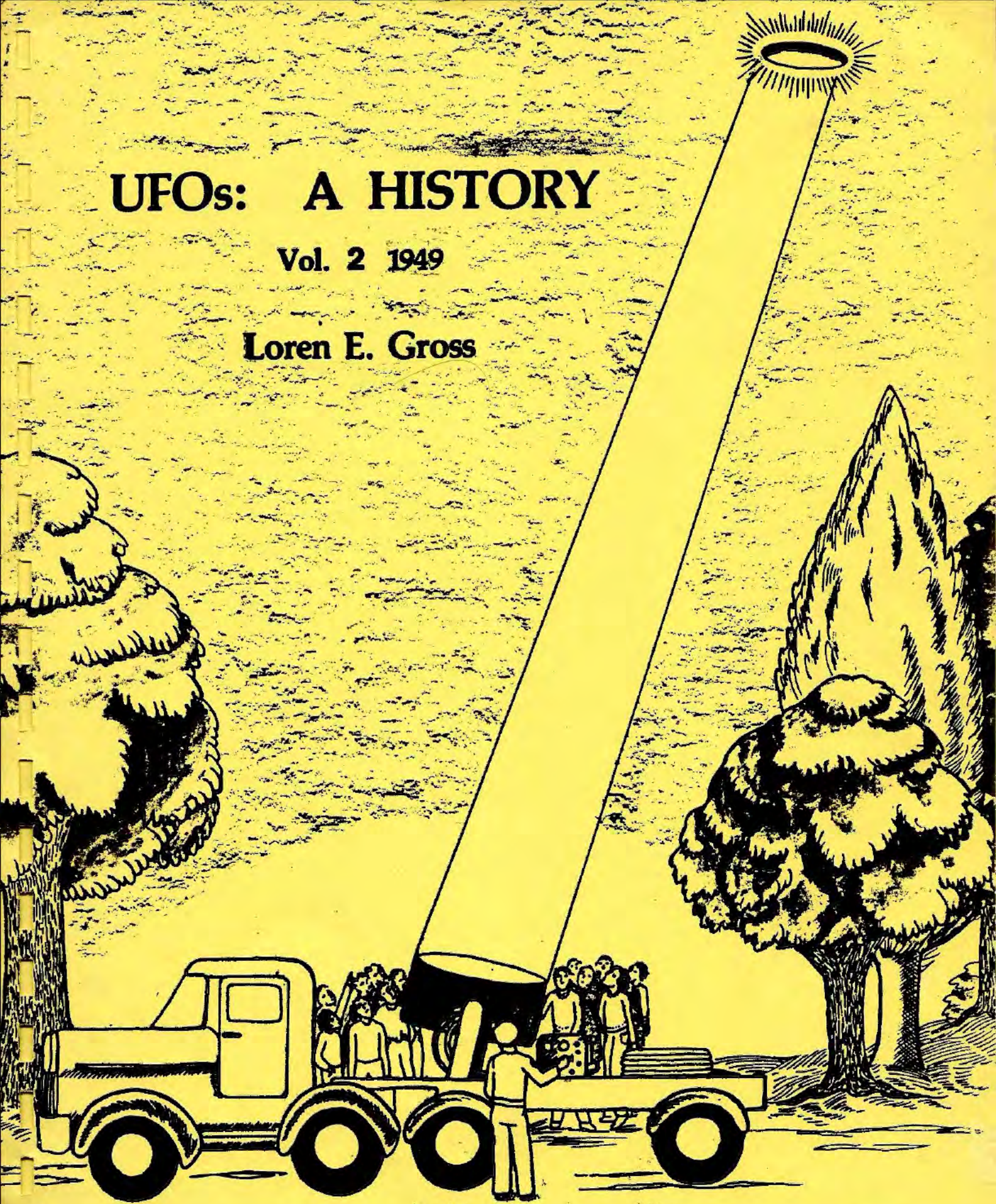


UFOs: A HISTORY

Vol. 2 1949

Loren E. Gross



UFOs: A HISTORY
VOLUME TWO
JANUARY - JUNE 1949

A minor catalogue of UFO reports and notations on various unofficial inquiries by individuals and privately funded organizations, as well as commentary on military investigations and governmental policies. Presented in chronological order.

By

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Charles Fort, The Fortean Society & UFOs

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Six articles in the ENCYCLOPEDIA OF UFOs, Edited by Ronald D. Story, Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1980:

- Airship Wave of 1896
- Charles Fort
- Fortean Society
- "Flying Saucer"
- War of the Worlds Broadcast

A research paper for a 1976 conference on UFOs organized by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Director of the Center for UFO Studies: "UFO Wave of 1947: California, June 25 - July 16, 1947."

UFOs: A HISTORY. JANUARY - JUNE 1949

The year 1949 was not even a day old before the Air Force's Project SIGN received word of yet another "flying tube" incident in the snowballing saucer story. The biggest UFO excitement of the previous year, it should be remembered, had been the fantastic Chiles-Whitted "rocket ship" report in the month of July that had given considerable impetus to the extraterrestrial theory to explain UFO reports, an idea fended off by the Air Force Chief of Staff because of its improbability and the lack of alien artifacts to lend credence to it.

The latest case took place in the same general region as its famous predecessor. Upon the receipt of a TWX sent in the name of the Commanding General, Wright Field Intelligence, displaying an interest, the Commanding Officer of Jackson Air Force Base, Mississippi, conducted an investigation which produced some interesting testimony from the pilot witness:

"...my wife and I were flying from Gulfport to North Jackson Airpark and were approaching the airport and our altitude was about 1,800 feet when I saw something go in front of us. I assumed that it was another plane since it was headed toward the Municipal Airport in Jackson and was on the eastern leg of the airways.

"I watched the object to try to recognize the type of plane. After it passed, it made a turn of about 50 degrees and headed southwest. The time was 17:00 as we had just made a comment on the time and I had checked our ground speed. As the object made its turn, it was then that I noticed the object didn't have wings. At that time, my wife saw the object and became excited. She is a private pilot and is familiar with plane identification from the air.

"The sun had not set and the weather was clear to the southwest as the object went away from us. When it crossed in front of us, I estimated the speed to be about 200 mph and about 500 feet in front of us. We tried to point out the object to the pilot, but he thought we were trying to show him something else.

"As the object turned and went to the southwest, with a sudden burst of speed, it was out of sight. In all, I saw the object 10 or 12 seconds."¹

Listed as case number 233 in Air Force files the official evaluation of the report went:

"There is nothing in this incident that can be said to have an astronomical origin.

"The object sighted is described as resembling a tow target, but no towing plane was seen. No one else reported seeing the object after this one sighting by several persons."²

The pilot did mention a "tow target" in his report but he did not feel that such an object was the explanation:

"At first, I thought the object was a large tow target about 60 feet long and about 10 feet in diameter at one end and about 4 feet at the trailing end. The tail even fluttered like a target but there was nothing towing it and it moved at a greater speed than tow targets I've seen before."³

Four days later a "classic" flying saucer sighting was forwarded to Wright Field from Hickam Field in Hawaii. The case was impressive enough to merit a careful review decades later by Dr. J. Allen Hynek. In compliance with military directives a report was filed. It read:

"In the words of Capt. --- (deleted) the object appeared to be a large round piece of flat white cardboard, oscillating continually. The object sighted was the only one seen and appeared to approximate the size of an AT-6. Capt. --- (deleted) stated that the object seemed to be extremely white on the underside, while the topside portion of the object seemed to have a dark, non-reflecting surface. The speed of the object was approximated at 85 miles per hour. Capt. --- (deleted) further stated that the object circled the area, making right circles and left circles at approximately 3,000 feet, continually gaining altitude and then suddenly departed, still climbing on a straight course of 25 degrees magnetic. It is the opinion of the witness that the object had limited maneuverability, and that no audible sound emanated from the object. There was no exhaust trail visible.

"The witness was much impressed by the brilliance of the whiteness of the underside of the object and stated that prior to the disappearance of the object at a distance of 40 to 50 miles from Hickam Field, the object still seemed to give off a blinking whitish reflection and, according to the witness, this blinking seemed to go on and off with decided regularity."⁴

Furthermore:

"Capt. --- (deleted) reported that, at all times and during the departure of the object, the undulation of the object was extremely rhythmical and that this rhythmical cycle was completed approximately once every second.

"When the object ultimately departed on a straight course, it appeared to increase speed and also to increase the angle of climb so that the angle of climb approximated 25 degrees. Witness stated that it was extremely difficult to approximate the rate of speed during departure due to the distance involved and the intermittency of the reflection. Witness stated that it was his opinion that this object was under absolute control at all times and that definite gyrations were being executed. The turns were extremely wide and decisive."⁵

The Air Material Command experts expressed the following opinion:

"The evidence does not lead to an explanation. It should be noted, however, that if the object were actually the size of a T-6 at 3,000 feet a greater amount of detail should have been observed."⁶

Moreover:

"There is clearly no astronomical explanation for this incident.

"The account given seems trustworthy, even though one person saw the circular disc. This report differs from many others in that the description of maneuvers executed by the object is definite, rather than hazy."⁷

During the "green flare/meteor" investigation late in 1948, the Forest Supervisor of the Santa Fe National Forest was approached and questioned about possible previous reports concerning unusual aerial phenomena. He shook his head when the year 1948 was discussed but brought up something about the summer of 1947. The Supervisor, a Mr. Flock, related a story that seemed to have leads to some useful information. He told of a Santa Fe woman that:

"had reported unusual aerial manifestations to him (during the summer of 1947) on numerous occasions. Mrs. --- (deleted), a writer, and her husband were prospecting throughout the State of New Mexico, and on at least five different occasions, during a period of five to six weeks, Mrs. --- (deleted) had visited him and reported having observed objects which she described as being 'cigar-shaped with a glowing tip' in the sky. No information was available as to the altitude, size, speed, or frequency of these objects. Mrs. --- (deleted) stated that she had personally observed these objects from Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico, to Los Alamos, New Mexico. Mrs. --- (deleted) is believed to have contacted the military security personnel at Los Alamos Atomic Energy Commission (LEAD) installation, and also to have contacted the Governor of New Mexico reference her observations.

It is not believed that Mrs. --- (deleted) is now residing at Santa Fe."⁸

A routine check of the files of G-2 Section, Fourth Army, revealed something unprecedented in regards to UFO witnesses. Instead of the usual negative results, the Santa Fe woman was found to be the subject of an extensive file. The essence of the file went: "--- (deleted) is known to correspond with Communist Front organizations and is considered dangerous."⁹

Subsequently the woman became well known to Air Force investigators, turning out to be more of a nuisance than a dangerous threat, although in the beginning she was regarded with considerable suspicion.

That the Pentagon was attentive to the "green flare" problem and relied on some sort of study of the strange events, is indicated by the following:

"Captain James C. Biddle, Executive Officer, Fourth Army CIC Detachment, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, interviewed 3 January 1949, stated in substance that the Fourth Army is in receipt of a letter from the Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, General Staff, Washington, D.C., advising them to expect reports of aerial phenomena during this period of the year and to report same to AMC, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base."¹⁰

For some reason, Project SIGN made a renewed effort to figure out an answer to the Lt. Gorman-UFO incident of October 1, 1948. A long letter to the Commanding General of the North Dakota Air National Guard sent by Colonel McCoy of Wright Field asked that all witnesses be interviewed again to clarify certain points that remained vague:

"As to the exact shape of the object seen. Did the object appear symmetrical and what was its shape as seen from various angles--in turns, from head-on, from the rear, from either side, above and below? Did the shape appear to vary while being viewed from any one aspect? Give details of shape as it appeared from all angles. Include three dimensional sketches by each witness.

"As to the size and range of the object as viewed from Gorman's plane and from the ground. Lt. Gorman states object appeared to be six to eight inches in diameter and that its closest proximity to his aircraft was apparently five hundred feet. There is great difficulty in estimating size and distance of an object when neither the normal size is known, and where there is no object of known size at equal range to the unknown object for comparison. Was the object estimated to be actually six to eight inches in diameter or was this area of space it occupied

on Lt. Gorman's windshield? Did the size of the object (in respect to area occupied on windshield) vary in proportion to apparent variance in range, or did it appear to the eye in constant dimensions? Was object only seen through the windshield, or was it seen also through the canopy, to the side and rear of the F-51?

"As to luminosity of the object, Lt. Gorman states there were no visible projections or unlighted sections to the object, and that he observed the object while it passed between him and the lights of Fargo. How intense was the light of the object, in comparison to city lights? Was the object lost to view for instantaneous periods while it eclipsed bright city lights?"¹¹

The only result publicly known of this inquiry was a statement made on January 24, 1949, which said: "... the Air Weather Service provided ATIC with an analysis which indicated that Gorman had been chasing a lighted balloon."¹²

One could easily disagree with the balloon explanation, but instead let's explore something else. Why the vigorous attempt to clarify the details on the object pursued by Gorman? Since there is no definite official reason, we are free to speculate. It could be that it was guessed the strange lights alarming New Mexico were the same thing Gorman had chased. What is known is that one of the top scientists studying the UFO mystery believed that reports of machines; i.e., flying saucer craft and rocket-like objects, were the results of hoaxes and illusions but that sightings of strange lights, or foo fighters as they were called in World War II, were the real mystery.

As if on cue, Wright Field received word of yet another "flare" over New Mexico. Air Force records tell us:

"... on 6 January 1949, while guarding an aircraft near the Ordnance Area, Kirtland Air Force Base, he (the witness) had observed a bright object traveling across the sky. The time was approximately 1730, and the sky was clear, providing a light blue background. The object was diamond shaped, about two feet long, bright white in color, and moving at a high rate of speed. Altitude was estimated at 1500 to 2000 feet, and distance traveled was estimated at 500 feet. There was no smoke or trail. Two other persons with --- (deleted) did not see the object."¹³

"Firmly of the opinion:"

Speaking on behalf of Air Force Headquarters in Washington, D.C., Lt. Col. Doyle Rees notified the C/O of Kirtland AFB on January 11th that:

"Investigations to date have not produced any positive information regarding the source or nature of the unidentified aerial phenomena, additional sightings of which continue to be reported. Dr. Lincoln La Paz, Director of the Institute of Meteoritics, University of New Mexico, is firmly of the opinion that the reported phenomena are not of meteoritic origin."¹⁴

Official evaluators remarked:

"If it were not for the fact that the incident appears to belong in the family of New Mexico 'green flashes,' the object could be considered to have been a slow meteor, even though the time of night of the sighting does not favor that hypothesis. It is much more probable, however, that this incident falls into the pattern of those dealt with in detail in the report on incident #223. See that report for further discussion."¹⁵

"Atomic Energy Missiles?"

Special Agent in Charge, the FBI, at the Knoxville, Tennessee, office, a Mr. C. C. McSwain, sent a dispatch to J. Edgar Hoover on January 10th with the heading: "Flying Saucers Observed Over Oak Ridge Area, Internal Security -X." McSwain discussed some reports of reputed UFO activity over the super-secret atomic installation that were made in July 1947. The data had been given to McSwain by a John Rathman, Chief Investigator, Security Division, Atomic Energy Commission; and a person identified only as a Mr. "E" who was Resident Engineer, AMC, U.S. Army. This Mr. "E" also did special work for the "Nuclear Energy for the Propulsion of Aircraft Research Center" at Oak Ridge. With renewed fears of Soviet aerial intrusions, which also meant renewed FBI interest in UFOs, Mr. "E" felt compelled to approach the Bureau with his opinions. Special Agent McSwain, after listening to Mr. "E" expound at some length, wrote down what he felt was important and submitted a report to Hoover. McSwain penned:

"Mr. 'E' predicated his remarks concerning 'flying saucers' or 'mystery missiles' by stating that he knew nothing of an official nature concerning them, other than the fact that they were believed by Air Force Intelligence officials to be man-made missiles, rather than some natural phenomenon. It was his further belief that a great deal of information had been compiled concerning these missiles by Air Force Intelligence, and that research on the matter was being done extensively at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio. He also expressed the opinion that information at the disposal of the United States Army Air Force Intelligence had, in all probability, been made available to the Bureau at Washington, D.C.

"Mr. 'E' then continued with his own ideas as to what might be the nature of these discs, which were ideas he had formulated through review of known facts and theoretical conjectures of himself and other scientists concerning the nature of flying discs and methods of propulsion for such type of aerial mechanism. According to him, flying discs have long been a theoretical possibility and, in fact, a possibility which would indicate one of the best means by which to break through the barriers of the supersonic area. Scientists have, for many years, been attempting to develop this kind of aircraft. Some experimentation has been done even in the United States, but insofar as is known in the United States at the present time, there have never been any practical developments. As a second factor of consideration, Mr. 'E' stated that insofar as is known to U.S. scientists at this time, there is no chemical fuel which would make possible tremendous range of flight such as is ascribed to the reported 'flying saucers.' There is only one possible fuel which could be utilized which is in accord with present theory, and that is the utilization of atomic energy. As further evidence of this possible means of propulsion, Mr. 'E' called attention to the vapor trail and gaseous corona described as a ball of fire, which he states might give some evidence to the fact that a radioactive field is present. He explained that the corona, or exhaust, has what appears to be layers of intensity which are circular rather than elongated and have no tendency to trail at the extremities, as would be the case if a normal type of exhaust from a combustion engine was being utilized in the propulsion of these aircraft. He continued that the vapor trail left by the missile appears to be one single line of uniform intensity which is extremely slow in dissipating. It was pointed out by him that in the case of a normal vapor trail being left by an aircraft moving at extremely high speeds or extremely high altitudes, the vapor trail usually will be from the wing tips and/or the exhaust of the engines, thus presenting several lines. But, in any event, even though only one line were visible, it would be rather quick to dissipate. This indicated to him that the vapor trail represents some atmospheric change along the path of the missile, which would not be the case were it any presently known type of aircraft.

"He continued that the information furnished by him should be treated with the utmost confidence, in that he was not speaking officially, but as a matter of personal cooperation. He stated that the matter was being given absolutely no dissemination by the Air Force or other military personnel, and that they had not deemed it advisable to advise him of all information pertaining to the missile. He continued,

however, that in his conversation with representatives at Wright Field and in reading reports returned to this country by foreign agents, he had gathered together certain information which might be of assistance in determining whether or not these so-called missiles were authentic, usable, and of danger to the United States. First, he pointed out that knowledge of such a possible aircraft is not by any means new, it having been known as early as four years ago that some type of flying disc was being experimented with by the Russians. In addition thereto, he stated that more recent reports have been received from representatives of the Central Intelligence Agency in Southern Europe and Southern Asia to the effect that the Russians were experimenting with some type of radical aircraft or guided missile which could be dispatched for great distances out over the sea, made to turn in flight and return to the base from which it was launched. This fact was extremely worthy of notice as experiments in this country have so far only developed to the point where we are concerned with delivering a missile to the required point of impact, and no consideration has been given to imparting to that missile the ability to return. Secondly, he stated that it is a known fact that the Russians are attempting to develop some type of nuclear energy, that they received a wealth of information concerning nuclear energy at the time of their occupation in Germany, and that they too have at their disposal the limited supply of the necessary fissionable materials. He stated that insofar as any opinion as to whether or not they have the ability and scientific knowledge to create such a nuclear powered missile is strictly a matter of conjecture, and that he would hesitate to make any definite statement. He pointed out, however, that the Russians have some very capable scientists in the field of atomic energy and that, in addition thereto, they took into their custody some of the most advanced and capable scientists of the German Nation.

"He also stated that a peculiar fact concerning missiles exists from reports he has received which is worthy of notice, and that is that from all appearances they have usually approached the United States from a northerly direction and have been reported as returning in a northerly direction. None have ever been known to crash, collide, or disintegrate over American soil, but it would appear that they come to the United States, cruise around, and go back over the North Pole. He states that insofar as is known to him, there has never been any piece of one recovered from any source whatever in order that analytical study of its nature could be made. Insofar as it was known to him, the only actual material

which would be of any value in determining its nature are telephoto photographs which are now in the possession of engineers at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio. How detailed and how clear these photographs are, he was unable to state. He stated that one report has been received concerning a collision of these missiles with another aircraft. This report, according to him, took place a short time prior to the report of numerous discs over the United States, and the report emanated from Czechoslovakia. This report was that a Czechoslovakian transport had collided with some unidentified missile while in mid-air over the ocean, and that said missile and said transport had been completely disintegrated without recovery of parts or survivors from either. It was the belief of Mr. 'E' that this undescribed missile was perhaps the same type of thing as the flying saucer. Another factor of notice, according to Mr. 'E' and as is portrayed by the photographs it would appear that the missiles can be maintained at a certain altitude above the contour of the ground. This could be done by means of some type of radio altimeter or radio control. Naturally, the path of the missile is not in exact parallel to the contour, as its purported great speed would create considerable lag in its flight. Another factor worthy of note, according to Mr. 'E' is that it is normally reported as being seen at tremendously high altitudes and always traveling in a straight line. He stated that he himself observed, on one occasion, a single vapor trail coming from some type of aircraft at unbelievably high altitude, which vapor trail extended from horizon to horizon in a perfectly straight line. He observed the vapor trail while it was in the process of formation and states that it was completely unlike any vapor trail he had ever observed before in all his experience with the Air Force. It was his judgment that whatever created the vapor trail was traveling at an unbelievably tremendous speed. This, together with reports that when close to the ground, the missile travels at speeds which make possible visual observation of its actions, would reflect that there is some ability to control the speed of these missile as well as the altitude.

"Mr 'E' concluded that this matter, while still purely a matter of great concern to the military establishment of this country. Great efforts have been expended by the service to determine just what the nature of these missile might be and, upon so determining, decide whether or not an adequate defense can be established. He also stated that it has given impetus to the

research being done by the Air Force in their own program of nuclear energy for the propulsion of aircraft to develop guided missiles. He also advised that insofar as was known to him, there absolutely was no connection between these missiles and the fact that they were observed close to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He stated that this was perhaps, and probably, a matter of coincidence and they were seen in this area merely as they were seen in forty-six of the forty-eight states of the United States during the month of July when so many reports were being received."¹⁶

Special Agent McSwain added:

"This information is being submitted to the Bureau for whatever value it may be, and no further action in the matter is being contemplated by this office, unless advised to the contrary."¹⁷

Although Mr. "E" was denied access to all available UFO evidence, his view of things no doubt was a fairly accurate picture of what Air Force Intelligence knew and believed.

D. M. Ladd, an important official with the FBI, perused with care the document detailing the thoughts of Mr. "E" and summarized the contents for J. Edgar Hoover's inspection. On January 24th Ladd's summary with various sentences underlined by hand, came back from Hoover's desk.¹⁸ Apparently the Chief was becoming amendable to renewed Bureau involvement.

The "bouncing" meteor:

The arrival of a letter from a former pilot of the Transport Command on January 4th at the University of New Mexico office of Dr. Lincoln La Paz initiated some discussion about unusual meteors. It seems that the pilot had observed a strange meteor back in January 1946, while flying over France. Sitting in his cockpit he glanced at the horizon and happened to see a meteor streak by. To his astonishment the meteor passed over the horizon and then reappeared because, as best as he could tell, it described a tiny hyperbola of perhaps one degree altitude and then fell again from sight.¹⁹

Dr. La Paz consulted with Dr. H. E. Landsberg about the "meteor that ricocheted." Landsberg did not buy the idea the meteor in question "bounced." He favored instead the idea the meteor had merely been following a "wave-like path," nonetheless he urged:

"in view of the fact that --- (deleted) important observation came to attention only by accident, it seems to me that immediate steps should be taken to interrogate all former and present ATC pilots (especially all pilots now flying in Germany or

elsewhere in Europe) in order to determine whether additional observations similar to that made by --- (deleted) have been made. Would it not be possible to require all pilots and co-pilots to report in detail on any fire-balls they may observe which they have any reason to believe are definitely or possibly non-meteoritic?"²⁰

The UFO story up to 1949 was certainly strange to say the least, and as the years passed things would get downright eerie at times. While the more sensational interpretations of the "eerie" events are of course open to rigorous challenge, there can be little debate about the effect "eerie" events had on various people, be they scientist or layman. And, one has to also admit, even after a close scrutiny of the evidence there often was no way to reduce to zero the chance of a startling interpretation of being true. (This writer will let others explore such ideas however.)

The hoodoo in the Bermuda skies:

On January 29, 1948, a British Tudor airliner "Star Tiger" with 40 passengers and crew vanished off Bermuda. What made the vanishment even more unusual was the fate of its sister ship almost exactly a year later.

On January 18, 1949, a British Tudor airliner, the "Star Ariel" with 13 passengers and a crew of seven, vanished without a trace 200 miles off Bermuda. A B-29 was dispatched on a special search mission on January 24th. At midnight while cruising at 15,000 feet altitude and at a position of 29 degrees 30 minutes north, 67 degrees 29 minutes west, and on a course of 050 degrees, the pilot of the B-29 perceived a red glow off the left wing. At first the Aircraft Commander, Captain Mattatall, thought that the Moon was peeking over the horizon, but after several minutes he was convinced the glow must be something other than the Moon, perhaps even a ship on fire. Intrigued, Captain Mattatall banked in the direction of the red light mass until he brought his plane around to a course heading straight at the crimson patch on the ocean. The pilot later told his superiors:

"On approaching the red light it was observed as a dark red glow, 1 to 1½ miles wide, based on the water, resembling burning oil with a phosphorescent red light rising to 2,500 to 3,000 feet altitude. Also from heading of 350 degrees and 180 degrees two columns of white light, ¼ to ½ miles apart, resembling searchlight beams and extending upward through approximately ¾ of the red light mass. The beams were at a slight angle toward each other. Captain Mattatall estimates that if the white light beams had extended above the red light mass to an altitude of 10,000 feet, they would have intersected. It was also observed that the red light mass gave off enough light

to illuminate the surface of the water and the bases of surrounding clouds with a dull red glow."²¹

The manifestation caused a stir within Air Force Intelligence. The Cambridge Electronic Field Station was called in by the Air Force's Engineering Division, and even more important, some other people and organizations were mentioned as possible sources of consultation.²²

The "Von Karman Advisory Group and H. P. Robertson:"

Besides Cambridge, Air Force records state that it was suggested:

"... that the data available be handcarried to Dr. Hynek of the Ohio State Research Foundation. In the event that no opinion can be obtained from that organization, the incident should be coordinated with Dr. H. P. Robertson of the Norman Bridge Laboratory of Physics, California Institute of Technology. Dr. Robertson is chairman of the Committee on Technical Intelligence of the Von Karman Advisory Group. Another possibility would be Dr. George Valley of M.I.T.²³ (Dr. Valley was a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Chief of Staff, U.S.A.F.)."

Also:

"Log of the Meteorological station at Hamilton, Bermuda, could not be obtained without causing undue comment. It was, however, viewed by Major Savage, Station Weather Officer..."²⁴

At first the experts felt there was a close relationship between the red light mass and aurora glows and it was requested that: "Captain Mattatall and his crew be interviewed to determine whether the appearance of the nearness of the light mass could have been illusory caused, possibly, by a combination of cloud and water reflection and the intensity of the aurora."²⁵

Interviews with the officers and airmen of the B-29 aircrew revealed:

"All crew members who observed this phenomenon stated that it was no illusory and did not seem to be a reflection. It seems hardly feasible that it was an illusory condition caused by the Northern Lights as there was no visible display of them at that time."²⁶

"No valid explanation, either natural or man made."

The Cambridge Electronics Station had some extensive comments for Air Force Intelligence:

"In reference to the phenomenon reported in subject letter, no glow of the size described has ever been reported previously to the knowledge of the scientific personnel of this Directorate at such low altitude. Due to the auroral activity in the area at the time it is natural to assume that the phenomenon is in some way related to the aurora, however the fact that this has been observed on the surface of the water rather than high in the atmosphere is difficult to explain. The orange color seems to indicate an excited state of oxygen, however, with the small mean free path which exists at the earth's surface, a terrific electrostatic field would be required which is not likely. If such a field existed due to some freak condition, static charges should have been noted by the B-29 personnel when approaching the glow. This would have produced corona from propeller tips and wing tips which should have interfered with radio communication.

"At the present time no nuclear reaction is known to the personnel of this Directorate which would produce ionizing particles of sufficient energy to excite the oxygen line in such a manner. The highest decay energy known is that resulting from nuclear fission of U-235 and Pu-239 which is in the neighborhood of 200 MEV. It is estimated that several thousand MEV should be required to produce this effect, and to date this has only been observed in cosmic rays which are not sufficiently dense enough nor localized enough to produce the effect. Even a controlled rate of fission would liberate heat which should have been readily detectable by the crew of the B-29 through heat radiation effects.

"The two white 'searchlights' beams seem to indicate higher excitation states of oxygen, nitrogen, and other atmospheric elements which are apparently in the zones of maximum potential gradient. It would be natural to assume that there is a possibility of the effect being man made, however, again the voltage required to produce a discharge between two antenna masts of a surface craft should cause breakdown of the air rather than a glow discharge at atmospheric pressure. There is a possibility of exciting the gyro-magnetic frequency of electrons in the earth's magnetic field which should not be overlooked. By establishing a strong electromagnetic field at approximately 1.5 mega cycles, and using the earth's magnetic field in much the same manner as a cyclotron magnet, it is theoretically possible to establish electron orbits in the atmosphere which would accelerate the electrons to the point where ionization of the air (and consequently glow) would take place. This has been proposed as a means of exciting the upper atmosphere on high altitude rocket flights in order to obtain atmospheric composition by spectrographic

plates. The possibility of doing this at sea level pressure has not been considered to be possible, however, due to the short mean free path of the electrons at low altitude.

"The fact that various atmospheric gases have absorption bands in the microwave region is also well known, but no known cases have been reported of exciting such molecules to the point of ionization at sea level pressures. Hydrogen in water has been resonated at relatively low frequencies due to their magnetic moment, however, a magnetic field of several thousand gauss is required for resonance.

"In conclusion, no valid explanation, either natural or man made, can be found for a logical explanation of this phenomenon. A copy of the sketch and descriptive material will be placed on file in this Directorate in the hope that some valid explanation of further observations may be found."²⁷

A number of government experts assisting the Air Force at this time seemed to be very interested in geomagnetic phenomena as it affects atmospheric physics.* They may have been on to something, but just what is not clear in Air Force records. While there may be no significance to the Atlantic manifestation, the phenomenon did help to bring out the forementioned official interest.

Perhaps of great importance is the mention of Dr. H. P. Robertson and Dr. George Valley in the case records, which gives some clues to what their relationship was to the Air Force's UFO investigation. Dr. Robertson, it appears, was not a disinterested scientist picked at random in January 1953 to chair an important UFO review panel. Evidently he had been advising the Air Force on the UFO problem for years.

Anyway, a Dr. R. Penndorf of the Atmospheric Physics Laboratory, Base Directorate for Geophysical Research, expanded a bit on the suspicion that the manifestation seen by the B-29 aircrew was somehow connected with aurora glows witnessed in the Bermuda region (which were the same colors: red-orange and white) by calling attention to the fact that sunspot activity of the bipolar type had been prominent January 16 - 20 on the solar disk, and that a severe geomagnetic storm commenced abruptly on January 24th, building up to a climax the night of the 25th.²⁸

*Claude Poher, a scientist that was a member of a UFO study group established by the French government in May 1977, believes there may be a statistical correlation between the vertical component of the geomagnetic field and UFO events in France. He used data from France's Chambon-la-Forêt Geophysical Station. Similarly, a J. Accetta suggests that perturbations of solar winds and the ionosphere may correlate with UFO activity.

Shades of Chiles-Whitted!

On January 27th at a location between Cortez and Braderton, Florida, something akin to the famous Chiles-Whitted "sky monster" of July 1948 was spotted by an Air Force officer and his wife. The officer had an engineering background and had been assigned to the Air Material Command, Intelligence Department, Air Documents, from December 1945 to September 1948.

For a half hour the night of January 27th, the forementioned witnesses watched something strange moving about in the sky to the northwest about eight miles away. It was nearly midnight but the heavens were clear and the shape vaguely discernible, it resembling a "cucumber" in shape and having a "double row of lights" which had the appearance of a "row of lighted windows but brighter." The object apparently was also rocket propelled, because as it diminished in size as it receded into the distance, it looked like a ball of fire "with sparks flying from it." This exhaust looked like: "sparks from a burning log but appearing in a rhythmic pattern."²⁹

The Air Force's narrative summary said the pale red thing became: "... exceptionally bright at split-second intervals... (and that)... during the second sighting the sparks appeared more pronounced and were apparently pulsating at approximately one quarter second intervals. Sparks appeared to be in an irregular pattern after turning to the final course of approximately 270 degrees but were in mainly an inverted 'V' with sides at a 30 degree angle."³⁰ Also: "Bouncing appeared to start after turn to final 270 degree course. Object climbed erratically in 'bounces of approximately 2,000 feet' with occasional rapid losses of altitude of approximately 4,000 feet..."³¹ This fantastic dance, not a rare occurrence in UFO reports, resulted: "... in an overall climb till lost to view at an altitude of the order of 40,000 feet."³²

More emerald enigmas:

A massive effort was launched immediately after January 30th to ascertain the identity of a "green meteor" spotted that day. Unlike the "green meteor" reports of the fall and winter of 1948, however, there was a great number of witnesses of which over a hundred were personally questioned by Dr. Lincoln La Paz and/or military agents. The latest "green meteor" came out of the northwest and disappeared in the sky to the southwest of Roswell, New Mexico. A priority teletype report flashed to Wright-Patterson from Kirtland Air Force Base via Washington, D.C., right after the aerial object's passage, stated that its personnel would investigate the possible impact point, if any. Kirtland felt compelled and added to its message to Wright Field: "...local commanders perturbed by implications of phenomena."³³

Dr. La Paz's comments on the phenomena after many inquiries went:

"In this report the descriptions of the object agree with those given for previous sightings, except that as the ground track of the object is approached, the color shifts from green to red or orange."³⁴

The January 30th case was Dr. La Paz's last field investigation, for he added a paragraph to his report on the incident that said:

"With the present report, the writer's participation in the OSI's investigation of the puzzling fireball question must, to his regret, terminate. During the time I was on leave of absence from the University of New Mexico, I was glad to donate my time and services to this investigation. Now that I am again serving as Head of the Department of Mathematics with a full-time teaching load, it is impossible for me to continue co-operating with the OSI."³⁵

Dr. La Paz's departure was not total; occasionally he sat in on meetings to discuss the latest developments in the meteor mystery.

With so many UFO sightings near highly sensitive scientific/military installations, the idea that spying was going on was not so far fetched. This meant the FBI was again thinking of entering the picture.

Renewed FBI interest called for an update on the status of the Air Force's UFO investigation. After making a number of inquiries, a FBI official authored a review of the UFO problem for the top men in the Bureau.

"Protection of Vital Installations."

J. Edgar Hoover's FBI produced a document dated January 31st, titled: "Protection of Vital Installations." Designated Bureau file #65-58300, the document dealt with an overview of the UFO problem as it related to installations engaged in secret work for the Pentagon. Prepared by an official in the FBI, the document says some interesting things. One is the definite mention of the UFO mystery being a "top secret" matter, an assertion underlined by the document's author. The document read:

"At recent Weekly Intelligence Conferences of G-2, ONI, OSI, and F.B.I., in the Fourth Army Area, Officers of G-2, Fourth Army have discussed the matter of 'Unidentified Aerial Phenomena' otherwise known as 'Flying Discs,' 'Flying Saucers' and 'Balls of Fire.' This matter is considered top secret by Intelligence Officers of both the Army and the Air Force.

"It is well known that there have been during the past two years reports from the various parts of the country of the sighting of unidentified aerial objects which have been called in newspaper parlance 'flying discs' and 'flying saucers.' The first such were reported from Sweden, and it was thought that the objects, the nature of which was unknown, might have originated in Russia.

"In July 1948 an unidentified aircraft was 'seen' by an Eastern Airlines Pilot and Co-pilot and one or more passengers of the Eastern Airlines plane over Montgomery, Alabama. This aircraft was reported to be of unconventional type without wings and resembled generally a 'rocket ship' of the type depicted in comic strips. It was reported to have had windows; to have been larger than the Eastern Airlines plane; and to have been traveling at an estimated speed of 2,700 miles per hour. It appeared out of a thunder-head ahead of the Eastern Airlines plane and immediately disappeared in another cloud narrowly missing a collision with the Eastern Airlines plane. No sound or air disturbance was noted in connection with this appearance.

"During the past two months various sightings of unexplained phenomena have been reported in the vicinity of the A.E.C. installation at Los Alamos, New Mexico, where these phenomena now appear to be concentrated. During December 1948, on the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 20th and 28th, sightings of unexplained phenomena were made near Los Alamos by Special Agents of the Office of Special Investigation; Airline Pilots; Military Pilots; Los Alamos Security Inspectors; and private citizens. On January 6, 1949, another similar object was sighted in the same area.

"Dr. Lincoln La Paz, a Meteorologist of some note, has been generally in charge of the observations near Los Alamos, attempting to learn characteristics of the unexplained phenomena. Up to this time little concrete information has been obtained. There have been day time sightings which are tentatively considered to possibly resemble the exhaust of some type of jet propelled object. Night-time sightings have taken the form of lights usually described as brilliant green, similar to a green traffic signal or green neon light. Some reports indicated that the light began and ended with a red or orange flash. Other reports have given the color as red, white, blue-white, and yellowish green. Trailing lights sometimes observed are said to be red. The spectrum analysis of one light indicates that it may be a copper compound of the type known to be used in rocket experiments and which completely disintegrate upon explosion, leaving no debris.

It is noted that no debris has ever been known to be located anywhere resulting from the unexplained phenomena.

"Recent observations have indicated that the unidentified phenomena travel at a rate of speed estimated at a minimum of three miles per second and a maximum of twelve miles per second, or a mean calculated speed of seven and one-half miles a second, or 27,000 miles an hour. Their reported course indicates that they travel on an East-West line with probability that they approach from the Northern quadrant, which would be the last stage of the great circle route if they originated in Russia. When observed they seem to be in level flight at a height of six to ten miles and thus traveling on a tangent to the earth's surface. They occasionally dip at the end of the path and on two occasions a definite vertical change in path was indicated. These phenomena have not been known to have been sighted, however, at any intermediate point between Russia and Los Alamos, but only at the end of the flight toward the apparent 'target,' namely, Los Alamos.

"In every case but one, the shape of the objects has been reported as round in a point of light with a definite area to the light's source. One report gives a diamond shape; another indicated that trailing lights are elongated. The size is usually compared to one-fourth the diameter of the full moon, and they have also been compared in size to a basketball, with trailing lights the size of a baseball. On no occasion has sound been associated directly with the phenomena, but unexplained sounds have been reported from Los Alamos. On two occasions reports have been received of the sighting of multiple units. Some nine scientific reasons are stated to exist which indicated that the phenomena observed are not due to meteorites. The only conclusions reached thus far are that they are either hitherto unobserved natural phenomena or that they are man made. No scientific experiments are known to exist in this country which could give rise to such phenomena."³⁶

David Z. Beckler, Chief, Technical Intelligence Branch, composed a memorandum to Project SIGN investigators regarding the reported passage of some unusual meteors over Tennessee the year before:

"It is requested that all pertinent details of the so-called Memphis incident, of May 7, 1948, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., be furnished the Research and Development Board for use by the RDB Committee on Geophysical Geographical Sciences."³⁷

From "SIGN" to "GRUDGE."

Nine days later a code name change of Wright Field's UFO investigation was made. Project "SIGN" became Project "GRUDGE." There were other changes too, changes not officially documented. February 11th marked the day when a "new view" became prevalent at Wright Field headquarters. The "new view" was that people were just "seeing things," thus efforts were to be directed toward dealing with a "psychological phenomenon."

UFO expert Edward Ruppelt asserts that many of those working for Project SIGN were not transferred to project GRUDGE, a project that was just supposed to do recording and evaluating and in general keep things down to a "minimum level." Most of the personnel transferred, he made clear, were those that had become committed to one theory or another to explain UFO's. Such people were "purged" and replaced by more "objective" Intelligence Officers. Others left in due course because of the normal rotation of their tour of duty. And some, the civilian experts, like Dr. La Paz, quit of their own accord. With so many fresh faces at Wright Field it wasn't that hard to handle UFO reports in the following way: "Everything (Ruppelt claims) was evaluated on the premise that UFO's couldn't exist. No matter what you see or hear, don't believe it."³⁸

A shuffle of personnel was still not enough. A document reflecting the "results" of Project SIGN was needed, not only for the record, but as Wright Field expressed it, for those: "...higher echelons, and others who are required to assess the possibility of a threat to national security presented by the sighting of such large number of unidentified flying objects."³⁹

Such a document was prepared, from which the foregoing quotation was lifted. It was designated "Unidentified Aerial Objects Project SIGN," Technical Report No. F-TF-2274-1A, and was drawn up by L. H. Truettner and A. B. Deyarmond of the Air Material Command, USAF.⁴⁰

Classified "Secret" like all Project SIGN files, the document was not completely declassified until 1967 but some portions were made public right away, something we will deal with later. Significantly, this document admits on the very first page that Project SIGN collected little data and never obtained "...sufficient information to permit definite, specific conclusions to be made."⁴¹ It stated plainly that there was no "final" project SIGN report.⁴² There was also no mention of the controversial "estimate of the situation" of August 5, 1948.

This lack of anything "final" was offset a bit, however, by an appendix. Before going into that, the reader may recall that a preliminary Air Force inquiry into UFO reports during the summer of 1947 produced a document filed on September 23rd of that year. The document went into some detail as to the apparent characteristics of the unexplained flying objects being reported.

With that in mind we turn to the "appendix C" of the project SIGN Technical Report. Taking into account information gathered by project SIGN since its inception, George E. Valley of MIT, the same gentleman mentioned in regards to the manifestation in the Atlantic, offered a summation of data on file. The summation was given as "appendix C" in the Technical Report. A comparison with the September 23, 1947 document is of interest.

A simplified breakdown of reported UFO characteristics as given in the 1947 inquiry results compared to the 1949 project SIGN Technical Report appendix:

1947	1949
Results of Preliminary studies by Air Force Intelligence and Various Engineering Divisions. Submitted September 23, 1947.	Summary of Project <u>Sign</u> by G. E. Valley, member of the Scientific Advisory Board, Office of the Chief of Staff, United States Air Force.
UFO Characteristics:	UFO Characteristics:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Often fly in formation 2. Disc-shaped, flat bottom, domed topped 3. Silent 4. Size of a normal aircraft 5. Metallic appearance 6. High rate of climb 7. High speed 8. Highly maneuverable, possibly remotely or manually controlled 9. React to normal aircraft with evasive action (10.) (No mention of "ghost rocket" type UFO) (11.) (The question of hostility was not considered) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Often sighted in groups, formations 2. Asymmetrical, like a turtle shell 3. Silent 4. Various Sizes 5. Metallic appearance 6. High acceleration 7. High velocity (8.) (No comment on maneuverability) (9.) (No comment on reaction to normal aircraft) 10. Rocket-like UFO's 11. Officially no damage attributed to UFO's⁴³

Although there is considerable agreement between the summation of project SIGN and that of the 1947 preliminary inquiry, there are, nevertheless, a few interesting differences.

Valley recognized that there existed reports of "rocket-like" UFO's, but he made no mention of two things given in the 1947 paper. By September 1947 it was recognized that UFO's being reported seemed "highly maneuverable," therefore possibly "remotely or manually controlled," and that UFO's "reacted to normal aircraft with evasive action." The Gorman case would have fit in well here, but as we have seen, it was quickly "explained" just before the end of project SIGN. And while the

Valley summation acknowledged that rocket-like UFO reports existed, it made no comment about this spectacular "space-ship" type of object.

The rest of the 1949 document is limited in scope. Under the heading "possible explanations," Valley discussed how certain geometrical calculations might be utilized, such as the reported fluttering of some flying discs which might provide a clue to the object's actual dimensions. Much ado was also made of possible UFO propulsion systems, an emphasis that was not surprising since it was more in line with Valley's academic training, plus the fact that there existed a solid clue to work with, i.e., a 1947 UFO report of a compass twitching while flying discs carvorted overhead. Over the years, Valley would not be the only one to become enamored of the possibility that UFO's made use of the earth's magnetic field. Perhaps this is why there were so many geomagnetic experts associated with the Air Force's UFO study.

Dealt with very briefly are other possible explanations for the UFO's such as: natural terrestrial phenomena, hallucinations, secret devices of either foreign or domestic origin, and even the weird idea that UFO's may be unknown "atmospheric animals!" The most exciting idea he saved for last, that of possible alien visitors, and it turned out that Valley echoed in a condensed form essentially the same views contained in the earlier RAND evaluation; nonetheless he did not end his comments endorsing any particular hypothesis. To his credit he recommended that the Air Force continue to collect data and to make its investigations better by obtaining experts in optics, by conducting studies in mass-psychology, and by being more precise in its interrogations of witnesses.

The February 11th "new view" of Project GRUDGE apparently was felt right away by the FBI. The Bureau learned on February 14th the following: "...higher military authorities advised that it was believed that ultimately it would be found that the phenomena in question has a natural explanation."⁴⁴

Within 48 hours one of the better green fireball reports came in! The official narrative summary of this case read:

"Dr. ---- (deleted) was interviewed on 16 February 1949. ---- (deleted) said that at about 1840 on 14 February 1949, as he and his wife were returning from Gallup (New Mexico), they crossed the long bridge about two miles due east of Ganado. As they came up the hill west of the bridge, where the road heads south, a brilliant white light was observed in the sky directly in front of the car, and somewhat above the horizon. The object appeared to hang stationary, then fell in a slight curve to the west. Mrs. ---- (deleted) said that the object

was slightly greenish color. Both agreed that the object had an orange tinge as it fell, and that sparks appeared to trail off the object, both while stationary and as it fell. Dr. ---- (deleted) said that his first reaction was that it was an airplane on fire, and that he had so reported to the Arizona State Police."⁴⁵

Now that Dr. La Paz had left the green fireball investigation, it left a gap. A teletype message was flashed by New Mexico authorities to Wright Field reflecting that fact while requesting aid:

"Local sensitive installations concerned. Scientific personnel and equipment unavailable this office. Dr. La Paz only consultant engaged full time academically University New Mexico. Request assistance and/or advice. Please reply."⁴⁶

There was no reply!⁴⁷ Kirtland OSI then tried sending data direct to the Pentagon, but Wright Field finally sent a message reminding the boys at Kirtland Field that Project GRUDGE had sole responsibility for the UFO problem. Kirtland authorities got around that by sending reports both to Wright Field and Washington.

