

UFOs: A HISTORY

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APRIL - JULY 1950

By mid-1950, the UFO wave then in progress was globe-girdling. Reports were coming in from all over: Latin America, Japan, Africa, Australia, the Middle East, and Europe; but as usual the vast majority were being made in the United States. Since, however, our discussion begins with the month of April, a little April item from Germany is appropriate at the outset.

April Fool.

A curious photo of a tiny man-like creature garbed in a skin-tight suit appears in UFO literature occasionally. In the picture the critter is being led away by two men in trench coats, the supposed diminutive "man" allegedly a survivor of a crashed flying saucer shot out of the sky by an American anti-aircraft sergeant. The origin of the photo and the story have remained obscure for decades.

What is the truth? Well, the storyline is a recognizable variant of the hoken dreamed up by the American con artists Silas M. Newton and Leo A. GeBaucer. A wirestory of the Newton and GeBaucer "little men from Venus" story reached Europe, and in Germany the Cologne Neue Illustrierte (News Illustrated) took a liking to the yarn and went to the trouble of faking a photo. Why did the Neue Illustrierte bother? Few Americans know that the German celebrate April 1st the same way they do.¹

Such nonsense confused the issue but it never dispelled real concern over the UFO question.

"Immense turtle."

If the UFO's were American or Russian then they were taking a chance testing them far and near.

Droning through the air over the coast of Venezuela, a DC-3 airliner piloted by John Power and Angel Delgado made its way uneventfully, on course and on time, April 2, 1950. Suddenly the passenger plane began to shake violently from a shock wave. Both pilots tightened their grip on the controls and snapped their heads in time to see a "huge machine" lunge past 2,000 feet away. Powers said to the press after landing: "It was an enormous apparatus of aerodynamic form similar to an immense turtle and I have no doubt that this machine was guided."²

Less spectacular was the report of "white balls" streaming mile-long vapor trails. Flying in V-formation they sped over Macon, Georgia, headed east. In spite of the estimated 1,000 miles per hour plus speed, the objects may have been aircraft,

but nearby Warner Robins Air Force Base proclaimed general ignorance and shrugged it off as "too much Saturday night celebrating."³

"Silver football."

On Highway 38, a few miles out of Butler, Pennsylvania, April 2nd, some people in a car became fascinated with an aerial vision. They pulled up and got out for a better look. They saw a "silver football" flashing in the sun and hightailing it across the sky at great altitude. Before it passed out of sight in the west, the witnesses were sure they could detect no wings or hear any sound. One of the witnesses was an instructor at an art institute and he made sure the press was impressed with the fact. He insisted that his eyesight was superior and there could be no mistake when he said the object was not a jet plane. The UFO, he declared, was a metallic-like football shape about 100 feet long which flew overhead at about an elevation of 6,000 feet.⁴

Reports also came in at this time from Longmont, Colorado, in the U.S.⁵ and Selkirk, Manitoba, in Canada.⁶ On the other side of the world in Italy a flying saucer caused a "horse to bolt" but unfortunately the writer of this manuscript has no further information on what may have been an interesting incident.⁷

"Flying Saucery."

When a large parachute training balloon at Weston-on-the-Green near Oxford, England broke loose from its moorings and drifted over London, the Air Minister got its first big taste of saucer mania. Phone calls stated: "it's got dots on the bottom," and "it's stationary," or "it's moving fast." All of which may well have been accurate observations except for the initial report made by a bus conductor who tried for a chuckle or two: "There is a flying saucer right over my vehicle with lots of little men with ginger hair inside having tea."⁸ The balloon, however, did not trigger a UFO wave in England although there were some who expressed concern about a creeping "flying saucery" threatening to infiltrate British society warning that British scientists would be stand-offish until: "...something is found that can be identified under the microscope of the National Physical Laboratory, or in a line-up at Scotland Yard...."⁹

One member of the English scientific fraternity protested: "We really have nothing to go on in this country." And the Royal Air Force responded in a frustrated tone: "People have started calling us up now asking us what it is all about. But what can we tell them? None of us has seen one yet."¹⁰

There was no UFO wave in England at this time because the UFO's were acting like real objects and not mass hysteria.

The UFO wave of 1950 was moving northward through Europe and had not yet crossed the channel! Did this fact prove the objects real? One wonders.

Eventually England would contribute its share of UFO experts for the gifted amateur is a recognizable English type, people who teach themselves to be experts on everything from butterflies to Baudelaire, all for the love of the thing, with no hope of making money at it. They write erudite letters to the Times, win abstruse magazine competitions, and write books in retirement that astonish pedagogues.

Back in the United States, like dandelions and toadstools, the flying saucer proved prolific and no sooner did official Washington stomp it out on one front when it popped up on another.

However, the UFO historian develops an odd feeling about the official policy towards the UFO question at this time.

An interesting speculation about this period of UFO history suggests that high up in the U.S. Intelligence Command it was decided to "use the UFO mystery" against the Soviet Union, to stir up suspicions that America was testing a "superplane." That the Pentagon might resort to this kind of psychological warfare tactic is not inconceivable, since warnings that a foreign power might utilize the same tactic against America had appeared more than once in U.S. Air Force UFO studies. Also, the then current international political situation was a test of nerves, more so than in contemporary times with co-existence in vogue. In the year 1950, Stalin was still the unchallenged dictator of the Communist world but he was getting old and there were some American Intelligence experts that felt that the aging Bolshevik, half mad and growing senile, would make a military move against the West before he died. A few Intelligence experts even felt danger was not without some validity because Stalin ordered the North Korean Army to take up attack positions along the 38 parallel and to make ready to invade South Korea sometime in the next 90 days.

If the Pentagon never meant to discourage or worry the Russians with the UFO mystery they missed a marvelous opportunity. We have only to give an ear to an opinion from the "other side," some remarks by Dr. Felix Zigel, a top Russian astronomer associated with that nation's space program. Radio Commentator Frank Edwards came across a 1967 Russian magazine article that gave Dr. Zigel's views of the UFO riddle. In the article, according to Edwards, Dr. Zigel says that Russian scientists were as puzzled as Western scientists over the UFO phenomenon and that Russian radar had tracked the strange objects for years. Edwards states further: "He also revealed that in the early years of the problem, 1946 - 1950, the Russians suspected that they might be some sort of U.S. secret device, at the same time that we suspected that they might have been Russian."¹¹

