

UFO'S: A History
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by

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Donald Keyhoe, whose writings appear to give a blow by blow account of the exciting UFO events of the Summer of 1952, considered the month of June merely a period of calm before an unexpected storm.¹ Similarly, Dr. Herbert Strentz, whose doctorate research covered press coverage of the UFO mystery during these years, dismissed June as lacking AP National or "A" wire stories about saucers and hardly worth a mention.² Under a higher magnification than either Keyhoe or Strentz used, we find however that a sizeable amount of data can be documented. Actually, Captain E. J. Ruppelt of BLUE BOOK fame was closer to the mark when he called June the time of an impressive buildup of UFO activity, although a check of all sources shows that UFO reports continued to come in a heavy, steady rate, creeping south, not only in North America but in Europe and the Far East, where in the latter region sightings in the Korean war zone gave the jitters to Intelligence experts. The Korean UFO situation gave the mystery a sense of urgency rarely matched in any other period of the sky riddle's history. Air Force UFO Status Reports, issued by BLUE BOOK, hitherto classified "Confidential," were upgraded to "Secret."

Project BLUE BOOK with E. J. Ruppelt at the helm was overwhelmed by the UFO flap of the Summer of 1952. The inadequacies of BLUE BOOK: the limited manpower, the meager funding, to say nothing of its questionable objectivity, became glaring. Ruppelt was really on the hot seat. His peace of mind was particularly tormented by radar cases and one of the better ones took place the first day of June. Ruppelt's memoirs give it a prominent place and the essentials are repeated in the following paragraphs.

"...something damned real."

It was morning and some electronic engineers employed by Hughes Aircraft were operating a radar installation at a Hughes Los Angeles facility, testing and calibrating the set by ranging in on jet aircraft passing over Southern California. The engineers were about to shut down for the day when one of the men gave his attention to a blip showing an object to the north of Los Angeles over the San Gabriel mountains. The blip indicated an object at 11,000 feet altitude travelling at 180 miles per hour. "Probably a DC-3," he thought.

Just when he was about to turn away from the scope, the engineer noticed the blip making a big jump on the screen, increasing its speed by a factor of three in one sweep! Amazed, the engineer called for his companions. All the men gathered around the scope to watch as the blip put on quite a show. The blip made a turn and began to gain altitude rapidly, accelerating to 550 miles per hour while zooming 35,000 feet a minute. The "thing" stopped climbing, leveled out briefly, and then plunged downward until it reached 55,000 feet, where again it assumed

horizontal flight, moving away toward the Riverside area.

After doublechecking the radar set to satisfy themselves the blip was not weather or a malfunction, the engineers contacted nearby Edwards AFB flight operations that controlled test flights of experimental aircraft in the region. According to the Edwards people nothing was scheduled, an answer that spooked the callers from Hughes who now had to face the possibility the target may have been something very weird.

At 5:00 that afternoon Ruppelt at Wright Field in Ohio received a long distance telephone call from the California UFO witnesses describing the radar riddle.

Before the telephone conversation ended, Ruppelt gave the California engineers a chance to play UFO expert, asking for their opinion. One engineer remarked:

"Yesterday at this time any of us would have argued for hours that flying saucers were a bunch of nonsense but now, regardless of what you'll say about what we saw, it was something damned real."³

Double loop over Africa.

Across the Atlantic Ocean that same Sunday morning, many hours before the incident in California, a mysterious orange-colored phosphorescent object raced into view over Port-Gentil in French Equatorial Africa. Among the few Europeans in the area was the crew of a cargo vessel which watched the astounding luminous object as it halted its rush above the coastline, veered, executed a doubled loop, and then sped away. The period of time in view was approximately three minutes.

The ship's captain told the press the object was flying at about 600 feet and was like nothing he had ever seen in all his years at sea.

The story appeared in the local African press where it was noticed by William Blake, the American Counsel General at Dakar, who forwarded the information to the U.S. State Department via a Foreign Service Dispatch.⁴

"Mass search."

Indiana was ready. A major newspaper in Indiana urged the population to take to the streets to scan the skies on June 2. Thousands heeded the call. The mass watch sponsored by the press produced mixed results. An officer Arbuckle, manning the desk at a police station in Columbus, told the newsmen there had been numerous phone calls reporting phenomenon above the city. Lights in the sky, a zigzagging silver disk, and a greenish UFO were among the visions. He said he even saw something himself which resembled: "...a light bulb headed north going fast."⁵

Public enthusiasm was not dampened by yet another issuance of the Air Force's standard UFO press release. On June 4, Air Force Secretary Thomas K. Finletter made a public statement:

"No concrete evidence has yet reached us either to prove or disprove the existence of the so-called flying saucers. There remain, however, a number of sightings that the Air Force investigators have been unable to explain. As long as this is true, the Air Force will continue to study 'flying saucer' reports."6

For the moment however, the scene of action was Europe and not the U.S.

In the Chartres region of France, near the communities of Saint Prest and Saint Martin de Nigelles, on June 4, a pair of circular objects soared overhead, one in a straight line and its companion in a sinuous course. Later that evening a huge "plate" hovered over Chartres at about 15,000 feet. After a brief wait it leaped upward out of sight. The witnesses were a M. and Mme. Descaux. That same morning Aunean, France was the locale of more UFO reports as were areas in Spain.7

"Possibles" and "probables" into firm actualities.

As a change of pace we will consider the next case first through the eyes of the Air Force scientific advisor reviewing the case, the review taking place a number of years after 1952:

"...it is entirely possible that it was a gross misidentification on the part of these two experienced pilots and therefore the evaluation of possible aircraft is justified. It is unjustified, however, in the statistics for the year to call it an unquestioned aircraft. To be fair, one might also have designated it 'possibly unidentified' and at the end of the year have listed it as 'unidentified.' I have long inveighed against the unacceptable (and this is to any good statistician) statistics employed by BLUE BOOK over the years in transforming 'possibles' and 'probables' into firm actualities."8

The incident, as given in official records, is related below.

"Has been assigned to the Directorate of Intelligence..."

Piloting a C-47 on a round robin flight out of Niesbaden, Germany, Lieutenant Colonel Gerald M. Jones, USAF, passed over the city of Stuttgart about 7:30 the evening of June 4. Having pulled out of a tight turn, Colonel Jones shifted his vision a bit and happened to notice an exceptional "star" of impressive brilliance which at first did not warrant a stare with the dark heavens clear and filled with scillianting astro bodies, yet in a split second the brilliant "star" captured the pilot's curiosity since it was definitely moving. Fascinated that a "star" was zipping around the Earth's atmosphere, Captain Jones banked his plane and took up the chase. Both he and his copilot tracked the intense white glow as it streaked with jet-like velocity, making pursuit futile but for an abrupt turn

by the light that put it on a collision course with the C-47. As the light closed with the C-47, the white, star-like point changed color blurring from a white into a crimson hue and then changing again to a dazzling green. Before many seconds had passed, the light switched from green to its original white. By this time the mysterious luminosity zoomed near enough to threaten an impact. The approach did however offer an opportunity to get a look at the phenomenon since for a brief instant it was silhouetted against the city lights of Stuttgart. What flashed in front of Captain Jones' eyes made him question his senses. Here is his testimony:

"At this point it is very possible that hallucination enters the situation, for only a fraction of a second was I able to observe its silhouette. It was my impression that the object was circular in shape with white lights on the leading edge. Around the trailing edge was what appeared to be a slight haze similar to that caused by waves of intense heat emanating from jet aircraft, which fogged the lights of the city seen through this haze. The object made a sharp turn to the left on a heading of approximately 270 degrees and disappeared under the nose of the aircraft. At this point I observed the time to be 2107 zebra."⁹

Air Force Intelligence added a remark to the Captain Jones' statement, a comment that it felt had a bearing on the reliability of the officer as an observer: "Captain G. M. Jones was the Air Attache in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and has recently been assigned to the Directorate of Intelligence, Headquarters, United States Air Force."

Initially listed as "unknown" the case was later classified as "possible aircraft" to Dr. Hynek's previously covered consternation.¹⁰

The alarm over UFO activity in Korea may have triggered a push for a wider distribution of an assessment of the Communist threat. A Colonel W. A. Adams of AFOIN-2B expressed a desire to have the Intelligence study #100-203-79 declassified. It was a Top Secret paper produced by Air Force Intelligence back in December 1948 that suggested the "flying saucers" being reported were real objects and of possible Russian manufacture. The Colonel contacted Dewey Fournet who rummaged through Air Force files and located something titled: "D/I-ONI Study No. 203" which he assumed was the document in question. After examining the material Fournet blocked any declassification. In a letter dated June 5, 1952, Fournet wrote:

"...it is not considered advisable to declassify the Study No. 203 inasmuch as it contains much speculation on the possible origin of unidentified flying objects, information on Soviet AOB and atomic energy installations, and some information on U.S. Research and Development activity. In addition, it contains

a treatise on possible Soviet intentions in utilizing controlled aerial missiles over the U.S."11

In regard to the UFO part of it, it's understandable why Fournet felt speculation on the origin of UFOs should not be declassified and thus made available to the public; for one thing the authors of the study treated the existence of the objects as a positive fact, something not authorized in official public statements.

Nervousness in Korea:

June 6th at K-14 airbase, 11:23 hours:

"...the object was described as having the appearance of a coin, dull silver in color, appeared to be spinning in a clockwise direction, and size was estimated as being seven times as long as it was thick. The edges of this object were dark blue. It was reported for shooting a course at an estimated speed of 300 knots, alternately revolving 360 degrees in seven seconds and then proceeding on a spinning course for approximately 12 seconds. The object approached K-14 from the north, paused momentarily and then rose straight up for 10 seconds, the exact altitude unknown, and then disappeared into the sky. A few seconds later this object was again observed by a second person at the same point of observation. The unidentified object was seen proceeding at a rapid rate of speed from the south to the north at an approximately 45 degree angle, pausing and then returning in the same manner, each time passing in front of the sun and traveling an equal distance to each side of it. The time required to progress in one direction was three seconds. The description of the second unidentified object was generally similar to that of the first with the exception of the color (which was reported as black) and flight performance. The object was observed at 12,000 feet altitude descending rather irregularly at 6,000 feet, flew at that altitude for six or seven seconds, approached the observer within 1500 feet, and then disappeared into the clouds. The size of the object was estimated to be 15 to 20 feet in diameter. The speed was estimated to be approximately 250 mph."12

Still another Korean case. The site: Guard Post #14 at the Fifth Air Force Compound, Seoul, Korea. The date: June 7, 1952. The time: 0400 hours. The official record states:

"First observed at approximately 1,000 feet altitude and at 38 degrees standing still. There it slowly rose for fifteen seconds to approximately 2,000 feet. Then descending slowly fifteen seconds to 1,000 feet altitude, hovered for about one minute, then ascended rapidly on a vertical climb to approxi-

mately 2,000 feet. Object then started to bounce up and down rapidly for one minute, then descended again to 1,000 feet where it remained for 3 minutes, and then started to rise to approximately 2,000 feet, at which point it began to move toward the east on a straight and level flight path."¹³

Since it was night, little could be seen. The description given mentions only lights: "Slightly larger than a star of the first magnitude..."¹⁴ Also: "Object appeared to change color from time to time..."¹⁵ Moreover: "When first observed, was red in color, then changed to blue, orange, yellow, and white." The Air Force's opinion: "Object probably a weather balloon."¹⁶

"Faint possibility of a balloon."

Yet another classic "Fargo-type" encounter, a dogfight with a strange flying light, presented the military anew with a difficult diagnostic problem and it didn't help matters to have it occur in the Korean war zone where aerial combat with a real enemy took place on a daily basis.

Word was received on June 11 at Washington AF headquarters that an American F-94 jet fighter had tangled with a brilliant, round light above the Korean battlefront on May 31.

The American jet pilot spotted the light flying below him and since he couldn't identify it, he dived to investigate. The rest of the encounter is on file in BLUE BOOK archives:

"The F-94 descended in a port turn to intercept unidentified object 6000 feet below on a 90 degree course and altitude of 8000 feet. Unidentified object began a port climb at the same time to intercept the descending F-94 and accomplished a maneuver which silhouetted the F-94 against the light of dawn. The F-94 turned on afterburner and tried two quartering head-on passes with the unidentified object resulting in neither being able to get astern of the other. Lufberry maneuvers ensued to 30,000 feet where more passes were exchanged for a few minutes. The unidentified object then increased speed to an estimated 400 knots on a 45 degree heading and began pulling away from the F-94. When last seen the unidentified object had seemingly increased its speed to approximately 450 knots where upon the F-94 gave up pursuit at 0355 and returned to base."¹⁷

Under remarks the military report commented:

"The light from 500 yards appeared to be the size of a household sewing thimble and the F-94 was flying on afterburner during part of the encounter. The

crew (of the jet) believed that the unidentified object maintained contact by the dawn light silhouette and the afterburner glow of the F-94."18

The initial explanation given (signed by a Colonel of Intelligence) suggested that the light's performance indicated a high performance aircraft but that did not explain why the "light carrying aircraft" would not paint on the ground radar that had monitored the aerial encounter, so the final analysis favored a smaller body that would not be readily detected, such as a small balloon, yet the Intelligence experts admitted that such a solution was just: "...a faint possibility."19

The control of UFO information out of Korea was managed without difficulty if it was from U.S. forces, but less so if the source was an Allied unit, so the Air Force PIO's office in Tokyo seemed a bit taken aback when a Korean "flying saucer" story appeared in the Australian press, specifically the Sun New Pictorial of Melbourne. An Australian fighter pilot named Smith from Adelaide described his observation of a strange object:

"It was fifty or sixty feet wide with a depth about 1/10 its diameter. I judged its size from its apparent height; about ten-thousand feet, behind and above a Sabre Jet flying over the airstrip. It was whirling and tumbling, and twinkling as the sun struck its smooth silvery surface. At the same time it was travelling laterally at about 350 knots. Suddenly it stopped in its course, stopped tumbling and flashed straight up in a few seconds to about thirty thousand feet. It hovered for a moment then shot away on a new course at right angles to the old one. It stopped again and then went at tremendous speed across the sun and I lost it."20

The reporter for the Australian press added:

"Smith, an experienced pilot who flew his 100th mission later in the day, called --- (deleted by military censors) of Kankston, veteran of nearly 200 missions. Together they saw 'the saucer' reappear, whirling and tumbling before it finally vanished. Australian pilots gave a mixed reception to earlier (early in the year) reports of flying saucers seen above Wonsan in North Korea. 'I have always been skeptical myself,' Smith said, 'But this has convinced me.'"21

The story had been forwarded from Australia to Air Force PIO headquarters, Far East, Tokyo, via a radio hook-up, but although the military had gone to some trouble to gather the information, there is no indication in BLUE BOOK files that the matter was checked out to ascertain the truth. The only remarks recorded

were these: "The facts appear to have been somewhat distorted for publicity."²²

Apparently public awareness of UFO activity in the Far East had become a delicate issue with the Pentagon early in June. At this time teletype messages flashed between Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; the Directorate of Public Information, USAF, Washington D.C.; and Major C. E. Thomson, PIO, FEAJ, Tokyo, Japan; requesting information on how the Misawa case was leaked, an incident more impressive than the newsstory from Australia and one fully documented in Air Force records. The March 29, 1952 Misawa, Japan report had given Pro-UFO advocate Donald Keyhoe some impressive ammunition in his battle against official censorship, so perhaps the inquiry by the High Command was not accidental.

In reply to interest from the States, Major Thomson professed innocence that any such UFO news slipped past official safeguards.

"Associated Press correspondent uncovered initial story on flying objects over Japan in the course of scheduled visit to Misawa AB for Japan Air Defense story. Stories on flying objects resulted from personal conversations between AP reporter Bill Barnard and various officers stationed in northern Japan. Conversations were informal and newsy nature."²³

"A slim hope."

A slim hope of explaining the existence of strange objects in Korean airspace presented itself on June 13th and Higher Headquarters decided to build on it to allay growing curiosity. It seems that a forward army observer scanned enemy lines and saw "a balloon being raised and lowered on some sort of cable." Thus the FEAJ commented for the record and for units under its command at that time that:

"Most of the previous sightings of unidentified objects have occurred in the CT and DT grid area. The high horizontal speed of the sightings could be accounted for by a free balloon caught in a horizontal draft in the mountainous areas of that sector. The purpose of raising and lowering a balloon so near the front lines is not apparent, but could possibly be a method of communication."²⁴

Meanwhile, the American UFO scene was heating up with reactions to Life magazine's big UFO article, so impressive it provoked a follow-up essay by Robert Ginna in the publication's June 9th issue in which he discussed the deluge of mail. Letters being received mentioned a number of, in Ginna's words, "provocative and plausible" theories. Of the ideas considered, Ginna dealt at some length with the light inversion hypothesis after having consulted with Dr. Ronald Ives

of Cornell, one of the world's greatest authorities on mirages. According to Dr. Ives, for the inversion theory to have merit in explaining the many puzzling UFO sightings, ideal conditions would have to exist and that seemed to him to be very unlikely. Also, as Ginna reports Dr. Ives words: "The intensely bright light and regular maneuvering of some saucers sighted cannot very well be explained by refraction..."²⁵ Thus: "He makes clear that he has not seen a flying saucer himself, but he is convinced that reflections or refractions of even the most remarkable nature will not satisfactorily account for many of the sightings."²⁶

"Reaction to Ives."

On the other hand, the most famous and enduring proponent of the inversion theory was Dr. Donald Menzel of Harvard who was granted space in Look magazine to champion the very same idea Dr. Ives condemned. Time, a periodical that shared Menzel's bias, picked up on the entry of this new personality into the UFO controversy and published a summation of the Harvard pedagogue's essay in its June 9th issue, matching Life's release date.

Dr. Menzel, who would become the arch-foe of "UFO believers," declared that after the famous April UFO article in Life, he was drafted by Look to come up with some answers, but comparing Dr. Ives' assertions with Dr. Menzel's, it seems that the former was right, for although the Harvard professor produced some crude images in belljars under laboratory conditions, his efforts fell far short of putting Project BLUE BOOK out of business.²⁷

Project STORK expands.

Required to apprise BLUE BOOK monthly of its progress, the STORK group stated in its June 1952 summary that the original plans would have to be "supplemented and extended." Also, results up to early June were explained with the five original requirements either met or well developed.

The first requirement, that of providing a panel of consultants, had been quickly achieved enabling STORK to proceed with other stated goals. A review of cases on file was used in an effort to create a tentative interrogation form with enhanced data gathering capability.

No mention was made of Dr. Menzel by name who suppositively had solved everything although by December the Air Force declared in its Status Report No. 7 that:

"Several theories on possibility that some sightings can be explained as a type of mirage have been offered to ATIC. These theories have been accepted as theories, and will be investigated. More details on the ideas have been requested and as soon as they are received they will be submitted for analysis and comments."²⁸

"Red spy" at Offutt.

At 11:00 p.m. June 5th, an auto approached U.S. Highway #75 and slowed to a stop, having just pulled out of the Airview housing project adjacent to Offutt AFB, Nebraska. The driver looked to the left to check for traffic, his eyes taking in the highway, the Main Gate of the airbase, and Twin Gables tavern directly across from the entrance of the military installation. All was normal except for a large crimson light suspended in the air about a 1,000 feet above the scene as if a giant red firefly had paused to gaze down at the servicemen coming and going on the streets below. The driver didn't drive on. Instead his eyes remained fixed on the dazzling spot for almost five minutes. Finally the red light zoomed away passing out of sight in three seconds. The driver-witness was so impressed by the sight he set out at once to find Lt. Colonel Arthur Soball, Staff Duty Officer of the Headquarters of the SAC base, to make a report. The witness in this case was a 2nd Lieutenant who was assigned to the Document Security Branch, TOP SECRET, Hq. SAC, and who was formerly a special agent, 13th District OSI.²⁹

The "Red spy," still hanging around.

Just four days after a mysterious red light hovered over the main gate of Offutt AFB, Omaha, Nebraska, another crimson light was observed by a T/Sgt from his residence in South Omaha. For some four minutes it was seen hovering in the air after which it sunk out of sight. The Air Force's OSI filed a report on the incident and stated: "Attention is invited to a similar phenomenon witnessed by 2nd Lt. (---deleted) SAC, at Offutt AFB, Nebraska, 5 June 1952..."³⁰

South of Offutt AFB, far to the South in Kansas, a UFO sighting was reported at Wichita. A local representative of Bell Aircraft was waiting for a plane at the municipal airport terminal at 4:00 p.m. on the afternoon of June 12th when he happened to notice a pale-colored sphere motionless in the sky. At the outset there was nothing extraordinary with the sight but soon this "balloon-like" object began to behave in a fantastic manner. Abruptly it moved to the northeast, seemingly urged along by a sudden gust of wind, but then, according to the Bell Aircraft expert, the object:

"...stopped, made several maneuvers, and reversed its field until it reached its original position, stopped and took off directly east at an estimated speed of 400 miles per hour. At this point the object appeared to change from a globular shape to a saucer."³¹

The day before, on June 11th at 6:44 p.m., a UFO duo was in view about 40 seconds.

"Two globular objects, dark blue with grey centers, appearing six inches in diameter, at an estimated 6000 feet, were observed in hazy outline without visible trail or sound. Objects passed in trail Southwest to Northeast at estimated 500 miles per hour. Number two assumed lead after passing number one to the left before disappearing."32

The objects were seen just northeast of Chicago several miles east of O'Hare International Airport. There was a layer of scattered clouds at 6000 feet.

The heightened excitement prompted an Air Force Captain to phone Air Force Intelligence June 12th to confess that he had seen some strange sky objects with his own eyes back on May 21st. The officer may have been seeing things but it was noted that he was a member of the Physiology Branch of the Aero Medical Lab, WADC. The phone call was documented and filed in a BLUE BOOK folder. It reads:

"The objects were sighted for a period of one half hour between 2100 and 2130 CST from a drive-in theater located near Randolph AFB, Texas. The Captain did not know the exact location nor the directions since he is not familiar with that area (he was on TDY). The objects were noticed to the right of the screen. A total of about 15 to 20 objects were observed. They were observed one at a time without more than three observations at once. They appeared to be about three times as bright as Venus, four times as fast as a F-86 and about one-twentieth the size of a full moon. They were bright bluish white in color. They were going back and forth, up and down, although most of them tended to go upward. One was noted to perform nearly a perfect sine-wave (S-shaped). They would suddenly come into view and suddenly disappear. They did not gradually fade out. The weather was CAVU."33

Smokey "meteor."

Out West near Medford, Oregon a strange airborne object hovered in the sky spewing white smoke. After awhile it moved away in a southwest direction leaving behind a trail of vapor estimated to be some four feet wide and 200 feet in length.34

On the other side of the continent in the Washington D.C. area, mysterious blue-white flashes of light lit clouds over the Nation's Capital. Rumors about flying saucers circulated but National Airport Control tower officials dismissed the rumors, blaming the lights on reflections from lightning flashes over the horizon.

"...interested in the airport."

The European flap was coming to a head in France in mid-June with a rather spectacular observation claimed by a M. Jean-Paul Nahon, on June 12th, through the living room window of his fourth floor apartment in St. Denis.

The afternoon of June 12th (at 3:30 p.m.) the weather was exceptionally good so it was natural that M. Nahon took in the view, letting his eyes roam the city skyline, the large gas storage tanks in the foreground to the environs of the neighboring towns of Ecuen and Luzarches in the distance.

A brilliant flash unexpectedly drew his attention indicating some sort of bright body in the sky. Grabbing his binoculars to look at the phenomenon, he could see with the help of the glasses that there was an object in the sky surrounded with a red aureole. M. Nahon called for his wife to come and witness the phenomenon. A charwoman and a neighbor joined them.

