched on a previous day had reached Gold Beach (without bursting and without leaking sufficiently to drop to the ground), its required average speed would have been much lower.

Hence, in order to accept the "kites" explanation the Grudge investigators had to assume that the balloons had not burst within an hour and also had to ignore the clear statements of four witnesses, two of whom used binoculars, that the object was circular. The investigators also had to assume that the witnesses did "not notice" that the object was suspended by balloons and they had to ignore the witness' claim that the object departed at the speed of a jet.

(Note: the statement that the radar kites were carried aloft by two-foot diameter balloons combined with data on balloon lifting capabilities (about 0.07 lb/ft³), we can calculate that the radar reflector or "corner cube" weighed about 0.3 lbs. An object of this weight could not remain above ground without support, so if such a kite reached the Rogue River, it would have to be supported by the balloons for the whole distance. The balloon would keep the kite at a high altitude (over 30,000 ft), assuming the balloon did not burst, unless it had a slow leak. Thus, in order for such a kite to have been low enough to be seen over the Rogue River, we have to assume that it was carried by one or more leaky balloons. Of course, the balloon(s) would be visible if the kite were visible since they were of comparable dimensions. The fact that the witnesses did not mention seeing anything above the unknown object provides another argument against the radar kite hypothesis.)

CASE ...UNIDENTIFIED!

There is yet a further reason to reject the "kites" conclusion, and this is based on the available weather records for May 23 and 24, 1949. The information contained in those records would have been available to the Air Force investigator, had he thought to check, but he apparently was satisfied with his proposed solution and, I guess, didn't feel the need to "check it out." (This is the problem with much of the skeptical explaining and "debunking" of UFO sightings: the skeptic proposes a solution and leaves it at that, without testing the explanation against all the available information about the sighting. see "PROSAIC EXPLANATIONS: THE FAILURE OF UFO SKEPTICISM" at http://brumac.8k.com/prosaic_1.html) About 27 years after Agent Brooks closed his file on the Rogue River sighting I completed his investigation by "checking it out."

The suggestion that the witnesses saw a radar kite launched in San Francisco presupposes that the wind directions and speeds at balloon altitudes were sufficient to transport the kite to the Rogue River area. To check this I obtained upper altitude data from reporting stations at Medford, Oregon (about 80 miles east of Gold Beach), and Oakland, California, from the National Weather Center in Asheville, North Carolina. The upper altitude data showed no winds as high as 50 mph, so even the radar kite launched at 10:00 AM on May 24 could not have made it to Gold Beach in time for the sighting. What about a kite launched the previous day? The weather records showed that during that latter part of May 23 and all day May 24 the prevailing upper altitude winds were from the west and northwest, with occasional winds from the southwest at various altitudes and times. Therefore, even if a balloon and kite could have remained in the air long enough to cover the 340 miles from San Francisco, they would have been blown generally eastward or inland rather than northward or along the coast. Hence on all counts the "kites" explanation must be ruled out.

NEW OLD INFORMATION

About twenty years after I completed my investigation of this case in the late 1970's another document became available, this from the files of Air Force Intelligence. The new information is the original Air Intelligence Information Report made by witness Mr. Don Heaphy. This document answers the question, how did the Battelle investigators derive the sketches which are in SR14 but NOT in the BB microfilm file? Then in 2006 I was informed about the existence of an uncensored version of the AFOSI file which gives the names of the witnesses. It is too bad that these names were not available in the 1970's when they witnesses could have been interviewed.

AF FORM 112—PART I
APPROVED 1 JUNE 1948

CLASSIFICATION

COUNTRY

REPORT NO.