Returning to 1950 we find that on April 3rd a big broahaha broke out over something published in the newsweekly U.S. News and World Report. The magazine had published its conclusions concerning the sky mystery titled: "Flying Saucers--The Real Story." The flying saucers, according to the magazine, were "accepted as real," because they actually were a new kind of secret military aircraft utilizing revolutionary principles, a U.S. Navy aircraft combining the best features of both a jet and a helicopter. The newsweekly referred to the summer 1949, White Sands, New Mexico, reports of a craft performing fantastic feats over that test range. Data obtained on the size, speed, and altitude were strangely cleared for publication at the time by the Pentagon (Commander R. B. McLaughlin's article in the March issue of True magazine: "How Scientists Tracked Flying Saucers."). The U.S. News and World Report did not buy Commander McLaughlin's idea that the saucers might be tourist buses from planet X reasoning that, in its opinion, the Air Force had abandoned its investigation into the UFO mystery without much fuss which the magazine interpreted as meaning the High Command knew the objects were domestic in origin and were not concerned. The newsweekly reasoned further that even if the Air Force denied ownership, that still left the Navy. Continual denials by the Pentagon were interpreted by the magazine as psychological warfare against the Soviet Union, thus it may be safe to assume people were sane after all and not victims of mass hysteria befitting the times.¹²

News commentator Henry J. Taylor, who had just recently insisted the flying saucers were "very important and wonderful news" for Americans, went on the air again April 3rd over the ABC radio network to repeat his earlier remarks, but as before he remained vague about his source of information and other specifics,¹³ the very details U.S. News was now trying to supply. Both Taylor and U.S. News had composed their idea of the "real story" out of guesswork.

The New York Herald-Tribune, a newspaper of extreme flying saucer inappetence, marveled:

"...the magazine U.S. News and World Report has a high reputation for reliability, and the article contains many unqualified statements supporting its theses when it would have been just as easy to put the statements on a conjectural basis."¹⁴

Once the American secret weapon theory was seriously proposed, some of those of the Fourth Estate leaped at the chance to tell the world they had believed UFO witnesses all along. The evidence, such as it was, hadn't changed but a "reasonable" solution made all the difference. Robert Ruark, a syndicated columnist wrote at the time:

"I wish here and now to go on record. I believe that there are flying saucers. I believe they are aircraft containing life. I believe that very soon a solution of them will be offered to the public. My hunch is that they are ours..."¹⁵

The influential columnist Drew Pearson went along with Taylor and/or U.S. News and World Report:

"Flying saucers, seen by hundreds of competent observers over most parts of the United States, are accepted as real. Evidence is that they are aircraft of a revolutionary type, a combination of helicopter and fast jet plane."¹⁶

Another journalist, Peter Edson, wrote from Washington on April 3rd that:

"The biggest off-the-record story in Washington is the flying saucer. The Air Force says 'there ain't no such animal.' They have never seen one and have no photographs or visible proof, however, privately most officials believe there's something to it."¹⁷

The President of the United States.

Newsmen went right to the top, the White House, but President Truman had made a timely retreat to Key West for a vacation. The morning of April 4th a group of newsmen compiled a list of questions and submitted it to the Chief Executive's Press Secretary, Charles G. Ross. That afternoon, Mr. Ross called a news conference to reply to the newsmen's inquiries. There was no detailed response, there was just the assurance that the reputed wanderers of the skies were not American. The President, Mr. Ross stated, had taken the trouble to confer with his Air Force and Naval aides, Brigadier General Robert B. Landry and Rear Admiral Robert L. Dennison, and learned that the Armed Services was still standing on conclusions reached the previous December. Mr. Ross added that it was extremely unlikely that the President would be kept in the dark about any new military development, domestic or foreign. As far as the President was concerned, the so-called flying saucers did not exist.¹⁸

Reporters sought a response from Commander McLaughlin, and when asked, the Navy officer made known his strong disagreement with the newsweekly's conclusions and disavowed collaboration. The Department of Defense followed up by swiftly issuing a blanket denial that any government agency or military service was testing saucer-like aircraft, especially the Navy.¹⁹

Secretary of Defense Johnson even felt compelled to bring out Navy Secretary Matthews and the Chief of Naval Operations,

Admiral Forrest Sherman, to shoot down the secret Navy plane suggestion.²⁰ Secretary Johnson grinned and remarked to the press that: "...he'd like a few saucer squadrons to beef up the Air Force."²¹ And, still grinning, he said he: "...raised the question about the flying discs at the Armed Force's Policy Council--facetiously."²²

The United Press news service carried all these official attempts to fend off rumors about the mysterious sky objects, statements that should have satisfied everyone, yet the news service expressed an uneasiness in its feelings about whether or not the saucers were so much nonsense: "But stories of strange objects soaring through space, often at fantastic speeds, keep cropping up."²³

In spite of the blasting given the UFO's, the New York Times noted the sudden rise in the number of UFO reports and expressed a sentiment which stated that an element of "reality" had accompanied the widespread resurgence of unexplained aerial activity. The Times also noted that the Defense Department was being harrassed by an understandable deluge of inquiries about the chance of a new Air Force UFO investigative project.²⁴

On Capital Hill the Chairman of the House Military Appropriations Subcommittee, Representative George H. Hahon, joined President Truman and Defense Secretary Johnson in expressions of doubt that such craft as flying saucers existed. Furthermore, Representative Hahon issued his own flat denial that the United States government was in the saucer business, secretly manufacturing the strange craft and then testing it in the nation's skies. Another member of the subcommittee, Representative Albert Engel of Michigan, listened carefully and when Representative Hahon finished, expressed his own view: "Maybe so, but I saw one myself." Representative Engle explained that he and some friends had sighted a flying disc the previous summer and two of his party had even chased after the object in an airplane. While a "believer," Representative Engle disagreed with the Chairman in regards to who owned the saucers. He tended to agree instead with Henry J. Taylor that the sky objects were the result of some top secret American project. The Russian theory he dismissed; afterall, he stated, as a member of the important Military Appropriations Subcommittee he was fully aware of the latest in Russian military hardware.²⁵

While the Air Force fell back on the usual litany about mass hysteria, birds, clouds, meteors, reflections, hoaxes, etc., to explain flying saucer reports, people nonetheless continued to "see things." And when some UFO's "buzzed" the headquarters of Air Force Intelligence at Dayton, Ohio, it was downright embarrassing.

At first they were just brilliant points of light in the night sky not unlike the normal stars in the celestial vault, but then they took on an increased glow and attracted the attention of some people motoring home five o'clock the

morning of April 4th. The witnesses watched as two lights, one behind the other, swept down out of the heavens with terrific speed and came to a halt in the sky over Dayton, Ohio. They then shifted to a point over Wright Field where the lights suddenly shot skyward in a vertical climb, going so high they became invisible. Later two lights in the sky, perhaps the same ones, appeared over Dayton and zipped around in various directions, occasionally taking brief pauses in their flight. With the first light of dawn the lights departed.²⁶ The next day the phones jumped off the desks at Air Force Intelligence at Wright Field. Officials told callers they knew nothing about any strange lights. The press was informed that: "...we know nothing about the flying saucers reported by nine Tipp City residents. We have no official report and our radar observers reported nothing."²⁷ One of the Tipp City witnesses had a reply ready: "If they say at Wright Field they didn't see them, then someone is napping over there."²⁸

Another pair of strange objects played follow-the-leader in the air over Denver, Colorado the same day. Perhaps they were the same UFO's.