As the four people watched, the object which resembled a huge piece of zinc more or less elliptical began an amazing series of maneuvers:

"The object remained stationary for a moment, in a slightly inclined plane, and then began to move in a series of jerks--to the right, then to the left, then up, then down.

"These movements were fantastic: violent ascents, too swift to be followed with glasses, followed by gentle descents. The last of these descents was of the 'fluttering dead leaf' type; then...(it) swung to and fro like a pendulum for a moment, and 'darted off obliquely and disappeared.'"³⁵

The Frenchman contacted the aircraft controllers in the Bourget control tower not far away, but they said at the time they had not noticed a thing. M. Nahon had his reasons for phoning Bourget for he believed the dancing object was "interested in the airport."³⁶ It turns out something was seen but on a different day. The officials at Le Bourget issued a communique concerning the testimony of the same two duty officers in the Le Bourget tower, a M. Veillot and his colleague M. Damiens, about a curious object observed at 1:00 a.m. the morning of June 13th:

"Today when the sky was overcast, a ball of fire larger than a star crossed the sky in the southwest of the area, after a long period of immobility. This phenomenon was reported by the airplane FBEFM, which signalled the control tower. The ball disappeared beyond the horizon, emitting sparks and with continually increasing speed."³⁷

Returning to the U.S. we find events building to a climax.

Like some eerie signal a big green fireball flashed over the State of Oklahoma 4:00 in the morning of June 14th, perhaps

announcing the advance of visions to the heartland of America.

The observer of the great bolide, an Air Force 2nd Lt. stationed at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, who happened to be motoring through the Sooner State and knew that such emerald manifestations should be reported, told his superiors that the: "...object was unlike any falling star that he had ever seen."³⁸

"Build-up."

Looking in on Ruppelt at Wright Field we find that BLUE BOOK had achieved a promotion in June, becoming a Section on the Air Force Intelligence's organizational chart, a gain of importance due, as Ruppelt claimed, to the number of puzzling UFO reports being made in the Korean warzone, however official concern would soon shift to domestic UFO activity. Of this change Ruppelt's staff had something of a forewarning for the STORK team was doing some plotting on a situation map and the results appeared to show an increase of sighting along the East coast.³⁹

That UFO activity could act as an area phenomenon, in this case a "build-up", was a possibility Ruppelt kept in the back of his mind and had an occasion to recall with interest on June 15th when the situation in the Virginia area became so pronounced the Officer of the Day at ATIC phoned Ruppelt at home off base to inform him a "lot" of reports were being logged and that perhaps he should return to his BLUE BOOK office at once.

Taking the OD's advice, Ruppelt rushed back to Wright Field and examined the numerous Telexes piled on his desk. It seems that a round shiny object had moved over a good part of the state of Virginia from 3:40 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Witnesses in Unionville, Gordonville, Richmond, and Blackstone got a good view as the thing slowly sailed overhead and by the time the object had reached Blackstone, radio stations in Virginia were regularly reporting the object's progress, hence the intense reporting activity by citizens along the UFO's route. While jet interceptors did not reach the UFO before it disappeared for good, Ruppelt was nonetheless satisfied the object was a balloon. If nothing else the sky show excited the inhabitants in the Virginia region, sensitizing them to later manifestations. At the Pentagon Al Chop was earning his pay handling all the phone calls making inquiries about the thing in the sky west of the Nation's Capital.⁴⁰

Vandenberg.

Public awareness of the UFO problem reached new heights on June 16th when a newswire datelined New York quoted the Air Force Chief of Staff as saying that complacency in the face of potential unidentified airborne objects could not be tolerated.

"Cigar-shaped monster."

The spectacular image described by Chiles-Whitted back in 1948, seemed to have returned (or at least a close relative),

when a "cigar-shaped" phenomenon came into view a quarter mile from Standiford Field, Louisville, Kentucky, midnight June 15th. A former U.S. Navy radar technician observed the thing slowly go through its paces at 5,000 feet altitude. Here is the description as told to Major R. J. Hefling of Air Force Intelligence:

"Cigar-shaped object, size of large aircraft fuselage, blunt at the front end, appeared to be lighted on both sides, had a reddish hue on the stern end; one object sighted, estimated speed was 400 to 500 miles per hour, no sound audible, maneuvered leisurely in area for fifteen minutes--turned due West, then South and then disappeared to the North-east."41

Balloons?

Here's one to file under the question: "Are UFOs weather balloons?" In the New York Journal-American was this item:

"Pueblo, Colorado, June 18 (UP)--Orville Foster of the U.S. Weather Bureau at the Municipal Airport here said he sighted an object commonly called a flying saucer on the bureau's theolite last night. He said the nondescript object circled leisurely for 10 minutes and then disappeared toward the northeast. The weather bureau uses the theolite to observe weather balloons."40

Strange "saucer" over Showa.

The night of June 15, 1952 during a blackout (a military practice alert) at Showa, Japan, some military personnel saw a phenomenon in the heavens, an odd star-like body going up and down like a spring:

"It came straight down, seemed to stop dead, and then straight up. Sometimes it would come across real fast, then back up, and made a hairpin turn about one degree wide. The angle at which we observed it was about 75 degrees."43

One of the top men in Air Force Intelligence in the Far East, Brigadier General Charles Banfill, alerted the Pentagon that the Showa case should not be considered an isolated event: "The appearance and actions of this object are very similar to those ascribed to the object seen over Seoul, Korea, on 7 June 1952..."44

Formation over Walker.

Approximately five grayish objects "the size of a dime" traveling in a "half moon formation with the outer curve facing the line of flight," flashed over Walker AFB, Roswell, New Mexico, at 10:30 p.m. on 16 June 52. It was observed by an Air Force

Staff Sergeant. An interesting detail mentioned: "While the objects were passing over Walter AFB, the most easterly object veered even more sharply to the east at about a 10 degree angle until the formation disappeared from sight."⁴⁵

On June 17th E. J. Ruppelt, trying to keep track of the swarm of saucer sightings and redoubling his efforts to obtain firm clues, shot off a teletype message to Captain Fournet in the Pentagon:

"HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT THE 6 JUNE 52 NEWS-PAPER IN FLORIDA CARRIED A REPORT BY A COMBINATION VISUAL-RADAR SIGHTING FROM THE BOCA-CHICA NAVAL AIR STATION IN FLORIDA. DO YOU HAVE ANYONE IN THE NAVY THAT COULD CONFIRM AND GIVE DETAILS?"⁴⁶

A moment of truth.

It came to Ruppelt's attention that a soft white light jumped back and forth in the heavens over Walnut Lake, Michigan, for an hour June 18th, and that a strange object followed an Air Force aircraft for an hour and a half over California the same day. Both cases puzzled BLUE BOOK but a Goose Bay AFB incident was a head-in to a fascinating confrontation between Ruppelt and the way he was handling his UFO investigation. First the case in question will be recounted.

The radar at Goose AFB detected something passing through the local airspace and at one point it painted quite large on the screen whereupon the blip returned to its previous size. Some suggested that the target might have been a dish-shaped configuration which would explain the variation of the return.⁴⁷ According to Donald Keyhoe's version of the incident, some details were omitted by Ruppelt. Keyhoe maintains that the incident occurred shortly after midnight and simultaneously with the appearance of the target on Goose AFB radar, a strange red glowing object appeared in the dark sky on a southwest heading. At an estimated 4,000 feet, the red object moved along and at one time during its passage it paused and changed to a white color. This happened the same time the target on the radar scope bloomed indicating a definite connection between the light and the electronic target. Likewise, the light lost its crimson hue and resumed travelling on its previous course, an event⁴⁸ matched by the scope target with a sudden shrinking in size.

NOTE:

Originally this page, and the two pages following, had some information concerning a "moment of truth." This section contained a description of a fascinating briefing given by Ruppelt to some military Intelligence officers at the Pentagon in "mid-June." Of

June 16-1952 3-35

HXR127

NEW YORK--GENERAL HOYT VANDENBERG--AIR FORCE CHIEF OF STAFF--

SAYS THE AIR FORCE HAS LAUNCHED A SECRET RESEARCH FOR "FLYING SAUCERS."

SAID VANDENBERG: "THE AIR FORCE IS INTERESTED IN ANYTHING THAT TAKES PLACE IN THE AIR," AND HE ADDED: "WITH THE PRESENT WORLD UNREST, WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE COMPLACENT."

THE NEW HUNT FOR FLYING SAUCERS IS REPORTEDLY BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE AIR TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE COMMAND. ONE HIGHLY-PLACED INTELLIGENCE OFFICER IS QUOTED AS SAYING: "OUR JOB IS TO DETECT ANY WEAPON THAT MIGHT BE USED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES. IN THE FUTURE, A WEAPON THAT (PROBABLY) WAS A METEOR MAY PROVE TO BE A GLOBAL ROCKET."

ACCORDING TO A NATIONAL MAGAZINE, A SPECIAL CAMERA IS BEING DEVELOPED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA WHICH WILL BE ABLE TO BREAK DOWN THE IMAGE SO SCIENTISTS CAN DETERMINE THE SAUCER'S COMPOSITION AND SOURCE OF LIGHT.

SUCH CAMERAS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED IN MANY LOCATIONS IN THE COUNTRY. INSTRUMENTS FOR TRACKING GUIDED MISSILES ALSO WILL BE USED TO TRACK THE LOCATION, FLIGHT PATTERNS AND SPEED OF FLYING SAUCERS.

AND OTHER SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS WILL BE USED TO TRY TO FIND OUT WHY THE SAUCERS APPEAR TO BE SOUNDLESS.

THE AIR FORCE INVESTIGATION IS DESIGNED TO PROVE WHETHER THE AIR PHENOMENA ARE MISINTERPRETATIONS OF WILDCOATS OF ICE PLANES, WHETHER THEY ARE REFLECTED LIGHT FROM THE EARTH, OR WHETHER THEY ARE REMAINS OF SPACE SHIP AND INTER-PLANETARY MISSILES.

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those at the briefing, Ruppelt only identifies General Samford. The reader is referred to pages 195-196 in Ruppelt's book The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects. For reasons impossible to ignore, the briefing was moved to December 4, 1952. Why this was done and some speculation concerning the briefing will be covered in the December 1952 time period. To satisfy the reader's curiosity to some extent, we can say here that the briefing turned into an argument over positive assumptions vs negative assumptions regarding BLUE BOOK explanations of UFO reports.

Page 16 of this booklet has been dropped and an unrelated reproduction of a General Vandenberg news release substituted. Footnotes 49-56 referred to portions of the deleted text.

While the military argued in the Pentagon, UFO activity drew ever closer to Washington.

Strange lights were sighted over New Jersey on June 19th. At 9:50 p.m. a witness in the backyard of his home in Trenton, New Jersey, saw something he thought might be a "flying saucer," a bright, star-like body that exhibited a "swirling motion." It reached the horizon in 20 seconds and had a yellow tint to it. It was not a meteor or a jet, he said.

The witness was a former ground crew member in the Air Force during World War II and right after the war was sent to Germany as part of the Strategic Bombing Survey.⁵⁷

Another Korean puzzler.

Right up until June, UFO stories from Korea produced the alarming impression that some sort of machine of unknown origin was spying on the ward and on the 20th there was another incident that was logged on the lengthening list of inexplicable encounters.

It seems that an air strike was ordered on Communist positions in the west central sector of the front marked on military maps as grid "CT." AT 2:15 p.m. a flight of F4U-4B's took off from the steel matted runway of K-6's airstrip and sped northeast to bomb targets in close support of troops of the U.S. First Marine Division. The pilots of the flight were: Captain Bobbie Foster (Flight leader), Captain Richard

Francisco, Captain Teddy Pittman, and Captain Ronnie McDonald.

Flight leader Foster remembers reaching grid area CT at 3:03 p.m. and reporting in to his Marine TAC director, code-named "childhood 14." The flight, with Foster in command, maintained a left orbit at a slow 150 knots until called on to dive on Communist gun emplacements. Looking down at the target area, Captain Foster noticed a white or silver-colored object below him and about two miles away flying toward Communist held territory. Even though it was coming from the south, it resembled nothing in the United Nation's arsenal so the first thought that flashed through Captain Foster's mind was that the thing was a huge artillery shell soaring through the air, but that idea ended immediately when he saw that the object started to circle, at which time he quickly radioed his wingmates that there was a possible "bandit" at 2:00 o'clock below.⁵⁸

Captain Pittman, flying in the flight's number three position at 5500 feet, peered down toward the ground and saw an object beneath him which he said appeared to be of a round or oval shape with a white or silver colored appearance perhaps 3 to 5 feet across. Was it a bird, he thought? No, it couldn't be, he judged, since it was moving too fast.⁵⁹

Just beginning a bombing run, Captain Ronnie McDonald was concentrating on a target, yet he managed a glance in the direction of the UFO: "I observed an unidentified object at a position one mile southeast of target-coordinates CT 091129. It was at an altitude of approximately 1000 feet. It appeared to be a white object, circular or oval in shape and about 10 feet in diameter."⁶⁰

In the flight's number two position was Captain Francisco flying at 5500 feet level with Foster in a left hand orbit. Alerted by Foster, Captain Francisco also saw the object that was causing so much interest. He later told interrogators:

"The object was below me at least 5000 feet and was travelling at a very fast speed and appeared to be white or silver in color. The size was hard to determine but I would estimate it to be at least 6 feet but not 12 feet in diameter. I was unable to tell the shape too well but it appeared to be round."⁶¹

Captain Foster relates the object's next move:

"This object made a 630 degree turn (circled twice) and was in sight at all times. It made approximately a 4 mile circle and retired to the east toward friendly lines."⁶²

His guess of the object's size went like this:

"I estimate the object was 10 to 20 feet in diameter. Bomb craters on the ground were about 3 or 4 times as large as the object and I later estimated the bomb craters to be 40 to 50 feet in diameter."⁶³

As the object started to pull away, Captain Foster made up his mind to treat the UFO as an enemy device so he peeled off for a firing pass. Plunging down to 4000 feet, Captain Foster took note that his speed had reached 250 knots and that: "...the object went out of sight still low to the ground (below 1000 feet) at an estimated speed of 1000 mph or 4 times mine."64

Captain Pittman collaborated the fact that the UFO accelerated: "Captain Foster made a run at the object, but it pulled away from him."65

Air Force Intelligence in the Far East rated the reliability of the pilots as "A-1". All had considerable combat experience.

Wind conditions which might support a balloon hypothesis were 15 knots at 5,000 feet and a mere 4 knots at ground level, hardly adequate to propel a balloon at much of a velocity.

Captain Charles J. Malven, the investigating officer for the FEAF, commented in his official draft that: "Most of the reports from the DT grid area have been traced to the use of balloons by the enemy. Several of the reports from the CT grid area at this time are still unexplained."66

Oddly enough, the very next day Korean military airbase K-6 had a "visitor." The official record reads:

"Two sergeants, working in the (----deleted) operations office reported sighting an object approximately four feet in diameter and orange in color at 10:45 p.m., 22 June 1952, just above the K-6 airstrip, coming from the north. Immediately after the sighting, the object went into a vertical dive and suddenly leveled off at a point approximately one hundred feet above the west end of the airstrip. During the dive, observers noted a trail of bright red flame extending from two to five feet in length. Without delay, it headed in a westerly direction about one quarter mile (two to three seconds elapsed during this maneuver), where it hovered briefly over the crest of some hills nearby.

"The object then circled in a hundred-and-eighty-degree turn to the right, spending about forty-five to sixty seconds in the turn. After the completion of the turn the object emitted a bright flash and headed in an easterly direction for a distance of about one-half mile. No trail was noted at this time. At this point, a second bright flash was noticed, followed by complete darkness. No moon was shining at this hour and during the entire sequence of maneuvers, no sound was heard from the object."67

The file included this comment by the report's preparing officer:

"As a result of the combined and individual interrogation of the two enlisted men concerned,

there is little doubt in the writer's mind that they did see some sort of flaming object in the sky at the time and place mentioned. Both men hold responsible jobs in the operations office of their squadron."68

Oak Ridge again.

Little time could be spent debating for UFOs were again trespassing in prohibited airspace, the latest manifestation occurring at AEC's Oak Ridge Laboratory in Tennessee at 10:58 p.m. June 21st. A mystery light spotted by GOC volunteers was also detected by radar. The mysterious intruder was challenged by the military:

"An F-47 aircraft on combat air patrol in the area was vectored in visually, spotted a light, and closed on it. They 'fought' from 10,000 to 27,000 feet, and several times the object made what seemed to be ramming attacks. The light was described as white, 6 to 8 inches in diameter, and blinking until it put on power. The pilot could see no silhouette around the light."69

Ruppelt marvelled at the fact that the case was an exact duplicate of the famous Fargo, North Dakota incident of 1948! He wondered if the case was another so-called lurid "duel of death" sensationalized by the more devoted pro-alien authors writing for the public.

An object with a corona.

While T/Sgt. Howard Davis of an Air Force training wing was a passenger in an aircraft passing over south Texas on June 21st, he witnessed an extraordinary spot of light flash downward yielding only a brief glimpse of a brilliant object, he guessed was 3 feet by 3 feet, trailing a tail of sparks 15 feet long. Obviously the object had good meteor credentials, yet there might be the chance Sgt. Davis had viewed an actual machine whose shape and corona hold vital clues to its power and origin. (See drawing.)70

It is appropriate here to mention that BLUE BOOK adviser Dr. J. Allen Hynek should, on June 22nd, undertake a survey of some professional and amateur astronomers. His aim was to:

- 1) To learn if any competent people in his profession have made sightings which have not been reported.
- 2) To summarize the opinions of the competent people in this field relative to the broad subjects of unidentified aerial objects.
- 3) To obtain information and suggestions which may be useful in carrying out future phases of the work on the investigation."71

REDDISH SPARKS
AND STREAKS OF LIGHT
(APPROX. 15' LONG)



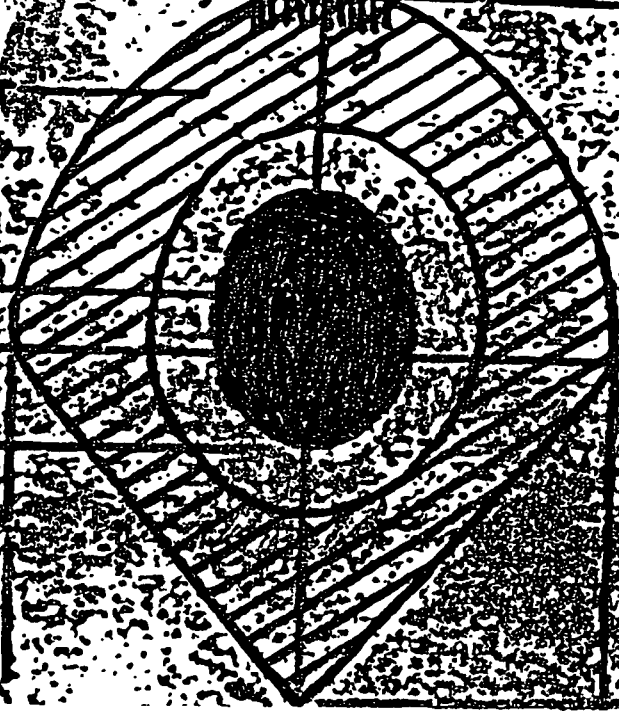
OPENING (INDEFINITE)



REDDISH LIGHT

DARK-BLUE
LIGHT

WHITE LIGHT



He would find that over half of those surveyed were interested in the UFO problem, exceeding that of the public at large, but that was no help to BLUE BOOK since they shared the Air Force's "negative assumption" attitude, that in time the military would solve even the most difficult case and find that it was just a matter of a misinterpretation of something ordinary. Why drop legitimate intellectual pursuits to chase a mere phantasm of the imagination?⁷² Their attitude underwent a change somewhat, however, when they took the time to listen to Dr. Hynek relate details of the better reports. Intriguing information from an Air Force advisor excited curiosity but it was generally agreed by the astronomers questioned that the data being gathered was still too tenuous.⁷³

"Giant soap bubbles."

Certainly an imaginative label, the description of some UFOs seen on June 23, 1952 ranks with the oddest recorded. That evening at 1:00 p.m., a Lt. Colonel in the Kentucky National Guard was hiking with a friend along Highway #60 some three miles east of Owensboro (near Oak Ridge) when a noise made him look skyward. Peering into the depths of the blue vault above in the direction of the sound, the Colonel saw: "...two round objects resembling giant soap bubbles that reflected the sun in a yellow-lavendarish light."⁷⁴ After the objects passed out of sight to the North, the Colonel immediately contacted the nearest office of the Air Force's OSI.

Things over Pennsylvania:

"Middletown, Pa., June 23 (UP)--Several 'round and silent flying saucers' and 'cigar-shaped' objects have been reported flying high over Jersey Shore, Pa., an Air Force officer said today. Capt. Arthur S. Lloyed of the Olmsted Air Force Base here said Army Capt. Harold Hermann and his wife reported seeing a 'round and silver saucer-like object flying fast across the heavens about 6 p.m. last Thursday' (the 19th). Two other persons saw flying objects."⁷⁵

Phantoms over Pottstown.

A FLYOBRPT, submitted via electrical means to Flight Service, MATS, in Washington, D.C. and then forwarded to BLUE BOOK, told of a series of sightings that took place during a period of 30 minutes in the vicinity of Pottstown, Pennsylvania, the night of June 26th. Pottstown is about 15 miles to the northwest of Philadelphia.

A pair of glowing bodies appeared at 10:00 p.m. moving on a heading of 120 degrees, flying in tandem 2 miles apart followed a quarter of an hour later by another duo separated by a mile. After another 15 minutes had passed, a single object came into view following the same course.⁷⁶

Balloon?

At one of the more remote parts of North America, Baffin Island in Canada's Northwest Territories, there occurred a sighting of an unexplained metallic-like object, a silver colored, elliptical-shaped thing. The UFO passed within view of an U.S. Air Force weather station on a course of 162 degrees. That the object may have been a weather balloon seems doubtful since witnesses to the passage were Air Force weathermen who were tracking a pibal balloon with a theodolite at the time.⁷⁷

Another green fireball.

A New Mexican newspaper tells us:

"The green fireball sailed through the skies last Tuesday (June 24th) evening around 10 o'clock was sighted by Mrs. Sheldon Wells and Mrs. J. F. Stampber while the Wells and Stampbers were playing bridge at the La Visto Motel. Mrs. Wells who was facing east suddenly blinded by strange, intense light. She gasped and screamed 'look a flying saucer!' Mrs. Stampber, noticing the horrified expression on Mrs. Wells' face, turned and got a glimpse of the fireball just as it passed out of sight.

"According to Mrs. Wells the object was about the size of a big, full moon and was intense green fire. It dropped at terrific speed, leaving only a faint trail of light. By the time the men had turned their chairs this ghost of the skies had vanished. However, the bridge game ended and the two couples scanned the sky for a trace of light, but there was none."⁷⁸

Unexplained radar targets.

Intelligence experts laboring for the FEAF admitted on June 25th that no positive identification could be made for a number of UFO reports in the Far East and promised redoubled efforts by Detachment #1, the 6004th AIEF, in obtaining more complete data so the mystery could be explained.

One step was to order a compilation of unexplained radar plots recorded in the Japan/Korean region and their evaluation by Wallace Bush, Electronics Engineers, Classified Reconnaissance Branch.

In the cases surveyed, it was determined that the radars were operating normally and questioning of personnel established that the radar operators were reliable. Mr. Bush was left with the recourse of suggesting that the Communists were going to a great deal of trouble to produce high-speed blips to confuse the Americans, which to him seemed to be a lot of effort for no real gain.⁷⁹ The evaluation could not have given Ruppelt any comfort when the results arrived at BLUE BOOK.

The evaluation's summation as penned by Captain Malven of the FEAF went: "The majority of the reports remain unexplained from the limited information available."⁸⁰

McChord AFB--under seige?

