

UFO'S: A History
1952:
January — May

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JANUARY - MAY 1952

by

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1952: The BIG year.

Edward Ruppelt claimed: "During a six month period in 1952, 148 of the nation's leading newspapers carried a total of over 16,000 items about UFO's;¹ and Dr. Herbert Strentz, after analyzing Air Force records of that same six month period, some 32 rolls of microfilm covering April - September 1952, determined that the amount of items, without duplication, were actually more like 30,000!² Equally spectacular, when one considers the Air Force's attitude at the time, was the official number of "unexplained" UFO reports listed for 1952 which was 19.3 percent!³

The year started off with Kenneth Arnold assailing Dr. Liddel's "UFO's are balloons" theory as the idea was outlined in an issue of Look magazine. Arnold wrote what he believed was a reasoned rebuttal for submission to Look in the hope his words would be published, but the essay got an icy reception. Within days of mailing the Boise flier received his material back with an abrupt message scribbled across the first page: "This subject has already been covered."

On the other hand the same small manuscript enjoyed a warmer welcome by the pulp Other Worlds Science Stories, a magazine edited by a sympathetic Ray Palmer. Not only did Palmer print the anti-Liddel essay, he also ran advertisement touting Arnold's famous pamphlet, The Flying Saucers-- As I Saw Them. The burb went:

"This sensational illustrated pamphlet (previously obtainable only at his famous lectures) is now available to readers of OTHER WORLDS by special arrangement.

***** 50¢ *****

"Personally autographed!
"Don't miss getting this incredible proof of the reality of flying disks from the world famous 'disk pilot' himself. Be sure to see his own model, built from actual observation."⁴

That was not all, for in January 1952, Ray Palmer made known that both he and Arnold would team up to produce a full size hardback about the flying saucer mystery. (The book would be written and would be titled The Coming of the Saucers.)

Tiffany Thayer, Secretary of the Fortean Society, was getting clippings on such topics from the membership on a regular basis in spite of his outspoken aversion to UFO stories. Noting the proposed Palmer/Arnold book venture, Thayer sneeringly remarked that Arnold had tried unsuccessfully to get Fortean sponsorship for a lecture tour, an affront to Thayer who was convinced the "saucer rumors" were a Pentagon plot.⁵ Were they?

Colonel Lanza.

Long time luminary in the study of bolides, especially the mysterious "green types" that continued to buffalo the science meteoritics, was Dr. Lincoln La Paz who was heard from again on January 4th when he reiterated his belief that some sort of unidentified guided missiles were flaming across America's skies. He considered such a concept not far-fetched in, as he put it, the "Buck Rogers era of 1952." He also made reference to a new ally, a certain Colonel C. H. Lanza, who had been studying the mysterious green fireballs since 1946 when such phenomena had alarmed the Baltic region. In an issue of the Field Artillery Journal, Colonel Lanza wrote that he attributed the fiery manifestations to possible Russian weapons.⁶

APRO.

Another notable January event was the shaping of "The Aerial Phenomena Research Organization," a private UFO investigative group headed by Coral E. Lorenzen of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. Lorenzen, with the aid of a number of amateur astronomers, drew up a charter and made plans to publish a mimeographed UFO news bulletin on a regular basis.³

There would be plenty to write about.

With such a massive wave in the offing, it's no surprise that there was a significant UFO report right off the bat on New Year's Day. An orange-red disc put on a real show in the sky over North Bay, Ontario, where there was a Canadian Air Force Base. The object flipped around with wild abandon. It zigzagged, dived, climbed, and circled for eight minutes.⁷ Watching the whole time was a pair of electronic technicians at the Air Base who reported the incident to Canadian Military Intelligence.⁸

"Flying Saucers Are With Us Again."

Saucerwise little had moved in the air over Monterey County, California, since mid-1950, but on Friday, January 4th, 1952, came word of renewed activity with the headline in the Watsonville Register-Pajaronian that shouted: "FLYING SAUCERS ARE WITH US AGAIN." The story went: "Watsonville police, Monterey County sheriff deputies and witnesses from here to

Greenfield (about 50 miles) sighted a weird cigar-shaped object rushing through the sky at about 5:00 a.m. Friday."⁹

Watsonville police were the first to go on record after spotting a funny-looking "ball of fire." The thing seemed to them to be an aircraft in distress, but when the phenomenon approached closer, the lawmen were amazed. They said: "It was throwing sparks and flame from both ends cruising along apparently under control at about 10,000 feet."¹⁰ Ambling along, it curved toward Fort Ord and later was seen following a course that took it past the west side of the Gabilan Mountain Range. Shortly thereafter, the police and populace of Greenfield City were apparently entertained by the same phenomenon. United Airlines Flight 2459 also saw something in the area and made a reference to a "meteor-like" object when the pilots filled in their flight log that afternoon.¹¹

One Watsonville cop said the thing "scared the devil out of him." He described it as a "bluish-green streamer of a luminous string of beads[?]"¹²

"Are they real?"

United Press filed one of those generalized commentaries on the flying saucers for its client papers on January 14th, the mystery revived by some sightings at Dallas, Texas. The news service asked: "History is filled with flying saucers-- but are they real?"

No one wanted to know more than the head of Project GRUDGE, the man who was charged with coming up with all the answers for Uncle Sam. On January 13th, Ruppelt sent some men to Washington, D.C. to:

"...locate additional data on sightings. It was found that both the D/I and TCB have such files. In the near future a trip will be made to Washington to review these files and obtain additional sighting reports [Some 50 new reports were found]."¹³

Also:

"A map has been prepared, showing all of the sightings in the United States. Colored tacks are used to designate sightings by years.

"The plot of sightings shows that there is a concentration of sightings in the area of:

1. Dayton, Ohio.
2. Columbus, Ohio.
3. White Sands, New Mexico.
4. Albuquerque, New Mexico.
5. Oak Ridge, Tennessee
6. Camp Hood, Texas

Data used in the plotting consisted of: "...nebulous reports from very questionable sources to more factual reports from reasonably reliable."¹⁵

A pattern seemed apparent but Ruppelt and his staff drew back from a commitment: "No conclusions can be made or other facts about the distribution of the sightings stated until a further study of the distribution of sightings has been made."¹⁶

If UFO's were real, were they merely balloons, the solution then in vogue? This question was one Edward Ruppelt gave top priority in his new job as head of Project GRUDGE, and what better place to make inquiries than at the Aeronautical Division of General Mills, Inc., the outfit that launched all of the famous Skyhook balloons. The people at General Mills had a lot to say about the UFO problem, but the Air Force's treatment of the UFO subject had poisoned any inclination to pass on information to military Intelligence, but word that the Air Force's Project GRUDGE had been "reorganized" encouraged the General Mills balloon team to forward a fat file of General Mills UFO reports that had been gathering dust.

Ruppelt was receptive to the overture and departed for Minneapolis to conduct an on-the-spot interrogation, taking along a member of the Battelle Memorial Institute. As the Air Force record states, the Battelle consultant¹ tagged along to familiarize himself with the methods used by the Air Force to investigate UFO cases. Time was available to the Battelle people by then, since a preliminary survey of UFO files had been completed and they had only to work on a formal proposal which was due the first part of February.¹⁷

On January 14th, Ruppelt and the Battelle expert braved a winter storm to travel to the General Mills Aeronautical Division Headquarters in Minnesota. While a blizzard roared outside, the Air Force representatives spent the afternoon listening to the civilians explain their qualifications in the field of astronomy, meteorology, aerodynamics, and of course, the operation and tracking of balloons. The General Mills people were stubborn in their insistence that balloons could not be responsible for all UFO reports, which impressed Ruppelt, but even more impressive (even amazing) was when the technicians announced their firm belief in the existence of "real" aerial objects of a mysterious origin. During their balloon work, a multitude of UFO sightings had been made, and Ruppelt tells us: "One man told me that one tracking crew had seen so many that the sight of a UFO no longer even especially interested them[!]."¹⁸

In the face of the remarkable stand taken by the General Mills people, Ruppelt nonetheless maintained his intellectual equilibrium and remained committed to an objective view of

the UFO problem. When the interview ended Ruppelt and the Battelle expert went straight to the airport and boarded a plane for Washington.

"Meteor" at 500 feet!

Two Sergeants of the Wing Intelligence Section, Hq. 57th Air Division, 924th Bomb Wing, Fairchild Air Force Base, Spokane, Washington, were walking to their quarters 1920 hours the 20th of January. One of the Sergeants recalled:

"My attention was called by Sergeant Holm to an unidentified object traveling below the clouds [8/10 coverage at 4,000 feet] at approximately 500 feet.

"The object was moving silently at a terrific rate of speed as compared to any jet aircraft I have ever seen. It appeared circular in shape and was brilliant blue-white in color. I estimate that the object was approximately 3/4 to 1 mile away, and at the distance from where I stood it appeared to be slightly larger than an orange.

"The object left a blue trail which was broken. The trail appeared to be coming from the object in spurts.

"Height of the clouds was estimated by a beacon light on Fairchild Air Force Base. The beacon was projected vertically in a stationary position, the flying object travelling parallel to the earth."¹⁹

After an Air Force investigation it was concluded:

"If the object was beneath the cloud it was not a conventional aircraft or meteor and no conclusion can be made as to its identity."²⁰

Not a conventional aircraft?

The "invisibles."

Forty-eight hours after the blue "meteor" visited Spokane, some "invisibles" invaded Alaska causing a military alert.

The trouble started at the 160th AC&W Site F-2, Ladd Air Force Base, when a strange target appeared on the radar screens. The testimony of the witnesses provides us with the details on how events were initiated:

"At apx 1020Z, 22 Jan 52, I, 1st Lt. Arthur L. Boyd, Jr., was in the radar maintenance room at site F-2. At that time the crew chief of my crew informed me that they had an unusual target on B-Scan #3. I immediately went to the B-Scan room and observed the target moving in a direction indicating an out

bound track on an azimuth of 210 degrees. The target was painting with normal brilliance, however, it was longer than a normal paint. It is estimated that the target return was apx 1/4 inch in length and appeared to be thinner than normal return. The only other irregularity being that the return was slanted 15 degrees to 20 degrees from the normal tangential position. The target appeared to be moving apx 4 1/2 to 5 miles per sweep, antenna was set at 5 revolutions per minute. The target was moving with regularity following a straight azimuth course. The target was observed for 10 to 12 sweeps during which time it carried on the action as described. At the end of this observation, I initiated action to handle interceptor aircraft with our equipment and notified ADCC."21

On the other side of the base at the All-Weather 449th Fighter Interceptor Squadron was Capt. Verl D. Ramey, a Radar Observer on standby. He testified:

"At 10:25 Zebra time we received the first notification of a scramble. Another call came in again at 10:26 Z to rush the scramble up stating the bogey was traveling 1500 mi/hr. We were airborne at 10:30 Z and were told to vector to point Jig. I had the airborne radar searching at all times on plus 20 minus 20 search pattern. Before we reached point Jig, we were given a new vector. At this time I lost track of ground position and concentrated on getting a radar contact. Crane control lost radar contact and was vectoring us in different directions."22

The fellow crewman of Capt. Ramey and the pilot of the F-94A, 1st Lt. Clifford E. Garrett, gives us his version of the scramble. As he lifted off at 1030 Z all he knew was that he was to intercept an unidentified target travelling at very high speed:

"I called ADCC immediately on the GCI VHF channel and was ordered to call Crane and fly to Point 'J'. As we neared 'J', Crane had another plot and vectored us southward to try and intercept it. The target faded and we were ordered back to 'J', at 30,000 feet, and saunter."23

Capt. Ramey, whose primary job was the manning of the F-94's radar, gave his full attention to the screen in front of him:

"Approximately 20 to 30 minutes after take off, making the time 10:50 to 11:00 Z time, after Crane Control lost contact, I picked up two definite target returns--one faint and one very bright. I immediately determined it was not ground return

of any sort by checking the displacement between aircraft and target. We were at 30,000 feet making the target at 25,000 feet, approximately. This happened so fast, due to the great overtaking speed, I could not follow the target with the antenna by hand control and lock-on. The targets were picked up at 40 degrees on the starboard at a range of 24,000 yards and crossed over to the port, disappearing at a range of 200 yards 55 degrees on the port. We started a turn after it, but Crane Control came in at that moment giving us a new vector. Thinking Crane had a contact we followed their order."²⁴

Pilot Garrett noticed that Ramey was picking up something with the plane's radar:

"As we neared 'J,' the Radar Observer had an indication of a target at about 40 degrees to the starboard. My heading was approximately 350 degrees at the time. I had an indication of lock on but the Set broke lock at apparently maximum deflection starboard. Later I learned that the RO [Radar Operator] had attempted lock on and must have succeeded momentarily because he immediately went on hand control in an effort to stay on the target. I started a port turn to go back around when Crane vectored us to the starboard."²⁵

Back on the ground at AC&W Site F-2, Lt. Boyd directed the interception, giving vectors to the F-94 codenamed "Concrete Red Flight." Lt. Boyd testified:

"Our first paint of the F-94 took place as he neared Point Jig. At this time the target was not painting on PPI scope #9 which was being used for control. Concrete Red was held at Point Jig while an effort was made to pick up the target. The vertical plotting board indicated the track out bound at this time and the fighter was not put into a chase due to the high speed indicated by the target. PPI #9 did not paint the target until apx 1052-3 at which time it appeared at a range of 45 miles on an azimuth of 210 degrees. Concrete Red was immediately vectored to a 180 degree heading which placed the target at 12 o'clock - 20 miles."²⁶

Ground control gave the F-94 various vectors and then ordered "Concrete Red" back to base. Garrett and Ramey hadn't seen anything so they didn't know what the situation had been. According to Lt. Boyd this is what happened to the strange target:

"The target painted thru 5 sweeps and appeared to make a turn of 180 degrees with the last paint indicating a final heading of 210 degrees. The turning radius appeared to be apx 8 miles. The target then faded and did not reappear. B-Scans had faded the target at 1047 and did not pick up this paint. Concrete Red went to buster (max. continous power) but did not make contact. I closed off the chase and vectored Red back to Jig."27

Just when it seemed that the chase had ended, the F-94 got lucky. Captain Ramey remembers it this way:

"As we headed toward Home Plate [Ladd AFB], we passed over Point Jig and I picked up radar contact again at a dead ahead position, 10 degrees below at 24,000 yds. I immediately locked on and we pointed the aircraft toward the target, keeping the target at a dead ahead level position, closing the range at over 100 knot overtaking speed. We dropped dive flaps at 10,000 to 13,000 yds, but the overtaking speed remained at over 100 knots. We kept the target dead ahead and level down to 200 yds with the high overtaking speed until at the time of break-off, pilot through normal reflex action pulled up slightly. We immediately made a 360 degree turn and came back over the same route, but did not pick up a contact again. We tried another 360 and then a 180 degree course for a few moments and back along the same route of radar contact. We did not again pick up contact so returned to field..."28

Up front, peering through the windshield all during the flight, pilot Lt. Garrett had something to say about visual contact with the supposed UFO:

"The weather during the day and night up until and after this mission was very good. No clouds were observed and the visibility was very good. On a daylight flight earlier I noticed very slight haze to the West. The night was dark but not black. On a flight earlier I visually identified a C-54, DC-3, and a small civilian plane from three to five hundred yards."29

Air Force Intelligence noted that according to the witnesses' accounts the radar target never appeared simultaneously on both the air and ground radar screens, giving credence to the possibility the target was a "ghost." Such "ghosts" are not uncommon. Usually they appear on radar screens because of equipment malfunction or because of temperature differences in layers of air that have a bending effect on the electromagnetic signal,

so the fact that the pilot of the F-94 never detected anything visually was a strong point in favor of the "ghost" theory. After checking Base Operations, the CAA, and Fairbanks Municipal Airport, Air Force Intelligence learned that no military or civilian aircraft had been in the area at the time of the incident, thus ruling out that idea (Not that anything flying in 1952 could do 1,500 miles per hour.). There seemed no choice but to go with the radar "ghost" hypothesis. Also, the fact that the radar target moved directly away from the ground radar site and then directly toward the installation, might make sense if the target was an equipment malfunction for it would be odd if an aircraft flew on such a course.

An "eerie" solution?

On the other hand, a case can be made for an eerie solution to the problem. According to Lt. Boyd, who was manning the radar at ground site F-2, the target reversed directions by appearing to turn, the turn having a radius of 8 miles! Also, when last detected by Lt. Boyd, the target was headed toward the radar station and that was the same direction of the target picked up by the F-94 fighter on its run back to Ladd Air Force Base. More importantly, the fact that the target never appeared on both the airborne and the ground radar at the same time need not be an insurmountable obstacle to the possibility that a material object was involved. Admittedly, the evidence is weak but it seems similar cases had been reported before. The best example was on October 15, 1948, when an Air Force F-61 chased a radar target for quite some time in the sky off the coast of Kyushu, Japan. The target showed up strong on the F-61's radar but ground radar never once detected anything but the fighter during the chase, although the pilot of the F-61 at one time clearly saw an aerial object with the naked eye. Just why there was a difference in the ability of one radar to detect the UFO compared to another is puzzling, yet it is a fact that 1952 type radar carried by aircraft was of the X-band kind while the ground search radar of those years had a higher PRF. Does that explain the mystery?

"The blob."

Returning to the Alaska episode, the Air Force, after an investigation, determined that the F-94 had indeed been in pursuit of something tangible (in a manner of speaking).

An Air Force expert doing the evaluation of the incident expressed a belief that a: "...'blob' of atmosphere temporarily was in a condition to provide radar reflection..."³⁰ However, the same expert went on to say: "It is doubtful that this 'blob' could be one of high moisture since the ground radar measured speeds of 1500 to 2400 knots[!]. It might be an ionized 'blob'..."³¹ The expert played with the idea that some ionized air from the wake of a meteor reported falling in the area some four hours before might have left some "blobs" of ionized atmosphere.

(Of course that still didn't seem to explain how the 'blob' could travel 1,500 knots), but a scientist contacted at a regional University expressed doubt that military radars were sensitive enough to pick up meteor trails.

The Air Force expert was not so sure either for he made a recommendation. He wrote in his evaluation of the case that if such an incident were to occur again a certain course of action should be taken:

"...when the opportunity is present it is recommended that instead of closing on the target that the pilot fly around the target and determine whether it appears from all directions around the area."³²

While the military didn't endorse the UFO concept, it did narrow the mystery down to a small volume of air that behaved strangely. (Supersonic ionized "blobs" seem about as far-fetched as Martian scout ships!)

Before leaving this case, it has to be mentioned that this would not be the last radar 'blob' incident of 1952. In fact the biggest UFO story of the whole year centered on the 'blob' question. More about that will be covered in the section on the months of July - August.

"Some damn odd things..."

Across the continent in New York state a top civilian experimental radar lab alerted Air Force Intelligence that: "some damn odd things" were going on. Strange, high, fast, targets were being detected and the experts were stumped by the phenomenon. An Air Force officer with General stars had conducted his own inquiry and subsequently personally delivered a report on the matter to Ruppelt's desk. The document breezed through Ruppelt's evaluation system, quickly ending up being tagged "weather inversion phenomenon." Ruppelt opined that perhaps justice suffered but since nothing more was heard from New York, perhaps from disgust as Ruppelt himself suggested, nothing more was done.³³

One thing for sure, things were stirring in the northern latitudes, even abroad in England where a red glowing object "like a pear" hovered for 15 minutes over Hampshire on January 28th, and at Canterbury a golden oblong UFO with a "flame-like light extending from its nose" sped overhead on a southern heading. Within minutes it reappeared out of the south re-tracing its course, this time speeding north.³⁴

Another green meteor.

January 23rd a B-29 of the 32nd Bomb Squadron on a routine operation was approaching the Ceder Bombing range in Florida. Off to the left of the aircraft at a heading of 120 degrees

and some 30 degrees above, a point of green light appeared. The light was a big ball of blue-green dropping toward the earth. Some five degrees above the horizon the ball burst into fragments. After landing the members of the aircrew reported the sighting to military Intelligence because, as they told investigators, they were: "...convinced that object had no relation to meteorological or astronomical activity."³⁵

It must have been a weird sight. The officers claimed:

"The object traveled through space at a greater speed than expected of free falling object and appeared much closer and brighter than falling stars. Prior to explosion object left glowing tail estimated to be 150 feet long."³⁶

While being interrogated one member of the aircrew, Lt. Goade told investigators:

"...during a C-47 flight between Denver and Albuquerque in late 1948 he observed the same type of phenomena on two separate occasions: once approximately 30 minutes north of Albuquerque and again just as he reached the city of Albuquerque. The aircraft was flying at 12,000 feet in both instances. Each object had an upward* trajectory and were seen to burst several thousand feet above the aircraft. Albuquerque radio was advised. Lt. Goade was interrogated at Randolph Air Base by the OSI regarding the incident a few weeks later."³⁷

Ruppelt wrote for the official record:

"This observation is typical of the green fire-ball class of unidentified objects. The Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratory has been investigating this phenomena for the past two years but have reached no conclusions. ATIC is still collecting data on this type of phenomena, however, in case it is ever needed in the future."³⁸

Late in the month a group of strange red lights were noticed hanging in the air in the dark sky above San Jose, California, one evening just after sunset. When a private plane approached to investigate, the lights sped away.³⁹ San Jose is not too far from Watsonville, California, where there had been some UFO excitement the first of the month.

*The emphasis given here is the author's. The upward "falling" of a meteor, if that's what it was, seems to be worth special attention.

Meanwhile, Brig. General W. M. Garland, Office of USAF, Director of Intelligence (Representing General Samford) was briefed by Project GRUDGE chief Lt. E. J. Ruppelt, who gave the bigwig a progress report on the military UFO investigation. The briefing was held on January 29th, and two days later a written summation of the project was issued as GRUDGE Status Report #3.⁴⁰

The only input of Ruppelt's superiors at this time is a suggestion by the Directorate of Intelligence urging Project GRUDGE to consider the use of radar in conjunction with a Project TWINKLE-type camera system. Ruppelt called a meeting of his staff in compliance, but it adjourned with inconclusive results because it was claimed they did not know how to overcome atmospheric problems and malfunctions of electronic equipment. Further discussions were planned.⁴¹

Ruppelt did manage to take what he believed was a positive step. He had his staff set up a speedy evaluation method to "weed out the worthless reports" that threaten to clog the wheels of GRUDGE's investigative machinery. The idea was that UFO reports fell quite readily into conventional explanation categories when correlated with certain known data. One supposes that the principle merit of the plan would be a fast zeroing in on the best cases, but did it work that way? Under Ruppelt's scheme reports were "investigated" by agents sitting at desks in quonset huts at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base using astronomical journals, almanacs, star charts, CAA, and military flight plans, Skyhook balloon position reports, weather balloon tracks, Notams, and Hydrographic bulletins. Reports that resisted easy correlation were placed with similar ones in a "MO" file. If the circumstances were later found to have a good relationship to a conventional phenomenon, all of the folders in the cabinet drawer might suddenly find themselves stamped "solved."

One aspect of Ruppelt's new strategy made sense and it was long over due. He gave orders to his staff to subscribe to a newspaper clipping service so as to gather as many UFO reports as possible from unofficial sources.⁴² Ruppelt expected to get a lot of low grade reports so the loose culling was seen as necessary.

Did this mean that many potentially good UFO reports would be brushed aside? Such a possibility was denied in the text of a routine ATIC briefing document dated April 1, 1952. It

*Here we must note again that the Air Force considered the UFO mystery a problem within the military and among the ranks of technically trained personnel assigned to vital research installations. What the general population was reporting was only of secondary importance. Indeed, often what the public said or did was laughed at and even ignored completely.

was stated that the proposed process: "...is not at all an attempt to prove that sightings are misinterpretations of known objects--we're simply checking to see whether we should eliminate certain of the most obvious possibilities."⁴³

Other action taken was the notice given to "AFOIN-c/cc-2 letter dated 19 December 1951," which dealt with the reporting of information on UFO's. The document was deemed inadequate and a revision was rushed through channels.⁴⁴ That some changes were badly needed is illustrated by the next item we will consider.

"Difficulties."