In California the phone danced on the desk of the Provost Marshal's office at Edwards Air Force Base, Muroc, California at 9:30 p.m. April 4th. Four persons living in the city of Delano, about 40 miles north of Bakersfield, called the Air Force base to alert them to the fact that something very odd was taking place in the evening sky over the south side of Delano. The citizens said that a circular object, 25 inches in diameter, was whirling on its axis and flying in an orbit. While the witnesses watched, the object would occasionally change its motion and orbit in the opposite direction. The object was plainly visible since it was only 200 feet high.²⁹

The steady flow of reports, in spite of negative remarks from the likes of President Truman, had the press reaching for more answers no matter how unlikely the source. The San Diego Tribune-Sun, on April 4th, gave space to a very unlikely source. A news story said:

"A picture George Adamski, amateur astronomer, sent to the Naval Electronic Laboratory for an opinion on whether it bore the image of a space ship has been found and the opinion is 'No!' Or is it?"³⁰

The photograph referred to (It showed some meaningless streaks) is of no consequence, but one can imagine how dizzy Adamski got when the press showed an interest in what he claimed to know about the sky mystery when even President Truman was being quizzed about the subject. But it was more than publicity that Adamski yearned for. Contact with an alien civilization had an overpowering appeal and Adamski

was highly susceptible to its allure. Adamski wrote that at this time (April 1950) he hoped:

"...without end that for some reason, some time, one of them (a flying saucer) would come in close, and even land. I have always felt that if the pilot within one of these ships would come out we could meet, there would be a way for us to understand one another."³¹

A filler in some newspapers mentioned a Reuters dispatch from Australia that told of a UFO sighting in Queensland, another indication of the continued world flap.³²

April 5th a report came in from Edmonton, Alberta, in Canada, but the most detailed cases for this date available are American.

People up and down Rhue Street in Ahoskie, North Carolina, pedestrians and motorists alike, stared skyward right after the sun had set. For five minutes an object moved across the sky south to north. It was described as: "...rectangular in shape, very bright red and tapering at the trailing end. Maintaining a steady speed and a steady course, the "short neon tube" grew fainter and fainter as it flew out of sight. At Woodland, North Carolina, some 16 miles to the west of Ahoskie, the same day, a soundless, white, cigar-shaped thing, tapering to the trailing end, had been seen earlier in the day. It had been seen at low altitude and witnesses figured its size was 18 feet long."³³

"Fast as the dickens."

Out West the planet Venus on the evening of April 5th was brilliant and low in the sky causing a temporary flap among police in communities just south of San Francisco with some lawmen standing atop their patrolcars to catch a glimpse of the suspect point of light.³⁴ What set off excitement was a UFO report made by a frantic woman living on Mt. Hamilton road outside San Jose who phoned police to say she had seen some strange sky objects between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m. She remarked: "They were running at each other. They were somewhat elliptical, fast as the dickens, and gave off a bright glow."³⁵

The Air Force learned that:

"...on 5 April 1950, at approximately 1215 hours (MST) she saw a dull white, disc shaped object, like a 'flying saucer,' traveling in a straight line in a northwesterly direction. She stated further that from where she was standing in her back yard....the object appeared to be at about 45 degrees. --- (deleted) said the object reminded her of two saucers placed rim to rim, and had the apparent size of such

an object if it were only a few feet from her. She said it moved swiftly at constant speed, was in sight about 10 or 15 seconds and then disappeared behind some trees. It had no lights, emitted no sound, left no smoke or vapor trail, was not marked, and was not equipped with any visible control surfaces, and did not have a metallic appearing surface."³⁶

A pair of UFO's zoomed over Ironwood, Michigan on April 6th,³⁷ and another Reuters dispatch mentioned that something was seen in the sky over Asmara, Eritrea in Africa.

Another foreign sighting took place in England signalling the beginning of UFO activity in that country. Persons in the English town of Whitly, in Yorks, reported something perplexing which was described as two "revolving hoops--one inside the other--passing over the coast."³⁸

Another vote for the theory that flying saucers, at times, use vapor producing engines was a report from Massachusetts April 6th. The man that made the report was a member of the Air National Guard, a Lt. Sevilla, who was startled by a roar "like a flight of jets." Alarmed, he glanced out the window of his home at Westfield, trying to see what was passing low over his home. Peering carefully, he said he saw, clearly, a large, perfectly circular "thing" that exceeded a four-engined plane in size and sparkled like polished chrome in the rays of the sun. For all its noise, the UFO made little headway and remained in view for four minutes on its way westward. Lt. Sevilla wrote an account of the sighting for the Air National Guard's 131st Fighter Squadron's magazine Thunderbolt. When the local press reprinted the story, a man who lived in the city of Agawan felt great relief because he had had the same vision and so knew he wasn't nuts.³⁹

More comments from Congress.

The press quoted Senator Russell (D-Georgia) of the Armed Services Committee:

"I am completely baffled by Flying Saucer stories. It seems inconceivable that so many pilots would have hallucinations or be fooled by cloud or atmospheric formations.

"From their testimony, it seems they do exist. But our Air Force says they do not. I just can't understand it. No, I don't think it is in the stage for a Senatorial investigation as yet."⁴⁰

A scoffer, Senate GOP Floor Leader Wherry of Nebraska remarked: "There are so many claims made. It is like our foreign policy--it is in a state of confusion and no one seems to know what it is all about."⁴¹

Senator Tydings (D-Maryland) Senate Armed Services Chairman, declared that: "...his committee has not discussed the discs with anyone, let alone defense officials."⁴² Quoting Tydings directly, the press reported: "I have not taken the matter seriously. I would assume it was our own experiments in embryo stage rather than men from Mars."⁴³

April 7th newsmen approached a leading authority on missiles and a founding member of the old German Rocket Society, Willy Ley, who discounted the proposal that UFO's, flying saucers, or whatever, were the result of an other worldly technology, yet he wasn't impressed with the latest official talk either. He liked the idea that the reported discs were real and probably U.S. military weapons since in his words: "...a large number of honest witnesses have seen them."⁴⁴

Ley was countered by Rear Admiral C. M. Bolster, Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics for Research and Development, who protested the idea of Navy aircraft being blamed and fell back on the theory that it was high flying research balloons that were being mistaken for some sort of immensely advanced aircraft.⁴⁵