Unidentified aerial bodies became so profuse in the vicinity of McChord AFB, Washington, local military Intelligence dispatched a C1 priority message to the Pentagon, ADC Headquarters in Colorado Springs, and BLUE BOOK. Captain Ruppelt prepared to fly there at once on June 25th, having to arrange passage by commercial air (again the lack of military help).

Ruppelt arrived at McChord AFB the evening of June 27th, and after deplanning contacted the Wing Intelligence Officer of the 4704th Defense Wing at McChord, a Captain Harnnagy.

Captain Harnnagy told Ruppelt that reports had been made on June 17th, 19th, and the 23rd, all of them being made within 20 miles of the air base. He said that odd lights, many times that of an aircraft landing light in size, had been witnessed, sometime singular and on other occasions as many as five in number. The activity appeared to be concentrated in the north where the slow, low level points of lumination had been seen and reported by military personnel and reputable civilians, who had watched things move about in V-formation and at times in a cluster with a single, central light surrounded by more diminutive glowing dots. Reported behavior described great agility: "The objects would seem to stop short, and go in level flight and then come to a stop and make a turn." For some reason most sightings took place about 8:00 p.m. Other than that, nothing much was known. An interception by aircraft from Mc Chord was tried on one occasion, but without success.

Questioning of local witnesses was conducted in earnest by Ruppelt who tried to determine the apparent brightness of the UFOs by having the observers make a comparison with auto headlights.

The reported color of the lights (yellow-white) and their arrangement in space stumped Ruppelt since the descriptions did not jive with FAA regulations.

Ruppelt attempted to seek aid from the radar installations of the 25th Air Division but no permanent records of tracks were kept on file and to make matters worse no one recalled any extraordinary targets. Captain Harnnagy saved Ruppelt the trouble of making inquiries of the Navy, or the Coast Guard, having done so prior to the BLUE BOOK's chief's arrival and with no positive results.

On his last day at McChord (June 30th), Ruppelt met with a Major Goldman, an Intelligence Officer of the 97th Bomb Wing stationed at the air base, who informed him that a recent rash of UFO sightings at Spokane had not officially been reported due to manpower limitations. Ruppelt suggested that a simple TWX containing essential information would suffice in an emergency in place of the detailed Form 112. ⁸¹

An unpleasant surprise.

It was then Ruppelt received a rude shock. He was informed that an Air Force Colonel was giving lectures in the Spokane area promoting the extraterrestrial theory! Although the officer in question was in a medical unit and not in a combat arm or Intelligence, he was a ranking officer in the Air Force and that was enough to prompt an immediate response by Ruppelt. It was amazing that no one had cautioned the officer, perhaps the lack of action by local authorities was a measure of the bewilderment pervading the military establishment.

Ruppelt, using delicate language like: "highly advisable," issued these instructions:

"It is esteemed highly advisable to advise this officer through channels that if he cares to make such speeches in the future that he definitely state that the opinions that he states are his opinions and that he has absolutely no connection with the Air Force on this subject. He should also be reminded to make it plain that the figures that he quotes are his own figures or those derived from popular books and not from any official Air Force report."82

The next day Ruppelt took a plane back to ATIC. We can only wonder if this serious breach of military public relations had been contemplated by officers who had direct contact with the UFO problem!

If the public wanted an update on the Air Force's interpretation of the vexing mystery, they only had to visit their neighborhood newsstand.

"Hunt for the Flying Saucer."

Look magazine lent its prestige to that of Life's in giving the UFO subject a good press with the apparent blessing of the Air Force, for in a major article titled, "Hunt for the Flying Saucer" in an issue released June 24th, Look played up the military's concern and efforts to gain an understanding of the sky mystery.

Leading off with a quote from General Vandenberg's recent public statement that urged vigilance, the article singled out the fact that E. J. Ruppelt, chief of BLUE BOOK, had a folder of some 63 mystifying UFO reports which, when plotted on a map of the U.S., showed an ominous correlation with the location of various atomic energy installations. Look learned that some high-ranking officers had taken note of the correlation and had held a Pentagon conference to discuss the strange concentrations. Unfortunately, nothing more about the conference is given and Ruppelt makes no mention of it in his memoirs, nor is anything to be found in official files available to public inspection.

Using blunt language throughout the article, Look addressed the favorite theory of quite a few conservatives, that UFOs were U.S. secret weapons, and slapped it down abruptly. Attributed to an unnamed but "informed officer" was this quote: "There is more chance that they are from Mars than from a project of ours."83

The editors of Look even managed to wring a conclusion of sorts from the conservative Ruppelt: "The only conclusion we have come to so far is that 'flying saucers' are not an immediate and direct threat to the U.S. They have been around for five years and haven't struck yet. But that doesn't mean they are not a potential threat."⁸⁴

Not everyone agreed there was anything intrinsic in UFO reports.

Menzel, apostle of doubt.

Dr. Donald Menzel of Harvard, fresh from denouncing UFO's in Look magazine, took advantage of an active duty stint during the summer of 1952 (He was a Lt. Commander in the Navy) to try and proselytize the Brass at the Pentagon, addressing groups that, in Menzel's opinion, were enthusiastic about his illusion theories. Someone even asked Menzel to enlighten all of the befuddled BLUE BOOK people at Wright Field, yet Menzel confesses Ruppelt and company was "less receptive." In fact, he admitted there were even some at ATIC "positively antagonistic." The antagonistic few, he asserts, were mostly extraterrestrial converts.⁸⁵ (He felt vindicated later when a small number of officers that did buy his ideas were those who were to be called upon to do over BLUE BOOK completely in 1954.)

At least one highly skeptical Air Force Intelligence officer at ATIC at that time can be identified, a Colonel Ray W. McDuffee, the chief estimator of Soviet military capabilities. He was in the same division as BLUE BOOK but his exact duties as regards to the UFO project is unclear from an interview granted to the press in 1976, yet he seems to have been aware of much of what transpired. Here is how many of the UFO reports were "solved" according to Colonel McDuffee as reported by journalist Mack Owens: "One of the first resources used to investigate a sighting would be the almanac. According to McDuffee, "...as much as sixty percent of the sightings were the planet Venus."⁸⁶ It is curious that McDuffee should give a figure of 60 percent since that amount is vastly higher than any ever given by BLUE BOOK's astronomical adviser, Dr. J. Allen Hynek!

Ruppelt does refer to a 60 percent explanation rate but he included a number of stimuli other than Venus. This included all kinds of "astronomical bodies viewed under unusual conditions," with things like balloons and aircraft making up the remainder.⁸⁷ That left a troublesome 40 percent of reports that required close study, an alarming number by any standard. Was McDuffee being deceptive?

To McDuffee the UFO business was a lot of hokem with people misinterpreting ordinary objects or phenomenon for something extraordinary. The word "people" is how he described UFO witnesses, the implication being that more or less only untrained civilians only sighted UFO's, and by reading the entire 2,500 word interview one cannot find a single hint that anyone in his chosen profession, the military, had, God forbid, ever made a UFO report.

Equally strange, is that the Colonel never even admits that there were "unexplained" cases, instead he alluded to only one category as having anything of a "special" status. Reports journalist Owens:

"...even after all the cases were analyzed and published, the rumors persisted that the Air Force was not telling the whole story.

"McDuffee said that most of those rumors stemmed from a small folder of incidents (Ruppelt's 63?) that came under a classified category, not because of the sighting involved, but because revealing the sighting would reveal other classified material not related to UFOs."88

The opinions of McDuffee and Menzel meant nothing to the UFOs of 1952, for in violation of chance and any sort of coincidence, the sky phenomenon kept to its slow Southern course.

June 26th, 2330 hours.

A point of light likened to a very large amber-colored star sailed over the countryside close to New York's Mitchel AFB. The principle witness to the phenomenon was a pilot for Pan American Airways.

What could one make of the event? The speed of the light was not especially high, so could it have been a light-carrying balloon? During its twenty minute passage it moved erratically: "...quite rapidly, then stopping or moving sideways. It was observed reversing its path for a short space."89 For 15 minutes it was observed hovering motionless. The Pan American pilot's impression was this: "After thirteen years of aviation experience in both a civilian and military capacity, I am convinced that the foregoing phenomenon could not have been caused by any craft or weapon with which I am familiar."90

Reports were often padded by such remarks for it seems written accounts failed to convey the strangeness of UFO appearances, some sort of feeling that comes over the observer that he or she is seeing something totally out of context of the natural order of things.

Disk over New York.

People in the Bronx sometimes sleep on the rooftops of apartment buildings during the hot summer months, and as it happened on June 27th, at 1:40 in the morning, members of the Oppenheimer family were dozing under the stars when Mrs. Oppenheimer awoke and noticed an object with a gray-colored halo hovering in the sky in the direction of LaGuardia airport. She remembered the object as a round, smooth, glowing, disk-shaped mass that was parked in the air for a while and then which suddenly took off toward the North, making an abrupt turn to the West before passing out of sight.

There are two things that are particularly interesting in Mrs. Oppenheimer's story. First of all, she had no idea what she had observed and only when the incident was mentioned to her neighbors did someone suggest that she may have seen one of the famous "flying saucers" much discussed in the press. At the urging of her neighbors, Mrs. Oppenheimer telephoned the Air Force. Secondly, she would have had to be an UFO "expert" to fake the following detail. She related how just before the strange object zoomed away, it stood up on end, flying off in a vertical position.⁹¹ The flip upright from a horizontal hovering position before moving away is a peculiar maneuver known only to persons who studied UFO reports and from her testimony that seems unlikely in her case.

Working our way West, we encounter UFO activity in Indiana.

A member of the Air Force (rank and name censored by military Intelligence) contacted the local Air Defense radar unit, the 782nd AC&W site located outside Rockville, Indiana. The man was on leave and was visiting a relative in Terre Haute and happened to be standing outside in the yard when an object flew over head at high speed, some 12,000 feet high, at an estimated 600 mph. When the object reached a point some seven miles to the southwest of Terre Haute it came to an abrupt halt and "parked" in the air. This seemed so extraordinary the witness notified military Intelligence.⁹²

Further West, we find another "red spy".

Forbes AFB was located in Topeka, Kansas, about 140 miles due South of Omaha, Nebraska, where a red light was reported hovering in the sky the first week of June. Now, three weeks later another and even stranger red light became visible in the heavens over Forbes. Was the latest manifestation a star seen through a turbulet atmosphere, or was it a huge weird machine glowing with energy?

A 2nd Lt. (--- deleted) assigned to a Bombardment Squadron stationed at Forbes testified to an OSI agent named Alfred Savage.

Savage wrote:

"At 1850 hours, 27 June 1952, (--- deleted) and his wife were taking a walk near their home in Topeka, Kansas. When they reached the corner of 21st and High Streets, their attention was drawn to a bright red light, hovering in the air directly south of their location.

"(--- deleted) estimated that the object was approximately ten miles away and at an angle of fifteen degrees elevation above the horizon. He believed its size to be about two-hundred feet in diameter.

"The object was observed for five minutes, and during this, it changed shape from circular to oval in a pulsating manner at an estimated rate of thirty pulses per minute. It exhibited no movement other

than the pulsating action and disappeared instantly 'much like turning off an electric light.' There was no smoke or vapor of any kind."93

Agent Savage could offer no answer:

"There were no known celestial phenomena which would account for the sighting, and weather conditions were clear, with visibility of fifteen miles."94

The green fireballs again.

The significance of the green fireballs established itself in 1949 with repeated appearances over military/scientific installations. Subsequent reports were carefully filed and pondered as if they were "real" flying disk sightings and when one of the green fireballs appeared on June 27th, Ruppelt was notified by phone by Major Fournet. Fournet told Ruppelt what he knew. It seems that twenty minutes before midnight a brilliant green phenomenon hurdled across the heavens in a shallow arc over Urbanan, Maryland. Travelling southwest to northwest, the thing maintained a constant size and appeared to have a definite shape: "...rounded at both ends similar to large and small pulleys with rope running around and between both but solid green within this area. Length estimated equal to 2 inches at arm's length..."95

The witness was a Foreign Service Officer assigned to the Munitions Division of the State Department.

Lake Kishkonoug.

An observer on the north shore of Lake Kishkonoug, Wisconsin, 6:00 p.m., June 28th, noticed a speeding white, round object on a southwesterly course. Much lower and slower than the object was an F-80 jet traveling in the same direction. In the opinion of the witness, the object noticed the aircraft beneath it and reacted by making an 180 degree turn. During the turn, the witness saw the round object become an ellipse momentarily before once again taking on a round appearance.96

A non-meteor" in the Far East.

An Air Force electronic countermeasures officer spent the evening at the service club in Nagoya, Japan finally leaving ten minutes after one in the morning of June 28th. Driving home and putting the car in the garage, the officer checked the night sky before going indoors hoping the weather would permit a round of golf the next day. Glancing north and south, he saw isolated thunderheads accompanied by intermittent lightning flashes. Overhead the vault of the heavens was clear and star-sprinkled. It was then, while gazing straight up, that he sighted a blue light heading northeast:

"My first impression was that it was a meteor. But upon closer examination, I saw that its speed was much too slow and that it had no tail. As I continued to watch the object, blue light appeared to pulsate around the object. The object continued in a straight line at an apparent constant altitude to the northeast leaving no trail and no sound could be heard."⁹⁷

Visitor to O'Hare.

An extraordinary visitor to Chicago's O'Hare airport on June 29th was witnessed by a trio of Air Police of the 83rd Air Base Squadron. The Air Police first sighted the visitor as it hovered above a pair of civilian radio towers (WGR and WBBM) that were located about seven miles away from their guard post. As seen from that distance the visitor appeared as a smooth, metallic oval about 30 feet in diameter, with the size estimate apparently derived from a comparison with the dimensions of the towers. It is interesting to note that there is a mention of a blue halo somewhat like that given in the previously given Nagoya case.

The military record states that the object began to move shortly after it was spotted:

"During the next 45 minutes the object travelled to the southwest and then back north to approximately its original position. It also moved to some extent in the vertical plane. Its acceleration during these movements was practically instantaneous to a speed which appeared to be much faster than any jet fighter. At times the object moved slowly and during the time it hovered it appeared to rock on its longitudinal axis. When the object rocked or turned into a vertical plane its shape was easily discernible as oval and when in a horizontal plane it appeared to be flat or thin and was difficult to see at this time. At all times during the first 25 to 30 minutes of the observation, the object was encircled by a blue circle of light haze."⁹⁸

Seaside Park and some interesting questions.

As reported, UFO reports often suggest a definite nuts and bolts super aircraft and hardly an illusion, yet it might be a mistake to make many assumptions based on conventional ideas.

For the moment we will restrict our musings to a single aspect. Not only do we not know for sure where UFOs might come from, you might well say we have trouble with the question of where UFOs go to? The O'Hare UFO, for example, was lost to sight finally when it disappeared, or as the witnesses put it, like "someone shutting off a light." Granted the object, according to the Air Police, was hard to see when it presented its thin profile while in a horizontal position, but could that explain the abrupt vanishment? Did the abrupt disappearance

indicate that the UFO had been a trick of light? With that in mind, we will move on to a case that took place at Seaside Park. The military suspected that something was quite odd with a UFO report made at Seaside Park, New Jersey, on June 30, 1952. The officer that interrogated the witness tried hard to clarify what happened when the UFO was lost to view.

Here is an excerpt from the witness' testimony:

"Air Force interrogator: 'About the disappearance of this object--did it disappear very suddenly, or was it gradual, or just exactly how was it?'

Witness: 'It sort of dipped away and turned over, and was out of sight immediately after the three puffs of smoke.'

Air Force interrogator: 'Describe those puffs of smoke for me, Mr. ... (deleted).'

Witness: 'Well, they were at least as large as the object itself and very round reminding me of a smoke ring a person who is smoking might blow. That is the first two were, and the last one was not round at all and was a whole lot thicker than the first two. This last one was as if the object had several exhaust pipes and had turned over, leaving a thick spot of vapor.'

Air Force interrogator: 'As to the manner of this strange disappearance, would you ascribe it to an invisible color, terrific speed or what? I mention these possibilities because you have remarked that it might have been caused by either of these things.'

Witness: 'I don't know. It might be that it had one side of it painted a color that wouldn't reflect light, or it might have been because it gained a terrific speed very suddenly.' "99

Do UFOs understand?

To reiterate, the UFO phenomenon may not represent some sort of metallic flying craft, although the evidence certainly seems to suggest that UFOs are fascinated with what would be their mechanical peers since the strange objects stalked airliners, dogfought military warplanes, and loitered near airports. Taking this train of thought further, if UFOs were actual machines and they were interested in machines that shared the sky with them, how much do they know about conventional aircraft, radio traffic, or aviation operations? Such questions should be raised since some curious aspects of some UFO cases suggest that the UFOs may have an awareness about them that indicates intelligence. Consider the Seaside case. The witness in the Seaside case remarked on how the UFO was hovering above three jet interceptors and was apparently intent on the activities of the warplanes below, one of the trio towing a target. The warplanes were practicing interception runs on

each other so it is an intriguing thought that UFOs might understand U.S. Air Force Air Defense Command interception procedures by monitoring such activities!

The status of the Status Reports.

The volume of UFO reports was so great for June the issuance of an end of the month Project BLUE BOOK Status Report by Ruppelt's small staff was put off until a later date, and as it turned out, the workload for the months of July and August were greater still so that Status Report #7 published on May 31st was not followed by a #8 until the end of the year. Besides the volume of reports, briefings by BLUE BOOK personnel and the distribution of Air Force Letter 200-5 generated the filing of more detailed reports which contributed to the processing backlog.¹⁰⁰

Little in any way of a detailed evaluation of the month of June is available in the BLUE BOOK record yet there is one staggering fact. Even though the criteria for a UFO report to be classified unknown was strict, the percentage for June was a mindboggling 38 percent!¹⁰¹

During the closing days of June, Ruppelt noted a concentration of quality UFO reports from the East which were marked by UFO-F94 jet chases almost every night, with the pursuits terminating by violent maneuvers in successful efforts to break airborne radar lock-ons.

Fortunately press coverage on UFOs slackened while public interest shifted to political conventions.¹⁰²

July.

Meanwhile, some bizzare stories complicated the UFO mystery.

"Spitzbergen saucer."

Did a real flying saucer crashland on the snow-covered Norwegian island of Spitzbergen in the Summer of 1952?

Over the years rumors have persisted that an extraordinary event occurred in the Arctic in the early 1950's. Generally the outline of the story owes a lot to the opening scenes of the American film classic The Thing. As for details attributed to the "alien" machine, they were strictly conventional as to origin (Russia), purpose (Intercontinental bomber), and make up (Plexiglass dome, jet driven pinwheel motive power, and instruments like chronometers having cyrillic symbols), thus there seems to be little doubt the ship was a creation of a German tabloid rather than manufactured by Mars or Moscow.¹⁰³

The U.S. Air Force asked its Air Attache stationed in Oslo to confirm the incident.¹⁰⁴ The Royal Norwegian Air Force informed their American allies the saucer story was "definitely false."¹⁰⁵

"Green-colored suns and flying saucers."

Rumors from Europe placed on file with BLUE BOOK the beginning of July included a newsstory in the Weiden, Germany, Der Neus Fag which purported to relate the revelations of a Polish defector who claimed the Russians were shooting off rockets from a hidden base near Tarnowitz in Upper Silesia. This highly secret experimental station was supposed to have sent cylinders zooming to the North, automatically detonating the devices when they reached their zenith, however on rare occasions the proto-weapons would overshoot and excite the Swedes 700 kilometers downrange. This "ghost rocket" activity, according to the Polish source, was responsible for recent Swedish reports of "green-colored suns" and "flying saucers."

One military Intelligence analyst scribbled across the bottom of the Air Force document in heavy, dark pencil: "Sounds like some more bunk...", "106 yet America's secret services were a cautious and curious bunch as we can tell from the next item.

Oskar Linke's "Russian" saucer.

Not long after the alleged saucer crash on the Artic island of Spitzbergen of a "Russian saucer", news from Germany told of another saucer craft that had a supposed Soviet origin, but the latest episode achieved a firmer hold on press attention since a first hand account was available from a flesh and blood witness, the ex-Mayor of the German city of Gleimershausen, Oskar Linke. Moreover, the circumstances surrounding the report were exceptional and added to its notoriety. A lot of eyebrows lifted when it was learned that Linke's UFO experience was supposed to have occurred behind the Iron Curtain.

The graying 48-year-old East German had just fled to West Berlin with his wife and six stepchildren to seek political asylum and while explaining his life under the communists he related an odd UFO story. His story follows.

On the day of the incident he was accompanied by his 11-year-old stepdaughter, Gabriele. The two were riding a motorcycle when a tire blew out forcing them to push the machine until they could reach the nearest community. According to Linke, it was the sharp eyes of Gabriele that first noticed some movement in the forest about 150 yards off the road. Thinking it was a deer, Linke decided to sneak up on the animal, so leaving his motorcycle leaning against a tree and Gabriele to guard it, Linke cautiously approached what he believed was a forest creature, but when he closed within 50 yards he realized that he was not sneaking up on a deer. Instead, in a small clearing were two "apparently human" figures dressed in aluminum, bent over examining the soil or some object on the ground with one of the figures wearing a "lamp" that blinked on and off. Increasing the stealth of his approach, Linke reached a low fence only 30 yards from the "two men" and from that vantage point he made a new discovery, a large object 50 feet across resembling a huge oval warming pan. Said Linke: "There were two rows of holes along the sides, about a foot and a half apart. Out of the metallic object rose a black cylindrical 'conning tower,' about ten feet high."107

The viewing was cut short when Gabriele called out, alarming the "two men" who quickly climbed the conning tower and evidently started the object's engines immediately once they were inside for the exhaust ports circling the craft suddenly glowed green and then red as the giant "warming pan" began to spin faster and faster, all the while rising slowly. Linke remarked:

"It seemed to be resting on the cylindrical piece which had sunk through the center of it and was not protruding from the bottom and standing on the ground."108

Furthermore:

"Then I noticed that the whole object was rising slowly from the earth. The cylinder on which it had rested had now disappeared inside the center and reappeared again through the top."109

This swirling spectacle was supposed to have left rapidly in the direction of the village of Stockheim yet Linke only mentioned the name of a shepherd, Georg Derbst, as seeing something flash overhead. Derbst, a half mile away according to Linke, believed that a "comet had bounced off the earth."110

At the termination of his interrogation Linke announced:

"I never heard the expression Flying Saucer until I escaped to West Berlin from the Soviet zone.

"When I saw the thing first, I thought it was a new Russian war machine.

"I was terrified, for the Soviets do not like one to know about their goings-on, and people are shut up for years in East Germany for knowing too much."111

Of course the first thing that comes to mind as one reads the story is the question: "Was it a hoax?" There did seem to be a similarity to the alleged Spitzbergen saucer in regards to the rows of exhaust ports which could indicate Linke was imitating the earlier yarn, but the resemblance stops there. Since the locale was in communist controlled territory there could be no field investigation, a convenient obstacle to challenging Linke if he planned it that way. Denied a followup by the political situation, the story was relegated to the "question mark file" but some people were less charitable. English writer Arthur Constance called the story "easily ridiculed," with only one witness to refute and the metallic suits obviously an idea gleamed from the pages of a science fiction thriller.

In spite of the sensational nature of the tale, the means by which BLUE BOOK obtained the Linke information was impressive. Stamped on the Linke document was "CIA-SECRET."112

If there was one thing the story did prove, it was the extraordinary interest of the CIA in the UFO mystery.

The Adamski phenomenon.

