

UFO INVESTIGATOR



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UFO RELATED INFORMATION FROM THE FBI FILE (Part II)

by

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The FBI Retreats

As of July 31, 1947, the FBI was officially involved with the UFO phenomenon. Agents were ordered to carry out intense investigations of reports which came to their attention. The Washington office began to accumulate a mass of UFO-related data. This would seem to be an ideal situation for an investigative agency that wanted to understand what was going on. However, only two months later the FBI left the center stage and began its retreat into the shadows. To understand part of the reason why, it is necessary to consider the types of reports that the FBI investigated.

By the time Gen. Schulgen contacted the FBI (July 10, 1947) the FBI had a collection of newspaper clippings and teletype messages. The first teletype message was rather brief, to say the least. It read: "About 12 so-called flying discs passed over Darlington, S. C. approximately 5:30 PM today. Advise if wish details."¹¹ Two other teletype messages that had been received by July 10 were more detailed, but they were reports of mechanical hoax devices which were apparently typical of the hoaxes that were perpetrated during the early days of UFOs. On July 7 a report was filed from Schreveport, La. of an object that had "Made in USA" written on it. It was a disc which reportedly landed and smoke issued forth. It was found to be a thin aluminum disc, 16 inches in diameter with coils of wire attached. The Army at Barksdale Field retrieved the disc before the FBI agent had a chance to look at it.¹² On July 8 a "disc" was found near Roswell, N.M. This "disc" was hexagonal

in shape and was suspended from a balloon. This "disc" was sent to Wright Field by a special plane for analysis.¹³ On July 9 the resident agent in Burbank, Cal. called the main FBI office to report that a fire in a nearby woods had been caused by the landing of a "flying disc". A further report on July 10 described the disc as being made of aluminum, about two feet in diameter, and "having a sort of radio tube in the center of the disc."

By the time the FBI had agreed to investigate UFO witnesses (July 24, 1947 communication to Gen. Schulgen), the files contained several more reports of hoax objects and only three reports that could be considered good. These reports will be referred to later. The hoax reports included a report from Twin Falls, Idaho about a "saucer within a saucer in the manner of cymbals" that had a plastic dome, wires and "tubes similar to radio tubes." It was about 30" in diameter and apparently had some wiring burned off and "looked as though something might be missing." This saucer was reported by a woman who claimed she had heard a noise like a collision in her back yard.¹⁴

Another hoax object was found by Mr. (name crossed off) in Laurel, Md. He called to report that a buzzing object had landed in his back yard "and the machinery is still buzzing."¹⁵ Still another object was reported from Black River Falls, Wisconsin. It was a large, possible carboard, disc that had a small propeller attached to the side.¹⁶ A disc found in Seattle on July 16 was analyzed by the ONI (Office of Naval Intelligence). It had a hammer and sickle painted on it.

The three good reports in the FBI file at the time of the response to General Schulgen all came from the Army Air Force (AAF) and were the following. 1) Two meteorologists in Virginia wrote "We hesitate to make this report concerning our pilot balloon observations in regards to a flying disc because of the considerable national skepticism regarding the subject at present. However, local newspapers inform us that the U.S. Government admits no authority for such a ship or object and for its flights. Then we must assume this strange object to be foreign." The report goes on to describe several sightings. "Mr. (name removed) has observed this strange metallic disc on three occasions through the theodolite while making his pibal observation during the last six months. Miss Baron (name accidentally not removed) has reported observing it on one occasion. Miss Baron's report agrees with Mr. observations except as to the color which she reported as a dull metallic luster. Mr. last observed this disc in April 1947 (underlining by present author) at the 1100E Pibal Observation when the balloon was at 15,000 feet. The disk was followed for 15 seconds, apparently moving on level flight from east to west to the far north of the station. The object was a metallic like Chrome-shaped something like an ellipse with a flat level bottom and a dome like-round top. The disk appeared below the balloon, was much larger in size in the instrument (sic; this may mean it appeared larger than the instrument package hanging below the balloon), and shined like silver. It was impossible to estimate the height or speed of the disk except that it appeared to be moving very

rapidly. Miss Baron observed the disk when her balloon was at about 27,000 feet. All days observed were either clear or with very few clouds and good visibility." This report was received by the FBI on the 22nd of July. It stands out as one of the highly credible pre-Arnold reports. Aside from the early dates of the sightings, one is struck by the detailed description by trained meteorologists using instruments to track and observe the "saucer." One is also struck by the, in retrospect, amusing references to many sightings of "this disk" and "the disk" as if there were only one object of its type which had been seen on several occasions. *It is clear from the report that the meteorologists were afraid that "the disc" represented foreign technology of which the U.S. government should be made aware. They even suggested that the occurrence of flying discs might be sufficiently serious that if they sighted such a disc again they should consider ending their weather measurements to observe the disc: "If sighted again, we wonder if it would be a good idea to drop the balloon and instead make observations on this disc."*