Pittsburgh's saucer sighter of April 7th had an unusual way of spotting a UFO that passed over that city. A youngster, 11-year-old B. Wappler, was running to catch a fly ball when his eyes fixed instead on a round, bluish-white object having a "tail of lightning." The whole ball team then caught sight of what Wappler was looking at. The boys dashed home to tell their parents.⁴⁶

Earlier in the day at Fort Madison, Iowa, at a fountain pen factory four workers sighted what they said was a silver-colored rotating disc flying by the factory spitting out a shower of silver sparks.⁴⁷

Chastised by Washington's reaction, David Lawrence, editor of U.S. News and World Report, wrote in a syndicated feature that he felt something was amiss and that there must be a lot of critical data reposing in secret Air Force files, charging that it was even possible the secret policy of the military was cloaking official incompetency.⁴⁸

Enjoying the discomfiture of its rival in the newsweekly business, saucer skeptic Time sent a reporter to interview Frank Scully perhaps hoping for a quote that would set back serious consideration of the UFO problem even further. Alas, Scully refused to say much because he was saving all comment for a book.⁴⁹

The Time representative would have done better if he had left Los Angeles and driven out to El Centro, a small California community about 10 miles from the Mexican border. On April 7th when the national press was debating the existence of UFO's,

the citizens of this Imperial Valley town were able to judge first hand. Mysterious lights, hundreds of them, could be seen in the night sky. Approaching out of the south, some hovered while others moved slowly, and still others darted back and forth at various velocities, a sort of nocturnal Farmington. Newspaper headlines in the region termed the phenomenon "flying candles" in the honor of Good Friday.⁵⁰

Back East two nightwatchmen aboard a ferry ship moored near St. Ignace, Michigan, were making their rounds when a "disc-shaped" object raced about in the night sky performing lightning-like maneuvers over the Straits of Mackinac. One of the watchmen, J. Angelason, told the press: "An intense dark glow came from the sides of the disk. It ran the entire length of the disk--like a blue fluorescent factory light." The local news reporters made a comment in the news story that a similar manifestation occurred several weeks before over St. Ignace, Sault St. Marie, and in Canada over the province of Ontario.⁵¹

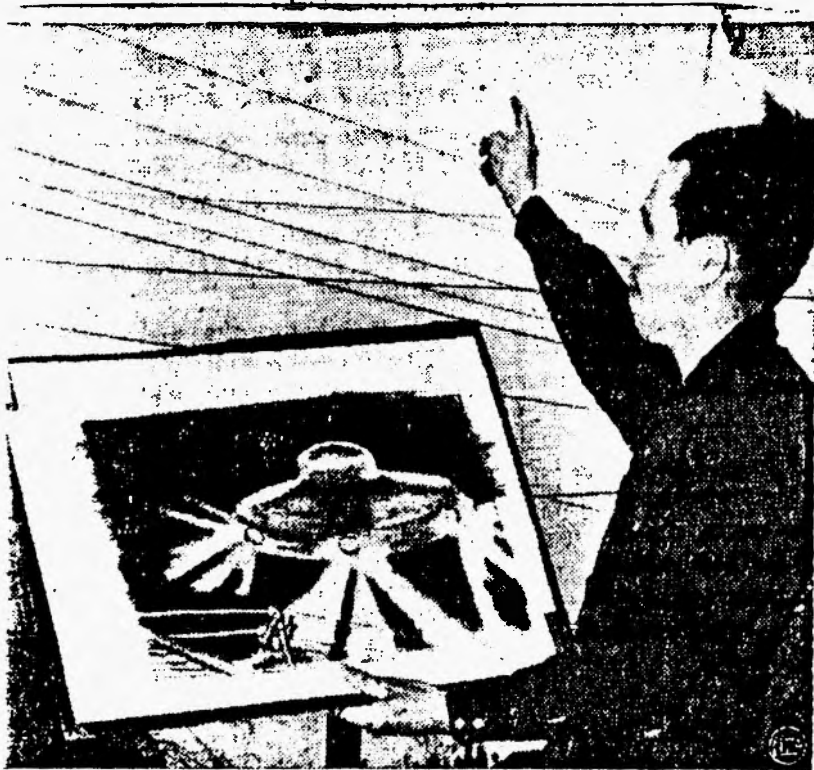
"An unorthodox light."

The date was April 7th. The place was Logan International Airport, Boston, Massachusetts. The time was 9:55 p.m. On duty in the control tower at Logan were three aircraft controllers: a W.G.M., a F.H., and a H.G.M. (The complete names have been deleted). Also present was an unnamed watch supervisor who filed the official report on the incident we are about to discuss.

In front of these witnesses a very strange light performed some unorthodox maneuvers. The mysterious light, changing from a deep blue to a pure white color and then to a cherry-red, moved across the field against the wind, at one time splitting into two lights which spun around one another, an ellipsoid pattern of diffused luminescence. The watch supervisor, with a long list of credentials and at the time a Lt. Colonel in the Air National Guard, tried to apply every natural solution he could think of to account for the phenomenon. Forced to discard ideas that seemed logical, the watch supervisor wrote a detailed report stating that he observed a solid mass in the midst of the glow as he followed it with binoculars. He added:

"For obvious reasons no formal report of this incident was made to any source. With so many reports rampant developing from irresponsible or hysterical sources, one hesitates to solicit ridicule, but in view of the close similarity of what I witnessed, I feel it incumbent to submit this report in spite of this risk."⁵²

"Flying Bowl."



SAUCER OVER KOKOMO—Earl Baker of Kokomo, Ind., stands in his back yard and points to the spot in the sky where he says a "flying saucer" hovered for about two minutes at 200 to 300 foot altitude. Baker holds an artist's sketch made from his description of the object, which he said had a conning tower and portholes giving out a bluish light.

As a railroad train chugged its way past Duncannon, Pennsylvania, the engineer, H. Perry, and his fireman, M. Conlon, were amazed by a "flying bowl" the size of a large aircraft. It cruised overhead at about 3,000 feet, low enough to cause great puzzlement to the pair of railroad men who could detect no means of propulsion.⁵³

Kokomo.