The cloak and dagger boys figure in the following series of developments, although exactly how and to what degree is still controversial. It concerns a strange character whose notoriety among UFO personalities was only regional up to 1952. The person was a Mr. George Adamski, leader of a band of Southern California religionist eccentrics. An astronomer by the name of Kuiper remembers:

"I learned first hand of reports circulating in southern California during visits to Mt. Palomar (observatory). In that area there was a cult which organized sunset and sunrise meetings for the observation of UFOs, the details of which were truly astounding. The Palomar astronomers were accused by members of the cult of keeping their secrets on the UFOs seen and captured (one of which was the 18-foot diameter bowl-shaped Hartmann diaphragm used in testing the 200-inch Hale telescope)."113

"Professor George Adamski," a title bestowed on him by his fellow cult members, remembers the same period and wrote that he had heard rumors of flying saucers making landings at different areas in the desert close to Mt. Palomar. Hoping to achieve personal contact with a UFO pilot to learn about his mission to the planet Earth, he frequently visited what he believed to be likely touchdown sites in Southern California's back country. Perhaps Adamski was taking a clue from Life's UFO article: "Saucer Reactions" of June 9th which contained this sentence: "Many readers are apparently resigned to visitations from space already and expect a landing momentarily."114

Adamski's wild talk produced incredible rumors that even reached the ears of news commentator Walter Winchell who announced on June 30, 1952 to Mr. and Mrs. America:

"Scientists at Palomar Observatory, California are supposed to have seen a 'space ship land in the Mojave Desert, in May last. Four persons stepped out, took one look, and went off again. The U.S. Army may officially announce it in the fall."115

The actual seminal event for this "landing business" may have been the newsstory of the alleged sighting of two diminutive "men" that were supposed to have been seen emerging from a crashed flying disk in Death Valley, California, on August 19, 1949, by a couple of prospectors (For further information on that case and additional material on Adamski, the reader is referred to this author's writings covering the year 1949.).

"We should go TOP SECRET."

The boldness of the Air Force Colonel in Spokane was an indication of an open split in the military that had surfaced in mid-June during the briefing of General Samford when Ruppelt was criticized for always making negative assumptions regardless of the quality of witnesses' testimony,* a gap of credibility that was growing wider as UFO reports mounted. The big surge in UFO reports induced a sense of panic among many in the military and government service that held the belief that UFOs came from outer space. The existence of a pro-alien fraction is confirmed by Ruppelt:

"They thought we now had plenty of evidence to back up an official statement that the UFO's were something real and, to be specific, not something from this earth. This group wanted Project Blue Book to quit spending time investigating reports from the standpoint of trying to determine if the observer of a UFO had actually seen something foreign to our knowledge and start assuming that he or she had. They wanted me to aim my investigation at trying to find out more about the UFO. Along with this switch in operating policy, they wanted to clamp down on the release of information. They thought that the security classification of the project should go up to Top Secret until we had all of the answers, then the information should be released to the public."116

Ruppelt even had something to say about the extent of the believers: "The enthusiasm of this group took a firm hold in the Pentagon, at Air Defense Command Headquarters, on the Research and Development Board, and many other agencies throughout the government."117

While Ruppelt certainly had personal reservations about using positive assumptions, he managed to maintain BLUE BOOK policy mainly because he had the full backing of General Samford and the General's superiors.

The Southern surge of UFO activity stirs the East coast.

The time: 7:30 a.m. The place: The Boston, Massachusetts area. An Air Force Captain at Bedford sighted an "elongated oval" which he described in this manner:

"One milky white object, shaped like an 'elongated oval' but 'fatter than a cigar' about 100 feet in length or slightly larger than a four-engine airliner, having indistinct outline at the rear resembling either a very short exhaust or a blurred tail section, with a narrow ridge along the top side, but without wings or any clear aerodynamic features. Object produced no sound, and left no vapor trail or exhaust other than described above.

*As previously discussed on page 15 of this booklet, this General Samford briefing has been shifted to a late 1952 time frame. This Ruppelt comment about a "pro-alien lobby group" may well belong in the same time frame since it seems tied in with the briefing in question.

Speed estimated to be approximately that of jet aircraft, but observer believed the object 'hung' in mid-air for a few seconds on two occasions..."118

Similarly, at the same time, witnesses at Lynn, Massachusetts observed:

"Two cigar-shaped objects, white in color, about 200 to 300 feet in length, six times as long as thick, having no aerodynamic features, producing no sound, leaving no trail or exhaust, proceeding on a straight course in a southwesterly direction at an unvarying altitude, and at a speed estimated by the observer as 500 miles per hour, or 'slightly faster than conventional aircraft.' The second object consistently remained about one mile to the rear and slightly higher than the first."119

When Ruppelt read such reports arriving from the Massachusetts region, he became excited over the possibility that proper interrogations would give BLUE BOOK some fairly accurate height and distance estimates by triangulation, yet he put off sending anyone, complaining that he had no one available (While General Samford may have had reservations about drastic changes in BLUE BOOK, why Ruppelt wasn't given just a little more help is hard to figure.).

"Look at the star."

Army personnel in training at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey were standing outside a darkened radar van in the bright sunlight 8:40 the morning of July 1st. Some of the men were gazing upward for the U.S. Air Force was conducting some Air Defense exercises and the radar students were fascinated with the vapor trails being traced high above in the sky by jet interceptors as they sped in great arcs through the atmosphere.¹²⁰ One of those watching the show was a private Arthur Darbin who heard one of the students suddenly exclaim: "Look at the star." Incredulous that a star would be visible in bright daylight, Private Darbin peered intently looking for a "star." Without much trouble he located a luminous dot that indeed had a star-like quality at an altitude much higher than the Air Force fighters chasing each other.¹²¹

Civilian radar instructor Donald R. Hartlaner remembers being inside the radar van when the commotion started outside over a "strange star." Curious, he stepped out the door to see for himself and sure enough a gleaming object was plainly visible.

The crowd of military men did not have long to ponder this "odd celestial body" because within moments after its discovery to everyone's astonishment the round dot abruptly took off toward the south at breathtaking speed. Stunned, the Army men searched the sky for more such objects with their efforts being rewarded at 9:07 a.m. when an identical looking object crossed from horizon to horizon at a height difficult to estimate, vanishing in the south.

Hartlaner remarked:

"This second object appeared to wobble very gracefully at the same time it sped forward--similar to a paper plate in a strong wind, though I could detect no spinning movement. The wobbling effect was manifested by the shining surface. It would become darker on one side and then the difference in light would shift to the other side."122

The Army men maintained their vigil and at 9:15 a third object showed up zooming southward, but the best was yet to come.

Later that day, July 1st, at 3:20 p.m., the Army radar detected 12 more "unconventional aircraft" directly over Fort Monmouth which displayed "great maneuverability and excessive high speeds."

At ATIC Ruppelt and his team plotted reports as they spilled out of the teletype machine. Their attention was attracted to ones from Boston and Fort Monmouth especially the latter since it was the site of some secret Army laboratories. It was apparent, without imagination or wild assumptions according to Ruppelt, that a pair of "objects" had flown over Boston and then over Long Island, continuing on until the two "somethings" reached Fort Monmouth where they paused before moving on in the direction of Washington, D.C. Within hours a UFO report was logged from the Nation's Capital.123

UFO hysteria?

For eight minutes a professor of physics, who taught at George Washington University, watched a "smoky-colored" object shifting position in the sky to the north of the Nation's Capital. The thing moved to its left and then to its right, although it remained in the same area of the heavens. The professor, a good observer and puzzled by the sight, calculated the degree of shift (15 degrees) and held up a coin to check size at arm's length. He also did one other thing that was to his credit--he reported the object to authorities.

Since the professor was an especially well qualified witness, BLUE BOOK investigators discussed the incident with him at length, although as UFOs go, the sighting was not that striking, but one aspect was memorable. Ruppelt and his Intelligence team marvelled at the professor's account of the reaction of the crowds of downtown Washington, D.C. to the sky phenomenon. In this urban setting the professor guessed that some 500 people were watching the UFO, some pointing the object out to others, yet as it turned out only the professor took the trouble to contact the military!124

The problem of data gathering.

Every expert that visited BLUE BOOK urged Ruppelt to obtain more reliable estimates of altitude, speed, and size, and any reader of UFO reports would concur since the guesses made by an observer were often the only "facts" that made a report unexplainable.

Part of the plan to achieve better data had been the proposals made to various commands to aid Ruppelt's team. These requests, as we have learned, were central to a revitalized Air Force UFO study. Ruppelt recognized that an increased official interest could not be kept hidden from the news media so there was no move to conceal the military's concern, in fact publicity was seen as having a positive effect. Ruppelt penned: In this way we would encourage more people to report what they were seeing and we might get some good data." To illustrate his point, Ruppelt suggested that if a UFO appeared over a city, 50 reports from civilians would provide a better solution to a triangulation problem than just two reports, giving the experts some real clues to the true height, velocity, and dimensions of an aerial body. The way Ruppelt paints it, the Air Force was being pushed hard to gather more accurate information.125

Hynek's view of Ruppelt's dilemma.

His return to BLUE BOOK as a consultant was a happy one for J. Allen Hynek. He enjoyed his work of seeking astronomical solutions to puzzling UFO reports, but during his regular visits to Wright Field he noticed that Ruppelt's job was less pleasureable than that of a scientific advisor:

"Captain Ruppelt, the director of Project Blue Book, had a most difficult task. The intra-Air Force controversy on UFOs had by no means died down and Ed Ruppelt was called on to be a UFO spokesman in handling the many queries from Washington and requests for 'briefings' from generals and legislators. It seemed that he was out of the office a great deal of the time--tracking down cases or appeasing Washington. Ruppelt was, in my opinion, a prime victim of the 'committee complex.' He was there to tell the brass what UFOs were--not to perpetuate a mystery. Generals don't like mysteries; they want hard, crisp answers. 'We showed that it was a balloon' or 'it was definitely Venus' won more acclaim then 'we don't know what it is; it might be extraterrestrial but we are puzzled.'"126

Be as it may, Hynek kept busy with his own particular project, a questioning of his colleagues about UFOs. Hynek was provided an excellent opportunity to initiate his survey since a national astronomical meeting convened shortly after the Battelle organization agreed he should poll astronomers, so he was able to approach a considerable number immediately. He had followed up with some trips to Observatories around the country where he carefully broached the subject in a manner most likely to evoke an honest response. Only 36 percent, to Dr. Hynek's surprise, shrugged off his queries. Some 41 percent expressed genuine interest and stood ready to offer assistance to BLUE BOOK. The remaining 23 percent went further, taking a position that "UFOs represented a problem that was more serious than people recognized." While in group discussions, the interested astronomers would disavow such concern, privately they had no such qualms. 127

A month after an extraordinary radar target had been tracked over the Los Angeles basin, something was supposed to have been spotted visually high over Mt. Wilson by a civilian official of the Veteran Administration at 7:40 p.m. on July 1st.

The discovery of the UFO was said to have been by chance, while the observer was watching a huge six-engine B-36 bomber. To the naked eye the UFO appeared to be a bright star but viewed through binoculars the witness claimed that he could discern a disk-like outline, having at least 10 minutes viewing time as the object hovered motionless.

What might be a rather common UFO story is spiced up a bit by the witness adding that: "...the object rotated slowly until it was 'on edge' and then moved vertically upward rapidly and disappeared." Note the similarity to the maneuver reported by a woman in the Bronx back on June 27th.¹²⁸

Tremonton, Utah.

The southern shift of UFO activity may have reached the 40 degree latitude in the east causing excitement in thickly populated areas like Maryland and New Jersey, but following the 40 degree line west to Utah we find that on July 2nd one of the most important UFO incidents on record took place. The official military file states:

"At approximately 1110 on 2 July 1952 while driving in the vicinity of Tremonton, Utah, Chief Petty Officer Delbert C. Newhouse's wife noticed a group of objects in the sky that she could not identify. She asked him to stop the car and look. There was a group of about ten or twelve objects that bore no relation to anything he had seen before milling about in a rough formation and proceeding in a westerly direction. He opened the luggage compartment of his car and got his camera out of a suitcase. Loading it hurriedly, he exposed approximately thirty feet of film. There was no reference point in the sky, and it was impossible for him to make any estimate of speed, size, altitude, or distance. Toward the end one of the objects reversed course and proceeded away from the main group. He held the camera still and allowed this single one to cross the field of view, picking it up again and repeating for three or four such passes. By this time all of the objects had disappeared."¹²⁹

The Tremonton footage was sent to ATIC where it puzzled and impressed Ruppelt who sat through 97 screenings. The images were so fascinating the film was sent to Major Fournet at the Pentagon even before it was subjected to lab tests. Major Fournet was as impressed as Ruppelt and arranged an immediate showing to a group of high ranking Intelligence officers. It was a remarkable beginning for the month of July.

Years later Ruppelt met Newhouse in person and finally got a chance to talk about the Tremonton film on a face-to-face basis. Newhouse turned out to be one of the most impressive UFO witnesses

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REPORTS OF UNCONVENTIONAL AIRCRAFT
IN FRANCE, AFRICA, CORSICA, AND WESTERN EUROPE

STRANGE OBJECT SIGHTED OVER DAKAR -- Dakar, Paris-Dakar, 3 Jul 52

On the morning of 3 July 1952, precisely at 0608 hours, the technical manager of the broadcasting station at Hann Center observed an unusual object following a strange path above Dakar. The object was clearly visible for about 5 seconds against a clear and no longer starry sky.

The witness was on Route de Front de Terre, when, looking south toward Dakar and above the Centre de Reception (Reception Center), he spotted a flat but tapered object emitting rather long, reddish streaks of light with a bluish tinge.

The fiery object was moving at "a dizzy speed," which he estimated to be "two or three times greater than that of the fastest planes." It moved from west to east and disappeared with a swoop upwards, according to the witness, who believes that the object was about 1,500 meters high when he first noticed it, though he admits that it was difficult to judge its approximate altitude.

[The following editorial comment by Paris-Dakar followed the above report:]

The staff reporter of Paris-Dakar is of the opinion that the object in question was a meteor and that it disappeared in a downward, not upward, trajectory.

UNUSUAL OBJECT SEEN OVER ORAN -- Dakar, Paris-Dakar, 4 Jul 52

On 3 July 1952, at 1900 hours, a mechanic on his way home to a suburb of Oran, Algeria, noticed in the direction of the Senia airport a silvery disk which was maneuvering slowly and apparently revolved rapidly. After 3 minutes, the object disappeared toward the sea, west of Oran. The witness reported that the object was small and that it was not shaped like a balloon or plane. At the local weather station, it was stated that no balloons had been released at the time.

Ruppet was ever to meet, but it was not the Navy photographer's credibility that would be the most vivid memory the BLUE BOOK chief would retain. Newhouse told Ruppelt that the UFOs cavorting in the sky over Tremonton that day in 1952 were much closer before he could get his movie camera in operation, in fact they were so close the exact shape could be discerned. The UFOs were like: "...two pie-pans, one inverted on top of the other."¹³⁰ This revelation stunned Ruppelt who was quick to admonish the Navy photographer for not relating the pie pan description to the original interrogating Air Force Intelligence officer. Newhouse complained that he did give the officer just such information. At that Ruppelt then recalled that it was his own fault. He remembered personally sending the interrogating officer a list of questions to ask Newhouse, and a question about the visual appearance had not been included, the reason being that the film would provide sufficient evidence of what the UFOs looked like and for some reason the interrogating officer made no record of Newhouse's pie-pan remark.¹³¹

"Unconventional aircraft" and the CIA.

A Central Intelligence Agency report detailing UFO activity overseas (see illustration) tells of some July 3rd cases and of special interest is the editorial comment by the Paris-Dakar that was singled out by the CIA analyst. The journalist just could not bring himself to believe that the UFO: "...disappeared with a swoop upwards..."¹³² Yet, it is a fact that a great many UFO sightings during this period described just such a maneuver offering impressive proof that people everywhere were witnessing the same phenomenon.

Circular-shaped lights.

"Horizontally at tremendous speed," read the teletype message from Michigan's Selfridge Air Force Base on July 3rd. On that day an observer motoring on the Manitou Beach Highway near Rome Center in the early morning, 6:15 a.m., beheld a pair of "circular-shaped lights," estimated to be some 20 feet in diameter, as they flashed over the countryside only a few hundred feet above the ground. There was some fog in the area at the time but the Air Force knew of no aircraft scheduled to be in the vicinity.¹³³

Besides Utah, Michigan, and New Jersey, other areas generally along the 40 degree latitude line experienced UFO visitations:

"Chicago, July 3 (UP) - Air Force officers at O'Hare base said today 'flying saucer' reports have picked up lately. The public information office said it had received sixteen reports of mysterious objects in the sky in the Chicago vicinity this week.

"But officers denied reports that a special 'flying saucer' alert has been ordered. Public information officers said jet patrols normally are on alert 'twenty-four hours a day.'

"Officers said the Air Force encouraged calls on objects sighted. They said the reports were 'passed on to higher authority for evaluation.'"134

A brief military message of July 4th said:

"Source observed disk-like object (flying) near Glenrock, Wyoming. Speed was approximately 200 to 300 MPH. Object reduced speed sharply and circled, gyrating and alternately rising and falling. Source observed disk go behind mountains and disappear from view."135

And then there were sightings half a world away at the same latitude. A German civilian living close to Stuttgart wrote:

On 4 July 1952, at 1138 hours local time, I observed from the Heusteig school in the direction of the astronomical observatory a silver ball or disc which apparently hovered motionless at an altitude of about 10,000 meters. Shortly afterward, another such object approached the first one, whereupon the first one flew to the left and disappeared with a tremendous speed--much faster than a jet-fighter. Soon afterward the second object disappeared from sight. No airplane noise was heard. As to witnesses of my observation, I immediately called my wife, my children, and a charwoman."136

"Nothing happened until he radioed."

Was hysteria sweeping the nation? Air Force Intelligence had this to say about an Oklahoma State Trooper: "Trooper ... (deleted) spoke calmly and intelligently, gave his information carefully and was certain he had seen something."137 The facts of the case follow. Piloting a private plane on July 5th, the Trooper had put his craft on a heading of 345 degrees and was proceeding uneventfully until he sighted something at 7:58 p.m. Off to his left at about 20 degrees, and at about an altitude of 6,000 feet were three dark disk-shaped objects. The lawman put his position as about one mile west and five miles south of Norman Oklahoma when he sighted these "somethings". The reactions of these objects were of particular interest:

"I first noticed these objects while flying NNE at about 4000 feet. There were three of them flying side by side or rather three abreast. They were NW from me and slightly higher. Apparently when I first noticed them they were motionless. At first it occurred to me that I was seeing the wingspan of three B-36 aircraft but there was no vertical fins visible. We have a special FM frequency 44.9 on which I talk to the control station only. To my knowledge there is only one person in our network that can copy that frequency. I immediately called upon this frequency and had our

chief operator check with CAA as to any jet flights in the vicinity of these objects. The answer was NO. At the immediate termination of our conversation, these objects started traveling NE at a terrific rate of speed. All three stayed side by side and finally disappeared over the top of the cumulus clouds on the horizon. I attempted to focus them in my field glasses just as they started NE. A part of one came into focus but at this distance it appeared no larger than when first seen by eye."138

On July 5th was this incident:

"Four Florida pilots saw a saucer hovering over Hanford atomic plant at Richlands, Washington, between Ellensburg and Yakima.

"Included: Captain John Baldwin of Coral Gables, Fla., an AT pilot in the Pacific who has 7,000 hours of airline pilot experience; said the object seen early today was at about 9,000 feet; seen just below a deck of wispy clouds 10,000 - 15,000 feet directly above us.'

"All of us have been flying a number of years and we've seen all kinds of clouds and formations, but none of us had ever seen anything like this before.

"This object seemed to back away from us and change shape. It was perfectly round and still at first; it became flat, gained speed and then disappeared quickly.'

"Other: Captain George Robertson of Miami, who flew a C-46 over the Hump to Burma, in World War II, D. Shanbel of Miami, former AF pilot, and Steven Summers of Hialeah, Florida, who has been flying since shortly after the end of World War II.

"Baldwin and Roberts are pilots, Shanbel and Steven Co-pilots for Connor Air Lines. Baldwin ran for a camera, but was too late.

"We passed the object as it stood suspended in space. Couldn't pick it up on radar. We reversed course and went back but we couldn't spot it again (said Robertson)".139

More on Hanford.

Sunday, July 6th, was not a day of rest for Ruppelt's team. The morning edition of a local Dayton, Ohio paper bannered: "FLYERS REPORT SAUCERS NEAR ATOMIC PLANT," and the newsservices were quickly on the phone to ATIC seeking Ruppelt's comment on saucers daring to approach America's highly secret installations. The ATIC Duty Officer turned back inquiries, saying that no comments were authorized and the only information then available were civilian dispatches.

Hours later, at 5:30 p.m., Ruppelt placed a phone call to Captain Fisher, controller on duty for the 25th Air Division at

McChord AFB but the officer was little help, acknowledging only a note in the controller's log and a brief message on file from McChord Flight Service which he understood had been relayed from the Ellensburg, Washington, CAA Radio facility. The military record contains the following which illustrates the pressure the Air Force was under:

"Shortly after the call, Col. Bower of ATIA was contacted to see what we (ATIC) should do about the newspapers that had been calling. Col. Bower stated that we could continue to stall them off with a no comment answer and if they got insistent to call him."140

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the BLUE BOOK adviser, had this to say in regards to the way the Hanford incident was handled:

My personal experiences attest that the Air Force record was available to the American people only as the Air Force saw it, either when cases were 'solved' or where an explanation of a sighting could be assigned with the hope no one would question it."141

UFO activity over New England in early July was not restricted to the land area, for on July 5th two men in a sailboat two miles off shore of Connecticut, near the city of Norwalk on the Atlantic coast, observed some suspicious lights. At 9:10 p.m. that night the sailboat was drifting slowly on calm waters under a full moon. The atmosphere was clear and windless. The lunar disk was half-way to its zenith and was bathing Long Island Sound with a soft glow. The pair of sailors were admiring the Moon when a brilliant, almost sparkling white point of light appeared. The light quickly grew larger, an indication that the light was approaching. A guess put the phenomenon 15 miles away and 15,000 feet high. Nothing seemed unusual aside from the intensity of the light until a change in speed took the witnesses' breath away:

"As we watched, the brilliant white light went out and in its place was left two small points of white light. All at once these two points of light started streaking away toward the end of the Sound at a fantastic rate of speed, climbing rapidly all the time. In a matter of 30 or 40 seconds it had disappeared from sight at great height about twenty-five miles away."142

Both witnesses agreed that the velocity shown by the phenomenon precluded an aircraft explanation.

One thousand miles out in the Atlantic.

Eight people, among them a half dozen military personnel, viewed an extraordinary sight on July 6th from a location at

Bermuda's Kindley AFB. The sight was so odd three of the Air Force observers were interrogated separately to make sure details were accurately recalled. In spite of the separate questioning the accounts were "in conformity with each other."

The resulting composite report says:

"(1) The object was first observed by S/Sgt. ... (deleted) at 2225Z. The object was moving in a North to South direction and stopped directly overhead of the observer. When it was overhead, ... (deleted) brought it to the attention of the other seven persons.

"(2) The object was round and appeared to be spinning. It did not change position, but was observed to be moving in a 'piston' like manner. Being in an overhead position, the altitude could not be estimated. Visually the object was 8 inches in diameter although the actual size could not be determined.

"(3) The object was observed for seven minutes in this position. During this time it appeared to be a highly polished silver color.

"(4) At approximately 2225Z, the object turned on its side and formed a long circular tube. At the time it gave off a yellow, then a faint green glow. It then returned to the original position and immediately disappeared."143

Again we have a disappearing act. Although there were broken clouds in the sky at the time, the Air Force questioned the witnesses and established: "The observers reported that the clouds did not interfere with the observation, and at the time the object disappeared, the sky was clear in the immediate area."144

Oddments overseas.