The second and third reports in the FBI file by July 24 were both sightings from the air in southern Wisconsin. They both took place on July 7, the second at 1145 CST and the third at 1430 CST. Each was a two observer report, with an A.F. captain involved in the second sighting. The second report stated: "saucer descended vertically edgewise through altocumuluous clouds, stopped at 4000 ft. and assumed horizontal position and proceeded in horizontal flight from a horizontal position for 15 seconds covering 25 miles and again stopped and disappeared." This observation was made from an altitude of about 800 ft. above ground, while the "saucer" was estimated to be about 4000 ft above sea level. The speed of the saucer was estimated at 6000 mph. The third report stated: "Observed in horizontal flight in a horizontal altitude for a period of 20 seconds covering 22 miles. By the time pilot had removed his camera from the glove compartment of his plane the saucer disappeared and again reappeared approximately 10 miles farther along its course after 6 seconds making its final disappearance." This third observation was made at an altitude

of 3500 ft. above sea level and the saucer was estimated to have been at an altitude about 1000 ft. lower. The speed of the saucer in the third report was estimated at 3690 mph. The weather during both of the sightings was clear ("CAVU") with scattered altocumuluous clouds at 6000 ft. Both of the above reports were sent via the Civil Air Patrol in Wisconsin to the Commanding General at Boiling AFB. There was no suggestion that the observers might have been mistaken or that they were attempting to create (independent) hoaxes.

I have presented these three reports in detail to show that the FBI did have some *interesting evidence available which could not be explained as simple hoaxes by the time the decision was made to investigate UFO reports.* Although it wasn't the job of the FBI to investigate aerial phenomena, it was the job of the FBI to investigate subversion within the US. Thus, if *all* reports of saucers had been a) clearly hoax objects and/or b) clearly mistakes of observers, the FBI could have concluded that there was no reason to investigate. However, with a few good, detailed observations of what seemed to be real craft that exhibited capabilities far beyond our own, the existence of hoax reports became more suspicious because one could argue that a foreign power (e.g., Russia) was flying a new type of aircraft over the USA (for intelligence purposes or whatever) while trying to cover up its flights by *discrediting witnesses by means of hoaxes.* To be more explicit, suppose John Doe (or Kenneth Arnold) reports seeing a flying disc. Whether or not he gives a detailed description is immaterial. Then soon after many other people also report seeing objects in the sky and also they report *finding* objects. Suppose, moreover, that the objects which are *found* have the same general shape as the descriptions of objects *reportedly* seen in the sky but that they are clearly hoax devices. Then John Doe's (and Kenneth Arnold's) story is discredited, and the few discs that the foreign power has are free to fly wherever they wish (as long as they stay away from cities) because they "know" that whoever sees them will not be believed. A scenario as just described (Russia has real discs and flies them over the USA while "covering up" the flights by discrediting witnesses)

may have been considered by the FBI in its decision to investigate, but in any event the suggestion of subversion and creation of hysteria by a "foreign power" was definitely made (see Schulgen's letter in Part I). Whatever reasoning may have been invoked to connect the "bonifide" reports with the hoax reports, the FBI entered the UFO "arena" with the intent to discover whether or not any of the UFO reports could be directly attributable to subversion. For example, Gen. Schulgen asked that Kenneth Arnold and Byron Savage (an RCA field engineer who reported seeing a disc in May, 1947) be investigated "since they were among the first to sight the alleged flying discs. He indicated that he desired that the investigation be directed toward ascertaining whether or not either of these individuals have any subversive background and to ascertain whether or not they had any ulterior motives for reporting these sightings."¹⁷ (According to a note on the document that included this request," a review of Bureau files failed to reveal any derogatory information that could be identified with these individuals.") Many of the teletype messages to FBI headquarters and reports on investigations made after July 30, 1947 were headed "security matter - X", "internal security" and "sabotage."