Colonel Robert Bell, an Army security officer at the Pentagon received an unusual letter from the Fifth Army Regional Office, Indianapolis, Indiana. The letter's subject was "Flying Saucers." Checking his files he found a directive titled: "Department of the Army, GSUSA, CSGID, 452.1, dated 25 March 1948, subject: Unconventional Aircraft, control number A-1917." The compliance requested therein was that reports of unconventional aircraft be forwarded to the "Commanding General Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, ATTN MCI." Not knowing if the directive was still in force, Colonel Bell nonetheless forwarded the information and added his request for an update on the status of Air Force interest in such material. No reply is on file. The UFO report, an interesting one, is reproduced below:

"On 12 April 1950, an agent interviewed Mr. Earl Baker of Kokomo, Indiana, sheet metal fabricator with the Continental Steel Corporation, 1200 West Markland, Kokomo, Indiana. Informant stated that, upon being awakened by his dog at 0200, 8 April 1950, he saw an 'object' about two hundred feet in the air, almost directly overhead. This 'object' was a grayish metal disc approximately fifteen feet in diameter and fifty feet in circumference, shaped approximately like a child's toy top. On the top bulge of the 'object,' he saw a small conning tower as the whole thing tilted occasionally. The 'object' rotated slowly on its perpendicular axis, and informant saw three small port holes on the outer rim. These port holes showed a blue-white light from within. After hovering for approximately two minutes the 'object' rose soundlessly and without tilting moved away to the north at a speed approximating that of a conventional type of aircraft at take-off. Informant could furnish no further information as to size or appearance of the apparition."⁵⁴

More April 8th cases.

A trio of farmers near Henderson, Kentucky reported some UFO's they said resembled "30-foot oil drums" that whizzed by in formation trailing smoke.⁵⁵

For a brief moment Horseheads, New York, commanded attention when a "flying saucer was found on a farm there." Constructed of cardboard, garnished with an old radio tube, the "saucer" caused no concern after the FBI was informed. It reminded one of many similar "finds" made in 1947.⁵⁶

Other sightings were made at Moline, Illinois; Upper Sandusky, Michigan; and Gouverner, New York, but it is a wirephoto from California that sticks in the mind.

Making the pages of many newspapers was a photo of two service men, arms raised, swearing they had distinctly seen a "pinkish, pancake-like, thingamajig flipping around in the sky over Long Beach." Both men were trained military observers and they kept insisting: "...our eyes don't play tricks on us."⁵⁷

Up north in the Bay Area, April 8th, a Mrs. G. Grey of San Francisco was idly gazing out the window of her home in the direction of Mt. Davidson when to her surprise, two disc-like objects hurdled right at her house. The flying "some-things" zipped at her with colossal speed, braked and then proceeded to move up, and then down, and then around, in an apparent game of aerial tag.⁵⁸ Similarly, a rancher that same day near the community of Terra Bella, California, a Mr. R. Barke, watched wide-eyed as another batch of disc-like things swooped, climbed, and circled, emitting puffs of black vapor when soaring vertically.⁵⁹

All this time Moscow made a show of being amused. Radio Moscow charged the "Yankee reactionary press" with trying to wring more military appropriations out of the U.S. Congress with screams about mysterious objects in the air.⁶⁰

"Doubting Thomases?"

An AP story datelined Shelby, North Carolina:

"Five Shelby residents aren't Doubting Thomases when it comes to tales of flying saucers. They say they saw one high over Shelby Saturday.

"Paul Limerick, the commander of Shelby's Veterans of Foreign Wars, gave the report on the whatzit of the air. He said he and Doane Mulick, an employee of an auto parts firm, and three children watched it for at least two minutes.

"Limerick described it as aluminum colored but not in the shape of an airplane. Apparently round, it followed a horizontal southwesterly course without making any noise or giving out any smoke or flame, he reported. Limerick said it 'Wobbled' along its course for about two minutes and then shot straight upward before disappearing."⁶¹

The red spray.

April 8th, Amarillo, Texas:

"Twelve-year-old David Lightfoot claimed today that he touched a 'flying saucer' and it sprayed him with a gas that raised red welts on his face and arm.

"Many persons tended to believe that David, as a true son of Texas might be getting an early start as a teller of tall tales. But his story was backed by his cousin, Charles Lightfoot.

"The boys were fishing 10 miles northeast of here Saturday, they said, when something 'like a balloon' sailed over their heads and landed beyond a slight rise.

"David ran to it. He said it was the size of an auto tire about 18 inches thick and curved on the bottom with a top looking like a flat plate.

"The part between the top and bottom was real red like it was on fire, he said.

"The top was still spinning as he approached. The disc was blue-gray in color and red-hot otherwise, he said.

"I dived for it but my fingers barely touched it,' he said. 'It was slick like a snake and plenty hot.'

"Then the top started spinning faster. 'It made a whistling noise and took off,' he said. It was out of sight in 10 seconds.

"He said that as it left the ground, the gadget released a gas or spray which reddened his arm and face and caused small welts. His father applied skin balm which removed the welts, but the redness remained.

"Charles couldn't run as fast as David but said he was within 100 yards of the object when it took off."⁶²

By a lucky accident, an amateur astronomer in Sacramento, California happened to be scanning the stars over the city at 8:35 p.m., April 9th, with a small telescope and he witnessed an eerie sight. Rushing pell-mell northward was a flight of some 50 objects accompanied by a dim, white glow. Stargazer H. Benach yelled to a friend nearby to come and confirm what he had in the eyepiece. They took turns looking and then rushed to the phone to alert the local newspaper, the Sacramento Bee.⁶³

"Are they or aren't they?"

The parade of reports began to tell on even the conservative New York Times which asked in a April 9th headline: "THOSE FLYING SAUCERS: ARE THEY OR AREN'T THEY?" Noting that even President Truman could not shed any light on the riddle,

the Times called the renewed UFO wave a whopper that was reminiscent of the wild year of 1947.⁶⁴

The UFO activity was most intense across the lower half of the United States at this time, April 10th, with a few exceptions like a sighting at Oba, in Canada, 150 miles north of Sault St. Marie. Lacking details it is hard to say if Oba's report was a "real" UFO sighting but another April 10th case fits the pattern geographically, and it makes good reading.⁶⁵

At first it was thought to be the morning star.

At Monterey, California, on the morning of April 10th, there occurred an experience that would be long remembered by the witnesses. The press account on the case reads:

"A 'bright chrome-like' flying saucer was spotted yesterday by at least seven persons as it cruised at a high rate of speed over Monterey County.

"Two sheriff's office patrols reported to Salinas that they had seen the mysterious objects.

"One of the deputies, Ted Cross of Monterey, was driving a prisoner to the county jail when he said he saw the saucer.

"It was definitely some kind of aircraft, but not local,' he said, 'in fact, nothing like anything seen in this world before.'