"The Requirements Memorandum:"

The office of Major General C. P. Cabell, USAF, Director of Intelligence, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, issued something entitled an "Air Intelligence Requirements Memorandum Number 4" on February 15th. The form was to improve reporting procedures. As for the actual sighting details, the observer was to fill out an "Air Force Form 112." The memorandum was the responsibility of the interviewing agent and urged him to seek answers that might prove to be clues to the type of propulsion of the UFO, the performance, origin, etc. Also, data of the witnesses' background was to be obtained. The memorandum was widely circulated with copies reaching: "...Commanding Generals of the Major Air Commands throughout the world, all U.S. Air Attaches, the Director of the CIA, Special Assistant for Research and Intelligence of the Department of State, Director of GSUSA, the Chief of Naval Intelligence, the Commander of the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Director of the FBI."⁴⁸

Perhaps the key element to this memorandum was the weight given to the term: "Unconventional Aircraft" which helped prompt attention when the document was read by other commands.

About this time the FBI received the latest about the status of the UFO investigation: "G-2, 4th Army, has now advised that the above matter (green fireballs) is now termed 'Unconventional

Aircraft' and investigations concerning such matters have been given the name 'Project GRUDGE.'"⁴⁹

"Conference on aerial phenomena:"

A conference on the green fireball problem was held at Los Alamos on February 16th. In attendance were representatives from the Fourth Army, Armed Forces Special Weapons Project; the University of New Mexico; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; University of California; U.S. Air Force Scientific Advisory Board; Geophysical Research Division, Air Material Command, USAF; and the Office of Special Investigations (IG), USAF. Of these representatives, three names were well known. There was Dr. Lincoln La Paz of the University of New Mexico; Dr. Edward Teller, a scientist who would later become known as the "father of the H-bomb" for his significant contribution to the development of that ghastly weapon; and Dr. Joseph Kaplan, a world renowned authority on the physics of the upper atmosphere.

The conference was convened 1:00 p.m. in conference room P-162 at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, Los Alamos.*

Present at the conference were the following people:

4th Army	:	Major Winn Major Godsoe Captain Neef
AFSWF	:	Commander Mandelkorn
University of New Mexico:		Dr. La Paz
FBI	:	Mr. Maxwell
USAEC, SFCC	:	Mr. Morgan Mr. Newburger
University of California:		Dr. Bradbury Dr. Holloway Dr. Hoyt Dr. Manley Dr. Reines Dr. Teller

The first remarks concerned security:

"Mr. Newburger opened the conference and stated that the subject of Aerial Phenomena was classified

*A sound recording of the proceedings was made for the official record. A 24-page transcript of the conference, quoted in this booklet, is not a perfect document since the government typist could not make out every word.

Secret within the meaning of AF 380-5 and comparable appropriate regulations of the Navy and Air Force, and that all personnel at this meeting were properly cleared. Mr. Newburger then introduced Captain Neef who briefly outlined the purpose of this meeting.

"Captain Neef: It all started back in December 1948, when we first received some reports from some airline pilots that these green fireballs were sighted. At this stage we had no idea what to do with it or what it was. We approached Dr. La Paz who has been assisting us, gratis, since that date. Almost over two months now that he has been assisting us, so in order to have you get the facts as they are to a scientist, I'll let Dr. La Paz explain these things as we have found them. Then you can give us your opinion from there; that is what we are interested in.

"Dr. La Paz: I would like to review what is observed in the case of a conventional meteorite fall. Not that I have any hope of saying anything you don't already know, but because I regard the observational evidence observed by the conventional meteorite falls as providing the necessary background for what is now observed. Meteorite falls (for next minute or two, Dr. La Paz' comments on record drowned out by noise from ditch digger immediately outside conference room) ... Because of sound phenomena primarily, the fall of a large meteorite will cause fright among human beings necessarily but primarily among animals, of all kinds. The fact follows, by a meteorite falling into the earth, is as you would expect, one at random--in azimuth and elevation. If the radiant white (?) is known, you can predict the minimum angle with respect to the plane of the horizon at which the meteorite path has been observed. There is no choice, as far as the for direction when meteorites fall in at random. I'd like to contrast now, at this time, this fact with what has been observed by some individuals here at the conference and by many of the AESS inspectors, UAL pilots, special agents, goodness knows how many other categories of people. I choose to describe the only one of the incidents that I was personally a witness to. It is the only one of the incidents that I am in a position to vouch for on the basis of experience, dating from 1915, as a member of the American Meteor Society, was most certainly not a conventional meteorite fall. It was the so-called Starvation Peak incident on the night of December 12, 1948. Time of observation was around 9:02 p.m., plus or minus 30 seconds. This fireball appeared in full intensity instantly--there was no increase in light.

Its color, estimated to be somewhere around wave length 5200 angstroms, was a blue green, or yellow green, such as I had never observed in meteor falls before. The path was as nearly horizontal as one could determine by visual observation. We have a photograph which might be some liters (?) of departure from horizontal. The trajectory was traverse at, I am inclined to believe, constant angular velocity. Just before the end of the path there was the very slightest dropping of the path, that is the green fireball broke into fragments, still bright green."

"Dr. Teller: And all this time the intensity was approximately constant?"

"Dr. La Paz: All the time, as far I could determine. The Eye, of course, is admittedly a very crude photographer.

"Dr. Teller: How long did the phenomenon last?"

"Dr. La Paz: Almost exactly two seconds. We have in the reports here, I brought the complete file with me and would be glad to circulate them, duration measures in relation to all observations. Few of these, however, I believe, were determined under as favorable circumstances as the duration of the Starvation Peak incident. Possibly I should go back and review the situation a little bit. Because some report, issued by the AESS, would certainly suggest that I was primarily responsible for starting this whole matter. I am glad that Captain Neef corrected that impression. Actually, I was on an investigation in regard to the green fireball observed on the night of December 5th at the time the December 12th incident occurred. As a result I was keyed up; I was watching; I had a stop watch with me and a transit. We got into position and made measures, transit measures, on azimuths and elevation readings; that is, we made a duration check, certainly within not more than two or three minutes after the incident occurred. To that extent, I believe, it is possibly the best observed of any incident up to the time of the January 30th fall.

"Dr. Manley: How did you have time to use the transit?"

"Dr. La Paz: The transit was in the back of the car. The moment the car was parked at the side of the road, we yanked the transit out and set it up and began measurements. We were in motion at the time but we were able to get a very good check of what we observed at the time on the road near Starvation Peak. We had a

clear view of the sky to the Northwest and the West, and the object was so low over the horizon it was possible to compare it not only to the stars with which I am familiar, but with respect to mountain peaks that were also visible. To continue, that duration was about two seconds. This is when I say that 90% of the duration determinations have been made in the case of the green fireballs have given durations right in that vicinity. Whereas you take, say, 100 ordinary meteor observations you will find the widest diversions in durations. You could take the same lesson as observed by 100 people--possibly that's a better example--and there would be wide variations in the estimates of duration.

"Dr. Manley: Did you correlate the azimuths with...?"

"Dr. La Paz: No. There is an azimuth factor here which I am going to talk to you about, that relates to the choice of direction. Both our observations are single station observations, so that it becomes impossible from the observation measure to determine the real path of the fireball in the atmosphere. There have been only three cases where that path was determinable. One, as I recall it, was that of December 12, another December 20, and finally, of course, the very large fall on January 30, 1949. I'll give you some particulars on the paths. I do want to observe, however, that even our station observations present a puzzling characteristic to the meteorists. If you plot what are called, by meteorists, the admissible protozons for a green fireball that has been observed, you will find that they give, on the average, an approach almost to the North, come down from the North, they are restricted to (?). Now what about the real paths? I gave some indications as to the lowest...of the path. The green fireballs are unusual in this respect: probably that they are horizontal or nearly so, or that their horizontal path is traversed very low down in the atmosphere. In the case of the real paths for which we have been able to make determinations so far, those are graphical determinations, as we have not taken the trouble to use Chablis (?) methods or... because the observations are regarded as necessarily too rough for mathematical niceties. Those paths are traversed at elevations between 8 and 10 miles. I defy you to find anywhere among meteorists, examples of conventional meteorites that move over long horizontal paths reserving nearly constant angular velocities and therefore, on the average, constant linear velocities, at elevations of the order of 8 to 10 miles. There is a good deal of evidence that may be of value I would like to summarize at this stage:

the fireball which I personally witnessed on the night of December 12, 1948, was not, in my opinion, a conventional meteor fall. Since the majority of the green fireballs have been reported to me, both before and after this December 12th occurrence, possess almost all the properties which I personally observed on the night of December 12th, I feel that in all probability they are not themselves conventional meteor falls. Now, the easy way out of this is to conjure up an unconventional type of....meteorite, which comes in practically parallel to the great atmospheric resistance that is experienced on a level, it reserves nearly constant velocity over paths say of the order of 25 to over 100 miles, as in the case of the green fireball on January 30th. It should also have the property that it is a very remarkable hue of green, not heretofore observed, to my knowledge, in the case of any conventional meteor falls. And finally, and this possibly is the most implausible feature of all, that although it produces light visible at distances of the order of 400 miles, it doesn't make a sound. In the case of January 30th fall, due to the fact that there had been observations within a minute after the fall occurred and pursued the investigation over a distance of 1,600 miles--Texas mud primarily!--in some ten day's time interviewing literally hundreds of people, we saw not one substantiated account of noise produced by the meteorite fall.

"Dr. Teller: May I ask how many people have seen this one big meteorite?

"Dr. La Paz: This is difficult to say. (Record blank for short period)... Finally, in the interrogation of such persons, we invariably interview them as individuals. We tried a family of eight the first night as Major Gedsoe will recall, interviewing.... and it became apparent at once that there was some sympathetic influence and we broke it off after I think the third or fourth observation and thereafter interviewed separately. If you were to search, however, the independent observations of those who were widely separated, possibly stations of the order of 100, there were probably 100 different stations reporting.

"Dr. Teller: What area did that cover?

"Dr. La Paz: All of New Mexico, all the Western half of Texas. I have a map here with some indications of possibly the extent of that.

"Hoyt and Bradbury: Wasn't that Sunday the 24th?

"Dr. La Paz: No, it was definitely Sunday the 30th. The newspapers have very helpfully concealed most of the relevant facts relating to this fireball. First, they described it as a fireball, second, they ... (record blank for few seconds) ... interfered with OSI and wasn't able to do that this time. This is the field map and will give in various colors, dots and pencil dashes, etc. all of the observations obtained on the Texas search.

"Dr. Teller: All relate to one fall?

"Dr. La Paz: Yes. These lines are drawn from points of observation. The center, as you see, of points of appearance is somewhere Southwest of Amarillo or South-southwest of Lubbock, Texas. At the time this was drawn, before I was able to make out transit measures in the vicinity of Albuquerque, this was the best apparent path of the fireballs. These other ink lines are independent, made by other groups of observers working on the same problem. (record blank again for a short time) This transit, unfortunately, had a needle with a bent piston and it was not discovered until much later that we were getting faulty records. Independently, I have redetermined, using the best equipment available at the University, the lines of sight at all points where the faulty transit had been used. I have plotted on this map only observations that I made personally or such observations as I have every reason to believe were made by experienced personnel, for example UAL flyers, who took the trouble to make measures, or possibly civil engineers.

"Dr. Teller: You mean these people right afterwards or shortly afterwards took an instrument and tried to measure it?

"Dr. La Paz: That's right.

"Dr. Teller: This is the point where it disappeared?

"Dr. La Paz: And normally, all you will get is the point where it disappears because the average man is aware of the fact that when he is not warned, he makes a very inaccurate observation. Having been warned by the appearance of the fireball, his attention is fixed and he watches where it bursts, where it explodes, where it disappears. So I say this is a much better determination. This beginning point, although you notice the...of line here, is reasonably satisfactory.

"Dr. Teller: Are these points here observers of the test, locations of those observations?"

"Dr. La Paz: Usually a dotted circle like that indicates a reported sound observation. We use this symbol: a circle is a report, whether or not the observation includes azimuth of elevation, light appearances, is indicated by the presence of a cross. If it is blacked out, both light and sound were heard. Now every one of those things has been disproved. In the area where the end point was located, oil well drilling was underway, dynamite blasting in connection with setting up of rigs, some nitro being used apparently to shatter...in every case we were able to exclude the possibility that the noises reported actually were tied in with the meteorite fall. At least let me say, in my opinion, those noises were excluded. In certain cases, independently, that was confirmed by a visit of Lt. Ryan of the Roswell Group of the OSI. For instance, the best case of all, near Amherst (?), or noise--the observer, it's true, was only a ten year old boy, but he wrote a very intelligent letter, and it is well known that children, like animals, are more sensitive to sound than people who have listened for too many years, say, to the radio. It appeared conceivable that he had actually made a sound observation, but Lt. Ryan went to Amherst (?) found that even three members of the family were not able to confirm his observation of noise and no one in the town, some 300 or 400 persons I think in all were estimated to have been visited, no one at all had heard a sound, so I think that Mike probably heard the same dynamite blast as had been reported by Miss Winson Didpasture--I didn't take that name out of the funny papers, it actually exists.

(Continued examination of the maps with minor interrogations concerning markings.)

"Dr. La Paz: With one exception, in the case of Roswell, there are two types of sound associated with meteorite falls and, I assume, associated with the motion of any very high velocity projectiles or missile through the air. There are what physicists would call reasonable sounds, and while he would not acknowledge it, simultaneously will the appearance of a meteorite, you hear a meteorite, the physicist will refuse to believe the observation. Nevertheless, there is a tremendous volume of evidence indicating that these anomalous sounds occurred. Anyone who does field work in the search for meteorites will come across possibly 10% of the observers who say that, although my attention was attracted by hearing, a whining noise, a whistling noise, I looked up and there was the fireball. In other words, this anomalous sound apparently

attracts attention to the occurrence. I have an article by Brandon...one of the sons of the man who first investigated the great crater out in Arizona, and a chap by the name of Hart (?) with whom I am not personally acquainted by a physicist apparently at Princeton, in which they attempt to justify the occurrence of anomalous sound. They express it roughly in this fashion. Electromagnetic radiation is set up by....

(Dr. Teller excused to answer the phone.)

"Dr. La Paz: You wouldn't believe it anyway. However, electromagnetic radiation is rectified somehow by the...changed into sound that can be heard and, therefore, you can hear the meteorite at the same time you see it fall. In the case of the Roswell observation apparently that occurred. We have a group of five men--they were near a steel smokestack--and everylast one of them swears that they heard at the same time they were watching the green fireball go by, a noise like, say, a gasoline blowtorch. This is certainly not an ordinary explosive sound. One more thing in connection with the noises. In every other meteorite fall, any one meteorite fall that I have investigated--that covers many years--I have never yet found an occasion of a detonating fireball, without meteorites coming down at all, in which there was not some evidence of alarm of animals. Chickens will fly around to try to get under cover. Dogs will howl and try to get into the house. Horses will run away. In the case of the Texas fall, in spite of the tremendous area in which the light was observed, we found not a single case in which the animals were disturbed. We knew of the case of a farmer who had, in sunny Texas, a pond with a five-inch layer of ice, who reported that a meteorite had fallen through the ice on that pond, had broken a hole. Captain Neef here put on a pair of rubber boots and very thoroughly searched the pond without finding a meteorite. Even in that case there was no evidence of alarm by the animals. I believe with that summary, I'd better cease operations and have you ask questions.

"Question (source not identified): How many observed falls?

"Dr. La Paz: I'd like to classify those into three groups. I would say that there are ten instances that definitely merit the most serious consideration. They are strictly analogous to the green fireballs of the night of December 12th. On top of that, there must be something of the order of twenty more

which are so well reported, from Los Alamos for example, that although the green fireballs observed showed small....the nature of the fireball.... many observations of observers who paid practically no attention to the sky at any other time in their lives and now when they see a really bright light, they report it. You will find a great many instances of bluish-white fireballs. In my opinion, those falling vertically and leaving trails, are simply ordinary shooting stars. Of high intensity, that is, what we call fireballs, a blue light, are not in any sense to be associated with the green lights. Those three categories then.

"Dr. Manley (?)

"Dr. La Paz: In the case of the two green fireball paths, determined from Los Alamos observations, in one case the Starvation Peak incident, we have an East-West motion, and then also a motion exactly parallel to...In other words, these two real paths show, I think they are the only two of the first category that show any real departure from the.... It is possible to explain that. It is quite evident that we have no case of assurance that both groups of observers, the observers at Starvation Peak and the observers at Los Alamos, saw the same point ofso that if we were to merely ask what are the limits within which such real paths might fall, it turns out that it might be as short as 12 miles instead of being 25 miles long, and in that case it would be directed almost directly to the North; it would come down very nearly within 2 degrees, 5 degrees say, of the North. In the case of the Texas observations, whereas I have indicated and the maps show, we have many observations by trained observers, motion is clearly almost directly North to South. I have been informed that there are reasons for regarding the....out there (ditch digger)....and you notice that this passes reasonably close to Lubbock. The same is true of the two earlier fireballs, those of December 12th and December 20th. They both passed--one passed centrally over Los Alamos and the other about six miles North of the center, but this would not be true....(ditch digger). One point that possibly should have been mentioned earlier in this: I was the more interested when Captain Neef came to my office and brought the December 5th incident to my mind because very much earlier I had been contacted first by....White, Director of Texas Observers, from a Dr. Pruitt, Director of Northwestern Section, City Section, of the Meteor Society. I had been informed that earlier occurrences of bright green fireballs, not too far from the Hanford area. When Captain Neef

came in with reports of green fireballs near Las Vegas and particularly when he disclosed that there was a Los Alamos near Las Vegas--the real Los Alamos--it had much interest.

"Dr. Holloway: Are there any reports of these from other installations, such as Troy, New York, or places like that?

"Dr. La Paz: I raised that question and I know of no other cases. I mean to say the areas from which these reports come, as in one, for such evidence as....they do not relate to the daylight occurrence of horizontal moving, bright white objects--some in Memphis, Tennessee in May 1948--that is not too far from Oak Ridge. They relate to the Hanford area as far as the Pruitt observation go, and to the observations that I've mentioned here in the Las Vegas-Los Alamos area....A very curious thing has come to light during these investigations. I published not long ago an article in Science Illustrated on the recovery of the....Norton, Kansas, meteorite. The time of that fall, February 18, 1948, the rumor got around somehow in Northern Kansas and Southern Kansas that it was a Russian bomb, and it was aimed at the geographical center of the United States which is not very far from....Apparently, a great many people gave credence to that rumor and were delighted when we finally recovered meteorites up there and proved it wasn't anything but an ordinary meteorite fall. Incidentally, it did not have the characteristics of the green fireball we're talking about here. There was an air transport pilot who made a most curious observation while flying near Cherbourg on January 16, 1946. His observation was the observation of a bouncing meteor.. After what I've been telling you about the green fireballs, you probably think it not unreasonable that a meteorite should bounce but to the meteorological mind that seems very hard to swallow. The interest is that one of your own persons here at Los Alamos, and confirmed at least in part by four other persons, saw one of the green fireballs come down and then glide off horizontally. The bouncing meteorite is manually explained by having it form, say sinusoidal (?) motion lying in about the plane at which the observer was looking so that he first saw the high point of the curve or the peak. The next time it was at the peak, it was so far away that the altitude was very low, which will give you the appearance of a bouncing meteorite. I offer that as a possible explanation. Of course, he may have landed in Paris before he made the Cherbourg flight and then we should disregard the testimony entirely!

"Mr. Newburger: Dr. La Paz, you mentioned, I believe, at one of our other meetings that they had compared the color of this with certain metals?

"Dr. La Paz: That's right. Initially we could only ask them what they thought it looked like. And we got such interesting responses that we eventually carried around a spectrum chart and allowed everybody to make his own choice. Of course, the use of the spectrum chart was unnecessary if they have a color like one lady who had around her neck a green scarf which corresponds to something between 4900 and possibly 5300. Most of them will fall very close to 5218 which is about the color you get when you have copper salts in the Bunsen burner. I checked with Dr. Regener on that and asked him if an alloy had been used, like, say, copper beryllium, if there would be any change in that hue, and he has assured me there would not. He said it would still give approximate appearance of beryllium copper....You will find in probably 1350 of the 1500 only the merest trace of copper occurrence. There are a few meteorites like....in South Dakota, where little veins of copper have been found, making up possibly .4 of 1%.

"Dr. Bradbury: Is this true of all meteorites?

"Dr. La Paz: It's true in any category. Even in the irons, the presence of copper is very hard to detect, very little...(ditch digger). I don't know whether you gentlemen could suggest an easy way to obtain green fireball spectra or not.

"Dr. Teller: What is the geographical solution of this?

"Dr. La Paz: Another man would probably answer that best of all.

(Looked at more maps with some talk that was not audible.)

(Mr. Hoyt confirmed the green hue of the green fireball he had seen on the night of December 30, 1948.)

(Record dead for a minute or two.)

"Mr. Hoyt: I would have said approximately as far above the mountain as the floor of the valley was below the top of the mountain. I felt that would give me somewhere in the neighborhood of 20,000 feet or thereabouts. It was about 5 minutes to 6

on my way up here. I have a feeling that it had a downward path. I mean it was going South.

"Dr. La Paz: But it was not strictly horizontal?

"Mr. Hoyt: No.

"Dr. La Paz: We have some discrepancies in that regard. Some 95% of the observations indicate a very nearly horizontal path. One from Forth Worth, Texas, which was not made by....but measured by them, indicates an elevation of 6 degrees at the beginning and $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 degrees at the end.

"Mr. Hoyt: That's what I would have said, but remember that the ridge would give you the sensation that it was taking a downward path. Duration--at the time I would say it was approximately 3 seconds.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: How does the calculated velocity of these objects compare with the known velocity of meteorites?

"Dr. La Paz: Apparently very much lower: that is, more than the ordinarily observed meteorite falls. First, to observe in the cast of an actual meteorite fall you have a relation of the velocity from the auricle of....atmosphere down to the impact velocity which may be very....but it isn't fair to compare the velocity of the green fireballs to the impact velocity of....(ditch digger and everyone talking at once).... Not with the trajectory velocity of the meteorite. After a meteorite....the fragments fall about like a bomb. Their resistance just about balances out the.... and as a result, they come down with about the velocity of a falling bomb, a little less because they do not have the same ballistic coefficient.

"Dr. Bradbury: This is not an excluded (?) direction like the....?

"Dr. La Paz: Due to the fact that they have a curve, and practically all times during which darkness is with us, why they tend to come in from that direction?

"Dr. Bradbury: Would it be a shower?

"Dr. La Paz: That was my first explanation, as a matter of fact. Geminid showers with a maximum of December 10 to December 12. The first evidence that I had was Sgt. Kinsley's report on December 2 and since often the forerunners of the showers will....I thought we were talking about Geminid showers except that I never observed a

green Geminid. Matter of fact, a check of observations made at the time found that there were 414 observations since 1915 and there wasn't a since one, Geminid or non-Geminid, for which any hue of green was mentioned. Later, for instance on the night of December 12, you could watch the Geminid come down....and notice that they came in at high angles to the horizontal, whereas the green fireballs....incidentally, we have another interesting piece of evidence there--Dr. Sherman Smith from the University--I mention an observation that he made on the same night. The time of the observation is in dispute. According to Dr. Smith it was probably as late as 10:50. He had to wait for a long time, he said, for his wife to pick him up after the concert was over. Mrs. Smith, however, times it around 10:10. Whatever the time, within one hour or say an hour and a half after the green fireball and the horizontal path were observed, we have another extremely bright blue fireball come out of the Geminid. Apparently you can have very large Geminid falls of the color estimated by a trained....checked with the spectrum charts.... is quite distant, I assure you, from the green fireballs.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: How good is the coverage of the observers of the American Meteor Society as far as the top-half of the United States is concerned?

"Dr. La Paz: It depends a good deal upon overcast conditions. I would say, however, that this year the Eastern half of the country has offered phenomenal observing conditions. One of my reasons for withdrawing from Ohio State was that after 13 years there I had given up hope of ever seeing a meteorite shower because during the season of maximum intensity of the falls we had heavy overcast, snow and so forth. On the other hand, this year they're had reasonably open skies. I have obtained no reports from people in that part of the country. We thought we had a definite check because Harvard College has now installed a photographic meteor station near or possibly inside the White Sands Proving Ground. Since the 12th of December, you correct me if I exaggerate here, we have been trying to determine the color and other characteristics of the ten or twelve brightest meteors observed at that station. We still don't know what they saw. We know they were operating and they made some photographs, but Captain Neef can probably tell you the red-tape channelization impediments that have dropped out any determinations better than I can.

"Captain Neef: Well, it's one of those things; it's a Navy contract and they are not at liberty to divulge what they find, so we have to go through Washington, the Bureau of Ordnance, to get the information.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: I believe I can get that information; as a matter of fact, I feel very certain that I can. Just a matter of approach.

"Dr. La Paz: I feel certain if I had contacted Dr. Fred Whipple, for example, I could have obtained it, but his other occupations keep him away from that installation. And actually I felt as a meteoritist, it might be wise to have OSI appeal for information rather than to ask for it directly.

"Captain Neef: They did tell us they weren't using film which were going to be susceptible to these colors.

"Dr. La Paz: But, of course, they are making constant visual observations and if you were able to determine visual observations 100 miles from Los Alamos don't reveal the occurrence of bright green fireballs, I think it would be significant. I don't know why they should avoid the Southern-half of the State.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: Let us say if these had been at extremely high altitudes, they would have been visible from White Sands without any question.

"Captain Neef: This one of the 30th definitely was visible from White Sands because Commander of Holloman and his wife and one of his assistants and his wife saw it from there.

"Dr. La Paz: On the other hand, you have experience like that of Professor Talbot who is now in charge of the optical trajectory section down there, an experienced astronomer, a member of the American Meteor Society. I talked with him about this, and he has observed nothing out of the ordinary. I don't think anybody, I mean in the line of green fireballs, in this area has been observing as much as he does. I don't see how he could miss sighting some of these.

"Question: What explanation do you have for this?

"Dr. La Paz: The only explanation is the one I gave in the beginning and had my ears promptly boxed for. I think these are defensive maneuvers

of some higher U.S. Command and they are practicing in the neighborhood of the regions they are going to defend, so naturally your localization of light near the atomic bomb installations, but boy, am I scolded for that! Even Dr. Kaplan of the FAD tells me no, no, the FAD would know all about it, and they don't have any facts.

"Dr. Bradbury: Is this the physicist Kaplan?

"Dr. La Paz: Yes. Kaplan is my old boss. He was chief of the operational analysis section when I was....director there....During Kaplan's visit to the University of the New Mexico, where he was lecturing, we called a conference with Major Godsoe and other interested parties. He gave a brief resume of the observations that had been made to date. Now, Kaplan is one of the charter members of the American Meteor Society, and he said certainly these could not be conventional meteorite falls. He, of course, mentioned as other people do who have not gone into it more thoroughly, the possibility of abnormal types of meteorite falls, that might come in from a peculiar direction or might drop at very low level, but I don't think he was able to explain the absence of sound.

"Dr. Teller: Did I understand you correctly that the velocity of the object appears to be some 50 kilometers per second?

"Dr. La Paz: No. In the case of the green fireballs something between 3 miles per second and 12 miles per seconds. Depending, you see, if you choose one ruled map or another. For example, let me illustrate how that affects the velocity determination. This is the one I think possibly best represents the observations of the case of the fireball of December 12. That is the path I assume the Los Alamos observers saw the same point of the curves that the Starvation Peak observers did, likewise to the point of disappearance. If we deny that possibility, the path might shorten to this dotted line (Dr. La Paz worked on maps with Dr. Teller, explaining paths.) Dropping from 25 to something between 11 and 12 miles. The January 30 observation gave us our first long path.

"Dr. Teller: How long was it?

"Dr. La Paz: The first observations we had here indicated....That was because of errors in the determination of the azimuth at the point of beginning, made due to the faulty transit they used. But that's correct that the path runs over 100 miles.

"Dr. Teller: And how long does it take?

"Dr. La Paz: Duration estimates range from 5 to around 14 seconds. I think that a 10 second average is about the best, that would give about 10 miles per second.

"Dr. Bradbury: Green is not an unknown color in meteors?

"Dr. La Paz: If I were to rewrite the report that I first presented on that subject, instead of saying 'rarely observed' this color green, I think I would now say 'never observed.' You sometimes see green, Dr. Bradbury, but it is a blue-green. The blue-green color is rare, but it is observed. For instance, Dr. Sherman Smith's observation was essentially a blue-green, but on the blue side.

"Dr. Bradbury: What other color do you see in meteors?

"Dr. La Paz: Whites chiefly. If you look closely and without interference from outside lights, yellow, oranges, and reds.

"Dr. Bradbury: But it's apparently a yellowish-green we're talking about here. If you can see a bluish-green, you can also see yellows and whites.

"Dr. La Paz: There is some defect, possibly in the vision, that requires a pretty high intensity in that yellow-green before it's noted in a meteor fall.

"Dr. Bradbury: Looks like green?

"Dr. La Paz: Yes it does, that's perfectly true. Now here's a peculiar property of those yellow-green fireballs--some people will refer to them as red. The only explanation that I can think of is they report afterwards that they see what is an exposure to a very green-bluish light rather than the light itself--I don't know if that is correct. And, incidentally, due to your observation, I don't know how to explain the inability of meteor observers to report this renegade color, but I simply know it doesn't occur. You go through long lists, like those of the American Meteor Society, you will find, I imagine, not 1 in 100 where a green is mentioned. Even in the case of the....?showers, where you have large numbers of very bright colors--let me recall something that all of you must have seen. The....shower of October 9, 1946--anyone here who saw that? There were large numbers of extremely bright fireballs at that

time. Kaplan himself recalled that they were blue, maybe blue-green, but never yellow-green. And I observed those under very favorable circumstance--we were flying at about 20,000 feet in a B-29. We had no absorption effects at all. They definitely did not show hues of green.

"Dr. Bradbury: You mentioned the noise problem also. The noise occurs only when the meteor itself blows up, breaks up?

"Dr. La Paz: No, that isn't strictly true. You have, in addition to the hollow sound, the normal sound of the breakup of the....you have headwind; you're near the path. You get a real shock; for instance, we haveapparently up by that headwave, shock wave, in the case of the Norton County Fall. And then from the turbulence and reflections all the way along the path, you will have a rumbling which may endure not for the matter of a tenth of a second, but for minutes, and they're real rough.

"Dr. Bradbury: But these occur fairly close to the trajectory?

"Dr. La Paz: No. In the case of the Norton fall again, they were heard clear down to....City. Shakes buildings that far away. The....fall was heard up to 300 miles from the point of impact.

"Dr. Bradbury: Large number of observations....

"Dr. La Paz: No, there again I checked very carefully because I was concerned. I am trying desperately to give a logical explanation to the absence of sound. I have found in the literature only three cases where no detonations, no rumblings were reported. One of these is the Belgium observation in 1855, and I think should be discounted because meteorites hardly existed at that time. Some falls occurred and were not reported at all. The other two are reasonably recent observations--one in 1921 and one in 1922. They occurred, however, in the deep South where negroes, I think, were the only observers. Even there, the whizzing of the meteorite as they fall through the air, was reported. I know of no case of an actual meteorite where at least the whizzing of the falling body coming down through the air has not been reported.

"Dr. Bradbury:?

"Dr. La Paz: Meteorite falls, I believe that was the way you phrased it? In the case of a shooting star, of course, you never hear a thing because the entire mass is very kindly vaporized before it gets, say, within 50 miles of the earth....Not only noises, but accompanied by such noises that persons or animals are really frightened out of their wits. For example, we have a beautiful case where two horses killed themselves--in the Norton fall--they may have been felled by meteorites, but I'm inclined to think that the noise frightened them until they dashed into a ditch....Animals go crazy.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: Do you think it unusual no fragments are found?

"Dr. La Paz: I certainly do. And I think it unusual, not only in the case of the green fireballs, but in view of the fact that a great fall, like the....fall of October 30, 1947, wherefor the first time we detected a bit of the interest on the part of the military, there too we recovered nothing. October 30, 1947, about 4:48 in the afternoon there was, what appeared to be, a tremendous meteorite fall over the reservation area--the Four Corners Area. We got there within a very few hours, had excellent observations, went back time and again, exhaustive ground search, CAP people in airplanes, we had a radio centered, we had radio controlled jeeps and a lot of people out walking around--not a trace. I can't give you a color on that because....

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: Ordinarily, when phenomena of that nature occurs, you are able to recover some material?

"Dr. La Paz: Yes, some material is recovered almost always. If proper search is conducted by Gill Field Corps of Intelligence Unit; Dr. Lansberg of the Research and Development Board, very kindly interested himself in the problem and the air searchers resulted not even in the discovery of a broken branch. The region is heavily forested. If branches had been broken, I think they would have been detected. I haven't classified that particular fall, however, with the green fireballs and for this reason: that left a train. Another thing which I might have mentioned--a normal meteorite fall....will produce a long enduring train visible by day and night. Luminous by night and by day, illuminated by the sun. In the case of the irons, it will be very faint, but it'll be there if you look for it. In the case of the

Four Corners Fall, that train was observed and I'm inclined to believe that it might have been a conventional meteorite fall. In the case of the green fireballs, to my knowledge, no such train has been observed. That question is always asked of people--did you observe a long enduring train; their replies were always negative.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: Then you would say there were 10 incidents which are analogous to the green fireballs, with reports checked by a sufficient number of independent observers, that there is no doubt whatsoever of their occurrence?

"Dr. La Paz: That's right.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: Then there are 20 with some deviations, two of these probably are related to the green fireballs....

"Dr. La Paz: I believe two of those incidents I mentioned occurred before the 5th of December. A very remarkable one of the 4th of August--note that again is very close to the time of...meteor shower....From late in July on and my report will be producing quite a number of these...., but it is physically impossible with this particular observation from near....Orgeon....

"Dr. Bradbury: Then their directions were wrong?

"Dr. La Paz: As a matter of fact, we can't tell because they were single observations. Maybe I should pass that letter around, but it is, I believe, the first detailed report on what might be characterized as a typical green fireball. After the Oscar...incident of January 1, 1948, was merely a remarkable green flash, which might have had some other interpretation.

(Dr. La Paz showed some letters around the table, there was general talk--not able to be picked up individually.)

"Major Godsoe: The basic purpose of this meeting is: we want you to find a meteor!

"Mr. Newburger: Have the military--anyone from the National Defense establishment--given us anything? Sent out any conjectures about this thing?

"Major Godsoe: No, most of the military authorities think we are crackpots; that is,

except for the Army Air Force, which is taking an active interest in details.

"Mr. Newburger: The Air Force does have the primary interest in this gadget?

"Major Godsoe: Yes, the Air Force is the gathering, reporting agency for this phenomenon.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: I'd like to remove that temporary statement about the Armed Forces Special Weapons Projects; we aren't laughing....(record blank for a minute or two.)

"Dr. Bradbury: None of us are experts in this field, so we essentially have to believe what we are told. I suppose if you try to look for logical explanations, there are probably some.

"Dr. La Paz: I would like to ask one question here--unless you feed power into a body moving into a horizontal path, can it preserve essentially a horizontal trajectory? A plane does it; meteorites don't do it; shows curves as the energy falls off. This thing apparently ignores air resistance and gravity and goes blissfully on its way....

"Dr. Teller: As far as straightness of the path is concerned, if you have a meteorite that you have observed for 10 seconds, and in these 10 seconds it has gone a distance of 100 miles, it will have fallen in this distance 1/3 of a mile and now I should like to dare any observer to tell a curvature of this kind--because you are completely unprepared for the phenomenon.

"Dr. La Paz: As it slows down, it curves toward the bottom.

"Dr. Teller: But apparently before it has happened, slowed down too much or exploded or something, and then it has disappeared. Now the.... point is, of course, if it has no power it will slow down, but I do not know how quickly you would have to estimate that; furthermore, the rate at which it slows down will depend very much on the question whether it has been at a 10 mile altitude or a 20 mile altitude.

"Dr. La Paz: The elevation estimates are very concordant on these, and I doubt that you will be able to change that elevation of 8 to 10 miles by very much. These are the path observations that I have mentioned.

"Dr. Teller: Well, can you say....do you think anything can be said about that?

"Dr. La Paz: I doubt it. The eye, of course, is not a good speedometer. You can't detect a change. At least, I did not in the one observation that I made, and no such change has been reported. In the case of those who observed the green fireballs say that near the end of the Texas fireball path of January 30 it was noted that the fragments moved out leisurely to the point at which there was apparently less velocity, as shown by them on the green fireball itself. May I mention, however, that in the case of the normal meteorite fall that curvature in the path, the transverse vertical, is one of the most apparent. You see that in the case of any large, ordinary detonation fireball fall even though it may not produce....there is a tendency to curve.

"Dr. Teller: What about total light....How does the brightness compare to the brightness of the meteorite that come from a meteor?

"Dr. La Paz: In the case of the Texas fall, this is very rough; I didn't see it, I can only base an estimate say on the comparisons that were made with the moon as to size and total intensity. In the case of the Texas fall it would certainly be comparable to--it was one of the brightest observed fireballs in total intensity....In the case of the Starvation Peak incident, we can compare it with Venus which was conveniently located, and it certainly was of stellar magnitude minus four, possibly a little brighter. That comparison was made almost immediately after the observation....

"Mr. Hoyt: It was very bright and clear that night....

"Dr. Teller: You saw it at 6 o'clock?

"Mr. Hoyt: At five minutes to six. Very, very clear night.

(Ditch digger--in between ditch digger, a few coherent remarks.)

"Dr. Manley: In 1945 or 1946 I observed practically the same thing as in this letter. We thought it was a roman candle. Definitely light green in color. I am still worried about the fact that they don't report any green color in these falls.

"Dr. Bradbury: Lack of noise, lack of.... the lack of these things would be equally astounding for any material object.

"Dr. La Paz: Dr. Kaplan suggested the possibility of the same sort of phenomenon that he could produce experimentally in his laboratory.... and he tells me under certain conditions he can produce a globe or lamps of yellow-green lightHe conjectured for a minute that might have some relation--an artificial aurora.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: As long as you brought that up, Maj. Johnson has a letter I obtained from Gen. Bunker which may be pertinent. Gen. Bunker transmitted the information you've heard to the Air Material Command, and in reply recieved a letter from an Air Force General who recently returned from Alaska. I'll let Dr. La Paz read this.

"Dr. La Paz: This is closely related to what I was talking about. It begins: 'Dear Bunker: Received your interesting phenomena of 1 February and promptly turned it over to Howard....now saddled with the responsibility of clues. Regard as coincidental that on dates you mention Gen. Carroll was in Fairbanks, Alaska, and on his return related that he had never seen before in his life such a beautiful technical display of Northern Lights. Maybe what these people have seen is a reflection from the....of these pyrotechnics. So far as we know, it is still phenomena and not material. Best regards, Paul.'

"Dr. La Paz: May I make the observation that if you look in the chapter by....you'll find that in Alaska where this observation was reported, there are very few times at this season of the year when you can't see an aurora.

"Dr. Teller: I have the feeling that it iseither a discovery in physical psychology or....

"Dr. La Paz: I thought that psychological element would come in here?

"Dr. Teller: Here is a slightly irrelevant question--you brought in the flying discs. What is the connection?

"Dr. La Paz: I didn't bring in the flying discs.

"Mr. Newburger: I brought in the matter of the flying discs because the Air Force, as I understand, now have classed the flying discs and these fireballs in one category.

"Captain Neef:The only indication we have is a letter from MAC in Washington, Saturday where they indicated the old project SIGN is now project GRUDGE, which includes the phenomena observed in New Mexico. They knew of this meeting and were going to send a representative.

"Dr. La Paz: I just asked Mr. Hoyt a moment ago how he would compare the brilliance of this object with that of an aircraft flare. He said they were of comparable magnitude. I think that was definitely ruled out....

"Dr. Teller: I understood that a reasonable explanation of the flying discs--and I suppose that it is generally known--is that they are meteorological balloons....I understand that in quite a number of cases there have been very close directions established....I must say that from what you have said it certainly sounds like everything else but meteors. The thing that impresses me is your evidence of the horizontal flight. Meteors do not usually come in like that....

(Mumbled talk between Drs. Bradbury and Teller.)

"Captain Neef:Change of direction such that we haven't been able to follow it up yet. One of our men was returning Sunday night when our tower operator saw this object to the Southwest from Kirtland Field and....Arizona reported it was Southeast from them. From the Kirtland tower it was a bronze color. The time checks, but fromArizona it was green until it turned straight down and veered going....

"Dr. La Paz: Dr. Teller, may I mention this one other instance that shows maybe why I have more concern than is merited by the evidence I am able to present. I deal with Vic Regener and I know that the physicist doesn't like to work with anything that can't be photographed. I share that view but a meteorist is not available sometimes to photograph shooting stars, even the conventional type. During the war, I was acting as Director of the Ohio Section of the American Meteor Society and all at once we began to get

reports of large numbers of stationary fireballs; not moving. The burst was there, but no motion. Now one who observes normal conventional fireball falls is aware of the fact that not one out of say five hundred shows actual fixity; there is always motion. So, this looks very, very strange. Of course, you all know what those stationary fireballs turned out to be. They were the self-destructive devices on Japanese paper balloons operating. You had a hydrogen filled sphere with a two-crown mask of magnesium flashlite power. And when the magnesium and the hydrogen went off together, you could see it for a long way. We got stationary fireballs but they certainly were not meteoritic. My experience since I was suspected of psychological apparitions at the time I reported these stationary fireballs to, for example, Dr. Kaplan, my experience with....led me to be very cautious about taking my concern....but at the same time I feel that we shouldn't be too hasty in giving a natural explanation to these green fireballs.

"Dr. Teller:but I would like to ask, these phenomena are apparently quite bright, more luminous than normal meteorites?

"Dr. La Paz: Well, the January 30th one was: I would say that about the one I saw on December 12. That was a very bright fireball, but not extraordinarily so.

"Dr. Teller: What is the chance of getting pictures?

"Dr. La Paz: I refer to the one attempt that was made on the night of December 19. We set up a photographic patrol--the AESS, as you probably know, has been interested in this problem. They brought a lot of speed graphics and so on and set them up. Mr. Maxwell, a member of the group....and they were able, I think the night before, to photograph a bright Geminid. But on the night of the 19th nothing was observed. The next night, however, the night of the 20th there was an incident which I believe might have been photographed, but by that time the equipment had been disbanded and nothing was obtained. I should think, with proper coverage, say 10 to 15%, of these should record themselves provided you do not use green insensitive....and film such as the....

"Dr. Teller: Is there any possibility of having a wide coverage of the sky triggered by a photo cell?

"Dr. La Paz: I have discussed that, for example, with Dr. Reneger, who has been very much interested in the apparatus, and his answer is more or less in the negative. I understand that Cornell University--Gartline of Cornell--has produced some sort of photo-electric triggering device which has been used in this connection. I wrote him about it, asking for reprints or instructions, but never received a reply.

"Question: Do you think you are going to find film sensitive to this green color fast enough? We have some that can't be left out over 12 hours....

"Dr. La Paz: It should be possible....The conventional meteor cannot be photographed at the present time. The so-called meteorschmitts that Harvard College is now having produced at very great expense, they expect to go down to the fourth and possibly fainter. With one of those, a bright green fire-ball might be photographed, but they are not available.

"Mr. Newburger: Does anybody know if there were any experiments carried out in Europe, prior to the war when our last best information came from over there, along this line?

"Dr. La Paz: Not to my knowledge. I raised that question with Dr. Kaplan and he gave me some rather surprising information. Dr. Kaplan had attended the IAU meetings in Syria(?) and the Russians had a large representation there. Sufficiently large, as a matter of fact, to beat down the proposal that the IAU appoint an international committee to investigate the so-called....meteorite crater produced in the fall of 1947, February 12. On the contrary, at the Oswald, I think it was, conference of the International Geophysical Union, none of the Russian geophysicists were present. Kaplan's interpretation was that they feel so far ahead of us that they didn't think they could learn anything, and they were taking the precaution that no leak occurred.

"Mr. Newburger: Were the Germans experimenting in any phase that was possibly connected with it?

"Dr. La Paz: Well, they had the so-called stations in space....might have some attachment to it.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: You don't have any record of experiments?

"Dr. La Paz: No, no knowledge of experiments. I have the belief that no country in the world has there been meteoritics developed as it has in Russia in recent years. Recently, the Academy of Science of the USSR has been issuing a so-called meteorite (journal) an extraordinary publication--very little work of the caliber being done by the Russians has been conducted in the United States. Apparently, there it has big support; here, it is an individual matter. Until we had some military interest in meteoritics, we were never able to found even an institute in meteoritics in the United States. The one in New Mexico is an outgrowth of application of meteoritics to determine, say, ballistic coefficients for shells of unconventional design like the proximity fuse shell with the radio in its nose, and that sort of thing. That's where we got a start. Apparently, the Russians got that earlier and have full-fledged state support.

"Dr. Holloway: How much interest would the military have if they found out these things were landing all over the country, Canada, Hawaii, etc.?Have you contacted people in the East?

"Dr. La Paz: Olivia, C.C. Olivia, President of the American Meteor Society, King, Leonard, Pruitt, Kaplan, etc. Most of them have been observing; Kaplan, I imagine, has not....is now preoccupied with laboratory experiments. I think that if anyone of the UCLA Institute of Geophysics had been observing, it would have gotten to Kaplan's ears....There are two great advantages to this area; first, you have clear skies at night and can observe them as they come down, and second, (record blank for a minute or two).

"Dr. Holloway:this was before the war. They had a telephone network which covered a fair section of the East there....a network so that your observations....I mention this to indicate, I don't know what he is doing now, but at least they may have a group of people who have been observing. May not be in a position to....green fireballs, but they might have seen them.

"Dr. La Paz: My one attempt to contact.... and unfortunately I did not approach him again for information, but someone acquainted with him should certainly ask if they have observed any of this sort of thing there.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: Well, wouldn't phenomena of this nature have been reported to the Society, no matter where they occurred?