Donald Keyhoe was not making a mountain out of a mole-hill when he asserted that some of the best potential UFO witnesses had soured on reporting UFO's. Project BLUE BOOK stated in its January 31st Status Report:

"Recently several airline and Air Force pilots have been queried as to their feelings on reporting the sightings of unidentified aerial objects. The queries were predicated by reports that sightings were not being reported due to stigma that has been placed on the project by favorable newspaper releases, etc. Only a very few individuals were contacted, however, these people stated that they would be very reluctant to report any type of unidentified object to the Air Force. One pilot summed up the situation by stating, 'If a space ship flew wing-tip to wing-tip formation with me, I would not report it.' This feeling among people who are in a position to submit good reports is a great handicap to the objective of getting reliable data. The exact nature of some of the objects reported have not been determined, therefore, there is always the possibility that there exists some type of unconventional vehicle possessing extraordinary performance and characteristics. If such a vehicle should appear, its detection would be hampered by the reluctance to report sightings of unusual aerial objects.

"A series of briefings of Air Force commanders is being tentatively planned to explain the functions and findings of this project in an attempt to break down the adverse feelings on reporting that are held by many people."⁴⁵

Apparently in an effort to counter such sentiments, the Pentagon suddenly gave its blessings to the publicizing of some sightings of strange lights spotted in Korea, a report they could have easily hushed up.

When bright orange lights took up pacing positions beside a U.S. B-29 bomber during a bombing raid, Washington released some details to the news media while saying the High Command was impressed with the cases since they had arrived at Headquarters through regular military Intelligence channels.

United Press told the folks back home:

"This report might have been discounted as over imaginative. But on the same night, a B-29 from a different squadron returned to its base after a flight over Sunchon, Korea, a considerable distance from Wonsan. Two crew members told intelligence officers that they had seen 'flying discs' moving parallel to their plane at a high altitude. They fixed the time at about midnight."⁴⁶

Correspondent Dean Dittmer of United Press was pleased that Washington had released the information about the strange objects over Korea, expressing the opinion that the bare announcement may herald a departure from the long prevailing blunt skepticism.⁴⁷

While it may have been a Pentagon maneuver to encourage UFO reporting, the case itself is of interest so we will look at material that is part of the Air Force record and which cannot be found in any press account. Most of the details are contained in a FEAF Bomber Command summary. Excerpts from the official teletype message declared:

"The disc-shaped object, size estimated by observers as 3 feet across, was first observed parallel on course, at 8 o'clock, distance from B-29 unknown. This object remained with the B-29 for approximately five minutes. The object appeared at 8 o'clock level going away from B-29. B-29 was at 22,500 feet, heading 274 degrees, 148 knot ground speed."⁴⁸

The second incident mentioned:

"...one disc shaped object observed, by the left and tail gunners of aircraft...[also] the object approached the B-29 from between 8 and 9 o'clock level then withdrew and disappeared at the same clock position.

"The observers estimated the object to be approximately three feet across at its closest point to the B-29. The object was observed from one minute at which time the weather was CAVU. The object appeared to be spinning."⁴⁹

An additional detail was that the object appeared to be: "...the color of the sun with occasional bluish tint."⁵⁰

Intelligence officers debriefing the bomber crews were apprehensive about the possibility of a new Communist weapon particularly when they learned that in the second case: "The unidentified object was observed shortly before receiving flak."⁵¹

One Intelligence officer became very exercised by the report which he warned: "...represent another example of new technique in warfare under test by the enemy."⁵²

Headquarters replied with requests for more precise information on altitude, speed, direction, etc., and ordered a debriefing of all combat crews. The High Command also asked: "Have photo interpreters noticed anything on the ground similar to reported objects?"⁵³

In their evaluation the military Intelligence officers could not bring themselves to admit that some kind of 'flying saucer' was involved but they came close:

"The times that the object or objects followed the B-29's indicate that the objects were propelled by some means, which eliminates the possibility of an unguided ground-to-air missile, drop missiles, etc. The color and shape of the flames were studied by members of the ATIC propulsion Group to determine whether or not the flame could have been the exhaust of a conventional jet engine with or without an after-burner, a pulse-jet, ram-jet, or rocket engine. None of these possibilities were considered to be applicable.

"The report is somewhat similar to the reports of 'fireball-fighters,' type of phenomenon observed in Europe during World War II. The exact nature of this phenomenon was never determined but bomber crews reported large fiery balls, similar to the sun, passing through or near their formations. There is no documented evidence of data available on this phenomenon, and all the information that has been obtained is verbal from World War II bomber crews, consequently, few actual facts are available."⁵⁴

A re-interrogation produced some clarifications. The military observers could not be absolutely sure the UFO's were spinning: "The brilliance and shimmering of light suggested spinning or rotation."⁵⁵

Furthermore, the expression "disk-shaped" that had caused a sensation in the news media turned out to be a mistake: "Observers described objects as globular rather than flat and description given initial report as saucer-shaped intended to indicate roundness without reference to depth or thickness."⁵⁶

Captain Fournet.

Ruppelt enlarged his staff at this time by adding a certain Captain Dewey J. Fournet to handle questions at the Pentagon in Washington on a full-time basis since there was that much interest in UFO's. Early in February, Captain Fournet shot off a teletype message to Ruppelt at Wright Field, Ohio, asking if ATIC had the cables from Korea giving the specifics on the strange objects reported in the war zone. Captain Fournet pleaded:

"If you have copies of both these cables, request your comments regarding unusual similarity of sightings by these two crews from different squadrons and about 23 minutes apart. Believe will be queried by Brig. General Garland, etc., on this subject so would appreciate your evaluation immediately."⁵⁷

Captain Fournet was also in a fix over something else it seems. The Falls Church, Virginia, Sunday Star had carried a story in its magazine section, February 10th, by Dr. Lincoln La Paz who wrote of his adventures in tracking the mysterious "green fireballs" in the U.S. Southwest, ending his essay by soliciting sightings by the readers. La Paz, often bothered by phonecalls detailing sightings of flying saucers which he merely passed on to the Air Force,⁵⁸ was careful to ask for reports of "green fireballs" only. One result of this appeal was a reaction by a Colonel Caldera, attached to the office of the Joint Chief of Staff at the Pentagon, who believed he had seen one of the so-called green fireballs, or at least something not akin to any meteor. His curiosity aroused by Dr. La Paz, Colonel Caldera collared Captain Fournet in a Pentagon hallway to relate his story. Fournet was still a babe in the woods as far as UFO's were concerned and quickly sent a message to Ruppelt asking: "what did the Colonel mean by 'green fireballs?'"⁵⁹

Three days later, after he had checked his files, Ruppelt sent the following message to Fournet at the Pentagon:

"Object mentioned is green fireball type of phenomena. ATIC has been attempting to get further info on what conclusions were reached by the AF Cambridge Research Laboratory which made a study of this phenomena. They have submitted a report to the Directorate of Research and Development in Washington, but we have been unable to get a copy of the report."⁶⁰

The reason the information on the green fireball study (Project TWINKLE) had not been declassified and disseminated to interested parties was a very interesting one indeed:

"The [Air Force] Scientific Advisory Board Secretariat has suggested that this project not be declassified for a variety of reasons, chief among which is that no scientific explanation for any of the 'fireballs' and other phenomena was revealed by the report and that some reputable scientists still believe that the observed phenomena are man-made."⁶¹

"Man-made?"

The point that the fireballs may have been man-made, or otherwise artificial (alien?), brings us back to the subject of UFO's. On February 18th Ruppelt was still thinking about those odd lights that had excited American airmen in Korea and he could not buy the theory the lights were illusions or some natural phenomenon. Noting that the lights paced the bombers from 1-5 minutes, Ruppelt favored the theory that the lights were some kind of propelled objects and requested that the Air Forces' Reaction Power Plants, Group, Propulsion Unit, analyze the incident to determine which of 5 possibilities could have been the cause of the glowing spots in the sky:

- "1. A conventional jet engine.
2. A conventional jet engine with an after-burner.
3. A ramjet engine.
4. A pulse jet engine.
5. A rocket engine."62

A review by a group of experts, headed by a civilian named Strangers, concurred that the Korean UFO's were propelled, but not by any means suggested. What were the UFO's then? One guess was as good as another.

The result of the inquiry led to another problem: "what to tell the press."

The Director of Public Relations for the Air Force contacted Captain Fournet at the Pentagon on February 20th since he had been swamped by questions concerning "flying saucers" in the Korean war zone. The PR chief had done so: "...in the hope that it will clarify the situation and suffice to eliminate the big play given the incident in the nation's press."64

What was finally released through the Pentagon Press Branch went something like this. The Air Force termed such sightings as "not abnormal" since similar sightings were made during World War II. A list of suggested explanations was included in the press release although it was admitted that the "Foo Fighters" were still a puzzle. The best idea proposed was that enemy fighters were carrying searchlights.65

The handling of the UFO reports from Korea was so unusual Senator Russell was phoning around on Capital Hill for more information, and like the reaction of United Press' Dean Dittmer, those outside the government and military were doing a lot of wondering. An editorial in the Warsaw, Indiana Times-Union expressed the mood better than most. In an issue of February 19th, the Times-Union "blamed the Air Force" for triggering renewed UFO agitation using a press release unaccompanied by the usual blasts that labelled all UFO reports as without foundation. Terming the Air Force move as an event for which there was "unclear reasons," and guessing there had been a behind the scenes shake-up, the Times-Union made a leap that, if shared by any great numbers of others, might mean real trouble:

"Some of the air force statements on the saucers have been so ridiculous as to cause speculation that it actually wants the people gradually to read between the lines and realize that the saucers are real, but that it wants the process to be gradual to avoid possible panic regarding visitors from other parts of the universe."⁶⁶

Meanwhile, there was no let up of curious events.

On February 18th, an aircraft pilot reported 'something' resting on the ocean 14 miles off shore southeast of Savannah, Georgia. At first believed to be a ship afire, search teams, both aerial and naval, could find no trace of debris or oil slicks. Weather conditions were perfect and no ships were reported missing or in distress.⁶⁷

The West Coast had its own aerial show the next day with "meteor maverics" heading the list.

A fiery red-orange thing like a small sun plunged out of the heavens in a conventional manner near Corona, California, but it had a change of mind. It zigzagged and then swooped upward to return from wherever it had originated. The passage took 15 minutes.⁶⁸

That same day at Richmond, California, three "greenish streaks" spotted during a heavy rainfall, were more clearly seen as greenish spheres when they halted their fall and moved away toward San Francisco.⁶⁹

The ever popular romping ground for UFO's, the State of New Mexico, contributed 3 reports of a "round metallic object" hovering in the air over different towns. Suspicions were rampant that a balloon was the culprit, although a state patrolman at the City of Magdelens said the object he had seen had a "ramp."^{(?)70}

The Pentagon issued a press release on February 20th announcing that an investigation of the UFO encounters in the Korean war zone was "full scale," relating the fact top officials in Washington were being briefed on the case.⁷¹ The foregoing we know from an examination of the official file. For some clue to more of the actual "behind-the-scenes" activity we have to rely on Ruppelt's writings and he has little to say except to state that his Project GRUDGE work was proceeding without publicity during a period of relative calm in the civilian sector. UFO activity was at a low ebb but interest among various big shots in Washington was at a remarkable high. Almost daily Ruppelt got phone calls about the UFO subject, which is why Captain Fournet had been assigned to the Pentagon to field questions on a personal basis.

A beautiful day at Greenfield.

At Greenfield station, Massachusetts, February 20th, a pastor of a German Congregational church boarded a train and took a seat near a window. Like most travelers he gazed at the scenery to alleviate the boredom of the trip. Flashes in the cobalt blue excited his eyes as a brilliantly reflective trio of saucer-shapes approached in V-formation. The formation quickly slowed, the object in the lead braking faster than its companions so to form a line of three abreast when all of the objects finally came to a complete stop. After a ten second wait, the objects shot off to one side so fast they were out of sight in about six seconds. It was an astonishing performance.⁷²

"Queer meteor."

Another "queer meteor" over Keysville, Virginia, was described as a "silvery, cigar-shaped object" silently crossing the sky in "short bursts of movement."⁷³

Richmond, California had strange sky guests for the second time in four days when on February 24th another trio of strange fireballs, this time a bright orange, approached the city from the direction of the bay. The UFO's flew a circle above Nichol Knob, a small hill overlooking the local shipyard. Two of the balls then took on a green hue and with the lone orange glowing companion, zoomed away on a northward heading. This time three policemen on patrol were the witnesses: Officers Jack Ficks, Jack Estes, and T. J. Walsh.⁷⁴ (The February 20th Richmond report had been made by a newspaper manager and a group of newspaper carriers.)

Turkey turmoil.

The tilting and flashing in the sunlight of hoop-like images in the sky over Gansville, Arkansas on February 25th, produced a UFO report a notch above the Richmond incident.

Perhaps larger than an airliner, the things maneuvered about the sky at great height. A transparent center proved an optical illusion as the rays of the sun struck at various angles but were the objects themselves an illusion? If so, can we explain why a flock of turkeys in a pen on the ground below the waltzing UFO's went bananas, flapping their wings and screeching.⁷⁵

England owned up to two strange cases in February. One on February 13th mentioned a "luminous cigar-like thing" over London. The UFO was blue-bellied and green-tipped (both ends). Also, a round bright object with a light or shiny protuberance on its underside, passed over Cambridgeshire on the 28th.⁷⁶

The U.S. suffered from saucer measles, a sighting here, a sighting there, sightings everywhere, at a low frequency; nonetheless, attention was slowly being drawn to the north.

Project "THETA".

Official agencies in Canada were alarmed by a jump in the number of UFO reports which had been accompanied by a sharp increase in public restlessness so the Defense Research Board, which had taken the lead in worrying about the aerial mystery, decided to launch a classified program to study sightings of strange objects moving through the atmosphere.⁷⁷ At the outset, the single codeword "THETA" was adopted, but then it was dropped because according to the usual Canadian practice, stringent security measures went with a "single word" use that required the word to be deleted from all documents. Not willing to be inconvenienced, the DRB opted for a "two-word" codeword.⁷⁸

Project "SECOND STORY."

The proposed Canadian effort was then assigned the name SECOND STORY, and with that out of the way the next step, under the leadership of the DRB, was the notification of interested officials that a meeting was to be convened in the near future to discuss the apparently growing UFO excitement.⁷⁹

A comment that might be made here is one by Dr. Robert F. Creegan who, while studying the UFO mystery in the late 1970's, wrote:

"Sometimes a coming flap of world-wide proportions may be predicted by noting increased numbers of reports in the Canadian file. For example, the numbers in the early 1973 preceded the flap in the USA, France, and elsewhere, which became evident only in the late summer and autumn."⁸⁰

The year 1952 would follow the Canadian pattern.

At the end of February 1952, Project GRUDGE issued Status Report #4, a rather dull document, but then the second month of 1952 had been a relatively dull month for UFO reports, except for the Korean incident.

"BLUE BOOK."

While UFO activity may have been less than usual, Ruppelt was still quite busy:

"By March 1952, Project GRUDGE was no longer just a project within a group, we had become a separate organization, with the formal title of the Aerial Phenomena Group. Soon after this step-up in the chair of command the code name was changed to Blue Book. The word 'Grudge' was no longer applicable."⁸¹

For the record the person who helped rename GRUDGE was a Lt. Colonel Charles Cooke, USAF. He pondered a name "without overtones" so he picked BLUE BOOK, which he thought had a lot of overtones, therefore actually having none!⁸²

March.

Time, in its March 3rd issue, produced the year's first big magazine treatment of UFO's. While the military seemed to be taking the UFO problem seriously for the moment, Time did its own squelching by making fun of disc stories, especially Frank Scully's Venusian yarn. The article did, however, wind up with a surprise in the form of a favorable review of Edward Sullivan's amateur group of saucer sluetts, the Civilian Saucer Investigations of Los Angeles. The magazine was probably leery of blasting the group because of its membership. CSI's star member was Dr. Walter Riedel of North American Aviation Corporation who had been an intense student of the UFO riddle for some time and had come to the conclusion that the reported objects were real, that they possessed solidity and were some sort of machine. Because of his training and background, he determined that:

1. The metals used in such objects surpassed known alloys in heat resistance.
2. High performance shown by the UFO's exceeded known designs.
3. Lack of exhaust trails also indicate a highly advanced technology.

His conclusion: "Visitors from the void."⁸³

Lending authority to his views was the fact that Dr. Riedel spent World War II as the chief designer of the German V-2 rocket works at Peenemunde.

As usual Time ended an article on UFO's on a doubting note, questioning the lack of radar contact, the missing piles of saucer wreckage of craft gone awry, and the limited reporting of UFO's over metropolitan areas.

This is a good opportunity to point out that interest in the UFO mystery seemed to be sweeping the aircraft industry of Southern California during the early 1950's. Besides Edward Sullivan's CSI with its members from North American Aviation, there existed the "Flying Saucer Club of San Diego" made up of engineers from the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation.⁸⁴ Likewise, there was the Lockheed bunch mentioned in a March 3, 1952 letter penned by Dr. Lincoln La Paz. Unlike the civilian organization created by Coral Lorenzen (APRO), the forementioned groups had good connections within the military and could prove to be potent critics of official policy as demonstrated by the gentlemen from Republic Aircraft who met with General Cabell in an explosive meeting back in September 1951.

Returning to the forementioned La Paz letter, we see another example of how well aviation experts were becoming entwined with the military's UFO investigation. The letter from Dr. La Paz was addressed to Colonel Doyle Rees in charge of the OSI's 17th District Office based at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico. The missive read:

"You no doubt recall the investigation carried out jointly by the 17th District OSI Office and the Institute of Meteoritics in the Mescalero-Apache Reservation. Our guide on the field trip made through the reservation was Mr. Charles Milligan, who was on leave from his engineering work with the Lockheed Corporation in California.

"I have just had a long distance phone call from Mr. Milligan, informing me that a group of engineers and scientists which he recently helped organize have a new and very interesting approach to the green fireball problem which has long been a matter of concern to you and me. Mr. Milligan and his associates are anxious to discuss this matter with agents of the OSI. I promised to bring this matter to your attention at the Washington office in the hope that you would be able to arrange for OSI agents to communicate with the secretary of Mr. Milligan's group, namely, Mr. William M. Thompson, --- (deleted), North Hollywood, California.

"Lt. Paul Ryan, with whom we several times cooperated in the Roswell area, is personally acquainted with Mr. Milligan and was responsible for Milligan's acting as guide during the Mescalero search. I mention this action on Milligan's request."85

Meanwhile, Robert Ginna of Life magazine dropped in to visit Project GRUDGE at ATIC, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, on March 3rd, bringing with him an update of his inquiry into the UFO riddle. A brief reference to this visit in Air Force records tells us that the "proposed article had been coordinated with Headquarters USAF," and that Ruppelt was interested in the fact that the Life probe had turned up some intriguing UFO reports by highly qualified civilian observers that had not come to the attention of ATIC. Furthermore:

"It is believed that Mr. Ginna's contact with the Air Force established an excellent source of material in that Life has representatives all over the world and these people are sending reports to Life as a matter of routine. ATIC will have access to these reports."86

Another "thing" in the air in the Far East.

An American C-54 was approaching Achiya Air Base about 2:00 p.m. March 4th and was:

"...approximately 15 miles west of the Base, over the Sea of Japan at an altitude of 1550 feet, and was letting down at the rate of 300 feet per minute. Speed of the C-54 was 130 knots. The C-54 was turning to 300 degrees. The pilot, 1st Lt. R. J. Weed, stated that the object was heading 290 degrees, itself [sic] appeared to be oval shaped, from 50 to 100 feet in length, and that both the trail and the object were bright orange in color. The object, itself, was approximately 50 feet thick; the trail was approximately 50 feet in length. He stated that the object was observed for from 1½ to 2 minutes. The object was at an estimated 15 miles distance from him, at an estimated altitude of 30,000 feet, and was moving on a horizontal plane at a 'terrific speed.' He added that it seemed to gradually fade from sight.

"The other two crew members, 2nd Lt. T. G. Camidge, Co-pilot; and S/Sgt. N. Davly, Engineer; concurred in the above account of the sighting.

"Lt. Weed further stated that the object was definitely not a jet aircraft. He stated that he has seen jet type aircraft operating at night and, further, that he has also seen jets operating with afterburners during periods of darkness. He and the crew were very impressed with the observation, remarking that they almost forgot to land the aircraft because the object sighted had captured their complete attention."⁸⁷

The king of the columnists, Drew Pearson, now did an about face from his early stance of saucer doubter to charge, on March 7th, that the Pentagon was keeping under wraps some 25 radar-visible UFO cases, feeling justified in suppressing the data since radar could be fooled by ionized clouds which more than once had put the military on the alert and had President Truman scurrying to the White House war room.⁸⁸

Kaplan's plan.

Status Report #5 had this interesting information:

"On March 7, 1952, Dr. Joseph Kaplan, Professor of Physics at UCLA and a member of the AF Scientific Advisory Board visited ATIC to discuss methods of obtaining more factual information on the reported unidentified aerial objects than has been obtained in the past. His primary interest is the 'Green Fireball' phenomena, but the methods he suggested can be applied to any object.

"Dr. Kaplan's suggestion is to use spectrum analysis as an aid in identifying the objects. Any object that emits light will have a definite spectrum. The first step in Dr. Kaplan's suggested plan is to obtain the spectrum of the object. This spectrum is then matched with the spectrum of known objects such as meteors, stars, etc., to eliminate or establish the fact that they are known objects. If the objects are not astronomical bodies the spectrum will give some indication as to what they might be."⁸⁹

A technical explanation was then detailed by Dr. Kaplan which was reproduced by the Status Report, including a remark by Air Force Intelligence that the proposed program's feasibility would be studied.

March 7th a pair of flat silver objects parked in the air several minutes over the suburbs of Tucson, Arizona. Unfortunately, no military equipment was available to zero in on the UFO's.⁹⁰

A pair of dark bodies zipped over Oakland, California, March 10th, perhaps too fast to be measured. Seen by a C. K. Greenwood, one object launched itself straight across the sky like the flight of an arrow while its wingmate scooted along in sinuous course.⁹¹

"Unwarranted fears."

The persistent attempts to get the results of Project TWINKLE declassified continued to smoke out intriguing commentary by the Air Force High Command. In a letter dated March 11, 1952, it was stated by Colonel H. J. Kieling, Executive Director of Intelligence, that:

"The attached report on project 'Twinkle' has been carefully reviewed by the Directorate of Intelligence with a view to its possible declassification and preparation of a suitable press release.

"It is not considered appropriate to declassify the project at this time since no definite conclusions have been reached concerning the origin or nature of the phenomena which have been investigated. It is believed that a release of the information to the public in its present condition would cause undue speculation and give rise to unwarranted fears among the populace such as occurred in previous releases on unidentified flying objects. This results from releases when there has been no real solution. This project is part of a larger program which is known as 'Grudge' and which has been

(Unclassified) Project TWINKLE

UNCLASSIFIED

Directorate of Research and Development, DRS/D
ATTN: Research Division

17 MAR 1952

Directorate of Intelligence, DUS/O

Capt Fournot/ra/56894
AFOIN-7/TC

1. The attached report on project "Twinkle" has been carefully reviewed by the Directorate of Intelligence with a view to its possible declassification and preparation of a suitable press release.

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3. However, the Directorate of Intelligence will continue its past policy of treating each incident as a separate case and will recommend the release of information on sightings which appear to warrant publication.

2 Incls

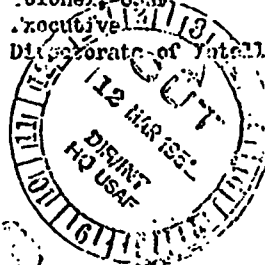
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for info only

When inclosure(s) No. 112 is (are) withdrawn or not attached, the classification of this correspondence will be cancelled or changed to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with Ar. 130, AFR 203-1.

No M/R required

H. J. KIELING
Colonel, USAF
Executive
Directorate of Intelligence



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"However, the Directorate of Intelligence will continue its past policy of treating each incident as a separate case and will recommend the release of information on sightings which appear to warrant publication."⁹²

Well! There you are! Donald Keyhoe said as much in his many books, although it was done in a more dramatic style.

"Still classified."

The same day Colonel Doyle Rees had something to say about the release of information to the public in his answer to Dr. Lincoln LaPaz:

"I enjoyed very much receiving your letter of 3 March 1952 and learning that the fireball phenomena is still continuing. I often think of the great assistance you so willingly gave us during that investigation.