By the end of September the FBI file contained many reports, about equally divided between good reports and poor reports/hoaxes. Many of the reports had been supplied by the AAF merely as information for the FBI with no investigation requested. Many of these reports concerned sightings by technically oriented individuals (pilots, military personnel, scientists). There was even an early analysis of sightings that had been carried out by someone in the AAF (no name given). It contained 18 sightings up to late July, 1947, and broke these sightings into their various characteristics for comparison according to Date, Hour (local time), Location, Observer's Name, Occupation, Ground or Air Observation, Number of Objects, Altitude, Direction of Flight, Speed Distance Covered, Length of Time in Sight, Deviation from Straight Flight, Color, Size, Shape, Sound, Trail, Weather, Manner of Disappearance, and "Remarks." The analysis included copies of all the sightings ana-

lyzed, but there was no conclusion expressed. However, associated with the analysis in the FBI file, but not necessarily a part of it, is an undated page with no signature which expresses someone's interesting conclusions. The paper, which was very likely written in late July or in August 1947, reads as follows:

"From detailed study of reports selected for their impression of veracity and reliability, several conclusions have been formed:

(a) This "flying saucer" situation is not all imaginary or seeing too much in some natural phenomenon. Something is really flying around.

(b) Lack of topside inquiries (i.e., lack of requests by top echelon military officials), when compared to the prompt and demanding inquiries that have originated topside upon former events, give more than ordinary weight to the possibility that this is a domestic project, about which the President, etc. know.

(c) Whatever the objects are, this much can be said of their physical appearance:

1. The surface of these objects is *metallic*, indicating a metallic skin at least.

2. When a trail is observed, it is *lightly colored*, a *Blue-Brown haze*, that is similar to a rocket engine's exhaust. Contrary to a rocket of the solid (propellant type, one observation indicates that the fuel may be throttled which would indicate a liquid rocket engine.

3. As to shape, all observations state that the object is circular or at least elliptical, flat on the bottom and slightly domed on the top. The size estimates place it somewhere near the size of a C-54 or a Constellation.

4. Some reports describe two tabs, located at the rear and symmetrical about the axis of flight motion.

5. Flights have been reported from three to nine of them, flying good formation on each other, with speeds above 300 knots.

6. The discs oscillate laterally while flying along, which could be snaking."

All of the previous information has been presented to indicate the types of reports and the sort of information that was available to the FBI by the end of September. About 60 non-trivial, non-hoax reports, some from FBI sources and

many from AAF sources, were filed by the end of September. Also filed were documents giving viewpoints on the situation regarding "flying discs." All of this information played an important part in the decision of the FBI to end its official investigatory status. However, the FBI investigation might have continued anyway, if it hadn't been for "the last straw," which I will describe in the next installment.

However, first I would like to present some information which suggested to the FBI that it might be investigating our own secret weapons. The document of interest reads as follows:¹⁸

"Special Agent Reynolds (call him SA) of the Liaison Section, while discussing (flying discs) with Lt. Col. Garrett (Col. G) of the Air Forces Intelligence, expressed the possibility that flying discs were, in fact, a very highly classified experiment of the Army or Navy. SA was *very much surprised when Col. G. not only agreed that this was a possibility, but confidentially stated it was his personal opinion that such was a probability.* Col. G. indicated confidentially that a Mr., who is a scientist attached to the Air Forces Intelligence, was of the same opinion."

Col. G. stated that he based his assumption on the following: He pointed out that when flying objects were reported seen over Sweden, the "high brass" of the War Department exerted tremendous pressure on the Air Forces Intelligence to conduct research and collect information in an effort to identify these sightings. Col. G. stated that, in contrast to this, we have reported sightings of unknown objects over the United States, and the "high brass" appeared to be totally unconcerned. He indicated this led him to believe that they knew enough about these objects to express no concern. Col. G. pointed out further that the objects in question have been seen by *many individuals who are what he terms "trained observers,"* such as airplane pilots. He indicated also that several of the individuals are reliable members of the community. He stated the above has led him to come to the conclusion that there were objects seen which somebody in the Government knows all about."