"Dr. La Paz: Yes, I would think so. For example, you can consult the so-called meteor notes of the American Meteor Society, and popular astronomy, they are published from month to month with the President, C.C. Olivia, Director of the Florida Observatory at the University of Pennsylvania. I've been through those very carefully. There's one single solitary case of a fireball which by one of the observers--a doubly observed fireball--so it was possible for me to....in which one of the observers mentions a green color. Not this peculiar yellow-green which most people in that work find unusual, and in the case of that the elevation determined is of the order of, oh 199 kilometers from the beginning point and roughly 100 for the end, so I think it is only an ordinary fireball; nothing unusual about it. That was the only case I found.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: According to recent records, where the observation conditions in other parts of the country satisfactory? At least part of the time?

"Dr. La Paz: Well, I infer from the fact that we have had so much trouble out here and the East has been bragging about its climatic advantages; that probably during the recent months, they have had good observancy. I haven't attempted a full scale check on that.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: Let's put it this way then: Have there been a sufficient number of fireballs reported in the last 60 days in other parts of the country to lead us to infer that had some of these occurred, they would have been reported?

"Dr. La Paz: I think that definitely is true. To my knowledge, as far as the contacts I've had with Olivia and so on, there was nothing out of the normal noticed in the East, and in the South, shall we say as far up as White Sands. Whether the Harvard Observatory set-up observed anything peculiar or not; I don't know. We tried right away to get that information. We were told by the gentleman in charge down there, I'm sure this will be of interest to you, that it was impossible to make an estimate of the approximate wave and angstroms without detailed spectroscopic equipment, which he did not possess. So whether the Captain actually cut out the spectrum charts and sent them to him or not, I don't know, but it was considered.

"Dr. Bradbury: Well, we're not coming up with any bright ideas for you very fast.

"Mr. Newburger: No, but as long as we have the problem presented to you, maybe by thinking on this, you will come up with an idea!...Of course, you know our entire connection with started with....(deleted name of a crackpot with Communist affiliations) back in 1946!

"Dr. La Paz: Except for the flying discs, nothing that you could say would cause me greater embarrassment! I have actually had communications from (deleted) myself.

"Dr. Teller: Your statement of the absence of sound when this thing has gone apparently overhead at the distance of 10 miles, within earshot of people.

"Dr. La Paz: That seems incomprehensive, doesn't it, Dr. Teller? I'm glad to hear you say that because that has been my feeling from the beginning. And we tried desperately to get confirming evidence whenever sounds were mentioned. No reports have been obtained.

"Dr. Teller: I must say that the admission in which one could get....typical phenomenon is something in the light of....

"Dr. La Paz: Kaplan told me he was going to get out of his old blow pressure tubes and begin experimenting as soon as he returned from the (?) UCLA, to see if he could duplicate in any way the descriptions we have given him.

"Dr. Holloway: What sound does a P-2 (V-2?) make when it goes overhead?

"Dr. La Paz: I can tell you what they make when they come down.

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: I can tell you what they make when they go overhead at the height of about 1,000 yards. But anything manmade that passes overhead at the height of 8-10 miles, at this speed, could be inaudible.

"Dr. Teller: You think it could be?

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: I think it could be. The only... (?)

"Dr. Teller: Even if it went at the speed of 10 miles per second?

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: Well....(?)"

"Dr. Teller: You see, at that time, the.... begins to come up.

"Dr. La Paz: You bet it does.

"Dr. Bradbury:(?)"

"Dr. Teller: You have to get a shock wave out of it. With a very small object the shock wave would be smaller than....I have not made calculations on it, but it's just common sense.

"Dr. La Paz: I would like to ask a question. Isn't it true in the case of the so-called light movement that you have very intense, luminous effects off them without noise?

(Talk between Drs. Bradbury and La Paz too fast and too jumbled to be transcribed.)

"Comdr. Mandelkorn: From what Dr. Teller said apparently a solid object converging with the atmosphere horizontally at about 8 to 10 miles altitude, it's incredible that it wouldn't be accompanied by some sort of sonic phenomenon.

"Dr. Teller: I would like to repeat that to try to get an estimate of the size of the object, that it would have to have in order to get sound effects, is not an easy thing, but offhand I would say--this is what I would expect--that you get a very small object, as small as an inch or smaller.

"Dr. La Paz:(?)"

"Dr. Teller: If I remember correctly, the intensity, the amount of energy that goes into a shock wave is proportional to the square of the velocity. The velocity that you have here proportional to the square of the velocity and of course, is proportional, I should think probably to the square of the linear dimensions of the object that you have. Now you have 10 miles per second.... velocity of the object that you have. Now you have 10 miles per second....velocity you have 20 miles per second, so this could be, on that count, ten times fainter--the sound would be ten times fainter. On the other hand, a meteorite that you will hear, I think....that much across....

(Too much cross talk.)

"Dr. Teller: That is something we could do right away. Now I do not know, tried to get from you information on brightness, but I would like to ask again some details....

"Dr. La Paz: The brightest meteorite fall in history, of which we have historical record, was the....fall in 1908, June 20....estimates the power, the light power, of that was of the order of 10 to the 18th power--10 to the 19th power ergs per second. In the case of the Texas fall it was probably not 100,000th as bright.

(Dr. Teller then spent approximately the next twenty minutes or so figuring on the blackboard--estimating light, speed, kinetic energy, shock wave, etc.)

"Dr. Teller: If I can just believe everything I have heard and put it together with what I theoretically believe in, it ought to be a material body--might be an electron phenomenon.

"Dr. La Paz: You see why I'm puzzled, Dr. Teller. Nothing like this to my knowledge has ever been observed in the case of meteorite drops.

"Dr. Teller: If you go to a group like UCLA or some other place where they have a good sound laboratory, they ought to be able to take the absence of sound observations--that is definitely incompatible, assuming that you know that there are....and assuming that they have heard no sound from this, they ought to be able to work an upper range upon the sight of the object which has been moving, and from these figures I would be inclined to believe the object could probably not have a heat (?) or something like one cubic centimeter. One centimeter in dimension, and that in turn would not have given the blinding effect, it was a material object.

"Dr. Bradbury: Wait a minute. I think you've left out something in light effects--you don't have to worry about kinetic energy. You can get your light from chemicals as well.

"Dr. Teller: That is correct....

"Mr. Newburger: This seems to wind up the meeting.

"Dr. Bradbury: Still don't feel that the meteor stuff is out. The puzzling thing is the long horizontal path; also absence of noise is puzzling."⁵⁰

After the conference, Dr. La Paz returned to his teaching post at the University of New Mexico still convinced there was something very strange going on in the atmosphere.⁵¹ Years later when he was approached by Edward Ruppelt about the "green fireball" matter, La Paz had not changed his opinion.⁵²

Officially things did not end with the February conference. Special cameras, "meteorschmitts," as they called by La Paz, were being produced by Harvard for employment in the southwest. FBI documents, by chance, reveal something about the Harvard specialized instrumentation:

"The Geophysical Research Division, Air Material Command, Cambridge, Massachusetts, has recently let a contract to Land-Air, Inc., Holloman AFB, Alamogordo, New Mexico, for a limited scientific study of green fireballs. The results of this scientific approach to the problem will undoubtedly be of great value in determining the origin of these phenomena."⁵³

This offshoot of the conference was Project TWINKLE, a scheme to gain more accurate information on any more "peculiar meteors" by establishing a number of cinetheodolite stations to film anything unusual in the atmosphere, especially fast moving objects.

One of the surprises of examining declassified Air Force UFO files is the continued discovery of reports of a class of objects typified by the Chiles-Whitted "sky monster", a huge, jet-propelled cigar-shape a hundred feet or more in length. Words used to describe the objects in question are varied: "sausage," "spindle," "blimp," "tube," "rocket," or "cucumber."

The "sky monster" of Sandberg Pass:

South of Bakersfield, California, in the vicinity of Sandberg Pass on February 28th, still another sighting was made. In this case a young lieutenant of the Air Force Reserve caught sight of something while piloting a T-11 aircraft.

"....while flying on a northerly heading at an altitude of approximately 9,000 feet, I observed what appeared to be a jet-propelled aircraft of an unfamiliar type. Weather over Sandberg Pass was thin scattered clouds, visibility 10 miles, temperature 36, cloud covering at approximately 20,000 feet, dew point 34, wind south 7, altimeter 3007. The visibility west was one mile with fog ceiling and visibility variable due to scattered stratus drifting in the area. The object with the general

shape of a blimp approached head-on about 1500 feet above me, made a complete 360 degree circle and left on a heading of 180 degrees to my course. The object left a steady glow at the rear which I believed to be a jet exhaust. At the time the co-pilot was in the rear of the aircraft and at no time observed the object. I was unable to determine its distance from me due to darkness and climatic conditions. The object appeared about as big as two fingers at arms' length and it took about 40 seconds for the object to make a 360 degree turn about my aircraft. During this maneuver I observed the object to be approximately 20 degrees above my line of flight."⁵⁴

Colonel Clingerman of Project SIGN mailed two "Guide to Investigation" forms to the March AFB Intelligence Officer asking that detailed signed statements be obtained from all available witnesses and added: "Results of this investigation should be advised of the necessity of avoiding publicity in this matter."⁵⁵

The "thing" parked above Little Rock:

"Three hours after midnight on February 25th, something took a liking to Little Rock, Arkansas, positioning itself high in the sky:

"....witnesses sighted an unknown object directly overhead of their residence on the outskirts of Little Rock, Arkansas. The shape appeared as flat and perfectly round with a diameter of from 30 to 60 feet. Color could not be determined because of darkness. The entire 'disc' was reported to be plainly outlined by radiation or luminescence. Altitude was estimated at 10,000 - 12,000 feet. The object was highly maneuverable. During $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of observation the object appeared to stop and reverse its direction several times. At one time, during observation, it appeared to come to a sudden stop and move directly up for several thousand feet, after which it returned to its normal elevation of 10,000 - 12,000 feet. No estimate was made of speed of object but witness reported it as 'several times as fast as conventional aircraft'. No sound was noticed. No exhaust trail of object was noticed. At one time during observation a vertical beam or ray of light was noticed from the object to the ground. Weather at the time was clear with good visibility."⁵⁶

If the Russians or "Men from Mars" were interested in Los Alamos and White Sands, it would be understandable, but why an Army camp in Texas?

Beginning in March 1949, strange lights began to appear in the sky over Camp Hood, Texas, with unnerving regularity. Authorities were more than concerned because Camp Hood was more than just another Army camp. The lights showed extreme curiosity about that part of the camp ringed by guards, the so-called "Q" area. Indications are that the "Q" area was a nuclear weapons depot.

Listed below are quotes taken from eyewitness accounts which give some idea of what was being seen:

- "size of a basketball, white-color, round-shaped, and had a long trail."
- "Half-dollar size, white--to full violet, fast acceleration from standing start."
- "Brilliant light, 20 to 40 feet in diameter, very slow speed."
- "Pale yellow, smaller than the Moon, slow..."
- "Size of a dime at arms length, incandescent white, round stationary..."
- "...oblong, pale blue-white, faint pinkish trail...."
- "...Ball-like flash, pale blue-white...."
- "...like flash bulb, size of basketball, bright blue-white...."
- "...roundish head with trail, light colored head, orange trail...."
- "like flash bulb, brilliant blue-white...."
- "...roundish head with hazy smoke trail, pale white light at head, traveled in an arc...."
- "...lemon-shaped with tail, pale reddish nose, whitish red trail, very fast...."
- "...orange, teardrop-shape, dropped vertically...."⁵⁷

It would be best, however, to deal with more detail. One incident mentioned that the:

"....light started from a point above the horizon then arced upward and down to 15 degrees when it disappeared. It was a perfect arc. He (the observer) was able to run 10 paces toward a field telephone to report the light before it vanished."⁵⁸

Camp Hood authorities were developing a bad case of nerves:

"The following incident may or may not be connected. At about 1930 hours on 7 March 49, a flashlight was seen moving about the 'Q' Area fence line near the air strip. It could not be told by the observer whether the light was within or without the fence. The Security Officer of Baker Site is investigating. He stated the light was not carried by any of the AFSWP personnel."⁵⁹

The dates of the strange light sightings were: the 19th and 31st of March; the 27th of April (4 sightings that day); the 6th, 7th (two sightings), 8th, 23rd (two sightings), and the 24th (three sightings) of May.

The FBI received the impression that the Camp Hood "flares" were non-controversial:

"These appear to be reason to believe that the above-mentioned phenomena may be connected with secret experiments being conducted by some U.S. Government Agency as it is believed that the United States is farther advanced in guided missile development than any other power."⁶⁰

This uncomfortable correlation with a sensitive military/scientific area thus shared a similarity with the "green meteors" which was something that did not escape official notice:

"At Camp Hood, it was determined that this type of phenomena, hitherto unreported from the Camp Hood area, had the same general characteristics of the phenomena observed during the past several months at Sandia Base. Because observers were in different locations and some were not certain as to time, it is possible that observations reported within the same hour on the same date are duplications. It should be noted that none of the observers had been instructed to look for or report any sort of atmospheric phenomena. All stated without equivocations that they had never before seen anything resembling the reported phenomena. All claimed to have seen 'falling stars' nearly every night on the Camp Hood Reservation; but all were emphatic in stating that this phenomena was quite different. All men were interrogated separately and had no advance notice that they would be questioned. After the interrogation they were taken to the spot where the observations had been made. These points were numbered and then plotted on a map, Camp Hood and vicinity, 1/62 500 1943. Overlays have been made and a copy is hereto attached. The observer was

then told to aim a surveying instrument, brought along for the purpose, at the celestial points of origin and of termination of the phenomena. Vertical angles and magnetic azimuth of each point was then recorded. In most cases, the observer was able to fix azimuths by some terrain features. Vertical angles were of course estimated except where elevations of observations coincided with ridge or tree lines."61

The conclusion: "No conclusion is drawn from the data on attached overlay other than to note that the 'lights' form a rough circle about the 'Q' area."62

Meanwhile, alarm continued in New Mexico. Fourth Army Intelligence at Sandia Base noted more manifestations in the sky on March 8th from both Kirtland AFB and the atomic installation at Los Alamos:

"Kirtland AFB reports luminous object, blue white in color in northwest horizon. Descent vertical, exploding before reaching earth. No sound indicated.

"Los Alamos guard station #106 reports luminous object, greenish white in color, west of southwest. Direction of flight southeast on horizontal plane. Altitude at or below partial cloud cover. Duration of sighting 2 to 4 seconds. Speed slower than meteor or falling star. No noise heard.

"Los Alamos guard station #103 reports luminous object, greenish white with billowy white flaming tail. Seen west of southwest by observer, gliding in a 60 degree downward angle. Was at altitude of cloud layer. Speed undetermined but described as floating or lazy manner. Observed for 2 to 4 seconds. No noise heard."63

Something also approached Camp Hood in a "lazy manner," coming down out of the sky at a 45 degree angle, almost drifting as it eased itself earthward. A government expert employed at Camp Hood looked up just in time to catch sight of the intense white light. He later told Lt. E. D. Hightower at Protective Force Headquarters his story. The expert, a Mr. Patterson, said:

"(I)...was extremely startled by this object as the first impression was that it was a plane on fire and about to crash nearby. As the eyes became adjusted to the distance this Inspector had the distinct impression of seeing a silver or aluminum colored red body inside the flame or glow that resembled that part of the fuselage of a war-time German type plane from just behind the wing to just in front

of the tail assembly. This Inspector further had the impression that the object was actually flaming and that the flames were quite visible. The overall shape of the object including the flame or light was much like the accompanying sketch. The object appeared less than one half time from the observer and the outlines were very distinct."⁶⁴

Troops and tanks were poised around the "Q" area in preparation for a training exercise but maneuvers suddenly became the real thing! The Army report on the episode reads:

"Eight moving 'lights' appeared in the atmosphere over or in the vicinity of the 'Q' area, AFSWP, Camp Hood, Texas, on the evening of 17 March 1949. At the time of these sightings, the alert guard of the 2nd Armored Division, under the Assistant AC of S, G-2 of Camp Hood, was in the area concerned and prepared to fire flares and record instrument readings of elevation and azimuth. The purpose was to check the powers of observation of observers who had previously reported the phenomena observed on 6-7-8 March 1949 and heretofore reported in Summary of Information, this headquarters, dated 17 March 1949. Subject: "Unusual Lights." However, before this operation could be begun, the series of 8 unusual 'lights' appeared....Coordinates were based on dual sightings of each light by sights on tanks of observers. Time was clocked at instant of sighting. Captain McCullough, the Assistant G-2, personally observed three of the lights. Physical characteristics of these 'lights' were reported as 'quite different' from those reported on March 6-7-8 March 1949. One burst into a green cluster. One was reddish, another white. One observer described some of them as similar to Very Pistol flares. While this phenomena was occurring, a security detachment from the 'Q' area arrived in the vicinity of the alert crew from the 2nd Armored Division."⁶⁵

"Alert Status:"

Were the lights just flares? The following tells what was found:

"It was then determined that no one in the 'Q' area was responsible for the phenomena. 'Q' area then went on alert status. Ordnance check has shown that nothing in the way of pyrotechnic missiles has been issued or used in months. Investigation of whole area by ground crews is being made and additional reports will be rendered. As in the case of the 6-7-8 March 'lights', those of the 17th 'bracket' the 'Q'

area. One group of 3 lights being North of the area and one group of 5 lights just South of the area."⁶⁶

The crowning insult to the personnel at Camp Hood was the passage of a formation of "lights" in front of the entire garrison lined up for an evening ceremony, in effect the phenomena thumbing its nose at the whole bunch. When higher headquarters took no action on their complaints, the Army Commander worked out an extensive visual tracking system that only needed a final okay from the Pentagon. The okay never came. Edward Ruppelt claims that the Army scheme was one of the first casualties of the change at Air Force Intelligence at Wright Field.⁶⁷

This new way of treating the UFO problem got some publicity that only intensified curiosity. The public was treated to some comment that interpreted the "new look" of Project GRUDGE as anything but a "minimum level" effort apparently dealing with something of little consequence. The Associated Press in an article datelined Washington, D.C., March 12th, remarked:

"Remember the flying saucers? For what it may be worth--the armed services won't talk about them any more. Any information concerning them is now 'classified' along with information on atomic bombs and guided missiles.

"Few here know what to make of this--if anything--and of course won't talk."⁶⁸

A FBI official by the name of Mr. Fletcher sent a memorandum to a Mr. Ladd on March 14th which advised that: "The approval of the Executives Conference is requested for the attached SAC letter furnishing to the field the type of information desired by the Intelligence Division of the Air Force..."⁶⁹ Noting that the Bureau had dropped out of the UFO investigation business on October 1, 1947, Mr. Fletcher wrote that a Mr. "E" (name crossed off) had "confidentially advised" him the Air Force considered the UFO's to man-made and that the Russians were experimenting with a type of flying disc craft, moreover, that for the most part UFO's approached from the north indicating a Russian origin. Therefore, the FBI should furnish the special report forms dated February 15th and titled: "Unconventional Aircraft" to agents in the field.⁷⁰

The distribution was approved. A letter to all Special Agents in Charge (SAC) signed by J. Edgar Hoover explained the possible Russian threat and terminated with:

"....no investigation should be conducted by your office relative to flying discs, however, the attached memorandum should be referred to in securing the data from persons who desire to voluntarily furnish information to your office relating to flying discs."⁷¹

Although the FBI chose to remain passive and the "new look" at Project GRUDGE reduced investigating to a minimum level, this period was marked by a significant expansion in official interest. Perhaps the best authority on this is Brad Sparks who tells us:

"In March 1949, the CIA's (Central Intelligence Agency) newly established Office of Scientific Intelligence (not to be confused with the Air Force's Office of Special Investigations or 'OSI') assigned an intelligence analyst in its Weapon and Equipment Division to keep a file of UFO reports and to follow any developments of interest."⁷²

The Central Intelligence Agency:

European author Baron Johannes von Buttlar makes a fantastic claim about this period of UFO history, asserting that he obtained his information from "special contacts within the American CIA and the Russian KGB." The CIA, he says, was informed by another American government agency in 1949 that UFO's were "almost certainly extraterrestrial visitors." As for the KGB, von Buttlar contends that it arrived at a similar conclusion about the same time. Both Intelligence agencies, he goes on to say, determined that "public interest in UFOs was an obstacle." To the Russians secrecy was not too much of a problem since a state controlled press had always been an official policy. The American CIA, however, faced a more formidable task in that it had to operate in an open society. According to von Buttlar, beginning in 1949, the CIA resorted to a scheme of deception, ridicule, and lies, to debunk the UFO subject. Project GRUDGE, he maintained, was established to "explain" UFO reports as hallucinations, hoaxes, or mistakes. What the CIA and the KGB were engaged in, von Buttlar tells us, was a race to obtain knowledge of the highly advanced technology the UFOs utilized.

How much truth is contained in the European best seller, von Buttlar's The UFO Phenomenon, is a matter of conjecture without more exact verification, but one suspects that he may have scored a few bullseyes.

All this time editors like Ken Purdy of True magazine had investigative reporters haunting the halls of the Pentagon, asking for opinions and tracking down rumors in the hope the Air Force or some other source would reveal what had been discovered about UFOs. Sam Soal and John Du Barry of True couldn't get much in the way of Air Force cooperation,⁷³ but it wasn't because the military didn't want a UFO story to be written, it was just that the UFO subject was so sensitive it was felt it needed a "special touch."

There were no UFO reports on April Fool's Day, but on the third a real winner came in from Dillon, Montana, a "classic" saucer shape performing "classic" maneuvers:

"The object appeared to be approximately twenty feet in diameter and four to five feet in depth through the center. The object at the time of sighting appeared to be rocking or rotating in a semi-circular motion. It appeared to be constructed of metal such as aluminum and was bright on the upper side and reflected sunlight. The lower side appeared to be either blue-gray or greenish-gray, which did not reflect light. The shape of the object was that of a plate or disc placed upon another inverted plate or disc. The edges of the disc were believed to be exceedingly thin with considerable thickness in the middle.

"The object, after rocking from side to side for at least six completed arcs, proceeded in an easterly direction and descended rapidly from the height at which it was first observed down to an altitude of approximately 700 or 1,000 feet at which it again started the rocking motion. After rocking a few times and reflecting light each time, the upper side came into view. It had then moved rapidly in a southwesterly direction to a position approximately 1,000 feet in altitude and two miles west of Dillon, Montana, at which time it again started the rocking motion. After rocking a few times, it proceeded rapidly to a position above the airport of Dillon, Montana. The object again rocked a few times and rapidly disappeared over and beyond the mountains east of Dillon..."⁷⁴

Something other than routine remarks were made in the official file on the case:

"Particular attention is drawn to the fact that the direction of travel of the unconventional aircraft conforms with the radio beams in the Dillon range..."⁷⁵

A bird, a plane,--Superman?

A Cleveland newspaper on April 6th printed: "Here's a sample of a conversation on any street corner in Cleveland today: 'What was that in the sky last night--a bird, a plane--superman?'"⁷⁶ It seems that a mysterious red light had taken a liking to Cleveland and was hovering over the city at night. The newspaper remarked:

"One thing is certain--it wasn't a flying saucer. They were seen only in the daytime last year. And speaking of them...the Air Force said today it still can't explain the saucers. The Air Force says there's no reason to think some

foreign country was practicing with rockets over American territory. Yet on the other hand, the Air Force says cautiously that it can't rule out that possibility. Just what were they? Like Clevelanders today, the Air Force just shrugs its collective shoulders and says 'you tell me.'"77

"There they go again!"

It was twenty minutes after midnight. A number of clouds, dark gray in the blackness of the heavens, drifted silently over Ambridge, Pennsylvania. Two miles north of town some rail yard workers were loading freight that early morning of April 26th. High above them the clouds drifted by and for a moment left a huge gap, a long narrow break about three miles wide by four miles long, through which the Moon and stars could be viewed clearly. Mr. Peter Hildebrand gazed at the sky when some movement caught his eye. Quickly he yelled: "There they go again!" One of the other workers, a Mr. Sradomski, busy at work next to the locomotive, looked up in time to see something at 45 degrees from horizon. He later testified that some 40 round objects in formation were clearly visible in the break in the clouds. Gold in color and seemingly luminated internally, the things were without detail except for some dark spots. No vapor trails were noticed. The phenomenon remained in sight for 10 seconds:

"The formation consisted of three V formed elements. The first element was estimated to consist of 18 or 20 objects, the second element which followed immediately after the first consisted of approximately 11 or 12 objects and the third element which followed immediately after the second, definitely consisted of 8 objects. The formation was travelling from east to west at what appeared to be tremendous speed, estimated at 1,500 mph. It passed directly over Spang Chalfant Corporation and turned south over the Jones and Laughlin plant which is directly west of Spang Chalfant across the Ohio river. The blast furnaces at Jones and Laughlin were in operation and cast a reddish glow into the sky. Over that plant the third object from the lead on the left side of the last element seemed to drop out of the formation, bank to one side at approximately a 90 degree angle as if to observe below. This object then resumed its place in the formation and the formation abruptly disappeared to the south."78

Both witnesses generally agreed with the above. One of them however felt the: "...objects appeared to be weaving or fluttering and at times swerved from side to side and several crossed over each other."79

The men said a similar overflight of objects had been witnessed by them three months before on December 17, 1948.

"Are those airplanes? Boy! They are sure fast."

The color of unlighted, frosted electric light bulbs, the two objects hurdled over Peterson Air Field at Colorado Springs 1:30 p.m., April 15th. The Intelligence Division of the Fifteenth Air Force investigated:

"Objects followed a straight course. When first seen, the object on the left was an apparent distance of five feet behind the first, and with an increase of speed overtook the first object in about two seconds and flew in close formation with the first object. This fact seems to preclude the possibility that these objects were meteors.

"Object was first sighted by T/Sgt. Morbeck, who was watching a B-25 pass over the field, and observed the objects passing above the B-25, going in the opposite direction, and called them to the attention of Major Bullock and M/Sgt. Fink, who were standing near by and remarked: 'Are those airplanes? Boy! They are sure fast.'"80

New Mexico again:

A letter reached Dr. La Paz detailing what might have been a large scale appearance of UFO's in New Mexico April 25th. A young man, who had read of Dr. La Paz's interest in unusual aerial phenomena, penned a note to the professor because he was profoundly puzzled at something witnessed when he was fishing at Springer Lake, a body of water four miles northwest of the New Mexico town of the same name. At 6:30 in the morning the 25-year-old man and a friend were preparing bait when they both:

"....heard a peculiar sound sort of a high pitched whistle. We both thought it was some high flying ducks coming in for a landing and we looked up in the air. What we saw was certainly not ducks, but what it was we don't know.

"We saw 'objects' which were silvery white in color and to us what looked like balls, sort of like Christmas tree ornaments. They passed us at very high altitude and going very fast. They were out of sight in a very few seconds."81

The correspondent claims he observed the objects for over an hour. He made a sketch that showed the objects in various formations as they zoomed overhead. The word: "zoomed" may be a good word to use since the witness remarked: "....I do not believe that these objects could have been picked up or followed with field glasses; they were moving much too fast."82

If the objects seen at Springer lake were real, then it lends support to possibility that something strange was going on in the skies of New Mexico April 24th. Some 200 miles southwest of Springer, at Arrey, New Mexico, the site of White Sands Proving Ground, military personnel were making a pibal wind run. The official statement reads that on April 24th the men witnessed something very strange:

"We released a 350 gram balloon at about 1020 MST and were following it with a standard ML-47 David White Theodolite. After the 1030 reading, --- (deleted) took over the theodolite and --- (deleted) and I looked up to find the balloon when we picked up a whitish spherical object right along the direction the theodolite was pointing (45 degree elevation and 210 degree azimuth). The object was drifting east rapidly (5 degree/second as estimated by stopwatch and width of fingers), but we had thought to encounter similar winds on the balloon. When the distance between the theodolite and the supposed ballon became apparent, I took over the theodolite and found the true balloon still there, whereupon I abandoned it and picked up the object after it came out of the sun (this gives another good bearing if you wish to work out a sun shot at 1030 MST at Arrey). The object was moving too fast to crank the theodolite around; therefore, one of the men pointed the theodolite and I looked. The object was an ellipsoid about $2\frac{1}{2}:1$ slimness ratio; length about .02 degree subtended angle. White in color except for a light yellow of one side as though it were in shadow. I could not get a hard focus on the object due to the speed at which the angles changed. Therefore, I saw no good detail at all.

"The azimuth angle continued to decrease as the object continued on a north heading, growing smaller in size. At around 20 degrees--25 degrees azimuth, the azimuth held constant and the elevation angle began increasing from the 25 degrees minimum to about 29 degrees. The object then apparently disappeared due to distance after a total time of observation of about 60 seconds.

"The object was not a balloon and was some distance away. Assuming escape velocity, a track is enclosed which figures elevation above the station of about 300,000 feet over the observed period. If this is true, the flight would have probably gone over the White Sands Proving Ground, Holloman Air Force Base, and Los Alamos."⁸³

Air Force advisor Dr. J. Allen Hynek said of the Arrey case: "...to the best of my knowledge, it was not taken seriously by....(Project GRUDGE). No follow-up was made."⁸⁴

Dr. Hynek also contributes this comment:

"This sighting has been classified as a mirage by some 'experts' but the physics in this case certainly escapes me. Moore then launched another balloon and tracked it throughout its course to 90,000 feet. At no level were the winds from the southwest, so a balloon is ruled out."⁸⁵

The shiny sausage of Tucson:

Something huge also zipped over Tucson, Arizona, on the 28th. Numerous civilians spotted the object. Of the many accounts on file with the Air Force, the following is representative:

"At approximately 5:45 p.m. on 28 April 1949, I sighted an object in the air NE of Tucson, Arizona, just over the rim of the Catalina Mountains. This object was very bright and appeared to be reflecting the sun shine. From my point of observation, this object was first sighted at approximately a 30 degree angle of elevation and I would judge it to be at that time about 300 miles NE of Tucson. This object was in sight for approximately 12 minutes after which time it disappeared to the SW, just gradually fading from view in the distance. It appeared to be traveling in a curved trajectory, but I believe this object was traveling in a straight line and from my point of observation, the illusion was curved. I would judge this object to be traveling in excess of 500 miles an hour at an altitude of from 5 to 10 miles up. It appeared to be sausage-like in shape, with no fins, wings, or protrubances of any sort. It seemed to be revolving similar to a slow roll of an airplane. It was most visible when it reached a position where it reflected the sun's rays but it also could be seen during the times when no reflections were visible. From the height and size of the object in the air, and if it was placed on the ground, I would judge it to be the size of a city block. I did not hear any noise nor was there any exhaust or vapor trails."⁸⁶

The same day a sighting made in Homer, Michigan, was as vivid as any reported during the big saucer flap in 1947:

"Quickly going out doors and calling to a fellow worker, Mr. ---- (deleted), who was working in the tank room of the plant, we both were able to observe that they were not gulls but six

silver colored discs rotating around in a wide circle at about a 45 degree angle and traveling due west. They seemed to be revolving around as if they were attached to an axle. I judged them to be between 300 and 400 feet off the ground and traveling at about 40 miles per hour."87

The focus of UFO activity, however, remained in the U.S. southwest, Camp Hood had twelve reports of strange lights between 11:20 p.m. April 27th, to 11:30 p.m. April 28th. All of the sightings were made by guards in the dead of the night. Nothing unusual was noted during the daylight hours. Colonel Eustis Poland, GSC, AC of S, G-2, alerted Air Force Intelligence. The dates and times as given by Colonel Poland are listed below:

- 1-Rpt dtd 27 Apr, 2120 hours
- 2-Rpt dtd 27 Apr, 2135 hours
- 3-Rpt dtd 27 Apr, 2137 hours
- 4-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2030 hours, at Outpost No. 3
- 5-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2030 hours, at 914.8 - 856.1
- 6-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2037 hours
- 7-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2040 hours
- 8-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2100 hours
- 9-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2110 hours
- 10-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2110 hours
- 11-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2130 hours
- 12-Rpt dtd 28 Apr, 2130 hours

Some of the descriptions:

One account mentions a light, going on and off at regular intervals, that moved horizontally close to the ground, even passing through a fork of a tree. Another Army guard saw a bright, white cone-shaped affair, three to four inches long, that moved in one direction and then made a 180 degree turn before going out. Still another guard said he witnessed a round, bright, white light 200 yards away and about seven feet above the ground. It approached him within 50 yards. He thought it to be the size of a baseball. It was in sight some 30 to 40 seconds. Standing guard, yet another Army guard was surprised to see a light come on, a dull violet, glareless glow about the size of a 50 cent piece. The light was stationary at first but then moved passed the guard, approaching within 12 feet. It quickly picked up speed and darted off down a nearby road (Route 203) at an altitude of an estimated seven feet.

For five to six seconds another guard watched as a light, he believed to be some 10 to 15 inches long and about 100 to 150 feet in the air, jumped up and down. It appeared to be a mile away. After a while it shot off to the south, changing color all the time from white, to red, and then green. At one guard post a soldier glanced toward the camp and suddnly noticed a light he thought to be the dimensions of a baseball, two miles off just above the tree tops. The round light drifted slowly west. The

soldier remarked that the light was visible for about three minutes, vanished for two, and then came on again.

In the center of the bivouac area one enlisted man had learned of the lights being reported by the guard posts around the perimeter and walked out to the road to see for himself. He wasn't disappointed. Something chalk-white about a mile away to the north sped past, a baseball-sized object that traversed part of the dark sky in two to three seconds and then went out like a light bulb being turned off. A private in "C" Company spotted a baseball-sized light some 300 yards from the camp that bounced around for ten minutes blinking on and off. Alerted by a phone call, outpost number 3 checked the sky and immediately sighted four round lights the size, they guessed, of tennis balls. The four lights were at an azimuth of 45 degrees. One of the lights changed color. First it was white, and then it turned red, and finally it became green. The other three lights remained white in color. Duration of the sighting was about a minute.

Two guards were watching the night sky when one yelled: "There it goes!" The other guard turned in time to also see the phenomenon, a bunch of lights some eight to ten in number, at an angle of 40 degrees up into the vault of the heavens. The flock of lights traveled slowly toward the southeast. The lights all followed the same pattern. About the size of a softball, the two guards said, the round lights first appeared white, and then reddish, and finally a green color. Another large group of lights, in fact the largest reported, was seen the night of April 28th when some 18 white and red, round, glowing points appeared just above the treetops about a mile and a half away from the observer. The lights moved slowly and through binoculars appeared to be 10 inches in diameter. They were visible for 10 to 15 minutes.⁸⁸

The Air Force may have felt that the foregoing was some sort of natural phenomenon, but to the Army personnel at Camp Hood the lights were spooky and something they could do without.

The dry official reports of the strange lights seen about Camp Hood lack the essentials of drama, but drama can be imagined and even an ordinary writer could come up with a screenplay that could do justice to the ghostly experience. All of the lights flashed by in the dark and it can be guessed there were many trigger-happy Army sharpshooters that would have given a month's pay to get one of the sky spooks in their gun sights in broad daylight.

Meanwhile, Wright Field was struggling with the Arrey, New Mexico monster. The height and speed estimates of the object reported were enormous. At their desks at Intelligence headquarters, the Air Force experts zeroed in on the witness's admission he did not get a clear focus on the object in question. To them it boiled down to a matter of proper depth perception: "We therefore conclude that the observer could

not estimate the distance of the object from him. Since he could not estimate the distance, then any assumption as to linear speed and/or elevation is without reason."⁸⁹

Things were made simpler, perhaps, by a Fort Bliss, Texas, UFO report filed on April 28th. Seven military men sighted a flat shining object stationary in the sky and all seven witnesses submitted visual impressions of the UFO in the form of drawings. The descriptions were very similar making it very hard to deny that "something" of considerable dimensions had been in the air,⁹⁰ but what? Certainly it was not a small weather balloon. In the course of the investigation it was learned that the Skyhook program had started at White Sands several days prior to the sighting, a program of sending giant balloons (150 feet in diameter) aloft to test the upper atmosphere. The Fort Bliss object fit the description of a Skyhook, therefore, a person might suggest that here also was an answer to the Arrey case.⁹¹ Perhaps there had been a huge unfamiliar object very high over Arrey the day of the sighting. Perhaps the Arrey object might have been 100 feet in diameter as estimated, but the observer's computations that put the object at 300,000 feet and moving at 17,000 miles per hour were fantastic miscalculations. Lacking a reasonable alternative, it made sense.

The scene now shifts to sort of a "showdown" the Air Force had with the public and the press. Ever since the summer of 1947 the Air Force had managed to avoid answering too many questions. The typical brushoff was that they "were still investigating." Now the Air Force felt it was time to tell the UFO story. Two means were employed. One was an official document, a "Memorandum to the Press," a brief handout to the press corps. The other was a large article in the Saturday Evening Post, written with Air Force cooperation. Both appeared on April 29th.

First of all, one should make a few comments about the official memorandum which was eagerly snapped up by reporters. There were some introductory remarks, which included a brief comment on the famous Kenneth Arnold report of June 24, 1947, which was characterized by the memorandum as an event that "set off a chain reaction." This negative attitude at the outset set the tone of the rest of the document.⁹²

According to the Air Force, the military conducted exhaustive investigations of each reported UFO sighting. They mentioned that they had on file some 240 domestic and 30 foreign reports. This low number reflected the fact that only "officially reported" UFO reports were logged and investigated.⁹³

While admitting that question marks still existed, it was stated that there were: "...no alarming probabilities."⁹⁴

By page three the memorandum launched into a sketchy recounting of various UFO reports that seem to have been

selected at random with the exception of a few widely publicized "classics" like the Mantell and Chiles-Whitted cases.

Toward the end of the document the space visitor theory was discussed at length, generally following the guidelines drawn by Dr. George Valley's evaluation although his name and that of the RAND organization was not mentioned.⁹⁵ The critical part of the document, the summation, read:

"To sum up no definite conclusive evidence is yet available that would prove or disprove the possibility that a portion of the unidentified objects are real aircraft of unknown or unconventional configuration."⁹⁶

Furthermore:

"Many sightings by qualified and apparently reliable witnesses have been reported. However, each incident has unsatisfactory features such as the shortness of time the object was under observation, the great distance from the observer, vagueness of description or photographs, inconsistencies between individual observers, lack of descriptive data, etc."⁹⁷

"Is there 'something funny' about the silence?"

Now to take up the magazine article authored by Sidney Shallet, one wonders why it was deemed necessary? Why didn't the memorandum satisfy the Air Force? One guess is that the Air Force could imply things in the magazine article in a "semi-official way" not possible in an official document. Or, one might surmise that by cooperating with one journalist, the Air Force would be spared the bother of confrontations with a continuous stream of investigative reporters. Edward Ruppelt wrote of the Post article:

"I have heard many times, from both military personnel and civilians, that the Air Force told Shallet exactly what to say in his article--play down the UFO's--don't write anything that even hints that there might be something foreign in our skies. I don't believe that this is the case; I think that he just wrote the UFO story as it was told to him by Project GRUDGE."⁹⁸

The Saturday Evening Post UFO article was a long two-parter that ran in the April 30th and May 7th issues. The Post article starts off in large type beneath the title that asked: "Is there 'something funny' about the silence that still envelops the mysterious disks?" The article's main theme was that the Generals in the Pentagon did not believe the "saucers" were either Martian scout craft or Russian missiles. The High Command, it goes on to say, attributes UFO reports to misinterpretations of natural phenomena and therefore nothing to

be excited about. Missing was any hint that the Air Force had even been greatly alarmed by the UFO mystery. The article quotes Generals Norstad, Le May, Spaatz, and Vandenburg, as calling the UFO business so much humbug.

Air Force Intelligence officers are quoted complaining that people were reporting things that were hard to entertain. A gentleman in Montana testified that a "...large blue-white ball beamed a bright light at him."⁹⁹ More incredible was a claim by another man who said that while strolling through Golden Gate Park in San Francisco he was attacked by a mysterious light that seemed to have the power to lower his hand like a sack of shot, leaving a bruise on him.¹⁰⁰

A special target of the Post article was the sensational Captain Mantell case. It was proposed that the UFO Mantell had pursued had either been the planet Venus, or a cosmic-ray study balloon (a Skyhook) launched from a site outside Minneapolis.

Amid all the negative remarks about the possible reality of UFO's, there was one allusion to a dissenting opinion. One unnamed scientist of the Project SIGN, fleetingly mentioned, was said to have been convinced that UFO's were extraordinary physical objects. A private UFO investigator happened on something in the 1950's that suggests just who the forementioned unnamed scientist might have been:

"...on the conservative side (is) Alfred C. Loedding, former civilian head of the first Air Force investigation into flying saucers (Project SIGN), and a Princeton aeronautical engineer. According to the Trenton New Jersey Times, Loedding had stated unequivocally that there were such things as flying saucers. He based his statement on more than 100 reports received from airline pilots, Air Force officers, and other reliable sources."¹⁰¹

The vast majority of the material in the Post article was little more than what an ordinary person could gather from major newspapers with a diligent search. The "classic" cases were rehashed (Arnold, Mantell, Gorman, and Chiles-Whitted), but nothing really new could be gleaned from the retelling. Like the official memorandum, there was a disappointing lack of statistical breakdowns of UFO data or other scientific evaluations. In short, there was nothing to indicate that Project SIGN had been a scholarly endeavor.

One point that could be taken from the text for a closer look is the concern expressed by an Air Force expert that the "hardiness of the UFO scare" was undesirable. He reasoned that a future wave of UFO sightings hitting the United States the same time as an international crisis might overload military Intelligence channels dangerously. This was a justified worry during the era of the manned bomber and this excuse for "de-emphasizing" the UFO mystery would be used again in 1953.

The reaction of the press.

While the press faithfully repeated Air Force statements that UFO reports were not a cause for alarm, the wire stories invariably led off with sobering headlines that reflected a continuing concern about the problem. Some examples: "FLYING SAUCERS ARE NOT A JOKE SAYS AIR FORCE" and, "FLYING SAUCER REPORTS BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY."

A news story out of Washington D.C. the next day by the Associated Press was devoted to the new standard questionnaire being circulated by the Air Force for the reporting of UFO's. The news service also singled out the admission that some 40 percent* of the UFO cases on file were unexplained.¹⁰²

Hynek's farewell.

April 30th marked the termination of Dr. J. Allen Hynek's services as an astronomical advisor to Air Force Intelligence. Looking back on his experiences with Project SIGN, Dr. Hynek remembered his job as a part-time effort and that many of his explanations were "force-fit," which over the years he disowned. Explained Hynek: "I, too, thought at the time that UFO's were just a lot of nonsense. I enjoyed the role of debunker even though I had to admit that some (20 percent) of the original 237 cases I studied were real puzzlers."¹⁰³ His job done, Dr. Hynek returned to teaching full time at Ohio University. Later in 1952, he would be called upon to assist the Air Force again with the UFO mystery but in 1949 he had no inkling of such a possibility.¹⁰⁴ The UFO mystery would persist, surprising Hynek and exasperating military intelligence. Were the strange objects Russian afterall?

The ordeal of Arkadiy Arpraksin.

In 1948 a Russian pilot encountered a weird "flying cucumber" while on a training mission. It would not be the last time. A year later this pilot, Arkadiy Arpraksin, was test flying new jet fighters in southern Russia:

"Once, after a flight, another pilot reported that he observed something similar to what Apraksin observed the previous year, at a great distance from himself. It was an object of elongated form from which bundles of light beams emanated. Again, everything was recorded in a statement and compared with Apraksin's data. The second pilot did not close in with the unidentified aircraft and he encountered no complications.

*This figure is no mistake. This is the number quoted in the news accounts although Hynek mentions 20 percent.

"On May 6, 1949, Apraksin took off in a new airplane for a test flight. He flew at a maximum altitude. The cloud cover in the take-off area was light but when he found himself at Moscow latitude clouds covered the ground. He established communications with Vol'sk and maintained communications with the base all the time.

"Suddenly an incomprehensible aircraft similar to the previous one appeared. It flew considerably lower. Later, it began to descend. Then Apraksin directed his aircraft toward the 'flying cucumber.' The speeds of both machines were very great and a collision appeared inevitable. At a distance of about ten to twelve kilometers a cone of light beams was again directed at Apraksin. (This happened during his first encounter with a similar object in 1948.) Blindness set in. It turned out that the entire electrical portion of the controls was destroyed and, furthermore, the front plastic observation window was damaged. The air-tightness of the cockpit was destroyed and although Apraksin was in a special suit and protective helmet, he experienced a drop in external pressure.

"He was in great trouble, but nevertheless he flew the aircraft, gliding it to the earth. Radio communications with the base ceased. Apraksin landed the airplane on the right bank of the Volga, forty-nine kilometers north of Saratov, with great difficulty and lost consciousness.

"When he came to, he was in a hospital at the base. Again, his statements and again the experts (sic) arrived from Moscow. He lay in the hospital (in Saratov) for two and a half months and then was sent to Moscow."¹⁰⁵

Apraksin's troubles would not be over when he arrived at Moscow. In August his ordeal would resume.

Back in the United States at Baltimore, Maryland, an American had his own ideas about Russian activity. He wrote a letter to the Pentagon, a missive would trigger a lengthy investigation. The man scribbled:

"Gentlemen:

"On Saturday, April 30, 1949, I phoned some information to the local office of a certain U.S. government agency. I would like to give you the same information but I hesitate to put it in writing for fear a communist agent may see it. How can I be placed in communication with a high ranking official and assured I am giving this information to a 100 percent supporter of our United States Constitution? Please contact me

at your convenience.

Very truly yours,
 ---- (deleted)"¹⁰⁶

The above letter was mailed May 2nd.

Back in the United States, in New York City, the editor of True magazine, Ken Purdy, had been trying to obtain some satisfactory answers to the UFO riddle for months. The more he and his staff worked, the more complex and mysterious the subject seemed to become. Finally, on May 9th, Purdy sought some outside help. He sent a telegram to a top investigative journalist by the name of Donald Keyhoe, a gentleman with a military background as an ex-Marine Corps pilot, and an author of books on military topics. As a graduate of Annapolis, Keyhoe had many old classmates still in the Navy. Some of his friends even held jobs in the Pentagon. Furthermore, he was an aide to Charles Lindbergh when the "Lone Eagle" made an aerial tour of the U.S. under the auspices of the Daniel Guggenheim Fund for the promotion of aviation. Keyhoe befriended many influential persons in aviation across the nation during the tour.¹⁰⁷ This is to say nothing of Keyhoe being a one-time assistant to the Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, U.S. Department of Commerce.