"I do not know how much help it would be to Mr. Milligan to talk with OSI Agents on the subject, because as you know, the investigative reports are classified. However, this is a matter he should take up with the District Commander in the area concerned."⁹³

Perhaps it was just as well the military sought to head off "undue speculation that would give rise to unwarranted fears" because the forward edge of the massive 1952 UFO wave was beginning to appear along the northern part and a few places in the middle of the U.S.

A wingless cylinder turned twice before being lost from sight to the north over Columbus, Ohio, March 12th. The same thing was reported in the air over Wellston, Ohio, travelling a straight course while in view.⁹⁵

At Athens, Ohio, an object appeared in the sky looking like a "long silvery streak" as it dived through the air after which it moved perpendicular to the earth.⁹⁶

From a vantage point atop a tower at Duke University (Durham, North Carolina), on March 14th, a nightwatchman witnessed a group of subjects flying north to south.⁹⁷

The beautiful crystal clear air of British Columbia was host to a shimmering silver star-like body that moved in different directions, making right angle turns punctuated with three sharp bounces. A quartet of lumberjacks gave their account of the spectacle to the Vancouver Sun.⁹⁸

A wobbly, tipping object that resembled two saucers placed edge to edge, crossed the sky over Ionia, Michigan, flashing a silver light. This was on March 17th.⁹⁹

"Curious phenomenon."

On the road outside of Aix, France, at 8:30 p.m., an evening late in March, a Pierre Urtin saw a "kind of fiery ball" in the sky approaching at high speed. Silent and casting out red-green rays of light, the "meteor" suddenly changed gears and achieved a violent acceleration, doubling¹⁰⁰ its speed when it reached a point directly above Mr. Urtin.

Navy Secretary Dan Kimball.

In mid-March, a member of President Truman's cabinet, Navy Secretary Dan Kimball, visited Pensacola Naval Air Station, Florida; where he addressed an audience of Navy officers and air cadets. During his address, Kimball told a sensational story about a recent flight across the Pacific.

The Secretary and members of his staff, according to Kimball's account, were travelling in two aircraft and were over the ocean somewhere between Pearl Harbor and Guam when the pilot of Kimball's plane left the controls and rushed back to the passenger compartment. Excitedly the pilot explained that: "...a flying saucer had appeared out of nowhere, had flown abeam the Secretary's plane for some distance, and had just raced ahead and shot up into the sky and out of sight."¹⁰¹ The pilot swore both he and his co-pilot had witnessed the startling sight, requesting permission of Kimball to notify Pear Harbor of the incident. Secretary Kimball thought it best that no radio message be sent on ahead since the story: "...wouldn't be believed," but did give orders for the plane carrying the rest of the staff following behind on the same course be alerted. The message was sent and minutes later the radio crackled with the astounding announcement from the second plane that: "...a flying saucer had just come down and flown alongside the wing tip, then it shot ahead and vanished into the sky."¹⁰²

"Air Defense Command and Joint Air Defense Board Briefing."

Status Report #5 states:

"On 19 March 1952, General Childlaw and his staff, of the Air Defense Command, and General Gardner and his staff, of the Joint Air Defense Board, were briefed by an ATIC briefing team. The groups were briefed on the history and operations of Project Blue Book and a member of the Aircraft Performance and Characteristics Branch of ATIC presented data on missiles and types of unconventional aircraft that are known to exist or have existed.

The purpose of the briefing was to present the problem to ADC and determine how they can help. It was found that ADC presently has about 30 radar sites equipped with scope cameras. Those cameras are not operational on a 24-hour basis, but this could be accomplished in a minimum time particularly in locations of special interest to Project Blue Book. Radar scope photographs would be of great value in interpreting some of the unusual radar returns that are reported.

"Action has been taken to initiate a program with ADC to utilize their radar facilities."¹⁰³

"The Townsend Brown Foundation."

A Lt. General Craig phoned Major General Bertrandias on March 24th to discuss the "Townsend Brown Foundation" of Los Angeles, California. General Bertrandias was impressed with the group which was working on a "flying saucer-type" craft, and urged General Craig to check on the queer project.¹⁰⁴

Counter Intelligence investigated the Los Angeles organization and learned nothing alarming,¹⁰⁵ but it would not be the last time the Air Force would hear from the foundation's leader, Townsend-Brown.

A cloud in the sky over Chicago March 27th spit out a couple of disc-like things that flipped completely over during a short flight in the area. After a while the pair returned to the blanket of vapor where they had first emerged.¹⁰⁷

More mystery in the war zone.

A press account reads:

"At 11:20 a.m., March 29, 1952, an Air Force pilot was flying a T-6 north of Misawa, Japan. It was a bright cloudless day. Lt. D. C. Brigham was in the T-6 target plane in a practice intercept mission, with a flight of two F-84's pursuing him.

"As the first F-84 overtook him at 6,000 feet, Brigham noticed a flash of sunlight behind it and saw a small shiny disc-shaped object gaining on the interceptor. The UFO curved toward the F-84, decelerating rapidly to the Thunderjet's air speed (150 to 160 mph) and flipping up on edge in a 90 degree bank. Then it fluttered along close to the interceptor's fuselage (between the two aircraft) for 2 to 3 seconds, and pulled away around the starboard wing, flipping once, apparently as it hit the slipstream. Finally, the object passed the F-84, crossed in front, pulled up abruptly, accelerated, and shot out of sight in a near vertical climb.

"Lieutenant Brigham estimated that the UFO at its closest point was 30 to 50 feet away from his plane. It was round, shiny as polished chromium, and seemed to be about 8 inches in diameter. Throughout the observation, the disc rocked back and forth in 40 degree banks at about one-second intervals. Lieutenant Brigham saw no exhaust or protrusions, but reported a ripple in the apparently metal skin around the edge of the disc."108

An Air Force Captain, a jet pilot friend of Donald Keyhoe by the name of Jim Riordan, shook his head after reading the Misawa report: "How the devil could an eight inch disc fly, let alone maneuver like that?"109 Donald Keyhoe didn't know the answer either but the continued reporting of such incidents increased his resolve to keep abreast of the mystery. Already the ex-Marine pilot was thinking about another book about UFO's.

Why the Congo?

The next episode is briefly mentioned in various UFO books like Keyhoe's and one might assume it was of doubtful authenticity but a search of Air Force files has uncovered the original account. The date of the case was March 29, 1952. An ATIC document states:

"Location: Belgian Congo.

"Recently two fiery disks were sighted over the uranium mines located in the northern part of the Belgian Congo in the Elisabethville district. The disks glided in curves and changed their position many times, so that from below they sometimes appeared as plates, ovals and simply lines. Suddenly both disks hovered in one spot, then took off in a unique zigzag flight to the NE.

"Commander (--- deleted) of the small Elisabethville airfield immediately set out in pursuit with a fighter plane. On his approach he came within about 120 meters of one of the disks. No further identification action was taken."110

Here are two more from the U.S.

A 100 foot long cylinder slowly crept toward the northwest over Butler, Missouri, on March 29th. A soundless performance, it left no smoke trail. The principle witness was the Chairman of the Industrial Commission of the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, C. J. Henry.111

That same day something dropped in on New England. It dropped at an alarming speed out of the sky over Greenfield, Massachusetts, the roar of the wind reaching the ears of the citizens of the town below. Coming to a halt at 1,500 feet, the thing was visible to witnesses as a "rotating disc" which floated in the air and then tipped on edge showing two rings

both about four feet wide. It eventually sped away following the contours of the terrain. Reaching a point above a mountain peak, it then shot back to the reaches of thinner atmosphere somewhere above.¹¹²

Back at ATIC Ruppelt was preparing Project BLUE BOOK Status Report #5 on March 31st when the Pentagon phoned asking for clarification of the January 1948 Captain Mantell tragedy. A Colonel in the Pentagon's Office of Public Information was requesting information on the death of the National Guard pilot, and the planet Venus explanation that was supposed to have ended speculation about the case. Ruppelt dropped everything and rummaged through old Air Force files. Much of the material was incomplete and hard to read so he questioned some of the Intelligence officers that had worked on Project SIGN. This led to Ruppelt contacting the Air Force's first scientific UFO advisor Dr. J. Allen Hynek of Ohio State University who Ruppelt later praised as the "most impressive scientist ever to work on the UFO problem."¹¹³

Over lunch Ruppelt and Dr. Hynek reviewed the famous Mantell case of January 7, 1948 that had produced screaming newspaper headlines about a "pilot killed by a flying saucer," a disaster that was soon after explained as an accident, the dead pilot mistaking the planet Venus for a mysterious UFO. Dr. Hynek explained that the Venus solution had been based on only circumstantial evidence and that he could not pass judgement on theories such as balloons, reflections, etc., since they were not within his field of expertise.

After his talk with Dr. Hynek, Ruppelt zeroed in on the Skyhook balloon theory to explain the UFO in the Mantell case since only a few simple assumptions were required to have the balloon answer fit the apparent facts as they were given in official records. Studying the data, Ruppelt became convinced that the Skyhook answer was the correct one so he phoned the Pentagon's Office of Public Information and passed on his decision.

Perhaps of greater significance than Ruppelt's Skyhook decision was the meeting between Ruppelt and Dr. Hynek which led to the Ohio professor's return to the work of an astronomical consultant to the Air Force. Dr. Hynek later wrote:

"I played essentially no part in Project Grudge, and it was not until after the organization of Project Blue Book, under Captain Ruppelt in 1952, that I again became scientific consultant on UFO matters. Although my chief responsibility was as astronomical consultant, I concerned myself with all reports as they came in, each month reviewing current reports. Thus I became aware of some very interesting cases, most of which were submerged in a veritable quagmire of nonsense reports."¹¹⁵

Dr. Hynek's help was needed but the subject of providing solutions was explained further by Ruppelt.

"The most serious question since the beginning of man."

The pressure to supply answers to puzzling UFO reports was eased, Ruppelt knew well enough, by the realization that the most important decision of all would not be his to make. He wrote: "Giving a final answer would require a serious decision--probably one of the most serious since the beginning of man."¹¹⁶

A "UFO" supreme court.

Ever since mid-1951, there had been talk at ATIC of convening a "panel of experts" to seriously weigh the UFO evidence.* By the first part of 1952 such plans had firmed, since the space ship idea had edged up notch by notch, until early 1952 when the extraterrestrial theory was being seriously entertained in both military and scientific circles.¹¹⁷ Anticipating the appointment of a "UFO supreme court" the Battelle Memorial Institute was given the okay to move ahead at full throttle under a contractual agreement codenamed "Project STORK," but also referred to at times by the designation "PPS-100." The date of inception was March 31, 1952 and the supervisor of STORK was a Mr. William Reid. The requirements were:

1. Provide a panel of consultants.
2. Assist in improving interrogation forms.
3. Analyze existing sighting reports.
4. Subscribe to a clipping service.
5. Apprise the sponsor monthly of all work done."¹¹⁸

Since Battelle was the world's largest non-profit independent research organization which conducted thousands of studies every year for dozens of countries in the social, physical, and life science, a person had every right to expect great things from STORK.

The timing would be perfect for STORK, since April set an all-time record for UFO reports and most were from military sources. Moreover, ordinary citizens wrote the Air Force adding some 200 reports to Project BLUE BOOK's files, and the newspaper clipping service would forward press articles in the tens of thousands. Ruppelt, however, would have his hands full just processing information coming through official channels.¹¹⁹

April.

*By mid-1951, the Pentagon realized that excellent UFO reports made by the military had kept increasing in spite of the lack of publicity, a fact that tended to disprove the "UFO sightings are due to hysteria" theory.

An Intelligence briefing was given on April 1st at ATIC headquarters, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, and a transcript of it has been preserved in Air Force files. Just who was briefed that first day of April was not recorded but apparently the material was meant to be a standardized presentation to visitors to Project BLUE BOOK and thus was used on a number of other occasions.

Most of the material upon examination shows that it contains considerable routine information like the explaining of ATIC's mission (Prevention of technological surprise in the air.), but it did lead up to the subject of aircraft of advanced design and from that to the UFO mystery. An expert from the Air Force's Technical Analysis Division, according to the briefing documents, gave a run down on the capability of the very latest achievements in aeronautical science and then tied the discussion to the UFO riddle by stating: "This applies to conventional aircraft, however, and since our reports indicating aircraft point to a highly unconventional type, it is felt that in-flight refueling as a possible explanation for the phenomena offers little promise."¹²⁰

Other than that last startling sentence, nothing much else about UFO's appears in the briefing script (Unless, of course, such data was censored.).

Kaplan and cameras.

A key figure in the Air Force's effort was Dr. J. Kaplan who continued to push for a serious scientific approach. On the second of April he outlined his plan of using diffraction grating equipped cameras, utilizing a laboratory model and stressing the economics of using a particular type of grating which was cheap but adequate (Even at this hiatus of official interest money was a problem.).

Demonstrating his device to BLUE BOOK personnel, Dr. Kaplan discussed how the use of sky-scanning cameras to identify unusual airborne objects would be enhanced by a lens grating that would break down the light from even the most blurred source to reveal temperature and the composition much like an astronomer studying a star (There is no indication in the record that Dr. Kaplan took seriously reports of metallic disks but there is little doubt he would have given ten years pay to examine the spectrum of a streaking green fireball that zoomed over New Mexico with teasing regularity.).¹²¹

In spite of this highly technical suggestion, BLUE BOOK with Ruppelt at the helm had no desire to pass up less sophisticated means.

"A source of information."

Accompanied by Colonel S. H. Kirtland, Ruppelt flew to Los Angeles April 2nd where he and the Colonel dropped in on a meeting of the Civilian Saucer Investigators, the group of

amateur UFO investigators that had been mentioned in Time magazine and boasted Dr. Walther Riedel as its director, a scientist who had been quoted as saying: "I'm convinced saucers have an out-of-the-world basis."¹²² Ruppelt remembered the gathering as being composed of: "...well-meaning Don Quixote-types," and could only shake his head at their attempt to do what the Air Force could not.¹²³

Ruppelt did address the group, briefing the members of CSI on the unclassified aspects of BLUE BOOK operations and in spite of his "Don Quixote" comment, he did take note that many in the audience were employees of the North American Aircraft, Inc., people that were aerophysics experts and qualified engineers engaged in missile development.

Regardless of the impression given in Ruppelt's memoirs, which indicates that the visit was something of a whim, official documents tell a different story. As head of BLUE BOOK Ruppelt at that time was making an extensive effort to garner as much UFO data as possible and the principle purpose of the visit was to establish an official liaison with the civilian band to channel any information they would receive to Wright Field.¹²⁴

CSI managed a contribution that very evening since one of the members had been able to procure an advanced copy of the April 7th issue of Life magazine that contained the long awaited UFO article worked on by Bob Ginna. The world's most widely read periodical had finally published the big UFO story it had commissioned months before. The reputation of Life for serious journalism meant the slant given the topic could have a substantial impact on public opinion, and with that in mind Ruppelt was wide-eyed at the article's title: "Do We Have Visitors From Space?"

In the article Life took the opportunity, via the pen of Bob Ginna, to eat a little humble pie. The editors confessed that their initial reaction to the outbreak of the "flying saucer craze" in 1947 was that the phenomenon would only be a one-time summer absurdity, a feeling that prevailed until January 1948, when Captain Mantell was killed "chasing a saucer." That sobering event was followed by the Air Force's 1949 UFO project report distributed to the news media which attributed UFO sightings to explainable factors of an unsensational nature, a document that seemed to act like a sedative to fervent imaginations since reports slowed to a trickle. Yet when Life did get around to asking questions seriously, on and off the record, it learned that not all the experts were at peace with the notion there was nothing to UFO reports. It was also noted that concern was growing, not diminishing. Finally, Life obtained an electrifying admission from an Intelligence officer: "The higher you go in the Air Force, the more seriously they take the flying saucers."¹²⁵

Life discussed ten UFO incidents, presented in capulated form, and arrived at the extraterrestrial solution as the most

likely possibility. The ten cases were touted as "scientific evidence" although a critical reader would contest that contention. Furthermore, only two men with scientific credentials were quoted, CSI's Dr. Walther Riedel and a Dr. Maurice A. Biot, as endorsing the concept of aliens penetrating the Earth's atmosphere. As for the Air Force, an article sub-heading proclaimed that the service was "now ready to concede that some UFO's are unexplained."¹²⁶ Was that true?

French UFO author Jimmy Guieu interpreted Life's effort as something other than a daring achievement of investigative journalism, seeing the article as probably an Air Force attempt to use the magazine as a mouthpiece, imparting the message that there might be something strange in the atmosphere and that the military was mobilizing men and material to find some answers.¹²⁷

"Flying Saucers are Back."

Reacting to the swelling UFO activity, Sir magazine whipped up enthusiasm on the news stands with an article in its April issue with the title: "Flying Saucers are Back," a rehash of the more sensational stories. Climbing on the bandwagon started by Life, Sir announced: "American scientists are now really worried about flying saucers--these weird machines have been sighted more and more--hovering over our biggest secret atomic experiments."¹²⁸ There was no telling how far speculation would accelerate. Everyone looked to Washington for an official statement.

Word from Washington, D.C., April 4th, countered any excesses the Life article might have evoked, explaining that recent Air Force statements should not mean anything other than that the Pentagon had a "continued interest" in UFO's and that no: "...new evaluations have been made or new conclusions have been reached."¹²⁹

If the powers-that-be were anti-UFO, why all the pro-UFO language in the Life article which was written with Air Force assistance? Ruppelt admits that the "maybe the UFO's are space ships" article in Life had been "unofficially inspired" by the "Air Force." The BLUE BOOK chief defined what he meant by the "Air Force" as the "personal opinion" of several high ranking officers in the Pentagon. Ginna drew encouragement for the alien slant from personal interviews and not documented data.¹³⁰

For their part, the UFO's were gearing up to provide ample opportunity for thousands of Americans to judge the mystery first hand. The UFO wave of 1952 would move south out of Canada in the next few weeks.

At 10:30 p.m. April 4th, persons living outside Hammond, British Columbia, were enjoying a clear evening air when a green shimmering point of light came over the southern horizon.

As it got closer to the zenith, the green color faded to an orange-amber hue. The point of light took on a discernible shape, that of an oval, as it neared 12 o'clock high, and then casting off a sparkling trail, the light made an abrupt left turn and moved on a western track for a brief time. It then halted. Immediately thereafter, it retraced its approach course. Before being lost to view in the southern sky, its coloration changed to pure amber and then to a green, and finally to a white hue.¹³¹

Rand endorses Kaplan.

"A group of Rand, Inc., personnel were briefed on 4 April 1952. Although Rand, Inc., is not associated with the project in any way, some of the scientists are personally interested and have been following the status of the project. After the briefing, various aspects of the project were discussed, among them the use of a diffraction grating camera to obtain the spectrum of objects that may be observed. All of the group concurred that this would be an inexpensive method of obtaining more definite data."¹³²

While we are at it, what did the BLUE BOOK Status Report have to say about the Life article? Report #6 stated:

"This article created a great deal of interest in the subject of unidentified aerial objects. During the period of 3 April to 6 April 1952, approximately 350 daily newspapers in all parts of the United States carried some mention of the article and some mention of the fact that the Air Force was interested in receiving such reports.

"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."¹³³

Did this publicity generate an increase in UFO reports across the country? The answer to that is no! The UFO wave of 1952 had yet to leave Canadian latitudes.

"No significance is attached."

Examining a UFO report submitted by a civilian source on April 5th, one is struck by a comment made by the investigating Intelligence officer. The case itself is not as worthy of note as the attitude of the agent making the inquiry. A Captain F. R. Roeper declared: "No significance attached to this lone report. However, if substantiated by reports in surrounding areas, pertinent information may be incorporated."¹³⁴

Okinawa, Japan.

UFO reports from the war zone in the Far East early in the year did not match some observations made later on in Okinawa. That these latter sightings made no splash in the press is explained by the fact that information on the incidents was buried in classified debriefing documents that detailed the witnesses' activities during combat missions over North Korea. Inserted right in the middle of a routine Intelligence report were some unusual statements.

It seems in one case on April 5, 1952 an American air crew had just returned from a bombing run and was in the tent area of Kadena Air Force Base on Okinawa after deplaning prior to reporting in. It was midnight and overhead was a thin, broken layer of cloud at 20,000 feet. The wind was out of the North. Their flight log listed routine occurrences during the mission like: "removal of chaff dispenser," "test of 50 caliber guns satisfactory," and "observed whitish brown puff of smoke at Hungham." Only in a few places would the log make for interesting reading with short references to flak or a near approach by a communist interceptor. The fascinating section deals with that period after landing:

"Unidentified flying object observed at an approximate altitude of 20,000 feet flying an erratic course from position on North horizon to Base Area and then disappearing to the West. The object was observed to approach the base flying a straight and level course on and then maneuvered over the base with violent high speed zig-zagging stopping momentarily and then maneuvering. Finally object shot up out of sight heading West. Total time of observation was ten minutes. The object was observed to have the following characteristics, namely: (1) white steady light (2) no definite shape but larger than the stars (3) noiseless (4) no trail of sparks or flame (5) grew larger and brighter on approach and smaller and dimmer ascending and breaking away (6) all maneuvering done at speeds higher than any conventional jet aircraft-- estimated at 1000 knots."135

Saucer over Shreveport.

Was it a balloon? Air Force records state:

"At approximately 1430 CST on 9 April 1952, a C-46 crew observed an object between Shreveport, La., and Barksdale Air Force Base. The C-46 was at 9,000 feet on a heading of 90 degrees. The object, which appeared to be disc-shaped, cream-colored and 30 to 40 feet in diameter was ahead of the aircraft at an estimated altitude of 4,000 feet and coming directly toward it. When the

object was some distance ahead of the C-46, it appeared to turn into the easterly wind. It passed under the C-46, over Barksdale Air Force Base, and climbed into the overcast which was at 12,000 feet.

"Fifteen minutes later another C-46 observed a similar object five-six miles north of Barksdale. It appeared to be at 11,000 feet and was disappearing on a northerly heading."¹³⁶

F-86 fighters were scrambled in an effort to intercept the object but results were negative.

Afterward, Air Force investigators listed under the heading: "STATUS OF THE INVESTIGATION" this remark:

"A Radiosonde balloon was scheduled for launching at 1500 CST. The description of the object and its maneuvers are somewhat similar to previous reports that were possibly balloons. However, if the time of sighting is correct and the balloon was launched on schedule, the object was probably not a balloon."¹³⁷

Green, green, and more green.

A phosphorescent green fireball raced over Racine, Wisconsin, on April 7th, while another appeared in the sky over Portland, Oregon, the same day.¹³⁸ A short time after the first sighting, three green lights moving in formation passed over Portland.¹³⁹

The northern activity continues.

April 11th at Temiskaming, Ontario, six disc-like objects followed by vapor trails noiselessly bobbed up and down in the sky.¹⁴⁰

Also on the 11th near Hammond, British Columbia a bright light similar to those previously reported in the area was observed again, the second incident in a week.¹⁴¹

A secret dispatch from the Arctic increased the jitters among those in the Air Force following the UFO mystery. Heretofore, the mere suspicion of possible Russian intrusions had kept alive interest in any reports of strange aircraft, but the communists had not, so far as it was known, dared come near American territory. On April 12, 1950 the following message was flashed to all Commands:

"THE CG OF THE ALASKAN AIR COMMAND REPORTS THAT ON 12 APRIL A GROUND OBSERVED AT POINT HOPE (NORTH-WESTERN TIP OF ALASKA) SIGHTED AN UNIDENTIFIED MULTI-ENGINE AIRCRAFT HEADING SOUTHEAST, ALTITUDE AND SPEED UNKNOWN. THERE WERE NO KNOWN FRIENDLY MULTI-ENGINE AIRCRAFT IN THAT AREA AT TIME OF THE SIGHTING. THIS MAY BE A POSSIBLE INDICATION OF THE FIRST SOVIET OVER-FLIGHT OF ALASKAN TERRITORY."¹⁴²

Nervousness over possible Russian activity was indirectly confirmed by the reaction of an Air Force General when he was interviewed by the press in Washington on August 3rd. The General, according to the press account, when asked directly: "...edged cautiously around the question of a major alert in Alaska on April 17th."143

North Bay, Ontario, April 12th.