"Cross said the object was about 30 feet in diameter and appeared to be travelling at approximately 4,000 feet."⁶⁶

As the witnesses watched, the object came to a halt and started to spin. After a minute or so, the thing zoomed off in the direction of Fort Ord, California, an Army Base.⁶⁷ As the object moved northwest, the rays of the sun reflected brightly from its surface. Supporting the sheriff deputies was a Greyhound bus driver on his early morning Salinas to Monterey run who happened to spot the same object. Likewise, a local gas station attendant saw the same object. Both the bus driver and gas station attendant reported the object independently.⁶⁸

When questioned by the press, deputy Cross remarked: "It was a bright, circular, spinning object--spraying little flares of light (and it was) ... visible for five minutes."⁶⁹ In the police car the prisoner, a delinquent girl, muttered: "I guess it's just one of those days."⁷⁰ Cross radioed headquarters where an all points bulletin was broadcast. Within minutes two other deputies in a patrol car near Castroville radioed that they sighted the strange object in question which, while it was in view, turned and flew out to sea.⁷¹

Army Intelligence agents, possibly from nearby Fort Ord, hotfooted it to the sheriff's office to quiz the saucer

sighters, displaying more enthusiasm than one might expect from reading all the statements from the President on down that saucers were just so much nonsense. During the half hour interrogation the Army agents told the lawmen that military investigators like themselves were required to carry a camera at all times in case they ever got a chance to take a snapshot of one of the elusive sky objects. Moreover, and this is of extreme interest to the UFO historian, one Army man snapped: "...if you [one of the lawman] had photographed it, we would have confiscated your film just like THAT!"*72

When that quote hit the newswire the bigwigs back east had a fit. An Air Force spokesman in Washington hurried to say that the casual confiscation of civilian film was downright illegal unless, of course, a military secret or a restricted area was photographed. Perhaps because this discussion might put the saucers in a favorable light, the Pentagon added that it still didn't believe in the objects and that orders to investigate reports were: "...general in nature and subject to interpretation of commanders in the field."73

Fire and smoke.

While a crew of nine state highway workers labored on a road outside of York, Pennsylvania, in the Pigeon Hill district, April 10th, the foreman, R. Jenkins, and the rest of the men, were surprised by an unfamiliar whining sound. Looking up the crew sighted something approach at terrific velocity. Only 500 feet above the ground, a black oval 20 feet in diameter spewing fire and smoke swerved into view. Dumbfounded because the object sported no wings or propeller, the men watched until it moved out of sight.74

Meanwhile, Henry J. Taylor reiterated his now famous claims and warned that the stubborn refusal of the Pentagon to admit that the saucers were American would open the way to the Kremlin announcing that the strange objects were,75 Russian which might produce hysteria in the Free World.

Kenneth Arnold, blamed by the skeptics as "starting it all," made news again on April 10th when United Press mentioned that the Boise flier felt there may be a link between the saucers and unidentified submerged objects reported by the Navy. Asked about the more sensational rumors making the rounds, Arnold replied: "... [I] don't scoff at reports that 'little men' have fled from alleged crackups of flying saucers in Mexico and Southern California." Moreover: "Who am I to say that no such men exist? My mind is always open to anything. I haven't seen any of the tiny men myself. But I have letters from persons who have seen them. And they're serious too."76

*Emphasis is part of the original quote.

In about the middle of Kansas, at the city of Lindsborg, April 10th, a P. Patchin saw a gray-white clam-shaped object streaking across the heavens at 11:30 a.m. According to Patchin's calculations, the object was heading southwest at about 650 miles per hour and at an altitude of two miles.⁷⁷

More roars.

Much like the experience of Lt. Sevilla of Westfield, Massachusetts, who had been alerted to something strange in the sky by a horrendous noise, another gentleman, a Mr. E. D. Williams of Buffalo, New York, a reserve flying officer, was also startled by a loud roar just before midnight April 10th. Being a pilot and familiar with aircraft activity in the area, he sensed something amiss. He couldn't see two well because of the glare from the street lights but he said he saw enough to put a doubt in his mind about his belief that the saucers were bunk: "It was the noise that attracted me. It sounded like four or five jet planes were just outside the house. I flicked off the light and looked out to see an object with four or five flaring exhausts streaking across the sky. It was flying at about 2,500 feet and going west in a straight line."⁷⁸

"As red as a red neon tube."

Four o'clock in the morning of April 10th, Captain Charles H. McMahon arrived at Robin's Air Force Base, Georgia, after a three hour flight. He was tired and wanted some shuteye before reporting for duty the next morning. Some friends had dropped him off at the base hospital where the Captain thought he might find a cot so he could catch 40 winks. The so-called "flying saucers" were the farthest thing from his mind; in fact he had never really paid attention to the subject. As the Captain walked up to the front door of the hospital, he passed a Sergeant Lovett C. Harrell, Jr. Sergeant Harrell called out to the officer and directed his attention to the sky. Captain McMahon lifted his head and saw something red in the dark sky at about 12,00 feet altitude. He later told Intelligence officers his story.⁷⁹

The UFO turned out to have been a conventional object, a verdict that need not be contested, but the details of the interrogation make for interesting reading. Here is what happened to Sergeant Harrell.

"Any preconceptions?"

Military Intelligence asked Sergeant Harrell if he had got a good night's sleep, whether his vision was 20/20 without glasses, or if he had been reading newspaper accounts of recent flying saucer sightings, and finally, had he listened to Henry J. Taylor's broadcast about American secret weapons. Satisfied that the Sergeant was a good observer and had no preconceptions, the interrogation proceeded.

An investigation revealed that the Robins AFB weather unit had released a weather balloon around 0400 and that this balloon had dropped a paper lantern containing a lighted candle which had been seen to float over the Hospital and to have come down in the swamp. (The Air Force Times issue of 15 April 50 had a similar device illustrated on page one.) It's evident that witnesses had seen this lantern but it is important to point out that the military men had observed accurately, although they had not seen a "flying saucer," it is interesting to note that it was not a "flying saucer" that they reported.⁸⁰

A half-hour show.

Montclair, New Jersey, April 11th, was the scene of a half-hour show. A Miss Delapen, up to this time a doubter, was entertained by an aerial spectacle that produced a firm belief in the strange objects known popularly as flying saucers. The New York secretary watched a dozen softly glowing yellow-colored things like dinner plates play in the air over Montclair. The young woman noticed the sky objects when she was enroute to church about 7:30 p.m. The UFO's, moving in two and threes, chased one another about the sky, disappearing and reappearing, as she said: "...circling first high in the sky then dropping down in a circling motion..." A neighbor, A C. Perdue, confirmed the sighting.⁸¹

The only accounts available for April 12th are European ones. United Press reported that American occupation officers had seen something at Neukirchen, Germany.⁸² And on the afternoon of the 12th, two brothers were driving a road linking Tarragona and Reus, Spain, when they noticed an object hovering over some olive trees. The brothers, Pedro and Adres Garcia, said the thing was a small disc about one meter in diameter. It glowed strangely and was visible for only a few seconds before zipping away.^{83, 84}

"Study of aerial phenomena."