With the forementioned qualifications it seemed Keyhoe was just the man for Purdy. Although he would become one of the top experts on UFO's in the coming years, when Keyhoe walked into Purdy's New York office in response to a telegram from True's editor, his mind was a blank slate on the subject. Keyhoe has left us a record of his introduction to his saucer assignment. Purdy speaks first in the following exchange:

"Have you seen the Post this week?"

"I told him no.

"There's something damned queer going on. For fifteen months, Project 'Saucer' (SIGN)* is buttoned up tight. Top Secret. Then suddenly, Forrestal gets the Saturday Evening Post to run two articles, brushing the whole thing off. The first piece hits the stands--and what happens?

"Purdy swung around, jabbed his finger at a document on his desk.

"That same day, the Air Force rushes out this Project 'Saucer' report. It admits they haven't identified the disks in any important cases. They say it's still serious enough--wait a minute--'he thumbed through the stapled papers'--to require constant vigilance by Project 'Saucer' personnel and the civilian population."¹⁰⁸

*The code name "SIGN" was classified. The expression: "Project SAUCER" was used by the military in its press releases.

The aroused editor of True handed Keyhoe a stack of notes that had been already collected by his staff on the UFO mystery. Purdy told Keyhoe to study the material and then to nose around the Pentagon to find out anything new. As Keyhoe went out the door, Purdy warned him that True's first man on the job, Sam Boal, had gotten as far as Secretary of Defense Johnson who flatly dismissed the UFO subject as meaningless. In Keyhoe, however, the powers-that-be would have a real fighter as an adversary.109

Most of the Fourth Estate, like the editor of Time magazine, tended to buy the announced conclusions of the Air Force. Still there were a few like True's Purdy who were not about to give up so easily.110

Report of an unusual (?) natural (?) phenomenon.

A two-door sedan left Holloman AFB, New Mexico, about 9:30 p.m. May 12th. As it traveled the highway to Alamogordo the passenger in the vehicle gazed at the Moon that was coming up over the Sacramento Ridge to the east. After a time he became aware of two "stars" of a fuzzy appearance three to four degrees above the horizon. The position of these "stars" bothered him, as did the fuzzy images. Since the observer wore bifocals he shifted his head. He even rolled down the window. As he peered at the points of light he mentally estimated them to be of zero to first stellar magnitude.

He submitted a report on the incident to Air Force Intelligence and titled it: "Report of an unusual (?) natural (?) phenomenon." Of his sighting he wrote:

"There is a bare possibility that the patches were clouds, but the behavior was unusual, to say the least. The whole phenomenon is puzzling. It may have some simple explanation, but there seems to be no completely satisfactory theory available."111

The observer was Dr. Donald Menzel of Harvard Observatory.*

*Dr. Menzel, an astronomer and astrophysicist, obtained his B.A. from the University of Denver, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Princeton.

At Climax, Colorado, an observing station was established in 1940 by Dr. W. O. Roberts and Dr. Menzel. It was called the Fremont Pass Station of the Harvard College Observatory.

During World War II, Dr. Menzel held the rank of Lt. Commander in the Navy and was a member, and subsequently chairman, of the Wave Propagation Committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This committee conducted tests in desert areas to study radar images. As Dr. Menzel acknowledged, light behaves much like radar.

Dr. Menzel apparently remained in close association with the military after the war although he played down such ties. He admits following the UFO story as reported in the news media during the period of 1948 to 1951 and dismissed most accounts as amendable to natural explanations. He eventually became Director of the Harvard Observatory at Cambridge, and as such, could command the attention of the nation's news media when he later became the world's foremost skeptic of UFO's being extraordinary objects.

Censorship?

A rather intriguing paragraph appears in an Air Force document concerning UFO's dated September 22, 1949 which refers to something dated earlier. A Colonel James O'Connell, a OSI District Commander wrote:

"Your attention is invited to Paragraph 11, AF Regulation 205-6, dated 18 May 1949, which prohibits the disclosure of the nature, sources, or existence of investigative information to unauthorized persons."¹¹²

May 19th L. Colonel William M. Turner, Executive, Special Investigations, The Inspector General Office, USAF, Pentagon, forwarded a written request to the Air Force, OSI office at Bolling, AFB, Washington, D.C. to investigate certain "Communist activities," as alluded to in the April 30th letter from a civilian residing in Baltimore, Maryland.¹¹³

Numerous flying saucer reports were coming in during this period, but the majority involved a single witness with little in the way of training that qualify them as an expert observer. There were exceptions.

A man was enjoying a nice warm day on May 20th on Pontchartrain Beach, New Orleans, La., not far from the city airport:

"...he first saw only one object, but later five smaller objects grouped around a larger one. All were bright and shiny, being silver in color. Shape was flat and spherical. Distance from the observer could not be estimated, but objects were in sight for approximately 23 minutes."¹¹⁴

The witness in this case was a Tulane University professor who also happened to hold the rank of Lt. Colonel in the Air Force Reserve. In fact, he was formerly an Intelligence officer and just happened to be well known to the local Air Force OSI Office, so well known no background check on his character was considered necessary.

There were some indications UFO activity would break out in Europe for the fourth year in a row. Reuters told the world on May 20th that:

"Flying balls of fire moving in the direction of the Soviet frontier were today reported to military authorities by inhabitants in different parts of eastern Finland.

"The balls left trails of sparks and made a whinnying noise as they passed overhead at 500 feet, the inhabitants said.

"During the last two years different types of flying bodies have been periodically reported in

Sweden and Finland but scientific investigations showed them to be natural phenomena."¹¹⁵

More atomic plants.

Hanford, Washington, is a small community without any claim to fame other than as the site of the U.S. government's huge atomic plant. Obviously the air space over this important installation was restricted. Therefore, when a silvery, round, disk-shaped object intruded on May 21, 1949, the alarm was sounded. A nearby radar site (the 637 ADCC) picked up a target hovering around 18,000 feet. The proximity of the object permitted visual observation of the unidentified object by personnel at the radar site with one of the military men using a telescope. A F-82 jet fighter was sent aloft from Moses Lake AFB to intercept and identify the UFO. Before the fighter arrived the UFO left the area, but another target, a small, slow, commercial aircraft dropping advertising leaflets, just happened to wander by and official Air Force files classify the case as "explained" and as a "private aircraft." This was done in spite of the investigator on the scene who stated that: "...two separate and distinct alert conditions existed..."¹¹⁶

The Rogue River Riddle.

The next case was checked extensively by Dr. Bruce S. Maccabee, who was initially attracted to the case because of an official reference to it as an outstanding example of an unexplained UFO incident.

His curiosity was further enhanced when he checked Air Force UFO files that had the following listing:

(Date)	(Location)	(Observer)	(Evaluation)
(May) 24	Rogue River, Bend, Oregon	Multiple	Other-Kites
24	Rogue River, Oregon	(deleted)	Aircraft

Dr. Maccabee's search in Project GRUDGE documents for the "multiple witness" Rogue River case proved to be in vain (The file is out of chronological order on the official microfilm. The case material is among files of an earlier date.). Dr. Maccabee did, however, locate the "non-multiple witness" case explained as an aircraft. Eventually he obtained the data on the "multiple witness" case from OSI records. Not only did he determine that both cases had been carelessly filed as separate incidents, he found that neither explanation given could explain what happened that day on May 24th.¹¹⁷

Five people were in the group that saw the object in the air over Rogue River, and two of them were aeronautical engineers employed by the Ames research laboratory at Mountain View, California. The engineers approached the security officer at

Ames who represented the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics. The two aeronautical experts were subsequently interrogated by Project GRUDGE investigators. All five witnesses were questioned and all accounts were nearly identical. Here is one:

"While fishing with a party of friends about two and a half miles up the Rogue River from its mouth at Gold Beach, Oregon, at approximately 5:00 p.m., 24 May 1949, my attention was called to an object in the sky. The object was to the east of my location. With the naked eye, little but a glare and silvery glint could be seen. But after watching it for approximately one minute and a half, I was handed a pair of 8-power binoculars by ---- (deleted). It was then possible to see that the object was roughly circular in shape and appeared to be 30 to 35 feet in diameter. It had somewhat the cross sectional appearance of a pancake, being thicker in the center than at the edges. A small triangular fin started approximately in the middle and grew gradually higher to the rear as the object traveled. When first sighted the object was moving very slowly. As I watched it through the glasses, it picked up speed and when it vanished from sight, approximately 90 seconds later, it was traveling as fast or faster than a jet plane. As far as could be seen, it had no openings or protuberances of any kind other than the fin and there was neither sight nor sound of any driving force. It was a clear day and no clouds in the sky, and the sun was at our backs as we watched the object which vanished in a southeasterly direction, mostly south."118

If the Air Force's handling of the Rogue River case was less than perfect, it may be because of the "new view" at Project GRUDGE, but not helping things were two other cases at this time that may have proved to be distracting. One was the previously mentioned Arrey, New Mexico case, and one we have yet to discuss: "the southern Oregon case."

The witness in the "Southern Oregon case" was a very prominent businessman with an excellent background in aviation. He held a commercial pilot license, both single and multi-engine, plus a flight instructor rating. When he was in the Navy he was a legal and personnel officer while having a senior pilot's grade certificate in the Ferry Wing of the Navy Air Transport Command.

With those credentials, the Air Force was inclined to believe the gentleman, although his story put their belief to a real test.

Shades of Kenneth Arnold.

The summary of the "Southern Oregon" case recalls to mind the famous Kenneth Arnold sighting:

"On Friday, 27 May 1949, ---- (deleted) was flying his privately owned SNJ-type aircraft from Red Bluff, California to Burns, Oregon. He departed Red Bluff at 1332 hours P.S.T. and arrived at Burns at 1458 hours P.S.T. At 1425 hours, same date, ---- (deleted) observed the sun reflecting on an object, or objects, at a considerable distance ahead and a few points to the starboard. He continued to watch the course taken by the reflecting material, expecting it to materialize into a conventional aircraft as the distance lessened between him and the object or objects. As the objects reached the long bluffs (shown on the Boise V-2 Aeronautical Chart as Hart Mountain) which run for a number of miles along the east side of some dry lakes (Swamp, Flagstaff, Campbell and Stone Corral Lakes), he observed that instead of a single object there were several which seemed to be flying in formation. At this point the objects appeared to have changed their course so that they were paralleling his course and were following the bluff's rim at about 1000 to 1500 feet below ---- (deleted) altitude at a distance which he estimates to have been 5- $\frac{1}{2}$ to 7- $\frac{1}{2}$ miles. ---- (deleted) is certain that it could not have been as far as ten (10) miles since the bluffs were less than ten (10) miles away and he could see the objects outlined against the bluffs.

"The objects that ---- (deleted) saw are described by him as follows:

"Size of each object: Considerably smaller than a fighter plane, probably less than 20' in length. All of the separate objects appeared to be the same in size.

"Shape of objects: There was no break in the outline. ---- (deleted) is certain he would have recognized conventional aircraft. They had a solid configuration, and no great thickness. They were elongated oval, perhaps twice as long as wide, and perhaps five times as long as thick. ---- (deleted) points out he observed the objects from an angle from above and could not easily estimate their thickness; they could possibly have been egg-shaped, and could conceivably have been perfectly oval. The objects seemed definitely solid objects--there was nothing ethereal about them.

"Speed of the objects: ---- (deleted) is confident they were traveling at least as fast as his own plane (212 MPH). ---- (deleted) had a tail wind of 15 to 18 MPH and the objects would therefore have

been doing over 230 MPH air speed. The objects were traveling south/southwest, opposite to ---- (deleted) course. Calculating the speed of the objects, several different ways from the facts at hand, the speed of the objects varies between 190 to 260 MPH. ---- (deleted) concluded at the time of observation that he could not possibly have turned around and caught up with the objects. They were definitely traveling faster than a group of birds, and slower than jet planes. No trail of smoke or exhaust was observed. The speed of the objects appeared to be steady.

"Terrain, elevations, population, etc. in area:
Source flew at 9000' MSL which was between 4000' and 5000' above terrain. During most of the time of observation, the objects were 1000' to possibly 1500' below source's plane. Towards the end of sighting when source had begun to come down he was almost on a level with them in altitude.

"Number and formation of objects: At the beginning of observation when the objects were a few degrees to the starboard of dead ahead, source could not distinguish separate objects--all he saw, were reflections; however, as he came closer and passed them by $5\frac{1}{2}$ to $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles, he definitely saw 6 to 7 separate objects. To be on the safe side source states with positiveness that there were no less than 5 objects and no more than 8.

"The objects were always in file formation (one behind the other) and there appeared to be no change in altitude of the formation. The space between the lead object and the next one was three or four times the length of the objects. The distance between the second and the following objects was between one-half and two-thirds the length of the objects. Accordingly, if the objects were 20' in length, the distance between number one and number two was 60 to 80 feet, and the distance between number two and the others was between 10 and 17 feet. The distance between the objects appeared very constant. The objects were so close and appeared to keep their formation spacing in a manner which indicated they might have been under tow by the leading object. At the distance of sighting, no connection, if there was any, could possibly have been observed. Source is positive that the objects were separate objects because he was able to see terrain between them. The formation did not fluctuate in flight; the objects flew very evenly and steadily. When ---- (deleted) last saw the objects they were going out of visual range on the horizon."119

The official explanation:

"It is believed that conventional aircraft, birds, balloons, astronomical phenomena, and auto-hypnosis can be eliminated as an explanation for the objects sighted by source. Since source was not flying into the sun and since he is an expert pilot-instructor, vertigo does not appear to be a reasonable explanation, because of the wide range of observance of the objects. As far as the reporting officer's comment is concerned (as well as source's own comment), the explanation of source's sighting of the strange flying objects remains a question mark."¹²⁰

The big "Z" of June 5th.

It appeared on fire, a burning ball resembling a tiny sun. It cannonballed through the sky at tremendous speed, the flaring light exuding a long pink-colored wake, a smoke trail maybe 1000 feet wide and many miles in length. The altitude was extreme. Observers over a 800 mile stretch from Key West to St. Simon's Island, Georgia, reported the phenomenon. Newspapers, in their write-ups on the incident, suggested that a meteor was responsible, yet there were several aspects that caused speculations. First, there was no sound. Second, the flaming object took between 5 to 10 minutes to cross the sky, moving in a horizontal flight path. Finally, quoting a consensus of opinion of ten members of an Air Force detachment that witnessed the passage: "...after the object reached its zenith, it slowly began a graduated auger-shaped ("Z" shaped) descent..."¹²¹

Air Force investigators from MacDill AFB at Tampa, Florida told the press that: "...since the 'flying saucer scare' they made a practice of withholding statements until they could thoroughly explain the cause of such phenomena."¹²²

The investigating officer that filed the official report for Wright Field Intelligence, or Project GRUDGE, remarked: "It is the opinion of this officer that this object was not a meteor due to its erratic course."¹²³ This opinion was not shared with the news media.

The New York World Telegram hit the street on June 5th with a story that could only be bad news for the Air Force. One of the biggest names in journalism, Walter Winchell, was quoted in a front page "exclusive report" that the Air Force knew that the flying saucers were real and that the military had recently (May 14th) obtained actual photographs of some of the mysterious machines in the sky over Stephenville (Newfoundland) Air Force Base (This case is not in Air Force UFO files.).¹²⁴ The mood supposedly engendered by the Post article had little chance if such "exclusives" continued, particularly if such charges became more detailed and forceful. Now that Winchell had fired the opening shot, Keyhoe and True magazine were preparing to follow up with a massive assault on the Air Force's position.

Keyhoe arrived in Washington, D.C. shortly after his talk with Purdy in New York. Before making inquiries around town he studied carefully a long list of UFO reports compiled by the True magazine staff. In addition to other notes, the aviation editor of True, John DuBarry, had worked up a theoretical composite of a typical flying saucer. Purdy's personal written contribution was various suggestions to guide Keyhoe's questioning of Washington bigshots. Keyhoe was impressed with the contents of the UFO evidence even after a cursory examination. His first impression was that the saucers were real machines and ominous thoughts about a Russian secret weapon entered his mind. It was almost a reflex mental reaction since Keyhoe had already authored a book titled M-Day, a work discussing the mobilization of America in the event of a Communist attack.

Ziping around Washington, Keyhoe tracked down various rocket designers, aircraft engineers, and military officers. Two important experts Keyhoe quizzed were Admiral Calvin Bolster, Director of Naval Research, in charge of the special design section of the Bureau of Aeronautics; and Captain Delmar Fahrney, a top man in the Navy's guided missile program. The opinions of both were identical. They said in effect: "Wish we had such craft!" And: "They couldn't be Soviet!" Thus Keyhoe quickly felt he was left with just two choices: 1) UFO's were misidentifications of ordinary objects or phenomena; 2) UFO's were craft from outer space.¹²⁵

Other civilian stirring.

The Borderland Sciences Research Association with headquarters on Adams Avenue in San Diego, California, the same group that had "conducted mental contact" with a "Kareeta space ship" over San Diego in 1946, held weekly seances with the trance medium Mark Probert up to 1950. Mark Probert's "contact with the Kareeta" had sparked an interest in UFO's by the Borderlanders which continued for some time. Since 1946 the organization kept its membership abreast of the sky mystery by issuing an occasional newsletter. The Borderlander's literary effort was symptomatic of a growing mistrust of the Air Force, of the service's efficiency and/or its desire to share all the data it had with the public. Granted some people wanted UFO's to be spaceships and were blind to any facts to the contrary. There were others, however, with disciplined minds who just weren't convinced the UFO riddle added up to zero. They had little to go on with men like Keyhoe still gathering information, but they didn't need Keyhoe to notice that the official handling of the problem of UFO's had a real bad smell.

Camp Hood, still perplexed and harassed.

On May 7th an unusual light was seen over Camp Hood at 9:30 p.m. The light remained stationary for about 35 minutes. It was round and twice the size of the brightest star visible. The color varied, being predominantly white, but occasionally changing to blue with flashes of red. No maneuvers were observed.

On May 23rd at 10:10 p.m., a light estimated to have been three feet in diameter, round in shape, and changing from an amber to a greenish-yellow in color. The light was in sight for about two or three minutes, and was about 1,500 yards from the observer. The speed was slow and the light appeared to grow. No maneuvers were noted.

On May 23rd again, at 11:30 p.m. a strange light was seen that reappeared approximately 20 times and was described as being round and about the size of a half dollar. The color was similar to that of an ordinary light bulb. The light was in sight for several seconds and moved straight up and down with a slight lateral motion right to left.

On May 23rd also at 11:30 p.m., another section of the camp noticed a light that appeared and reappeared several times. It was described as being the size of a light bulb when held at arm's length and was round in shape. The duration of the sighting was about one minute. The movement of the light was straight up and down at slow speed.

On June 6th at 9:05 p.m. an orange colored ball of fire was seen for some two minutes and forty seconds. It moved in level flight. It burst into fragments.¹²⁶

Finally, at the headquarters of the Second Armored Division the Office of the AC of S, G-2, notified headquarters of the Fourth Army at Fort Sam Houston, Texas on June 15th that:

"Facilities presently available at Camp Hood are deemed inadequate to procure additional information regarding certain aerial phenomena sighted in this area.

"Request that technical personnel equipped with scientific apparatus be available for accomplishment of the mission."¹²⁷

Retreating for a moment to the Arrey incident of April 24th, it should be remembered that the critical point was the estimate of distance. How far away was the UFO? The optical device used was a little off in its focus and there was nothing at that point in the atmosphere to give any ranging information. The observer may have been convinced personally but he could not offer a convincing argument to justify his belief. In the following case we can see that the UFO's in question cooperated by placing themselves right next to an object that was at a known distance, and there was more than one optical device trained on the area of the UFO's appearance providing numerous checks on the objects' position. The case in question is detailed below.

At White Sands, New Mexico, the Navy had an upper atmosphere missile project in progress. In charge of the project was Commander Robert B. McLaughlin, USN. On June 10, 1949, just after a missile launch, two small mysterious discs were noticed pacing

the missile on its upward flight, keeping abreast even though the missile was zooming along at 2,000 feet a second. One of the disks dropped back a bit, moved sideways through the rocket's exhaust gases, and then closed with its companion. Together the two UFO's streaked off on an upward slant leaving the "slow" missile far behind. Immediately after the incident eleven different observation posts separately confirmed the presence of the disks and their maneuvers.¹²⁸

It wasn't until June 7th that Air Force Intelligence agents from Bolling AFB got in touch with a Baltimore man that had notified the Pentagon about something that had to do with "Communists." The informant told the agents that a decade before he had bought stock in a venture to build an experimental aircraft but that inventor had disappeared after a few years of work on the project. Just prior to the inventor's vanishment the man told people he would sell his ideas to a "foreign country" if he had to. Recent flying saucer sightings described craft that bore a striking resemblance to the inventor's experimental aircraft. Therefore, the Baltimore man said there may be a connection. The Bolling Air Force agents, in a report to higher headquarters, titled "Communist Matters," wrote that the case may deserve further investigation because of the possible existence of some "saucer-like" prototype craft in storage at a farm at Glen Burnie, Maryland. The agents didn't rush to Glen Burnie right away, in fact they didn't get around to checking until August, but when they did the event made the national news-wires.¹²⁹

Flying "dinner plates."

Outside the main hanger at Klamath Falls Airport, at Klamath Falls, Oregon, a CAA maintenance technician spotted a half-dozen objects speed overhead in a trail formation. He said they looked metallic, were soundless, and left no wake. They looked like "dinner plates" in shape and appearance.¹³⁰

Oak Ridge, Tennessee, another atomic installation.

Three women at Oak Ridge, one a school teacher, another a biologist working at an Oak Ridge lab, and a third who was a wife of a member of the Security Division, AEC, Oak Ridge, observed a very odd trio of "flying saucers" for about 15 minutes on June 22nd. The UFO file on this case states:

"It was described as consisting of two identical rectangular-shaped objects which appeared to be coordinated in movement and which moved in a wave-like motion. The third object was circular in shape and appeared to be in level flight between and above the two rectangular objects. The rectangular objects appeared to be bright metal on top but dark underneath, while the color of the circular object was the same as that of frosted glass. The 'flying saucer,' when last

sighted, was in level flight and was flying in a northwesterly direction. The weather was clear with high cumulus clouds. The 'flying saucer' flew at a speed of from 10 to 15 mph over an area just about the center of Oak Ridge." 131

It was immediately apparent the trio of UFO's had a distinct similarity with meteorological or research balloons but wind charts failed to establish such a correlation.¹³²

"Bubbling."

While driving toward Gunter AFB, Alabama, June 18th, a woman noticed a big dark thunderhead over the airfield. At the base of the towering cloud she said she saw 20 to 25 saucer-like aluminum colored objects which appeared to be "bubbling" up and down into the cloud.¹³³

"It dived on me."

A few white clouds were to the west but otherwise the sky was clear and the sun bright and warm on June 11th, as a Standard Oil of Ohio employee drove down a highway near Lima, Ohio. The driver suddenly noticed something diving out of the sky. He later said:

"I pulled the car to the side of the highway and quickly got out, shading my polaroid glasses with my hands to obtain a better look. I observed an object approaching from high in front of me and a little to my right at what appeared to be a terrific speed. The object dove directly toward the highway and when about 1000 feet above the ground it turned to its right and headed north and west. When approaching headon it appeared to be oval in shape with small short objects protruding from the lower half, much like the appearance of a Seal's flippers.

"When making its turn it appeared to be more of a square turn and not like an airplane. Its actions could best be described that it looked like a puppet on a string with someone guiding same."¹³⁴

One detail in the forementioned statement is rarely reported; that of protuberances, and it casts doubts on its authenticity. On the other hand, the "square turn" and movement "like a puppet on a string" are striking UFO characteristics.

The Tioga, Colorado case and Dr. Valley.

A farm laborer was working in a field on June 9th near Tioga, Colorado, and happened to glance at the sky to check the possibility of rain. He saw something unusual moving just below the overcast. Peering closer he saw:

"....five objects, round in shape, flying at about 20,000 feet toward the north....they were in a formation of two echelons with two objects flying parallel to each other in front. The remaining three objects were to the left and rear of the two front objects and were formed in a triangular formation. The flight was at cloud level and flew in and out of the clouds. He noticed that the rear echelon moved back and forth in the rear of the front echelon."135

During the investigation of the above report, Colonel Clingerman of Project GRUDGE called attention to a Department of the Air Force letter dated May 6, 1949, that requested a Dr. G. E. Valley be contacted if any UFO activity occurred in the Denver, Colorado area between June 1st and September 15th. The Colonel took pains to point out that Dr. Valley was a member of the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board of the Chief of Staff, and as such, rated the full cooperation of the Intelligence officers investigating the Tioga sighting. The reason Dr. Valley gave for the special treatment did not seem to reflect a disbelief in UFO's as real objects of a mysterious nature:

"Dr. Valley stated that it was his desire to be contacted concerning Project GRUDGE activity in the vicinity of Denver because he wished to be on the lookout for such objects. Dr. Valley is doing his research work on Mt. Evans, altitude 14,260 feet, and because of his vantage point felt that, if there were any objects in the vicinity, he might be able to observe them. It is his desire to be contacted immediately, either by telephone or telegram, of the sighting of any objects so he can be on the alert for them. Arrangements have been made with Dr. Valley whereby this office will notify him immediately should anything of this nature occur."136

Meanwhile, Donald Keyhoe was still in Washington D.C. seeking information in his quest for an answer to the UFO question. Boldly he asked for permission to examine the files of the terminated Project SIGN, but he ran into a brick wall on that. Air Force Pentagon Public Relations officers, Al Scholin and Orville Splitt, of the magazine section, referred Keyhoe to Shalett's Saturday Evening Post article, insisting that the essay told the whole story on the UFO mystery. Undaunted, Keyhoe returned to his search for experts "in the know" and willing to talk.137

To be continued...

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137. Flying Saucers Are Real. p. 30.

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. The mysterious "flying tube" over Jackson, Mississippi, on January 1, 1949, Sketch by the witness.
2. The Atlantic manifestation.
 - a. Official sketch by witnesses.
 - b. Diagram explaining sketch.
3. The "bouncing cucumber" over Florida on January 27, 1949.
 - a. Sketch by witnesses showing the "cucumber with windows."
 - b. Sketch by witnesses showing erratic path of object.
4. Sketch by an Inspector Patterson of an object over Camp Hood in March 1949.
5. Sketch and comments by witnesses explaining the "saucer squadrons" seen over Springer Lake, N.M. on April 25, 1949. Reproduced from original in Air Force files.
6. Seven sketches by witnesses of object over Fort Bliss, Texas, on April 28, 1949. A skyhook balloon?
7. Official sketch of the Rogue River object.
8. Newspaper clipping showing the big "Z" over Key West, Florida, on June 5; 1949.
9. UFO newsletter issued by the Borderland Sciences Association.

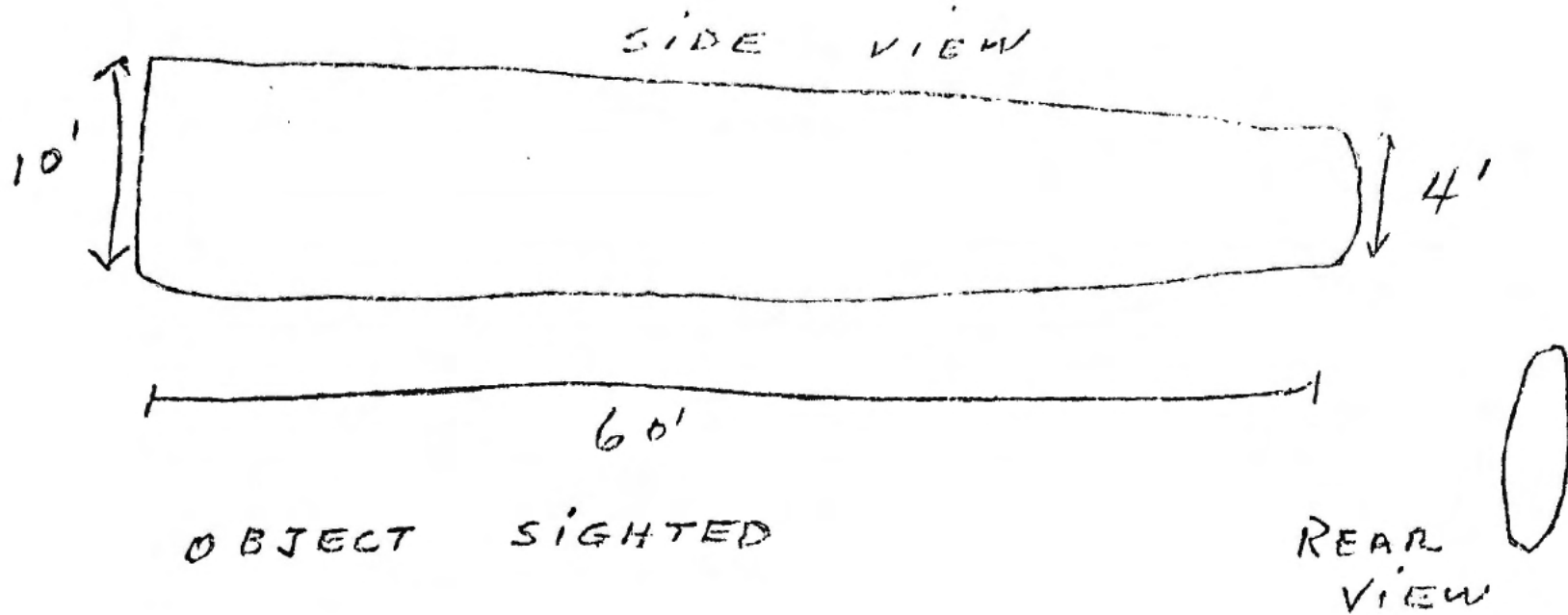
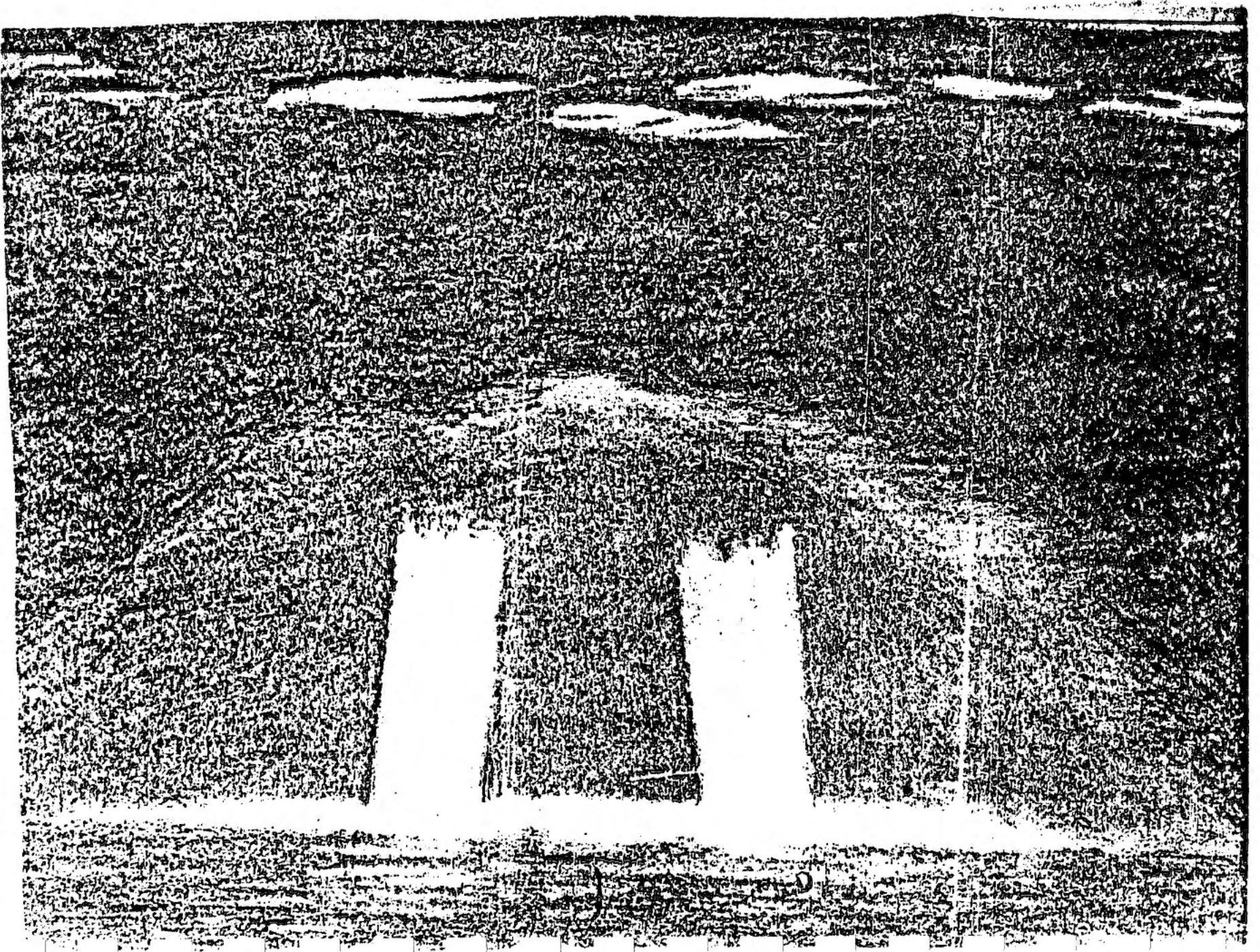
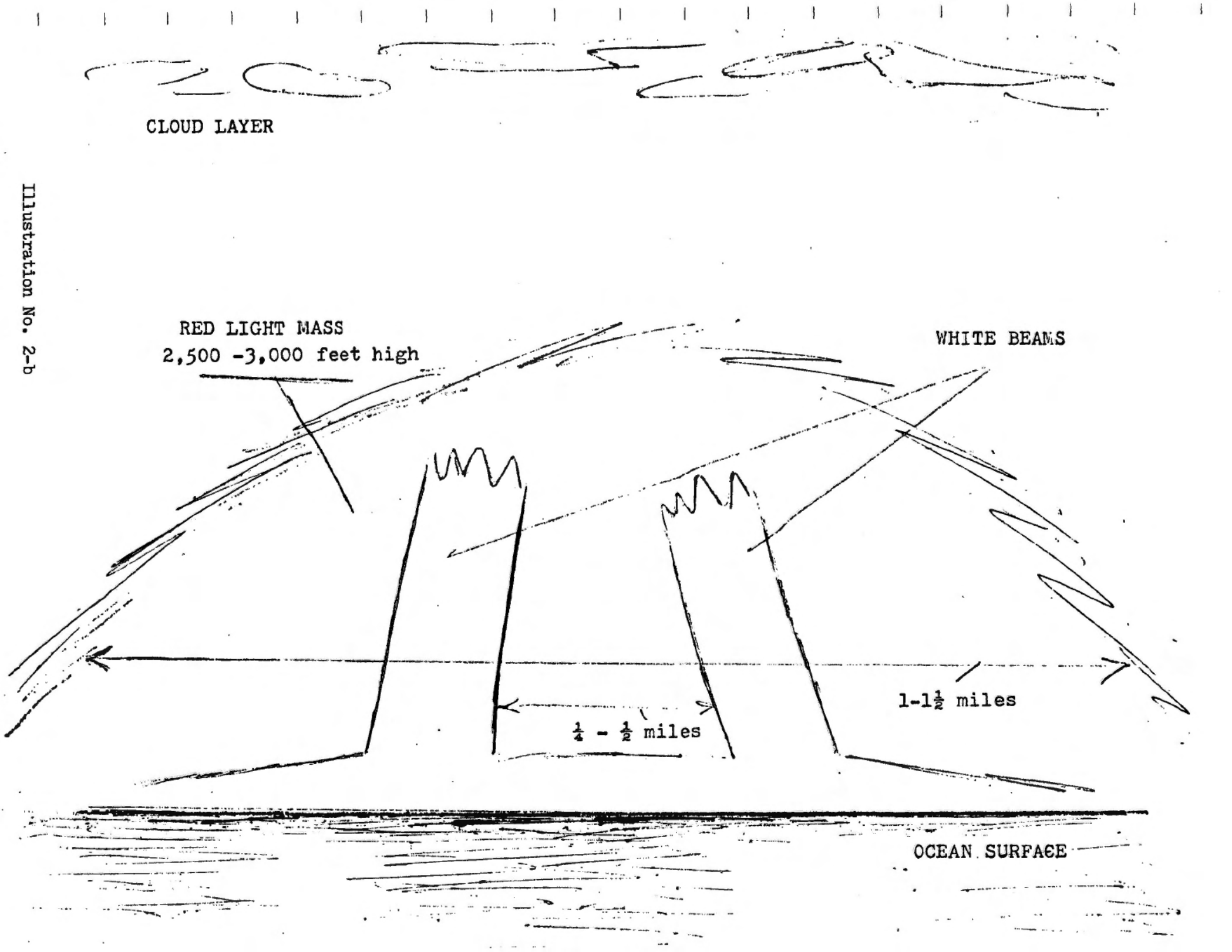


Illustration No. 1

Illustration No. 2a





CLOUD LAYER

RED LIGHT MASS
2,500 - 3,000 feet high

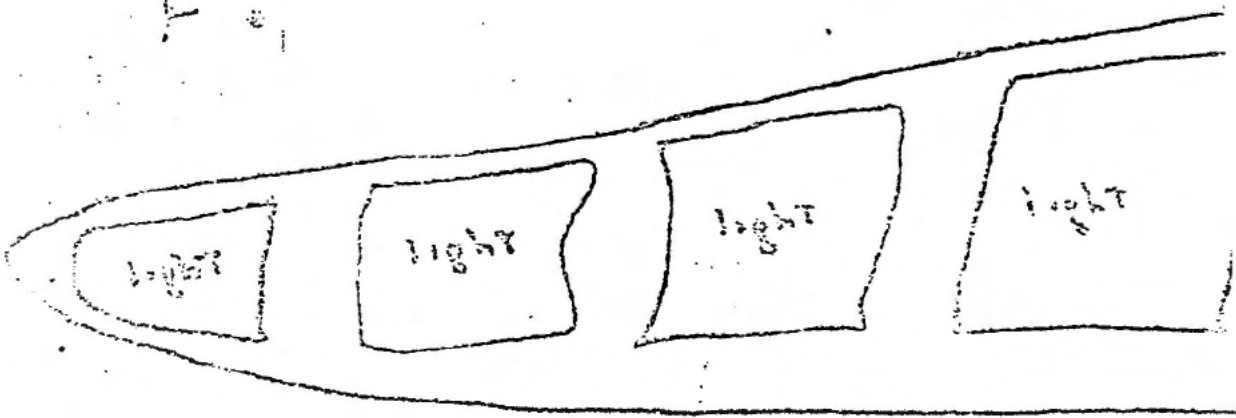
WHITE BEAMS

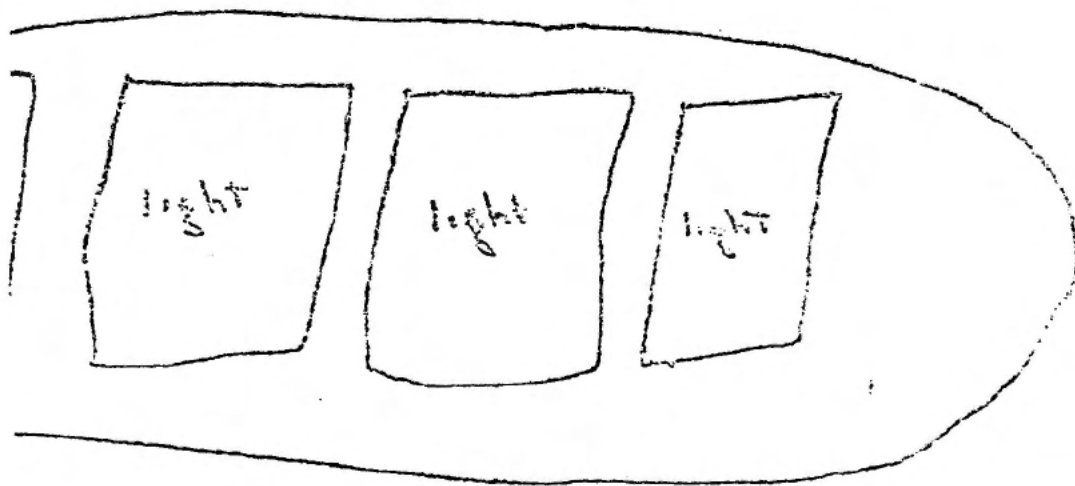
$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ miles

1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles

OCEAN SURFACE

Incl No. 1.





DIRECTION OF TRAVEL →

Illustration No. 3-a

PASSED FROM

(passed from view)

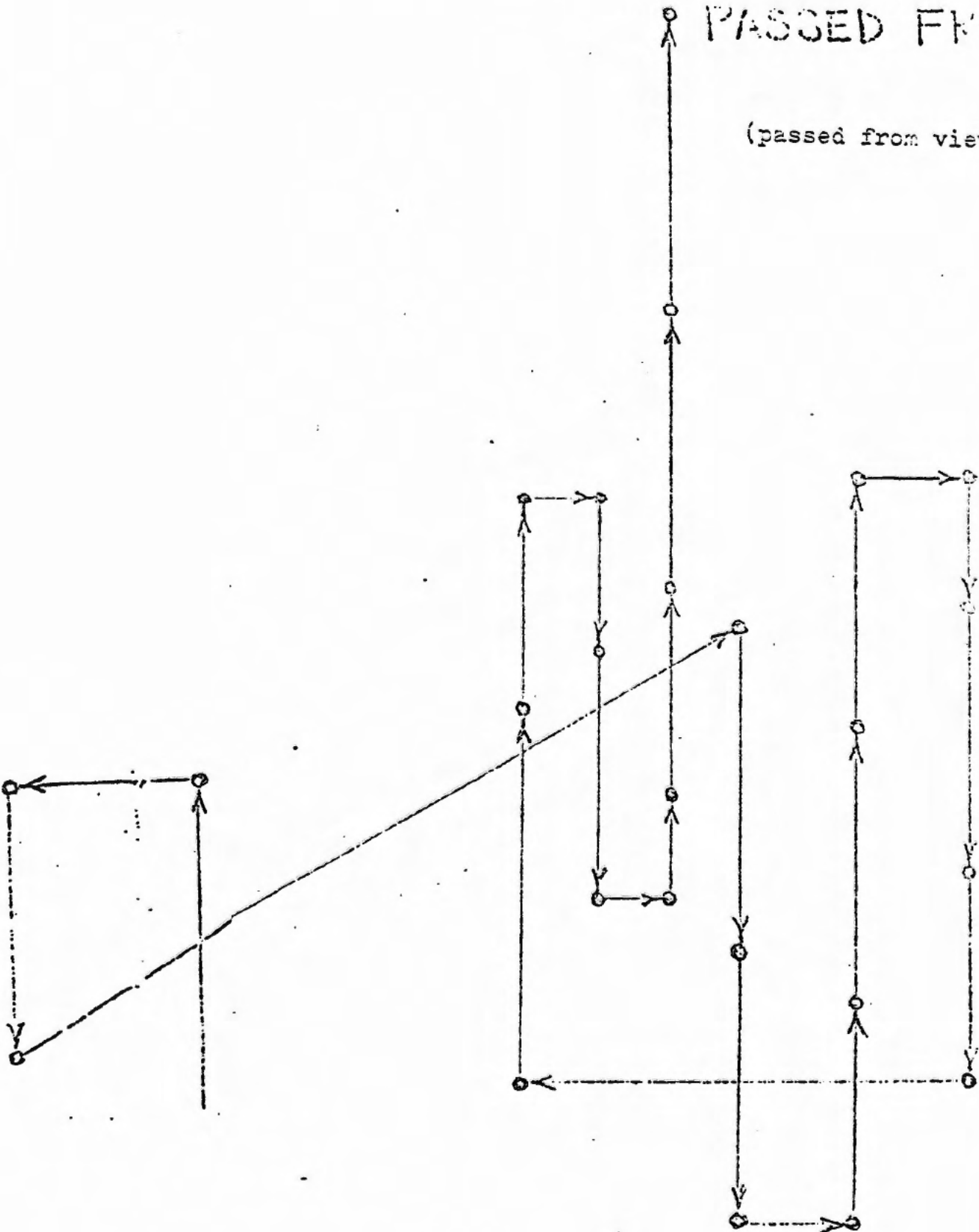
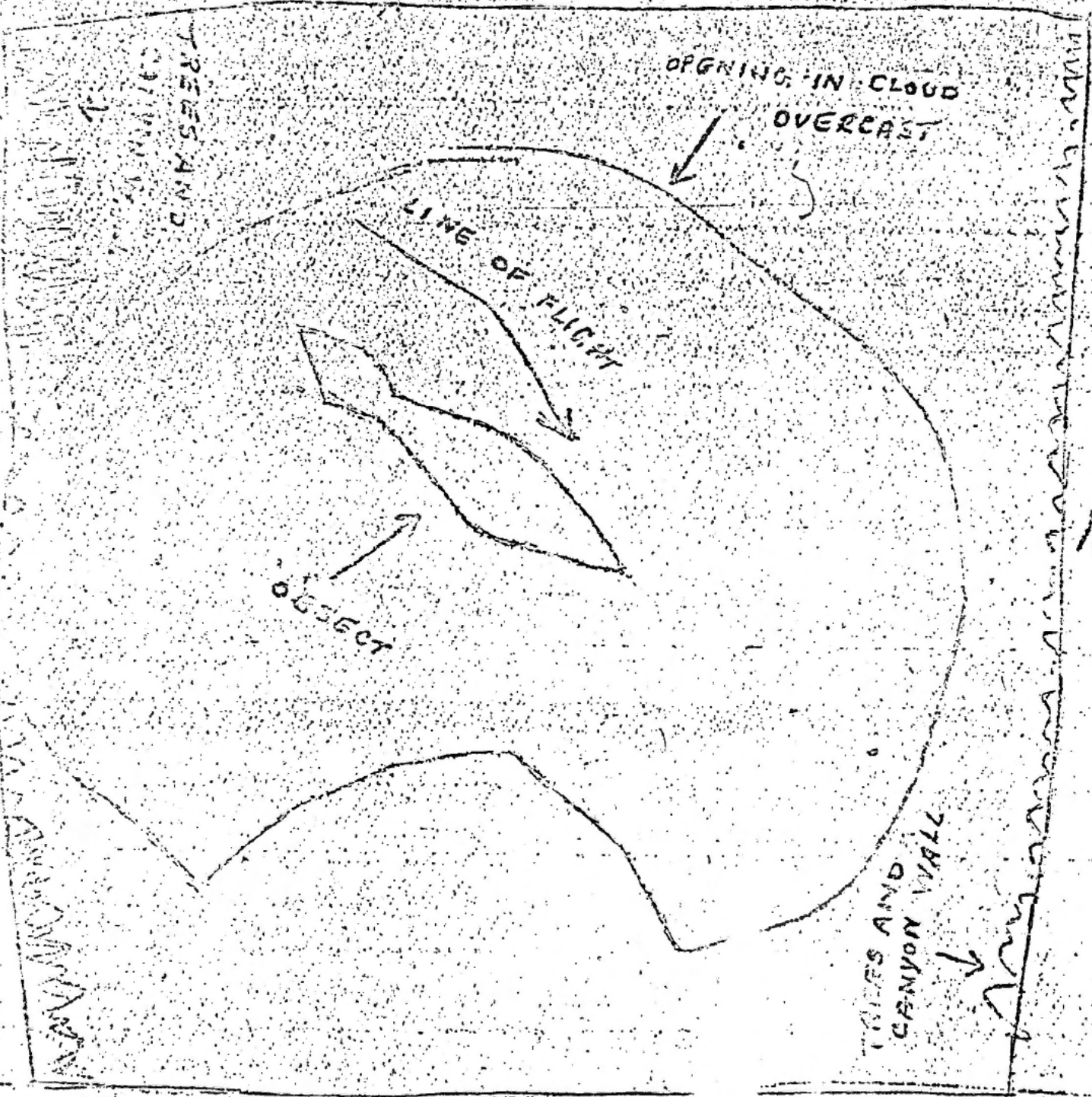


Illustration No. 3-b

W



OUTLINE OF WINDOW
IN THE SHACK

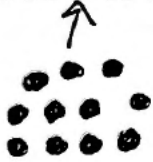
Illustration No. 4

off

April 25, 1949
6:30 - 7:30
Morning

CEILING AND VISIBILITY UNLIMITED

Due West



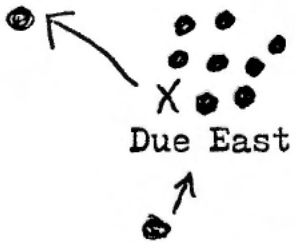
First time we saw the "object," heading due west at an extremely high altitude and at a very high rate of speed, they were not in sight over 10 seconds. They passed directly overhead. Time 6:30 in the morning. They were in a tight group as shown at left, eleven in group.