Ruppelt admitted the existence of foreign UFO reports in July of 1952 and a check of BLUE BOOK records confirm this, yet nothing much was done about them for the simple reason ATIC at Dayton was snowed under by domestic activities.145

A French authority states:

"July 6th: ...two bluish 'disks' were seen at Thann in Alsace; a luminous sphere was reported at Bone, Algeria; and another disk was seen at Bou - Hadjar, Oran, during the night of July 7th."146

Another French source informs us:

"On July 8, 1952, Flying Saucers again visited the French capital. A white, shining object silently crossed the Parisian sky in successive stages, fairly

slowly and at a low altitude. After a minute or two of this calm progress, the flyin_ disc suddenly climbed vertically and disappeared at prodigious speed."¹⁴⁷

Back in the U.S. UFO reports were showing the first indications that the Southern shift was reaching out to areas beyond the middle of the country. For the moment attention centered on the Southwest.

When a scientist working at Alamogordo, New Mexico sighted some odd objects in the sky over the installation and told the newspapers on July 7th, three civilians contacted the press to say that they had apparently viewed the same phenomenon. It seems that near the New Mexican town of Orogrande a man, his wife, and his daughter were in their auto motoring down a highway when they noticed something high up and to the northwest. They said it was a strange spherical object speeding along when it: "...was joined by three more of the same objects and seconds later three more, totaling seven." The objects maintained an evenly spaced formation.¹⁴⁸

News from Los Angeles on July 7th ignited further press interest when an important name volunteered a statement. He had impressive credentials. Formerly a Royal Air Force flight official and since the war considered England's leading authority on space, Arthur C. Clarke had been in the States on an official visit and stopped at the United States rocket test station at White Sands, New Mexico, enroute to the West Coast. When he arrived in the City of the Angels he was quoted by the press as saying he was: "...beginning to think there's more to the flying saucer mystery than just a mirage."¹⁴⁹

Moreover:

"... a noted American scientist told me at White Sands that he is certain he had seen one. It appeared to be going at a high rate of speed and was close enough for this scientist to see windows in it.

"Yes, you can't help but wonder at the number of supposed flying discs which have been reported in the vicinity of a secret military base like White Sands."¹⁵⁰

The British expert's disclosure alluding to a "noted American scientist" triggered a response the next day by Dr. Clyde Tombaugh who was world famous for his discovery of the planet Pluto. Dr. Tombaugh admitted being the source of Clark's new suspicions that UFOs amounted to more than unverified apparitions, although the renowned astronomer qualified his position as to what it was he observed the summer of 1948 in the sky over Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Tombaugh commented cautiously:

"I take a very humble attitude about it all. We may know something some day but we have no idea

yet as to what these objects are, if they are material objects."¹⁵¹

New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Oregon, and various other places.

A newsservice release read:

"Driving the New Jersey Turnpike early (4:15 a.m.) morning of July 7th, Clark Tinch, a veteran of war-time service aboard heavy cruisers, viewed an aerial roundup between some aerial objects. Relating his story to the New York World-Telegram, Tinch said his attention was attracted to a brilliant body hanging in the black sky. For 20 minutes he kept it under observation and then a similar brilliant object approached the first. The second object shot upward leaving a vapor trail along its course."¹⁵²

Strange green fireball.

When a silent, green-colored fireball flashed over Fort Bragg, North Carolina, at 2017 hours on July 7th, it was watched during its brief passage by an Air Force Captain formerly assigned to UFO investigations at California's Muroc AFB, a gentleman who did not submit reports lightly yet knew enough to know that a green fireball might not be a meteor and consequently important objects to be kept track of.¹⁵³

Pennsylvania's contribution went:

"July 8, 1952, near Greiner, A CAA equipment provider experienced as radio operator weather observer and traffic controller, at 10:00 p.m. saw a doomed UFO speed overhead below a high overcast. The object was visible about 10 seconds travelling at an estimated 1,000 mph. The main body was green, with a reddish portion on top."¹⁵⁴

"Out of nowhere over Oregon."

Ashland, on July 9th:

"...a blue-colored square thing with rounded corners 'appeared out of nowhere dropping down out of the sky in a flaming plunge visible for three seconds. An intense brilliance at the center with a surrounding luminosity at the corners (was seen)."¹⁵⁵

Not far away at Grants Pass came word of:

"Two flying pans inverted one over the other brilliant and having a crimson aura... (also) a triangular tail spewing a white light."¹⁵⁶

The city editor of the Ashland Daily Tidings forwarded the forementioned clippings to ATIC with the lead: "Have heard you are interested in reports of the green men from Mars."¹⁵⁷

"Hovered over airstrip."

Four airmen were relaxing at 1:35 the afternoon of July 9th, lying on their backs on the grass next to the runway of Rapid City Air Base, Weaver, South Dakota. In such a position they couldn't help gaze at the blue sky. Much to their surprise, three milky white circular objects passed over "going faster than a jet plane." The men, personnel of the 717th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, had barely recovered from the unexpected sight when a fourth and then a fifth object sped by headed east. At the same time Airman 1st class Howard Hoff caught sight of a lone disk-like object approaching from the southwest:

"It crossed over the North West corner of the airfield and seemed to stop and hover over an area North of the East-West runway and little over a quarter of a mile from us. It would lose some altitude and then gain it right back more like arcing (?) it also did sort of a twisting motion."¹⁵⁸

Green fireballs over the east coast.

The Camden Courier-Post carried an incident that seems to indicate the green fireballs were interested in areas other than the southwest:

"A Marine lieutenant gave a United Press reporter ... (a) description of lights he saw on night maneuvers over Quantico, VA. July 10.

"The Marine pilot, who asked that he be unidentified, said he saw 'two green objects--like shooting stars without tails--shooting straight across the sky at terrific speed. The objects, he said, were flying close together, one slightly behind and off to the side, at a very, very high altitude."¹⁵⁹

"Metallic football."

Towering thunderheads floated over Orlando, Florida, 4:15 p.m. July 10th. A witness standing on the shore of Lake Nann viewed a large, perfectly smooth, "metallic football" about the size of a T-33 fuselage, come out from behind one column of cloud and disappear as it entered a second. Since T-33s were operating in the area at the time, military intelligence assumed that was the answer to the sighting.¹⁶⁰

Washington, Missouri, and Ohio.

A huge meteor terrorized a wide area of Ohio and Indiana at 9:08 a.m., July 12th. In view for almost ten seconds as it swept from horizon to horizon, the giant brilliant tear-drop was responsible for the swamping of newspaper and police switchboards in the "saucer jittery" region.

That same evening of July 12th a crowd of people at Montrose Beach, Chicago, were watching the stars while relaxing on the sand in the sultry summer heat when a silent red light, with smaller white-hued points of brilliance to either side, came out of the Northwest, coasted along for awhile, and then made a fantastic 180 turn. One of the bathers was an Air Force Captain stationed at O'Hare International Airport where he was the weather officer. Immediately he found a telephone and dialed O'Hare to check on balloon flights and aircraft traffic in the vicinity of Montrose at that hour. The Captain learned that nothing should be aloft that could explain the aerial marvel so the Air Force officer got in touch with BLUE BOOK. Ruppelt dispatched an agent to the Windy City but an investigation drew a blank.¹⁶¹

"Kirksville mystery body."

More of a worry to the Air Force was the two yellow globles of fiery appearance that played follow-the-leader as they sailed over Richland, Washington, next door to the Hanford atomic works. It was the second occasion in seven days that strange aerial phenomenon was recorded at the sensitive scientific installation.¹⁶²

Exactly 24 hours after the big bolide excited Ohio and Indiana, in nearby Missouri a giant mystery body lurked in the blackness over Kirksville.

It was 9:00 p.m. when a large blip indicating an object the size of a six engine B-36 bomber appeared on Air Force radar. The radar installation tracked the object in the vicinity of Kirksville travelling at 1,700 mph.¹⁶³

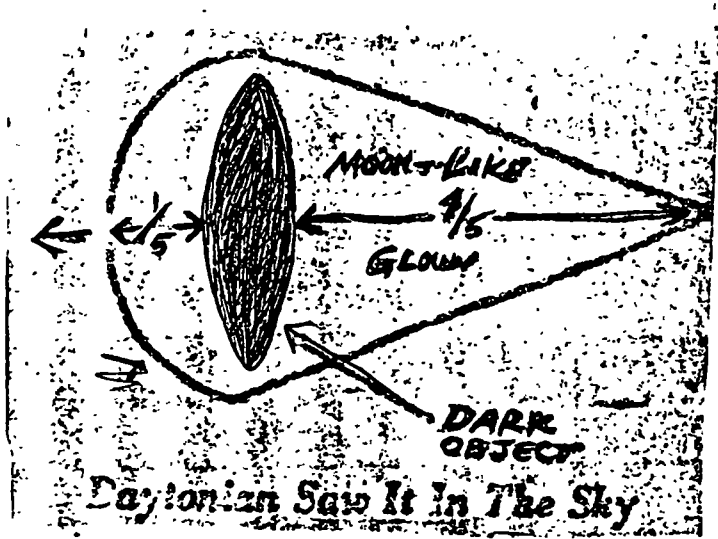
"Ice cream cone."

The "ice cream cone" tag, placed on UFOs at times, is probably best explained with the use of a drawing made by Ray T. Ellis, president of Rubber Seal Products of Dayton, Ohio. On Sunday, July 13th, a "thing" with the overall likeness of an "ice cream cone" appeared out of nowhere over Dayton at 12:25 a.m. Getting a close look, Ellis could make out a: "...hemi-sphere of white light in front of it, an elliptical dark object in the center where the ice cream would meet the cone, and the rest of it a bright light (see diagram drawn by Ellis)."

It might be safe to say, therefore, that the ice cream cone configuration mentioned occasionally in UFO reports is due to an effect of streamlining action exerted on an illuminous envelope surrounding a flying disc.¹⁶⁴

The airliner and the mystery light.

Here is another UFO sighting by pilots near Washington, D.C. One pilot said:



"On the night of July 10, 1952 at 2018, while piloting National Airlines flight 42, we were approximately ten miles south of Potomac River south of Clifton intersection. A strange light caught our attention. At first we thought it was a landing light on an approaching aircraft, but discounted this as it did not get any closer. Then we thought it was a military flare but discounted this also because it appeared to rise when flares fall. It was an amber light and appeared to glow somewhat with no tail. The light was of very, very bright intensity. It was not a meteor since meteors generally descend rapidly. This light was in our view approximately ten minutes making no particular pattern of movement. Then suddenly it climbed rapidly in a turning attitude and disappeared into the northwest. Our altitude through this event was 1,500 feet above sea level."*165

This National Airlines incident was of special interest to Air Force Intelligence. The preparing officer of the Information Report on the case offered a conjectural opinion, proposing that the light seen had the general appearance of an aircraft landing light, although there was no air traffic scheduled to be in the area at the time. The Colonel also raised the question: Were Intelligence agents at either Bolling or Andrews AFBs, adjacent to the Nation's Capital, aware of a possible aerial intruder?

Col. Hinton's immediate superiors at Intelligence Division HQ, MATS, took his suggestion and contacted authorities at Bolling and Andrews and found that the National Airlines sighting had not been forwarded.¹⁶⁶

"Coruscating envelopes of light."

Part of the U.N. force in Korean waters was the Canadian destroyer *Crusader* on patrol off the coast. On July 10, 1952, the 40 officers and men of the ship experienced a UFO overflight. Two UFOs were observed shrouded in what was termed "coruscating envelopes of light" as they shot by at blinding speed. Critical to the strangeness rating of the case was the fact that the two UFOs were tracked on radar, exactly placing them on a course seven miles away and at a 10,000 foot altitude.

An AP dispatch from Seoul describing the incident also mentioned a proposed explanation by an "unnamed expert" which was so stupid it drew a retort from an angry Canadian sailor. The "expert" contended that the planet Jupiter was responsible, whereupon the outraged Canadian snapped: "Jupiter doesn't come in pairs and is several million miles out of range of our radar."¹⁶⁷

*The similarity to a report dated July 13th, which the reader can check for himself later on in this text, is so close it was a struggle to resist treating both incidents as the same case. The deciding factor in treating the information as two different cases is the Flight numbers which do not resemble each other "Flight 611," and "Flight 42."

Curious military language.

We might agree with Air Force Intelligence that labeled two witnesses excellent observers: an engineer for Hughes Aircraft and a CAA Airport Traffic Control officer employed at the San Fernando Valley Airport, Van Nuys, California; yet the military's acceptance of what was reported seems curiously qualified. According to official documents, on July 11th, a ball-like object with a dark spot in the center and appearing to be enveloped in a blurry halo was seen by the forementioned observers in the night sky near the Constellation Urus Major. When first noticed the object was completely still and then suddenly it took off like a rocket. The Air Force explanation for the phenomenon went like this:

"Stationary position of object prior to its reported movement slants report toward indication of non-meteoritic origin of object. However, stated speed of ten degrees per second lends credence to meteoric possibility."¹⁶⁸

Morocco mystery.

A formation of luminous bodies, one in the lead with one on either side and one trailing, variously described as "pillow-shaped," "diamond-shaped," or "saucer-like," swept over Casablanca, Morocco, the night of July 12th. Nine persons on the roof terrace of the Key Club, all Americans, reported the passage to USAF Intelligence.¹⁶⁹

Another odd interception.

A pair of closely spaced lights, brilliant to the point of being blinding, were seen over Dayton, Ohio July 12th, motionless in the night sky. A flight of F-86 jets, scrambled to intercept an unknown target detected by ground radar, were heading in the general direction and made visual contact. While ground radar had not pinpointed its target, the flight leader believed the lights marked their quarry and ordered his wing-mates to close in. The pursuit abruptly ended, however, when the lights suddenly disappeared "as if someone turned out a light." Within seconds (there may be a correlation) another Air Force pilot reported an unexplained object moving at terrific speed over Indianapolis, Indiana.¹⁷⁰

"The ghostly voice."

Two F-86 jet fighters were on a routine mission out of O'Hare Field, Illinois on July 12th, and were speeding over the city of Arlington when something unexplained occurred. Right after coming out of a right turn, one F-86 pilot sighted a bizarre object about 15 miles away at 22,000 feet, and on a heading of 240 degrees. The object was an oblong, yellow-colored thing spewing an exhaust and zooming along at an estimated 700 knots. The pilot steered toward the UFO and

accelerated to 100% power, however the chase was brief (20 seconds) because the strange object easily pulled out of range. During the short encounter, the pilot advised ground control of the pursuit on "foxtrot channel." His wingmate, who was out of position and did not view the UFO, was nevertheless listening in on the radio transmission so he knew an interception was being attempted.

Just before the F-86 pilot broke off his pursuit, and all was quiet on "foxtrot," both pilots heard a distinct word: "C-A-S-E-Y," in an ethereal or ghostly tone. This startled the pilot engaged in the chase of the UFO because "Casey" was his name! Subsequent military investigations established that the one word radio transmission did not come from any known source, either ground or air. Both pilots, however, were of the opinion that the word was transmitted from the UFO, an eerie thought indeed!

Air Force Intelligence, Washington (AFIN), requested that the proper forms be completed on the case and specifically asked for investigators to: "Include details of unusual radio transmission mentioned in subject wire."171

"Do you see what I see?"

While lying on the beach at Round Bay, Maryland, a spot about six miles northwest of Annapolis, a couple of swimmers were stunned by the appearance of some very strange aerial objects. The principle witness was the president of an insurance company who travelled by air up to 30 times a year, thus was well acquainted with air traffic. Military investigators found the man sincere, highly educated, and so socially prominent a hoax was out of the question. His woman companion, who also witnessed the UFOs fly by, was similarly considered above reproach socially and hardly publicity minded.

The time of the occurrence was 3:30 o'clock the afternoon of July 12th with the weather that day clear and visibility at 20 miles. The insurance company president had been swimming in the bay, but at the moment of the sighting was on the beach in a prone position after drying off and putting on his sunglasses. Basking in the sun's rays the man idly squinted at the sky and his eyes settled on a transport plane crossing over at 9,000 feet heading in the direction of Norfolk, Virginia. As the transport reached the zenith, the gentleman also noticed four oval, white-colored objects in close formation abreast approach with enormous speed. Not sure of the objects' altitude but assuming they were the same elevation as the transport (which he believed was a Martin 202) he estimated the ovals were 1/3 the size of the aircraft. When the objects reached a point about a half mile behind the transport they did something hard to credit. The company president told investigators:

"All four objects stopped abruptly in mid-air behind the transport, maintained their formation, hesitated for a full second, did a right-angle turn and then immediately resumed their

original high speed and headed approximately south. They were in sight for about three seconds more then disappeared in mid-air."172

Although the transport made the usual engine noise, the mysterious flying objects were absolutely silent.

Shocked, the man called to his companion: "Do you see what I see?" She answered: "I certainly see something. It looks like the disks on a harrow."173

Ghost rocket over Norway.

Haslsmaen airfield, Norway, the night of July 12th, the wife of a Norwegian Aero Club pilot and one of the club's personnel were waiting on the tarmac for the arrival of an aircraft, and at 11:17 p.m. a light in the sky seemed to herald its imminent appearance, yet as the glow grew in its intensity and a shape took form, they were dumbfounded when something other than a conventional aerial machine became visible. There, in the dark sky, was a speeding oblong shape in the mist of a halo of light. Without stopping, it glided past keeping to a northeasterly course until it was claimed by the blackness.

Hours later a similar object was reported in the sky over Stockholm, the capital of Sweden.174

Washington, D.C. sightings.

"No flying saucer report in the history of the UFO ever won more world acclaim than the Washington National sightings."

-- E. J. Ruppelt

Besides ranking as the most famous, the Washington incidents were, as Ruppelt admits, the most confused and most incompletely told. We intend to correct those shortcomings by utilizing every source possible and by including a regional look at the UFO activity. The picture that emerges differs substantially from official accounts that reduce the mystery to bland summaries that offer no challenge to science.

What might be considered the first in the series occurred July 13th when National Airlines Flight 611 encountered something while cruising at 1100 feet along an airline some 60 miles to the southwest of the Nation's capital. A large round, glowing, blue-white object, motionless to the west and below when first spotted, rose up until it reached the altitude of the passenger plane where it leveled off and paced the airliner two miles off the left wing. Startled, the airliner's pilots flashed their landing lights. In reaction, perhaps, the luminous thing vaulted upward out of sight at an estimated 1,000 mph.175

Ruppelt's team explained the case as a "meteor,"176 a solution that stunned BLUE BOOK's astrophysics advisor, Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who was amazed that a meteor label was placed on the case. He wrote:

"Then why was it dismissed as a meteor? Meteors do not hover, do not move along with the aircraft, and then take off 'up and away.' The only way out of this one would have been for the evaluator to have claimed that both pilots were momentarily subject to a hallucination!"¹⁷⁷

There would be more interesting Washington cases in the days ahead.

"Sausage-shaped."

Beacon, New York is on the Hudson River some 30 miles north of New York City and a considerable distance from Braintree, Massachusetts, but an object similar to the New England case appeared there. The New York witness stated:

"I was seeing some friends off at the New York Central RR station at about 11:30 a.m. As the train came in from the north, I happened to note an object over the tracks I would guess about a mile or so distant. At first I thought it was a sausage-shaped balloon. It hovered motionless at around 500 to 1,000 foot altitude. It began to move a little and then went directly upward like an elevator at a very rapid rate of speed. I knew at once that I was looking at a solid object and that it moved like nothing I had ever seen before. I blinked my eyes and looked again. The object, which appeared about the size of a fighter plane, was still rising. It gradually melted into the atmosphere becoming a mere blur, then finally disappeared altogether."¹⁷⁸

Still another "sausage."

Strolling the 200 block of North Battin street in Wichita, Kansas, 10:30 in the morning of July 14th, three teenagers saw something through a break in the clouds, something oblong in shape and silver in color moving at high speed. The trio of young people were sure the object was a mysterious aerial object but they were baffled by the fact that the thing was not a flying saucer, instead: "...whatever it was they saw was cigar-shaped looking almost like a dirigible..."¹⁷⁹ yet, as one of the teens, a Bill Atkisson, emphasized: "...we don't believe it was a dirigible."¹⁸⁰

Another puzzled witness.

On duty at her post at Indio, California, ground observer Pauline Watts noticed "two shiny discs" at 2:45 p.m., July 14th while scanning the sky with field glasses. She later told the press: "If they weren't flying saucers, I don't know what they were."¹⁸¹

"Straight down."

A star-like body dropped straight down out of the night sky over Hadana AFB, Okinawa, July 14th, and then shot away horizontally. Military personnel leaving a base theater witnessed the sight.¹⁸²

"Straight up."

A "mystery star" hovered over Oberlin Gardens, Pennsylvania, the evening of July 14th. Persons reported that the "star" eventually took off straight up and disappeared.¹⁸³

Five mystery objects in V-formation flashed over Great Falls AFB, Great Falls, Montana, moving north to south at an estimated supersonic speed on July 14th.¹⁸⁴

Another significant Washington D.C. sighting in July occurred on the 14th at 9:30 in the morning. A total of eight witnesses watched all or part of the passage of what could only be called flying saucers. In broad daylight three objects in triangular formation swept through an arc of 75 degrees and disappeared in the haze along the horizon to the southeast. They were shining chrome-like ovals clearly discernible against the blue sky. The employees of a Naval gun factory on the outskirts of Washington D.C. observed the flyby and excited by the incident, continued to stand watch. Within five minutes a pair of similar objects raced out of the southwest, zipping along on a reciprocal heading. The two were in an in-line formation and were flying in a vertical position. These last two were visible for 35 seconds until they were obscured by the factory's smokestack.¹⁸⁵

Mid-July.

Ruppelt complained that by mid-July he and his team at BLUE BOOK were putting in 14 hour workdays everyday except Sunday. The project's field investigators (a mere three men, which was a laugh), Lieutenants Andy Flues, Bob Olsson, and Kerry Rothstien, were constantly out of town travelling around the country on TWA airliners, coming and going to the latest UFO hot spot.¹⁸⁶ (Note that BLUE BOOK used civilian transportation in spite of all the aircraft the Air Force had available!). Besides the forementioned three officers, there were Ruppelt, two enlisted men, and a couple of civilians of which one was Dr. J. Allen Hynek.

Dr. Hynek would show up at BLUE BOOK every 3 or 4 weeks to read the latest reports logged by the Air Force, zeroing in on the unknowns and making a quick decision about a case based on whatever facts were handy. At the time Dr. Hynek was a sceptic and never pressed for exhaustive investigations.¹⁸⁷

Calls from military installations around the country were frantic in tone asking for Ruppelt's help since they were being besieged with reports. Ruppelt, drowning in data, told callers to only send in the best. As for the rest, it was ignored.

CSI meets.

The inadequacy of the BLUE BOOK effort had its effect in the restlessness of those outside the official agencies. The night of July 14th a small group of civilian self-styled UFO investigators met in Mayfair Hotel in Los Angeles. It was a meeting of the Civilian Saucer Investigators presided over by E. J. Sullivan, the outfit that had gained fame by a mention in a UFO article in Life magazine. Two Air Force representatives attended as observers but refused to identify themselves to a reporter from the L. A. Times.

Sullivan announced to the small gathering that so far the group had received over 1,500 UFO reports since the organization's inception. The material, he promised, would be sorted and evaluated without prejudice even though there was a consensus among the membership that "unidentified objects were coursing around the atmosphere." Most of the meeting was given over to an amateur astronomer T. H. Cave who lectured on the planet Mars, and afterwards some of those in attendance described personal UFO sightings. Perhaps the most significant moment of the evening was when the writer Gerald Heard stood up and suggested that strange sightings made during World War II might be authentic UFO reports.¹⁸⁸

That same night across the continent the UFOs gave the CSI band some spectacular encouragement.