CLASSIFICATION

AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

SUBJECT

Unconventional Aircraft

AREA REPORTED ON

Fourth Air Force

FROM (Agency) Security Officer, Nat Advisory Comm
for Aeronautics, Moffett Field, Calif

DATE OF REPORT

14 June 1949

DATE OF INFORMATION

13 June 1949

CLASSIFICATION

PREPARED BY (Agency)

L. P. DOMVICH, Major, USAF, Air of the

SOURCE

Arthur B. Freeman,
Security Officer

REMARKS (Classification, description, previous report, etc., as applicable)

SUMMARY: (Enter concise summary of report. One paragraph in total one sentence paragraph. List references at source left. Begin text of report on AF Form 112, Part II.)

following is copy of letter and inclosure re sighting of unconventional aircraft:

"NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR AERONAUTICS, Ames Aeronautical Laboratory,
Moffett Field, California. 13 June 1949

Jerome C. Hunsaker, Sc.D., Chairman

Alexander Wetmore, Ph.D., Vice Chairman

Gen. John A. Alison

Vice Gen. John W. Price, U.S.A.

Vannevar Bush, Sc.D.

Arthur S. Raymond, M.D.

Edward U. Condon, Ph.D.

Francis W. Reichelderfer, Sc.D.

Ronald W. Riden, M.S.

Gen. Louis A. Rentsch

William Littlewood, M.L.

Gen. Carl G. Vandenberg, U.S.A.F.

Gen. Edw. Theodore C.

Theodore P. Wright, Sc.D.

Lennquist, U.S.A.

Maj. Gen. Edward W. Fowles, U.S.A.F.

Committee Headquarters
1724 F Street, Northwest
Washington 25, D. C.Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory
Langley Field, Hampton, Va.Flight Propulsion Research Laboratory
Cleveland Airport, Cleveland 11, OhioDirector of Intelligence,
Fourth Air Force,
Hamilton Field, California.

Dear Sir:

There is attached a report by Mr. Don Beaphy, recounting the observation by several employees of this laboratory of an unusual object apparently in flight. Mr. [REDACTED] is employed in this laboratory's 1- by 3-foot Supersonic Wind Tunnel and is therefore necessarily somewhat familiar with high-speed flight configurations. Therefore it was considered advisable to forward Mr. Beaphy's report to you inasmuch as the observers were undoubtedly competent.

Please acknowledge receipt of this report.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Arthur B. Freeman,
Security Officer. *

Encl.

UNCLASSIFIED

AF FORM 112-PART II
APPROVED 1 JUN 64

CLASSIFICATION

AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

1. (REF. NUMBER)

Director of Intelligence
Hq 4AF, Hamilton AFB, Calif2. REPORT NO.
Unconventional
Aircraft

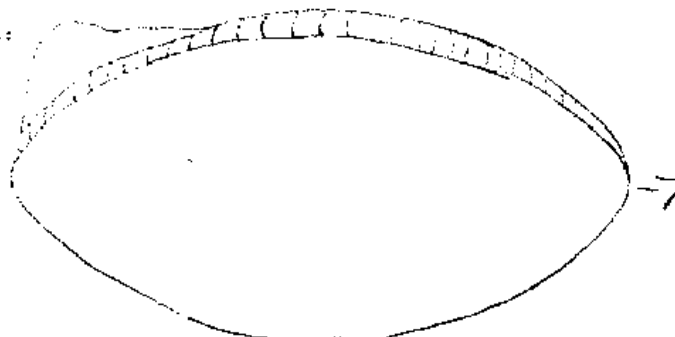
PAGE 2 OF PAGE(S)

INCLOSURES:

"Tuesday May 24th about 8:00 P.M. -- 2 1/2 miles up Rogue River from mouth in Oregon was vantage point.

When my attention was called to an object in the sky it appeared like a round shiny object such as a round mirror with the sun shining on it and the mirror standing on edge. With the naked eye the appearance never changed. It appeared to be stationary when I first saw it. There was another party looking at it with a pair of 8-power glasses during this time. He attempted to look directly at the light and it was at an up angle of about 45°. With the 8-power glasses it had looked. With the glasses there was no glare. It was flat and round like a round object a little thicker in the center than at the edge. It appeared to be flat on the bottom. The perimeter part seemed to be slightly oblong. Instead of being an edge it was lying flat. I would say it was 20 or 30 feet in diameter. The edge had a outward round radius and look like a 1 foot thick. The trailing edge as it traveled had a rough appearance. As it traveled I noticed a fin starting from nothing about midship and became bigger as it reached the trailing edge of the perimeter but it did not protrude past the edge. The fin appeared small in relation to the rest. The fin was round on top and a inward radius on the side. The fin looked fairly thick midship and very thin at the rear.