A bright amber-colored disc-like object came from the southwest, crossed over the local airfield, stopped in the air, and then retraced its course. As it sped away it rose into the sky with terrific speed at a 30 degree angle. The UFO was observed and reported by two Canadian Air Force enlisted men.144

Besides press reports, a message was forwarded to Project BLUE BOOK from the Office of the Air Attache, U.S. Embassy, Ottawa, giving additional details, noting the time of day (2230) and the exact site of the observation (The married quarters of the RCAF North Bay Air Station). Moreover, it was stated:

"The two observers were Warrant Officer --- (deleted), a veteran airman with 13 years' service and Flight Sergeant --- (deleted). It is impossible to estimate the reliability and/or experience of the individual airmen until a more complete report is received from RCAF Intelligence."145

From its lofty perch, the New York Times squinted down at the saucer resurgence. On April 12th the renowned New York daily gave the UFO subject ten inches of type, ten inches of airy rebuke, saying that believers must have received a big boost from Life, while expressing astonishment that the Air Force's 1949 conclusions had not dealt a death blow to the disc rumors. The UFO mystery it suggested, could be likened to the Loch Ness monster in that it seems to have perpetual appeal. Life's arguments were waved away and replaced with the balloon idea since Liddle was a hero to the Times in spite of critics. That a few reports evaded a simple analysis might be expected, commented the editors of the Times, as well as a certain smugness from those who took delight in stumping science. The Times reflected a bit on Charles Fort, the eccentric collector and expounder of the unexplained who died in 1932 but lately christened the "Father of the Flying Saucers," the New York newspaper remarking that the Bronx writer's ghost no doubt was enjoying a few hearty chuckles over the public's massive surrender to the improbable.

The Times had not shifted much from its New Year's Day declaration of 1948 that mocked what it had already termed the "saucer legend," and now, over four years later, the paper had to admit that the "apparitions" were more substantial than it had assumed even if the mystery was "only balloons."146 Alas, more disappointments lay ahead.

Turning two pages in the same edition revealed an item that did violence to the Time's self-assured demeanor on the saucer issue, the assertions of J.J. Kaliszewski, supervisor of the aeronautical research laboratory of the General Mills experimental station at Minneapolis. Again he ripped to shreds the balloon theory by recounting his experiences of October the year before, while insisting that the mystery objects he encountered were not of plastic construction but "aerial objects of undetermined origin."

Kaliszewski urged a round-the-clock radar, telescope, and sky camera alert to be established by the government, the 24-hour watch to be set up at White Sands, New Mexico.¹⁴⁷

At the same time the United Press interviewed Charles B. Moore, an aeronautical engineer of General Mills' balloon project who claimed up to 20 encounters with strange flying objects during launch operations.¹⁴⁸

UFO's and powerlines.

A UFO incident in Norway on Easter Sunday caused an uproar among Norwegian authorities. The press there proclaimed that reliable people had witnessed: "...the most extraordinary phenomenon every observed in this country."¹⁴⁹

The incident began late in the evening at about 10:30 p.m. during excellent weather offering a clear view of the sky. At an isolated farmhouse perched a top a hill above Torpo a 19-year-old youth was studying for an exam. The farmhouse had a good view of the valley below and from a window in his room the youth spotted an odd fire-like phenomenon across the way. He yelled to his sister and father to come and observe a strange "fire" burning on the other side of the valley. He thought it very unusual that a "fire" would be burning at that hour especially in the forest, so he went outside with his sister to stare at the glow. What happened then is best described in the words of the principle witness, the 19-year-old, who related to the press:

"Then an extraordinary thing happened: the 'fire' or ball of fire, rather--all of a sudden ascended straight up into the air, at a colossal rate, only to stop instantaneously. It stood there as though nailed to the background. For some moments it remained absolutely still, then it shot off to the side also at a great rate, stopped still, sank a little, possibly vibrating somewhat. The whole time it was radiating light, sometimes dull, resembling strong moonlight, but for the most part of the time it looked like a bright light. The strength of the light changed several times."¹⁵⁰

The three witnesses were bewildered and confused by the weird luminous spot. The father dashed back indoors to fetch binoculars but when he emerged from the house and peered at the phenomenon with optical instrument, the magnified image only showed a kind

of smooth glowing ball bathing the mountain plateau as if from a light projector which threw out rays in different directions.

The last act in the drama was described by the 19-year-old in this way:

"It finally ascended above the hill at a great rate and then, after I had been watching it for exactly 25 minutes, it shot off in a southerly direction at an incredible speed. The ball of fire emitted a very strong light causing the entire hill to be illuminated as though by a strong searchlight. The light was turned a couple of times, first to the east, then to the west. The ball of fire then set off in an easterly direction, and appeared to come to a stop again, but we could see it clearly no longer.¹⁵¹

The youth, aware of the laws of physics, was stunned by the terrific power displayed by the object's actions, especially by the "impossible feat of stopping dead in mid-air."

The boy's father ventured an interesting suggestion, pointing out that there may have been some connection between the fiery manifestation and the nearby electric power lines that led from the Hal installations. He declared:

"The ball of fire at first appeared right above the cable net, but then it rose and then stopped quite still in mid-air, I realized it must have something to do with those modern inventions. To me it appeared to be a glowing ball of fire, and when it started to move up and down in the air at great speed, it was obvious that it was some sort of gadget guided by remote control. The odd thing was that there was no sort of a noise emerging from it. Admittedly it was a fair distance away, three kilometers as the crow flies, and the river runs fast down in the valley, but with the speed the ball was travelling, there ought to have been some sort of a roar, or drone. But none of us heard a sound of this kind."¹⁵²

When the forementioned was officially reported to the Commander of the Home Defense Camp at nearby Torpomoen, the story received serious attention. The Commander expressed a belief that the phenomenon could not be anything other than "something like a flying saucer."¹⁵³

Authorities lost no time in consulting meteorologists and scientists to explore the ball lightning hypothesis, but that approach yielded little value in helping to explain the incident. The experts excluded the ball lightning answer citing the calm, clear weather and the unusual size and duration of fiery ball.¹⁵⁴

A theory offered by the 19-year-old's father was also dismissed by the experts:

"It has been guessed that the occurrence might be caused by disturbances of the Hol electric cable net, but the electro-engineer states that this is out of the question. Had that been the case, there would have been a small explosion."155

Lending weight to the credibility of the Torpo case were other reports. Official documents reveal:

"It transpires that a similar phenomenon has been observed during the last winter higher up the Hallingdel, at Vats above Aal. There a reliable person ...[said] he has seen it as much as four times in the course of the winter. The person in question is Mr. Strandron of Kjellarnard, he states that he first observed the phenomenon just before Christmas, the other times between Christmas and Easter. It occurred each time late at night, between 21:30 and 23:00 hours. He was able to give a detailed account of the movements of the ball of fire. In this case too, the ball stood perfectly still in mid-air, then shot off to the side at a great rate, stopped dead once more, and performed a number of queer maneuvers, with abrupt movements. The ball the whole time emitted a very strong light, but according to Mr. Strandron the light had a green hue. Once Mr. Strandron watched the ball of fire through a pair of binoculars, but the light was too strong to allow him to distinguish the contours. Each time it appeared that the object was a perfectly round sphere. The ball of fire in each case disappeared in the same direction behind a hill at great speed."156

Dull orange "ducks" over the Gulf of Mexico.

Swearing under oath and after being warned of his rights under Article 31 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, an Air Force 1st Lieutenant assigned to the 3300 Technical Training Group, Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, voluntarily issued the following statement:

"While attending the Beach Drive-in Theater on the night of 13 April, I, First Lieutenant (--- deleted) and my wife, (--- deleted), sighted three unidentified objects in the sky out over the Gulf of Mexico, south of our location. The objects appeared to be in a formation or definite pattern, round in shape and of a dull orange color similar to the glow of heated metal, and were traveling west. The objects appeared to be approximately

thirty degrees in elevation. The objects were within my sight for approximately four to five seconds. After approximately three seconds, the objects appeared to change formation or alter their pattern and then vanished from to my right (West).

"I believe that the possibility of sighted objects being confused with falling stars is precluded by the direct horizontal path of the objects sighted and the difference in color between a star and the sighted objects."¹⁵⁷

Yet another report by military observers:

"On 13 April 1952, at 1645 MST, four airmen observed a silver, disc-shaped object east of Moriarity, New Mexico. The object appeared to be travelling at a high rate of speed and its flight path was very erratic. The object was assumed to be disc-shaped due to the fact that it appeared to tip edgewise and disappear for an instant. When first noticed, the object was thought to be a high flying jet aircraft but all the observers are familiar with jet aircraft and they all agreed that its speed and maneuverability eliminated that possibility.

"The time of observation was judged to be from four to ten minutes."¹⁵⁸

The Adjutant that filed the report, Captain P. F. Jones, commented: "The visual contact can be considered authentic and the personnel involved can be considered reliable as far as the organization is concerned."¹⁵⁹ He went on to point out that all of the observers: "...were impressed most by its high speed and maneuverability."¹⁶⁰

An airline radio operator and other airline personnel noticed a disc-like object spouting a blue-white flame from its trailing edge as it moved over Cleveland, Ohio on April 13th. Estimated to have been at 3,000 feet as it passed overhead, the thing did not maneuver but it did seem to shake a bit. Because of its slow speed and for the fact that only the top part was brilliant, the report does not mention the meteor theory.¹⁶¹

For thirty minutes a huge disc-like object was seen moving from horizon to horizon over Anchorage, Alaska, on April 14th. A dozen people observed the thing. One had binoculars but there was nothing said that indicated the object was a balloon.¹⁶²

Wlademar Kaempffert, in his "Science in Review" column, joined the New York Times in attacking both Life's article and those that held the notion that UFO's were "other-world visitors." Kaempffert assumed that "most" newsmen accepted the Air Force's 1949 conclusions, which should have, he felt, doomed the subject to permanent limbo. He charged the authors of the

Life's article with a "lack of critical ability" and mentioned some weak points in the June 1947 Kenneth Arnold sighting and the 1948 Chiles-Whitted UFO encounter. That was an interesting criticism since Life didn't dwell on the cases Kaempffert mentioned, instead it discussed ten completely different ones! It was also curious to note Kaempffert's reliance on the 1949 Air Force report when the Air Force had abandoned it for a new, more intensive project to gather information for a study by top experts! Evidently poorly versed in the topic, Kaempffert did not know each UFO report had a difference "strangeness rating" and often a particular case, was significantly divorced from providing evidence of "extraterrestrial visitors." He even expressed a doubt that any man-made rocket would achieve an escape velocity of seven miles a second to break the bounds of the earth's gravity at least "in our time" (This was just five years before Sputnik).¹⁶³

"A 100 yards away."

It sped by rapidly. Some three feet in diameter and a foot high, an object with the likeness of an "inverted bowl" was seen at 6:34 p.m. on April 14th.

A couple of U.S. naval fliers claimed that during a flight over Tennessee, at a point over the U.S. Naval Air Range Station at Memphis, a peculiar brightly glowing red object passed by their plane only 100 yards away. Besides its "inverted bowl" shape, the object, the airmen said, appeared to have: "...slots running vertically from the top to the bottom." The thing was in view for about 50 seconds.¹⁶⁴

"A day of reckoning?"

A Project BLUE BOOK file card dealing with a Wisconsin UFO case dated April 14, 1952 certainly seems intriguing but little detail is on the little rectangular piece of stiff paper. It says something about an airliner pilot spotting several light-colored objects traveling at a high speed which shifted position while in V-formation.

This case has an unusual history. An Air Force scientific consultant, Dr. J. Allen Hynek, penned a letter to Air Force Intelligence in the year 1968 concerning his attempted examination of the La Crosse, Wisconsin file. Dr. Hynek wrote:

"I originally asked to review this case in the hope that unknown to me some additional follow-up had been made. I found that despite the fact that a captain of a commercial airliner and others had witnessed this, no follow-up whatever was made... since 1947, because of lack of funds and adequate personnel, a formidable number of cases were not adequately followed up. I had often pointed out, both to officials in Dayton and in Washington, that a day of reckoning might some day come when the Air Force might be asked to show cause why proper investigations were not made."¹⁶⁵

The reactivation of the Air Force's special investigation of UFO's, Project BLUE BOOK, left the OSI wondering what its role would be, especially since there were indications another wave of UFO reports were imminent. Ruppelt apparently had not requested the OSI's help, so the OSI Office at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, a UFO "hotspot" for years, didn't wait for instructions. The Commander of the 17th District, Lt. Colonel Richard G. Cox, warned the OSI's Counter-Intelligence Division that his New Mexico unit was unprepared, or unwilling, to handle the job:

"Recently there have been reported in various Arizona and New Mexico newspapers the sightings of objects, which probably would come within the purview of AFCSI Letter No. 85, dated 23 October 1950. These observations have been made by persons believed to be familiar with conventional type aircraft and have been corroborated by other witnesses presumed to be reliable.

"In view of the date of AFCSI Letter No. 85 and the renewed interest by the Air Force in these sightings, as alleged by recent press releases, this District respectfully requests advice as to the extent into which investigations of these incidents should be carried.

"Requests for investigation of these incidents have not been received from Base Commanders, nor has a query been received from Headquarters Air Material Command relative to them. An inquiry at local Air Force Commands reveals no standard operating procedure for reporting observations of unconventional type aircraft, either to Headquarters United States Air Force or Air Material Command.

"In the event it is the desire of your Headquarters that the 17th District investigate reports regarding sightings of these objects, it is recommended very highly that such investigations be on very limited basis.

"It is requested that your Headquarters contact the 17th District at your earliest convenience."¹⁶⁶

"Flying Saucers Excite Interest."

Compiling a report for all U.S. consulates and Consulate Generals in Canada, The American Ambassador Deputy, Don C. Bliss, included two paragraphs under the title: "Flying Saucers Excite Interest." Bliss wrote:

"A report of the sighting of another flying saucer has stirred up considerable interest in the press during the past week. Two senior non-commissioned officers of the RCAF stationed at North Bay, Ontario, about two hundred miles northwest of Ottawa, reported a 'bright amber disc' in

the sky which they observed for several minutes and which followed the usual pattern of changes in direction and intensity.* The RCAF is conducting a routine investigation of their report but attaches no particular importance to it.

"Comment, about 30 reports of sightings of mysterious objects have been reported during the past three years. In October 1950, after some investigation the RCAF accepted the conclusion of the USAF Project "Saucer" and adopted a routine procedure for the investigation of these incidents. The present flare-up of interest is notable in that senior Canadian scientists have been prompted to make statements and an enthusiastic reporter of the Ottawa Journal was given some material which had previously been classified. It is not considered that there has been a change of official attitude toward these incidents as a result of the recent sightings."167

The reason for the extraordinary comment was a strongly worded news story in an Ottawa paper. The Ottawa Journal's April 16th edition was headlined: "FLYING SAUCERS MAY BE REAL HINT TOP CANADIAN SCIENTISTS."

The paper announced that top Canadian scientists and RCAF Intelligence experts were "no longer scoffing," having undergone a complete change in attitude. Recent sightings, like the North Bay case, these men could not dismiss lightly.

Lending a sense of urgency and credibility to the article were a number of direct quotes from eminent members of Canada's scientific community.

Astrophysicist Dr. Peter Millman snapped: "We can't laugh off these observations."168 Dr. C. J. Mackenzie, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Control Board and past President of Canada's National Research Council was similarly abrupt: "These reports cannot be ignored as nonsense."169 Commenting further Millman said: "It is no good just laughing at these reports. We can't discover any conventional explanation which would cover the reported behavior of the objects."170 Referring to the North Bay sighting, Dr. Millian pointed out that if the object reported actually reversed direction as claimed by the witnesses, then it could have hardly been a meteor. He said: "While caution is advisable, we must keep an open mind about them (UFO's)."171

Dr. Mackenzie elaborated by saying: "It seems hardly possible that these reports could be due to optical illusions."172

*The use of the word of "usual" is a puzzle. Was Mr. Bliss referring to some other sightings of recent origin, or was it a reference to UFO reports in general?

The Ottawa Journal commented: "He stopped there and did venture an opinion on the origin of UFO's, adding that there was no chance Canadian experiments were responsible."173 As for Dr. Solandt, the paper mentioned revealed that for some time the Board had received and pondered UFO reports that were considered "reasonably authentic," admitting that for some time he and his colleagues had been firm disbelievers but that many fresh reports from the U.S. and elsewhere of excellent quality had forced renewed speculation.

That North Bay was only 110 miles from Canada's Chalk River atomic energy installation and that similar UFO sightings had occurred near American nuclear security zones, did not escape the notice of the Canadian authorities as did the theory that suggested that visiting denizens of some other world might be snopping on mankind's fission projects.174

"Colossal signals?"

Mars, the mystery planet, reached opposition with the Earth in mid-April and on the 16th, as astronomers scrutinized the red disc in their telescopes, a huge dusk cloud erupted to a height of 60 to 90 miles above the surface of the planet in the region of Eridania. This was so startling that the conservative journal Strolling Astronomer described the phenomenon as the "most interesting Martian cloud of all our records." The event made even better reading in newsstand tabloids that ranted about "colossal signals from the Martians." Among students of the UFO problem the news begat fantastic thoughts, since the last big UFO flap took place during the last Martian opposition, and which was also marked by strange eruptions on the crimson orb.

UFO's and Atomic tests?

Here is the story hot off the news wire:

"A flight of flying saucers near the Nevada test site, where important new atomic tests are being made, has been reported by five men at Nellis Air Force Base, near Las Vegas.

"Those who said they saw the saucers are T/Sgt. Orville Lawson, Rudy Toncer, Foremen of the sheet metal shop, and shop workers R. K. Van Houtin, Edward Gregory and Charles Buliffson.

"The men said they counted 18 circular, dull-white objects streaking across the sky north of the air base yesterday.

"They were flying on an easterly course which apparently had taken them directly over or very close to the atomic weapons proving grounds.

"The objects--which the men declared definitely were neither planes nor observation balloons--flew in an irregular formation. One of them was off to the right, flying in a zig-zag motion.

"The men estimated they were 40,000 feet high and traveling at a speed of at least 1,200 miles an hour. They left no smoke or vapor trail.

"Van Houtin saw them first and called the attention of the other men to them. The objects were in sight about half a minute before they disappeared to the east."¹⁷⁵

"Excellent attempt by ADC units."

A buzzing alerted Captain R. W. Cambell to a call from 178th Fighter Squadron at Truax Field, Madison, Wisconsin. As senior controller on duty at the 755th AC&W Squadron, Capt. Cambell was being notified of strange objects in the sky in the vicinity of Madison. The fighter base had received a phone call from a civilian and it was hoped something might be on the 755th's radar screens. The radar was down for preventive maintenance and could not confirm the presence of any UFO's and a F-80 vectored to the area did not see anything, but if the witness was right things happened too fast to be checked out by an interceptor coming from any appreciable distance. According to the witness' account, he observed:

"...5 or 6 objects in the sky, almost straight up and slightly to the west. The time: 20:15 CST [April 16th]. They were semi-circular in shape and formation, glowing with a yellowish-white light. Neither sound nor exhaust was noted. They were on a heading of approximately 090 degrees traveling at a high speed: altitude not determined."¹⁷⁶

Radar operations checked all flight plans on air traffic in the region as well as contacting two observatories in Wisconsin on the chance some unusual astronomical phenomena was occurring.

The result of all this effort was zero. The UFO's were long gone before a significant contact was made. Lack of advanced warning hurt ADC's attempt to intercept the lights, plus, in the words of the witness:

"After a few seconds, the objects made a sharp left turn in a north, northwest direction and gained altitude rapidly, as they disappeared the lights seemed to fuse or come together."¹⁷⁷

BLUE BOOK gave ADC an "A" grade for its try, ruling that the Defense Command boys had made an "excellent attempt at identifying" the UFO's. As for the UFO's, BLUE BOOK dismissed them as "possible jet aircraft,"¹⁷⁸ and: "...the apparent high speed and rate of climb was an illusion. [!]"¹⁷⁹

"Blue-green dinner plate."

A tuing, which witnesses called a "blue-green dinner plate", zoomed over Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, the third week of April according to an Air Force civilian employee. The passage was observed from an auto on State Highway #3 leading from the city of Shawnee. Said the witness: "It was going at a terrific velocity at 15,000 feet."180

Some civilians were sleeping in the open on a Boy Scout camping trip at a location near Dallas, Texas, on April 16th, and happened to notice some odd glowing objects in the sky above. The time was 10:03 p.m. There were some 9-10 "things." Counting the luminous moving points, the witnesses determined that there were four red, four yellow, and one white. The civilians asserted that the lights executed a 90 degree turn while under observation. A military officer investigating the report asked if the witnesses had read the UFO article in the latest issue of Life magazine. The question drew an affirmative response but in his official report the investigating Intelligence officer remarked that the people: "appeared to be O.K."181

"Too fast and too erratic."

The crypto-center at 6th Army Hq., San Francisco, California, flashed the following message to Project BLUE BOOK in Ohio. The Army message went:

"UNCONVENTIONAL AIRCRAFT REPTD SIGHTED VIC YUMA STATION, ARIZONA 17 and 18 APRIL 1952. WEATHER BELIEVED CAVU. OBSERVED BY MEMBERS OF 9575 TSU, YUMA TEST STATION: LT. --- (deleted), M SGT. --- (deleted), CPL. -- - (deleted)... [one officer and ten enlisted men named as witnesses]. NO PHOTOS. 1 OBJECT SIGHTED EACH DATE. CIRCULAR. SUBTENDED ARC OF 1/4 INCH AT ARMS LENGTH. FLAT-WHITE. 69 DEGREES. COURSE NOT COMPLETELY SMOOTH. ALTITUDE UNKNOWN. NO SOUND REPORTED. INTERMITTENT VAPOR TRAIL, NON PERSISTENT, THIN, NOT LONGER THAN 2 OBJECT DIAMETERS. ALL OBSERVERS WERE METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVERS AND STATED THE OBJECT WAS UNLIKE ANY OBJECT OR PHENOMENON SEEN PREVIOUSLY. OBJECT SIGHTED 18 APRIL WAS MOVING TOO FAST AND TOO ERRATICALLY TO BE TRACKED BY THE THEODOLOITES WITH OPEN SIGHTS."182

Another "screwball" reports a flying saucer.

The witness was standing in the front yard of his home in Shreveport, Louisiana, talking with a neighbor one evening when he noticed something in the ebony heavens. What he saw was detailed in an official document:

"A single circular object, brilliant white in color and ten times the size of the brightest stars, was reportedly sighted by a ground observer at 32 29 N - 93 48 W, 2226 hours, 16 April 1952. The exposed surface of the object appeared to be flat. The object, travelling at unbelievable speed on an unwavering heading of about 100 degrees, emitted no trail, exhaust or sound. After passing over the city of Shreveport, it suddenly executed a 100 degree turn and continued its unwavering course on the reciprocal heading until lost to sight. The observer reported the object accomplished the 180 degree turn in approximately six seconds. During the execution of its turn, the object appeared to become pinkish in color, gradually turning to red on the reciprocal heading. After turning, appearance of the object seemed to change from flat circular shape to a thinning lens shape, and, approximately ten seconds after completing its turn, the object appeared to emit, for an instant, a slight reddish trail, as if a few glowing fragments had become detached from the main body. Neither size nor altitude of the object could be estimated, and there was no apparent change in altitude or speed during the period of observation."183

Who was the witness to this event? Was it a civilian whose observational powers were suspect? Although the actual name was deleted from the official file, there was identifying data of another nature that was most informative:

"Observer reporting the sighting, Captain --- (deleted), --- (deleted) Bomb Squadron, --- (deleted) Bombardment Wing, Medium, is a SAC Aircraft Commander, a senior pilot with more than 3000 hours and eight years experience in heavy and medium bombardment and transport type aircraft Captain --- (deleted) has prior experience as a Special Agent for the Counter-Intelligence Corps, and for the past several months, has been assigned to duty as Squadron Intelligence Officer."184

"Erratic."

Another episode, this time in the sky above Longmeadow, Mass., at 10:30 p.m. on April 17th, was witnessed by two engineers and mentions a very bright star-like body which appeared to change shape as it changed altitude, making erratic climbs and dives. The show lasted some 40 minutes.