Due West



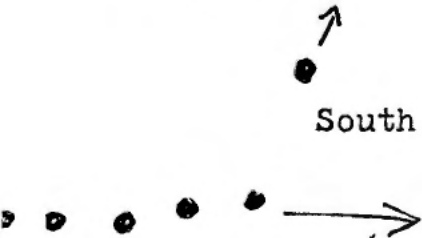
About 10 minutes later we observed another flight of these "objects" heading due west very high and fast. When directly overhead the last one on the left suddenly left the rest and headed southwest. All went out of sight in a very few seconds. Nine in group.

Due East



At approx. 7:00 we saw two more "object" heading due east in the same manner as the others we had seen. These were much farther apart than the first ones we had seen.

South

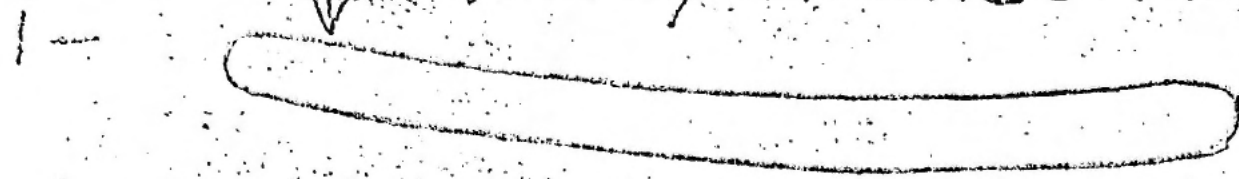


The last large "formation" we saw passed due east from us and heading south. They were strung out in a line going very fast and low but at quite a distance from us. All these "objects" made a peculiar sound like a high pitched whistle. The sound was some distance behind the objects. Five in line.

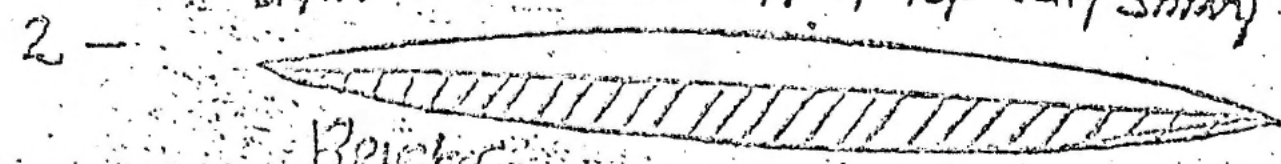
/signed/ ---(deleted)
Springer, N.M.

UNCLASSIFIED
Individuals report a description of the objects sighted with numbers
and names listed below.

Very highly Reflective on Top only



Light reflected off of top very shiny



Bright

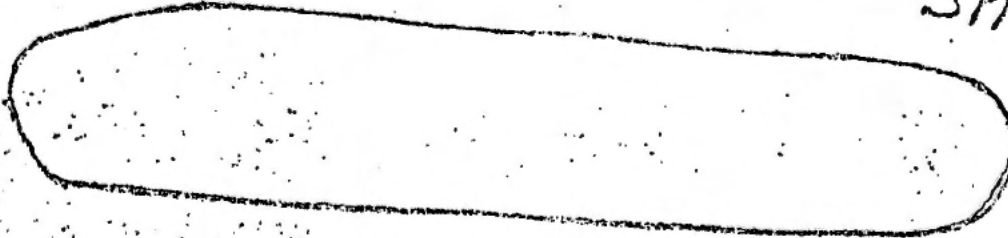


Illustration No. 6-a

4 -



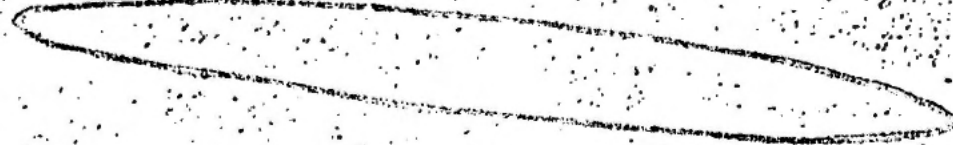
5 -



Shine

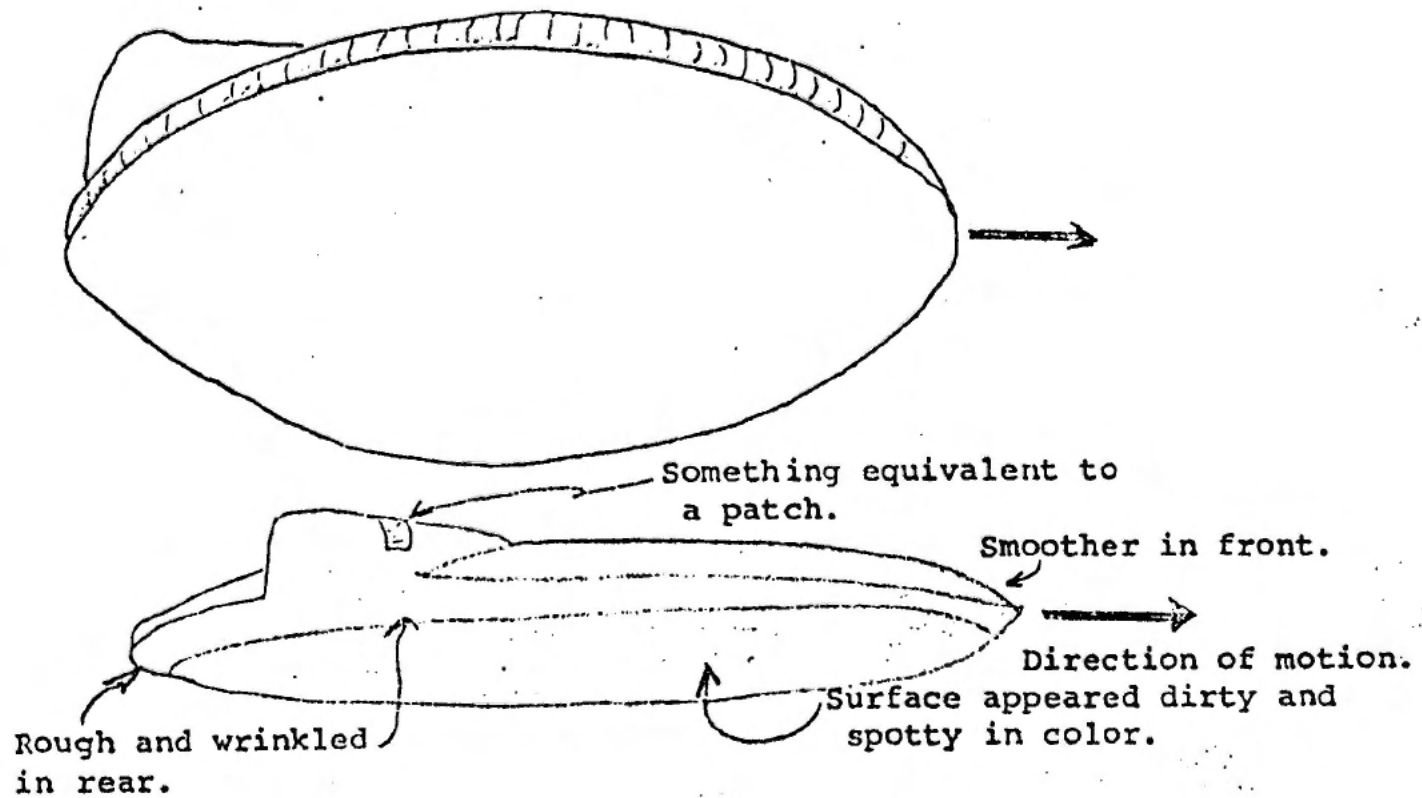
6 -

Reflection on top a white beam

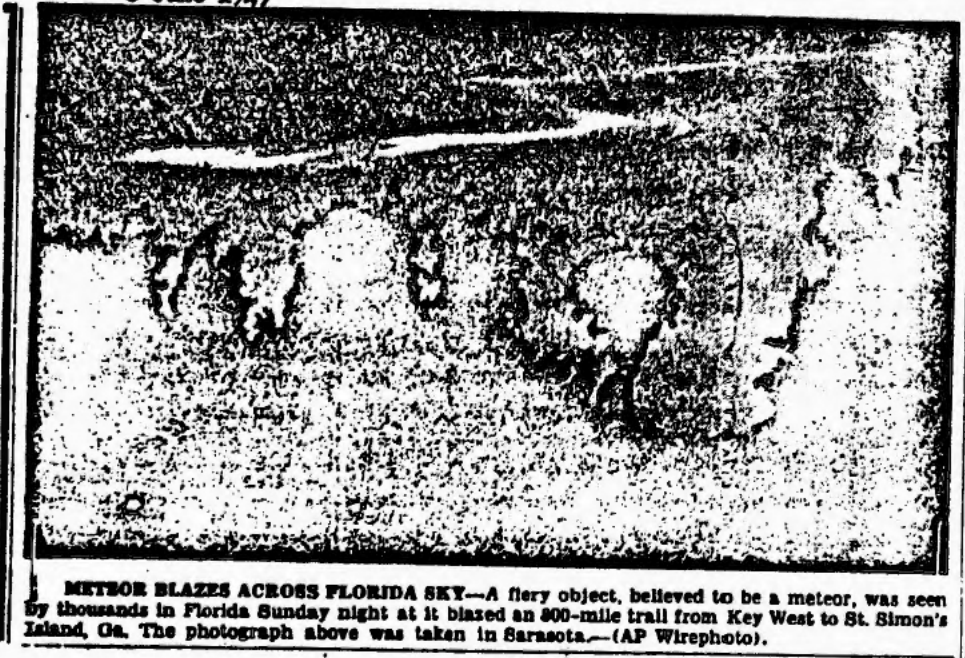


1. John R. Henderson
2. Stephen Borowski
3. James L. Brown
4. Ed Adcock Jr.

DOWNGRADED AT 2 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.



Tampa Morning Tribune
8 June 1949



METEOR BLAZES ACROSS FLORIDA SKY—A fiery object, believed to be a meteor, was seen by thousands in Florida Sunday night as it blazed an 800-mile trail from Key West to St. Simon's Island, Ga. The photograph above was taken in Sarasota.—(AP Wirephoto).

Illustration No. 8

Meteor dust rocks

Night of Dec. 3, 1948

B ~ S ~ R ~ A
 BORDERLAND SCIENCES
 RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

UNITED PRESS DISPATCHES -- Indiana wire -- Dec. 3. 8:41 p.m.

Waukegan, Ill. Two truck drivers reported to police tonight at Waukegan, Ill., that they saw a large airplane plunge into Lake Michigan about a mile off Waukegan. However, a two-hour search of the area disclosed no sign of an air disaster. The truck drivers told police they saw the plane burst into flames and crash into the lake about 5:30 p.m. CST. Coast Guard stations at Chicago and Kenosha, Wisconsin, sent boats to the scene, but they had reported nothing after a two-and-a-half hour search. Air search by a naval plane from the Glenview Air Base was hampered by darkness. A "disturbance" in the area was reported by persons aboard a Wisconsin Central Airlines plane which flew over the area about the time the truckers reported to police. But airports in the Chicago area say no planes have been reported missing.

An hour and a half after this report, a "flaming wheel" fell over Bellefontaine, Ohio. Here follow the final clippings on the case as supplied by the DAILY EXAMINER of Bellefontaine, Ohio, under date of 12-6-48:

MILITARY NOW HAS WHEEL MYSTERY: POLICE CHIEF SAYS INVESTIGATION OF MYSTERIOUS FLAMES HERE IS YET UNDER WAY.

Police Chief A.D. Padden Monday said the investigation of the burning 'wheel' incident Friday night has been referred to the proper military authorities. He said the origin of the wheel had not yet been determined and declined further comment. Remains of the wheel that seemed to fall out of the sky about 7:00 p.m. Friday in the Center Ave. - Hayes St. area were sent to the Wright-Patterson air base at Dayton in the hope officials of the Air Force Experimental Center could give an answer to the mystery. At Wright Field, Col. C.H. Welch said ... he knew nothing on an airplane that would behave as did the 'wheel'... and knew of no experiments being conducted. Col. Welch said it was possible it might have been a magnesium flare used by pilots in making night pictures, but added 'there were no night photo flights from the field at that time. W.H. Reynolds, 549 Center Ave., observed the object go past his home and fall, burning with much smoke, in a field to the east.

The foregoing quotations were sent the BSRA hdqrs. by VINCENT H. GADDIS, well-known as a writer and investigator. We have received a large number of clips on this, from BSRA friends; no satisfactory explanation has as yet come to our attention. Is there a connection with events noted in paragraph I above, and with the reported "disturbance"? (As all BSR Associates know, while all press stories are suspect on general principles, all smug and facile 'explanations' are equally so).

(It is almost impossible to evaluate a press story as it stands; it requires the time and effort and on-the-spot inquiry of an honest and competent investigator, to get a worthwhile report. So these headings quoted below are only samples of the kind of material that constantly flows into BSRA Hdqrs., and of the interest of the press and (presumably) of the public. A clipping service for all leading newspapers (U.S. or world) would soon fill scores of volumes with such "odd news" - or lies and delusions, if you prefer - it will not pay to generalize either way).

FLYING SAUCERS NOW HUSH-HUSH - i.e., "classified information" by the armed services. (Seattle Post-I. 3-13-49). -- FLYING DISC at Long Beach (60-lb. greenish steel disc * San Diego Jour. 3-21-49 -- FIREBALL SEEN IN SKY AT SEATTLE (1-28-49) -- BALL TRAILING FIRE OVER KENTUCKY (1-16-9) -- BUTTER-COLORED DISC IN SKY (Victoria, B.C. 2-12-49) -- STRANGE DISPLAY OF LIGHTS (over Red Lion; N.Y. dispatch 12-10-48); -- SILVER BALL IN SKY OVER MAINE (4-9-48) -- MYSTERIOUS MISSILES IN U.S. ZONE OF GERMANY (many clips, various sources. ca. 2-22-49) -- FLAMING WHEEL FALLS IN OHIO (many clips; 12-4-49) -- WHITE LIGHT OVER TUCSON - TERRIFIC SPEED (Ariz. Star, 10-9-48) -- Silver Saucer in Sky over Langland Island, Denmark, 8-28-48) -- TRANSLUCENT SPHERICAL OBJECTS OVER SAN FRANCISCO (9-21-48) -- Flaming Object over Augusta, Me. (S.F. Exam. 1-3-49) -- YELLOW-ORANGE-RED OBJECT OVER KALAMAZOO (K. Gazette, 9-5-48) -- ROCKET SPURTING FLAME OVER RISING SUN, IND. (recent) -- Explosion in Air Over San Joaquin Valley, (10-12-48) -- "SKY OCTOPUS" SEEN OVER SWEDEN (8-23-48) --

MYSTERY OF THE FALLING ROSE PETALS (Philippines). 1-14-49; many clips. -- DENSE SMOKE? NO FIRE in San Diego house (S.D. Union, 1-22-49) -- MYSTERY FUMES IN SCHOOL (Pensacola Jour. 11-12-48) -- FLIGHTS OF BIRDS CRACK UP (in N.Y. and Philadelphia; 9-11-48) -- WIERD TRACKS ALONG THE SUWANEE: (many clips) -- Series of Strange Holes in Golden Gate Park, S.F. News, 10-29-48 -- STRANGE HUMMING NOISE, over parts of Britain during last six years (many clips) ...

FIVE NOW DEAD IN HEX CASE (Wash. Post 11-28-48) -- Snowflakes with Holes, like doughnuts, in Idaho; Sandpoint News, 1-6-49 -- Police try (and fail) to catch ghost; Rochester, N.H. 8-29-49 -- Wonder Horse Discusses Politics (Richmond Times Dispatch, 10-25-48).

And Dr. Karl T. Compton says: 'A return to public confidence in scientists would mean great progress toward the future contributions of science to national security'. (Yes - confidence in their honesty as a class; not necessarily in their good judgment and competence, in either science or statecraft).

For the "Beat this if you can" dept.- "Dr. Morris Fishbein(!!) said today, psychological quacks are fleecing the public of millions of \$\$\$ a year." (!!). "Witch-Doctors, Charlatans!" cries Dr. M.F. A. quack, by definition, is any practitioner of healing arts who does NOT belong to the American Medical Association! ---- Good article on firewalking, Mechanix Illustrated, March 1949 -- FATE Magazine, Vol. II No. 1, has article on BSRA, the San Diego seances, etc. NOT written by M.L., but by Roger Graham, (physicist, Los Angeles).

UFOs: A HISTORY

VOLUME TWO

JULY - DECEMBER 1949

A minor catalogue of UFO reports and notations on various unofficial inquiries by individuals and privately funded organizations, as well as commentary on military investigations and governmental policies. Presented in chronological order.

By

Loren E. Gross

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UFOs: A HISTORY. JULY - DECEMBER 1949

Skepticism about the reported aerial phenomena being extraordinary objects drew strength from two things not being reported:

- 1) Contact
- 2) Crashes

There were rumors, but other than the Roswell, New Mexico incident of July 1947,* which apparently was hushed up, little had been reported that could qualify. However, from mid-1949 on, things start to get fascinating.

Do flying saucers cause polio?

Driving down highway #70 along the east side of the Lake of the Woods in Canada on July 1, 1949, an American doctor from Decatur, Indiana, happened to notice a "silvery gray oblong object" in the sky rushing pell-mell horizontally in a westerly direction. The aerial anomaly exhibited an erratic motion as if it was being thrown across the heavens rather than being self-propelling. When the doctor returned to his practice in Indiana he searched the files of the Indianapolis Star and the Indianapolis News to learn what he could about UFO's. Tabulating UFO sightings published, he determined that the majority of sightings were reported in the months of July and August for the years 1947, 1948, and 1949.¹

At the office he was kept busy with the latest summer polio epidemic, a dreaded disease before a vaccine was developed. While all of his patients did not have polio, they did have symptoms similar to Uranium poisoning, or so he thought.² Noting that polio struck its victims between April to October, reaching a peak in July and August, he sat down and wrote a letter to the Air Force. It said in part:

"...there may be some connection between the polio epidemic and the flying saucers, either by atomic radiation from the so-called saucer, or by release of a polio virus which a foreign government may have isolated."³

The doctor admitted his proposed theory was far fetched but he felt he should submit it just the same.⁴ The Air Force OSI agent at Offutt AFB made a few calls and learned that the doctor was a reliable, responsible individual. The agent then phoned a

*The Roswell Incident, by Charles Berlitz & William L. Moore, Grosset & Dunlap, New York, N.Y., 1980.

medical authority at Benjamin Harrison AFB, Indiana to ask for advice. The Air Force was not about to laugh off any suggestion that had to do with atomic energy since for quite some time it was thought that UFO's might be real craft that used atomic power for propulsion. "Uranium" was one of the buzzwords at Wright-Patterson's Project GRUDGE headquarters.

The medical authority contacted thought the uranium poisoning concept advanced by the informant was interesting and suggested some statistical inquiries:

"(a) Does the uranium element produce any physiological reaction in human beings corresponding to symptoms applicable to many of the so-called Polio clinical and sub-clinical conditions?

"(b) Are topographical areas where so-called flying discs are predominately seen (or known uranium deposit) pin points of epidemic areas of clinical symptoms resembling Polio?"⁵

The reply from this medical authority generated further action by the Offutt agent. Messages were sent to various government departments and scientific consultants. The idea was found wanting and was discarded. The UFO mystery seemed to be hitting new levels of strangeness.

"Summary of Observations."

The office of the AC of S, G-2, Headquarters, Fourth Army, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, communicated its alarm over the continued aerial manifestations in the sky over Camp Hood, Texas by sending a report on the incident, "A Summary of Observations of Aerial Phenomena," directly to the Director of Intelligence, General Staff, U.S. Army, at the Pentagon. The Summary stated:

"Beginning 6 March 1949, a series of aerial phenomena has been observed in the vicinity of the restricted area at Camp Hood, Texas. For want of a better appellation, this phenomena has by common consent been tagged 'Balls of Fire.' The phenomena has recurred at Camp Hood on the average of every nine days since it began. Complete reports of each incident have been reported in detail to the Commanding General Air Material Command by direction of the Director of Intelligence, 25 March 1948. Detailed reports of numerous similar phenomena at Sandia Base, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Los Alamos, New Mexico, have already been made direct to the Director of Intelligence.

"Observations made at Camp Hood indicate:

"--The 'fireballs' are highly luminous lights usually greenish-white but sometimes orange-red in color.

- "--They are usually round but are sometimes of diamond or oblong shape.
- "--Some move and some appear to be fixed 'bursts' described as like the turning on and off of an electric switch. The movement has been reported as in an arc, vertical, and zig-zag.
- "--Observations always occur on the same or consecutive nights--the shortest observation period being one night and the longest three. The smallest number of individual phenomena reported during any period of manifestations has been 4 and the largest 50.
- "--When artillery observation and plotting methods were used, the following data was obtained by triangulation: On 7 May 1949, from 1940 hours to 2105 hours. Weather was clear and a bright moonlight night.
- "--Diamond shaped fireball, red to greenish white, 15 yards in diameter and 1,000 feet high, moved approximately 100 yards horizontally in 57 seconds and appeared to 'go out.'
- "--No sound or odor has ever accompanied the phenomena.
- "--All observed groups of phenomena have 'bracketed' the restricted area.
- "--Over 100 men and officers have observed and reported the phenomena (including field ranks and college graduates).
- "--Flights of aircraft and all firing and training schedules have been checked and rechecked without a single such incident having been found that coincides in time and place with any of the observed phenomena."⁶

The "summation" of the summation states flatly that the Army was at an impasse, but only indirectly the unpleasant fact that they were very disappointed with the lack of help from the Air Force's Project GRUDGE:

"No explanation of this phenomena is known to nor has any been presented to this headquarters. In the absence of scientific equipment and observers, it appears that no explanation is foreseeable."⁷

The Army generals in the Pentagon passed on the summary to Project GRUDGE for what it termed: "...consideration and appropriation action."⁸ Thinking that it might give a push to Wright Field, the Army High Command added:

"Commanding Officer, 10th OSI Kelly Air Force Base, an authority charged with Air Force investigation responsibility at Camp Hood, has advised this headquarters he is in accord with the recommendations and concurs in the request."⁹

If Project GRUDGE had been as active as it should, it would have had teams of investigators out west where there was a flap in progress. The latest UFO appearance was, of all places, at an air show.

At 10:40 a.m., on July 3rd, a Naval Reserve officer by the name of M. B. Taylor (former Officer-In-Charge of guided missile work under Rear Admiral Delmar S. Fahrney)¹⁰ was at the Longview Airport, Longview, Washington, waiting for an air show to begin when the first of three UFO's hove into view. Visible for three minutes, it traveled in a large arc at a constant altitude. Since the object was unfamiliar and moving in a clear sky, there was no way to be sure about anything except that it was of a metallic color and definitely circular. It was at a high altitude but not so high that Taylor missed noting something about the object which he described as regular oscillations which he timed at the rate of 48 per minute. The motion he described as a "skulling," or falling leaf motion.

An identical object was observed at 10:40 a.m., and a third at 11:25 a.m.

Over 150 persons witnessed the UFO overflights, among them a stunt pilot, Sammy Mason, and an aeronautical engineer by the name of Arthur Robertson, both of whom agreed with Taylor that the UFO's could not have possibly been balloons. The airshow was a mixed blessing. There were plenty of witnesses at Longview Field, but when Taylor contacted the local radio station to get it to broadcast an appeal for possible witnesses to the passage of the UFO's at different localities, the station refused, thinking the phone call to be just a publicity stunt for their air show.^{11, 12}

A run-of-the-mill report detailed the sighting of a round object of a polished metal appearance on July 5, 1949, about 6 miles northwest of Boise, Idaho on Skyline Road. What was other than run-of-the-mill was the following detail:

"Dark grey smoke appeared to emit from one side of the object near the bottom part of the circle in irregular, but intermittent intervals. This smoke appeared to follow the lower contour of the object to almost halfway up the other side of the object and would then disappear."¹³

The news media and the Commander McLaughlin case.

The Public Information Officer, U.S. Army, for White Sands Proving Ground, a Captain Edward Detchemendy, assumed his duties at the New Mexico installation on May 30, 1949, and not long afterward was approached by a Sgt. Feldman.

Sgt. Feldman felt compelled to inform Detchemendy that a UFO had been tracked by telescope on a testing range (the Arrey incident of April 24th). Detchemendy immediately discussed the UFO incident with Clyde Tombaugh, Chief, Ballistic Measurement Section, White Sands Proving Ground, who said the sighting had been made by

Naval personnel. Since no formal report was made to him and nothing had leaked to the press, the case was not pursued by Detchemendy.

Later on July 6th, the Public Information Officer of the National Military Establishment, Washington, D.C., a Mr. Scholin, arrived at White Sands on a one-day orientation tour seeking to gather information on possible leads to future news releases. Detchemendy and Scholin stopped in at the Naval Operations Office in the course of the tour and there ran into Navy Commander Robert McLaughlin. McLaughlin, who had been involved in the tracking of the UFO over White Sands, took Scholin aside and began to talk freely about the amazing incident. Detchemendy was shocked and tried to hush McLaughlin, who in turn, retorted that the UFO incident was "known information." Detchemendy, puzzled, asked McLaughlin what he meant to imply by such a remark, protesting that the Army treated UFO information as classified but that did not stop the Navy Commander who ignored Detchemendy and continued to talk to Scholin. Detchemendy protested again and when he finally got Scholin to leave, he made it clear to the Washington press chief that the Army "...considered all information gathered on flying discs classified and any release regarding them would stem from official information channels in Washington."14 The Army?

More from out west:

Do UFO's like water? It would seem that often UFO's are reported near water. The correlation is not that marked, but at times one wonders:

"On July 8, 1949, between the hours of 6:30 and 7:00 a.m., my wife and I were fishing from a rubber boat on the north end of Shoshone Lake in Yellowstone Park, when I heard what sounded like the whir of duck wings. I said to my wife listen, what is that sound, on looking straight up over our heads, I should say 800 to 1,000 feet, there were eight objects appearing to be round and I would say about 20 feet in diameter, and very bright metal like bright aluminum, sailing as I have sailed a lid from a can many times. They were not in formation but reminded me of a flock of black-birds in a group some above and some below each other.

"There was no smoke or exhaust of any kind, it was a beautiful clear morning and the sun was shining bright. If there had been any exhaust we would surely have seen it. They did not sail on a level course but seemed to go up and down just like some of the smaller birds fly when in a group. They were going very fast and if they had not been directly over our heads we would never have heard or seen them because we were watching the water. There was no sound of a motor.

"When the disc-shaped objects were about over the center of the lake one of them turned completely over sailing in among the rest of them without coming in contact with the other objects.

"They looked the same on both sides but I could not tell how thick they were, but judging from the diameter they are large enough to have one or more men aboard.

"Many times when I was younger I have taken a flat round lid or heavy cardboard and threw it to see what it would make. This disc object turned completely over and sailed through the air as if the air current hand changed its course. Just before the disc went out of sight the one on our right turned on its edge and sailed down and away from the rest.

"I have seen jet planes and know about their speed, but these objects were just as fast if not faster.

"I have been kidded about seeing things and having too much to drink. But the sky was clear and the sun shone bright. We had had a good night's rest and nothing but good clear water to drink.

"My wife and I saw these eight metal objects if we ever saw anything in our lives. My opinion is that they are controlled by some device some where outside of the disc itself and there is no man aboard, even though they are large enough to carry a man. I think there is some device that keeps them from colliding with each other, and my opinion is that they belong to the United States Government, because if they did not, the U.S. Government would soon find out where they came from."¹⁵

Judging from the last sentence, it is nice to note that someone had faith in the government. As it turned out, Project GRUDGE did not have that much faith in this witness' ability to observe accurately:

"Reflection of the sun's light off the wet bodies of birds often gives the appearance of a very large object at a much greater distance from the observer than they actually are, especially during the periods of dusk and dawn."¹⁶

East coast, west coast:

A silver disc was seen over Astoria, Oregon, on July 6th, and the following day a: "...fast moving, brilliant light...was reported over the hills to the west of Portland. J. High Pruett, a University of Oregon astronomer, suggested that in all probability the light was the planet Venus. Spotted at 10:08 p.m., by a John Webber, the light had a reddish hue and was visible for about 8½ minutes as it swung across the horizon."¹⁷

Scores of persons reported sighting some silvery discs heading across the sky at Philadelphia, Pa., going in the direction of Trenton, N.J. on July 9th;¹⁸ while at Alexandria, Va., a single shiny disc was seen.¹⁹ July 10th was a busy day with two people in Tacony, Pa., counting nine saucer-shaped objects crossing the sky at one minute intervals, while at Philadelphia, Pa., nine "dull lights" were spotted in the heavens.²⁰ The lights were dimly lit saucer-shaped things that were seen traveling swiftly across the sky under a layer of clouds. They appeared intermittently between 9:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.²¹ The UFO's may well have been searchlight beams although during the day a witness reported a flying saucer over Mt. Lebanon, a geographical landmark near Pittsburgh.²²

Are flying saucers a "joke?"

Meanwhile, investigative journalist Donald Keyhoe, hired by True magazine* to dig up all the facts on the UFO mystery, had not been idle. After spending a couple of weeks quizzing experts in Washington, D.C., Keyhoe learned that many of them had felt that the flying saucer business was a joke until the time Captain Mantell met his death on January 7, 1948. This surprised Keyhoe, and since there had been some confusion over the identity of the thing Mantell had pursued, he decided to zero in on this particular case. The Mantell episode was laced with intriguing loose ends, discrepancies in times of various sightings of the UFO, the apparent erratic path traced by the UFO, the peculiar descriptions reported, and the fact that the UFO could not be located right after Mantell crashed, to say nothing of the strange reports from outside the state of Kentucky. The Mantell case was sensational stuff, just the kind of story to give the proposed magazine article the impact needed.

Keyhoe left Washington, D.C. for the west coast to question various UFO witnesses. For several weeks during the summer of 1949 he talked to airline pilots and other individuals. He had his basic outline finished but still sought more dramatic detail.²³

The first anniversary of the Chiles-Whitted case.

The military Dick Tracys had been momentarily mesmerized by rocket-like UFO reports in 1948, with the Chiles-Whitted encounter the blue ribbon incident, and before the Air Force Chief of Staff discouraged the idea, some at Wright Field cared to muse Martians in our midst and questioned whether mankind was indeed the "crown of creation." Now, a year later, an interesting letter arrived at Air Force Intelligence headquarters. Did the missive support the mystification of the encounter high over Alabama that night in 1948? The letter read:

*There was a UFO article in the July 1949 issue of Argosy magazine by a Frederick G. Moorhouse. This author has not been able to obtain a copy so cannot comment on it.

"At the risk of being ridiculed, I have finally decided to inform you of that which my sister and I saw about 8:00 p.m. on July 24, 1948.

"First, let me say that I am a Public School Teacher in this, my hometown, where I have lived most of my sixty-nine years. Practically everyone in Rayne knows me and my sister, --- (deleted), retired teacher. I refer you to Missrs. --- (deleted), and --- (deleted) of the Rayne State Bank.

"Although my sister's vision is very poor now, it was not so bad at the time of which I write. That evening she and I were seated on our east porch from which we often watch the airplanes traveling east or west.

"There are two parallel routes, the most northerly being a little north of our house. It was on this northerly route that we heard and saw coming swiftly from the east a large cubicle, box-like thing without wings. We had a good view of its two rows of windows, four above and four beneath, lit by a deep red glow. Of course we saw only the south side of the object. I ran through the house to a door opening on the west, and saw it disappear in the distance as it continued its westerly course. There was a flare or tail of light streaming out behind it.

"A peculiar thing was the irregularity of form and windows, i.e., no right angles, but outlined as a child might draw them. We did not observe its nose construction. I cannot say whether it was very close to the ground, or of immense size, but I do know that the size of a single window appeared larger than the planes that cross high above by night.

"It seemed to run more smoothly than an airplane--practically purred.

"On the following morning we heard over the radio about the experience of pilots Chiles and Whitted. Their description tallied with ours with one exception. They saw the windows lit by a white light, whereas we saw them red.

"I read Sidney Shalett's article about "Flying Saucers" in the Saturday Evening Post of May 7, 1949.

"My reason for writing you is because this flying object was not coming southwest of Montgomery, Alabama, at 2:45 a.m. and passed over Rayne, Louisiana at approximately 8:00 p.m., of the same day. Discounting the fact that there might have been two of them, where was it during the intervening hours? Might it not have a hide-out somewhere along the route and travel only at night?"²⁴

Addressing himself to the Air Force's later change of the explanation of the Chiles-Whitted case from "unknown" to "meteor," scientist Dr. James McDonald, after an extensive review of the

military's UFO investigation procedures after 1948, remarked: "Such shifts in official categorizations are not uncommon, but they do not always appear to represent clarifications."²⁵

The Pullman puzzle.

Air Force OSI agents from McChord AFB, Washington, investigated an incident at Pullman, Washington, upon receipt of a newspaper clipping from the Spokane Spokesman Review:

"The date of sighting was 13 July 1949 at approximately 1430 to 1500 hours, Pacific Standard Time. The observers were at the Union Pacific railroad yards; two were working on the railroad tracks and two were loading coal from a bin into a truck. Three objects were sighted, flying in formation, echelon to the left. At the time of sighting, the objects were estimated to be ten miles northwest of Pullman at an unknown elevation. None of the observers would venture to make an estimate as to altitude but stated that it was about the same height as the average airliner. The objects were sighted at an indicated 45 degree angle above the horizon, and two of the objects passed directly overhead. The objects were estimated to be in sight from five to eight minutes. The objects were circular-shaped discs, being approximately six feet through the center or middle section and ten feet in diameter. They were black on the top and silver colored on the bottom. The material or substance of construction was unknown. They were flying toward the southeast. The object oscillated in flight, creating a blinking effect as the silver and black surfaces came into view. The arc or swing of the objects was very mechanical and regular and covered approximately 80 degrees. When the objects were approximately five miles from the observers, the trailing object made a 90 degree turn to the left and disappeared from view northeast of Pullman. The two remaining objects continued in a straight line of flight until they were directly overhead, and then they executed a 90 degree turn to the left and continued a straight line of flight to the northeast. There was no evidence of smoke or vapor trails nor any type of exhaust. No sound was audible. The weather was hot and humid, with a few scattered clouds, and the observers did not recall seeing the object pass through or near any clouds. The speed was constant and estimated as about the same as a commercial airliner. There was no evidence of propulsion other than the oscillating effect and no evidence of control surfaces were noted. The objects continued in flight until they disappeared from view. The observers did not know what the objects were."²⁶

"Convention of Saucer Witnesses."

The Young Mens Business Club of Alexandria, La., discussed the possibility of inviting scientists, science writers, and government investigators to a convention of saucer witnesses. The Pineville News of Pineville, La., noted the proposed saucer convention and learned that people from all over the nation had expressed interest in attending. Two UFO reports came in from the Pineville area at the time and the editor remarked: "It's becoming harder and harder to be skeptical about these mysterious discs."²⁷

Out of Brownwood, Texas, came a very odd story. A Mrs. Armstrong related to the press that a strange thing had passed over her home sometime after midnight, July 17th. It was about a foot in diameter, she reckoned, and "glittered" with light. The thing slowly wafted over the house, moving into the teeth of the wind, about 30 feet up. When the thing brushed a tree branch, it cast off multi-colored sparks. Soon afterward, the thing flew away to the south. After it passed from sight, a rumbling was heard and a glow lit up the horizon.²⁸

"Hey, you guys!"

The morning of July 18th an enlisted man named Clemmensen yelled to three of his buddies inside Building T-516 at Fairfield Suisun AFB, California: "Hey, you guys, come and see these 'flying saucers'!" Since Clemmensen sounded serious, the others ran to the door. They all viewed two, white, round objects hurtling eastward. The objects were out of sight in five seconds.²⁹

Another high speed object, or thing, was seen speeding over Galveston, Texas, July 18th. It appeared to hesitate for a moment and then zoomed west at a tremendous velocity.³⁰

A rumor that U.S. Air Force fighters had shot down one of the mysterious flying discs over New York state, on July 20th, made the rounds, but the Hamilton (Ontario) Spectator attempted to squelch such speculation attributing the alleged downed disc to an advertising balloon from Quebec province that had come to grief.³¹

This is as good a place as any to broach the subject of "crashed saucers." There has been considerable confusion over the "little men from Venus" story, a sensational yarn that has obfuscated the study of unexplained aerial objects to an extent difficult to calculate. The genesis involved two confidence men, Silas M. Newton and Leo A. GeBaucer, dealers in fake oil leases and operating out of Denver, Colorado, and Mojave, California. Together they concocted a unique scheme, but before we explore that, there should be a remark or two about what may have seduced their imagination.

Inspiration was adequate. The April 1949 flying saucer article in the Saturday Evening Post stirred national interest in the mystery, and for many people raised more questions

than it answered. The April 1949 Air Force press release about Project SIGN discussed hypothetical supporting and propelling systems that might be utilized by a flying saucer and in the process made comments about the possible use of the Earth's magnetic field. Perhaps the best source of information available to the two con artists was the spring 1948 issue of Fate which had considerable material about the saucer problem and detailed the adventures of two fellows who claimed to have recovered a number of metal fragments from a damaged flying saucer. Fate not only seemed to accept the fellow's story but dared to suggest, which is of considerable interest to our examination of Newton and GeBaucer, that more saucers may have crashed specifically referring to the 1947 Zamalayuca, Mexico meteor.

On June 5th when Walter Winchell charged the Air Force with concealing information about UFO's detected over Newfoundland, suspicions became more definite. The climate of mistrust gave Newton and GeBaucer a weird idea.

Reflecting on the marvels that might be salvaged from a mutilated machine from another world, a crashed flying saucer, Newton and GeBaucer mused possible profit in an unique bit of hokum. It had a special appeal to them since they had scientific pretensions that favored geomagnetic mumbo-jumbo.

The swindlers decided to make up a story about magnetically powered and controlled flying saucers that are attracted to radar installations, the electromagnetic waves emanating from the equipment at the sites invariably causing the craft to crash. The imagined flying saucer space ships were supposed to originate from the planet Venus which was known to have a thick atmosphere somewhat like Earth's and also having a strong magnetic field. They would claim the saucers were piloted by small, peaceful, human-like beings, and that the circular craft that had crashed were undergoing secret examination by the U.S. government.

Newton, posing as a highly successful oil executive, would steer prospective investors to GeBaucer who would be acting the role of a government scientist engaged in classified Pentagon projects. GeBaucer would then casually drop hints about "crashed saucers" when the opportunity presented itself. With such fascinating bait, the unsuspecting victim would be drawn deeper and deeper into a financial snare Newton and GeBaucer carefully prepared.

Early summer 1949, found the two bogus oil men in Denver, the front man of the pair, Newton, living in a lavish suite in the Brown Palace Hotel hobnobbing with the local well-to-do crowd and in the process capturing the amateur golf title of Colorado.

Establishing the "Colorado Geophysical and Development Company," the two con men sold stock and played a game with their clients until their credibility started to deteriorate. They then fled to Mojave, California, where they had an oil rig in operation in the desert, a set up that provided a facade of legitimacy for "promising oil leases" in the Mojave to be sold to the gullible. GeBaucer didn't tarry long in California since

he owned a business in Phoenix and preferred to spend much of his free time in Arizona. Newton, who had more polish than GeBaucer, and happened to be an excellent golfer, took to hanging around the bar at the Lakeside Country Club in Hollywood. He also got in touch with an old acquaintance who had achieved a position that could benefit his efforts to cultivate contacts with Hollywood society, Frank Scully, a columnist for Variety, the newspaper that catered to the entertainment industry.

More about Newton and GeBaucer later.

"Please expedite explanation."

Two UFO reports continued to annoy Project GRUDGE. Colonel W. R. Clingerman, Chief, Analysis Division, at Wright Field, put the whip to his advisors on July 21st about the matter. He fired off a message to all pertinent Commands:

"The enclosed information regarding the sighting of unidentified aerial objects in the vicinities of Arrey, New Mexico and Southern Oregon is forwarded for your review and comment as to possible origin and/or identification of these objects.

"In view of the source of these reports (Navy personnel at White Sands and a very prominent businessman) Headquarters, USAF, has requested action on this matter be expedited and that both incidents be given special attention in an effort to obtain a logical explanation.

"It is desired this office be advised by telephone of the estimated date your comments can be expected."32

"What are those lights flying around in the sky?"

Fishing for bass at Merrill Stone quarry outside of Delphi, Indiana, on July 23rd, produced more excitement than it did food for the dinner table. Two men at the quarry had nothing much to do while waiting for the fish to bite so they leaned back and relaxed. One, a Mr. Robertson, happened to look up. Although it was close to midnight and the sky was very dark, he noticed a pair of luminous objects in the heavens north of Delphi. Robertson turned to his companion, pointed, and then uttered: "What are those lights flying around in the sky?" Both witnesses watched as the objects zoomed in circles, moving horizontally, one in a clockwise orbit, the other in a counterclockwise orbit. Occasionally the objects emitted a phosphorescent glare. The objects dipped and dived as they went their merry way.

The objects were huge, maybe the size of a five room house. At least that is the estimate of the observers although they were guessing at the altitude of the sky objects which they put at 1,500 feet. The fishermen were sure the UFO's were metal objects, aluminum or magnesium. Since the objects were not going anywhere, one witness ran to a nearby house and persuaded a man inside to also witness the UFO's. The new witness said he would summon

the police and contact the newspaper office in Delphi. The authorities never came, and meanwhile the objects gradually shifted their circling farther away until they were out of sight.

Within a half hour, however, the objects reappeared in the sky in the original location. They were still circling. The two men continued to observe the orbiting objects as they cast for fish. It wasn't until 3:00 a.m. that the UFO's were lost from sight.

The witnesses were certain the objects were solid metal objects. They discussed different explanations between themselves and walked around the area to view the objects from different angles. They decided they were not watching the northern lights, stars, landing field beacons, bats, searchlights, or birds reflecting the city lights of Delphi.³³

What is unusual in this case is not the nocturnal orbiting, but rather the length of time the UFO's spent in the area. It is rare for a UFO report to mention a period of time of more than a few minutes at most. There also may be some connection between this report and a number of reports that would take place in the Cincinnati, Ohio area, beginning in August 1949.

"Observers are very reliable."

An Air Force Captain and an Air Force Major were surprised at the passage of some bluish-white lights over Fort Worth, Texas at this time. Obviously the Air Force had to describe the observers as "very reliable;" after all, the Air Force had trained them. The Major's account reads:

"On 24 July 1949 at approximately 2030 hours, I saw what appeared to be seven dully lighted objects in a type 'V' formation slightly to the west moving very rapidly from south to north. The distance between lights apparently did not change during the time they were visible, which indicated that they might have all been on a single object. This formation of lights was visible for only four or five seconds and finally faded away into the northern sky."³⁴

A little later on July 26th, a whirling, saucer-shaped object emitting a bright light, sped over the Nebraskan landscape at 400 to 500 m.p.h. A doctor living near the town of Mitchell, Nebraska viewed the object and estimated it to be 25 feet across and about 6,000 feet in the air. The saucer passed through a number of clouds before disappearing behind some hills.^{35, 36}

The epidemic of flying saucer-itis continued in the Pacific Northwest.