SEE ATTACHED SKETCH:



It looked as if it was built out of aluminum and some of the metal looked a little dirty.

I looked very close for propellers or a jet stream but could see none. We listened very close for a noise but there was no sound of any kind. It appeared to be at an altitude of about 5,000 feet. I looked at it about two minutes or more with the glasses until it disappeared in the distance. The last 1/2 minute or so I watched it, it looked as though its speed was about like a jet plane.

There were five of us watching it. Two of us looked at it with the 8 power glasses.

I could see no openings such as doors or windows or holes of any kind.

Also observed by --

[REDACTED] 1x3

[REDACTED] (attached section) and
three others."

UNCLASSIFIED
THAT RECEIVED

As the above document makes clear, the sketches were taken from the original sighting report. Hence they represent, as accurately as possible, what Mr. Heaphy, the wind tunnel operator, saw. (Note: an attempt was made to locate man with the name spelled Heaphy, and several other possible variations (since the document is not perfectly clear) to obtain a first-person report. However, this attempt was made some 50 years after the sighting and no one fitting the above description was located.)

CRAFT UNIDENTIFIED

All of the witnesses agreed on the general shape and color. Apparently the object was of an angular size that was large enough so that the witnesses could determine its circular shape even without binoculars.

The size estimates are subjective but suggest angular sizes comparable to 0.1 to 1 degree (0.0017 to 0.017 radians; the sun or moon is about half a degree in angular size). At the very least, the angular size must have been a minute or two of arc (1/60 to 2/60 of a degree) since the normal shape resolution of the daylight-adapted eye is on the order of one-half to one minute of arc, and the object was apparently resolved into a circular shape by the eyes of five people. The 8-power binoculars would have made apparent details down to one-eighth or so of the diameter of the object for the two witnesses who used the binoculars (Mr. Rivera and Mr. Heaphy).

An object that is one minute of arc in angular size would be 1/60 of a degree or (1/60) of 0.017 radians or 0.00028 radians in angular size. This corresponds to 0.28 feet in linear size if 1000 feet away, about 1.5 feet if one mile away, and about 6 feet if four miles away.

The sizes just calculated are based upon an estimate of the minimum angular size of the object. However, if the estimates of Mrs. McBeth and the other lady are more nearly correct, then we should use a larger angular size, probably comparable to 0.1 degree or 0.0017 radians, rather than 1/60 of a degree. The linear size estimates are now about 1.7 feet if 1000 feet away, 8.4 feet if one mile away, and 33 feet if about four miles away. This last size estimate agrees with the size estimates of Mr. Reivera and Mr. Heaphy, and probably with the fuselage length estimate given by Mr. McBeth. However, their estimates were purely qualitative since they had no measurement of distance. It is unfortunate that the interviewers didn't think to obtain rough angular size estimates (such as the size of a pea at arm's length) from the witnesses.

Despite the difficulty or impossibility of obtaining size estimates from the data presented in the OSI files, it seems clear that the object seen by five people was not an ordinary aircraft, and moreover, the detail reported by two observers who used binoculars (not just one observer, as implied by the SR14 summary) rules out other readily identifiable aerial phenomena.

HOAX!!! *Or the real thing?*

Although the sighted object bears some resemblance to experimental semi-circular or circular aircraft that had been proposed in the 1940's, there were no such craft flying around and even if there were they wouldn't have been flying in an area far from any aircraft research facilities. Hence we are left with a sighting report that clearly describes the "*real thing*", *a craft not made by mankind.....*, or else it is a hoax.