The famous Nash-Fournet case.

Over and over again reports of luminous dots in the sky moving in V-formation turned up in UFO reports and they were usually dismissed as ducks or geese, and then on July 14, 1952, an incident was recorded that casts some doubt on the liberal use of the bird explanation.

The principle witness was a Captian William B. Nash. His background in aviation was above reproach before the incident and after. During World War II he flew for the Navy and after the conflict ended he was a pilot for Pan American. By 1962, Nash had achieved the rank of Senior Captain and had been appointed an official of the Air Line Pilots Association.

As a further introductory note, it should be said that BLUE BOOK's AFHQ Monitor, Major Dewey Fournet, called the case one of the most detailed and reliable in Air Force files up to that time.

The encounter.

Just after sundown (8:12 p.m. July 14th), a DC-4 passenger plane enroute from New York to Miami, was 8,000 feet above the waters of Chesapeake Bay. At the helm was Captain William B. Nash. Visibility that night was excellent and as the airliner cruised over the bay Captain Nash could clearly see the lights of Norfolk 25 miles away and the dark mass of the penninsula of Delaware to his left. Off in the distance

sprawled the myriad brilliant luminous points that marked the metropolitan areas of Washington, Richmond, and Philadelphia. Up ahead lay the dazzling glow of the city of Newport News, growing brighter as the DC-4 sped in its direction. The only clouds in the sky were some cirrus at 20,000 feet.

With the heavens so transparent, Captain Nash sought to point out landmarks to First Officer William Fortenberry who was on his first run to Miami. As the two were looking out the windshield to the right, they both noticed a series of crimson dots at 30 degrees streaking in their direction, moving so fast in their flight they resembled tracer bullets. Peering closely Captain Nash noticed that red dots were moving in a step-down echelon formation, zooming along at an altitude of 2,000 feet, or about a mile lower than the DC-4.189

As the row of dots grew rapidly larger, both Nash and Fortenberry were transfixed by the swelling images, six red-orange circles they estimated were 100 feet in diameter and 15 feet thick. Of the six objects, the leading trio suddenly began to behave oddly after being under observation for a few seconds. Captain Nash explained the behavior in this manner: "They began to slide back and forth to cross one another as though the leader had decelerated and the second two had been asleep."190

Fascinated by the sight and convinced that the weird formation would pass beneath this aircraft, Captain Nash threw off his safety belt and lunged to the right so he could maintain eye contact through the cockpit window. To his surprise, however, the red circles of light dimmed, flipped up on edge, instantly reversed direction with no arc or wavering, and then resumed a horizontal position as they sped away on a trajectory some 30 degrees from their approach course. The pilot's amazement, was compounded when two more such objects entered the flier's field of vision diving on the other six, smoothly joining up with the departing formation. As the formation receded in the distance, the pilots could see that the UFOs skirted Newport News, and then went some 10 miles beyond the city; at that point the objects shot upward at an angle of about 45 degrees, gradually growing fainter as they climbed higher and higher.

The total time elapsed was about 15 seconds. Elaborate calculations utilizing their charts and navigating equipment produced an astounding figure for the UFOs' velocity: 50 miles in 15 seconds, or 12,000 miles per hour!

Profoundly impressed by the performance, Captain Nash assumed that the objects were intelligently controlled machines so he immediately radioed a local Naval Station to notify the military, but receiving no answer he made a second call to a CAA VHF short range installation where the message was logged. 191

7:00 a.m., July 15th.

Hours later when the Pam American plane #88901 landed at Miami International Airport, military officials of the 435th Troop Carrier Wing based at Miami Airport had already flashed a message about the encounter to the 7th OSI District at McDill

AFB, Tampa. At 7:00 a.m. in the morning of July 15th, the OSI telephoned Nash and Fortenberry asking for an interview which the pilots readily granted. Shortly thereafter an interrogation team arrived and we know from military records the names of three OSI members: Louie A. Johnagin, Rudolph McCollouksi, and an OSI Detachment Commander C. L. Hamilton. Captain Nash remembers:

"There were five men, one in uniform; the others showed us I.D. cards and badges of Special Investigations, USAF. In separate rooms, we were questioned for one hour and 45 minutes--then about a half hour together. We made sketches and drew the track of the objects on charts...the tracks matched...all conversation (was) recorded on a stenotype machine.

"They had a complete weather report...it coincided with our visual observations...our flight plan. The investigators also advised us that they already had seven other reports. One was from a Lt. Commander and his wife...They described a formation of red discs travelling at high speed and making immediate direction changes without turn radius. These other reports alone were enough to convince the investigators that we had not seen 'reflections.'"*192

Issues of the Washington Daily News later visible on the newsracks around the Capital bannered: "PILOTS SPOT 8 SAUCERS FLYING IN NORFOLK AREA."

The Air Defense Command headquarters in Colorado dispatched a teletype message to ATIC at Wright Field, Ohio, requesting the interrogation reports on the Pan-American encounter stating: "THIS IS GREAT PRIORITY, INFO NEEDED THIS HQ 2 AUG 52 OR AS SOON THEREAFTER AS POSSIBLE."

Another rendezvous in the Newport News area.

Newport News' sister city of Hampton, Virginia was host to another UFO rendezvous just two days after the Nash-Fortenberry incident. The witness to the UFO episode was a Paul R. Hill, Assistant Division Chief with the Pilotless Aircraft Research Division of NACA, Langley AFB, Virginia. He was familiar with the best aircraft America was developing yet in spite of that was totally mystified 9:00 p.m. July 16th by two amber-colored lights viewed from his home near the intersection of Chesapeake and La Salle Avenues in Hampton:

*It is claimed that two members of the Ground Observer Corps, on duty the night of July 14th at Newport News, spotted the same lights as Nash and Fortenberry but did not contact the Filter Center at Richmond.

"Two were seen first coming in over Hampton Roads at about 500 mph from the South. These slowed down as they made a 'U' turn at the southern edge of the Peninsula. They moved side by side until they revolved around each other at a high rate of speed in a tight circle 2 or 3 hundred feet in diameter. This appeared to be a rendezvous signal as a third UFO came racing up from the direction of Virginia Beach and 'fell in' several hundred feet below the first two, forming a sort of 'V' formation. A fourth UFO came in from up the James River and joined the group which headed on south at about 500 mph."193

Hill commented on the circling or spiraling, saying that the orbits were very tight, passing through 360 degrees in about a second, all the while changing altitude. When the objects flew slowly, their movements were jerky.194

Stalking UFO.

A military SA-16 amphibian cruised unconcerned 5,000 feet over West Palm Beach, Florida, 10:10 a.m., July 15th, totally unaware of a commotion on the ground below. That day and at that time a resident of West Palm Beach was getting a drink at a water fountain at a Keystone gas station at 504 South Olive Street. As the man turned away from the fountain, his thirst quenched, the sound of the SA-16 caused him to look up. He sighted the slow moving aircraft, nothing very interesting in that since the local airport was only three miles away, but above and to the rear of the SA-16 was a strange, grayish, round-like object approaching with great velocity. Peering intently at the approaching object, the witness took shorter and slower steps. As it gained on the aircraft, the puzzling object appeared to tilt, showing a disk-like profile and also changing to a yellow-orange color. Reaching a point about 500 feet directly above the SA-16, the object slowed and began to pace the airplane wavering a bit as if nearing its stalling speed.

Excited, the man yelled to one of his sons under the grease rack: "Come out here quick!" The son scrambled outside, glanced at the "saucer", and called to his brother: "Look up there in the sky." The brother came running, and another fellow inside the station reading a newspaper dropped everything and raced out into the sunlight.

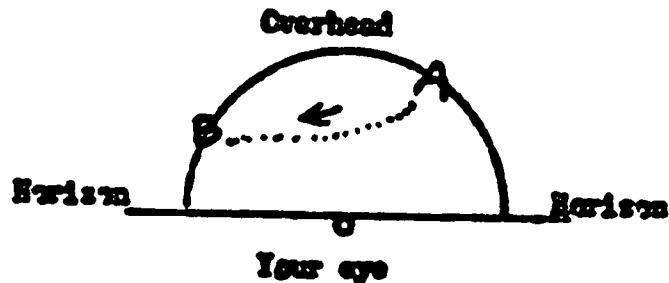
The object stayed with the SA-16 for a few moments and then zoomed away, lifting its front a bit before taking off.

Military investigators determined the identity of the SA-16, finding that it was piloted by a couple of Air Force officers assigned to the 12th Air Rescue Squadron stationed at Palm Beach International Airport. Speed, altitude, course, and description of the SA-16 matched the testimony of the UFO witnesses. Unfortunately, the Air Force pilots did not see the aerial object in question.195

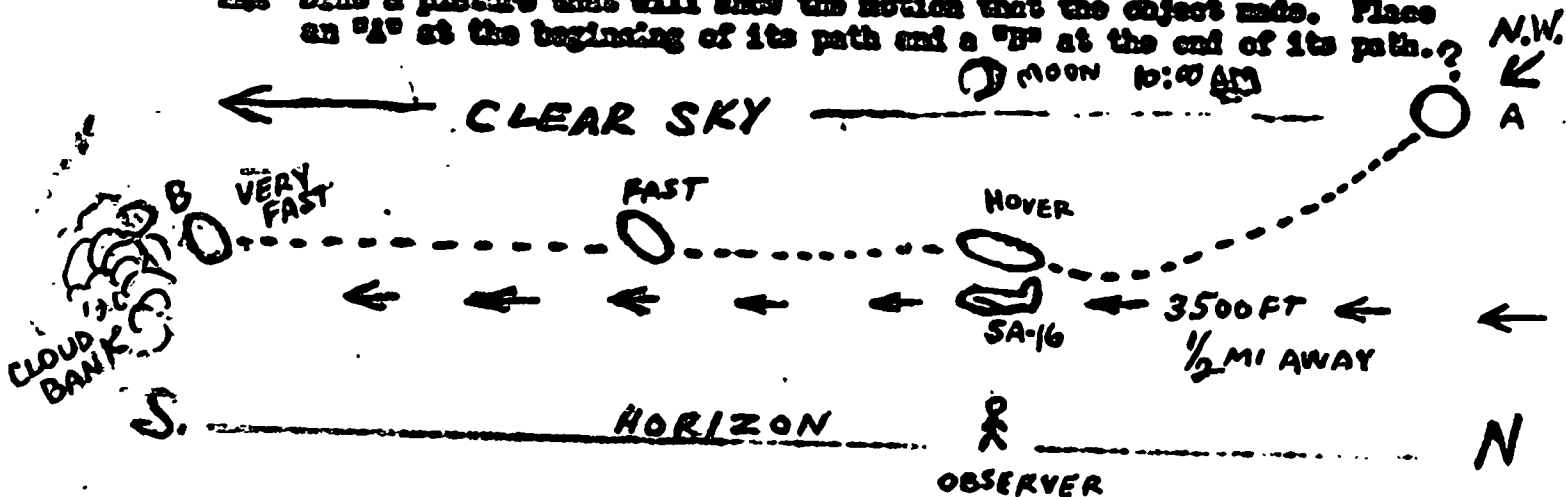
July 16th.

23. In the fall I sketch place an "A" at the position of the object when you first saw it, and a "B" at its position when you last saw it.

The West Palm Beach case
 Drawing by the witness



24. Draw a picture that will show the motion that the object made. Place an "A" at the beginning of its path and a "B" at the end of its path.



On July 16th Fournet phoned Ruppelt and briefed him on the extraordinary Naval Gun factory case of the 14th, but as yet BLUE BOOK's attention had not focused on the Washington D.C. area with reports coming in from numerous other places that seemed to be of equal interest to the UFOs.

Hawaii.

An American sailer standing watch on the submarine Burgara running on the surface off Lahaina, Maui, the Hawaiian Islands, sighted an oval disc speeding through the sky, his binoculars revealing the object's change of color, white to red, as it sped by.¹⁹⁶

Putnam Valley, New York.

In Air Force records it states that a UFO report was telephonically received from a civilian:

"On the 16th of July 1952, he was coming from Putnam Valley near Poughkeepsis at approximately 1930 to 2000 hours. It was still light with the moon fairly visible. Driving over a hill he saw an object shaped like a moon about 5,000 feet high. It was dome-shaped in the upper part, bulging in the middle with no tail. He could see it very clearly. It had a disus shape, yellowish in color with fringes luminous and whitish, emitting a bluish light similar to a luminous clock. He realized it could not be the moon since it tilted and he saw only the edge, then saw it rise 1,000 or 1,500 feet, straighten out, and parallel to the earth, it moved back and forth and suddenly zoomed off in a 45 degree angle and disappeared at incredible speed. There were no clouds at all and sound."¹⁹⁷

Devine, Texas.

On July 16th at 2300 hours CST, some objects were observed for five minutes. A number of persons waiting for a train at a train station in Devine, Texas, which included a civilian employed at the nearby Kelly AFB, witnessed some dull, yellowish lights soaring across the sky in V-formation. That the lights were attached to aircraft seemed unlikely since it was said the formation hovered in the sky for a time.¹⁹⁸

A little more than an hour after the Devine report a private detective and an insurance adjuster observed a string of four luminous circular lights in staggered formation in the sky near St. Paul, Minnesota, while motoring on State Highway 33. The two men watching the phenomena through the car's windshield claimed the lights were about two feet across, glowing disk-shaped masses, brighter at the center than at the edges. The things appeared to be about 200 feet high although it was hard to tell. Speeding south when first seen, the lights wheeled in

formation, changing course to a Western track and then repeated the maneuver until the lights were moving North. The lights were lost from view abruptly.¹⁹⁹

A comment should be made about the weather. Sky conditions were scattered clouds at 1,500 feet with a solid overcast at 6,500 feet. There was severe lightning flashes from cloud to cloud and cloud to ground in the area at the time. This is notable because UFOs are rarely sighted during inclement weather.

July 17th.

Super fast "planets."

Too slow for meteors and too fast for airplanes, aerial objects that puzzled some airmen were seen early in the morning of the 17th:

"Captain Paul L. Carpenter, an American Airlines pilot for 24 years, reported today (July 18th) that he and his crew observed mysterious objects flashing through the skies at speeds of 3,000 miles an hour.

"The pilot said the objects were seen near Denver early yesterday morning on his non-stop flight from Los Angeles to Chicago.

"He reported that they were at an altitude of 25,000 to 30,000 feet and that they looked like moving planets of a dull red color with a yellow tinge.

"First officer George Fell of La Porte City, La., and flight engineer Quilici of Los Angeles, also saw the same controlled aerial objects.

"Carpenter, 51, of Los Angeles, said the objects seemed to be about 100 miles away and that he could not tell if they whirled on their own axis.

"He said the first flying object was moving south by southeast. A minute after it disappeared, he said, two more came into view going westward and another eastward.

"The two travelling westward disappeared about two seconds then reappeared traveling eastward."²⁰⁰

Ohio.

At Salem, Ohio (about 15 miles south, southwest of Youngstown) the following story appeared in the press: "Unexplained objects resembling descriptions of flying saucers were seen to the north of Salem Thursday (July 17th) night. Walter Bok of Benton Road was the first to notice the whitish flying objects between 10:00 p.m. and midnight."²⁰¹

Lake Erie enigma.

It stands to reason that if UFOs were to swarm over a region, even a large lake would not be excluded and such is the case. BLUE BOOK was notified that on July 17th at 11:00 a.m. an unidentified aerial object was observed East of Sandusky, Ohio over Lake Erie:

"... (deleted) described himself as a private pilot since 1929 and the owner of a Buick agency in Brooklyn, N.Y. According to ... (deleted) the United Airlines plane was approximately 12,000 feet when the object was sighted at three or four thousand feet, and was estimated at be 150-200 feet in diameter. This object was further described as round, with the outer border of approximately 75 feet being a reddish color and having a black center. ... (deleted) stated that during his observance the object was stationary. He did not make a report of this information to the pilot of the plane."²⁰²

"V-formation."

Some three and a half miles from downtown Rapid City, South Dakota, was a drive-in theater. The evening of the 17th an Air Force Master Sergeant and his girlfriend were watching a movie at the drive-in when about 10:00 p.m. two "V-formations" of orange-colored objects soared through the heavens, visible to the observers to the east. There were about a dozen points of light in the formations.²⁰³

Ruppelt was aware of the fact that the UFO wave of that summer was not confined to U.S. territory since Air Attaches overseas filed regular dispatches about strange aerial bodies but ATIC could not spare the time or effort to examine them.²⁰⁴

Here are two French cases:

"C. Vaillant, a correspondent for the newspaper La Bourgogne Republicaine, claimed that on July 17, 1952, at 1:00 p.m. at Belansur-Ource, he was astonished by a sudden whirlwind of dust. He saw in the sky a luminous object that appeared to be stationary. A second object, disk-shaped, detached itself from the first one and moved toward the west, while the first one moved off in the opposite direction. Then suddenly both objects rose straight up and vanished; thereupon the wind stopped."²⁰⁵

The second tells us:

"...on July 17, in the same district, a number of people at Belan-sur-Aurce had watched the movements of two luminous discs. An extraordinary feature of this incident was that the witnesses stated that a strong wind agitated the tree-tops. It seems certain that this must have been caused by the passage of two flying saucers and was not an ordinary breeze."²⁰⁶

Cuba.

Tuesday, July 17th, at Matanzas, Cuba, 11:20 in the morning, a Cuban stading on his terrace noticed a shadow and looking up saw a round object reflecting the sun orbiting over the south-east edge of the city of Matanzas at a relatively low 1200 feet (estimated).

The most interesting sentence of the newsstory datelined Havana states:

"He said that the object at first was in a vertical position or plane, when it suddenly shot off at tremendous speed for about 400 meters where it stopped and changed to a horizontal position."²⁰⁷

Marrakech, Morocco.

Correspondents alerted their editors that at Marrakech, Morocco, on July 16th, witnesses saw a "luminous disk," large in size, skipping across the night (10:00 p.m.) sky with a leaping and bounding motion.²⁰⁸

Argentina.

"La Plata, Argentina, July 18-- Residents of nearby Veronica reported seeing six disc-shaped lighted objects which resembled 'flying saucers' last night.

"Eyewitnesses said the objects maneuvered in the sky and movements were entirely different from those of regular planes.

"The objects were said to have been bluish-yellow in color, and remained within sight of Veronica for more than an hour."²⁰⁹

And finally Japan.

On July 17th at 1800 hours, Airman First Class Lyle Drenth released a white balloon for a winds aloft measurement. He was assigned to the weather unit stationed at Tsuiki Air Base on the island of Kyusku, Japan. For some 30 minutes Airman Drenth monitored the Pibal run and then turned the tracking theodolite over to a Japanese assistant. He had hardly done so, when the helper sighted something startling and became excited. Airman Drenth grabbed the theodolite and peered at the sky. There, near the balloon, were 12 white luminous bodies, nearly the same size, moving along with the balloon. The dozen objects stayed with the balloon for about 20 seconds and then gained speed, leaving it behind. Over the next seven minutes similar objects in groups of 3's, 4's, and 5's appeared and disappeared, all going westward, with the exception of one which orbited the balloon and left in an eastern direction.²¹⁰

July 18th.

A newsstory from the Nation's Capital reported more of those strange orange-colored objects, and if the sighting was valid, the objects would have been very difficult to follow by radar, leaving a track of only a few miles before suddenly disappearing, something that would puzzle local radar controllers the next night.

Washington D.C.:

"At 2 a.m. today, radio engineer Elmer Chambers looked up at the sky. Here's what he says he saw.

"Six or seven bright orange discs were streaking through the sky in single file. The saucers sped along for about five seconds and then each, in turn veered sharply upward and disappeared.

"Chambers, 41, is chief engineer at the WRC radio station transmitter in the Washington suburbs."²¹¹

The press noted that Chambers had been a previous skeptic but that now he spends his time wondering and worrying.

A public relations nightmare.

"THE SAUCERS KEEP COMING" screamed a headline in the Washington Daily News proclaiming the surge in UFO reports and posing the question of what it all meant.

Normally local military officials would say little or nothing, leaving speculation to appointed spokesmen. Now the excitement was becoming too much to bear.

"Not natural objects."

Are flying saucers real? Yes, according to the executive officer of the Illinois Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, Lt. Colonel Edwin H. Weig. The Colonel was not afraid to say so publicly and his comments appeared in The Chicago Daily News: "Lt. Col. Weig said he believes the objects are not natural objects and that he saw one a week ago over Lincolnwood..."²¹²

Similarly, at the same time Lt. Col. Richard H. McGee, Civil Defense Director of the Dayton, Ohio area that included Wright Field where BLUE BOOK was headquartered, commented to the press: "There is something flying around our skies and I wish we knew what it is."²¹³

Ruppelt tells us how the latter remark caused some confusion:

"When the story broke in other parts (other than the local Dayton paper), the Colonel's affiliation with civil defense wasn't mentioned, and he became merely 'a colonel from Dayton.' Dayton was quickly construed by the public to mean Wright-Patterson AFB and specifically ATIC. Some people in the Pentagon screamed while others gleefully clapped their hands. The gleeful handclaps were from those people who wanted the UFO's to be socially recognized, and they believed that if they couldn't talk their ideas into being they might be able to force them in with the help of this type of publicity."²¹⁴

Here is what was officially acknowledged at the time.

One press release dated July 17th stated: "An Air Force spokesman said today sixty reports of flying saucers have been received during the last two weeks. He could give no reason for the sudden increase."²¹⁵

Moreover, a news dispatch datelined Dayton, Ohio, July 17th, quoting BLUE BOOK chief E. J. Ruppelt, said: "In the reports we're getting in here, I see no connection whatsoever."²¹⁶

Even the amazing Nash-Fortenberry incident failed to elicit more than a bland comment from Ruppelt that day: "We are assuming the pilots are describing accurately what they saw and we have no reason to doubt them. However, objects like they saw have been previously reported and we need more information."²¹⁷ He added the remark that no theory could be embraced unless there was something: "...it can prove."²¹⁸

July 18th.

Ninety degree turns.

Air Force investigators interviewed a man and his daughter at the Hilton Hotel in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in regards to a manifestation above the city of Placitas. The civilians happened to notice something remarkable while studying the constellation Corona Borealis Friday night, July 18th, at 2155 hours. Something glowing yellow-orange sped into view at tremendous speed, passing across the constellation and continuing east for about 20 seconds where it then turned 90 degrees and stayed on a southern course for a brief 5 seconds before making another 90 degree turn to the west, maintaining that track for about 3 seconds until turning 90 degrees for the third and last time, disappearing while speeding away on a southern course.²¹⁹

"I almost fainted."

A Mrs. Hetzel of West Brighton, Staten Island, excitedly recounted her experience to New York Civil Defense authorities describing a "V-formation of dinner plates" seen on the evening of July 18th. Her words were preserved by the INS newsservice:

"I almost fainted when I looked up at the sky and saw what looked to me like five large dinner plates flying through the sky.

"They came from the direction of Perth Amboy, N.J., and appeared to be headed for Manhattan.

"They were up high and had a silvery glow and silent. They were in formation. The red glow from the rims was outstanding. They were flying as fast as jet planes.

"I was so excited I almost fainted. I yelled to the only one I could see, my neighbor, Mr. Gondar."²²⁰

Her neighbor happened to be outside relaxing in a lawn chair with his young son Allan when Mrs. Hetzel yelled to him. Mr. Gondar told the press:

"I looked up. My son did too. I was too startled to talk. My son said: 'Look at that, Daddy, what's that?'"

"They were high in the sky flying from south to north or from Tottenville to St. George. They were flying like geese. They were bright in color and had a reddish rim. They gave off a glow and didn't make a sound.