The description of the object was a bit more detailed than most such "star-like" UFO stories:

"Both --- (the names of two witnesses deleted) described the object as round and deep orange in color. --- (deleted) described the object as occasionally emitting a shaft of light to the rear and to the underpart of the object, and travelling at a speed estimated at well over 600 miles an hour. --- (deleted) did not estimate the size, but described it in brilliance as approximately four times greater than any known star; it traveled in an erratic course at a speed of well over 1,000 miles per hour. Each man stated there was no exhaust and no sound was heard. --- (deleted) stated the object continually maneuvered during the observation and described the movement as rapid climbs and descents. --- (deleted) stated that at the time the object became elongated, but commented that he did not believe the elongation was an exhaust, but opined that the object was evidently coming toward the observer, and when executing a turn and travelling at right angles to the observer, the true length of the object was seen."185

North Bay, Ontario, is a Canadian town on the eastern shore of Lake Nipissing in Ontario. Directly south about 150 miles is the large city of Toronto. At one of Toronto's suburbs, Scarborough, on the 17th of April, a glowing ball trailing dark smoke fell toward a lake in the area. No one reported seeing the sphere plunging into the waters but a puff of smoke was noticed wafting just above the lake's surface. Residents in the area were concerned enough to notify authorities and two boats put out from shore to search for the "crashed aircraft." Nothing was found.187

North Bay, Ontario, again.

Two groups of people observed something strange in air over North Bay, Ontario from two separate locations. The two groups, although they were watching in different areas in the North Bay, made the same report. At 10:00 p.m., a varied-colored ball of light dived and soared in some sort of aerial dance. This sighting took place on what was a busy UFO day and evening, April 17th.186

Back up north at North Bay once again, at 11:00 a pale colored object with a round appearance sped over the town at great altitude leaving smoke behind. The object travelled west to east at great velocity although without a sound.188

A highly reflective object zoomed over Montreal on the 18th and apparently its passage was unusual in appearance since the incident made the newspapers.189

A pair of objects leaving vapor trails passed over Hawkesbury, Ontario, April 18th. It was daytime and witnesses thought the objects may have been jet aircraft. A loud explosion was heard.190

Likewise, vapor trails crossed the sky over Brooks Range in Alaska on April 18th. The local newspaper, the Fairbanks News Miner, got little from the U.S. Air Force other than the fact that what ever made the vapor trails was unidentified.¹⁹¹

April 18th at Hamilton, Ontario, some 50 to 60 dimly lit orange lights passed over in a V-formation;¹⁹² while at Hammond, British Columbia, in a cloudless sky a ball glowing with a blue hue hovered for some time. It was seen at about 11:30 a.m., April 19th.¹⁹³

"V-formation over Toronto."

Zooming over Toronto, Ontario, on April 19th, at 10:30 p.m., crossing 30 degrees of sky in six seconds, were some 50-60 glowing pale orange objects in V-formation.¹⁹⁴

Another hint that things were warming up in northern Europe also was a snippet from southern Jutland, Denmark, on April 18th. A news item mentioned that: "Several saucer-like objects were seen."¹⁹⁵

"That takes care of the flying saucers once and for all."

The outbreak of UFO sightings in Canada in mid-April encouraged a newspaper columnist for the Corner Brook, Newfoundland, Western Star, to draft an article satirizing what he considered a ludicrous weakness of certain people to interpret various normal stimuli as fantastic flying craft. The columnist laid it on thick, composing a nutty report by some hypothetical Martians on the results of their scouting mission of the Earth, and after having milking the subject for all it was worth, the columnist signed off with: "That, I believe, takes care of the Flying Saucer romance once and for all, so now let's hear no more of the darn nonsense."¹⁹⁶

That very evening at 10:10 p.m., the writer was returning home from a movie when something odd drew his attention to a cloud of smoke drifting 2,000 feet above a local paper mill. There in the dirty vapor was a bright spot, a very odd looking bright spot. Could it be one of those unexplained things? No doubt determined not to make any snap judgment, the columnist stopped and peered closely. Here is what happened:

"The spot, which appeared as a silent blob of light about the size of a man hole cover, remained stationary for about one minute then with a slight wobbling motion moved up and to the left through the smoke at a rapid rate. The object emerged from the smoke at estimated 3,000 to 4,000 feet where it paused momentarily and appeared to be slightly elliptical in shape. From this position it moved out of sight toward the east at a high rate of speed. Two to three minutes after Mr. --- (deleted) had resumed his

walk a bright object appeared in the east resembling a dot, moving toward the west and increasing in size as it approached. At a point opposite the observer at an estimated altitude of 10,000 feet, the object seemed to make a coordinated vertical banking turn of 180 degrees to the left and moved out of sight toward the east."197

The experience was, to say the least, a sobering one for a person who had, only hours before, ridiculed all those fools with wild imaginations. Now he wasn't so sure there wasn't something peculiar moving around in the atmosphere over Canada.

Bogies over Bethesda.

Word of a strange occurrence near Washington, D.C. was picked up by Fournet at his post in the Pentagon and was dispatched to Ruppelt on the 18th. Fournet teletyped:

"AT ABOUT 0100 HOURS TODAY, WHILE STANDING IN THE YARD OF A FRIEND IN BETHESDA, MD., (--- deleted) AND THREE FRIENDS OBSERVED WHAT APPEARED TO BE SPHERICAL OBJECTS FLYING IN VEE FORMATION. OBJECTS DESCRIBED AS FAINT OR DIFFUSED LIGHT, ORANGE IN COLOR AND FAIRLY SHARPLY DEFINED. FORMATION CONTAINED BETWEEN 7 AND 15 OBJECTS, ALL PERFECTLY SPACED AND MAINTAINING PERFECT FORMATION. INCLUDED ANGLE OF VEE ESTIMATED AT 40 DEGREES. TRAVERSED ARC APPROX. 100 DEGREES IN ABOUT 5 SECONDS AND LOST FROM VIEW ALMOST DUE NORTH AT APPROX. 30 DEGREES ELEVATION. NO SOUND HEARD. ESTIMATED THAT OBJECTS ACCOUNTED FOR ABOUT 30 PERCENT OF TOTAL SPACE ALONG A LEG OF THE VEE. WEATHER DESCRIBED AS CLEAR WITH NO CLOUDS NOTICED."198

Fournet tacked on this comment:

"... (deleted) SEEMED TO BE VERY INTELLIGENT, SINCERE AND MOST COOPERATIVE. THIS IS PRELIMINARY INFO. WILL MAKE EFFORT TO CONTACT OTHER OBSERVERS THIS AFTERNOON, THEN, IF IT APPEARS WARRANTED, WILL CHECK ON JET FLIGHTS FROM ANDREWS."199

"Followed an aircraft."

On the ground at Mc Clellan Air Force Base, California, on April 20th, a commercial pilot looked up and noticed that something seemed to be following an aircraft on a landing approach. It was dark (9:30 p.m.) and the pilot could not make out what it was that seemed stalking the aircraft except to say that the phenomenon appeared to be a number of "luminous objects." The UFO's were in sight for about four minutes.200

Monday, April 21st at 10:00 a.m. in the morning sky over Hammond, British Columbia, a fiery ball raced south to north.²⁰¹

Similarly, a disc-like object flashed over Molson, Manitoba, the same night. The thing changed color as it sped through the sky.²⁰² Another town in Manitoba called Tuxedo, also had an aerial visitor that evening (at 8:26 p.m.) when a brilliant green object sailed by at a low height, changing from green to red, and then to yellow. The Winnipeg Free Press tells us a strange star-like body passed over Tuxedo at a very high altitude, stopped, and then back tracked.²⁰³

According to information given in the Toronto Globe and Mail, the UFO was a "dark cylindrical object" spewing a vapor trail. Travelling north to south at an altitude of about 40,000 feet, the UFO was estimated to have been moving at 1,000 mph. Thousands of persons in the Toronto area sighted the phenomenon.²⁰⁴

A briefer account mentioned eight "Moon-like" discs zipping over Walla Walla, Washington, in a straight course 10:30 p.m. April 21st according to a pair of civilians.²⁰⁵

In keeping with BLUE BOOK's intention to garner all possible data and to improve its quality, the following action was ordered:

"On April 21, 1952, a letter was forwarded to Air Defense Command requesting the location of all ADC radar sites that have operational scope cameras. When this information is received, a request will be made to put all or part of these cameras on a 24-hour alert basis."²⁰⁶

The reason was explained in detail:

"Although this will not provide definite identification of radar returns, it will aid in determining whether or not the return is due to weather phenomena, a malfunction of the set or a return from some unidentified object. A photograph of the exact size and shape of the return will then be available for study and the impression of the operator need not be relied upon."²⁰⁷

The very next day an ADC radar site had to deal with a UFO case but as usual evidence remained verbal. An AC&W installation outside Condon, Oregon, received a phone call from a Condon housewife. She related to a Lt. Todd:

"At 12:15 on the 22nd of April 1952, I was standing in my yard in Condon, Oregon. I saw three saucer-shaped objects moving East, North of Condon. They were in formation and the larger

saucer apparently in the lead. They were gray-brown in color on the underside and shiny metallic on all other surfaces. They were moving at a fast rate of speed and I saw them only for approximately two minutes. The larger was revolving, but it was so far away that I couldn't tell the direction."208

"There's something going on."

One particular object, zooming over the countryside in the region near London, Ontario, ignited controversy since reports mentioned a speed in excess of 1,000 mph which was far faster than anything the military owned. Prop-driven P-51 Mustangs of the City of London Squadron were in the air on training runs as the UFO raced past but could not catch the streaking object.

Tension had started to build in Canada, so this latest aerial manifestation evoked more than mere press comment. J. W. Noseworthy (CCF, York South), a member of Canada's House of Commons, challenged Transport Minister Chevrier to explain the rumors that the RCAF was attempting intercepts of "flying saucers" over southwestern Ontario. Minister Chevrier flatly denied any saucer chases had occurred but that did not faze Noseworthy, who then demanded some answers from Defense Minister Claxton. Minister Claxton tried to debunk the UFO reports instead of denying anything had happened. The UFO reports, he said, had been caused by a fast flying Canberra jet bomber carrying Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Lloyd, Chief of the RAF Bomber Command. Oddly enough, however; the P-51's had been vectored in on the UFO by ground radar, which, Minister Claxton would have us believe, was unaware that a VIP would be passing through its Air Defense zone in the latest of modern jet aircraft. Also, Wing Commander A. D. Haylett, of the City of London Squadron, still wasn't sure of the UFO's identity two days later. If it had been Air Marshall Lloyd, he had yet to get the message. He told the press:

"I'm pretty firm in the opinion that it couldn't have been an aircraft. Not at that speed. I have never been a believer in flying saucers, but I'm pretty sure now that there's something going on around this planet that we should be paying lots of attention to."209

The secret meeting.

At this time, April 22nd, Dr. O. M. Solandt, Chairman of Canada's Defense Research Board (DRB), convened a secret meeting to brief the eleven men of the board about building UFO activity in Canada, stressing that the country had no official UFO investigative project. The result of the meeting was the appointment of a committee to come up with a scheme to gather and analyze data. It was decided the committee would meet again within 48 hours with suggestions.²¹⁰

Second in seven days.

NAHA military records told of a second UFO observation in seven days in this interrogation log:

"Observers: Capt. (... deleted), 1st. Lt. (... deleted), A/1C (... deleted), T/Sgt. (... deleted), 1st Lt. (... deleted), 1st Lt. (... deleted) - (Not interrogated, transferred).

"Time and Place: Approximately 2100-2200 hours 22 April 1952 during a practice alert (blackout). Observations made by crew members from immediate vicinity of MATS Passenger Terminal, NAHA AFB, Okinawa. Crew was awaiting scheduled flight to the United States returning on rotation.

"Weather: Overcast of base at 2,000 feet, light wind blowing from NE.

"Observation: Unidentified flying object observed at an altitude of approximately 1,000 - 1,500 feet beneath overcast in straight and level flight. First a single object was sighted to the East in lower part of sky and observed to fly over the base and disappeared to the West.

"One minute later two more objects were sighted flying in formation along same course from the East, and disappearing to the West. Five minutes later two more objects were sighted flying in formation with same observation. All five objects were each observed to have the same characteristics, namely: (1) elliptical in shape (2) approximately 2-3 feet long (3) noiseless (4) no trail of sparks or flame (5) brilliant white light that blinked at regular interval of one or two seconds similar to running lights of conventional aircraft (6) covered course from East to West in approximately 5 - 10 seconds with estimated speed at 1,000 knots (7) objects flew straight and level course. Said observations were reported to the officer of the day in MATS terminal by 1st Lt. Herbert B. Johnson."²¹¹

Mystery "airplane."

Date: April 23, 1952. Place: Lexington, Massachusetts. The witness: Mr. R. C. Munroe, Engineering Standards Section Head of the Raytheon Manufacturing Company. The time: 9:30 a.m. Mr. Munroe happened to notice an AT-6 trainer aircraft in the sky and while watching it pass over also noticed something else which at first he believed to be another plane:

"Because of the speed at which this second aircraft was moving, I immediately concluded that it was of the jet variety. I would estimate its altitude at approximately 40,000 feet...just below the cloud cover. My curiosity was aroused upon realizing that I could not distinguish a fuselage

wing configuration. My curiosity was further aroused when this aircraft began to decelerate at an unbelievable rate. I observed the aircraft going into a flat turn while continuing to decelerate and believe I saw the aircraft come to a stop...

"The observation that inspires writing this letter...was the speed of this aircraft apparently accelerated from a stopped condition and flying in a northeast direction which would carry it over the north end of Boston. I would relate the speed was considerably in excess of that of any jet aircraft that I have observed.

"The altitude of this aircraft did not permit color identification.

"There was no apparent exhaust or vapor trail. It is unconceivable to me that any human being could have withstood the deceleration or acceleration displayed by this aircraft."212

More "ducks" near Lubbock.

Clovis, New Mexico is hard by the New Mexico-Texas state line and about 90 miles to the southeast of Clovis is the Texas city of Lubbock of "Lubbock Lights" fame. The night of April 24th the weather was clear in this area with considerable moonlight. The witness, motoring in an auto near Clovis noticed a phenomenon to the southeast. The time was about 10:00 in the evening. What the witness observed isn't spelled out properly but one wonders if the atmosphere in that part of the country was prone to optical tricks. The teletype report flashed to BLUE BOOK, ADC, and Air Force Intelligence in Washington, went like this:

"OBJECT OR OBJECTS SEEMED TO BE MADE UP OF ... (Not legible) ORANGE AMBER LIGHTS SOMETIMES FUSED AND SOMETIMES SPLIT UP. LIGHTS APPEARED TO GO ON AND OFF AS IF CONTROLLED. NO FORMATION. NO TRAIL OR EXHAUST WAS OBSERVED. OBJECTS REMAINED MOTIONLESS FOR PERIODS OF 3 SECONDS AND THEN MOVED AT TERRIFIC SPEED IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. OBJECTS MOVED WITH LIGHTS ON AND OFF. SOURCE WAS NOT SURE WHETHER THERE WERE MANY OR JUST ONE OBJECT. OBJECTS DISAPPEARED AS IF LIGHTS WERE EXTINGUISHED.213

The witness was an Air Force Flight Surgeon and his wife. She confirmed what she saw. The Flight Surgeon insisted his eyesight was 20/20 and he should know. Oh yes, after watching the phenomenon cover a certain linear distance, the Major estimated that the thing was moving in excess of 1,000 mph. 214

"V-formations over Vancouver."

On the West Coast was this episode. Orange-colored bodies with a blue glow at the rear passed over Vancouver, British

DEFENCE RESEARCH BOARD

24

Minutes of the First Meeting of the Committee
Set Up to Deal with "Flying Saucers" Sightings
24 April 1952

Chairman: *W. R. Lees* Dr. P.M. Millman Dom. Observ

Members: Lt.Cdr. J.C.L. Annesley D.N.I.
S/L L.P.S. Bing J.I.S.
F/L V.L. Bradley D.R.B.
Mr. W.B. Smith D.O.T.
W/C N.W. Timmerman D.A.I.
Lt.Col. E.H. Webb DMO&P.

Secretary: Mr. H. C. Oatway D.R.B.

For the benefit of those who were not present at the general meeting held on April 22nd, the Chairman opened the meeting with a brief resume of discussions leading to the formation of this Committee and the terms of reference. He then tabled three books by Kehoe, Scully and Heard dealing with Flying Saucers sightings as worthy study as they give a fairly useful summary of the most important publically recorded sightings. These can be used in addition to newspaper reports.

S/L Bing tabled a report by the RCAF relative to the USAF project on Flying Saucers. This report is to be duplicated by the RCAF and copies passed to the Secretary for distribution to the Committee members.

The question of the security classification of the work of the committee was then discussed. It was agreed that CONFIDENTIAL was sufficient, but that members should be cleared to SECRET to facilitate any exchange of information from international sources.

The Chairman stated that it would probably be better to divorce this work from the questionable title of "Flying Saucers", and thought that some name entirely without meaning such as "Project Theta" should be adopted. The Committee agreed in principle to this suggestion, with the exception that the project name is not to be used during exchange of information of an international character. Such "exchanges" are to be effected through established channels only. There being no further suggestions acceptable, the name "Project Theta" was adopted, subject to investigation by the Secretary as to the validity of the use and possible duplication of the name.

The possibility of obtaining U.S. data on a reciprocal basis was considered desirable and the Secretary was instructed to have a formal approach to this effect made through the DRB Member in Washington.

(A sample of one of the Canadian documents)

*Classification cancelled / Changed to
by authority of
28 May 1979
P.M. [initials]
[initials] / DSS*

Columbia, on April 24th at 7:30 p.m. The illuminous objects were in a V-formation. Immediately behind and "inside" the first formation was a second group. Witnesses state the objects came out of the south at terrific speed and when the strange things reached a point over Vancouver, they soared upward out of sight.215

At night, April 24th, a disc-like object was seen in the heavens above Regina, Saskatchewan. It hovered, sending out flashes of fire, and then moved toward the southwest. The account mentioned that the object "had a tail like a kite," a remark that does not necessarily discredit the story since there were at least three reports of UFO's with ribbon-like tails in 1950.216

"UFO's in formation."

In keeping with the north to south shift, when a C-124 type aircraft out of Biggs Air Force Base, Texas, encountered UFO's on April 24th, it was not over Texas but over Vermont.

Cruising at 11,000 feet and on heading of 73 degrees magnetic, the Air Force C-124's crew noticed something 20 degrees to their right and just above the horizon. Visibility was unlimited and the men had no trouble making out: "...three objects in loose fingertip formation" that were flying on a parallel course. This continued for two to three minutes before the objects were lost from sight. Immediately thereafter off the left of the C-124 more objects were seen and were in view for another minute before disappearing. The crew of the C-124 said the objects were round in shape and blue in color. They appeared capable of very high speed since they were rapidly faded from sight, and if the objects were the estimated distance of 50 miles then the UFO's must have been quite large in size.217

The Canadian UFO committee.

That same night, the evening of the 24th, the Project SECOND STOREY committee appointed by the Canadian Defense Research Board convened under the chairmanship of Dominion Observatory astrophysicist Dr. Peter M. Millman. And what critical documents did they bring to the meeting? Dr. Millman had brought along a copy of Donald Keyhoe's book The Flying Saucers are Real and two others (which were probably Scully's Behind The Flying Saucers and Gerald Heard's Is Another World Watching?). Another member, L. P. Bing, did better and had obtained a Royal Canadian Air Force document which had an assessment of the American Project GRUDGE. It's not surprising that the principle decision of the get together was to request the DRB representative in Washington D.C. to contact and seek cooperation and information from the Pentagon.218 The Canadians had practically nothing to work with.

Cambridge.

One of the prime sources of technical advice for Project BLUE BOOK was the Air Force's Cambridge Research Center, Cambridge, Mass. Ironically, it was at Cambridge on April 24th that one of the most outstanding UFO reports of the month originated as the giant UFO wave of 1952 swept south out of Canada. In the afternoon that day, Alfred P. Furnish, Herbert J. Brun, and Joseph Page, all USAF civilian employees working at the Cambridge Radar Systems Laboratory, Electronics Research Division, were in a tower on the summit of Great Blue Hill, a 785 foot rise of ground just outside Milton, Mass. Blue Hill was topped by an Air Force observation platform equipped with a small 6-power telescope for the tracking of transient aircraft. Although the Sun was obscured behind a high overcast, visibility was at least 70 miles. Wind velocity was almost nil. The three men on the platform were not your usual civilian witnesses. Page was an electronics scientist who regularly tracked aircraft, both with optical devices and radar, and A. P. Furnish, another electronics expert, also tracked aircraft on a daily basis so he could tell at a glance what kind of aircraft might enter his field of vision. Herbert Brun had not yet graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he was a senior, but besides his major in Electrical Engineering, he had specialized in identifying military and commercial aircraft silhouettes.

To the northwest that afternoon, at 2:30, some shapes were detected with the naked eye by the three civilians. The trio swore what they saw were not birds, pieces of paper, kites, nor any object known to them. The men later told Captain Locke, the Air Provost Marshal, that they saw objects that:

"...were very thin, from ten to fifteen feet across at their widest point, had a lip around the outer edges, and were a dull reddish orange color. No corners were visible, and they looked like 'ovals pulled in at the waist.' Objects consistently undulated with a wobbling, swooping motion, first in a perpendicular course, then along a horizontal plane, and then, a second, but angular, rise of about fifteen degrees at approximately 240 miles per hour. No trail or exhaust, no sound heard. Objects at about 2,000 feet elevation when first observed, and at unestimated height when last seen. Objects grew smaller traveling away from observer and became invisible."²¹⁹

Look takes a look.

An investigative reporter from Look, Life magazine's chief rival, spent April 25th and April 26th at the offices of BLUE BOOK, gathering material for another UFO article. What he was told didn't detract from the sensational impression Life's story had provided. Look's treatment would place stress on the Air Force's increased effort to obtain data and what appeared to be an alarming pattern to UFO sightings.

A more significant and far reaching contact BLUE BOOK made in April was the friendship that developed between Fournet and an apparent civilian named Fred Durant. Through Fournet, Durant met Ruppelt, a meeting most desirable to someone who had a keen interest in the famous sky mystery. This fellow Durant displayed just such a fascination in the aerial puzzle while failing to make known to the two Air Force officers he was an employee of the Office of Scientific Intelligence, an arm of the Central Intelligence Agency. America's super-secret Intelligence organization, the CIA, was taking the "alleged objects" very seriously and had ordered the establishment of a covert contact with the military.²²⁰

A white circle of light.

At about the same latitude as Seattle, Washington, is Darmstadt, Germany, site of Rhein Main Air Force Base. The north to south movement of the UFO wave of 1952 in North America had something of a counterpart in Europe and when reports were made in places like Darmstadt, the similarity was confirmed.

On a local instrument flight above Rhein Main on April 25th at 2115 hours were Captain Wisnieski and Lt. Bartholomew at the controls of a C-47. There was scattered clouds in the sky with visibility from 5 to 10 miles. While cruising at 2,000 feet, Captain Wisnieski sighted a brilliant moving light heading directly at his C-47. Alarmed, Captain Wisnieski radioed Rhein Main Tower for instructions, but the Tower had no information on any other air traffic in the vicinity; meanwhile, he had taken evasive action. Disaster averted, both Wisnieski and Bartholomew kept an eye on the phenomenon as it zoomed away, climbing at a high rate of speed toward the northwest. As for the shape of the UFO, none could be distinguished. All that the two officers could say was that the thing appeared to be about two feet in diameter and looked like a "white circle of light."²²¹

"The disc pilots, if such is the case..."

A number of residents of Moorehead, Minnesota, and Fargo, North Dakota (the cities are just a few miles apart), became excited April 25th over dots in the night sky travelling South to North with the appearance of being: "Very high, very fast, bright red and orange, etc..."²²² The flights, there were two reported, occurred at 9:00 and 9:45 p.m. Eight civilians observed five "objects" per flight some eight minutes apart.

The Air Force report on the case uses some remarkable language: "The formation was described as a wide 'V,' irregular or more specifically sloppy, in that the disc pilots, if such is the case, appeared to have trouble maintaining constant speed and altitude."²²³

It almost sounded as if the officer were about to join the Donald Keyhoe fanclub, yet the puzzlement only drove him to take unusual measures that had a significant effect on BLUE BOOK evaluations.