Could it be a hoax? I say no because of the way the sighting was reported. It took the witnesses about three weeks to report the sighting, although, of course, if it were a hoax they could list any date previous to the report date as the sighting date. But, if it was real, this suggests to me an element of caution on their part. Did they really dare to report such a thing? And yet, they probably felt, as stated by several of the early

witnesses to flying saucers, that it was their duty as American citizens to report these things so the government would know about them. But, when they finally did decide to make a report, they did not run to the newspapers or TV or radio to get the maximum publicity for their story. Instead, the two men who worked at the Ames research laboratory reported it *to the security office at the laboratory*. This, to me, is the proof it wasn't a hoax. No person in his right mind, who works at a defense installation and who (probably) needs a clearance (Confidential, Secret, Top Secret) to perform his duties, is going to try to hoax the security department. The witnesses probably expected an investigation of their claims. If such an investigation took place and uncovered the hoax then they would likely lose their jobs.

Of course the "dyed in the wool skeptic" or scoffer might argue that they played for high stakes: if they could get their story past the OSI investigators they could either laugh at the government (they did it only for fun) or use the investigation as evidence it was real and make lots of money selling their story to the press, or both.

Well, they did get it past the OSI investigation which did not claim they were hoaxers. Yet, there is no indication that they capitalized on this success of the "hoax." In fact, there is no indication of which I am aware, that they ever told anyone other than the OSI the details of their sighting. Hence they didn't "do it for money" or publicity. Of course, I cannot prove they didn't do it for fun, but it seems like a highly risky undertaking, to put one's job on the line merely to be able to laugh at the OSI investigators.

The only thing that makes sense to me is that they saw the "real thing," a flying craft not made by mankind. One can only wonder, at this late date (2004), whether or not they carried their secret with them to the grave (assuming they are no longer living).

(Note of interest: this sighting occurred exactly 1 month after the more famous sighting by Charles B. Moore and others near Arrey, New Mexico, while they were tracking a high altitude research balloon.)

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE ON VISION

Although the witnesses were quite convinced that the object was circular, there may be a question as to whether or not the witnesses could have seen this object well enough to determine its shape. Studies of the visual detection and recognition of military targets and other studies concerned with the presentation of visual information on TV-type displays have shown that detection of a target against a somewhat "contrasty" background requires that the angular size of the object subtend roughly one "eye resolution element," which is about one minute of arc or about one-third of a milliradian. For the shape of an object to be barely recognizable requires about 1.5 to 2 resolution elements along any major axis of the object (if it is square or circular it has no major axis; in any other case, the orientation of the object will be barely detectable with 1.5 to 2 resolution elements along its major axis). For objects with non-simple surfaces (e.g. automobile, aircraft), it is barely possible to differentiate between classes of comparable non-simple surfaces if there are about four resolution elements along any major extension. Thus, for example, to distinguish between a plane and a blimp seen at great distances would require that the plane be seen in such a way that the fuselage subtends several resolution elements and the wings subtend several resolution elements. An object with a structured surface can usually be identified (either by the observer or by an analyst studying an accurate report by the observer) when there are 6 to 8 resolution elements along any major extension and several elements along any minor extension.

The requirements for typical visual detection, determination of object orientation, object class differentiation, and object identification are of interest in analyzing this report because here we have a case of an object for which the angular size was sufficient that, not only could the observers detect it, but they were also able to assign a general shape (circular or oval) with the naked eye. The ability to make this statement about its shape with the naked eye implies that the angular size of the object was such that it subtended at least two resolution elements in its major dimension. It probably subtended more, but two is sufficient to allow me to make the following point: with the binoculars, the angular size was "amplified" by a factor of eight, meaning there were at least 16 resolution elements across the major dimension of the object, many more than necessary for identification as a radar kite, an airplane or some other normal, manmade or

natural phenomenon. In other words, the witnesses who used binoculars definitely could have determined its overall shape.