On March 30th when Brigadier General Carroll visited the 10th District Office of Special Investigations, USAF, based at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, he issued verbal instructions that a summary of "aerial phenomena," reported and investigated in that area be prepared. General Carroll requested that the summary be forwarded immediately to OSI headquarters in Washington, D.C.

By April 12th the summary was completed and it makes for interesting reading when it is compared to documents like the final report of Project GRUDGE:

"1.) A review of the files on 'Aerial Phenomena' contained in the 10th District OSI files #24-0 and #24-39, of which there are approximately forty cases, indicates that the following generalizations are

pertinent to the investigation:

- "a. The observations of the individuals who have reported sighting the so-called 'flying discs' have been at all times during day and night; about 70 percent of those on file have been after the hours of darkness, ranging from 1800 hours to 0200 hours.
- "b. Most of the observations have been sightings of single objects; however, about 10 percent of the sightings have indicated there were two or more, with the maximum being four.
- "c. The observations have been made by both military and civilian personnel. The predominance of the military sightings have been in the vicinity of Camp Hood. The military sightings comprise 75 percent of the sightings on record in this office. No particular observation can be made regarding the sightings of the civilian personnel; they have been in metropolitan or interurban areas.
- "d. In practically all cases, with one or two minor exceptions, the estimate of speed of the 'aerial phenomena' have been in supersonic speeds, ranging from 800 to 2,000 miles per hour. This conclusion is arrived at in that the individual method of expressing speeds, ranging from azimuth readings converted into linear miles per hour, through military persons, by artillery observer giving feet per second, to pilot estimates of speed given in miles per hour; i.e.,
 - (1) One civilian giving an estimate range of one-quarter mile an azimuth movement of 170 degrees in three minutes, which converts to approximately 335 miles per hour.
 - (2) A military observer's estimate of 3,000 feet per second, which converts into approximately 2,000 miles per hour.
 - (3) A military pilot's estimate of 2,000 miles per hour.

"e. Weather, as a factor in these cases, does not seem to be of major importance; there are four sightings in which the alleged disc or 'fire ball' was sighted near or in the vicinity of thunder storms that were active at that time; however, most of the cases on hand have clear weather or with a small amount of clouds as climatic conditions prevailing at the time of the sightings.

"f. The estimated altitude of the 'aerial phenomena' at the time of the observations seem to be predominantly in the lower altitudes, ranging from two to eight thousand feet; however, there are several incidents in which the estimated altitude of the object was 20,000 feet or above.

"g. Visual phenomena associated with the passage of the 'flying discs' are approximately equally split; as having a long tail; and as to those which have no such visual evidence of an appendage during its passage through the air at high speed.

"h. Most cases of these observations have reported an absence of all sound with the passage of the phenomena; however, there are a few which have reported a hissing sound, which cannot be described in any other manner.

"i. It is the universal opinion of all persons interrogated in the reports reviewed that the objects were of a smooth contour, with no protuberances for control or method of propulsion.

"j. The described sizes of these 'aerial phenomena' in most cases, conform to that expressed in the following illustrations: a civilian service station attendant described the object as being approximately the size of the disk in a passenger type motor vehicle; another civilian described it as being the size of a volley ball. As illustrated, each of these conforms to general shape and size in uniform manner. It should be pointed out, however, that in none of the investigations on file in the 10th District Office, is there any further description of saying at what distance the comparative object is to be held from the eye; this leaves some doubt as to this comparative size.

- "k. In all cases, the object and the vapor trail or tail attendant thereto was of a uniform color; however, the color used in describing the object in each case varies from a blue-white through bright red to orange.
- "2.) A tabulation of the sightings indicates that they fall in a line from northwest to southeast, originating in the vicinity of Camp Hood, and terminating in the vicinity of New Orleans, with a few individual sightings to the east and west of this general line.*
- "3.) In most of the cases on file in the 10th District, distribution has been through OSI channels only, primarily between the 17th District and the 10th District Offices, however, in accordance with a letter from Headquarters, OSI dated 2 June 1949, this subject, and letter, Headquarters, OSI, 20 May 1949, copies of reports were sent to the Commanding General, Air Material Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, and to the Director of Intelligence, USAF.
- "4.) Attached to this report as Enclosure No. 1, you will find a copy of the minutes of the meeting of a conference on 'aerial phenomena' held in the conference room, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico, at 1300 hours, 16 February 1949. Herein are expressed the views of several scientific people which might be an aid in the digesting of these phenomena.
- "5.) Comments and Recommendations: It should be pointed out that each one of the approximately forty observations contained in the investigative files of the 10th District is diverse, in that the intelligence of the individual, the scope and range of experience, and the ability to express oneself is widely diversified in each case. The homely expressions, the excitability of the individual under stress, the acuity of the memory in each case is a questionable factor. The investigative technique in the form of the report is not uniform throughout. All

*This seems to be the first mention in UFO history of "Orthoteny." The reader should consult the book: "Flying Saucers and the Straight Line Mystery by Aime Michel. New York: Criterion Books, 1958.

these factors tend to downgrade the authenticity of the overall report. The above comments are the opinion of the undersigned as to the factors which are common to all or most of the reports reviewed.

"6.) It is the opinion of the undersigned that the 'phenomena' do exist, but that the haphazard pursuit of information and the lack of coordination of investigative effort including scientific research into this matter makes it a problem that cannot be resolved at the present time.

"7.) It is recommended that the matter be brought before a proper command at the headquarters level, with a recommendation to that command that a coordinated scientific effort be made to establish an explanation of this phenomena.

(Signed) Ralph H. Schaller

Lt. Colonel, USAF
District Commander"⁸⁵

Snooping on Moffett Field?

A lot of citizens of San Jose, California, on April 13th, were stirred up over some strange manifestations in the heavens above their city.

Said one witness:

"It hovered in the direction of Moffett Field, staying up there stationary four or five minutes. Then three flaming tongues shot out of the tail and it vanished within a minute or so.