"They didn't take long to disappear in the clouds. Be assured they were not airplanes and this was not an illusion. Now I believe such things."²²¹

Wheeling, West Virginia: "Mrs. Jess Jarrell of 1313 Lind Street reported last night that she and her daughter sighted a weird, roaring, whirling, flat object in the sky yesterday (July 18th) afternoon..."²²²

"What should we do?"

The teletype machine in Ruppelt's BLUE BOOK office tapped: LOCAL PUBLIC IS AWARE OF THE OBSERVED OBJECTS BUT NO CONFIRMATION HAS BEEN ISSUED FROM HERE. ADVISE THIS OFFICE." Authorities at Patrick AFB, Florida, on July 18th, were in a quandary over being "visited" by strange aerial lights. It seems that around 9:45 p.m. a S/Sgt. Blackmon and a T/Sgt. Bishop noticed a string of unusual lights moving north in the southern sky over Hanger 800, climb to a higher altitude, and then hover. So strange did the lights appear to be, that in spite of all the years of experience around airfields the two enlisted men felt compelled to alert the A.O. (Airdrome Officer) on duty inside the hanger in the operation office. At the urging of the Sergeants, the A.O. went outside to see the phenomenon. Accompanying the Sergeants and the A.O. were a number of other fascinated by all the talk about weird sky lights, two Air Force officers on TDY, an Air Policeman, and a couple of military aircraft dispatchers. None of the witnesses during the enthusing viewing were of the opinion they were watching normal aircraft traffic. Immediately before the sighting, and immediately after the sighting, normal aircraft traffic was observed and the difference in appearance was pronounced between the strange lights and normal aircraft lights.

As the A.O. remarked: "The light did not appear to me as having been those carried by any conventional aircraft, as the lights were single, round in shape and appeared the same at all angles sighted."²²³

What made an explanation particularly challenging was the complexity of the sighting. When the witnesses emerged from the hanger they could see only a single light to the west where the glowing string was last seen. After watching the light for a moment, the Air Force men noticed it slowly move south and then abruptly move north. Observing the change of direction, Airman H. A. Hrickelbach exclaimed, "...with no apparent turn!"

Suddenly about 20 degrees below the light there appeared another similar light, speeding north rapidly, and then a third light shot over the airfield at high speed on a western course followed quickly by a fourth light. All lights now disappeared.

After a short interval, a fifth light hurdled out of the western sky, raced to a point over the airfield where it did a slow 180 degree turn and then retraced its approach course.

The entire soundless aerial show lasted approximately 15 seconds. The display had to be quite out of the ordinary for the military men to pay it any heed. That the lights were attached to wind-blown balloons seems improbable due to the various directions the lights travelled as well as the speed (estimated to be about 900 mph).

Contributing to the strangeness index was the fact that just five minutes after the military observation and certainly before the incident became public knowledge, a local newspaper telephoned Patrick AFB inquiring about "strange lights" being reported in the sky by residents in the area. When Ruppelt got the report from Patrick AFB he noted that it was no run-of-the-mill airfield. It was "Headquarters, Air Force Missile Test Center."

The public statements made by Ruppelt on July 18th rank with the most interesting remarks he would ever make as spokesman for project BLUE BOOK, comments coming close to making a "few positive assumptions" about the identity of UFOs one of General Samford's subordinates suggested he do back in June. Things had gotten plenty hot by July and perhaps Ruppelt thought things might get hotter still. First there was an admission that: "...ground radar had tracked some aerial objects at speeds ranging between 1500 and 2000 miles per hour."²²⁴ That the Air Force took such radar targets seriously Ruppelt confirmed in the very next sentence: "...jet fighters equipped with the very latest radar have been sent aloft to 'make contact' with the phantom objects, but all efforts to catch up with them have failed."²²⁵ Note that he does not necessarily say the targets were false returns, but hints that there were objects flying around too fast for America's best planes to intercept. While only claiming to have 1,000 UFO reports on file with BLUE BOOK, Ruppelt did admit that 25 percent of the cases were listed as unexplained. The news release was not, however, an endorsement of the space ship idea since Ruppelt used the military's standard objection to the theory by citing the fact that there had been no physical trace of a machine causing saucer reports, yet he seemed to meet UFO believers half way: "We are convinced that persons making these reports actually see something in the sky, but what they are is another question."²²⁶

"What are they?"

For years Dr. Lincoln La Paz of the University of New Mexico had chased some very strange "meteors" and he entertained no doubt that the phenomenon existed, but he found that the character of the glowing bodies never yielded to any theory. The meteors not only refused to rumble and roar in their passage, they remained mute even when the radiant streaks terminated in an explosion of light. The "meteors" left no fragments behind after such a sky blast, so did they really blow up, or was the burst of brilliance an indication of some nondestructive change?

There was an alternative to the meteor hypothesis but the professor tried to maintain some distance from controversial subjects and had rejected any suggestion that there may be any tie-in to what people called flying saucers. By July 19, 1952, however, Dr. La Paz was singing a different tune. Reports of "meteors" La Paz had been studying for many months included sightings of maneuvers in the air and an occasional case of a discernible shape.

On June 19, 1952 an AP dispatch carried La Paz's concession to a bizarre explanation of what he now generalized under the heading "luminous objects."

La Paz explained: "By whatever name you call them, flying saucers, guided missiles, discs, space ships, they all act strangely." The professor dismissed the idea the objects were shooting stars and gave the press a description the reported antics of the mystery phenomenon:

- They can reverse directions and cruise back and forth.
- They travel at high speeds in wide sweeping circles.
- They are spherical or disc-shaped and for the most part, give off a steady yellow light.
- They travel at extremely high altitudes and can be followed as long as 3½ minutes."228

What motivated his remarks to the AP newsservice was the results of his recent field trip through Idaho, Utah, and Nevada, investigating fireball reports. Dr. La Paz said he had gathered reports of speeding objects that did not correlate with meteors: "...in practically every place I stopped."229

July 19th.

Sic: North
In a steep dive, the round dot fringed with light plunged out of the black, early morning sky over the countryside near Williston, ~~South~~ Dakota, casting its radiance on a cloud bank. Arresting its plunge, the glowing ball of light executed a 360 degree turn, quickly following that with a 180 degree turn, and was last seen going out of sight in a northeastern direction.

The observer in this case was an experienced pilot who was driving an auto on US Highway 85.230 Later that evening UFOs were spotted over North Dakota. See below.

"V-formation over Minot."

A page of the Minot Daily News carried this story.

"According to a Robert Himmler, a 'roman-candle with a trailing edge' joined by a half-dozen similar objects, formed up in a V-formation as they sped over Minot, North Dakota, Saturday night, July 19th.

"A Harley Pfau, viewing the passage from a local drive-in theater, counted at least six of the objects giving off a 'green glow' as they zoomed south."231

Further south that day were other sightings.

Elgin, Illinois.

A brief note in the Elgin Review-News informed its readers: "A 'mysterious and unidentified object' in the skies over Elgin was spotted and charted last night by three persons who were on duty at the Ground Observers post atop the city hall..."²³²

Also that day (July 19th) according to Air Force records:

"Six luminous round objects, independently carting about the sky, 10:00 p.m., July 19th, over Chicago, were reported by a woman resident. She said they moved horizontally and then in a vertical manner."²³²

More to the East were these next two cases.

July 19th at Tonanvanda, New York, which is near Buffalo, reports were made of eight objects moving in the sky at an altitude of 6,000 feet. The press report did not give any details of the objects but another object in another part of the sky was apparently closer to a witness who said it was round, silver, or "very much like a flying saucer."²³³

Baltimore, Maryland.

A secretary, a civilian volunteer ground observer aircraft spotter, manning a post at Baltimore, Maryland, was on duty at 11:28 a.m. the morning of July 19th. There were clouds that morning that lay in a broken layer at 15,000 feet with a solid overcast at 25,000 feet. It was a warm 80 degrees.

The woman noticed two objects heading northeast at an altitude of 2,000 feet or well below the clouds. When first seen the two objects were about 1½ miles southeast of the GOC post, appearing round, of a bluish color, and spewing a jet-type exhaust. One of the objects was trailing a steam of smoke. When the mysterious pair of objects drew opposite of the observer, they suddenly zoomed vertically, gaining altitude until they became too small to be discerned. The objects were in view some 20 seconds. A remarkable similar sighting would be made 12 hours later in Florida.²³⁴

The prediction.

Ruppelt recalled a confidential discussion at this time with a scientist representing an agency Ruppelt "wasn't permitted to name", a talk that lasted two hours and concerned the pattern of UFO sightings being reported. Ruppelt wrote in his book about UFOs:

"'Within the next few days,' he told me, and I remember that he punctuated his slow, deliberate remarks by hitting the desk with his fist, 'they're

going to blow up and you're going to have the granddaddy of all UFO sightings. The sighting will occur in Washington or New York, ' he predicted, -- ' probably Washington.'"²³⁵

The afternoon of July 19th the newspapers on the news-racks around the Nation's Capital carried banner headlines of the latest UFO news: "AF ADMITS IT CAN'T TRACK ALL SAUCERS," "'SAUCER REPORTS DOUBLE NUMBERS OF YEAR AGO," and "'PEOPLE SEE SOMETHING' AIR FORCE SAYS." Late that evening all heck broke loose.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

At 11:35 p.m. on July 19th, two high speed, star-like bodies were spotted moving on a heading of 30 degrees over Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. While the lead object held to a steady course, the second pulled abreast so close the two looked like one object. This apparent merger lasted only briefly and then the two were seen to part, the second object breaking away with a 90 degree turn and taking up a trailing position. The objects were observed from the front yard of a residence in a suburb of Philadelphia.²³⁶

"Orange light."

At 11:55 p.m. an orange-colored light zoomed soundlessly over the State of New Jersey. A witness said it was about "4 times" the size of a star. The mystery light disappeared over the Southeast horizon. Ten minutes later another "orange light" would appear over Washington D.C.²³⁷

"Get Barnes in here--quick."

The setting was Washington's National Airport. Atop the main terminal building was the control tower equipped with a range radar for final aircraft approach guidance, while about a quarter mile away was the FAA Air Traffic Control facility in a converted hanger, a large dark room feebly lit by the glow from a pair of big horizontal scopes 24 inches across. Outside the hanger stood a five-story girdered structure topped with a slowly rotating long range radar antenna sweeping the skies, providing an electronic view of air traffic 70 miles in every direction.

The night of July 19th showed signs of being a comfortable one for the graveyard shift of the FAA surveillance team, an easy uneventful tour of duty monitoring and directing light air traffic in trouble-free flying weather, but less than an hour after the start of the shift, at about 11:40 p.m., traffic controller Edward Nugent noticed something extraordinary. According to his scope there was a gaggle of blips scattered over a wide area, slowly moving at an estimated 100 mph, in the air space 15 miles to the southwest of the Capital. There was no flight plans for the blips and they were not flying in established air lanes.

With puzzlement threatening to melt into panic over the large scale violation of FAA regulations covering air safety, Nugent yelled for the shift supervisor: "Get Barnes in here--quick!"²³⁸ Nugent, with a nervous chuckle, called out as Barnes approached: "Here's a fleet of flying saucers for you."²³⁹

Harry G. Barnes was the shift boss for the eight man crew and had seen many odd things in his years on the job, but this night would be the strangest ever.

Answering Nugent's summons, Barnes bent over the big 24-inch scope and examined the tiny smears of light, seven in number, that seemed to be moving aimlessly above the Virginian countryside, the activity having no apparent purpose in regards to a possible origin or possible destination.

Barnes said later: "...although an occasional strong return was noted, most of the targets would be classified as fair to weak."²⁴⁰ As puzzled as Nugent, Barnes backed off and let two other controllers, Jim Copeland and Jim Ritchey, fiddle with the radar set in an attempt to diagnose a possible malfunction which seemed apparent since some of the blips were weak and often painted for only a three mile track before fading.

For the moment Barnes was not overly concerned, however, he did decide to phone Washington airport tower and ask the CAA man there, Howard Cocklin, if anything strange was appearing on the tower's short range radar. Not only did Cocklin reply in the affirmative, he peered out the big glass tower windows and yelled: "I can see one of the things. It's got a bright orange light-- I can't tell what's behind it."²⁴²

Needless to say, Barnes and his crew now began to take the targets seriously and their concern turned into real alarm when a pair of targets moved to a point above the White House and another target loitered very close to the Capital.²⁴³ Barnes rang up the Military Flight Service (MFS), codenamed "Thorndyke," to express his amazement over possible intruders in the skies over Washington D.C. MFS urged Barnes to contact the nearest military airbase and alert the Intelligence officer on duty or whoever else was in charge. Since both Bolling AFB and Andrews AFB were near at hand, there was a little confusion about which one to call. Andrews finally got the nod, apparently because it had jet interceptors on standby. It was now midnight.²⁴⁴

Five minutes later a civilian controller working Andrews AFB tower under government contract (there were a number of these men working along side military personnel) took Barnes' phone call:

"At about 0005 EDT 20 July 1952 myself and two other controllers were on duty at Andrews Tower. Washington Center (Barnes) called Andrews Approach Control to inquire about five radar targets over Andrews range. Andrews Approach Control advised they had no traffic. Also the only traffic the Tower had was one C-47 inbound still about an hour out of Andrews. A few moments later Tower had a phone call from C-47 flight line at Andrews by a party named Goodman, title unknown to me. Al/C Brady answered."²⁴⁵

Airman William Brady's testimony:

"Airman Goodman called the tower and reported he had seen objects in the air around Andrews, while we were discussing them he advised me to look to the south immediately. When I looked there was an object which appeared to be like an orange ball of fire, trailing a tail, it appeared to be about two miles south and one-half mile from the Andrews range. It was very bright and definite, and unlike anything I had ever seen before. The position of something like this is hard to determine. It made kind of a circular movement..."²⁴⁶

The others in the tower were only half listening but they perked up when Airman Brady exclaimed: "I see it!" The men in the tower jerked their heads around as fast as they could but no one else saw a thing.²⁴⁷ The apparent reason others had trouble spotting anything is explained by Airman Brady who, when we last left him, was staring at an orange light making a circular movement. The orange light, according to Brady, halted its circular movement and: "...took off at an unbelievable speed. It disappeared in a split second."²⁴⁸

The departure of the light was followed by the appearance of a second light. Brady: "Seconds later I saw another one, same description. As the one before it made an arc-like pattern and then disappeared. I only saw each object for about a second. The second one was over Andrews range, the direction appeared to be southerly."²⁴⁹

A few minutes later, at about 12:10 a.m., a T/Sgt. John Izzo reported for duty in the tower on the floor where the radio equipment was monitored. At about 12:15 a.m., Sgt. Izzo switched on the intercom that linked him with the controllers working in the tower's top level and overhead talk about "flying saucers."²⁵⁰ As the "saucer" talk continued, Sgt. Izzo couldn't resist making jokes over the intercom for the benefit of the men in the top of the tower. His curiosity getting the better of him, Izzo finally climbed the stairs to the top level and joined the group of saucer debaters. Hardly had the Sergeant entered the controller's room when Barnes at Washington National notified Andrews that its radar showed new strange radar targets both east and west of Andrews. Without being asked, Izzo and one of the controllers made like monkeys and scrambled to the tower's roof for a better look. With a pair of field glasses the two scanned the entire sky. The night was clear and the stars brilliant. One prominent point of light excited interest right away but a careful watch determined it to be just one of the brighter stars in the sky. It was now about 12:30 a.m. the morning of the 20th.²⁵¹

Even though Barnes had communicated his concern to Throndyke there was no green light for military intervention since the target information available was too vague, but Barnes insisted that the Washington National scopes were getting good returns and the civilian controllers could vector Air Force interceptors. The military took time to ponder the offer.²⁵² In any event, due to repair work being done on Andrews runways, it seems that

the jets based there had been sent temporarily to Delaware where the squadron was flying out of New Castle AFB. It would take some 30 minutes for any jets to arrive in Washington skies to defend the Capital.²⁵³

"Lord, Mr. Woodson. What is that?"

Meanwhile, at midnight, far to the south at Madison, Florida, a sighting remarkably similar to one that occurred 12 hours earlier at Baltimore, Maryland was taking place.

A farmer was checking on some piles of tobacco stored in a shed on his property, and going to a window to see if it was open wide enough to dry the leaves, he caught sight of two "somethings" suspended in space, a sight so amazing he yelled to a Black farmhand standing nearby. The farmhand ran over to the window, peeked out, and exclaimed: "Lord, Mr. Woodson. What is that?"

For almost four minutes the two men stared at the glowing, oblong objects, highly curious and not sure what would happen next. Finally, one of the objects "switched on a light" (The witnesses did not go into more detail) and moved horizontally. That the objects had life convinced Mr. Woodson he was watching something uncanny and he watched with fascination as the object crept forward. The object did not go far before turning back toward its companion, stopping for an instant, and then shooting straight up out of sight. The second object, inert all this time, abruptly zoomed skyward in apparent pursuit of the other object.²⁵⁴

"Orange disk?"

A scrap of note paper in official files has the following interesting remarks regarding a definite shape being observed. No where else is the word "disk" used. Here is the information:

"Targets remained on Washington Tower screen until 0030 during this time one target left a trace from west of Andrews to Riverdale, a distance of seven miles in four seconds.

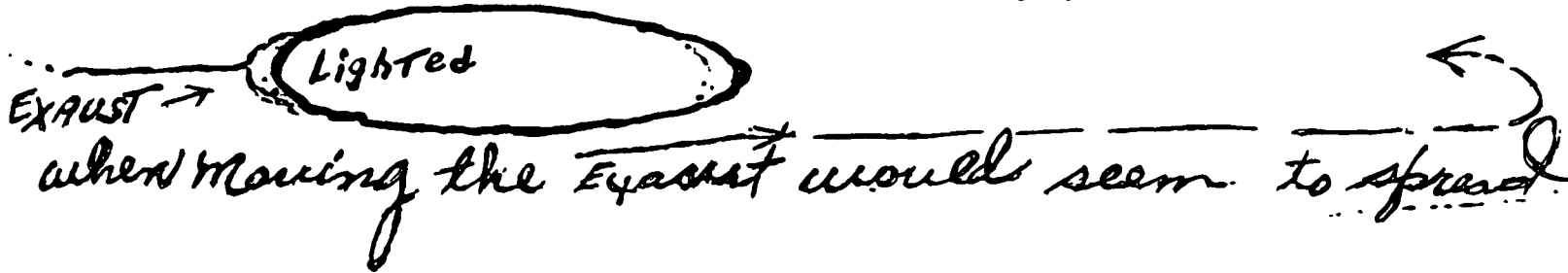
"There was also a visual sighting by the controllers of the Washington National. They observed an orange disk about 3,000 feet altitude at 360 degrees."*²⁵⁵

Regional nocturnal lights.

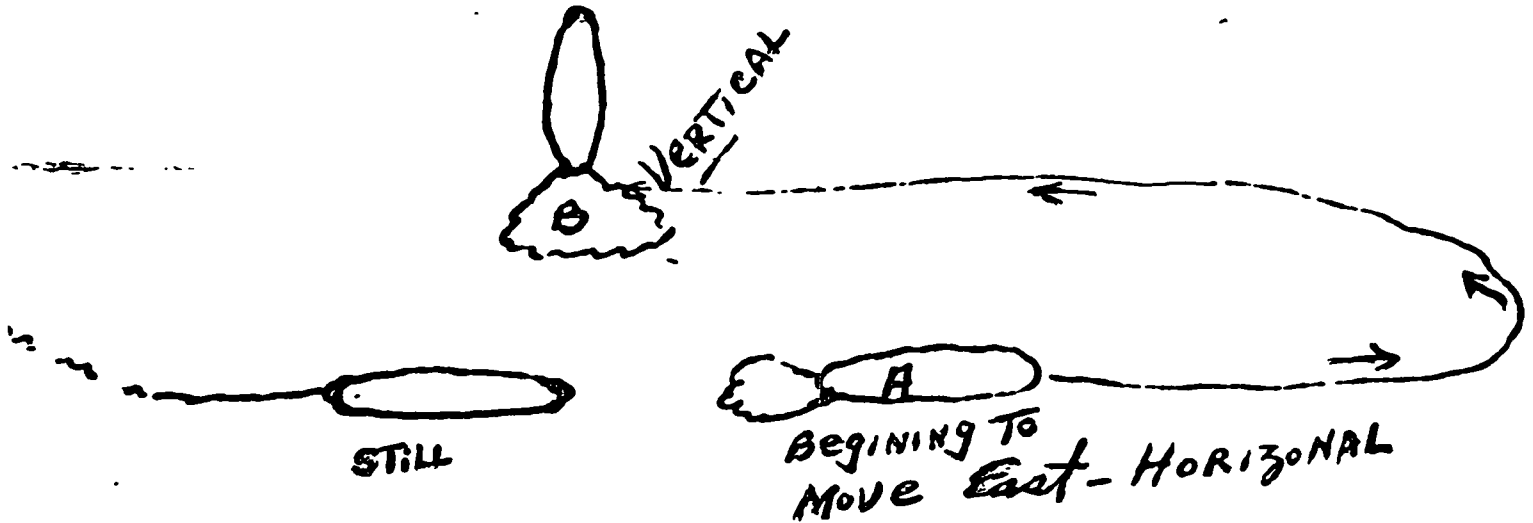
By this time it was after midnight and to the northeast of Washington strange lights were also observed. Three different sightings were made, the first by a professor of chemistry on

*Nearly every person involved in the night's events admits that there was considerable confusion making it very difficult to recall the facts accurately or in the proper order.

Madison, Florida
Drawings by the witness



24. Draw a picture that will show the notion that the object made. Place an "A" at the beginning of its path and a "B" at the end of its path.



the staff of a famous Eastern University. Air Force advisor, Dr. J. Allen Hynek remarked: "...professors at respectable institutions of learning rarely write to news desks unless profoundly motivated..."²⁵⁶

The professor penned an extensive letter to the City Desk of the Newark Evening News describing two glowing spots in the sky over Lavalette, New Jersey, the same time there was mysterious aerial activity over Washington D.C. Lavalette was a community of about 1,000 people located on the long, slender island just off the New Jersey coast at about 40 degrees latitude. The professor has left us a carefully composed essay relating his experience:

"Two moving lights were seen, each the same appearance, approximately round, and orange-yellow in color with dull red alternately diffusing over much of the surface. They seemed about five times the apparent size of Venus or Jupiter, but only two or three times as bright. The 'lights' were first seen toward the south, just off shore, about in the center of the Milky Way, at an approximate elevation angle of about forty degrees. They moved northwards slowly, one behind the other, and followed nearly the same path. They appeared to be at least one quarter to one half mile apart and moving at less than one hundred miles per hour. At the point where they passed almost due east of the observer, they appeared to be at least five thousand feet high, the approximate elevation angle being forty-five degrees. The second, or trailing light, did not keep constant distance or course with the leading object. Shortly after passing to the east of the observers, both lights gradually began to turn westward towards land, passing over the coastline at approximately sixty degrees north of the observer. Continuing to circle, the lights passed to the west at approximately fifty degrees elevation, then around to the south, crossing the shoreline at about the same angle. During this first circling, both lights were smaller and fainter but more yellow in color; the trailing one grew fainter more rapidly, and appeared to drop further behind and to shift course slightly to south of the leading one. At no time did any sound come from the lights.