These overflights by "mystery craft" so intrigued the Commanding Officer of Detachment 2, 462 Ground Observer Squadron, Fargo Filter Center, Fargo, North Dakota, that he was determined to make an effort to identify the phenomenon. He stationed himself atop one of the tallest buildings in Fargo, the ten-story Black Building and waited for a "mystery flight." Various civilians joined the vigil. Telescopes, speed cameras, and binoculars were trained on the black heavens.

Here are the results:

"On or about 2115 hours several Teal Ducks passed over, high, fast, and bright orange. Identification was positive via flapping wings. Geese followed, also illuminated and was positively identified by 'quacking.' Phosphorescence was picked up by the fowl from the neon lights in the City thus causing the strange illumination.

"Observation heretofore had been from the ground level with lighting glare. The difference in both of these factors caused the objects to show up more clearly."224

Was the mystery solved?

"Red ducks" over Yuma?

A layer of cloud lay over Yuma, Arizona at 6,000 feet on April 27th. An Air Force S/Sgt., Chief of AACS Operating Location 1903-4 AACS Squadron at Yuma County Airport, was a witness that night to a bizarre sight:

"On the 27th of April 1952 between the hours of 2030 and 2230, my wife and I, while sitting in our automobile at the Yuma Drive-in Theater at Yuma, Arizona noticed what at first seemed to be falling stars but upon following them we observed them to fly horizontal with the ground and then make a very definite abrupt change of attitude disappearing in the clouds. Several minutes later two similar objects appeared flying parallel with each other, after a few seconds one continued straight ahead, the other veered sharply to the north and passed over the town of Yuma disappearing into the clouds. All the objects sighted which numbered 7 or 8 were travelling from NE to SE, were round and emitted a fiery red glow, on one occasion after watching this one particular object after it had made an abrupt change of

altitude it seemed as though it were whirling like a disc."²²⁵

Perhaps the objects over Fargo and Yuma were birds. Perhaps the mystery was just a case of bad eyesight and good imaginations. Nonetheless, the phenomenon kept to a strange pattern: heading south like a wave, throwing a scare into people in the northern U.S.

Two April 26th fillers off the news wire:

Lake Wilcox, Ontario.

Something bright and circular parked in the sky for awhile and then shot toward the northern horizon at tremendous velocity. As it sped north, witnesses noticed that the object tipped a bit revealing a flat, thin profile.²²⁶

Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

A group of five objects observed. They were said to be disc-like.²²⁷

"Wingless cigar."

High scattered clouds and winds at 10 to 20 knots were recorded at Waskish, Minnesota, a small town on the shore of Upper Red Lake. The date was April 27th and the time 20 minutes after 8 in the morning. Visibility exceeded 15 miles. Waskish, like many places in the country at the time, had a Ground Observer Post manned by civilians and officially linked to the Air Defense Command. The observer manning the post that morning detected a strange object in the sky and immediately dialed the Filter Center in Minneapolis. The Filter Center, puzzled by the report, relayed the information to the 31st Air Division. For one minute the GOC fellow had viewed:

"An object like nothing the observer had seen before. It was cigar-shaped. It had no wings. It made no sound. It gave off a high reflection from the sun. It looked like polished aluminum. Object traveled about 30 miles due north during period of observation."²²⁸

Michigan mystery.

The phone rang on the desk of Captain Anthony W. Rosinia, Assistant Intelligence Officer of the 4708th Defense Wing, Selfridge, Air Force Base, Michigan, 8:30 the morning of April 29th. Being the Officer of the Day, Captain was more than mildly interested in the call as duty demanded. A civilian was phoning from Royal Oak, Michigan (a part of Detroit) to inform the Air Force he had observed something strange about 11:00 the morning of April 27th. Captain Rosinia took down the account:

"He said he saw a small white object very high in the sky. It looked like a paper plate. As he watched it, it turned sideways. It seemed to be stationary. Mr. (--- deleted) reported he went into the house to get his binoculars and when he came out, it was gone. He called a neighbor as a witness, but the neighbor could not see it."229

This was not the only report of unusual airborne objects above Detroit on April 27th. Captain Rosinia had taken a call the day before concerning an even more extraordinary story. While not pretending to be able to judge the credibility or probability of the information, Captain Rosinia noted that the eight witnesses involved claimed military backgrounds. The site of the observation was the Detroit suburb of Roseville. The Air Information Report filed on the phone call read:

"On 27 April 1952, at 1600 hours, (--- deleted) was in the backyard of his house at the above address with (--- deleted), (--- deleted), and (--- deleted). They were engaged in pitching horseshoes, and occasionally would watch jet aircraft as they flew over. At 1615 hours they observed in the northeast sky a round object, silver in color, high in the sky. It appeared to remain motionless. All four men saw the object. A pair of high-powered binoculars were obtained and the round object was brought under observation. It was observed to turn completely over and assumed an oval or egg shape. The object had a dark underside, it is not known whether it was a door or a painted side. It seemed to drop straight down and then stop. Two other silver objects, cigar-shaped, larger than the first sighted object, were then seen in the same area. It appeared that they came from the ball object or just appeared in the same area as the ball object when it was under observation. Those seemed suspended in space and at approximately 1700 hours all disappeared, the ball object going straight up and one of the cigar-shaped objects travelling up in an easterly direction and the other going up in a westerly direction. The speed of ascent was amazing, and in a small fraction of time they were gone from sight. The objects observed were in view from 1615 to 1700 hours by all men visually, with the naked eye and binoculars.

"During the observation of these three objects, another object was observed. It was a silver, cigar-shaped object traveling at a tremendous speed northeast to northwest. It was at a great altitude, no sound was heard. It was observed through binoculars and the body of the observer had to be turned as he tracked the object to keep

it in view. It traveled horizontally at a great altitude and speed.

"There was no formation evidenced by any of these objects, no trail or exhausts, nor was any noise heard. The objects were all above jet aircraft observed flying in the local area. The sky was clear, the observations were made during daylight for a period of approximately 45 minutes. No estimate as to altitude, distance or speed could be given, no photographs were taken. The sky was cloudless."230

"All I can do is report it, Bud."

Bear in mind as you read the following account that the person making the statements collected the names of three other witnesses who happened to be in the area and did not know him personally. Granted the witness was well aware of the UFO problem and thus conditioned to "tell a tall tale" if he desired, but there are many possible checks that could be made to ruin the validity of the sighting. A hoax seems improbable unless the man was a complete fool. The entry in official UFO records is brief:

"On 29 April 1952, at 0830 hours, the following report was submitted to the undersigned by the Officer of the Day relative to sightings of unconventional aircraft observed on 27 April 1952.

"A/2C (---deleted) of the Air Police Squadron took a call from a Mr. (--- deleted) of Pontiac, Michigan. Mr. (--- deleted) called at approximately 2306 hours concerning an object approximately 200 feet in diameter and 200 feet off the ground. The object would go from brilliant white to nothing. Mr. (--- deleted) was in a business establishment making the phone call but friends were outside the building still watching the object. A/2C (--- deleted) did not get the phone number or address of Mr. (--- deleted)."231

So much for the brief official note. On May 16, 1952, the witness wrote an extensive letter to BLUE BOOK providing his address and the names and addresses of three other witnesses. The bulk of the letter recounted the events of that wild night.

"Gentlemen:

"I have been a faithful believer and follower of Flying Saucers incidents as far back as 1948 and was of the opinion that they were a project of the U.S. Government, but after my recent experience which I am going to outline in detail, it has changed my belief entirely.

"Coincidentally, I happened to read the April 7th issue of Life Magazine which precedes my experience by a couple of weeks, explaining my actions as you will note.

"I live approximately seven miles west of Birmingham, Michigan, which is north of Detroit about fifteen miles. On Sunday night, April 27th, my wife, two children and myself were preceeding home from my sister's traveling north on Stevenson Highway at 10:45 p.m. As I turned left on Fifteen Mile Road (Fifteen Mile Road runs through Birmingham east and west and this point is about seven miles east of Birmingham), my wife and I both spotted a brilliant white object coming toward us out of the sky from the northeast. It descended so fast that by the time my wife could realize and state it was a Flying Saucer, it had descended to its minimum height of approximately 3,000 feet or the average height of a transport plane in flight. It stopped abruptly and rocked slightly similar to a row boat in choppy water. It then settled at an approximate 80 degree angle and the brilliant whiteness diminished to what appeared to be window lights. It sat in this exact position and spot for approximately three or four minutes making it to be about two miles north of us and 3,000 feet high. The angle at which it rested made it very easy for us to estimate its thickness and diameter. It appeared to have two tiers of windows each about ten feet high which resembled looking into the playing section of a mouth organ. The windows were all around the entire diameter making visible the round flatness. We estimated conservatively that the diameter of this ship was at least two hundred feet.

"After what seemed to me they were getting their bearings, they started drifting northwest toward the city of Pontiac at about one hundred miles per hour but stopped two or three times during the time of our observation. At no time did it make a noise.

"Immediately I realized that I should have witness to this phenomenon, so I speeded west on Fifteen Mile Road to a drive-in restaurant about a mile away. I ran in and asked some young men if they would come out and witness my experience. After persuasion, two of them went out and were amazed, causing others to follow. By this time it had drifted at least five miles northwest. At this point I called the Birmingham Police and asked them to alarm all the air fields in its direction which they said they would do. I returned to my car and we continued to follow it driving west on Fifteen Mile Road. During the next five minutes the lights in the saucer went off and on three times. The third time the lights changed from white to a brilliant yellow-orange and by this

time we had reached the Grand Trunk Railroad Station, a half mile from Birmingham. Thinking this experience would make a good newspaper story, I stopped at the railroad station and called the Detroit Times telling them my story thus far.

"After that I again called the Birmingham police and asked them if they had reported the incident as yet. They said they were thinking about it so I became provoked and said I would call Selfridge Field myself, which I did. If anyone ever got the 'Brush' I sure did. I was transferred to five different departments and finally got an officer who, I am sure, was awakened by my call and was very peeved. I explained what was taking place and he mumbled something to another fellow and then said: 'I'll report it. What's your name?' I gave him my name and explained: 'If you ever want a close-up view of a giant saucer, get some planes in the sky at once, telling him the approximate location of the saucer. Then he repeated: 'All I can do is report it, Bud.' Then he hung up.

"During my telephone conversation, my wife had convinced the station attendant and railroad express truck driver to observe the spectacle. I secured the truck driver's name and then proceeded west following the saucer until it vanished from our vision over the tree tops toward the general direction of Flint at 11:15 p.m.

"I contacted the Detroit Times Tuesday A.M. and gave them my complete story. Their reporter phoned Selfridge Field and the radar Division and they both told him that it was impossible for anything to be in the air at that time because nothing was picked up by radar, so naturally, the Time dropped the story.

"To prove my story, I started to trace down my witnesses. After considerable difficulty, I found the young men I asked to come out of the drive-in and obtained written statements from each. Then I contacted the truck driver and he was very willing to write a statement of his observation (Their names and addresses are at the end of this letter.). I again went to the Times with my proof and the editor turned the story over to another reporter who again phoned Selfridge Field. This time they contacted the intelligence division. They stated that they received at least two letters a day from people who had also sighted the saucer at different points. This assured the reporter of my story and he later stated that he thought the complete story would be in the Sunday, May 4th issue. However, for some unknown reason it never appeared."232

It would be very interesting to locate the writer of the forementioned letter and the other witnesses but all such information has been blotted out with black ink by Air Force censors.

Finally, it seems Captain Rosinia saw something himself. The night of April 27th at 8:00 p.m. he was walking in the officer's barracks area at Selfridge Air Force Base when he happened to observe one of those famous silent horizontal green "meteors." He reported: "...I noticed in the sky at a 45 degree angle a large flash of green light which trailed to a point to the north. The light was kelly green in color, persisted for from three to four seconds, and then disappeared. I heard no noise, saw no object--though the light appeared to move in a horizontal plane."233

The Captain was puzzled by the sight.

"I have been at Selfridge Air Force Base for 16 months and have never seen any similar lights or balls of green light. The night was clear, stars were clearly visible, no clouds in the sky. I have seen falling stars, but this light moved horizontally and not vertically as a falling star.

"I would not have reported this ball of light in view of its fragmentary nature were it not for the fact that four other sightings, during the daytime, were reported in areas around Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan."234

"Circling an airplane?"

A couple of women living in Homewood, Illinois, telephoned a U.S. Army regional office in Chicago to say they had witnessed an unusual airborne object 5:00 April 28th. The Army Summary of Information document covering the conversation stated in part:

"The object, resembling a white parachute, was apparently circling a large airplane (description of which could not be given) silver in color, which was traveling southeast at the same altitude as the object. The object and plane were observed for approximately three minutes when they disappeared from view."235

The Army relayed the message to BLUE BOOK with the notation that it did not "contemplate conducting an investigation on the matter."236

Moorhead, Minnesota.

Six persons, one being a policeman, watched as a V-formation of glowing round objects swept overhead. Other than the fact that it was nighttime, no indication of the hour of the sighting was mentioned.237

Manchester, Michigan.

At a high altitude a brilliant green "saucer" zipped overhead. Estimated speed was moderate for a meteor, about "twice the speed of a jet," and the witness said the thing "dived over the horizon."²³⁸ This object was sighted at 9:30 p.m. What makes it more interesting is that a similar phosphorescent blue-green object crossed the sky over Ann Arbor 30 minutes later.²³⁹

A bouncing, amber-colored thing appeared over Vancouver, British Columbia, 4:20 a.m., April 28th. It moved away, returned and finally flew off for good.²⁴⁰

To the south of Vancouver a humming noise announced the approach of a group of ten dark objects as they passed west to east over Lake Tanwax, Washington. Before passing from view, the objects turned north. The speed was incredibly fast.²⁴¹

Crossing the sky in just a few seconds, the brilliant green blob took on a slight orange tint before disappearing to the northwest over Albuquerque, New Mexico. The passage occurred at 9:55 p.m., April 29th.²⁴² The object may have been one the "mystery" meteors but there didn't seem to be anything unusual about the incident. Speaking of "green meteors" the Life gave the phenomenon its first major exposure. A Captain E. A. Kolar, an Intelligence Officer in the U.S. Marine Corps wrote to the editors of Life to say that during a tour of duty in Korea as an aviation Intelligence Officer:

"Pilots often reported seeing strange bright green objects in the skies, unlike anything they had ever seen before, and moving too fast and regularly to be explained or identified or analyzed by the pilots themselves or the intelligence officers."²⁴³

"A great deal of excitement."

It must have been spectacular when a strange, unidentified cigar shaped object, leaving a long fiery trail, passed over Singapore at great height. The U.S. Air Liaison Office, Singapore, Malaya, flashed a telegram to Washington saying the event: "...caused a great deal of excitement with the local residents, mainly Chinese." This April 29th item perplexed the Royal Air Force at first and it first announced that: "...no jet aircraft had been in the air at the time," but a few hours later the RAF said there had been some high flying jets in the area. The big "cigar-shaped silver object," a RAF spokesman suggested, might have been an illusion from the reflection of the sun's rays off the body of an aircraft or from a "brief-duration vapor trail."²⁴⁴

Reiterating, UFO reports were primarily coming in from Canada and America's northern tier of states from Washington to Maine. Why was there such an odd distribution?

BLUE BOOK with Ruppelt at the helm seems to have certainly made an effort to be an effective clearing house for UFO reports so it was puzzling that one section of North America was logging more sightings than another section.

The effort to gather data had been manifold. Back in February, Ruppelt had travelled to Colorado where he discussed the UFO problem with the Commanding General of the Air Defense Command, General Benjamin W. Chidlaw. Anything unidentified in America's airspace was of great interest to ADC and General Chidlaw saw to it that a Major Verne of Brigadier General W. M. Burgess' staff (ADC Intelligence) was assigned as a liaison to Wright Field. Furthermore, ADC radar scope photos of suspected targets along with a list of technical questions to be answered by the reporting unit was to be forwarded to BLUE BOOK's expert on such matters, a Captain Roy James.

The collection and interpretation of data was something Ruppelt was familiar with since it was Air Force Intelligence's primary mission, but during his briefing of General Chidlaw another subject was touched on--the question of the defense of the United States, the main mission of the ADC. The scrambling of interceptors was largely a decision made at a local level by a junior officer and since strange targets often showed up on radar screens due to the malfunction of equipment, weather, or electronic interference, site commanders were hesitant to allow the commitment of pilots to a take-off even though such a course of action was theoretically automatic. Therefore, BLUE BOOK would not have any guarantee a UFO would be investigated by an interception. But what if an interception was ordered and it was successful? What if an ADC jet with loaded guns closed with a UFO? What advice could Ruppelt give ADC about what to do next? Were UFO's a threat to the country? The only guidelines were conventional ones in use for some time. The question of firing at an unidentified target was covered by established "rules of engagement" that interpret certain acts as hostile. Dropping of troops by parachute was hostile as well as dropping bombs. Merely the opening of bomb-bay doors was considered unfriendly. UFO's never violated any of the rules of engagement with one big exception. If an aircraft entered certain restricted airspaces without permission, ADC pilots had the authority to destroy the intruder and UFO's respected no restricted airspaces. (In fact, the aerial phenomenon was soon to challenge ADC to the utmost by hovering over the White House and the Capital Building in Washington, D.C.)

It was such questions that made Ruppelt redouble his efforts to understand what he was up against.

General Chidlaw was also instrumental in Ruppelt's obtaining the assistance of the Civilian volunteer Ground Observer Corps. GOC posts dotted the nation and were manned 24-hours a day, a valued supplement to ADC's radar net.

On April 29th Air Force regulation AFL 200-5 went into effect that allowed Ruppelt's team to bypass the usual slow official channels to expedite the transmission of UFO information. Thus it appeared coverage of the U.S. military was adequate.

Civilian sources of data were not overlooked either. The newspaper clipping service BLUE BOOK had contracted with was a great success, discovering many incidents that had not been reported to any military installation. It was assumed the UFO article in Life would encourage people to notice things in the sky and motivate them to report it.

There was intense interest in the U.S. in the UFO subject and the fascination was not restricted to any one class of people. In BLUE BOOK Status Report #6 issued on the last day of the month, the Air Force noted that the mail prompted by the Life article amounted to the following:

"The letters which reported sightings comprised about 80% of the total. All but a few of these letters reported sightings that occurred within the last two years. The writers of these letters ranged from mystics to highly educated individuals."²⁴⁵

Thus as the phenomenon moved ever deeper into the U.S., there would be no lack of willing witnesses although Ruppelt never fathomed any pattern to the activity.

May.

The continual upswing in UFO reports at this time was recalled by Edward Ruppelt who illustrated the progressive increase in activity by the amount of news clippings being forwarded to BLUE BOOK by the clipping service. Swollen envelopes were replaced by large manila envelopes, which in turn gave way to shoe boxes full.²⁴⁶

Sideshow in Australia.

The first part of May was marked by a disturbance down under, a sideshow in the larger scheme of things but perhaps instructive in giving some clue to the attitude of the Australian government toward the UFO problem.

A United Press dispatch datelined Sydney declared that a pair of airline pilots and a Royal Australian Air Force officer had watched a spectacular object that sped through Australian skies on a course between Parks and Sydney.

The most marvelous version of what zoomed through the sky that morning was that related by a Mr. William Anderson who asserted he viewed the UFO from a location on the outskirts of Sydney with two companions. Anderson was a witness to what he described as an "airship or flying submarine carrying winking colored lights." Before the vast bulk disappeared in the dark he estimated that it exceeded an airliner in size by three to four times.²⁴⁷

"Spaceships with lights?"

With Australian headlines shouting things like: "SPACE-SHIP WITH LIGHTS OVER VICTORIA," Australian Air Force Intelligence in the person of Wing Commander I. L. Campbell directed that newspaper stories of UFO manifestations on May 3rd be collected and studied, meteorologists consulted, and interrogations conducted if it was considered advisable.

When Lt. Colonel George A. Urich, the United States Air Force's Air Attache assigned to the American Embassy learned of the Australian Air Force UFO file being compiled, he requested access to the material and forwarded selected excerpts to Project BLUE BOOK.

The possibility the object had been a brilliant bolide was immediately apparent, yet the duration of the thing's passage was seven minutes, an incredible period of time for a meteor. The Australian military took the case seriously enough to thoroughly interrogate Anderson.²⁴⁸

In the days following, similar observations were made by persons living in New South Wales and Victoria. One of these "other" sightings that is available for study was of the "flying saucer" type. A gentleman named Ron Dent, a former aircraft navigator, claimed to have sighted a peculiar display 20,000 feet in the air over the Australian city of Varrgul in Victoria. Dent was quoted in the press as saying:

"There was a bright disc followed by another with a tail. The discs seemed to play tag in the sky like two schoolboys. Then they both rose suddenly and seemed to merge into one disc before disappearing."²⁴⁹

One source claims:

"Mr. R. M. Seymour, Superintendent of the Federal Civil Aviation Department's Air Traffic Control Branch, reported that Australian Intelligence Officers had refused the Department permission to investigate flying saucer reports on the ground that UFO's were 'security matters'.²⁵⁰

Back in North America the U.S.--Canadian border was alive with UFO activity both real and suspected.

A trio of bluish-green objects coasted over Toronto, Ontario, on May 1st at 9:15 p.m.²⁵¹

Seven minutes later witnesses at Ottawa spied a silvery-blue disc sporting a green halo soaring overhead. This UFO was stalked by another object that was a pure white in hue. Apparently the green colored thing was also the object reported by residents of Alfred, Ontario, only seconds later. The witnesses at Alfred claimed that the object they observed dived toward the ground and then rose sharply before passing out of sight.²⁵²

The show above Portland, Maine in the USA took first prize however. A retired weather forecaster swore he spotted revolving red and green star-like bodies in the night sky that he characterized as appearing like pinwheels.²⁵³

At this point it is advisable to take another look at the continuing adventures of E. J. Ruppelt and the efforts of Project BLUE BOOK.

"Puzzle palace."

Ruppelt contends that his comments to the press were frequently ill received at the Pentagon, a place which Ruppelt dubbed the "puzzle palace" since he often failed to divine the will of the powers-that-be, an unsettling situation for one in his position. Ruppelt communicated his discomfort to his immediate superior, Colonel Dunn of ATIC, who in turn phoned General Samford in Washington. Colonel Dunn was directed by Samford to approach General Sory Smith who presided over the Office of Public Information at the Defense Department. The result was the assignment of a civilian, an Albert Chop, to the Pentagon's Air Force Press Desk to handle news media inquiries. Chop enjoyed a direct line to Ruppelt at BLUE BOOK headquarters in Ohio through Major Dewey Fournet, BLUE BOOK's liaison man in the War Department.²⁵⁴

George Air Force Base.

On May 2nd a teletype message was flashed directly to the Air Force Director of Intelligence in Washington, D.C. announcing that a good UFO report had been filed by Air Force personnel at George Air Force Base in California. Teletype messages subsequently exchanged between Washington, George Air Force Base, and Wright Field resulted in a decision to send Ruppelt to investigate the California manifestations in person.

The initial message from George Air Force Base read:

"FIVE UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS SIGHTED... WERE DULL WHITE IN COLOR...CIRCULAR SHAPE...DIAMETER APPEARED TO BE GREATER THAN LENGTH OF FOX FIVE ONE AIRCRAFT...SPEED WAS MORE THAN TWICE THE SPEED OF JET AIRCRAFT...NO SOUND...HAD QUICK SNAPPY MANEUVERABILITY...APPEARED TO ALMOST COLLIDE WITH EACH OTHER AND THEN BREAK APART AT LAST SECOND...NO EXHAUST AND NO SOUND...NO REFLECTION OF SUN ON OBJECTS...OBJECTS MADE SUDDEN RIGHT TURN AND DISAPPEARED...OBJECTS SIGHTED VISUALLY AT ONE ZERO FIVE ZERO HOURS PACIFIC..."²⁵⁵

The principle witness to the phenomena had been a Lt. Colonel who was Wing Director of Personnel of the 146th Fighter-Bomber Wing headquartered at George Field so it was no wonder the case sparked an immediate reaction by the High Command.

Besides having Ruppelt rush to the scene, the Air Force ordered that all balloon launch records, winds aloft information, and flight log data be made available to BLUE BOOK without delay.

Upon examination the records only deepen the enigma. Winds aloft that day over George Air Force Base were of a feeble velocity, just a few miles per hour, and as for balloons none had been sent up in the vicinity anywhere near the time of the sighting. As for aircraft, a small Navion had been in the area but it lacked any characteristic that might prove of value in the development of a sensible hypothesis. Mother Nature was no help either. The weather that day had been crystal clear with 50 miles visibility.