"SA pointed out to Col. G. that if it is a fact experimentations are being conducted by the United States Government, then it does not appear reasonable to request the FBI to spend money and precious time conducting inquiries with respect to this matter. Col. G. stated that he agreed with SA in this regard and indicated that it would be extremely embarrassing to the Air Forces Intelligence if it later is learned that these flying discs are, in fact, an experiment of the United States Government."

"SA subsequently discussed this matter with Col. L. R. Forney of the Intelligence Division of the War Department. Col. Forney stated that he had discussed the matter previously with Gen. Chamberlain. Col. Forney indicated to SA that *he has the assurance of Gen Chamberlain and Gen. Todd that the Army is conducting no experimentations with anything which could possibly be mistaken for a flying disc.*"

"Col. G. of the Air Forces Intelligence subsequently contacted SA and indicated that he had discussed this matter with Gen. Schulgen of the Army Air Forces. Gen. Schulgen had previously assured both SA and Col. G. that to the best of his knowledge and information no experiments were being undertaken by the Government which could be mistaken for flying discs. Col. G. indicated to SA that he had pointed out his beliefs to Gen. Schulgen and had mentioned the possibility of an embarrassing situation arising between the Air Forces Intelligence and the FBI. Gen. Schulgen agreed with Col. G. that a memorandum would be prepared for the signature of Gen. McDonald, A2, to Gen. LeMay, who is in charge of Research and Development in the Air Corps. Col. G. indicated that this memorandum will set forth the characteristics of the objects seen by various reliable individuals. The memorandum will then request Gen. LeMay to indicate whether or not any experiments are being undertaken by the Air Forces which could possibly be connected with any of the observed phenomena. Col. G. stated that when a reply is received from Gen. LeMay, a communication will be addressed to the Bureau."

"SA will follow this matter closely with Lt. Col. Garrett and Gen. Schulgen so that the Bureau will be promptly

advised of all information regarding the flying discs, especially any information indicating that they are, in fact, an experiment of some Governmental agency."

On Sept. 5, 1947 the FBI received the following note from Gen. Schulgen:¹⁹

"In answer to a verbal request of your Mr. S.W. Reynolds, a complete survey of research activities discloses that the Army Air Forces has no project with the characteristics similar to those which have been associated with the Flying Discs." (signed) Geo. F. Schulgen, Brig. General, USA; Deputy, Ass't. Chief of Air Staff-2.

This officially laid to rest the possibility that the US government had any devices which could have generated flying disc reports, although the possibility was again discussed in 1950.²⁰

It is interesting to note the comments within the preceding document about the apparent lack of interest of the "high brass", as expressed by Col. Garrett, apparently with the concurrence of Gen. Schulgen. This information obtained from the intelligence services associated with air force flying saucer "research" provides an interesting contrast to Ruppelt's claim^{21,22} that the "top brass" wanted the problem solved quickly and that this desire resulted in pressure and "frantic attempts to find answers."²²

SIGHTING ADVISORY

Preliminary information on new reports. Details and evaluations will be published when available.

July 4, 1977, Arlington, Virginia—Prior to a fireworks display, a retired USAF Colonel, his wife and another couple observed two starlike objects for thirty minutes. Both objects moved at random speeds. They also appeared to be stationary in an irregular position during the course of the sighting. The witness, who is presently an aerospace engineer, stated, "I was fascinated by the fact that each object duplicated the exact motion, course and speed of the other." Upon their departure in tandem, in a northwesterly direction, their speed was estimated to be that of a MACH 5 plus. "The speed was so rapid upon their departure that the objects appeared to leave trails."

December, 1977, Yucatau Pennisula, Mexico—A group of young people visiting Mexico attended an outdoor sound and light show at Uxmal (the ruins of a Mayan city) during the month of December. While watching the show, the entire group, in addition to others, observed something which caught their attention. They could see a sharply outlined object flying over them. It appeared to have a definite circular shape with a yellowish glow about it. In addition, it was ringed with non-flashing white lights. Within a short time, another object appeared travelling in the same direction. It was first thought to be a part of the extravaganza that they were watching. However, when the group returned to their hotel, the desk clerk explained that numerous sightings have been made in that same area and no one has yet to identify them.

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PART III
to be continued
in the
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NICAP's President, John Acuff, will be serving on the National Enquirer's UFO Panel next month. The purpose for this panel meeting is to judge the best case of 1977 for a monetary award. The UFO INVESTIGATOR will publish the results of this meeting in a future newsletter.