"Out at sea, they continued circling, radius of turn being much smaller, but the brighter leading object crossed the shoreline once again just south of the observer at about an eighty-degree elevation. Both continued to grow much fainter, smaller, and more silvery in color, occasionally disappearing and reappearing as though passing over small, thin high clouds. The second light completely disappeared just over the shoreline. The first light continued westward, growing very faint like a small star. It seemed

many miles high and moving more rapidly. It finally disappeared in the west at about a fifty-degree elevation. The total elapsed time from first sighting to the final disappearance was about five or six minutes."257

A yacht anchored off the New Jersey coast provided six more witnesses to the passage of the pair of mystery lights. An interrogation report prepared by the Air Force summarized the testimony given military officials:

"At 12:15 a.m., 19 July 1952, two unidentified objects were seen streaking across the sky in a south-westerly direction by six observers on a boat located at approximately 40 degrees north, 75 degrees west. All members of the party observed two objects, and the three witnesses interviewed described the objects as follows: 'The objects looked very much like stars, possibly slightly larger, and were of a yellowish-orange color. They were soundless and seemed to follow a very definite course across the sky. Both objects remained the same distance from each other, and it was this fact that made the observers decide that the objects were not stars. The observers followed the objects with their eyes as long as they were in sight, after their disappearance were unable to detect them again.'"258

As these two lights moved inland they passed just north of Philadelphia where they were observed from the suburb of Elk Park. The witnesses in this instance consisted of an Air Force Major and his wife. Due to the occupation of the main witness, an Air Force pilot, the following account is of particular value. The Major reported:

"I first observed what appeared to be a star of average size and light intensity moving steadily on a heading of approximately thirty degrees. While the object was in this overhead position, I judged that it was moving at such a rate that it covered ten degrees of the sky arc in about a minute. I then noticed a second and identical-appearing object following the first. It was about ten degrees behind. My initial reaction to sighting these objects was to accept them as the traveling lights of a very high-altitude, high-speed aircraft. This impression was only momentary. In my experience, no aircraft lights at very high altitude look like these two objects, which could be most aptly described as moving stars of average size and light intensity. Since the night was dark, clear, and cloudless, it is pointed out that the stars appeared to be of more than average size and brightness. Furthermore, the movement of the object was estimated to be at least three times and no more than five times the apparent velocity of a conventional aircraft traveling at four hundred miles per hour ground speed at twenty-five thousand feet altitude..."

"The rate of acceleration on the part of the trailing object was rapid enough to close the ten degrees of sky separation in about five seconds. After maintaining such formation only momentarily, the trailing object made a short, sharp ninety-degree turn to the left and again assumed 'trail' position."259

One cannot move on without throwing in a story taken from the Passaic, New Jersey Herald-News which told of a procession of lights over northern New Jersey the night of July 19/20 although no time is given for the sighting. That night some seven oval-shaped lights were seen traveling rapidly in a strung out, in-line formation, passing from horizon to horizon in a minute and a half. The object in the lead appeared to be slightly bigger than those that followed behind and also seemed to have a slight trail of sorts.260

Back at Washington the principle person in the drama unfolding was now a Captain Pierman, pilot of an airliner scheduled to take off from Washington National at 1:00 a.m.

Seated at the controls of his DC-4, Captain Pierman was going over his preflight checklist. His airliner was poised on the airport parking ramp facing a compass direction of 020 degrees. Capt. Pierman happened to look up from his work and had a good view of the sky through the cockpit windshield at that angle. He chanced to see at that very instant a blue-white body flash horizontally across the sky some 30 degrees above the horizon. He estimated that the luminous object traveled from 150 degrees to 010 degrees. A trained observer, Capt. Pierman figured he turned his head to visually track the fiery object through a 45 degree quadrant, thus whatever the thing was, it was in sight about five seconds, a respectable time for a meteor although certainly not an impossible duration. The passage of the light did not alarm the airline pilot and he returned to making preparations for a take off. When Capt. Pierman did lift off at 1:00 a.m. he headed 180 degrees while climbing to an altitude of 1200 feet before turning to a course of 330 degrees. At that time he changed radio channels from Tower Central to National's UFO-tormented Airway Traffic Control Central staffed by Barnes and his men. Undoubtedly to Pierman's surprise ATRC controllers radioed that strange radar targets indicated the presence of unidentified aerial objects in the area and requested Capt. Pierman to investigate, telling the pilot to steer 290 degrees. When the course change was made Flight 807 was climbing 600 feet a minute and had already reached 4,000 feet. What is generally not recognized by those who have studied the events of the night of 19/20 July is that none of the radars in the Washington area had HRIs, or height range indicators. All the radars measured range and azimuth only. Not only would have height finding capability have facilitated the location of any UFO, it would have also provided a vital secondary confirmation of the reality of any target since the HRI was a separate radar device.

When we left Capt. Pierman his airliner was at 4,000 feet and climbing. At that time Washington National radioed that an

unidentified target was nine miles from Flight 807. Moments later ATRC radioed that the unknown was now at four miles and was closing. Now knowing the UFO's altitude, Capt. Pierman was taking a risk since his closing speed with the phantom radar blip was high approaching it headon. Seconds later ATRC radioed that the UFO was very near and at 10 o'clock. This put the UFO a little to his left so the danger, if any, was diminished considerably and it was a good thing for as Pierman scanned the black sky to his left he plainly saw another aircraft, a DC-4, zoom by. He doesn't say by how much he missed the other plane but he was close enough to identify it without much trouble. While this encounter may have proved to Pierman that ATRC was somewhat confused, not being aware of other traffic in the vicinity, it did indicate that there were "hard" radar targets around.²⁶¹

It is assumed that Pierman made at least two intercepts although no one document or newspaper account contains the complete story. A brief Intelligence report of Pierman's experiences in BLUE BOOK files compiled by a representative of the Tenth Air Force, for example, contains very little of the startling details mentioned in the newspapers, but does refer to the encounter with the DC-4. On the other hand, in one aspect at least, the newspapers were less sensational. Press accounts do not refer to ATRC directing airliner intercepts, instead it is merely stated that Pierman was just "advised to keep a look out for any UFOs in their area."

Pierman's second intercept.

One thing that perplexed Barnes was the abrupt reaction of the radar targets occasionally. At times after just a few sweeps of the radar beam the targets would vanish. Puzzlement continued until controller Jim Ritchey requested that Periman take up a course toward one particular target and right after the radio transmission the target suddenly faded from the scope. Barnes said of the failed interception: "It was almost as if whatever controlled it had heard us, or had seen Periman head toward it."²⁶² Barnes reasoned:

"That means it must have raced out of our beam between ten-second sweeps. It could have done this in one of two ways: First, it could make a steep climb at terrific speed, so that in ten seconds it would be above the vertical area swept by our M.E.W. set. Second, it could race horizontally off our 34 mile scope within seconds.

"Since such a possibility would mean speeds up to 7,000 miles per hour, far beyond the capability of any known aircraft, Barnes and his CAA team were skeptical. They were skeptical until, however, a measurement was obtained..."²⁶³

The measurement.

It just so happened that one of the mystery targets streaked across the screen of the high speed (28 R.P.M.) Airport Surveillance

radar at Washington National leaving behind a strong scope trace. Radar operators Joe Zacko and Howard Cocklin quickly calculated that the target in question had achieved a velocity of 7,100 mph. Cocklin was quoted as saying: "It was as if it had descended rapidly, almost vertically. That would bring it suddenly into the A.S.R. beam area. It seemed to level off for those few seconds, and then abruptly ascend out of the beam again."²⁶⁴

On another occasion a blip disappeared while an aircraft was in pursuit, only to suddenly reappear behind the aircraft. Barnes suggested: "If it was the same one--and I think it was--that was another of those high-speed vanishing acts between sweeps."²⁶⁵

Barnes had more than mere theory to work with because Capt. Pierman had achieved a visual on the unknown he was trying to intercept. The Captain had advised Barnes over the radio: "I saw the thing, but it streaked off before I could get close. It climbed out of sight in three to five seconds."²⁶⁶

Having enough of intercepting UFOs, Pierman put his plane back on a heading of 330 degrees, altitude 6,000 feet, so he could keep to his timetable and resume his flight to his scheduled destination at Detroit. The Northwest route Flight 807 followed the Potomac River into Northern Virginia which was infested with aerial phenomena. Pierman saw quite a show that night.

Pierman spotted six lights "like falling stars without tails" that zoomed "up, down and horizontally" and at other times remained stationary."²⁶⁷ Barnes remarked that Pierman's: "...descriptions of the movements of the objects coincided with the position of our pips at all times while in our range."²⁶⁸

Farther out over West Virginia Pierman sighted more suspicious lights. A trio of brilliant dots were viewed by Flight 807 as it passed over Martinburg. Initially the lights were seen moving on a horizontal course but suddenly the three lights: "...went into a terrific power dive."²⁶⁹ As the Washington Daily News reported it: "According to Pierman the dive was accomplished with 'tremendous vertical velocity' but then the UFOs quickly checked their plunge and appeared to hover."²⁷⁰

During a seven minute period both Captain Pierman and his co-pilot witnessed at least seven aerial bodies flashing about, speeding so fast the exact details were difficult to recall. Interviewed at this home in Detroit after he landed, Pierman said:

"In my years of flying, I've seen a lot of falling or shooting stars--whatever you call them--but these were much faster than anything else that I've ever seen.* They couldn't have been aircraft. They were moving too fast for that.

*Meteors travel at enormous velocity so Pierman's impression of greater speed must have come from the fact that he was witnessing slow objects at a relatively low altitude instead of bolides a hundred miles up where space rock usually burns up in seconds. To explain further, an object moving slowly close to an observer may seem to be moving much faster than an object at a distance since a slower object in such a case can pass through more quadrants in less time.

"They were about the same size as the brighter stars. And were much higher than our 6,000 foot altitude. I couldn't estimate the speed accurately.

"Please remember, I didn't speak of them as flying saucers--only very fast moving lights."271

"Meteors or mystery bodies?"

After 1:00 a.m. some streaking lights were observed by a number of witnesses. Civilian controller De Boves remembers:

"At approximately 0100 hours A1/C Brady answered the ringing telephone and spoke to someone unknown to me who was apparently watching the sky from hardstand 14. Brady became excited during the conversation and suddenly yelled: 'there goes one.' I saw a falling star go from overhead to a short distance south and burn out. About two minutes later (1:25 a.m.) Brady said there's another one: 'Did you see the orange glow to the south?' I said I thought I saw it but he pointed south and I had been looking southwest. I went up on the roof after that and watched the sky in all directions."272

T/Sgt. Izzo testified that at that time:

"...I saw what appeared to be two falling stars directly overhead falling in a south to north direction. They did not occur at the same time, about ten minutes part. The first one was quite bright and orange in color."273

Another civilian controller, apparently a Mr. Darning, is quoted in censored records as saying:

"...we saw what appeared to be a shooting star streak across the sky heading (? not legible)... followed almost immediately by another on the same heading and near where the other one had started. I went down to the drop line (?) to report the incident to Washington Center when Mr. (...deleted) and T/Sgt. Izzo said there was another one following the same route and near where the other originated. Later on A 1/C Brady and myself saw a falling star whose color was white like any falling star while the others observed were a light red or orange color."274

Controller De Boves, skeptical about the whole business, was not jarred by the fast moving lights since the night was very clear and the Milky Way in its glory. He brushed it off and said he was surprised that more meteors were not being observed on such a fine night for seeing. His doubts about the strangeness of the lights were strengthened when Airman Brady apparently made a mistake. De Boves:

"Brady was in the Tower talking on the phone and interphone. He was watching a star and telling various people that it was moving up and descending rapidly and going from left to right* and Darning and I were listening to him from the roof and believed we saw it too. Such is the power of suggestion.

"This star was to the east slightly to the left of and above the rotating beacon. Brady reported the star as two miles east of Andrews and at an altitude of 2,000 feet."²⁷⁶

Controller Darning came around to De Boves opinion:

"A 1/C Brady said he spotted a strange light near our beacon which is atop our water tower west of our control tower. I spotted the same from the tower roof but to me it appeared to be just a distant star and its position due to the rotation of the earth on its axis. To me it didn't appear to be moving around."²⁷⁶

Two o'clock.

Air Force Captain Harold C. May testified:

"At approximately 0200 EDT Washington Center called and asked if Andrews Approach Control had any unidentified targets in the vicinity of the Andrews range. Nothing appeared on our radar scope. Washington Center called several times in the next hour asking if Andrews radar had any unidentified targets but we were unable to pick up any targets.

"At about 0200 EDT Washington Center and Andrews tower were talking on the telephone. Washington Center advised that their radar had a target five miles west of Andrews Field. Andrews tower reported seeing a light (not legible)...color and said it was (not legible)...for the tower. At the same time Washington Center advised that the target on their radar was moving toward Andrews. I went outside as no target appeared on Andrews radar and saw a light as reported by the tower. It was between 10 to 15 degrees above the horizon and seemed to change color, from red to orange to green to red again. It seemed to (float? The word is not clear)...but at times to dip suddenly and appear to lose altitude. It did not have the appearance of any star I have ever observed before. At the time of observation there was a star due east of my position. Its brilliance was approximately the same as the object and it appeared at about the same angle, 10 to 15 degrees above the horizon. The star did not change color or have any apparent movement.

*The effects of an unsteady atmosphere can make a star appear to "jump around." The reader can check this by doing some night observing of his own.

I estimated the object to be between 3 and 4 miles²⁷⁷ east of Andrews Field at approximately 2000 feet."

Another visual was made by S/Sgt. Charles Davenport of the 1053rd Maintenance Squadron of Andrews:

"On the morning of the 20th of July at approximately 0200 I saw a strange light south of Andrews AFB traveling from east to west at a terrific rate of speed. The light was about 5 to 7 miles south and travelled from (not legible)...side of Andrews to approximately the Potomac River west in about 5-15 seconds. I watched this happen several times. At times it would appear to stand still then make an abrupt change of direction and altitude. I was unable to tell what it was so I called Andrews tower and asked if they had spotted or knew what it was. They finally saw it for a few seconds off runway 28 about that time it shot out of sight at terrific speed. It's color was an orange-red."²⁷⁸

Also at 2 o'clock Washington National detected radar targets near Bolling so S/Sgt. Richard La Cana, the Washington operations dispatcher, phoned both the Bolling Airdrome Officer and the Bolling Mobile Control Tower where in the latter S/Sgt. Don Wilson took the call and shortly thereafter scanned the sky. Here is what S/Sgt. saw: "...he saw an unidentified roundish object drifting low in the sky about seven miles southeast of Bolling AFB. He said it was about the intensity of a star and white-amber color. It was visible for a few minutes."²⁷⁹

Finally A 2/C Bill Goodman tells us:

"...about 0230 hours I was just finishing a tour of guard post in Section 'A' of the 1053rd Maintenance Squadron on Andrews AFB. At this time I noticed an object to the southwest of Andrews, it looked to be about the size of a golfball and it was a bright orange in color. The object moved from the west to the northeast in a half circle pattern and was travelling at such speed that I knew that it could not be a jet aircraft, my estimation of it from 1,000 to 2,000 mph. It would be hard to judge at what altitude the object was flying because it seemed to lose and gain altitude. The object moved in this pattern several times and then disappeared into the west. From the time I saw the object and then lost it, I would say it was about 15 to 20 minutes. But as far as saying anything that it was a flying saucer I would not because it looked to be more round in shape than flat."²⁸⁰

Other suspect activity in the region took place at 0200 EST. A Ground aircraft spotter assigned to the Harrisburg Filter Center, a Sgt. Francis Young, reported strange lighted objects

to the south. The object were viewed at intervals of 9 to 12 minutes. Some of the glowing things were in trail formation and at a very high altitude.²⁸¹

Further evidence that definite objects were in the dark sky reflecting radar waves was the occasion when one of the "things" hovered for a time near the Riverdale Radio beacon. All three radars in the area, National ARTC, National Tower, and Andrews AFB, got an identical fix on a target hovering above the beacon. The target remained in position for a good half minute giving all three radar installations time to double check range and azimuth. When the blip did disappear, it disappeared from all three radar scopes at the same time.²⁸²

Things seemed to have gotten quiet so Capt. Harold May of Andrews went outside to check on the two points of light he had studied an hour earlier, one he was fairly sure was a star, the other a "suspicious" illuminous dot. Staring at the same area of the sky, Captain May saw that both points of light had moved in relation to the normal rotation of the Earth. Captain May was now convinced both lights were stars.²⁸³

The jets arrive.

About 3:00 a.m. all the mystery blips vanished from Washington D.C. radar screens, for no particular reason it was assumed, yet it was an eerie coincidence that shortly thereafter radio messages came crackling over the loudspeakers at Washington Airport Tower announcing the approach of two jet interceptors that had been scrambled from an airbase in Delaware, summoned by Andrews AFB to defend the U.S. Capitol. As the fighters roared over Washington requesting instructions, Andrews' radar controllers were in a helpless state. Since there were no targets on their radar screens, the controllers could give no intercept vectors to the jet pilots, so the best that they could do was to have the planes cruise the night sky in circles until low fuel levels forced a return to base.

After searching the skies over the Capitol without sighting anything unusual, the jets flew back to Delaware.

With the heavens now clear of jets, the mystery blips returned to Washington radar screens, wandering about duplicating their previous antics.²⁸⁴

It stalked the plane.

A couple of hours after Capt. Pierman had tried an unsuccessful interception of one of the mystery targets, another airline pilot on his approach run to National Airport became a bit rattled when a "light" turned the tables by intercepting and then stalking his plane, following close behind as the pilot eased down to a landing. Ground radar at National, alerted to the existence of the UFO, checked its scope and confirmed the fact that a target was indeed following the airliner in a position eight o'clock to the rear. Four miles from touchdown the pilot reported

seeing the mystery light turn away, a fact confirmed by ground radar. The pilot was Capt. Howard Dermott at the controls of Flight 610. It was over Herndon, Virginia that the light took up a stalking position.²⁸⁵

This is how Barnes summed up the situation as of 3:00 a.m.:

"...we reached the point where we wondered just how much of this could go on and for how long before something could be done about it. I contacted Smoke Ring finally about 0300 est (3 a.m.). They were doing nothing about it so I asked if it was possible for something like this to happen, even though we gave them all this information, without anything being done about it. The man who was supposed to be in charge and to whom I had been talking, said he guessed so. Then another voice came on who identified himself as the Combat Officer and said that all the information was being forwarded to higher authority and would not discuss it any further. I insisted that I wanted it now if it was being forwarded tonight and he said yes, but would not give me any hint as to what was being done about all these things flying around Washington. He tried to assure me that something was being done about it. I asked, too, how he was getting his information. He said they would get it from Thorndyke and ADW. We were then told by ADW that they had no way of forwarding it to them. Smoke Ring then said they were not really concerned about it anyway, that somebody else was supposed to handle it.

"It would be extremely difficult to write this so that it is in a logical sequence due to the confusion that seems to have existed throughout the whole affair..."²⁸⁶

Before the night was over the Andrews Tower Log recorded:

"0330 Wash Center advised the targets seemed to move more frequently when there were aircraft moving. As daylight was approaching they seemed to move less frequently."²⁸⁷

Also at 3:30 a.m., S/Sgt. Davenport again viewed something he believed to be inexplicable:

"...(I) spotted what seemed to be a star north of the field which was in the general direction of Baltimore. It was about tree-top level from where I was watching. It was very bright but not the same color (of the light he had seen earlier which had been an orange-red). This was a bluish-silver. It was very erratic in motion as it moved up from side to side. It's motion was very fast. Three times I saw a red object leave the silver object at a high rate of speed and move east out of sight. At this time I had to

service a C-47 and lost sight of it for the night."288

"Dome-shaped."

A teletype message found in Air Force files contains a very interesting sentence and if there is more documentation on the incident it is not to be found in current open official records. It was in the material dated July 19-20, but there is no reference to time of day or night: It reads: "Washington Center monitoring Andrews' Flight Service heard them talking about an object moving across the field at an estimated 4,000 feet, described as dome-shaped, very high speed.(!)"289

"Like small kids out playing."

Between midnight and 4:00 o'clock the strange targets shifted all over the radar scopes, through every sector regardless of established air corridors. At first Barnes had this comment:

"The only recognizable behavior pattern which occurred to me from watching the objects was that they acted like a bunch of small kids out playing. It was helter skelter, as if directed by some innate curiosity. At times they moved as a group or cluster, at other times as individuals over widely scattered areas.

"I could safely declare that they could make right angle turns and completely reverse their flight."290

But then, after studying the blips for some time, Barnes believed that the blips were not moving at random. The apparent helter skelter had a purpose if matched with landmarks in the Washington D.C. region. Said Barnes:

"I'm positive they were guided by some intelligence. If no planes were in the air, the things would fly over the most likely points of interest--Andrews Field, the aircraft plant at Riverdale, the (Washington) Monument, or the Capitol. One or two circled our radio beacons. But as soon as an airliner took off, several would dart across and start to follow, as if to look it over."291

Barnes contacted Andrews at 5:05 a.m. and was told that the weary Officer in Command had "gone back to bed" and that there were no plans to forward any information to higher authorities until later. Someone at Andrews even called Barnes back to ask what they were to do with the reports on the strange targets!292

Even as late at 5:30 that morning, Controller Ritchey detected ten targets near Andrews. Barnes checked himself shortly thereafter and counted from seven to eight scattered over the scope so both Andrews and Military Flight Service were informed. MFS determined that Andrews had not followed proper forwarding procedures but to allay Barnes' concern, it promised to file its own report.293

As the sky grew ever brighter with the approaching dawn, commercial air traffic appeared on Washington radar with increasing frequency and made demands on the attention of the controllers to such an extent no time could be given over to the tracking of suspicious blips.

The morning editions carried nothing about the radar targets due to the simple fact that Barnes and his crew were still only in the initial stages of doing some deep wondering about the phenomenon, but slowly word leaked out that panicky confusion had reigned in the radar room of Washington National during the night. Since it was Sunday, knowledge of the incident spread leisurely. Mercifully a small grace period would be granted Ruppelt before the Washington case hit ATIC full force.

That same Sunday morning, a resident of Passaic, New Jersey, was sitting on his front porch listening to the radio when he saw something just above the horizon in the southwest in the direction of the "saucer satiated" region of the night before. The thing appeared to be a glowing orange ball that travelled in a jerky motion. The witness said: "It was rust-colored--like a wood flame. Through seeming to burn it left no vapor, was tailless, and made no sound. No flame issued from it."²⁹⁴ As for the motion: "The object changed its pace--sometimes suspended without motion, sometimes moving forward at great speed. Seemed very high."²⁹⁵

Had there been real flying bodies over Washington? Reports like that from Passaic indicated that there had been something more than "electronic ghosts" in the region, yet what would make the situation explosive would be identical manifestations that would follow within a week and that would make things so hot Ruppelt would have to answer to President Truman.

To be continued in:

UFOs: A HISTORY

JULY 21 - JULY 31, 1952

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241. Document by (No name given), Chief, Facility Operations Branch, 1-547, Chief, Washington Center -9. Subject: Unidentified targets, July 20, 1952. Air Force BLUE BOOK files.
242. Keyhoe, Donald. Flying Saucers From Outer Space. p.63.
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245. The vast majority of items in Air Force BLUE BOOK archives' microfilm are in chronological order, however the material on the Washington D.C. reports of July, 1952, is an exception. Major Fournet at his post in the Pentagon received an unprecedented amount which was kept in a separate file and was microfilmed in that fashion. The "Washington folder" contains mostly summaries of UFO reports telephoned directly to the Pentagon (AFOIN), also included are local newspaper clippings and some rough personal notes made by Fournet.
The formal footnote for this whole file would read: To: Chief, ATIC Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. From: Col. William Wilcox, Chief, Policy and Estimates, Directorate of Intelligence. (Uncl.) Material for Project BLUE BOOK, Dept. of the Air Force, HQ USAF - AFOIN - 2A2. 26 Incls: Rpts. of U/I Flying Objects originated by AFOIN - 2A2.
For the sake of brevity further references to this file will be given in the following manner: "Fournet's Washington file." Therefore, this footnote, #245, is as follows: (deleted) Air traffic controller, civil-

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274. (Mr. Darning?) Air traffic controller, civilian, Andrews AFB, Washington 25 D.C. 22 July 52. Air Force BLUE BOOK files. (See Fournet's Washington file).

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