The Air Force could not very well shrug off the incident particularly after BLUE BOOK remarked that the objects were too fast for balloons, the best bet for an answer accepting the Colonel's estimate that the UFO's left the area at high speed passing out of sight in 15 to 30 seconds.²⁵⁶

"Unheard of."

Much more on the status of BLUE BOOK is found in Ruppelt's writings where he called attention to the military directive, Air Force Letter 200-5, that empowered BLUE BOOK to: "... directly contact any Air Force unit in the United States without going through any chain of command. This was almost unheard of in the Air Force and gave our project a lot of prestige."²⁵⁷

Air Force Letter 200-5 in action.

As expressed in official language the following report was "submitted in compliance with AFL 200-5, dated 29 April 1952," to Project BLUE BOOK at Wright Field with an identical "informational copy" routed to the Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, USAF, Washington, D.C.

The enclosure mentioned nothing in the way of spectacular data only that the witness was a man living in Phoenix, Arizona, who claimed to have viewed a powerful light silently coasting across the sky above the city on an ascending course at an angle of 10 degrees, heading in a northeasterly direction. The track of this fireball would have carried it over the green fireball plagued area of Los Alamos if maintained, and that fact, combined with the witnesses' remark that the thing gave off an: "...iridescent bluish-green light similar in color to the arc made by an electric welder..."²⁵⁸, was probably why Air Force took the trouble to question the witness closely.

"A la Flash Gordon."

In the path of the UFO's slow southern sweep was a wondering American public. Some were very vocal about mystery and have left us a record of their musings. During an address

to the Rotary Club of Columbia City, Indiana, a Mr. A. C. Horrocks, a public relations counsel for the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, "enumerated the innumerable bests and firsts of the American nation" while adding that a bright new age was to come in the years ahead, even the flying saucers, he suggested, heralded a better life since he felt personally the objects were machines from another planet, "a la Flash Gordon," a nonhostile invader that meant the possible acquisition of the benefits of an advanced science. The Columbia City Post commented:

"Such comments, whether true or not, at least list possibilities of advancement which could come and remove a part of the fear and disillusion with which present generations look at the future."²⁵⁹

"Flying Saucers Are Back."

The INS teletype rapped out on May 6th: "Flying saucers are back--this time over uranium-valuable region of southwestern Colorado." Noting that back on March 17, 1950, the entire town of Farmington, New Mexico had seen swarms of UFO's, the news service postulated some significance in the report of a dozen Durango residents spotting some silver-colored discs in the sky close to the Vanadium Corp. of American's uranium processing plant on the outskirts of town, noting that Farmington was only a short distance to the south.²⁶⁰ Are UFO's interested in uranium?

The saucer invasion of America's heartland was briefly overshadowed by news from Brazil.

"Barra Da Tijuca."

A clearer account of the Barra Da Tijuca incident is obtained by consulting military Intelligence records as opposed to reliance on strictly newspaper accounts. The beginning of the story is best related by quoting a military teletype report that was filed the first week of May:

"...A 'FLYING DISC' IS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN SEEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY TWO REPRESENTATIVES OF 'O CRUZEIRO' MAGAZINE AT APPROX 1930Z 1636 LOCAL 7 MAY 1952 AT POSITION 25 DEGREES 01 MIN SOUTH 43 DEGREES 26 MIN WEST. PHOTOGRAPHS AND NEGATIVES HAVE BEEN INSPECTED AND APPEAR TO BE UNTOUCHED AND SHOW FAIRLY CLEAR A ROUND FLYING DISK. THE OBJECT WAS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN IN VIEW FOR ABOUT ONE MINUTE. IT APPROACHED FROM THE SOUTHEAST MADE A 180 DEGREE TURN AND WENT OUT OF SIGHT TOWARD THE SEA AT WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS HIGH SPEED. FIVE PHOTOGRAPHS WERE TAKEN BY THE OBSERVERS, COPIES WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED IF THEY BECOME AVAILABLE. THE OBJECT SHOWN IS A ROUND FLAT DISK, DIMENSIONS

DISTANCE NOT DETERMINABLE BUT ESTIMATED TO BE APPROX 200 FEET IN DIAMETER. THERE WAS NO EXHAUST TRAIL OR SOUND REPORTED."261

Subsequent official teletype messages expressed high interest in the photos and mentioned that the Air Force had the cooperation of [?] a "Mrs. Barber," a "Donald Stewart," and Life magazine's investigative reporter Bob Ginna.

A Lt. J. E. Rothstein of ATIAA - 2C contacted Captain Fournet asking: "Are photos available of sighting in Rio de Janeiro? Mrs. Barber may have copies. Please forward report of investigation."262

To that Captain Fournet replied:

"Lt. Col. Adams of collections dispatched cable to AA (Air Attache) Brazil on 16 May requesting info on photos and status of availability. No reply yet. Will inform you of developments. Mrs. Barber has no info except that Ginna of Life said they were considering purchase of negatives. Asking price reportedly 25,000 dollars."263

Captain Fournet then alerted Ruppelt with the following note:

"...incl copy of 'O Cruzeiro' having photos of object distributed to you by collection this week. Mrs. Barber informs that Ginna was obtaining negatives for examination and would pass them on to us for scrutiny along with set of prints. Assume Ginna will contact you directly."264

BLUE BOOK made a partial prejudgment on the case: "Until the negatives are analyzed, it is impossible to draw any definite conclusions. It is doubtful that the pictures and story are authentic."265

In a later dispatch that passed between Ruppelt and Fournet the Air Force's suspicions seemed confirmed:

"Life was offered Rio photos free if they would give credit line to Brazilian photographers. Original price was \$25,000. Life had original prints but concluded they were not reliable because (A) shadows on disk were not same as shadow on background. (b) They would be too easy to fake, and (C) after first 'flurry' the price of the photos went down. ATIC concurs in this evaluation."266

The dismissal of the case had its foes. The question of shadows discrediting the saucer photos was disputed by a

Brazilian, Mr. Fernando Cleto, during a Brazilian television show called "The Enigma of Space" aired in 1959. The argument in favor of the authenticity of the photo was based on geographical landmarks that provide clues to the position of the object in question. According to a careful study of maps and a survey of the site, it was determined: "...that to shine from the right the sun would have to shine from the southeast quadrant of the sky--a thing that it never does in that part of Brazil."²⁶⁷

"Secret Briefing in Progress."

Fascination with the UFO mystery remained high among personnel stationed in Washington. Both military and governmental experts were among the curious so frequent opportunities were provided to inform those who felt they had some need to know. Beginning in May, Ruppelt travelled to the Nation's capital, every two weeks on the average, to give briefings to interested parties. Every talk was to a packed house behind secured doors decorated with a sign that proclaimed: "Secret Briefing in Progress;" and certainly not of minor importance was the fact that murmurs about extraterrestrial visitors were not uncommon among those in the audience.

During one briefing an Air Force Colonel proposed that a squadron of F-94C's equipped with cameras be stationed at strategically located air bases ready to take off at the first hint of UFO activity in the region. It was pointed out, however, that the F-94s, the Air Force's best, were in short supply and were committed to the guarding of vital defense installations against the all-too-real threat of Soviet intruders. One has to admit though, his attitude was both positive and aggressive, characteristics that were too often lacking in BLUE BOOK operations.

Among those briefed were General Ackerman of the Director of Intelligence, Brig. General Maxwell of the Research and Development Board, and representatives of the Office of Naval Research (The Navy would approach BLUE BOOK at the end of the month and offer its aid in the channeling of data to ATIC. The offer was accepted and a liaison established.).

"You're doing a fine job Captain."

The many briefings given by E. J. Ruppelt in Washington cumulated in a presentation to the top man in the Air Force hierarchy, Secretary of the Air Force, Thomas K. Finletter. On May 8th, assisted by Lt. Colonel R. J. Taylor of Colonel Dunn's staff, Ruppelt spent an hour describing BLUE BOOK operations to a keenly interested Finletter. Several times the Secretary questioned Ruppelt about certain UFO cases. The briefing ended with Finletter dismissing Ruppelt with the compliment: "You're doing a fine job Captain." The impression Ruppelt received was that although Finletter was intrigued with the mystery, he didn't seem worried, or at least was able to conceal any strong feelings about the subject.²⁶⁸

Omitted by Ruppelt, or unknown to him, was a specific UFO case that had mobilized the Air Force's OSI the next afternoon. The incident, although later proving to be a hoax, evidently contained certain aspects fascinating to Secretary Finletter. Allegedly, some witnesses saw a flying saucer close up while motoring along Ritchie Highway just to the south of Baltimore, Maryland on March 29th. A big pancake-like object was supposed to have: "...hovered for approximately two minutes 200 feet above Mr. --- (deleted)'s automobile causing the ignition of his automobile to be magnetized and stopping the engine."269

The principle witness, a Mr. Stewart, (the other alleged witness later denied seeing anything) contacted a Baltimore news commentator who in turn mentioned the yarn to a retired Army Colonel. The Colonel felt it his duty to notify the AFOIN. Apparently the report circulated among some real big shots because one of Ruppelt's superiors at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Lt. Colonel Ray W. Taylor of ATIC, sent a message to the Headquarters of the OSI in care of Lt. Colonel Lucius Free, urging an immediate field investigation. The chief motivation was the fact that: "Intelligence requested that OSI afford the matter priority attention since Secretary Finletter had expressed a personal interest in the report."270

"Atomic spies?"

A security information message forwarded from South Carolina via the Federal Bureau of Investigation, alerted the Air Force to some activity in the Ellenton area. The information furnished stated:

"At approximately 2245 hours May 10, 1952, four employees of the DuPont Company, employed at the Savannah River Plant, Ellenton, South Carolina, saw four disc shaped objects approach the 400 area from the south, disappearing in a northerly direction.

"At approximately 2305 hours, the same employees saw two similar objects approach from the south and disappear in a northerly direction.

"At approximately 2310 hours, one similar object approached from the northeast and disappeared in a southwesterly direction. One more object sighted about 2315 hours traveling from south to north. Employees described objects as being about fifteen inches in diameter, having yellow to gold color. A-1 of these objects were traveling at a high rate of speed and at high altitude without any noise.

"Eighth object approached the 400 area from 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 at high rate of speed and was noiseless.

"Witnesses stated that they observed objects weaving from left to right but seemed to hold general course; also stated that due to speed

and altitude they were only visible for a few seconds.

"The Atomic Energy Commission in Washington was advised."²⁷¹

The disturbing thing about this incident is that of all the areas in South Carolina, UFO's were being reported swooping over a Hydrogen Bomb factory. We could ask the same question posed back in December 1950 by a local Ellenton newspaper which asked if UFO reports in the area indicated the presence of aerial "spies."

A "standard" report.

It was a "standard" report. The witness that submitted it said that he and his wife had been standing in the front yard of their home at 3:00 on the afternoon of May 10, 1952 when an aerial object appeared in the southwest heavens. Visible for over five minutes as it moved across the sky, the object was described this way: "It seemed to be silver and disc shaped."²⁷² Ten minutes later another such object appeared in the southwest and passed overhead flipping over and over during its passage. This second sighting sent the witnesses racing to a local radar facility down the street since the locale of the incident was Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, and the observers were Mr. and Mrs. Bachtel. Bachtel was an Air Force Colonel attached to the 34th Air Division headquartered at Kirtland.²⁷⁵

That night another "thing" appeared in the Albuquerque area.

Something with a white glare "on the tips" and with two other lights, both red in color, an arrangement not in conformance with FAA regulations, was seen above Albuquerque the evening of May 10th. Due to clouds and the darkness of the night, little was visible but one motorist claimed the thing dived on his car. The witness declared that the object went "as fast as a jet," roared like a helicopter, and made right angle turns.²⁷⁴

Further sightings at George Air Force Base.

One of the best manifestations of phenomena appearing above George Air Force Base was supposed to have occurred May 11th and was witnessed by a civilian then taking flying lessons at the base. A trio of objects was noticed by the man:

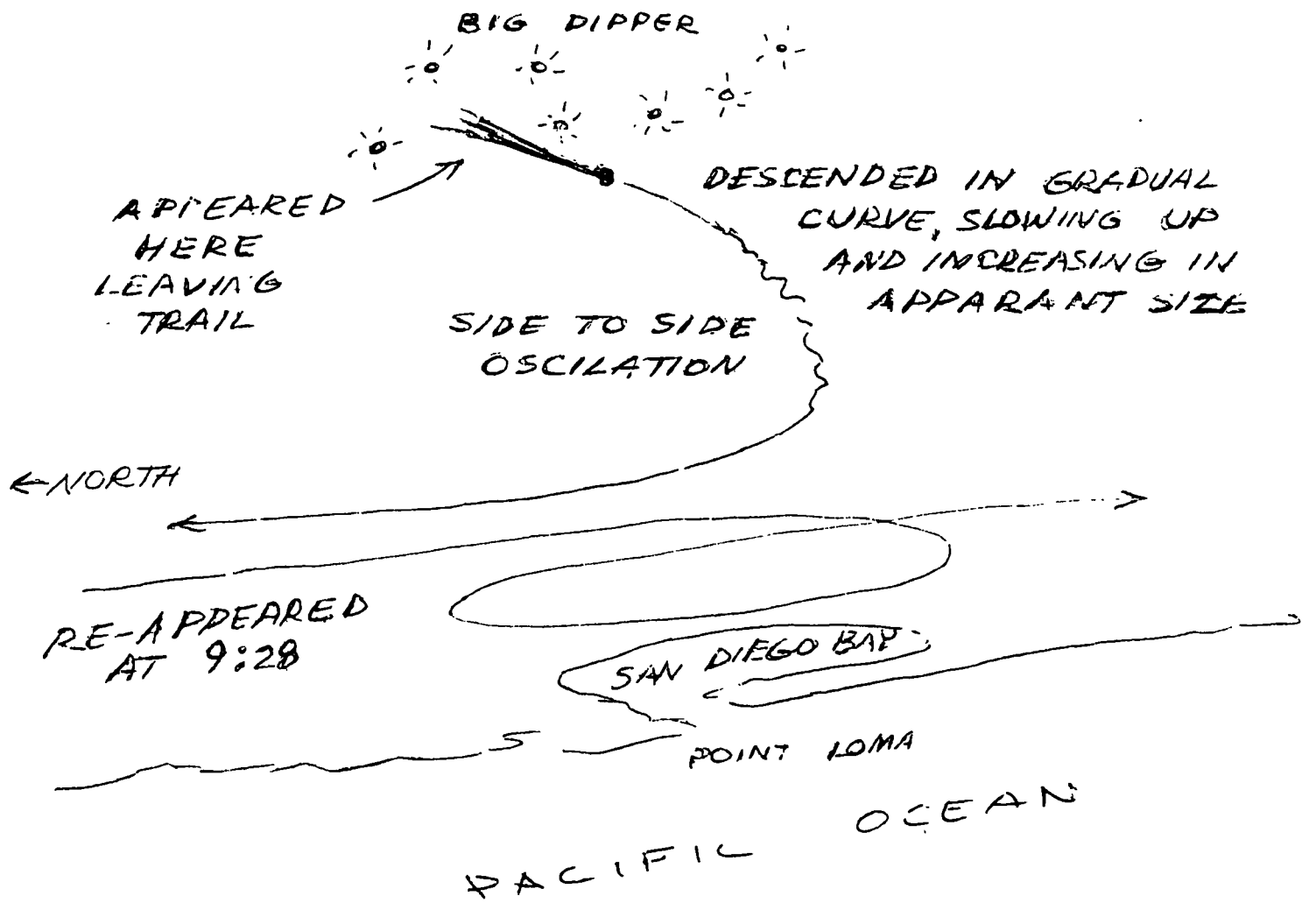
"One of the three objects that I observed resembled a paper plate in shape and appearance and was of a flat white color. The others were too high to allow any accurate estimate as to shape or size but had a metallic glow. One of the smaller objects was not continually visible because

it seemed to waiver or 'bob.' As it turned, the sun's reflection on it would cause it to glint. The other small object was continually visible and both seemed to be in a wing formation. The object resembling the 'paper plate' flipped end over end in a definite direction, disappearing into the south with a speed of a jet fighter and returning about five minutes later at a reduced speed. 20 to 30 seconds after the second observation had commenced, I saw the 'paper plate' object make a 90 degree turn to the south and then it seemed to approach the two smaller objects, which did not make their appearance until the second observation. There appeared to be no interaction between the 'paper plate' object and the two smaller ones."275

A "startling star."

A B-29 Maintenance Specialist, T/Sgt. Raymond Bare, who was praised by his Squadron Commander and immediate supervisors as intelligent and reliable, stepped forward to relate a strange story May 15th of seeing a peculiar astro body bounding around in the heavens to the west of Roswell, New Mexico:

"The object at first appeared to be a star, but after a few minutes Sgt. Bare noticed that its blue-green color changed in intensity from very bright to dim. The object pursued a definite course, which it repeated three times while Sgt. Bare was watching it. When the object was first sighted, it appeared to be about 20,000 or 30,000 feet above the mountains at Ruidoso, New Mexico [Ruidoso is in the Sacramento Mountain Range. Looking to east one can see Roswell down below in the Pecos river valley. Looking to the southwest one can see Alamogordo in the Tularosa valley]. It appeared to have two motions; one, a swaying movement from South to North, the other, the South to North track of the route it was following. The object then climbed almost perpendicularly to the terrain to between 40,000 to 50,000 feet, and then descended at an angle of 25 degrees, to its original altitude. This cycle was repeated twice for a total of 5 cycles. The speed of the object appeared to be faster than a jet type aircraft, but its exact speed could not be precisely estimated. Sgt. Bare could not estimate the length of the object's various courses, or the length of time that it remained on any one course or altitude. The color of the object was a blue-green while traveling straight and level and then changed rapidly to a bright bluish-green while climbing or descending. While climbing the object's shape appeared to be that of a disc."276



Deep space approach?

The enthusiasm of aviation experts in the Southern California area for the probing of the UFO mystery appeared to achieve some results on May 13th when two engineers from Convair, Donald Carr and Seymour Gates, beheld a very bizarre meteor. Also viewing the weird body was an ex-Naval pilot Dean Strawn, and an amateur astronomer by the name of Robert Haney. These four men were supposed to have observed the phenomenon from a locality in the San Diego area (see illustration). Mr. Carr was convinced a real strange craft had entered the Earth's atmosphere:

"Its dive from extreme altitude at possibly meteoric speed, its deceleration, leveling off, and circle of the city twice indicate that it arrived from interplanetary space and was under intelligence control."277

From the 10th to the 20th, sightings swept Europe.

France:

"On May 10, 1952, at 6:00 p.m., twelve persons in La Roche-sur-Yon saw a flat disk fully lighted; it flew without noise and took off vertically to overtake another UFO seen higher in the sky."278

England:

"At Malvern Hills on May 10th an object was seen that resembled: 'A bluish-green phosphorescent bubble-like sphere with a misty green halo.'"279

Portugal:

"On May 13th, ... Flying Saucers and cigars, accompanied by lights,' were observed at various points in Portugal.

"At Santarem, ... a dazzlingly brilliant sphere with a vapor trail was visible for minutes.

"Near Alcobaca a cigar flew several times back and forth before 'seeming to blow up.'

"At Caldas Darainha a 'cloud' darted up into the sky at breath-taking speed."280

Sweden:

"... on May 16, 1952, several inhabitants of Malung, Sweden, reported that they had seen a strange object, like a glass fluorescently illuminated from the inside, flying noiselessly across the sky."281

Italy:

"Pisa, Italy 'luminous oblong object' [seen on] ... May 19, 1952."²⁸²

England again:

"On May 20, 1952, an aerial object was reported at Denham, England, 'giving rise to small disks scattering in all directions.'"²⁸³

Birds or what?

There were so many "V-formation" reports, over and over again, its an effort to try and judge the value of each. The objects must have been birds, one assumes, yet the "luminous points" in question travelled at a velocity invariably estimated as extreme. One wishes one could have been a participant in the witnessing of the phenomenon so it might be better ascertained whether or not the incident had merit. Not everyone has 20/20 vision and it would not take much to blur a faint bird image into an ambiguous dot, therefore the next case should be considered with care for the individuals involved seemed to have adequate qualifications for observing sky lights and there is provided for our consideration three separate accounts of the same spectacle.

Members of a group of amateur astronomers on the campus of Furman University, at Greenville, South Carolina, swore to have witnessed something unusual in the heavens the night of May 13, 1952, at about 11:00 p.m.

The first witness gives us this account:

"I noticed four objects, modified cylinder or obloid in shape, flying at an unknown altitude on a heading of about 300 degrees. These objects were brownish orange in color and rather dull glowing in appearance.

"These objects were in a diamond formation, almost directly overhead, going on a straight course, oscillating slightly, first one side would tip up then the other. They were in sight for about five seconds."²⁸⁴

Another witness left us this version of the sighting:

"...one of the group, called our attention to what I would say were four objects, each the shape of the goose without neck or tail. They were a luminous brown or orange color, possibly translucent and flying in a diamond formation. Distance between each object was about five times the width of each object.

"They were flying about ten to fifteen degrees from directly overhead, on a level course heading about 330 degrees. Altitude I would say was below

1,000 feet if they were about the size of geese. They were visible for about ten seconds.

"Their flight was oscillating in nature, first five degrees up on one side and at the same time down on the other."²⁸⁵

Lastly, a third statement by another fellow:

"...one of our group called our attention to four obloid, self-illuminated, brownish-yellow objects traveling in a diamond formation. These objects were in sight for about three seconds traveling on a level course slightly agreed [?] to the left on a heading of about 300 degrees.

"I was unable to estimate the altitude or speed of these objects. They traveled directly overhead, making no sound, and rather wobbling in flight. Motion was similar to heavy winged birds in flight. It was a clear, quiet night, excellent for astronomy. There was a slight ground haze over the city, however, this did not extend to the Furman campus where it was perfectly clear."²⁸⁶

One of the witnesses made a significant comment when interviewed by 1st Lt. Arthur Palmer of Air Force Intelligence:

"By way of further description, I would say the objects were similar to the 'Lubbock Lights' as reported in Life magazine. Approximate size would be that of a half dollar held at arms length and slightly turned."²⁸⁷

The half dollar remark would make for a large image. If the reader of these lines would hold a half dollar at arms length and ponder the assertion the amateur astronomers could not detect any indication the objects were birds, then he might doubt the bird theory. It must be noted, however, that according to the official record one witness was: "...inclined to believe these were geese," ...but unfortunately no detailed reason or written statement was given to back up the claim yet the military jumped at the dissenter's remark and drew attention to another case that took place at a drive-in theater outside Fargo, North Dakota, back on April 25th. The Fargo case was similar and there was little doubt birds were responsible. Still, what makes the Furman file special is that the investigating officer preparing the Intelligence document on the sight pursued the problem beyond the acceptance of the bird hypothesis:

"The night was extremely clear. The sources stated that there was haze and ground illumination near the city, but that they were on the Furman University campus and that there were no ground lights near nor haze."²⁸⁸

Furthermore:

"...there were no ground lights in the area to reflect from a bird. This is borne out by the fact that these people had set up their telescopes in a dark area, which is essential for good astronomical observing."²⁸⁹

Moreover: "It is not known how much light a bird will reflect, but it seems logical that a relatively bright ground source of light would be needed."²⁹⁰ At this point it perhaps becomes imperative that scientific tests be conducted to resolve the uncertainty but no funding was available and a choice of an explanation remained a matter of personal preference.

It is curious that a similar sky show was observed by U. S. Naval officers on May 15th in the Washington D.C. area:

"...COLOR GOLDISH-ORANGE, NO APPEARANCE OF EXHAUST, SIZE AND ALTITUDE UNKNOWN, SHAPE CIRCULAR AND APPEARED 'SAUCER-LIKE IN THICKNESS.' OBJECT TRAVELING DUE SOUTH IN LEVEL FLIGHT AND VANISHED FROM SIGHT PRIOR TO REACHING HORIZON. OBSERVED FOR ABOUT 15 SECONDS MAXIMUM. SPEED COULD NOT BE ESTIMATED BUT 'EXTREMELY FAST.' STATE HE AND 3 OTHER OBSERVERS WITH HIM WERE CERTAIN IT WAS NOT SEARCHLIGHT REFLECTION ON CLOUDS OR OVERCAST."²⁹¹

The confused Canadians finally showed up on ATIC's doorstep in mid-April asking for help. Air Force records state:

"Two RCAF personnel members of the Directorate of Scientific Intelligence, Defense Research Board of Canada, visited Project Blue Book at ATIC on 14 May 1952. Canada is setting up a project very similar to the U. S. Air Force project for the investigation of reports of unidentified aerial objects. The RCAF people were briefed on the operations of the project and the difficulties that have been encountered and the proposed future plans were discussed. Action is being taken to establish channels for communications between the Canadian and U.S. project personnel."²⁹²

Korea.