A B-29 bomber flying over Washington July 26th attracted the gaze of an observer in the city of Spokane who claimed he

saw eight disc-shaped objects a 1,000 feet above the aircraft. The UFO's were traveling in the same direction as the bomber and quickly outdistanced it.³⁷ To the west of Spokane on the same day a motorist six miles north of Bellingham, Washington, saw something he first thought was a burning aircraft in the sky. Rolling the car window down, he peered closer and judged the spot in the heavens to be the size of a fuselage of a C-47 and about six miles away and some 15 degrees above the horizon. Red-orange in color, the thing was egg-shaped and had a sharp outline. It remained stationary and made no sound.³⁸

Over Redmond, Oregon, also on July 26th, something that gave the impression of being a "flat sheet of aluminum" soared over at tremendous velocity, flashing in the sun.³⁹ Likewise, a flying disc brilliant in the rays of the sun passed overhead at Puyallup Valley, Washington two days later. It was reported by J. Sagmiller, veteran flyer and since the war, an aerial crop duster for Washington farmers.⁴⁰ What may have been the same object was spotted over Seattle on July 30th about 10:40 p.m. A Mr. R. L. McCormick described the intruder as glowing and: "...flat like a saucer with a bright center and sort of a halo around the edge."⁴¹ Only hours before a brilliant object alarmed an observer at Burien: "It was three times as big as the largest star...the flame shot out (and) just really frightened me."⁴² The previous evening a Mrs. E. Lund spotted something over Port Susan she guessed: "...was not a plane or balloon and disappeared after flashing visibly a few moments..."⁴³

"Star light, star bright..."

This mysterious sky activity over Washington continued the next night when about 9:30 p.m. a Seattle housewife and her three children gazed at the dark night heavens. One child pointed out a star of particular brilliance and as the family made a wish on what they believed to be a heavenly body, together saying: "Star light, star bright...", they abruptly stopped in mid sentence. The "star" had started to move. It fell slowly and finally flashing out with a small explosion of pink and green light when it appeared to drop to earth in the Olympic Mountain Range.⁴⁴

Things began to get hectic when one UFO intruded into the air traffic over Portland, Oregon. Events started at 9:45 p.m. on Saturday, July 30th, when CAA traffic controller, Bernard Basford, at Portland Airport, caught sight of two red lights and one white light south of the Columbia River where the Bonneville power lines cross.⁴⁵ Basford took a sighting on the lights and estimated that they were half way between Hood River and Mt. Hood, or just about over the city of Camas, Washington, at about 7,000 feet. Basford, a CAA controller at Portland for over six years, was puzzled by the lights because the mystery lights did not match those required by law to be displayed by all aircraft for night flying. Approaching Portland airport at the time was an United Airlines passenger plane from San Francisco.

Its pilot, who was not named in press accounts, later told the newspapers:

"I first spotted the red light when I was between Salem and Albany letting down from 15,000 feet, about 10:10 p.m. It looked like a red light, with now and then a flash of white always off to the east of us, apparently quite a way away." 46

Furthermore:

"It would grow brighter and then fade. It seemed to be moving, but I couldn't seem to get any closer. It was off to the east when we arrived over Portland and the tower told us to hold off south of the city."47

The mention of the white light explains the radio command from Portland Tower. Basford, who had the red lights under observation for approximately 30 minutes, saw a white flash and thought it was an emergency flare. He set in motion aircraft-in-distress procedures. Passenger planes preparing to land at Portland, United flights 667 and 623, Western Airline flight 628, and Northwest Airlines flight 109, were ordered by Basford to assume a holding pattern away from the field. All four pilots of these airliners saw the mystery lights.

The alarm was also sent to the Air Force, the Army Flight Service, and the different sheriff and police offices throughout the area. Law enforcement officers immediately confirmed the presence of something odd in the starlit sky. In Clark County, deputies reported red lights east of Portland and police officer Robert Burke patrolling on Hayden Island reported both red and white lights which seemed to be five miles east of Rocky Butte in the Vancouver, Washington area. Clark County deputy sheriffs Henry Kaiser and Paul Markly also claimed to have spotted the "mystery plane" dropping what seemed to be a white flare. The "plane" was circling.

Back at Portland airport, Basford noted: "I couldn't tell anything about its speed since it was moving almost in a straight line toward and away from me...moreover the light would brighten, then dim. First it seemed to approach close to the field, then retreated."48

By now Basford's assistant, Robert Henry, and other airport personnel, were in the tower and were able to confirm what was occurring. Basford thought the UFO was a helicopter in trouble so he turned the airport's spotlight on the object to assist a landing but the UFO reacted by zooming off at a high rate of speed in a southwest direction.⁴⁹ As soon as the warning net was alerted, Portland Tower received calls from police departments at Camas, St. John's and other communities.

In the air, Captain Paul Thrush, piloting Northwest Airlines flight 628, cruising at 220 miles per hour, sighted the strange lights at 2100 hours when his plane was between

Stevenson, Washington and Troutdale, Oregon. He surmised that the lights might be several aircraft in close formation. The phenomenon was two steady red lights and an occasional white one. He was puzzled because this was:

"...nonstandard lighting and as such commanded his close attention as he approached Portland from the east. When Thrush heard Basford over the radio ordering incoming airliners to stack over Portland Field, he banked his plane 180 degrees to close the lights that seemed to be following his particular aircraft. The attempted interception was futile, the lights pulled away with ease."⁵⁰

After 15 minutes of waiting for the "aircraft in distress" to attempt a landing, Basford gave orders for the resumption of normal airport operations.⁵¹

The Army flight service control center insisted that no military aircraft was responsible, and no civilian planes had been reported as missing.⁵²

Air Force investigators, according to the Portland Oregonian, rushed to the Portland area to conduct an investigation and sent the results to:

"...the Air Force's 'flying saucer' project at Washington D.C. They immediately classified all details of the incident as 'secret' under security regulations and, while they have no direct authority over civilians, instructed airline pilots to observe the same restrictions. Captain Thrush (and C. J. Cole, his co-pilot) said he had also been called by Naval Intelligence with the same instructions."⁵³

A police sergeant of the Portland department who witnessed the whole series of weird sky events that night, became extremely annoyed when the red lights were explained in some newspapers as Very-lights shot up from Mt. Hood some 75 miles away. The law officer also happened to be a member of the Fortean Society* and sent a heated letter to Tiffany Thayer, the editor of the group's journal, which enclosed newspaper clippings on the flying lights over Portland airport and closed his letter with the declaration: "...I am more of a Fortean than ever!"⁵⁴

The Portland mystery lights were mentioned again in the August 3rd edition of the Portland Oregonian with the news that official investigators had arrived at no conclusions. Other than that, it was reported that a woman in Vancouver, Washington, had seen lights of red and white suspended under some clouds

*The reader is referred to the author's booklet: "Charles Fort, The Fortean Society, and Unidentified Flying Objects, by the author, Fremont, California, 1976.

and a Mr. Meserve living out at Gray's River, Washington, had contacted the Oregonian about an odd phenomenon visible over his hometown Friday night, the day before the strange lights made their appearance over Portland on Saturday. The phenomenon was said to resemble: "...beams thrown from the ground by powerful searchlights."⁵⁵

Project GRUDGE "withers away?"

At this time, according to Ruppelt, UFO reports forwarded from military units around the country and from overseas to Wright Field were not being investigated or verified. The reports were just being filed. What were the Intelligence experts doing to keep busy? Ruppelt reveals:

"The meager effort that was being made was going into a report that evaluated old UFO reports, those received prior to the spring of 1949. Project GRUDGE (experts) thought that they were writing a final report on the UFO's."⁵⁶

It was known by the experts at Project GRUDGE that periodicals had investigative journalists trying to obtain the "full story" on the UFO mystery.⁵⁷

The military Intelligence experts concluded:

"All evidence and analysis indicate that reports of unidentified flying objects are the result of
1) Misinterpretation of various conventional objects;
2) A mild form of mass-hysteria and war nerves."⁵⁸

This August document further stated:

"It is, therefore, recommended that conclusions 1 and 2 of this report with sufficient supporting data, be declassified and made public in the form of an official press release. This action would aid in dispelling public apprehension, often directly attributable to the sensationalistic reporting of many of these incidents by the press and radio.

"There are indications that the planned release of sufficient unusual aerial objects coupled with the release of mass-hysteria. Employment of these methods by or against an enemy would yield similar results."⁵⁹

The 375 reports in Air Force files, which was the amount compiled up to the spring of 1949, were screened by: Dr. J. Allen Hynek, head of the astronomical department at Ohio State University; the Air Force Air Weather Service; the Rand Corporation; the Air Force Geophysical Laboratory; the U.S. Weather Bureau; and a Dr. Fitts, a psychologist from the Air Force Aero-medical Laboratory.⁶⁰

The Air Force Weather Service attributed some 12 percent of the records on file to balloons by correlating general description, motion and speed with known balloon launches.⁶¹

Dr. Fitts advanced a theory (Dr. Hynek's views will be given later on in this text) that makes more sense if applied to civilian observers; unfortunately many of the good unknowns were reported by technically trained personnel:

"There are sufficient psychological explanations for the reports not otherwise explainable. These errors in identifying real stimuli result chiefly from the inability to estimate speed, distance and size."⁶²

Perhaps the most critical appraisal, because it was not so confined by a specialized viewpoint, was the RAND Corporation's. But first a note about RAND. The RAND Corporation was a "think tank."

A group of scientists that had worked together during World War II on research and development formed the RAND organization in 1947 and established headquarters in Santa Monica, California. RAND's basic mission was to bring systematic and analytical thinking to bear on Air Force tactics and strategy. The RAND people said of the UFO material:

"We have found nothing which would seriously convert simple rational explanations of the various phenomena in terms of balloons, conventional aircraft, planets, meteors, bits of paper, optical illusions, practical jokers, psychopathological reports and the like."⁶³

UFO investigations continued but activity was mostly by local Air Force OSI units, and other military services like the Navy.

When, on August 1st, an American reported seeing a strange, torpedo-shaped object like a "Fourth of July sparkler" zipping over the countryside outside Tampico, Mexico, the story on the incident was forwarded to Wright Field by U.S. Navy Intelligence agents stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City.⁶⁴

The Army, with "mystery flares" troubling Camp Hood in Texas, attempted once again to arouse Project GRUDGE to action. Major Schaffer, in charge of security at Camp Hood, sent a batch of new UFO reports to his superiors and pointed out that all of the latest sightings did not have the strange characteristics of former ones. These latest sightings, he asserted, were no doubt natural meteors. Perturbed, the Major lashed out:

"These reports of natural phenomena by Army personnel who assume they see unidentified aerial objects bears out the necessity, as previously recommended, for assignment of qualified technical

personnel with special equipment to carry out the mission of observing and recording unidentified aerial phenomena."⁶⁵

"Assigning probability percentages."

The experts at Project GRUDGE wrestled quite some time with the Arrey, New Mexico and the "southern Oregon" cases.*

Any closure of Project GRUDGE activities necessitated the explaining of these two puzzling incidents, an irksome task, but since they were so fresh and well witnessed it had to be done.

In order that the reader may get some insight into how Project GRUDGE analyzed UFO sightings, let us look over the shoulder of Captain T. K. Oliver, Acting Chief, Office of Air Research as he examined the Arrey and southern Oregon cases:

"In the analysis of the data presented, the first question that must be answered -- 'Did the observers actually perceive the objects which they describe through their physical sensing organs or were they created within the observer; i.e., noise?' The objects have been seen simultaneously by several observers and certain common characteristics described. This is irrefutable evidence and it must be recognized that the objects which the observers reported were real and perceived from stimuli received from outside the observer.

"Now let us examine the testimony. What are the firm facts brought out by the observers?

"The object had contrast with the sky by virtue either of a high albedo or radiation emanating from its surface.

"The object was moving relative to the observer. The speed at which the objects were moving cannot be established to any degree because of the lack of range information. Whether it was moving with the air mass or not is not certain. Shell observed the object to be moving retrograde to his own vehicle at an estimated 230 mph airspeed but without definite range measurement, very little can be made from this part of the observation. Bright objects appear to be larger when viewed at a distance. Consequently one could assume any number of situations which would physically satisfy the conditions described by the observer, i.e., the object could be at a distance in a free field, as the object came closer, its size would appear in truer perspective and to the rear of the athwart ship axis, the object would again appear to be larger. This

* See section 1 of this book, January - June, pp 64-5 and 78-80.

would give the impression of great distance and consequently great speed for a given angular rate. In the case of the ground observer, the angular rate was equivalent of the anticipated motion of the air mass but of a different direction of air mass; consequently, it cannot be definitely established that the bodies observed were not moving with the air mass, and on the other hand, it cannot be proved that they were. Therefore, all we can conclude was the object moved relative to the observer at an unknown speed.

"Configuration: Elongated oval; a solid of revolution. These seem to be common observation.

"Size: indefinite.

"Altitude: Shell reported what can be considered a reliable observation of beneath the level of his own vehicle which was at 9,000 feet above mean sea level and 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the terrain.

"Geographic: It is to be noted that the locale of these two observations was in the semi-desert waste lands of Western U.S., in general, a region of low surface earth conductivity and low humidity and sharp changes in the refractive index of light and temperature near the surface of the earth and high thermal current in the air mass.

"Let us consider the objects and phenomena which inhabitate or manifest themselves in the atmosphere near the surface of the earth.

"Natural: Animal Life.

Birds

Bugs

Physical Disturbances

Particles -dust -water vapor

Optical Anomalies

Energy Exchanges

"Airborn Vehicles:

Conventional

Non-conventional

"Let us discuss each of the items:

"Of the animal life that can make itself airborn, only two general classes need be considered--birds and bugs. Both of these can propel themselves in the atmosphere and have been reported found at high altitudes probably as a result of the vertical motion of air masses and not of their own locomotion. That these animals could give the configuration and albedo reported by the observers is possible. Swarms of bugs are known to make mass migrations and are believed to be responsible for the 'angels' sometimes seen on Radar presentations.

The arbitrary weighing given to the plausibility of the objects reported being animal life is one-tenth, where unit is defined as certainty.

"Physical disturbances, by which is meant any disturbance to the natural homogeneous distribution of the constituents of the atmosphere and their energies, such as dust particles, accelerated by thermals or water vapor or ice particles, could conceivably assume the configuration reported. That dust laden air can be made to retain its original configuration for long periods of time is evidenced by the British experiments for determining the velocity of the upper air mass (100,000 feet) by the use of puffs of smoke from rifles. These particles can also have the albedo observed. There are other phenomena which are the result of energy exchanges which give small masses of gas luminosity and self propelling energies, one of which is the 'Fire Ball' or nitrogen glow discharge that often is seen accompanying static discharges. Optical anomalies are common in tropical atmospheres and varying indices of refraction give curved paths to light propagation. Although there is little evidence to support the optical anomaly conclusion, is there reason to exclude it? The arbitrary weighing given the probability of physical disturbances being the phenomena observed is two-tenths.

"The conventional airborne vehicles, when viewed from a distance at unfavorable aspects, do present the appearance of ellipsoid and have the appearance of reflection observed and commonly frequent the atmosphere close to the earth. However, when viewed from less than 10 miles over a period of minutes, most aircraft would present a recognizable configuration. The arbitrarily assigned probability is one-tenth.

"For non-conventional aircraft, one must say that no such configurations are known to Allied aircraft designers; that no propulsion systems capable of moving against estimatable (from our present aeronautical engineering knowledge) drag forces through the distances commensurate with the spheres of our influence are known. Yet this exists as possibility and the arbitrarily assigned probability is one-tenth.

"On a scale of probability where six-tenths is the minimum necessary to make a prediction, we can intelligently make no conclusion as to the nature of the objects observed."66

The only thing certain here is that the expert is uncertain. He deals in probabilities that are "arbitrarily assigned."

So much for the military aeronautical engineer doing the analysis for Project GRUDGE. On the other hand, Milton Greensberg, Chief, Plans and Operations Section, Base Directorate for Geophysical Research, forwarded the opinion of Dr. J. A. Peoples,

Chief, Terrestrial Science Laboratory at the Air Force's Cambridge Research Laboratories, Cambridge, Mass., to Project GRUDGE at Wright Field. Dr. People's opinion also happens to mention the last names of the witnesses to the Arrey and the southern Oregon sightings.

"From my contact with Mr. Moore* in the development of constant level balloons, I know him to be a careful observer. Because he has been flying such balloons, the possibility of some reports of unidentified objects being due to balloons had been discussed with him as well as the observational methods which would yield a maximum amount of information. His report is the best evidence that I have seen that the phenomenon is real.

"Concerning the observation of Mr. Shell, the only possible explanation is that the object was a chain of meteorological balloons. This explanation is very far fetched because the balloons would be strung out. That could not have been due to any Terrestrial Science Laboratories' activities.

"I can offer no logical explanation for the phenomenon. I believe that in both cases something real was seen."⁶⁷

Other odd things over Oregon.

An Air Force Intelligence Report states:

"...Wallace Lee McDonald, Aviation Photographers Mate, First Class, Naval Air Auxiliary Station, Monterey, California provided information regarding the observation of unconventional aircraft or unidentified objects on 8 August 1949. McDonald's log book showed that his SMB-5 was refueled at Medford, Oregon 8 August 1949. The pilot was P. O. Hull, AP1, of Seattle; the co-pilot R. Tuswell, Chief Air Pilot; and J. H. Sparks, AF1, Alameda, crewman. All observed five (5) white, luminous objects overhead traveling east-southeast in an off balanced V-formation. One object appeared to be leading the formation with one to its left and three on its right. McDonald stated that at first the impression was one of dandelion seeds blowing along, and then it was realized the objects were at an altitude estimated at 10,000 feet. The diameter of each object was estimated to be 35 feet. McDonald stated the pilot called the tower and asked if they had observed anything. The tower reported that they had seen flying saucers overhead. Pilot

* J. Gordon Vaeth, aeronautical engineer employed by the Office of Naval Research was the general supervisor of the launch. Charles B. Moore, Jr., an aerologist of General Mills, Inc., operated the 25 power theodolite.

Hull requested clearance for take-off and the tower asked if they intended to attain altitude enough to follow the objects. McDonald further stated that on attaining 8,000 feet altitude the formation of the objects could still be seen and their shapes appeared to be that similar to a camera lens; over (convex) on top, and flat on the bottom. They appeared to be travelling at a speed of 150 miles per hour, east-southeast from the Medford Airport moving in a straight line. Time of observation was between 1300 and 1330 8 August 1949. The objects did not reflect color but gave off 'florescent glow.' No sound was heard or exhaust trails observed. The objects remained in sight for a period of thirty (30) minutes. From an altitude of 8,000 feet in the air, McDonald stated the objects appeared to be 10,000 feet higher than their aircraft. McDonald attempted to obtain a photograph but was unable to do so as his camera had a six inch focal length lens and a nine inch plate which was not adequate for photographing the objects at such a distance. During the period of observation, one object dropped down an estimated 1,000 feet out of the formation and then returned. This object was the last one of the right echelon."68

Flying saucers on terra firma.

The debate over the interpretation of affidavits would, of course, be instantly reduced to minor quibbling if a dramatic development were to occur; to paraphrase an old saying: "A saucer in hand is worth two million on paper." The UFO over Portland in July, loitering as it did for some time over the city's airport, might suggest the prospect that if the unexplained phenomena known as flying saucers were actually visitors from off the earth the last act in their journey was overdue, either by disaster or design.

Disaster?

The Roswell "UFO crash" of July 1947 is a most fascinating story and told best in the book The Roswell Incident. The thesis is the claim that something very mysterious crashed one night on a ranch near Roswell, New Mexico, during the height of the flying saucer flap of 1947. Although the incident is a 1947 event, a couple of years later, about now in our historical study, there occurred a subsequent development. It seems that the son of the rancher that discovered the Roswell "wreckage" had picked up more fragments during the months after a military recovery team had gone over the site. This gentleman referred to this collection one evening while visiting friends in Corona, New Mexico in mid-1949.

Somehow word reached the military about the collection in private hands and the very next morning a Captain Armstrong

backed up by three enlisted men showed at the collector's home to demand the material since it "was vital to the nation's security."

The Captain displayed the most interest in the string-like material in the collection and also asked to be shown the area where the material was found. The military men were taken to the site where they looked carefully behind bushes and under rocks until they were satisfied nothing more was to be recovered. The military didn't say any more about the material or incident and the puzzled collector of the strange material forgot about the business in time.⁶⁹ Thus the book closes on the Roswell incident until 30 years later when nuclear physicist and lecturer, Stanton T. Friedman, gave a talk on the UFO mystery to a group of businessmen in New Orleans. After the talk one of the businessmen took Friedman aside and urged the physicist to look up a certain retired Air Force Intelligence officer, a Jesse Marcel, who "once picked up pieces of a flying saucer."

The Roswell incident may have been the real thing, an actual disc disaster and the investigation is continuing,* but a vastly more well known and vastly more controversial crashed saucer story, the Newton and GeBaucer scam, has its beginnings at this point.

On August 8, 1949, the phone rang in the Los Angeles office of the FBI. Agent R. B. Hood answered. On the other end of the line was a man who identified himself as an announcer for a Long Beach radio station. He told Hood that he had some information of possible interest. The Air Force record on the FBI call states:

"...(the announcer) stated that he had received a telephone call from --- (deleted). --- (deleted) stated that he and another individual, identified only as --- (deleted), were prospecting in Death Valley approximately two or three weeks ago when they noted a large circular object crash to the ground a short distance from them. Immediately following the crash two "small men," heavily clothed, ran from the crash and disappeared over a ridge. The large circular object was inspected by --- (deleted) and --- (deleted) and according to them was approximately twenty-four feet in diameter and seven feet thick.

"--- (deleted) stated that --- (deleted) had a scientific background, and after examining a portion of the object, declared it to be principally calcium, iridescent and radioactive. The material reported had small green wires running throughout. --- (deleted) stated to --- (deleted) that he had a small portion of the material in his possession.

*Stanton Friedman discussed Jesse Marcel's testimony with this author and stated that it was crucial that the military officer that assisted Marcel in the recovery of the alleged saucer fragments be traced and questioned. Marcel said he could only remember his partner's last name: "Cavitt."

While the author of this history was examining Air Force files, it was noticed that a Special Inquiry report dated September 7, 1949, originating from Kirtland Air Force Base, OSI District Office #17, was prepared by a military officer named: "Sheridan W. Cavitt."

"--- (deleted) was unable to furnish --- (deleted) address but stated that if --- (deleted) recontacts him he will endeavor to obtain same.

"No action is being taken by this office and the above is for any disposition deemed appropriate by you."⁷⁰

Air Force records have the FBI document on this phone call on file and scribbled in pencil across the bottom of the page is the word: "hoax." No record of an investigation is indicated. Whether it was due to the slow-down within Project GRUDGE or a snap judgment is not clear, most probably the latter. The public became aware of the alleged disc crash on August 20th when the INS carried a briefer account datelined: "Mojave, California." The two prospectors were named: "Buck Fitzgerald and Mase Garney."⁷¹ Were our old friends Newton and GeBaucer up to something already? But we anticipate.

An equally absurd story concerning an alleged "landing" also had its beginnings in August 1949.

"Advanced Thinkers Club."

Southern California's reputation as an incubator of weird ideas is well known and the George Adamski story is no doubt a classic example. Born in Poland in 1891, Adamski emigrated to America with his parents just two years later. During World War I he served in the U.S. Army. Fascinated by philosophy he studied every religion of major importance. Once he almost applied for admission to a Catholic monastery before being deterred by a strong belief in reincarnation. Finally, he came to believe that Lamaism had considerable merit, but he wanted to utilize the "application of knowledge" much like the Christian Science organization. Adamski founded the "Royal Order of Tibet" in the mid-1930's and established a monastery in the placid hills behind Laguna Beach, California. There he and some disciples of his doctrine paraded around in long robes embroidered with the group's symbol, a 24 point star. Around their necks dangled crystal pendants.

One would assume that Adamski wanted to escape the world but total isolation was not his ambition. It was well to meditate in cells once in a while but Adamski felt he had a calling to be a teacher and lecturer to the world-at-large.

He had radio programs on KFOX Long Beach and KMPC Los Angeles for some time which gave him publicity and created a demand for speaking appearances at various service clubs in southern California.⁷²

An admirer presented Adamski with a six-inch telescope and the gift started him on a life-long interest in astronomy, a hobby he incorporated into his philosophical outlook. This hobby prompted a move in 1940 from Laguna Beach to the tiny community of Valley Center, because the world's largest telescope, a 200 inch monster, was planned for an observatory atop nearby Mt. Palomar. Adamski envisioned a cafe to provide food and drink to tourists.

Adamski was always unhappy with critics that pictured him as a "fry cook" at the cafe. As the owner he did not have to work and could spend his time in the dining room chatting with tourists, and various experts that stopped by while coming and going to check on the construction of the huge Hale telescope.⁷³ Up to early 1949 Adamski was unknown outside of southern California but in mid-year he took the first step in a zany journey that would lead to international prominence.

In August 1949, a novel by Adamski: Pioneers of Space--A Trip to the Moon, Mars, and Venus appeared on the market. It told of telepathic Venusians, ethereal women and radiant men that made up a religious hierarchy on that orb mankind called the evening star. The book was an acknowledged fictional effort although Adamski did say in the foreward the work was a speculation upon the possible inhabitants of other worlds by using natural laws of growth and progression known to mankind on this earth. He invited inquiries from the readers to be sent to the "Advanced Thinkers Club" at Valley Center in care of "professor George Adamski."⁷⁴ In time Adamski would become dissatisfied with "fictional" yarns.

The Grey Goose and the Rotoplane.

A series of events that reached a climax in the latter part of August had its beginning on May 19th. It seems that back in 1939 a Maryland inventor, J. E. Caldwell, sold stock and formed an aircraft company. Caldwell built some flying models and then suddenly left town without notice. Now, in 1949, one of the stockholders thought there was a chance that Caldwell had gone into seclusion to perfect his craft and was responsible for the flying saucers since Caldwell's designs called for a type of circle-winged plane. The stockholder contacted the FBI but the Bureau turned the investigation over to the Air Force OSI office at Bolling, AFB, Maryland. Special Agent Adelbert C. Von Maucher corresponded with the stockholder on June 7th and learned more about Caldwell who had created the "Grey Goose Corp." The informant provided documentation about the "Grey Goose" operation and Von Maucher followed it up by checking with the Glen Burnie, Maryland, Postmaster to determine the last address of Caldwell. Accompanied by Maryland State Trooper J. J. Harbaugh, Von Maucher learned that Caldwell lived and worked on the old Lypton farm on the outskirts of Glen Burnie. The present owner knew of Caldwell's activities and said that the improviser had utilized several out buildings as work shops.

In an old tobacco shed, two craft, after enduring dust and decay for a decade, were found. They did resemble somewhat a "flying saucer" and it seemed they had at one time been used in an aeronautical experiment. Since it was late, Von Maucher left and didn't return until the next day, August 18th. Working with Trooper Harbaugh, Von Maucher took photographs and made sketches of the rusted heaps of metal and fragments of rotting fabric. Everyone connected with Caldwell's enterprise was questioned and cautioned that the interrogations were: "...of a classified nature and they were not to talk about the investigation to anyone."

The old tobacco shed housed a battered gyroplane named the Grey Goose (hence the name of the corporation) that had actually got off the ground once in a test flight, and in a corner there was also a pile of rusted metal hoops that marked the last resting place of a much less successful flying washtub dubbed the Rotoplane.

A mechanic that had worked with Caldwell on the old craft tipped off the press.

The remains of the two craft were loaded aboard a truck to be taken away, and while this was being done a reporter for the Baltimore Sun appeared and questioned Von Maucher. Von Maucher refused comment and referred the Sun's representative to Captain Belk of the 4th OSI District Office.

Things hit the fan when a story later turned up in the Sun that quoted an unnamed Air Force officer (Belk may have been the one) as saying something in regards to the find in the tobacco shed: "I, personally, think the inventor went to some other part of the country and that he (Caldwell)--or someone else--developed new planes along these lines and is sending them up."⁷⁵

The story was picked up by the New York Times which catapulted the Maryland incident into the national limelight. This embarrassed the Pentagon, the generals there denying the Air Force sanctioned the idea that the strange old Maryland craft were prototypes of the reported mysterious flying saucers.⁷⁶

Shocked by the reaction of the High Command, Major Sealers of the Office of Public Information, Press Bureau, Headquarters, USAF, wanted Captain Belk to explain the statement that had appeared in the August 20th issue of the Baltimore Sun. Special Agent Belk was not that happy either so he questioned the Sun's editor who declined cooperation for the vague reason that: "...newspaper reporters are protected under the circumstances(?)."⁷⁷

The Air Force then made it known that its official position was: "...that agents of the Office of Special Investigations could not be quoted and were not in a position to make any official statements or publication."⁷⁸

The military had similar trouble with the other Baltimore newspaper, the News-Post, which was supposed to have "falsely attributed" several direct statements to Captain Belk.⁷⁹

This friction with the Fourth Estate was not the last incident during 1949.

Caldwell, now 66-years old, surfaced in southern California at Manhattan Beach and joined the Air Force in issuing disclaimers that his inventions were in any way tied to the mystery discs.⁸⁰

The "original saucer observer," Kenneth Arnold of 1947 fame, was quoted by the news services as denouncing the Caldwell Rotoplane explanation of flying saucer reports. Arnold remarked that Caldwell's inventions could not possibly perform like the "real saucers" while pointing out that a craft like the Roto-plane was not newsworthy since it was not based on a particularly new concept.⁸¹

"Neith and Monstrator."

In the spring of 1949 Doubt magazine carried a long essay by Fortean Norman Markham who was Vincent Gaddis' nearest rival among those in the Fortean fold in regards to the extraterrestrial diagnosis of the UFO mystery. Called "A Fortean Speculation," Markham's article: "The Riddle of Monstrator," was a sketch-work of a bit of datum discovered by Charles Fort. According to Markham, there was a vast amount of material in Fort's books that could be worked up into more circumstantial detail, enlarged like a photographic print. "Neith" was the name given by some astronomers to a supposed moon of Venus, an orb detected in the year 1645 and which disappeared in 1791. There were those who charged that observers were just not meticulous and the alleged satellite had been nothing more than a ghost image, an optical illusion. And then there was another supposed body in space, an anomaly that observers in Basel and Lausanne, Switzerland, calculated to be hovering close to the Earth, a stupendous bulk maintaining a discrete distance above our planet in the year 1762. Fort gave this thing a label he originated himself: "Monstrator." Astronomical purists are probably on safe ground when they attribute "Monstrator" to confusion over a sunspot but the commentary on such phenomena fueled conjecture by Fort which maintained that man may not be alone, that "Neith" may have launched "Monstrator."

Looking over the data, Markham had something to say himself, and his anti-anthropocentric eloquence matched that of his Bronx master:

"Maybe something only waited out there, thinking in terms of voyaging onward, supremely and utterly aloof to anything like contact with the swarms of humanity milling here below.

"Something out there with loftier things to do than hold concourse with marauding, war-like, self-aggrandizing, selfishly enterprising small white vermin..."⁸²

It is left to the reader to gage if Forteans like Markham were being too harsh in putting the knock on mankind but one should recognize that there is some virtue in a talent of determining affinities and connectabilities. Also, such a daydream of "outsiders" lurking high in the sky was exactly the idea proposed most seriously by an Air Force scientific advisor, Dr. Lipp, in the fall of 1948!

Dr. La Paz's 5th report.

On August 17, 1949, Dr. La Paz submitted the fifth of a series of reports on "anomalous luminous phenomena" reported in the skies of the American southwest. What is fascinating is that Dr. La Paz found that the "luminous phenomena" seems to have changed its behavior.

"This report covers anomalous luminous phenomena reported to and/or investigated by the Institute of Meteoritics during the months of June, July,

and the first ten days of August 1949. Incidents occurred on Sunday, June 5, 7:55 - 8:17 p.m. (El Capitan, New Mexico); Monday, June 20, 8:10 p.m. (Los Alamos, New Mexico); Wednesday, June 29 (Flagstaff, Arizona rocket incident); Sunday, July 24, 8:26 p.m. (Socorro, New Mexico); Sunday, July 31, 7:47 p.m. (Vaughn, New Mexico); and Saturday, August 6, 8:00 p.m. (Vaughn, New Mexico).

"For these incidents, it was possible to carry out reasonably satisfactory field investigations only for those occurring on June 5, July 24, and August 6. A small amount of field work was also done on the incidents of June 20 and June 29. Detailed reports on certain of these incidents are attached below as appendices.

"Certain general impressions have resulted from the investigations alluded to in the previous paragraph:

--Many of the green fireballs now appearing descend in nearly vertical paths, whereas, in earlier months almost all of the green fireballs observed moved almost horizontally.

--There appears to be a concentration of New Mexico incidents near weekends, especially on Sunday and near the hour of 8:00 (in the interval from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

--Unlike the fireball incidents of December 1948 - January 1949, most observations of recent incidents have been obtained from stations remote from the fireball path. Stations near the path either failed to report any observations or the testimony obtained is conflicting. This situation may arise from the fact that a fireball descending almost vertically through the zenith of a given station is an extremely difficult object for which to estimate elevations and azimuths.

--As in all the green fireball incidents reported on in earlier months, the characteristic green color continues to be observed by the great majority, but by no means all, of the observers; and the failure to observe any sound (meteoritic detonations) persists.

"Recommendations:

--A recommendation made many times in the past will again be repeated here. All eyewitness accounts of which I have knowledge fall in the unwarned category. It is strongly recommended that a systematic observing program be instituted which will provide something besides accidentally obtained data.

--Some decision should be arrived at in regard to the nature of the interrogations which are to be carried out by representatives of the Office of Special Investigations in the field. For several reasons namely newspaper and radio publicity, the layman is much more curious and concerned about

fireball incidents now than he was last December. As a result, the interrogator frequently has the experience of being himself interrogated. If he refuses to answer any of the questions asked him (for example, in regard to the possibility that guided missile experiments are responsible for the fireball incidents), then he may not be able to obtain any information from eyewitnesses who almost certainly have something of value to relate. It is the writer's conviction that very few people any longer take seriously the story that the Air Force is interested in the meteorite aspects of the fireball incidents.

--It would seem desirable to take steps to widely publicize in the New Mexico area the occurrences of such rich annual meteor showers as the Perseids of early August. Otherwise, investigators will be flooded with reports concerning ordinary shooting stars."⁸³

"Monstrator" over Ohio?

Cincinnati, Ohio, the city that is to figure so prominently in the UFO story during the rest of 1949 and well into 1950, was host to some strange "balls of fire" which were noted by a local Weather Bureau expert during the night of August 20th. The Weatherman entertained thoughts that the glowing spheres might be weather balloons but the round objects were holding their own against gusts of wind up to 32 miles per hour. Another witness, according to a press account, also reported what may have been the same phenomenon around 4:00 a.m.,⁸⁴ claiming that the strange balls emitted a pulsating light. But these reports were small potatoes compared to a series of sightings over Cincinnati by searchlight that began the night before. Lt. Colonel Fred Dixon of the Department of Military Science and Tactics at the University of Cincinnati alerted Headquarters, Ninth Air Force, by letter:

"On Friday night, 19 August 1949, Sgt. Donald R. Berger, a member of this organization was operating a standard Army General Electric anti-aircraft searchlight on a volunteer basis for a local group who were using the light for publicity purposes. Between the hours of 2000 and 2300 he picked up an object in the light beam in the sky which presented an unusual appearance and was not readily identifiable.

"This subject appeared to change color in the light beam from a sort of phosphorescent appearance to a bluish color if held in the light and when the beam was removed the object remained visible with what has been described as a luminous appearance.

"The object was North but slightly East of Cincinnati at an elevation of 1585 miles or approximately directly overhead. Judging from the atmospheric conditions and the range of the light,

the object appeared to be at an altitude of 4 to 5 miles and at about the same range. It did not seem to move but remained as far as could be determined approximately stationary for the entire period of the three and one-half hours Sgt. Berger observed it.

"This phenomenon, whatever it was, was seen by several hundred people in this city, a number of whom called it to the attention of Sgt. Berger while he was operating the searchlight. A notice of this incident, although not released by military personnel, appeared in at least one daily newspaper of this city."

"Signed: Fred Dixon, Lt. Col.
CAC Act. P.M.S. and T.
U of Cincinnati, Cinn., Ohio"⁸⁵

"News media timebomb."

The Arrey, New Mexico UFO sighting was impressive, and as we have seen the Air Force tried hard with little success to eliminate all doubt about the case. The same went for the southern Oregon incident but there was a big difference with the Arrey sighting, and that was the location. The White Sands area, where the Arrey balloon launch site was located, swarmed with experts on missiles and the physical sciences, just the kind of people who would have considerable curiosity about UFO's, and it would soon become painfully apparent to both the Army and the Air Force that some in the Navy did not share their apprehensions about the UFO problem.

During the third week in August 1949, the U.S. Navy was test firing its new "Viking" rocket and a crowd of news media people were invited to personally witness the launches. At 4:00 p.m., August 24th, the news people got off the airplane at White Sands airport. The Fourth Estate was well represented. The radio networks were represented by CBS, and the Mutual Broadcasting System. Newscasters from two west coast radio stations, KRKD and KFWB, were there, as were writers from three magazines: Popular Science, Aviation Progress, and Popular Mechanics. And three Los Angeles newspapers: the L.A. Times, the L.A. Examiner, and the Hollywood Citizen News sent reporters. The newsreel outfits outnumbered every other media: Acme News, News of the Day, Paramount News, Universal News, Fox Movietone News, and Pathe. Others included a man from Inter News Photo and a lone reporter from the New York Times.⁸⁶

Army Capt. Edward Detchemendy, the Army's White Sands PIO, assisted Navy authorities to orientate, accommodate, and transport the press Corps. On August 25th the day started out with a briefing by Navy Capt. William Gorry who gave an introductory talk to the news people at the officer's mess. The talk was followed by a short lecture by Dr. Newell, of the Navy Research Laboratory, who spoke on the Navy's new "Viking" rocket. The lights were then dimmed and movies of both the Viking and the old wartime German V-2 rocket were shown. It was cautioned that

certain details were classified. The group then left for the test range.

Since the optical tracking telescopes were at locations some distance from White Sands Proving Ground Headquarters, some newsmen interested in ballistics, were permitted to travel unescorted by security guards to interview technicians at tracking sites, a lapse of judgment Detchemendy would regret later.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, something was happening right under his nose.

Capt. Detchemendy spent most of the time talking with newsmen Clete Roberts of Hollywood radio station KFWB since the newscaster had just returned from Germany and the Army PIO had just received orders transferring him to the same European country. Roberts had a portable sound recorder, and during one rocket firing, he wandered from Detchemendy to record the "swoosh" of oxygen being pumped into the missile's fuel tank. Roberts just happened to pass close to a pair of Navy officers, one of which was Navy Commander Robert McLaughlin (the same officer that had a run-in with Capt. Detchemendy back on July 6th). Hesitating for a second at a rope barrier, Roberts' ear picked up a few words McLaughlin was saying to the other navy officer--something about UFO's being reported over White Sands. The remark had an electric effect on Roberts who immediately went up to the Navy Commander and accused him of "holding out on him." If there was a juicy story to be had, Roberts wanted the complete package.

Detchemendy, meanwhile, was kept busy with 12 reporters and photographers but did glance at Roberts engaged in conversation with a Navy Lieutenant and a Navy Commander across the way.

As Roberts listened carefully, the Navy Commander said something about a recent local UFO sighting and muttered something about photographs. When pressed on the subject of photographs, Commander McLaughlin hedged and indicated that the pictures were of no value. On that note Roberts let McLaughlin off the hook.⁸⁸

Later on during the afternoon of August 26th the Aviation Editor of the Los Angeles Times, Marvin Miles, happened to be in the Navy PIO office discussing rockets with Capt. Gorry when a Navy officer entered and began to confide news about a UFO sighting made at White Sands that very day. Unable to resist the temptation since Miles had heard UFO stories from others at White Sands, Miles approached the Navy officer shortly thereafter and urged that a full disclosure be made for the benefit of the readers of the Los Angeles Times.⁸⁹ Miles' story appeared Tuesday, August 30th, in the morning edition of the Times:

"White Sands Proving Ground, N.M., Aug. 29
--Flying saucers--or at least mysterious flying
'objects'--have been sighted by service personnel
at this vital center of America's upper air re-
search.

"I talked with three men, two senior officers
and an enlisted technician, who reported seeing
strange objects in the sky, one as recently as
last Friday during preparation for a high-altitude
missile flight.

"In all fairness, it must be pointed out that
other officers and engineers at White Sands scoff

at the reports and put them down to imagination, weather balloons, dual images in high-powered optical equipment, or possibly distant planes reflecting sunlight.

"Yet the men who gave these reports presumably are familiar with such possibilities and well acquainted with the appearance of balloons and planes and the quixotic results of staring at a fixed point in the sky for long moments.

"One officer believes, sincerely, that the objects seen are space ships and declared that a ballistic formula applied to one observation through a photo theodolite showed the 'ship' was 35 to 40 miles high--an 'egg-shaped' craft of fantastic size and travelling at incredible speeds of three to four miles a second!

"The observer in this case, he said, was tracking a balloon into the upper air when the object swept across the balloon's path and cavorted for some 10 seconds--taking turns up to 22 times the force of gravity--before it disappeared. It had no visible means of propulsion.

"The enlisted technician reported seeing an object at 3:35 p.m., last June 14, as he was tracking the course of a V-2 test rocket in a 20-power elevation telescope, an instrument that can follow a missile to altitudes of 100 miles or more.

"I don't know what it was, but I had never seen anything like it before,' he told me. 'It seemed to be metallic, but I couldn't tell its size, its speed or its altitude. It would be impossible unless you knew one of the three factors.'

"He added he had informed his superiors of the incident and was told the next morning he had seen a 'disk.'

"A check of one officer elicited the response: 'It was probably a weather balloon,' but he declared the enlisted technician is considered a 'reliable man.'

"Last Friday's object was seen by a senior officer shortly after 11:00 a.m. and reported to the unit commander. The observer was preparing for a missile firing and scanning the skies through binoculars.

"I don't know what it was, but it came out of the north in a shallow dive and turned west. No, I wouldn't guess at speed or size.'

"He hastened to explain he is a 'skeptic.'

"Isn't seeing such a thing the best proof for a skeptic,' he was asked.

"I should say it was,' he smiled. 'But I just saw something and reported it.'

"In all, some five reports have been made in the last six months, one officer said, with only one last year.

"On one occasion, he told me, three or four officers saw a flying object with the naked eye, and at another time two smaller objects were observed to 'chase' a test rocket. These may have been dual images on the telescopes, he said, although they were seen from several widely separated stations.

"These reports tend to take the 'flying saucer' question out of the realm of housewives' stories and the tales of air transport pilots. Still they have proved nothing--merely added to the mystery."⁹⁰

Clete Roberts was stunned when he read Miles' article over coffee that Tuesday morning and without much reflection dialed the Aviation Editor's desk at the Times. When Miles answered, Roberts asked why he broke the story since such material was seemingly not subject to publication. Miles brushed such objections aside, remarking that the New York Times' man at the launches, Glad Hill, had every intention of doing the same story and it was just a matter of being faster on the draw. In other words, the eastern paper had been scooped. After all that, Roberts got the feeling he was being left in the dust so he made up his mind to tell what he knew during his radio program on station KFWB, Hollywood, that evening.⁹¹

The phone rang at the Army PIO office, White Sands Proving Grounds, Las Cruces, New Mexico, at 9:05 a.m., August 31, 1949. Capt. Detchemendy answered. Calling was a reporter for the El Paso Herald Post, a Mr. Cowan. The conversation went:

"Mr. Cowan: 'What is this the radios are putting out about you people at the White Sands seeing flying saucers--or flying discs up there?'

"Capt. D: 'I just heard about it from some people who came out from El Paso--is it a story put out by a Mr. Roberts?'

"Mr. Cowan: 'Yes--a Mr. Roberts and a Mr. Miles, from Los Angeles, I believe.'

"Capt. D: 'These men were here last week as guests of the Navy, and if they have any information of this type, I imagine they got it from the Navy--shall I switch you to the Navy and let you talk with them?'

"Mr. Cowan: 'Do you have a Navy PIO?'

"Capt. D: 'I'll switch you to Cdr. McLaughlin who will be able to clear you up on where the stories came from. We have had no such information here, and have made no release at all...'⁹²

Detchemendy dashed off a notation on the phone message record:

"I believe Mr. Roberts received this information on which he based his release--from the Navy. Cdr. McLaughlin released verbal information of a similar nature to Mr. Scholin, Public Information representative National Military Establishment, Washington, D.C.

when he was here at this post some weeks ago--in my presence."⁹³

Fuming, Capt. Detchemendy rushed to Brig. General Blackmore's office to complain about the treatment of classified information by the press and the impropriety of using unnamed sources (neither Miles or Roberts named names.).

The General expressed sympathy and suggested that Navy Capt. Gorry be called to account since the press had been the primary responsibility of the Navy. Knowing that the source was "high ranking" and suspecting McLaughlin, Detchemendy vowed to prove it.

His wrath weakened by ignorance, Detchemendy approached Gorry cautiously. Gorry's response was one of astonishing indifference: "It was that same old thing of the Navy tracking of discs in the Spring and that they got this story from us." Capt. Gorry thought so little of the supposed security breach he didn't even bother to compose a decent sentence in making his reply.

Thinking back, Detchemendy did not remember Roberts conversing with any high ranking Army people. In fact, likely candidates as Lt. Colonel Eifler had left the Viking test area immediately after extending a welcome to the press and General Blackmore had never even showed up.⁹⁴

Headquarters, 17th District, Air Force OSI, Kirtland AFB, requested that S/A John F. Frampton investigate the circumstances surrounding the press accounts of UFO's seen over White Sands since no official news release about the subject was on file.

Inquiries to be made in California were handed by S/A James Shirley of the Maywood office.

Shirley phoned Roberts who, in turn, referred him to Miles. When Miles was finally contacted, Shirley needled him about basing such an incredible story on an anonymous authority. Miles snapped: "Do you think I made it up?" Shirley got Miles to suggest that an officer with the last name of McLaughlin had something to do with the release of information but not with the kind of wordage that would nail down the responsibility. Miles, very wary of the line of questioning, insisted that Shirley do some arm bending on Capt. Gorry and terminated the interview by asking if the OSI was: "trying to get someone into trouble."⁹⁵

Switching his attention back to Roberts, the OSI agent got the radio broadcaster to admit that perhaps Miles' source had been a "Commander Jansen" or some sort of name that had a similar sound.⁹⁶ Roberts also thought that a reporter for the Hollywood Citizen-News, an Austin Conover, might be a good bet to know something. Shirley checked the list of newspeople present at the Viking tests and found that a reporter representing the Citizen-News by the name of Austin Conover had indeed been part of the group. In fact, a story much like Miles' had appeared in the Citizen-News under the byline of Conover. Shirley obtained a copy. The first four paragraphs were of the most interest:

"Mysterious flying objects that are called 'flying saucers' or 'flying disks' have been

sighted by rocket experts at White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico.

"During a visit there last week, I was told by a top Navy officer who has had long experience in observing high-altitude missiles:

"While sunbathing one day recently I saw a mysterious object cavorting high in the air above me.

"Just before that, I turned in a report to Washington that two such objects were observed by a party of rocket experts visiting here. At that time I was skeptical. They insisted that I make the report.'"97

Further on in the article Conover mentioned a name that was familiar. This individual also seemed well disposed toward the subject of flying disks:

"Flying disks,' said Comdr. Robert McLaughlin, who since 1939 has been engaged in rocket research, 'have nothing to do with any experiments carried on by American scientists or for that matter by anyone on earth.'"98

Shirley confronted Conover in the offices of the Citizen-News and found him as evasive and cagey as Miles and Roberts. Much of the article Conover admitted he: "...sort of dreamed up."99

Questioned September 19th, Navy Captains Gorry and McLaughlin: "...advised that insofar as they were concerned the article contained in the Los Angeles Times dated 30 August 1949, contained no factual data whatsoever(!?)."100 According to Capt. Gorry, both Miles and Roberts had talked with numerous Naval personnel at White Sands and the April 24th UFO Arrey case was one of the topics discussed.101 Gorry volunteered his opinion that UFO reports had no validity, at White Sands or anywhere else. That same afternoon a visit to the White Sands Photographic Office turned up a denial by Lt. Alexander Szabo, who was in charge of such things, that there was any picture of UFO's on file.102

"Unconventional Aircraft Project."

Why was the Army so uptight and the Navy so indifferent? Well, one can make a guess or two. It was true that the Army at Camp Hood was very concerned about safeguarding of the atomic weapon storage area and the repeated visits of mystery "balls of fire." That fact, and the lack of assistance given the Army by the Air Force's Project GRUDGE ignoring messages imploring aid, left the Army to its own devices. The possibility that the Army was doing more about UFO's than twiddling its thumbs would explain a puzzling remark by a Lt. Paul Davidson in his capacity as Technical Advisor to the Army PIO at White Sands. Lt. Davidson declared: "...the Naval unit is fully cognizant that the Army's Unconventional Aircraft Project is classified as 'Restricted'

and is therefore not eligible for free and full dissemination to civilian organization."¹⁰³ Did the Army have its own UFO project!?!*

A paragraph of a declassified Air Force OSI document dated September 22, 1949, gives the impression that the reduction of the Air Force's Project GRUDGE in August to a low level effort was also marked by the emergence of interest by another agency:

"...it is noted that the Counter Intelligence Corps, Department of the Army, is also investigating these objects. In order to avoid duplication, it is requested that you contact the proper Department of the Army CIC offices and coordinate your efforts on these investigations."¹⁰⁴

Eventually Commander McLaughlin was firmly identified as the principle source of information about UFO sightings at White Sands. Cleve Roberts got the opportunity to apologize to the Commander, but McLaughlin, unperturbed, remarked: "Oh, that's all right. I don't care."¹⁰⁵ Some of the things McLaughlin subsequently said stuck with Roberts like: "White Sands Proving Grounds had an observation point located 42 miles from... (the test range) on a hilltop where observations had been made of objects in the sky since 1947."¹⁰⁶ And: "In all probability some men from somewhere or objects from other planets were checking on the tests--based on the fact that such occurrences seemed to take place only during the rocket and other types of tests."¹⁰⁷

Newton, "Dr. Gee," and Frank Scully.

Meanwhile, Newton and GeBaucer were finalizing plans at their home base at Mojave, California; in fact it is strongly suspected that the "Fitzgerald and Garney" named in the August 20th news item were our two friends using assumed names in an abortive plot. Anyway, a more successful scheme was now initiated with GeBaucer adopting the alias: "Dr. Gee."

Newton and "Dr. Gee" were telling everyone that there was more oil under the Mojave Desert than under the sands of countries in the Middle East, but their boasting went unappreciated until they befriended a newspaper columnist by the name of Frank Scully in the summer of 1949. They easily impressed the writer with descriptions of detecting trapped oil with "magnetic microwaves." Chatter about obtaining millions of dollars in petroleum by hardly lifting a finger was appealing enough but "Dr. Gee" had even more amazing things to relate. "Dr. Gee's" discourse about his background in electromagnetics led to his revealing his claimed employment by the government on classified projects and one project in particular was a real conversation piece. Not only did "Dr. Gee" believe in flying saucers, he asserted

that he had even "examined" such a craft for the government, a craft that had crashed near Aztec, New Mexico! Scully was all ears and when he was invited to accompany "Dr. Gee" to visit Newton's oil exploratory operation headquartered in the town of Mojave on September 8th, he eagerly acceded to the invitation. En route, "Dr. Gee" was loose-jawed about his secret government work and quite ready to delve into details about the "crashed saucer", in particular on how the craft was powered and constructed.* No doubt with Marvin Miles' White Sands story still exciting interest across the country, "Dr. Gee's" yarn was palatable. Anyway, Scully swallowed "Dr. Gee's" story hook, line, and saucer.¹⁰⁸

In reality Scully's two pals were "doodlebuggers," in oil trade terms that meant fellows who tinkered with mysterious (read phony) oil locating devices, impressive black boxes covered with fake knobs and meaningless flashing lights. A couple of the slickest con men this side of Venus, the two wanted to make a big impression on people who knew nothing about oil but who had plenty of money to help them learn the hard way. Before the con men could make a quick buck on dubious oil land leases, it behooved them to establish a reputation of sorts.

Donald Keyhoe, meanwhile, returned from the West Coast to Washington, D.C., picking up loose ends in his attempt to knit together diverse threads into a blanket theory, a big addition being the ideas recently aired by Commander McLaughlin. At length, he got around to reviewing "old" UFO reports, those reported back in the 1800's, the ghost rockets of 1946, and those few sightings made before the Kenneth Arnold affair, the famous June 24, 1947 report that marked the outset of the first large scale American UFO flap. This "old" evidence reinforced Keyhoe's growing conviction that the UFO riddle was indeed a significant phenomenon of a puzzling longevity. Upon reaching Washington, Keyhoe ran into a friend who had done a complete turnabout on the UFO question. Formerly a scoffer, recent reports of radar tracking of giant, high speed targets, coming in from various military installations, had him doing an about face.¹⁰⁹

"Took him by surprise."

Did a strange machine land and then take off at Oak Flat? The report on such a possibility reads:

"On 5 September 1949, at approximately 1200 hours, while flying at approximately 7,000 feet en route from Los Angeles to Sacramento, California, I sighted an object over Camp Oak Flat which was several thousand feet below us coming up with a

*Newton and GeBaucer's idea of a geomagnetic powered space ship was not that new. Donald Keyhoe found that a Canadian physicist, Dr. Ferand Roussel, suggested such craft in a privately published treatise: The Unifying Principle of Physical Phenomena (1943).

terrific ascent headed approximately due south as if to go over Los Angeles. We were just rounding an 8,000 foot mountain and took him by surprise. He was coming up at about an 85 degree angle and coming up from some small foothills to the right of the large mountain. When he reached our altitude he seemed to hover for a time and changed course as if going out to sea over Santa Paula. I followed him with my eyes until he was out of sight. I could not detect any sign of power or controls as the shadows underneath prevented it. It looked metallic with a canopy on top with approximately 35 feet of span. There was no way to determine speed but the rate of climb was terrific."¹¹⁰

The above statement was made by a Sgt. Richard Miller, who sighted the object while flying in a Piper Cub aircraft with another member of the Air Force, Sgt. Rudy Palmer. Sgt. Palmer made a statement of his own that went:

"Sgt. Miller and I left San Bernando at approximately 1200 hours, headed in a northerly direction straight over Grapevine Pass. Just before we reached the highest point of the pass, with an 8,000 foot mountain to our left and on the right other lower mountains, we sighted an object ascending from the foothills at about an 80 or 85 degree angle. It was about 3,000 feet below us when we spotted it and came right up approximately even with us, about 1,000 feet off our right wing tip. Our elevation at this time was approximately 8,500 feet above sea level. It seemed to rise from the floor of the hills but we didn't actually see it leave the ground. When it reached our altitude, it seemed to hover for a moment and then it shot off almost directly south. It was traveling at a terrific speed, slightly ascending at about a 5 degree angle. It headed south over the ocean disappearing from our view. This object appeared to be like a sphere, slightly oval in shape, appearing a little longer than wide. This object did not appear to have any support of any kind, no exhaust or control surfaces whatsoever, and was of a dull metallic substance, similar to aluminum. It appeared to be about 30 or 35 feet in diameter."¹¹¹

The two military men drew a sketch of the strange object for the official record.

A giant, high speed target?

Noontime, the 8th of September a Major Louis Seville was leading a three ship flight on a short hop around Clark Field in the Philippines. While at 6,000 feet and making a turn to

the left, wingman 1st. Lt. R. Semrau said over the radio: "Look up to the right!" Major Seville's report on the incident states:

"I saw an object climbing at a steep angle (approximately 30 degrees). Once sighted, I would estimate it to be at about 15,000 feet, 30 miles from our position and climbing rapidly. I reversed the turn to the right and spread out the wingmen while in the turn, all the time maintaining about a 35 degree bank. Upon reaching a heading of north, which took not over a minute and a half since it was a steep bank, the object had reached an altitude estimated to be 50,000 feet. It was dark in color and far enough away so that nothing more was distinguishable than a black dot. At about 50,000 feet it made a sharp level-out with its con-trail. My first impression was to start after it but obviously its speed was so great it was impossible. The con-trail was one long thin line and had not dissipated to any extent at all from its beginning at the south to its present position almost out of sight heading north. Upon plotting its relative position from us, and the quick lengthening of our separation, it is estimated to have been traveling well over 800 miles per hour."¹¹²

The other pilots also made reports on the incident. 1st Lt. R. J. Semrau adds this: "The Flight paralleled the course of the con-trail and the object continued to climb and make us look like we were standing still..."¹¹³ And: "There was a definite break or 'elbow' in the con-trail when the object leveled off."¹¹⁴

The third wingman in the Flight, 1st Lt. Ronald Cree, contributed: "Immediately following the change of direction a slight rolling-in of the con-trail occurred. It was like the wake from a ship, but instead of rolling-out this was curling-in."¹¹⁵

Ohio again.

The second in what would be an amazing series of Ohio sightings took place September 11th at the Community of Madeira outside Cincinnati. It amounted to a repeat performance of the first incident. Sgt. D. R. Berger, once more operating a searchlight at a church festival at St. Gertrude's on Miama Avenue, swept the night sky with a long beam of light and inadvertently illuminated a large round "something" resembling a tiny moon motionless in the sky at an altitude of about 17,000 feet, inscrutably aloof. The object, apparently annoyed at its discovery, sought the privacy of greater height, elevating itself out of range. So many questions plagued witnesses, Air Force Intelligence at Wright-Patterson AFB was alerted by phone, but by then it was too late for any official military observers to catch a glimpse of the UFO, however the weather, like on the first occasion on

August 19, was clear and thousands of persons out for an evening stroll had seen the strange image high above them. 116, 117

The "End" of Project GRUDGE.

The Air Force UFO study, Project GRUDGE, had all but ended at this time: "Major Jeremiah Boggs, AFOIN (Air Force Intelligence Evaluation Division) Technical Capabilities Branch, told Donald Keyhoe in early January 1950 that the project had ended in late August/September 1949."¹¹⁸ UFO expert Dr. Bruce S. Maccabee reminds us: "...as Ruppelt points out, the top men in Air Force Intelligence did not request the end of Project GRUDGE, it was the lower echelon OSI officers who decided to stop the activities of Project GRUDGE since 'most UFO reports were trash.'¹¹⁹ A document was drawn up titled: Project GRUDGE Report 102-AC 49/15-100." Originally classified SECRET, the document was declassified and made available to the public on August 1, 1952.¹²⁰

While the GRUDGE report was ready in August, ¹²¹ it did not see the light of day until the end of the year and perhaps the reason for the delay is not too difficult to guess. As Edward U. Condon said in an essay he penned on the history of UFO's during the period 1947-1968, the Air Force in August 1949: "... was aware of the public relations problem involved in the UFO situation."¹²²

People were now writing in to Marvin Miles telling of seeing things like "huge blunt-nosed bullets" in the sky and "bright golden objects glowing with green light" race across the heavens. Miles selected excerpts for his daily column, working up a humorous essay for the September 16th edition of the Los Angeles Times and expressed a wish someone would send him a good photo of the darned things.¹²³

American seismograph sensors recorded the detonation of the first Soviet atom bomb on August 29th, but authorities kept the knowledge from the public for three weeks.

The Project GRUDGE report contained an expressed concern that someone might try to use UFO reports in psychological warfare. It is true that the Germans used panic-causing rumors to great effect in the first years of World War II when the Nazi war machine blitzkrieged many countries in Europe, but would the Russians attempt a similar strategem? Could the Russians, if they were so inclined, convince Americans they had a fleet of super-airplanes? This fear took on a new dimension with the chilling announcement by President Truman on September 23rd that an atomic explosion had occurred in the USSR signaling the end of America's A-bomb monopoly.

*There is reference in Air Force files to an "AFCSI Letter No. 85 dated 12 August 1949." It probably had a bearing on the reporting of "unconventional aircraft," but the details of the document have not yet been discovered, or at least nothing that has come to the attention of this author. The same is true for an "AFCSI Letter No. 106 dated 18 October 1949."

"Priority message."

A message had been flashed south to Wright Field from the Yukon back on August 23rd. Given a priority classification, the message named a Norman Mitchell, member of a Coast Geodetic Study team. He informed Intelligence authorities at Ladd AFB, Fairbanks, Alaska, that while away from the survey camp he suddenly heard a loud whistling noise. The whinnying sound he likened to a high velocity projectile. Some 30 seconds after the sound started some objects flew into view, traveling at high speed at an altitude of 15,000 feet. The objects came out of the northeast, passed over Tigvariak Island where Mitchell observed them, and then flew toward the southwest. Six of the objects were in a circular formation with a seventh "weaving in and out behind them." Mitchell said the UFO's were roughly round in outline and dark in color. The Geodetic expert was adamant that the UFO's did not look alike, or sound like jet planes. Seventy-two hours later Mitchell, in the company of a cartographer named Harry Lantxy, heard the mysterious whistling noise again but this time sighted no flying objects. The two men were away from camp at the time and the others on the Arctic expedition at the camp were inside tightly insulated huts with radios blaring and could not corroborate what Mitchell and Lantxy experienced.¹²⁴

With the priority message from Alaska on a desk at Wright Field, a news item from Hollywood was an eye-widener. Dated September 13th, a United Press story by Aline Mosby reported that producer/actor Mikel Conrad was filming a spy mystery and he claimed to have had some incredible luck while on location in Alaska. While shooting footage near Juneau he said he had heard Indians talk about "things flying through the skies." Later on, according to his account, some strange objects suppositively swooped within range of the movie's company cameras filming scenes for "Arctic Manhunt," and he obtained 900 feet of film.

Conrad boasted: "I have scenes of the saucer landing, taking off, flying and doing tricks. The saucer is not created in miniature or by trick photography. It is a mechanical, man-made object."

Catching the eye of the military Intelligence officials was the further claim by Conrad that he had the blessing of "authorities" and that a military officer named "William McKnight" was "conducting an investigation."¹²⁵

He also said: "'The saucer footage is locked in a bank vault.'" He explained: "'I'm not showing it to anyone yet.'" With the spectacular capture of a real saucer on celluloid, Conrad was announcing he was now acting in, producing, directing and writing: "The Secret of the Flying Saucers," a movie that would feature Russian spies, a blond heroine, and a handsome hero. Although he was filming the saucer movie behind closed doors, he did reveal some of the storyline:

"The plot concerns a playboy, Michael Trent (Conrad), who steels his weak chin and goes saucer-hunting in Alaska for the government. To throw the Russian spies off the track, he cleverly disguises himself as a drunkard seeking the cure. Trent is accompanied by an FBI agent, who turns out to be a beautiful blond (Miss Pat Garrison), cleverly disguised as his nurse."126

On September 16th, Mr. G. Towles of the Analysis Division, Intelligence Department, Headquarters, Air Material Command, discussed the Mikel Conrad story with Mr. John Morrill of the 5th District OSI. The Acting Chief, Analysis Division, Intelligence Department, Headquarters, AMC was then contacted. He agreed with Towles and Morrill when they suggested an inquiry.127

Special Agent James Shiley of the Maywood, California office, the same investigator that had a long talk with Marvin Miles, was ordered to have a discussion with Mikel Conrad. Shiley finally found the office of the film company associated with Conrad, Colonial Productions, and left several messages for the Hollywood personality, but Conrad took his time returning the agent's calls.128

Camp Hood is finally heard.

Dr. Joseph Kaplan, member of the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board, had kept abreast of the "green fireball" puzzle and had corresponded with the Air Force's Geophysical Science Directorate of Research and Development about the matter. The experts of the Directorate also took cognizance of the pleas of the Second Armored Division, Camp Hood, Texas, for a scientific investigation of strange "flares." It was emphasized by the Directorate that concern was also an issue in regards to the New Mexico manifestation: "...because of the fact that it (the green fireball phenomenon) has been observed only since the year 1947 and has caused a high degree of apprehension among security agencies in the area."129

Although noting that Dr. Kaplan had dismissed the green fireballs as natural phenomena, the Directorate still suggested positive action no doubt due to the anxiety shown by personnel in the field. The Geophysical people wrote Project GRUDGE September 14th and pointed out that the UFO study group was under the control of the Air Material Command and that Command:

"...has under contract several organizations in the Boston area that are specialists in observing techniques and the interpretation of celestial phenomena. It is desired that these organizations be consulted regarding the 'green fireball' phenomena. If necessary, consideration should be given to the establishment of an observational program designed to obtain additional information necessary to an explanation of the phenomena."130

Lt. Col. John Tucker, USAF, acting on behalf of the Geophysical Directorate, urged that Project GRUDGE send a representative to a meeting to be held at Sandia in New Mexico concerning the forementioned "light phenomena," a meeting scheduled for the middle of October.¹³¹

Ohio yet again.

The mysterious sky intruder had returned to Ohio on September 11th as mentioned previously. A week later it returned again to haunt Sgt. Berger who was testing this searchlight at the small community of Milford, Ohio, just outside Cincinnati. Word got around and a number of interested individuals made plans to be on hand when the UFO made another nocturnal appearance.

Sgt. Berger kept a log. The third entry in his skywatch log reads:

"Place: Milford, Ohio, 1900 to 2000 hours. Testing the searchlight about dusk, I had set it at 1600 mils. I could see an object which looked like a white glow. When I turned the light off, I could see nothing. I did this several times. As soon as it became dark I turned on the light at the same elevation and caught object in the beam."¹³²

Ghost rockets over the eastern seaboard?

Northeast of Rome, New York, a pilot of a C-45, Lt. Colonel Phillip Kuhl, spotted a silvery cylindrical object spouting an orange and white exhaust more than twice the length of the object, moving horizontally and letting down slowly until it entered a cloud layer at 7,000 feet. This took place on September 20th at 9:06 a.m.¹³³

The same day about an hour later in the same region another pilot, 1st Lt. W. E. Archibold, piloting a C-47, noticed a bright light and saw that the source of the light was a steady orange flame trailing from an object the aviator described as: "... similar in size and shape to a fighter fuselage, silver in color, and of an undertermined material." No protrusions on the body were detected. It came out of the north and vanished in a shadow cast by some clouds while in a 45-60 degree dive.¹³⁴

Six days later the folks living in Winchendon, Massachusetts, had a front row seat to the passage of yet another "ghost rocket." The object in question passed directly over Winchendon and a number of townspeople walking the streets sighted the phenomenon. At 10:15 a.m., a woman, whose name has been deleted from Air Force records, was the first to see the object. Her attention was attracted skyward by a gray smoke trail. Peering closely, she observed;

"...an object in the sky which appeared to be diving or falling slowly, emitting puffs of gray smoke in rapid succession. The object was first sighted directly overhead. It remained in sight for 15 minutes traveling from Northwest to Southeast and changed course from a vertical descent gradually to that of horizontal flight. No sound was noticeable. 'A silver, shiny airplane body, yet more box-like in appearance,' the object disappeared about six miles distant from the observer after a big puff of smoke had been emitted."¹³⁵

Another woman contested the account of the first:

"(She)...stated that the gray smoke was trailing behind the object in a steady stream and that when the object disappeared, no large puff of smoke was observed...(and) when the object reached the horizon, it seemed to disappear. It just disappeared strangely."¹³⁶

News from Europe.

A news dispatch dated September 10th said: "Graz, Austria (UP) Police reported today that two 'flying saucers' had been sighted two days ago over Radkersburg near the border between Austria and Yugoslavia."¹³⁷ This shows that things might start popping in Europe at any moment.

The UFO engima had sent sizeable reverberations as far as England where an English book publisher by the name of Waveney Girvan finally made the decision that the strange goings on in the sky merited monitoring, so he subscribed to a service that provided newspaper clippings, but alas, not much UFO news was to be had from the English press for it seemed English editors were too conservative to publish such "bedtime stories." Only a few snippets in small town papers were forecoming, nonetheless Girvan still learned enough to become convinced of the gravity of the UFO problem surmising that it would only be a matter of time before things UFO-wise would boil over in England and as matters stood, there existed an informational void made to order for a publisher. In fact, Girvan actually felt rushed, fearing that some spectacular UFO sighting, or government announcement, would cause an uproar before he was prepared. However, finding the right author proved a tough chore for no established writer wanted to trouble himself with a subject as yet so unfashionable in Europe. After an extended search, Girvan stumbled across a couple of tiny articles on UFO's in the small English magazine Enquiry, the essays penned by a personality widely known in England for his radio talks, public lectures, and articles on popular scientific topics, the Cambridge educated Gerald Heard, no stranger to anomalies of nature warring against preconceived notions. With the aid of the editor of Enquiry, Girvan contacted Heard and proposed that the English writer

expand his two short UFO articles into a book on the subject for the British market. Although odd correlations of science were just his cup of tea, Heard begged off, excusing himself on the grounds he had previous commitments that would occupy him for some months to come. Crushed, Girvan resigned himself to the fact that he had failed for the time being in his bid to bring the UFO story to British readers in 1949.¹³⁸

Across the channel, even in official circles, the UFO business was not laughed at. The highly decorated General Lionel M. Chassin, who eventually was promoted to Commanding General of the French Air Force and later General Air Defense Coordinator, Allied Air Forces, Central Europe (NATO), had become concerned over UFO reports made by French pilots in 1949 and he encouraged a member of his staff, Colonel Robert Clerouin, to keep tabs on the Phenomena.¹³⁹ Colonel Clerouin embraced the assignment with gusto and began a two year study of the sky mystery.¹⁴⁰

Behind the Iron Curtain the ordeal of Soviet fighter pilot Arkadiy I. Apraksin, whose encounter with strange "flying cucumber" back on May 6th led to the mysterious disabling of his aircraft and his loss of consciousness, lay in a hospital bed until mid-August when he was summoned to Moscow to be questioned by the Soviet Air Force Directorate of the Ministry of Defense, or at least that was what he expected. He had been questioned extensively by the military while he convalesced in the hospital in the city of Saratov and it had been the expected military interrogations. Once in Moscow, however, he was taken to a psycho-neurological clinic where he was treated with shock therapy much to his discomfort and anger. On a number of occasions men dressed in white coats, which he felt was a crude attempt to disguise their real affiliations, made repeated tape recordings of his testimony about the encounter with the "incomprehensible craft" evidently trying to break down his story by finding contradictions. Apraksin would not be released from "treatment" until January 1950.¹⁴¹

On the other side of the city at Moscow prison camp #7864/10, a German POW, one of the many soldiers being used by the Russians for reconstruction work long after the cessation of hostilities, was assigned to work at a construction site at Ismaylova. One day that summer of 1949 a fellow POW became excited and exclaimed: "Look, what is that over there in the sky?" Up in the sky was something the likes of which none of the Germans had ever seen. The Russian guards were as puzzled and alarmed as the German POW's.

The POW relating this story guessed that the thing under observation was anywhere from 2,000 to 5,000 feet high but it was hard to tell. It remained motionless for some 10 minutes and then suddenly moved away.

A second sighting like the first took place at the same location some time later. The UFO was the same object or something very similar hovering over the same spot which just happened to be a "restricted" area. The phenomenon was a group of

objects, a flying rod and some spheres:

"...the flying rod looked to be the size of a pencil but may have been about 10 meters long and 30 centimeters in diameter if the distance to the object is taken into consideration. In comparison with the diameter of the rod, the spherical items had a diameter of about three times the diameter of the rod, namely about 90 to 100 centimeters. The spherical items and the rod seemed to have been painted all white. The items may have been balloons, but source could not claim that. Source stated that he saw no antenna or anything else come out of the items. Four of the spherical items were symmetrically arranged about five meters above the rod in a square, while one spherical item was further away from the rod.¹⁴²

These objects remained for ten minutes and then moved off.

This account was not a lone report from the depths of Russia. Another originated from Dnepropetrovsk in the Ukrainian S.S.R. The source was another German POW, who told U.S. military Intelligence after being repatriated that he had witnessed the flight of strange missiles during the dead of the night from a location in Dnepropetrovsk. In view for up to a minute and a half, the missiles flew a wide arc to the south. The witness produced a sketch and listed the following details:

"Point #1: BODY. From the distance Source saw the body, it appeared to be a large disk, the center of which was almost black. It became red towards the outer edge, but the edge itself appeared to be white hot.

"Point #2: FLAMING ARCH. A flaming arch was observed on top of the disk, but the upper edge of the body could be seen.

"Point #3: SPARKS. Sparks emerged from the edge of the disk, white hot, with a tail similar to the one of a falling star."¹⁴³

A check of Air Force files discloses a curious similarity with a Humbolt, Nebraska, UFO sighting made on September 29, 1949.

The Humboldt report reads: "It was oval-shaped and apparently composed of luminous rings of some translucent material, moving southward in the sky..."¹⁴⁴ A sketch made by the witness bears a close likeness to the object drawn by the German POW.

All this time Donald Keyhoe kept building his case that "flying saucers are real." Returning to New York and the offices

of True magazine, Keyhoe learned some disquieting rumors about other magazines scrambling to be the first to do the story on the UFO mystery, so the race was on. Aside from being an exciting journalistic endeavor, the job given Keyhoe was beginning to affect him in a personal way. He was developing a feeling that he had a mission, that of aiding the Pentagon to prepare the public for a mind-numbing revelation.¹⁴⁵

"Man were we scared!"

In the fall of 1949, a plant superintendent of a steel firm, not the type to go around telling tall stories, swore that he and his wife were motoring along a stretch of highway in New Mexico minding their own business when the car's radio went crazy emitting only a loud static. The driver, A. D. Bushnell, then noticed a huge, domed, object some 60 feet in diameter as it dropped down out of the sky and hovered just above the blacktop some distance ahead blocking the road. Without waiting for the auto to close the distance, the object zoomed straight down the highway directly at the oncoming vehicle. The UFO streaked along just four feet above the asphalt and a head-on collision seemed imminent. Brushell stood on his brakes while his wife let out a horrendous scream as visions of impending death flashed through both their minds. At the last second the UFO adjusted its altitude just enough to clear the auto. The shaken driver jumped out once his vehicle slid to a complete halt and looked this way and that but the UFO, saucer, or whatever, had apparently sped away too quickly to be seen departing. Bushnell confessed to the press: "Man were we scared!"

The encounter had sinister overtones. Certainly it was on part with the wildest imaginings of Hollywood scriptwriters.¹⁴⁶

To move on to something less startling, AFSS inspector G. A. Polsin stationed at Los Alamos, New Mexico, contacted his superior, Chief Inspector Lt. Colonel John A. Carroll, about a strange three-second flash in the night sky at 9:10 p.m. on October 2nd. Polsin likened the light to a Very flare except for its having a tail. Two elements of the sighting were of special interest. The brilliant spot fell vertically and was a bright green.¹⁴⁷

Holland, Michigan, October 2nd, a witness with an extensive military background claimed he:

"...sighted a very bright and shiny object shaped like a dinner plate. Going east the object approached a transparent cloud, the object did a flip, and went up into the cloud. --- (deleted) expected the object to come out of the other side of the cloud, but instead it came out at the point of entry, and traveled back along its original route and disappeared into the east."¹⁴⁸

In New York Donald Keyhoe huddled with Ken Purdy and True's aviation editor John DuBarry reviewing the data gathered so far, and after an exchange of opinions, it was decided that the

magazine's upcoming UFO expose' would go all out for the extraterrestrial solution to the UFO mystery. Publication was set for the last days of December.¹⁴⁹

On October 6th the Los Angeles Daily Mirror tapped the rumor mills and was able to alert its readers that sufficient evidence had been accumulated to prove the reality of the flying saucers and the data indicated they were from "somewhere else;" that after the greater part of the reports had been satisfactorily disposed of, a residuum showed that the strange objects were from Mars or even the farthest infinitudes.¹⁵⁰

"Launched by someone unknown."

Another star gazer, John O'Neill, science columnist with the New York Herald-Tribune, spent the evening of October 9th with his eye glued to the eyepiece of his own telescope, preparing to observe a lunar eclipse. With his instrument in sharp focus, he was thrown into confusion when a dark body, approximately oval in shape, shot across the face of the Moon in a straight, well defined course. Because he had his telescope carefully calibrated, O'Neill was certain the dark object was not a bird, airplane or any terrestrial object. In a spin over the incident, he mustered that perhaps the "queer asteroid" may have been artificial and launched by someone unknown, entertaining the thought even though he felt such babble was the reserve of fiction.¹⁵¹

Did such space faring objects fly closer to Earth? Evidence of such a possibility continued to come from New Mexico. An Alamogordo military observer stated:

"On 12 October 1949, about 11:15 o'clock, I was sitting behind a B-29 which was parked on the Main Area Parking Ramp and I was facing approximately South East, when I saw a white looking round object that had the appearance of a balloon about 6" in diameter, coming from a Southward direction at an enormous rate of speed and, compared to the size of a B-29, it seemed to be about 35,000 feet in altitude. It seemed to curve slightly and disappear in a North East direction within approximately 45 seconds. Both boys said that they saw it and I called to about three other crew men, that were under the wing, to come look at it and due to the fast disappearance they were unable to see it.

"This object was of a silver color but I did not notice any bright reflections from it and it seemed to have no external configurations or vapor trails. The disappearance was sudden and there seemed to be no noise. The object seemed to pass between here and Alamogordo."¹⁵²

Official teletype sequence of local weather conditions showed that the object in question traveled into the prevailing winds at all altitudes.

"Special Joint Meeting."

Another gathering to discuss the fireball problem was called at Los Alamos on October 14th. Those participating in the meeting were the following persons:

"Joseph Kaplan, Member USAF Scientific Advisory Board.
 Lincoln La Paz, Professor of Meteoritics, University of New Mexico.
 Captain Melvin E. Neef, 17th District OSI (IG) USAF.
 Lt. Col. Doyle Rees, District Commander, 17th District OSI (USAF).
 Major L. C. Hill, CMP, Branch Intelligence Office, Fourth Army.
 Major F.C.E. Oder, Geophysical Research Division, USAF.
 J. Phillip Claridge, Special Agent, FBI, Albuquerque.
 Jerry Maxwell, Resident Agent in Charge, FBI, Los Alamos.
 Sidney Newburger, Jr., Chief, Security Operations Branch, AEC.
 W. E. Beadbury, Director, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory.
 John Manley, Technical Assistant Director, LASL.
 Edward Teller, Assistant Director for Weapon Development, LASL.
 George Gamow, Staff Member, LASL.
 Fred Reines, Group Leader, T Division, LASL.
 Major H. K. Kolster, J-2, Sandia Base.
 Stanislaw Ulam, Los Alamos, New Mexico."¹⁵³

The second meeting, unlike the first held in February, arrived at some conclusions:

- "(1) Real phenomena exist.
- (2) A scientific project should be set up to conduct a well coordinated investigation."¹⁵⁴

These two conclusions gave support to an announcement that Dr. Joseph Kaplan made at the meeting. He:

"...advised that he had been requested to discuss the phenomena before the Scientific Advisory Board, USAF, of which he is a member, on 3 November 1949 in Washington, D.C."¹⁵⁵

George Adamski and the Mt. Palomar reports.

On October 14th at approximately 1:15 p.m., a member of the Palomar Observatory staff, a Mr. Marshall, was driving down the mountain when he sighted 16 to 18 objects fly by in a formation, a "V" of "Vs," emitting a strange sound. Mr. Marhsall felt he was familiar enough with all types of aircraft but for the life of him he couldn't make out any wings or tail structures on the silver colored objects as they zoomed by at 5,000 feet altitude.

Marshall phoned an associate at the Observatory shortly thereafter and informed him of the sighting. As it happened, this associate, an electrician in charge of all electrical apparatus at the Observatory, went to the power-house where the Naval Electronic Laboratory of Pasadena, California, had installed some Geiger counters and recording equipment. He happened to notice that the recording pen had jumped off-scale at about 1:15 p.m., something that had never occurred before. There was no apparent malfunction. Pasadena was contacted and authorities there believed the odd coincidence called for an inquiry.¹⁵⁶

At 7:20 in the morning of October 17th a member of the staff of Palomar Observatory went to check the Geiger tubes in the power house. When he was inside, his attention was drawn to the window. To the southwest a small black dot was visible zipping along at high speed beneath a cloud ceiling at 7,000 feet. At the same moment the Geiger counter recorder pen jumped off-scale. Was this further evidence of something significant?¹⁵⁷

Around October 21st another high speed object was seen near Palomar Observatory. In view eight seconds, nothing in the way of wings or any sort of projections were detected by the witness. In appearance the object looked to be "elongated and slightly curved like a banana." The object was spotted at 2:30 p.m. On this occasion, however, there was no reaction by the Geiger counters.¹⁵⁸

A scientist at Pasadena notified the Office of Naval Research in Washington, D.C. on October 16th about the apparent correlation which if true would prove that the reported flying saucers were atomic powered, a contention entertained by many in the Intelligence community.

The tape of the unusual oscillations was brought back to Pasadena where it was examined and discussed. One of the top men of the California Institute of Technology assessed the evidence and stated:

"It was not likely that the reaction of the Geiger counter was the result of an atomically powered plane, inasmuch as the pen went off-scale and returned to scale in a matter of seconds; whereas the polluted air from an atomic engine would tend to linger in the vicinity for some minutes.

"It was most likely that the electrical relaying or amplifying mechanism of the Geiger counter had been activated by a plane's radio, altimeter, or radar mechanism. This was particularly true if the Geiger counter and amplifier were not shielded."¹⁵⁹

Both the Naval Laboratory at Pasadena operated by the California Institute of Technology, and the Navy's Point Loma Electronic Laboratory, sent representatives to Mt. Palomar to check on the strange radiation.

One day about noontime, four Navy people stopped at the Palomar Gardens Cafe on their way to Palomar Observatory. It

was pouring rain that day and the four men dashed for the entrance of the diner. In spite of their hurry they noticed two small observatories behind the diner, the shiny domes exact miniatures of the giant structure atop the mountain.

When the four entered and sat down, the owner of the eating establishment, George Adamski, looked up and recognized two men from Point Loma, G. L. Bloom and J. P. Maxfield. The other two from Pasadena, one of which was in Navy uniform, were unfamiliar. Bloom and Maxfield had stopped in before and knew Adamski.¹⁶⁰ As the Navy people ordered lunch, Adamski wandered over and engaged the men in conversation. Adamski related several stories of little interest until he mentioned sighting a "cigar-shaped object" on October 21st about 2:30 p.m. The men perked up at that. The date, time, and general description given by Adamski matched that given by a member of the staff of the Mt. Palomar Observatory.¹⁶¹

Official records do not confirm it, but Adamski claims that the Navy men asked his cooperation, requesting that he use his small telescopes in back of the cafe to scan the heavens and to photograph any suspicious aerial objects.¹⁶² We will hear more from Adamski in 1950.

As for the Navy, the reports from Mt. Palomar were considered to be of such importance arrangements were made with the Commander of the Navy Aviation, Pacific Fleet, to send both conventional and jet aircraft on missions near Mt. Palomar to see if the passage of the planes could affect the Geiger counters. Results were negative. This was on November 9, 1949.¹⁶³

In a summation dated November 23, 1949, it was stated: "The Commanding Officer, ONR, Pasadena, personally investigated these incidents and while he does not have a belief that these were actually flying discs, he is at a loss to explain the phenomena."¹⁶⁴

Further comment in an Air Force document declared:

"The Navy (it was a Navy cosmic ray contract, supposedly investigated) wrote a report, and concluded that this was all due to a circuit failure. The people operating the equipment also checked and are claimed to have flatly denied this, saying that due to the circuitry it would be impossible for similar failures to occur in all the circuits at the same time."¹⁶⁵

Other October occurrences.

October 12th the New York edition of Variety, the show business newspaper, surprised its readers by featuring a two column article by Frank Scully detailing the "saucer crash" related to Scully by the mysterious "Dr. Gee." For the first time, the public was exposed to the weird story, a yarn about a crashed flying saucer a 100 feet in diameter and some 72 inches high, and containing the dead, charred bodies of 16 "little men." This initial appearance of the yarn caused no excitement.¹⁶⁶

The second green fireball conference.

Los Alamos was host to a second green fireball conference on October 14th and official documents tell us that, aside from the fireballs being reported over New Mexico, the mysterious "flares" tormenting Camp Hood, Texas, were discussed. The apparent spread of unexplained sky phenomena was the key issue on the agenda.

Various organizations sent representatives to the conference. Official records named the following organizations: The Atomic Energy Commission, the University of California, the Fourth Army Armed Forces Special Weapons Project, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. No names of the forementioned representatives are given, however, four other organizations that sent people that are named in Air Force records were Major Frederic Odor, Acting Director of the Base Directorate for Geophysical Research; Captain Melvin Neef of the 17th District OSI, Kirtland AFB; Dr. Lincoln La Paz of the University of New Mexico; and Dr. Joseph Kaplan of the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board.

Since witnesses to the strange sky phenomena were trained personnel and they observed the "flares" or whatever, on an individual basis, those at the conference were in agreement that "something definite" was being seen. The New Mexico region had produced 209 observations of strange aerial phenomena which gave Capt. Neef and Dr. La Paz plenty of data to discuss and to provide a basis for some sort of conclusion. The official report on the conference states:

"It was the conclusion of the group present at the meeting the present information on the phenomena was not sufficiently quantitative and objective to allow any profitable scientific consideration. Instrumental observations (especially photographs, triangulation, and spectroscopic) were considered as essential.

"Dr. Joseph Kaplan, who was officially representing the Scientific Advisory Board, USAF, at the meeting, plans to report the problem to the next meeting of the Board (2 and 3 November 1949) with the recommendation that the USAF provide a suitable investigation of the phenomena using the Geophysical Research Directorate, Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratories, AMC as the agency for the project."167

A UFO question: "If there's no place for them to 'home' on the whole Earth, where then, in the name of Noah's dove, can they find an Ark to which they can return to roost?"

During the evening of October 23rd at Norwood, Ohio, Sergeant Berger was busy again with his searchlight at St. Peter and Paul's. The big UFO appeared again from somewhere out of the unfathomable night. This time there were eager witnesses on hand and the UFO did not disappoint anyone. Present was the pastor of St. Peter and Paul's, two reporters from the newspaper, Cincinnati Post, a Norwood policeman, and some 50 curious pedestrians. The huge object hung in the night sky as before, clearly visible in the searchlight beam. After about 45 minutes an astonishing thing happened according to witnesses.168

Sgt. Berger's fourth entry in his log reads:

"About 2200, two distinct groups of triangular-shaped objects seemed to come out of the main disc. Each group had about five objects. They came down the beam then turned out of the beam. The same performance was repeated about a half hour later. The disc was still visible when I turned out the light for the night."169

Witnesses speculated about the possibility the image in the searchlight beam was some sort of huge construction under intelligent control, a "space platform" as it was dubbed, a vast thing that silently arrived after sunset and remained fixed in the atmosphere above Ohio for hours which indicated that its helmsmen--or their directors--might be in a contemplative frame of mind.

Leonard Stringfield questioned some of those at the October 23rd viewing and learned, for example, that William Winkler, a businessman, was one of those that claimed he had detected visually the "smaller objects" which he termed triangular. Likewise, Father Miller and his brother Cletus, also a priest, agreed with Winkler and likened the smaller objects to the apex of an arrowhead. Stringfield extracted an admission from Robert Linn, Managing Editor of the Post, that something solid was reflecting the searchlight's beam and there were other, smaller objects that he said appeared like "bits of paper." Linn was impressed enough to join with Father Miller in an effort to alert Wright-Patterson AFB at Dayton, Ohio.

While the Cincinnati Post followed the searchlight case with interest, the city's other newspaper, the Enquirer, ignored the story but did tell its readers UFO reports were being made elsewhere in the state of Ohio.170

The next day, the 24th, we know from Sgt. Berger's log that he was ready again with his instrument set at 1600 mils. An investigator from ATIC Wright Field arrived in Norwood and conferred with Berger who was still stationed at St. Peter and Paul's church. Shortly after the sun had set at 7:15 p.m., Sgt. Berger flipped a switch sending a beam of light shooting up into the heavens while the OSI agent, Berger, and another witness by the name of Lou Gerhart, peered anxiously skyward hoping to catch a glimpse of the mysterious aerial "whatsit." There was no waiting for the object had not moved. It maintained the same position it occupied the previous evening.171

October 24th, a busy day.

October 24th: "Last Monday residents of Hymers, Ontario, reported they saw a huge streak of fire race through the sky, perform a neat loop and disappear."172

Also October 24th: "A streak of fire (was) visible 15 minutes over Fort William, Ontario, Canada."173

The "flying saucer" as a Hollywood star.

After numerous delays, Mikel Conrad finally returned the call of OSI agent James Shiley of the Maywood, California OSI office. This was on October 26th. Conrad extended an invitation to Shiley to attend a censor's preview of the newly finished movie "The Flying Saucer," the film that contained the footage that so interested the Air Force. Shiley showed up and took down the following notes:

"...the picture ran approximately one hour and a half and as indicated in the article, concerned a story of Michael Trent's (Mikel Conrad) attempt to locate a flying saucer which was rumored as being produced somewhere in Alaska. The Russian espionage agents were also attempting to locate the saucer for the Soviet government. It developed in the story that a spot bordering on Twin Lakes across the Ice Caps from Taku Harbor near Juneau, Territory of Alaska (sic). Trent locates the saucer prior to the Russian spies, who secure information concerning its existence and location from Dr. Lawson's assistant who sells out to the Russians for a few million. The picture ends with the assistant attempting to send the saucer to Russia and flee from Trent. However, the saucer explodes at the end of the picture when the assistant of Dr. Lawson attempts to launch it, Dr. Lawson having placed a bomb in the saucer to avoid just the situation that transpired."174

It wasn't a Rex Reed review but then OSI agents are not supposed to get paid for watching the latest from Hollywood. When the lights came back on Conrad admitted to Shiley the so-called "real flying saucer footage" was fake and the statements given to the press just Hollywood hype. Conrad implored Shiley not to spill the beans. Shiley agreed, displaying magnanimity considering the time wasted.175

News that government scientists were now taking the green fireball problem seriously prompted the 17th District Office of the OSI based at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico to request from Washington an easement of its involvement in the investigation of the problem. A letter in Air Force files spelled out the request, a missive dated October 28th:

"...since approximately 8 December 1948, this district has investigated and reported all known incidents of Unidentified Aerial Phenomena that have occurred in this area. It is estimated that these investigations have utilized the full time of at least two agents during that period.

"Authority is requested to discontinue this investigation because of the following reasons:

- The agent personnel are being reduced in this district to the point where the continuance of this investigation will delay other investigations.
- The investigation of this case has developed to the point where trained scientific personnel are required. This district has no such personnel."176

The Air Force's Scientific Advisory Board met on November 2-3, 1949 and one of the topics considered was the strange "light phenomena" being reported in the U.S. southwest. Board member Dr. Joseph Kaplan recommended to the Board that the Air Force provide funds and personnel to investigate. After hearing Dr. Kaplan state his case, the rest of the Board found itself in agreement, and since the phenomena seemed to be atmospheric it was suggested that any investigation be under the control of the Geophysical Research Directorate of the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratory.¹⁷⁷ Informed of the decision, Major Frederic Odor of the Geophysical Directorate felt the assignment was appropriate if the Air Force allotted the necessary requirements of men and material.¹⁷⁸

On the 14th of November the Washington headquarters of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations replied to a plea by its 17th District Office at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico for permission to relax its investigation of the green fireballs being reported over Los Alamos and other areas in the southwest. Colonel Carpenter, speaking for the Inspector General, USAF, said in a letter to the 17th District:

"Authority is granted to discontinue the present inquiry carried under your file number 24-8 and to close subject investigation.

"It is suggested that in the future each incident investigated concerning 'Unidentified Aerial Objects' be treated as a separate case and closed at the conclusion of the particular inquiry. This will preclude constant investigative effort."¹⁷⁹

Moreover, on November 14th, the Air Force's Air Intelligence Requirements Division, Documents and Dissemination Branch, was sent some copies of OSI UFO investigative reports by Lt. Colonel William M. Turner, Executive, Special Investigations, The Inspector General, USAF. Colonel Turner also forwarded a note that warned:

"Disclosure of the nature, sources, or even the existence of such investigative information to persons mentioned in the reports or to other persons not normally entitled to such information may be made only when expressly authorized by the Director of Special Investigations, IG, Headquarters, USAF, or higher authority."¹⁸⁰

"The Thing."