The use of balloons by the North Korean Communists in the war zone was recognized by the U. N. Command, but for exactly what purpose was something that had eluded Allied Intelligence services although some experts surmised that the effort had some sort of signal function. Be as it may, an occasional

encounter with the balloons kept U. N. pilots alert. When any round-like metallic appearing sky object was seen, it was invariably written off as an enemy balloon, yet some reports were still hard to figure. An American Air Force Captain at the helm of a speedy P-51 fighter had this story to tell:

"Returning from target area May 15, 1952, I was flying number four position. At approximately 1835 hours I first sighted this object. Our altitude was 9000 feet. First sighted object at about one o'clock position from our flight. By the time I called the object in as a bogie, it had moved to the three o'clock position and started a steep climb, which I assumed was the beginning of a loop, but at the vertical position in the loop, the object moved forward in its original course of travel (360 degrees) and wavered momentarily and then descended and disappeared into the haze which reached an altitude of approximately 7,000 - 8,000 feet."²⁹³

Subsequent interrogation drew out these additional details. The Captain remarked that the object: "Appeared spherical and at one time when it was climbing it looked like it was flat." The color and size was given as "50 feet in diameter and silvery color."²⁹⁴ The estimated speed of the "balloon" was 1,000 mph. If it was a balloon it seems incredible the Captain could not make a better guess as to its real velocity!

May 17th.

And what was Edward Ruppelt and BLUE BOOK doing at this time? Were the people at Wright sitting back with their feet up on a desk? There was always one thing that drew the Intelligence team out into the field and that was repeated visitations by an apparent inexplicable phenomena. BLUE BOOK was too understaffed and underfunded to go just anywhere, so it was logical that if there was an opportunity to see something for themselves it was hard to pass up the chance.

A visit to George Air Force Base.

Since personnel continued to "sight UFO's" ever since the impressive incident at the beginning of May, the Intelligence officer of the 146th Fighter Wing, Major Vincent Walrath, asked Ruppelt on May 17th to fly out to the West Coast and investigate personally an offer the head of BLUE BOOK readily accepted.

Three days later, May 20th, Ruppelt arrived in the golden state by commercial air and motored to George Air Force Base where he met with Major Walrath to devise a plan.

Just why he did so was puzzling but Ruppelt determined that the focus of the inquiry would be centered on a few UFO reports made from a T-6, so extensive orders were given to utilize that same aircraft in an attempt to duplicate conditions during which the UFO appeared. Every resource was enrolled in the effort. The base radar station was made available and observers were assigned to all geographical sites that offered a good view. Radio channels were kept clear of all unnecessary voice traffic that might hinder communications.

By 1:30 the afternoon of May 21st everything was ready and a T-6 aircraft with Ruppelt aboard took to the air. As insurance, Ruppelt took along a Licca camera equipped with a 135 mm telephoto lens.

The wait wasn't a long one. Within a hour a ground observer spotted an odd aerial object and contacted the command center. Visual examination determined that the UFO was a balloon without a doubt. Ruppelt radioed nearby Edwards Air Force Base and learned that a similar balloon had been recently launched.

May 22nd was spent interrogating witnesses to all the UFO overflights reported that month, and using his test as a guide, Ruppelt left George Air Force Base satisfied that balloons were responsible for the excitement on the basis that certain characteristics were identical to the known balloon passage. Generalizations about the George Air Force Base manifestations would be reduced to a single word: "balloons," yet a close check of the BLUE BOOK file reveals that other possibilities existed. Paragraph number 7 says in part: "It will be noted that although some of the reports were attributed to balloons, others could not be and are still being investigated."²⁹⁵ It hardly needs to be said that little or no follow-up was made and the balloon solution remains unchallenged to this day.

"There's the 'flying saucer woman.'"

The Southern shift of UFO activity resulted in a memorable moment for one of the more famous names in the UFO story: Coral Lorenzen.

At 7:00 p.m., May 21st something silver in appearance coasted over Door County, Wisconsin. Lorenzen, a writer for the Green Bay Press-Gazette, was walking on a downtown street in Sturgeon Bay on her way to an assignment when a UFO hove into view and excited the city's residents. People pointed and exclaimed: "What's that!" "Is it a flying saucer?!" Lorenzen's reputation as a minor authority on the subject drew a shout from at least one onlooker who yelled: "There's the 'flying saucer woman'--ask her what it is!"

Lorenzen had no answers but set out at once to identify the object. She contacted police headquarters to determine if any police units around the county could provide a triangulation on the object so its altitude could be calculated. She then dashed about to obtain binoculars to view the object with greater clarity. From her position in downtown Sturgeon

Bay, the UFO seemed to be an ellipsoid shape seen at a 45 degree angle. At the same time, she later learned police at the town of Fish Creek were gazing almost straight up at the UFO and from that angle the object's shape appeared to be round.

For half an hour the UFO remained visible to witnesses in Sturgeon Bay allowing persons an extended look. All agreed the object was metallic in appearance and had one outstanding feature: "...a brilliant round red light about one third the diameter of the object in the center."²⁹⁶

There seems to have been a possibility the object had been a giant skyhook balloon although Lorenzen remained puzzled, and now that she had seen something with her own eyes, it increased her resolve to devote her spare time to solving of the mystery of unidentified aerial objects.

Publicity picked up along with UFO activity. An AP dispatch out of Chicago May 22nd, told a UFO chasing an airliner, while at Northrop Aircraft, Inc., at Hawthorne, California, the house organ, the Northrop News, carried a story about a Mr. Leo Swenson who "saw one," an indication that interest in the aircraft industry in the UFO riddle remained high.

Tension in Washington.

A precursor of greater things to come was a message flashed to BLUE BOOK May 22nd: "...civilians reported sighting an unidentified object described only as an oval-shaped reddish glow moving very rapidly on a very erratic course in the general area southeast of Alexandria, Virginia..."²⁹⁷

More alarming was the disturbance in the dark operations rooms at the Capital's National Airport the night of May 23rd when at least 50 unexplained blips popped up on the radar screens, a preview of things to come.²⁹⁸

Encore at Lubbock, Texas.

Almost a year after the famous Lubbock flap, another sighting of a "V-formation" there raised some question about the validity of the bird hypothesis since, as before, the observer was firm in the opinion that the objects in question had a definite oval outline and soared overhead at tremendous speed; also, the color of white-orange seemed to be too common a UFO feature of reports of this time to be merely accidental. The latest Lubbock manifestation occurred May 25th and was immediately reported to the local military Intelligence office since the witness was so impressed. Here we are talking about Air Force Captain John S. Jones, Senior Navigator of the Combat Crew Training School at Randolph Air Force Base.

The Air Intelligence Information Report read:

"The interrogation revealed the objects to be tear-drop in shape, appearing to be about 1/8 to

"Flipped over and vanished."

Since this manuscript was written, an interesting 1952 UFO report was published in the November 21, 1986 issue of the Trenton N.J. Hamilton Observer in an article by staff writer Michael Koy.

The following incident took place two days after the mysterious radar targets appeared on the screens of the traffic control center at Washington National.

On May 25, 1952 a Ward C. Campbell and friends were fishing off the coast of New Jersey when a strange "bright spot" was noticed in the sky. Since this "spot" had a purplish fluorescent quality, it was impossible to ignore. When first noticed, the "spot," which was a body of some sort radiating light, was motionless, but it soon moved. It suddenly gyrated, dropped to a lower altitude, and then darted to the right and then to the left. The men in the fishing party began to chuckle at the antics of what they thought was a "blimp" gone crazy. They were amused until the object "flipped over" showing that it was not a blimp but a disk-shaped construction. Right after it flipped, the thing vanished so suddenly Campbell used the words: "like the snap of a finger." The disappearance was so abrupt he likened it to a dematerialization.

1/4 an inch across. The actual size was undetermined, but after questioning as to the relative size in relation to a known aircraft, he stated that they looked larger than a B-29 at an altitude of 10,000 feet. They appeared as a solid white mass of light with an orange tinge. He could distinctively count twelve objects, flying in three groups, four objects in each group in a very tight V-shape formation.

"Captain Jones was unable to distinguish any aero-dynamic features. He saw no trail or exhaust and the propulsion system could not be determined. Their speed was estimated to be between 1500 and 2000 miles per hour. He said that it was the fastest thing he had ever witnessed. Their sound after passing was a definite soft intermittent hum.

"All during the observation they were in straight and level flight, continuing that manner until they were out of sight. The outline of these tear-drop shaped lights could be definitely identified as such because they were superimposed against a very dark sky (the moon was new and not visible at the time). Their speed across the sky could be compared to that of a falling star.

"The sighting was made at exactly 2127 Central Standard time on 25 May 1952. The objects were observed for approximately 3 seconds. The officer judged this time by the amount of time it took him to rapidly rise from a sitting position in a chair and walk about 15 feet."299

One last note, if the objects were migrating birds, why were they traveling west to east and not a Polar route? The report on the case stated: "Captain Jones and the other witnesses were sitting on the patio of the officer's quarters facing southwest, looking at the stars when the objects appeared in the West heading in an Easterly direction."

The other two witnesses were Captain Jones' wife and a friend, 1st Lt. Paul Hewitt, a B-29 pilot.

The official conclusion, nonetheless, was: "birds." Additional comments by preparing officers:

"Source was sincere, positive and definite about all aspects of this report. The other two witnesses were in complete agreement with him which substantiates his story as to time, place and what was seen. The fact that the observers were looking at the sky in the direction in which the objects first came into view, allowed them to observe the objects throughout the entire period they were in the area. Observers were also accustomed to the darkness, having been sitting out of doors looking at the stars for some time. The source stated that it was a sight such as he had never seen before. This statement is reasonable in that the officer had considerable experience

as a navigator and was well acquainted with conventional aerial objects."300

Did this mean the report would be put at the top of the charts at BLUE BOOK? Hardly. The case was disregarded: "No special significance can be given this report inasmuch as there are no other records of comparable sightings in this area on file at this station."301

Saucer over Saigon.

If newspaper reports can be believed, Vietnam had a strange sky visitor May 28th. We know of the incident only because a few of the witnesses were French and a description of the phenomenon appeared in the French language press. The American Air Force Attache, Lt. Col. William Huntley, forwarded a translation to the Pentagon.

It seems a Frenchman by the name of Raivbanld had been motoring down Saignon's Rue Lefebvre that morning of May 28th at 10:33 a.m. The day was windless for the most part and only a few cottony clouds hovered in a bright blue sky. Zipping down the streets, Mr. Raivbanld could not help but notice that the Chinese and Vietnamese pedestrians were gathered in groups on the sidewalk staring at the sky. At first Raivbanld believed that it was just an interest in a mundane attraction, like a helicopter passing low overhead, but naturally he felt compelled to take a peek himself. Braking to a stop he got out of his car and scanned the horizon. To his surprise he saw nothing out of the ordinary, so a little bemused he got back behind the wheel of his vehicle and resumed his journey. He hadn't travelled far before he again encountered people evidently fascinated with some phenomenon high above. Again he brought his auto to a halt and out of frustration yelled to the nearest person gawking skyward: "What's going on?" His query was met with: "That is going on!" "Just look up!" A cloud in the azure sky was pointed out, and as Raivbanld visually examined the churing white vapor suspended in the air at about 3,500 feet, a strange object emerged. Moving clear from the cloud that had obscured it, and before it could enter another that could cloak it once more, Raivbanld had an opportunity to study the thing which he described as: "...something absolutely round, white-silver in color, and brilliant as metal shining in sunlight." It wasn't an aircraft, so was it a balloon?

Raivbanld quickly dismissed the possibility he was observing a balloon, a judgment backed up by the newspaper which published the story. The newspaper had taken the trouble to check with the Services Meteorologique and learned that no balloons were supposed to have been in the area at the time, but it is Raivbanld's reasoning that is the most convincing. He suggested that it was inconceivable that a balloon would be blown about with such velocity while the clouds through which it passed were remaining motionless.³⁰² One has to admit he has a point there.

More UFO's among the clouds.

An Air Force Intelligence Report, datelined Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 28th, told of something strange visible over the city.

The weather was clear with the exception of a few scattered cumulus clouds. The observers were two Albuquerque firemen:

"The first object was sighted at 1345 MST approaching from the northeast toward the observers at a high altitude and an extremely high speed. It had a circular shape, a shining silver color, no visible source of propulsion, and no sound could be heard. The object approached to a point estimated at four miles from the observers and then rose in a sharp clockwise circle. Sight was lost because of the higher altitude attained.

Two similar objects approached at a lower altitude (estimated at 15,000 feet) from above the mountains northeast of the observers at 1400 MST. They moved in a straight line and appeared to move faster than the first object. Both seemed to be of the same design as the first object, but had an orange or light brown color. The objects turned abruptly when they reached a point approximately on a forty degree angle to the observers and turned to a northeast course. The objects seemed to be thirty to forty feet in diameter at this point, which was the closest approach of an object at any time. The two objects flew in close formation toward the northwest until sight was lost.

"A third sighting was made of an object flying high over the mountains northeast of the city at 1440 MST. The object was flying among scattered cumulus clouds high over the mountains in a curving course from northeast to southeast. Sight was lost due to the high altitude gained by the object."303

Adamski and the FBI.

California's George Adamski remained a locally recognized excentric besides being the proprietor of the Palomar Cafe, an establishment some five miles east of the community of Rincon where there was a road junction leading to Mt. Palomar Observatory. Ever since March 1950, when the "little men from Venus" stories hit the newspapers, Adamski had grown bolder and bolder in his utterants about the flying saucer subject and by August 1950 had produced an indefinable image on a photograph which the San Diego Union published over the caption: "what is it?" A similarly vague picture taken by Adamski appeared in the September 1950 issue of Fate magazine which hinted at the capture of a spaceship on film.

Still Adamski was not satisfied with the limited notoriety such vagueness bestowed, for he had definite ambitions. In the spring of 1952 as UFO excitement began to build, Adamski spread a rumor that the U.S. government had successfully established contact with the pilots of the saucers and had learned something of the culture of the aliens which was markedly different from the American political system. To Adamski a highly advanced form of government could only be some sort of Socialist utopia which led him to make favorable remarks about Russia, something a person did with care in the 1950's. Adamski's words reached the ears of the FBI in May 1952 and were filed away for future reference. Adamski was guilty of nothing more than expressing an opinion and no matter how unpopular his views may have been, it was his constitutional right to babble as much as he wanted. It's laughable that the Californian rated such attention by the Bureau, but Hoover's boys believed in playing it safe. They would keep an eye on the strange Far West UFO enthusiast.³⁰⁴

More green fireballs.

Conjecture that put the notorious "green fireballs" in the same category as the mysterious flying discs received another boost May 28th and in the latest manifestation the same old familiar characteristics were present: 1) The intense green color. 2) The horizontal flight path. 3) A brief duration. 4) An unexplained concentration in the U.S. Southwest. 5) The conviction of witnesses that they were not observing a meteor.

The case in question here concerns a Combat Crew interrogation at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, which revealed:

"During a night training mission on 28 May 1952, five B-29 aircraft of this command reported sightings of unidentified objects, closely resembling Very Flares. The objects appeared to be globe-shaped, greenish colored, illuminary and were visible for less than a minute. All sightings were visual. Objects appeared to travel level or in an arc along a horizontal path with one exception, which was seen to trail off toward the ground. The size of the objects could not be determined, but were compared, by observers, to a Very Flare fired about one hundred yards distant.

"Three sightings were made in the vicinity of Otto radio, east of Albuquerque, New Mexico, by B-29's flying at approximately 16,000 feet. Sightings were as follows: at 0310Z 29 May 1952 at 34 degrees 20 minutes North, 106 degrees 40 minutes South; at 0320Z seven miles east of Otto radio; at 0340Z sixty miles northeast of Otto radio. Another sighting was at 0530Z by a B-29 flying at 25,000 feet, described as ten miles

southwest of Tulsa, Oklahoma. The last sighting was also at 25,000 feet at 0833Z described as fifteen miles Northwest of Enid, Oklahoma.

(Weather sequences given here have been omitted.)

"There were no known activities in the areas of sighting to account for what was seen. No physical evidence or photographs were obtained and no intercept or identification action was taken.

"Crews making these reports appeared to be familiar with the characteristics of meteorites and expressed the opinion that the objects were not meteorites."305

Enigma at Edwards.

The Thursday, May 29th, incident at Edwards Air Force Base, California, reminds one of a similar sweep across the sky over Great Falls, Montana back in August 1950, when a pair of silver UFO's, one in the lead with the second behind and to the right, flew an arc across the witnesses' field of vision.

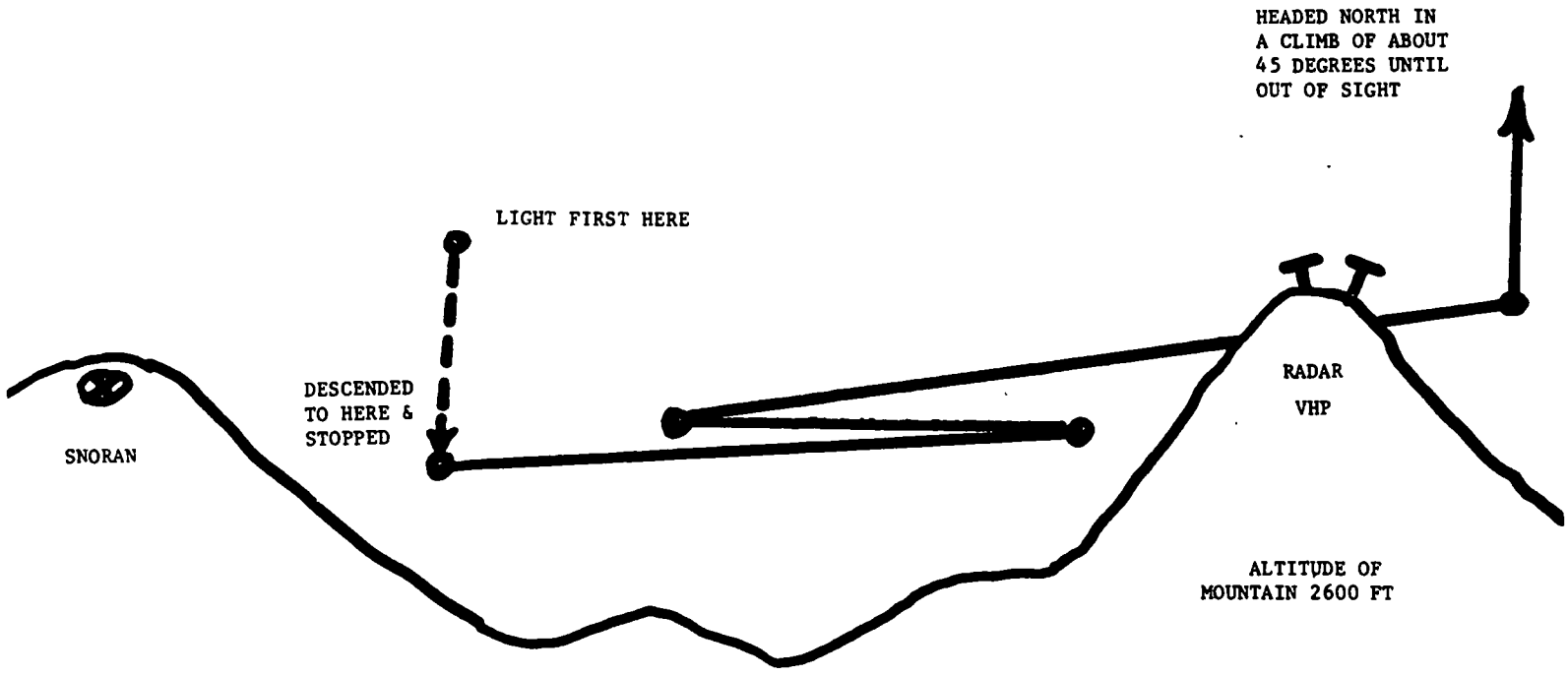
The weather that May 29th at Edwards Air Force Base was considered excellent with little wind and 20 miles visibility. The witnesses' testimony (submitted in accordance with Air Force Regulation 200-5) states in the first paragraph that:

"Two objects, appearing to be circular or disc-shaped, silver or metallic in color, with no sound or vapor trails, flew in a curved course from east to north to southwest. One object was flying behind and to the right of the other, at an estimated speed of from 200 to 450 mph. Objects drew into close formation before disappearing from sight, and increased speed very rapidly. No sign of wing or tail surfaces were observed by four of the five witnesses."306

The witnesses made up an impressive list. Although the names of the gentlemen are deleted, their qualifications are available for the record: A mechanical engineer with a background in aeronautics, an Ex-Air Force test mechanic, an aeronautical instrumentation engineer, and another man who was employed at the laboratory of the California Institute of Technology at Edwards Air Force Base. (His technical qualifications omitted.)

The military acknowledged the impressive credentials of the witnesses by remarking: "The report is evaluated as reliable due to the aeronautical experience and education of the observers."307

Another war zone wonder.



(UFO seen near the 607th
AC&W site in Korea on
May 31, 1952. Copied
from official sketch.)

At a radar site in Korea, the 607 AC&W squadron, 4:00 a.m., May 31st, an airman on guard duty at post #6 heard his field telephone ring. When he answered he learned from the guard post #4 that something odd was in the sky. A bright spot in the dark sky to the northeast was approaching fast. The official version of the next four minutes, as incredible as it may seem, was listed this way:

"Shape: Oval in shape.
"Size: About the size of a fighter type aircraft.
"Color: It appeared to have a color duller than mercury in the center and that looked like an outer ring around it glowing with a clear fine light similar to white phosphorous.
"Number of Objects: One.
"Trail of exhaust: None noted.
"Estimated speeds: Not able to determine.
"Aerodynamic features: None noted.
"Any unusual maneuvers: When first seen it was approximately 3500 feet high due north and appeared to slowly descend down to about 2600 feet where it stopped for about 2 to 4 seconds. At this point the observer stated that the object appeared like a disc. It had a pulsating sound resembling a jet idling. After the object had stopped momentarily, it proceeded to move toward the east for about a mile with jerky movements, and then stopped again momentarily, reversed its direction abruptly and headed west for a short distance to almost the same position it was the first time. At this point the object stopped again for a moment then reversed direction again to head east and in a shallow climb to a point to the right of the mountain where the radar station is located, at this point the object went into a steep climb (about 45 degree angle) to the north and disappeared in a matter of 3 to 4 seconds."308

More from Europe.

An increase in UFO reports also was noticed in Europe. French author Jimmy Guieu tells us something paid a visit to La Roches-sur-Yon in France:

"Mlle Mauricette Faive, a social worker, and her mother, and a Mme and M. Egron were among those whose reports of what they had seen tallied although they were not together. Two luminous discs, or disc was seen rather low in the sky at about 6:30 p.m. First, a large reddish disc was seen rather low in the sky. Then another was noted, smaller than the first, probably because higher up. The disc ascended and seemed on the point of collision with the other; but having joined it, the two flew off at terrific speed."309

Further south in Morocco, police and motorists sighted a: "...a shiny disc with a dark center" that spewed a 2,000 foot luminous trail.³¹⁰

The UFO's were no mystery to the German magazine Das Wochenende, which on May 28th excited its readers with the article "Invasion From Outer Space."

Widely quoted was the world famous Albert Einstein who was urged by a Protestant pastor to make a statement about the UFO riddle. Einstein said: "These people have seen something... I don't know what it was and I'm not interested in knowing."³¹¹ Millions around the globe were not that disinterested and within days would have plenty of reasons to look skywards. Ruppelt remembered this about June: "If you can pin down a date the Big Flap started, it would probably be about the 1st."³¹²

-To be continued-

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