Some farmers were driving on a road on the outskirts of Oxford, Mississippi, at 9:30 a.m., November 16th, when they beheld an amazing sight in the sky. They stopped their car and dashed into a nearby store and yelled for storekeeper Alex Coffey to come outside and see "the thing." Coffey rushed outdoors into the sunlight. The weather was cool, crisp, and clear. Instantly Coffey saw the source of the excitement, a whitish-gray cloud-like cylinder shape moving slowly past the store in an easterly direction only 60 feet in the air. Upright and approximately two feet in diameter and tapered at one end, the "thing" drifted along at some 30 to 40 miles per hour. It took ten minutes for the phenomenon to move out of sight.¹⁸¹

Another "thing."

Two days after the oddity appeared over Oxford, another "thing" was viewed for 30 minutes in the sky just south of Raceland, Louisiana. It was daytime, 9:30 a.m. to be exact, the exact time of day as the previous case. The day was clear. No lights or sounds associated with the object were noticed. Four witnesses to the passage gave substantially the same testimony. The "thing," they said, was shiny and similar in shape to a fuselage of an aircraft but without protruding appendages of any sort. When first seen the object was traveling southwest but then executed two 90 degree turns. As it faded from view one observer noted: "...the tail section seemed to be split when the object entered turning maneuver."¹⁸²

Still another "thing."

Guards at a Biloxi, Mississippi, Veteran Hospital were astonished November 18th at 10:00 a.m. The guard at the Main Gate contacted his superior at once. The chief guard rushed to the Hospital's entrance which commanded a beautiful view of the waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Directly to the south and over Ship Island, a bit of land ten miles off the coast, a "thing" traveled along at about 2,500 to 3,000 feet altitude and about 50 miles per hour. In appearance it resembled a white colored cigar perhaps a couple of hundred feet in length. The sky was clear. No sound or exhaust were detected as the "thing" maintained a steady flight in the direction of Mobile, Alabama and passed from view behind some trees after being in sight for some 25 minutes.¹⁸³

As stated before, not much work was being done at Project GRUDGE headquarters because incredibly there is no comment in Air Force files that recognizes the very apparent similarities in the previously mentioned three cases: the geographical proximity, the similar time of day, shape, and even velocity. Furthermore, a communication from the Far East, specifically Akita, Japan, alerted Washington and Wright Field that on November 21st a "thing" made an appearance over Honshu. A

1st Lt. John Jackson piloting a F-80 reported an unfamiliar object, a grayish-white "thing" that looked like a giant tow target, rushing pell-mell (400 to 600 miles per hour) at 30,000 feet altitude. Lt. Jackson said the "thing" appeared to be rectangular, some 20 feet wide and 60 feet long, and had a trailing edge that fluttered. Ceiling and visibility at the time was unlimited.¹⁸⁴

A "funny" cloud.

Texans on the outskirts of the Texas town of Inez thought to themselves: "That's a funny cloud." On November 25, 1949, something long and cigar-shaped stood out prominently in the blue atmosphere. Unlike a cloud of Mother Nature's, this blurred mass tilted with a suddenness unknown to normal weather, dropping abruptly and ending up moving parallel to the road that connected Inez with the community of Edna, Texas. About two miles away from the witnesses on the road, the phenomenon sailed soundlessly along approximately 10,000 feet high. Three people on that strip of asphalt peered intently at what now came into focus. What initially seemed to be smudge of water vapor was actually a large disc-shaped thing radiating waves of heat, the high temperature turbulence producing a thick mist or steam that fringed the lower portion but not cloaking a raised top part that had a metallic glint when the rays of the sun hit it just right. On its way toward the horizon the vapor-shrouded thing executed several graceful turns and banking maneuvers.¹⁸⁵ So much for funny clouds.

One of the best of the "green fireball" reports took place November 16th, too late to be considered by the October 14th "light phenomenon" conference. Sidney Newburger, Chief of Security at Los Alamos, alerted Captain Neef in a note that said:

"This office has been informed by --- (deleted) a scientist with Group P-9 of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, of the following celestial phenomena observed at approximately 1950 hours, November 16, 1949, at Los Alamos:

- Two bluish-green lights (similar to that given off by burning zinc) in tandem were seen overhead, slightly south of the zenith. They appeared to be stationary, but suddenly curved around and disappeared to the north with the speed of a meteor. No sound was heard in conjunction with this observation.
- Mr. --- (deleted) said that his attention had been called to the sky by some children who reported having seen erratically moving green lights, and it was while he was looking, in response to their questions, that he observed the phenomena described above."¹⁸⁶

Returning to Norwood, Ohio, once more, on November 19th, we find the evening sky dark and mottled with a scattered low cloud layer. Sgt. Berger switched on his searchlight again for the purpose of advertising, sending a long brilliant beam into the star-strewn sky. Sure enough, the UFO was still parked in the heavens. The beam was shifted. Brought back to the position where the UFO was last seen, nothing was visible but after a quick scanning it was discovered that the circular glow/image was higher in the atmosphere.¹⁸⁷

Why the outer space connection?

The New York edition of Variety on November 27th gave Frank Scully more space to further pursue his "crashed saucer" story. This time Scully insisted that the saucer that had come down in New Mexico had been taken apart piece by piece by Air Force experts and trucked to Dayton so that the method of propulsion utilized by the "little humanoid's" craft could be studied. Few people paid any attention.¹⁸⁸

Before we leave Scully an interesting question might be asked: "why did Newton and GeBaucer come up with the fantastic yarn to sell oil leases? Why dream up a crashed flying saucer from Venus of all things? The answer is in that part of the story concerning the dismantling of the alien craft. GeBaucer, or "Dr. Gee," claimed to have been present at one dismantling and supposedly pocketed some parts as souvenirs. One part in particular played a pivotal role in the con men's game: an alleged "magnetic radio" that was supposed to have been found in the saucer wreck. A complete explanation requires the mention of a letter from the Los Angeles office of the FBI to the Air Force in the fall of 1949. Motion picture actor Bruce Cabot happened to be in the bar at the Lakeside Country Club on November 24th when he overheard a gentlemen boast of knowing all about several flying saucers that had crashed in New Mexico, Arizona, and Maine, and that he had even obtained samples of the aliens' uniforms, metal from the ships, and a "magnetic radio," a small (7x2x2 inches) device. The "radio" was in the fellow's possession and he flashed it for the benefit of his curious listeners. Cabot was skeptical, but still thought enough of the weird story to check with the FBI about it, phoning the Los Angeles Bureau office. The FBI was not in on the UFO investigation, by orders from Hoover, so the problem was referred to a local Air Force OSI unit.

With little more than a rumor to go on, the OSI entered the case. The biggest difficulty at the outset was determining the identity of the man with the alleged "magnetic radio." During the preliminary efforts to learn the facts the OSI was informed that radio commentator Sam Hays of station KFI had said something about the incident in question during a morning program. According to Hays there had been a party at a certain Hollywood country club and a: "...discussion took place over a round of drinks at the 'nineteenth hole' of the local golf course and that the story (of flying saucers from Venus) got better with each drink."¹⁸⁹

But Hays did not turn out to be their man. For the next three months the OSI tried to track down Newton, a slippery character if there ever was one, but in regards to the question posed at the outset, it seems that Newton was telling the other golfers at the country club that the alien's "magnetic radio" was being used by him to find oil deposits. With the possession of a super-sure "doodle bug," finding oil was a cinch.¹⁹⁰

For what its worth, Newton alluded to a "hush-hush" motion picture in production at MGM studios which: "...could very well concern the matter of flying saucers inasmuch as the whole story would break anyway."¹⁹¹

Newton may well have been inspired by a press release on Mikel Conrad's "flying saucer" movie datelined Hollywood, October 22nd, in which Conrad was credited with having actual "hush-hush" film footage of a flying saucer which was being kept under guard and was to be used in the soon to be released movie: "...with the cooperation of the United States government (which had) studied the films, and kept them for a long time before they were surrendered for use in 'The Flying Saucer'".¹⁹²

More witnesses in the southwest.

Another mysterious green fireball flashed east to west over Alamogordo, New Mexico, on December 3rd. More detail than usual was given on this sighting. The "meteor" was green with a fringe of orange light. Moreover:

"Sparks were emanating from the object and were more pronounced in the lower rear edge of the object. These sparks were orange to white in appearance. Intensity of the center part of the object remained the same, however, the intensity of the sparks along the edges varied."¹⁹³

Most remarkable, however, was a "maneuver" the witness believed he perceived: "Object was traveling in an arc downward; it seemed to prescribe a small loop about midway in its visible travel."¹⁹⁴

Yet another case.

A pale blue-green, it moved on an arced trajectory going east to west over the state of New Mexico and fading gradually during its brief journey. A witness to this phenomenon was driving a car near the town of Socorro on his way to Albuquerque. He was impressed by the size and slow speed of the thing in the sky. Having studied astronomy in college, he was convinced the phenomenon was not a meteor. When he got to his destination, Kirtland Field, the observer sought out OSI agent Melvin Neef to tell his story. The witness found Neef attentive which is understandable since the witness in this case was Lt. Colonel Charles Lancaster, Jr., Deputy Base Commander of Kirtland Air Force Base.¹⁹⁵

Were the green fireballs ordinary meteors, a speck of luminous cosmic dust that shoots along and then is extinguished? There were many ordinary meteors being reported but the green fireballs seemed special; they seemed to have been more than an incandescent bit of stone responding to gravity. A special case in this respect was one on December 13, 1949. Another motorist, this time traveling U.S. Highway 70 outside Alamogordo, New Mexico, sighted something in the heavens shortly after 8:00 p.m. at an altitude of 50,000 feet. The witness said:

"The object changed color from white to amber, to red, and to green, however not in the order listed. During the entire sighting a flame appeared to shoot out from various positions of the object. When the object disappeared from view, it faded out in a bright green color."¹⁹⁶

The oddest aspect of the case was the movement:

"During the first five minutes, the object did not appear to be moving. Then it began to slowly move downward and to the right. The last estimated 3/4 of seconds in view the object definitely suddenly picked up great speed while taking on this green color."¹⁹⁷

The witness was one of the OSI agents assigned to Kirtland! This witness, Special Agent Robert R. Johns, was a member of the Holloman AFB detachment at Alamogordo, N.M. When his report was filed, one of his superiors added the following comment to the document: "The writer (Johns) has observed several 'shooting stars' of a green color within the past year, and at this time was acutely conscious of obtaining correct information during the sighting."¹⁹⁸

December 17th:

"The latest strange object report comes from the first officer aboard the Chinoik, the Seattle-to-Victoria car ferry, and is vouched for by the quartermaster and lookout.

"This week they saw a 'bright light in the sky moving towards Victoria at about 2,000 feet.

"'It was moving from side to side and up and down much too sharply to be a plane,' the officer said.

"The latest 'object' was too 'erratic to follow with binoculars and it was too dark to see any shape.'

"'It came within a mile of the ship and then spiralled swiftly upwards through the overcast.'¹⁹⁹

For the seventh time, on December 20th, Sgt. Berger's searchlight picked up the mysterious circular image high over Norwood.

While the UFO did not put on a show in the atmosphere as before, there was something of that sort on the ground with an array of witnesses present. Evidently to put to rest unwarranted excitement over some sort of illusion two scientists from the University of Cincinnati, a physicist and an astronomer, stood next to the searchlight straining their eyes as the beam of light swept across the mysterious image high in the sky. Close by were two Intelligence agents, as was the mayor of Norwood.

Sgt. Berger's seventh log entry reads:

"Place: Norwood, Ohio. 2015 to 2200 hours. Turned light on at 2015 and picked up object immediately. At first it was faint and small. As haze cleared, object brightened. At 2130 it got much brighter and spread out almost as large as beam, then disappeared. Present were D. A. Wells, Dr. Paul Herget, two OSI members, Father Miller, the mayor of Norwood and Reginald Myers."200

Leonard H. Stringfield learned from Father Miller that the names of the OSI agents: "...were suspiciously alike, one Eichleberger and the other Eichlebager."201

"What Glows On Here?"

Stringfield quotes a feature article by Cincinnati Post reporter Harry Mayo who asked: "What Glows On Here?" Mayo wrote of the comments made by Dr. D. A. Wells and Dr. Herget. Mayo reported that Dr. Wells said of the image: "In my opinion its an optical illusion." Professor Herget was quoted as remarking: "It's not a fake. I believe it may be caused by the illumination of gas in the atmosphere. We need an explanation to squash people's fears."202

Dr. Wells, of the University of Cincinnati, was questioned by OSI agent Harrie L. Stewart, of the 5th District office based at Wright-Patterson AFB, on December 22nd. Officer Stewart reported the following:

"He (Dr. Wells) stated that he believed the object itself to be the light of the beam striking a high layer of thin clouds. He stated that the fact that the object appeared to remain in the same place when the beam was moved off of it might be due to latent retinal image caused by staring at the spot for long periods of time. He reserved opinion on the reported diving objects due to the fact that he had not been present when the occurrence took place. He based his explanation of the nature of the object on the fact that the appearance and disappearance of the object on the night of 20 December 1949 coincided with the reported high cloud conditions from the Greater Cincinnati Airport Weather Bureau."203

The scholar's opinion was deemed satisfactory by agent Stewart. The case was considered closed. The men named "Eichlebager and Eichleberger," if they existed, might have been U.S. Army CIC agents. Air Force files make no mention of such individuals, at least not by those names.

"Flying Saucers Are Real."

December 21st radio commentator Frank Edwards happened on an advanced copy of True's January 1950 issue with Keyhoe's investigation on the sky riddle that trumpeted, as the title of the article proclaimed, "flying saucers are real." Quickly scanning the pages, soaking up the impressive quotes by experts and the electric conclusions of Keyhoe, Edwards became transfixed. When at last he felt he had sufficient grasp of the material, he paused to let out a long, low whistle. This, his reporter instinct told him, was blockbuster stuff. Impatient to be a klaxon alerting the nation, Edwards aroused True's editor from his slumbers to obtain permission to tell the American public about the magazine's startling charges. Edwards wanted to break the story during his regular scheduled broadcast over the Mutual network. Protesting in vain that Walter Winchell had priority by previous agreement, Purdy capitulated since the cat was out of the bag. Delighted, Edwards went on the air soon afterward, quoting some two hundred words which was the limit allowed by a sleep-drugged Purdy. 204, 205

The mention by Edwards sufficed to titillate the listening audience, so much so, the Associated Press carried a news story on the broadcast the following afternoon. This was the first indication Keyhoe's article was going to go over big, real big.

Meanwhile, GeBaucer had been busy in the U.S. southwest. In Albuquerque he ran into an acquaintance from Denver by the name of George Koehler and told him the latest about the "little men from Venus" and how one body of the diminutive saucer crew had been sent to Chicago's Rosenwald Institution for display, and that parts of two alien saucers were in storage at a "United States Research Bureau" in Los Angeles. GeBaucer even embellished the yarn some, claiming that he had been present when one of the saucers had run into trouble over an Arizona radar site forcing 15 Venusians to bail out. The Venusians allegedly made themselves invisible when GeBaucer approached.

Suitably impressed, Koehler borrowed the alien "magnetic radio" from GeBaucer, plus some gears and metal fragments that were supposed to be from a crashed saucer. Koehler returned to Denver where he worked as an advertising salesman for a Denver radio station. One can imagine Koehler's excitement at the prospect of being in possession of evidence of visitors from another world. It would be the news story of the millennium. The dazzling prospect, however, did not stop Koehler from trying to authenticate the material before becoming too enthralled. He phoned a local Ford Motor plant and discussed things with an engineer there, a Jack Murphy, and asked if an analysis of the alien material could be conducted in the plant's machine shop.

In making the request, Koehler told Murphy the whole Venusian story. Murphy told Koehler he didn't think the plant had the proper tools to test the alleged alien material.²⁰⁶

A Rudy Fick, a Kansas City auto dealer, happened to be in Murphy's office when Koehler called. Naturally Fick wondered what the crashed saucer business was all about, so Murphy told Fick what he knew. After Fick returned to Kansas City, a Kansas City weekly, the Wyandotte Echo, learned the full story from Fick just before Christmas but didn't get around to publishing the fantastic tale until January 6, 1950. The story as it appeared in the Echo was essentially that being spread by Newton and GeBaucer. Fick's opinion on why such an amazing secret was being allowed such currency is worth repeating however:

"Mr. Fick's assumption as to the reason behind the apparent lack of security is that the government desires the information to be spread from unofficial sources, until people are more or less familiar with the facts. He feels that the security departments of the military fear that the sudden shock of a surprise announcement of the fact that interplanetary travel was possible might cause mass hysteria. No cause for alarm seems necessary, however, for from all indications, the Venusian visitors are quite peaceful, and even unwilling visitors to our planet."²⁰⁷

The January issue of True hit the streets December 24th and as arranged, Walter Winchell plugged the Keyhoe article during his moment on the airways to enlighten Mr. and Mrs. America and all the ships at sea. Other top notch journalists like Lowell Thomas followed suit. With backing like that, the very best, Keyhoe had it made.

Not only did Keyhoe push the visitors from space concept, he also took on the Air Force, accusing it of continuing its UFO investigation on a strict hush-hush basis. The nation's press, with its lust for the novel, was quick to pick up on the rekindled controversy. Typical were the spiced-up headlines in newspapers like the Oakland Post-Enquirer: CLAIM SPACE SHIP RAIDS, and the Los Angeles Times: FLYING SAUCERS CALLED SPIES FROM ANOTHER PLANET. The Los Angeles Times emphasized that True and Keyhoe had learned that one rocket authority working on Project GRUDGE was totally sold on the extraterrestrial explanation and had insisted that Air Force Intelligence embrace the idea, moreover, that reports of strange aerial objects were still coming in at a rate of one a day.²⁰⁸

Historian David Jacobs' critical analysis of Keyhoe mirrors Ruppelt's and is on the harsh side: "Keyhoe used his imagination liberally in the article. When he could not see a clear reason for the Air Force policy or action, he surmised the reason and said it as fact. Scholarship and reliable information were not strong points of the article."²⁰⁹ In defense of Keyhoe, it is supposed he saw himself more as a catalyst, reaching the general public in a popular mode of communication, inspiring actions by others who would supply the essential scientific evidence. If he hurt a few feelings in the military or government, apparently

it was because he believed it necessary due to the vast importance of the UFO question.

Within a sunrise and a sunset after the appearance of the True article, the Air Force retaliated with a press release that followed the guidelines set down back in August in Project GRUDGE's policy paper. The Los Angeles Times, among others, carried the Air Force's announcement:

"The Air Force has discontinued its special project (GRUDGE) investigating and evaluating reported flying saucers on the basis that there is no evidence the reports are not the results of natural phenomena. Discontinuance of the project, which was carried out by the Air Force, was concurred in by the Department of the Army and Navy."²¹⁰

In the text of the announcement, which was drawn up back in August, it was admitted officially that a whopping 23 percent of the UFO reports studied were unknown but the newshounds of the news media failed to appreciate the importance of this very significant statistical amount. Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the scientist that provided many of the Project GRUDGE explanations, experienced a feeling of astonishment at the oversight and could only guess that the newsmen scanned the Air Force document too quickly, seizing only on the principle recommendation that the Air Force phase out its investigation, which implied that UFO reports offered no challenge to science although results indicated quite the contrary.²¹¹

The Air Force took at least one direct shot at True and Keyhoe:

"The Air Force Material Command has been working very closely with intelligence on the whole matter of flying saucers.

"We probably have the most complete file on the saucers anywhere, but there is nothing new or startling to indicate that the saucers are interplanetary visitors."²¹²

The civilian head of radio and press information at the Dayton Air Center, Dayton, Ohio, a Harry Haberer, consulted prudence, declaring that the Wright Field UFO investigation project had been discontinued three months back (August) and, after a yawn no doubt, muttered: "As far as I know, there has been no report of a flying saucer from any Air Force pilot since that time (!)"²¹³

This comes no where near the truth so we might wonder just who this man Haberer was, but little is available other than what Ruppelt says, referring to Haberer as a "crack public relations man," the Pentagon's choice to see that Shallet "got the full UFO story" for the Saturday Evening Post.²¹⁴ Was something rotten in Denmark?

The Air Force announcement on GRUDGE had this to say of future office interest: "Continuance of the project is unwarranted since additional incidents now are simply confirming findings already reached."²¹⁵ On the other hand, we have Dr. Hynek's word plus evidence in declassified Air Force files, that reports at that time were still being filed at Wright Field regardless of the very low level of interest shown the cases by the Intelligence staff.²¹⁶

Ruppelt wondered why the 600 page GRUDGE report was not commented on in the press since it was available to back up what the Air Force had said in its much briefer announcement. For an answer Ruppelt asked a Washington correspondent who had followed the UFO mystery closely:

"He remembered when the Grudge Report came out; in fact, he'd managed to get a copy of his own. He said the report had been quite impressive, but only in its ambiguousness, illogical reasoning, and very apparent effort to write off all UFO reports at any cost. He, personally, thought that it was a poor attempt to put out a 'fake' report, full of misleading information, to cover up the real story. Others, he told me, just plainly and simply didn't know what to think--they were confused."²¹⁷

Life magazine's investigative reporters later determined that although the Air Force had briskly dismissed hard core UFO cases as mental aberrations in its December 27th press release, pacifying the public and the press, reports—good reports—did continue. Alarm within military ranks, even at policy level, was substantial, and became more so as the months progressed.²¹⁸

Another view of things has been offered by Dr. David Saunders who speculated whether the prestidigitation was a "play within a play" conceived and executed for the dual purpose of confusing foreign Intelligence and reassuring the cadre of America's establishment.²¹⁹

Project BLUE BOOK.

A Lou Corbin, a Maryland radio personality and a military officer with some good connections in Washington, told Keyhoe later there was a "switch from Project GRUDGE to a Project BLUE BOOK instead of a shutdown of Air Force UFO investigative activity."²²⁰ Most students of the UFO problem now agree that GRUDGE had just merely been downgraded to a more normal status from a "special project" priority. In time, the continued interest in UFO's was formalized with the code name: BLUE BOOK.

The first Air Force UFO project, named SIGN, with its figurehead chief, James Conant, the famous former Harvard president,²²¹ had given way to GRUDGE. Now another name change was in the offing. The code name SIGN was said to have been compromised, but GRUDGE was a different matter. Code words are selected with the intent they have no connotation bearing on the endeavor so designated. A random choice, the word GRUDGE, was

dropped when the Air Force eventually upgraded the service's UFO investigative effort. Ruppelt claims that the word GRUDGE was never resurrected because: "...someone in the Pentagon suggested that 'Grudge' gave the impression that the project was taking the job begrudgingly."²²²

"Civilian Saucer Intelligence."

The seeming repudiation of the UFO question by the Air Force could not but help lead to a disturbing development: the civilian investigation of reports of unexplained aerial objects.

When some UFO activity convulsed the population of North and South Carolina on December 28th, John DuBarry of True magazine did the only thing that seemed logical if he wanted to learn the real story since the Air Force was "no longer interested." He hopped a train heading south.

Instead of discouraging the public, the Air Force in the future would be faced with serious and unwelcomed unofficial competition. Official conclusions about flying saucer reports would have to endure severe tests in the years to come.

DuBarry did a credible job. After his interviews with witnesses, he arranged his notes under different headings: "shape," "color," "altitude," "direction," "size," etc., and added a final heading: "my opinion."²²³

Since there were numerous witnesses plus the fact that there had been other such "ghost rocket" reports from the eastern seaboard during the latter part of 1949, it might be of interest to review the case.

According to the Associated Press, the UFO in question was initially spotted over Fayetteville, North Carolina, about 4:30 p.m., diving straight down out of the afternoon sky. The thing was described by observers as appearing like a "white blob," or as one individual expressed it, like a "drop of quicksilver." Yet another witness compared the thing to a "vertical neon lighting tube." The thing came out of its dive, leveled off, turning over as it did so.^{224,225} Whatever it was, its appearance was so dramatic and strange, persons squinted skyward and pilots took off in private planes in pursuit:

"...two pilots said it appeared to be a streak of smoke about fifteen or twenty feet long coming from an unseen plane. But the object, the pilots said, retained its shape during the ten or fifteen minutes that they followed it. The four pilots who chased it said they were unable to gain on it in their planes."²²⁶

What DuBarry ascertained after analyzing his notes on the times and locations of different accounts and using these calculations as a baseline, was that the UFO must have been 100 miles high and of tremendous size! Shades of Norwood!²²⁷ However, it is probably safe to say that DuBarry was way off in his calculations but the UFO must have been sizeable and very high.

At 4:45 p.m., the thing was also visible from Hamet, North Carolina, some 50 miles southwest of Fayetteville which proves that it must have been at a very high altitude. First sighted by Hamet physician W. James and the city's Fire Chief, J. C. Worley, the two men alerted the local airfield.²²⁸ One description from an unnamed witness said the UFO resembled: "...a dirigible standing on end."²²⁹ A Hamet pilot took up the challenge, a man by the name of Phillip Gibbons who later described the thing in terms completely different from any other witness. He said he got near enough to discern a "large metal ball" that exceeded greatly the size of a weather balloon. He estimated the dimensions as about 20 to 30 feet in diameter. Gibbons mentioned that it did not change its altitude while he had it under observation, a fact which tended to disprove the balloon theory. The weather station at Charlotte issued a statement that agreed with Gibbons but on different grounds saying that weather balloons were not being released that late in the afternoon at Hamet.^{230, 231} Gibbons, an overseas news correspondent and a one-time Air Force pilot, chased the UFO until he lost it in the sun, flying some 12 miles southwest of Hamet in the process. After returning to Hamet airport, Gibbons expressed his frustration to the press: "Something is really fishy. It was no conventional airplane, or balloon, that I know about."

A Mr. D. F. Owen watched the UFO with some people at Fayetteville. His version of the incident as spokesman for the group of witnesses went:

"We calculated that it was at an angle of some 20 degrees from the horizon...(and some) 15 to 20 miles above the Earth's surface.

"This flying saucer was witnessed by five people who were with me at the time, and several other townsfolk. It was sighted due west in the direction of the setting sun.

"From downtown Fayetteville, the object appeared as a rather long, cigar-shaped thing. The sun's rays were striking its sides at an oblique angle and it gave off flashes of light which would indicate the outside hull was of a bright metallic nature.

"(It was)...also observed by another person some two miles from our point of observation and at a much better position visually...(he) reported the object to be cigar-shaped, of a metallic nature and in a vertical position instead of horizontal."²³³

The next city to sight the phenomenon was Newberry, South Carolina. The next day the following story appeared in the press:

"An elongated, slender, shiny apparition was spotted over the west end of Newberry yesterday evening about 5 o'clock.

"According to observers, and there were about eight of them, or ten, who have actually been heard from, the 'thing' was flying erratically and apparently without any set course or purpose.

"When seen, the object was flying along at a very slow speed on a course parallel to the ground, then it veered off in another direction and seemed to be descending slightly."234

Some 30 miles away at Greenwood, South Carolina, at 5:00 p.m., the UFO was visible to witnesses. The director of the tree department in Columbia, a William Shields, was hunting with some friends in the countryside when the "thing" was noticed in the sky. It looked to them like a "fluorescent light blub" and hovered for at least 30 minutes in the sky in one spot and then, according to Shields, it "shot off through the sky at a terrific rate of speed." He later told the press: "I thought I was seeing things until I heard that other people had seen the object also."235

The Greenwood Index-Journal had this to say among other things:

"Mayor A. H. Woodle asked Johnson's Flying Service to see if they could determine what it was. Joe Poole, instructor, and W. C. Ashley, took off in a Piper Cub rising to about 3,000 feet. They chased it almost directly west, passing over Abbeville and almost to the Georgia line. They sighted it all the way but seemed to make no headway against it at all, although it had seemed to be traveling slowly--almost drifting--over the airport before they took off.

"From their 3,000 feet perch the object appeared to be on their level or somewhat above it. Mr. Poole had estimated the elevation at about 6,000 feet as it passed over the airport.

"He said it looked like smoke used in skywriting, but it never drifted apart, although the shape varied. It seemed almost like a long ribbon of paper fluttering at times, he said.

"Mr. Ashley said that it took various shapes, and appeared at one time to be a crescent. Others this morning said they first thought it was the moon when they spotted it.

"Mr. Ashley said that the object was traveling in the same direction as the prevailing wind."236

The last remark raises suspicion that the object was a partially inflated Skyhood balloon being wafted along by a strong air current.

"Shorn of its mystery?"

When another ghostly tube appeared above Charlotte at 3:45 p.m., on December 30th the local airport insisted the UFO was nothing

more than a vapor trail from a high flying Air Force B-36, a mass of ice crystals formed when the aircraft's hot engine exhaust came in contact with the frigid air nearly eight miles up. Charlotte officials may have been right since the "tube" was visible for 15 minutes as it slowly drifted away.²³⁷

"Operational Immediate."

A classified Air Force message titled: "Operational Immediate" concerned a military observation of the thing, at Pope AFB near Fayetteville. The official report on the military observation reads:

"Object appeared as an extremely short beam of light just to the right of the setting sun. A close observation through field glasses revealed that the edges of the beam were frayed. Object also appeared to remain stationary and was visible for approximately one hour. Impossible to photograph due to close proximity to sun and lack of adequate filters. It is the opinion of the observer that subject's glow was caused by the reflection of the sun upon dust particles or other nuclei present in the atmosphere.²³⁸

But if witnesses at Charlotte, South Carolina were right about the "thing" in the air being a mass of ice crystals, why was something similar seen near Langley, Virginia the same day two hours before the manifestation in the Carolinas. At 1:20 p.m., something was spotted at an altitude of 5,000 feet. Three sergeants attached to the Ninth Air Force Adjutant General Section sighted the "thing" moving south in the direction of the Carolinas. T/Sgt. Ernest Hendrix described the phenomena in the following way:

"The white, vertical, cone-shaped object appeared to be eight feet in diameter at the base by twenty feet in height. It was estimated to be at 5,000 feet altitude, 10,000 feet from the observer and moving slowly in a southeasterly direction. The base of the cone remained steady and the top slowly oscillated."²³⁹

Complicating the issue further is another report the day after the Langley one. At Andrews AFB in the District of Columbia, on December 31st, a member of the Air National Guard happened to glance directly overhead and saw:

"...an object floating--it seemed--leisurely in and out among the clouds. When it tilted toward the sun it appeared to be a huge sheet of tinfoil. I kept my eye on it and suddenly realized that it was traveling at a terrific rate of speed in a southeasterly direction."²⁴⁰

In the wake of the latest east coast UFO excitement, a radio station at Richmond, Virginia aired a fictional drama of a landing of a flying saucer with its crew disembarking to converse with some amazed Earthlings. The show was prefaced with an explanatory announcement, yet as people will tend to do, a number of listeners still took the story as fact bringing to mind the 1938 Orson Wells Martian invasion scare. To many of those following the UFO enigma, such a landing was not so implausible, for no longer were they imbued with a spirit of serene and inextinguishable self-satisfaction that the Earth was the only inhabited world in the whole stellar universe. Indeed, they could now warm to liquifaction frozen dreams of the imminent arrival of exotic emissaries from some far off land of Oz.

To be continued in the third volume of this series, UFOs: A HISTORY, JANUARY - DECEMBER 1950.

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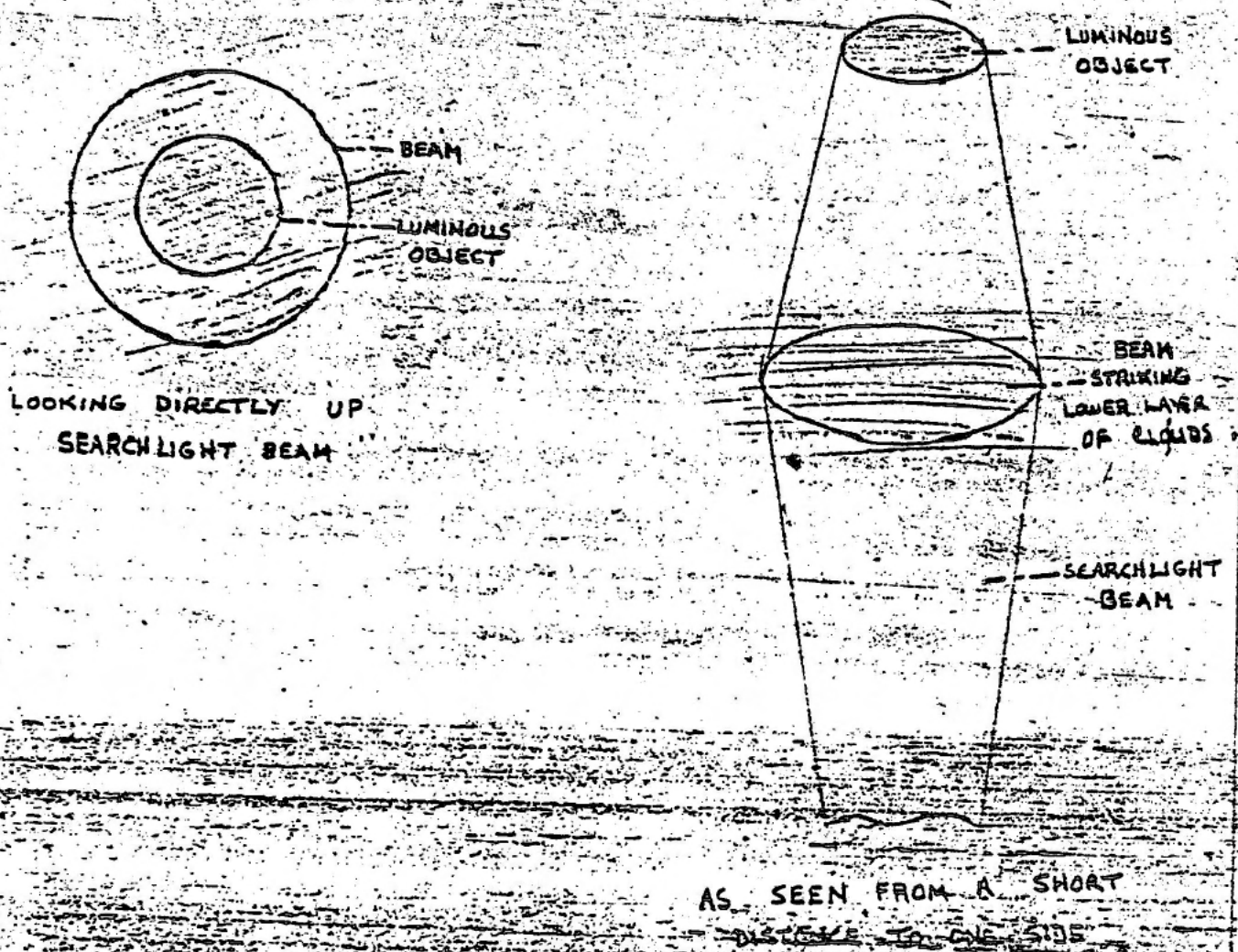
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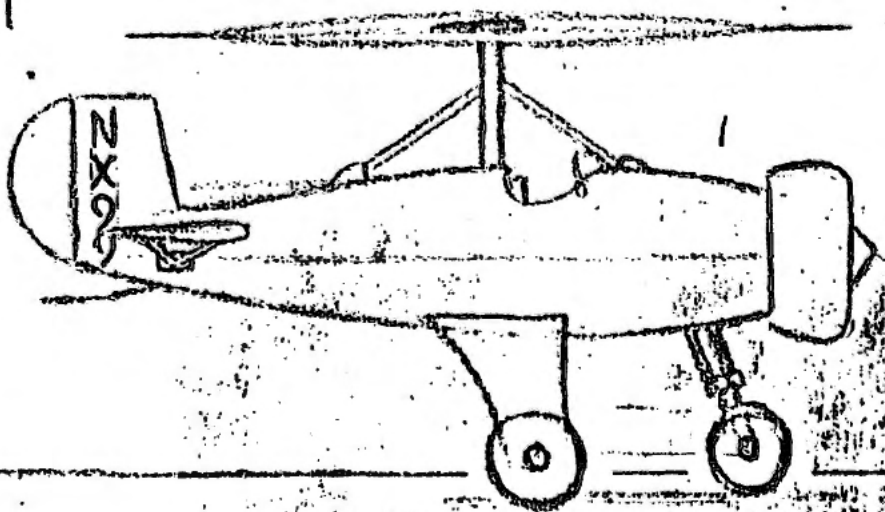
ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Mysterious Image Over Cincinnati, Ohio. One Witnesses' Conception.
2. Grey Goose and the Roto-Plane.
3. "Saucer" Over Dnepropetrovsk, Russia.
4. The "Thing" Over Raceland, Louisiana, on November 18, 1949.
5. Cone-Shaped Object Over Langley, Virginia, on December 30, 1949.

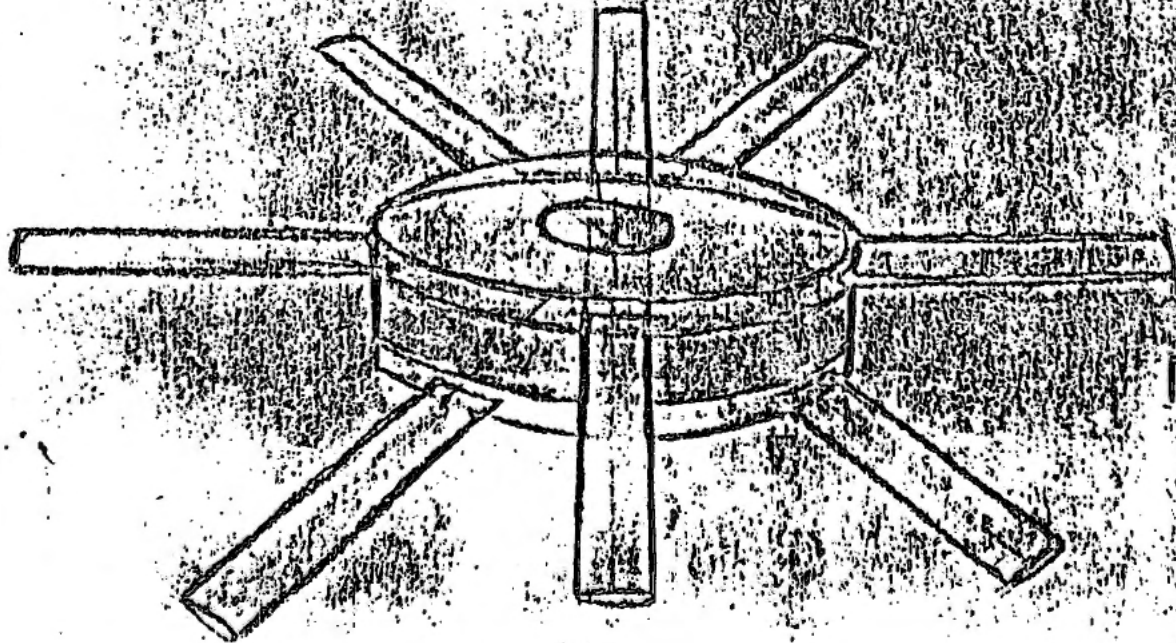
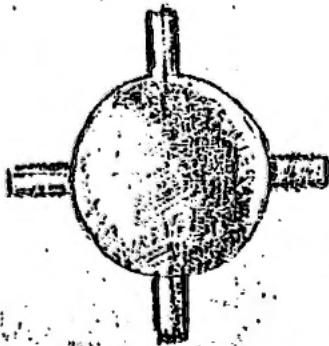
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ON 23 OCTOBER 1949



GREY GOOSE

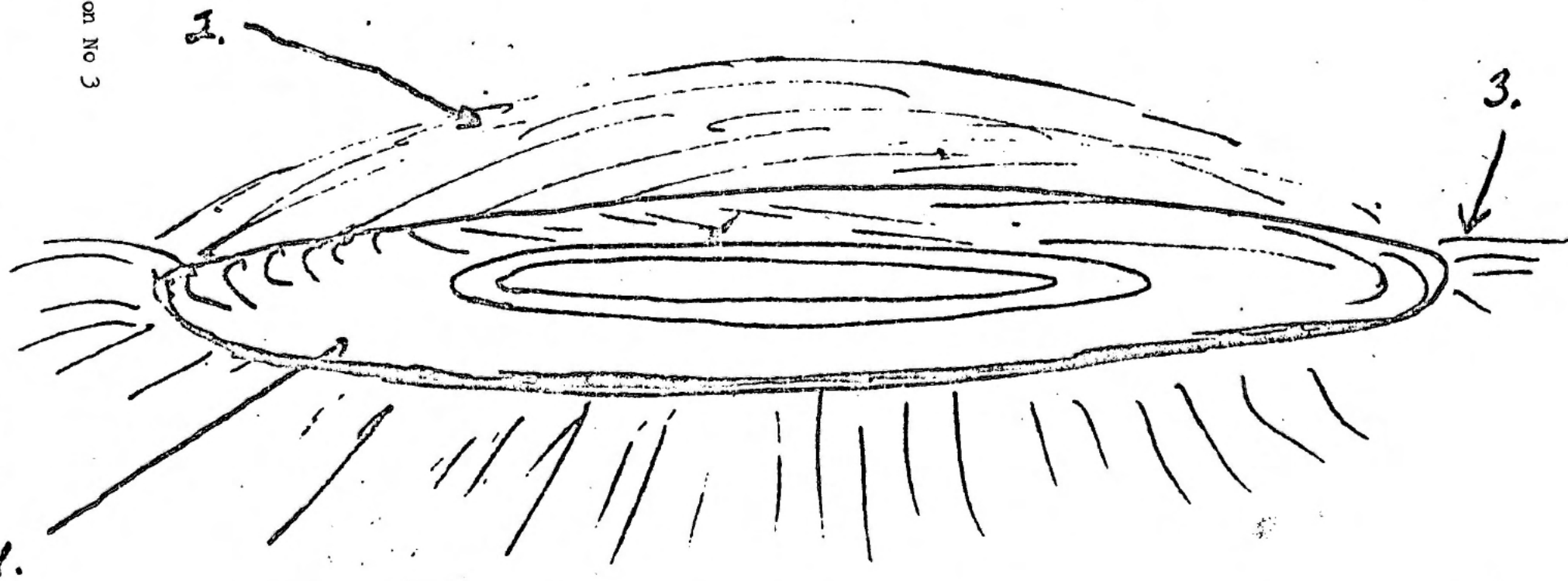


ROTO-PLANE

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Photo No. 1 - Artist Conception drawn by Mr. George Rolfe, Baltimore, Maryland from a description furnished by S/A G. E. Balk, 18 August 1949.

Illustration No 3



SOURCE'S MEMORY SKETCH

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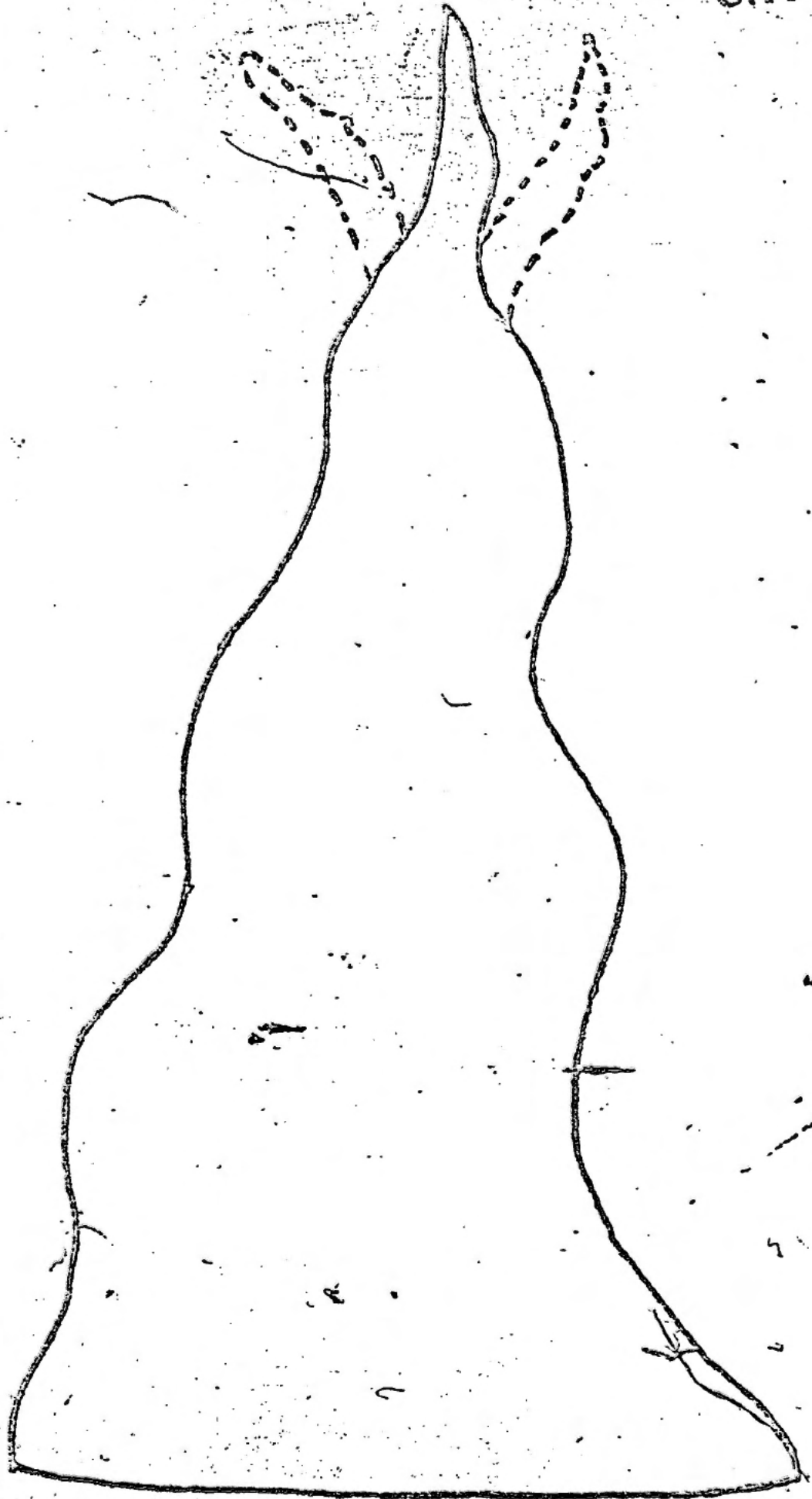


OBJECT AS OBSERVED IN LEVEL FLIGHT



OBJECT AS OBSERVED ENTERING TURNING MANEUVER

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