"The object appeared to be several thousand feet high. I thought jets of flame came out along each side of the tail and a third in between the other two. I heard a swishing sound. As it moved away it seemed to flutter a bit."⁸⁶

Not many miles away that day, at Salinas, California, a city that experienced a UFO visitation back on April 10th, another UFO appeared. A Mr. Potter of Salinas motioned to four co-workers to join him outside the plant building where they all worked. Mr. Potter was standing on the loading dock while engaged in his duties as head engineer when he first laid eyes on the "thing" in the sky, shiny in appearance and, as he termed it, looking like: "...one of those long-rooted sweet potatoes[?]."⁸⁷ He reckoned that it was just pulling out of dive when he first spotted it. He immediately contacted the sheriff. The sheriff visited the plant and questioned the witnesses. The CAA was phoned but

authorities said there were no aircraft in the area at the time. Subject to merciless ribbing by those who failed to catch a glimpse of the object, Mr. Potter refused to back down but he also refused to claim a "saucer sighting."⁸⁸

Almost directly east of Salinas, at about 1,500 miles, at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on April 13th, a saucer sighting involved an interesting witness. The news story relating the incident read:

"A Baptist minister says he saw two objects that looked like flying saucers. Reverend G. Bellamy said he and a friend saw the two things standing on edge, then suddenly wheeled over into a horizontal position at the same time. Bellamy says he knows the Air Force has denied such things exist, 'but whatever we saw,' he says, 'has made a believer out of me.'"⁸⁹

April 14th was another lull except for foreign reports. They told of a sighting at Guaquil, Ecuador, in South America, and in Europe about something in the air above Palermo, Italy. In Spain a sighting was made at the city of Camarasa. Spainards living near the Riegos y Fuerzas del Ebro hydro-electric power plant claimed that a luminous object came down out of the sky, landed on the waters behind the dam, floated for a time, and then was seen to sink beneath the surface.⁹⁰

And then there was Germany.

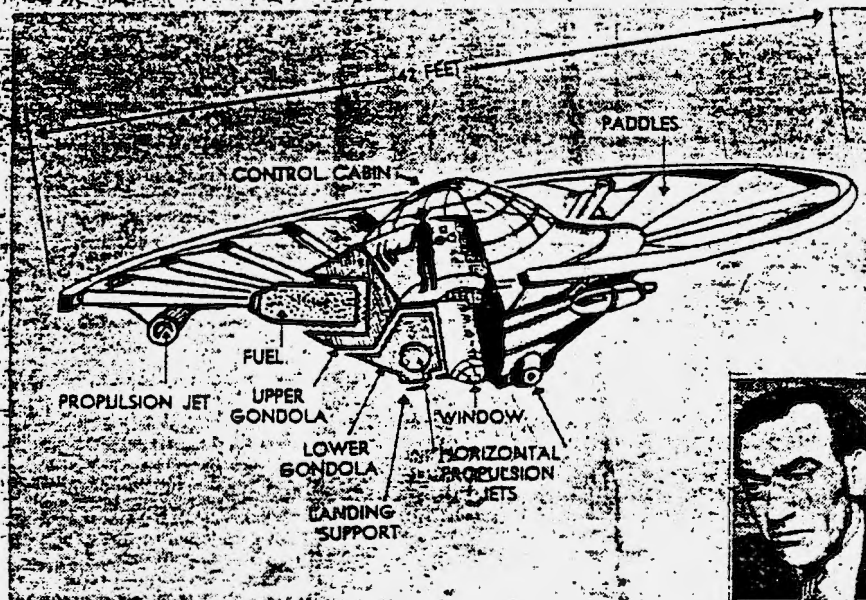
Panic.

In a scene reminiscence of the war, hundreds of fear-stricken Germans jammed the roads leading out of Munich. The recent shooting down of an American bomber over the Baltic by the Russians and sharp exchanges of diplomatic notes gave birth to a rumor that World War III would break out at any minute. Authorities managed to stem the tide of humanity only after crowds had gone miles from the city on a frantic trek to the Alpine redoubt. A contributing factor to the hysteria had been the sighting of flying saucers over Bavaria which the German population was convinced could only be Russian reconnaissance aircraft.⁹¹

"The Flying Top."

A civilian driver for the American Occupation troops at Bremerhaven, a Rudolph Schriever, a 40-year-old German aircraft designer who had graduated from Prague University, boasted to the Yanks he had conceived of a disc-shaped aircraft, even completing blueprints. Schriever called his envisioned machine a "flying top", a craft that could travel at 2,000 miles per hour, with a range of some 4,000 miles. Although his plans were purloined from his laboratory after

OFFERS TO BUILD 'FLYING SAUCER' FOR U. S.



A FORMER LUFTWAFFE captain and aircraft designer, Rudolf Schriever (inset), who says engineers throughout the world experimented in the early 1940s with "flying saucers," is willing to build one for the United States in six to nine months. The 40-year-old Prague university graduate said he made blueprints for such a machine (above), which he calls a "flying top," before Germany's collapse and that the blueprints were stolen from his laboratory. He says the machine would be capable of 2,000 mph with radius of 4,000 miles. Schriever is a U. S. Army driver at Bremerhaven. (International)

the war, he claimed he could build his "flying top" for the United States in six to nine months. Eventually a sketch of Schriever's proposed ship and his story appeared in the German news magazine Der Spiegel, inviting the attention of Hearst's International News Service. Quizzed by phone by INS reporters, Schriever's story made the newspapers in the U.S.⁹²

Although the German's design relies on conventional aerodynamic principles for lift and would doubtlessly fail to maintain stability in flight, there are those that persist in asserting that Schriever's craft is what the flying saucer mystery is all about, that German scientists left Germany before that nation collapsed in the Second World War and perfected the machine at a secret location. As late as the 1980's, a neo-Nazi group based in Canada still espouses the idea.

Except for a sighting at Farmington, West Virginia, nothing is on record for April 15th.⁹³ The next day there was also a single report, this time from Burlington, Iowa, and was carried by the Des Moines Sunday Register.⁹⁴ April 16th did have, however, another interview of Kenneth Arnold. Meeting with reporters at his Boise, Idaho home, Arnold asserted that if all else fails he would get proof of the saucers' existence if it took the rest of his life. People, he said, were still phoning him at all hours. Letters, newsclippings, magazine articles, and wire recordings filled shelves and closets in his house. He figured he had the largest collection of UFO material in the world.⁹⁵

On Rainy Lake in Illinois a man and two boys rowing a boat on a lazy Sunday afternoon, April 16th, were witnesses to a speeding object: a round, silver, soundless object, heading south. This happened at 3:45 p.m. The reaction of the local newspaper to the first UFO sighting in the area was somewhat amusing: "Frankly, we were getting a bit envious of the national publicity accorded some communities."⁹⁶

A mighty strange "meteor."

The OSI office at Westover Air Force Base, Massachusetts, alerted Washington of a strange story:

"The Springfield Union carried an article on April 17, 1950, in which it was reported that one --- (deleted) of Ludlow, Mass., advised that while on duty at the --- (deleted), atop Minnechaug Mountain in Ludlow, at 1030 hours, 16 April, he saw a large silvery disk with a gaseous tail, flying very slowly about eight to ten thousand feet above him, pursuing an easterly course. Mr. Grant stated that he watched the object for seven minutes before it disappeared from view and that it was definitely not an airplane,

perfectly round and was emitting a long tail of burning gases which made it look like a meteor. It started to climb before it disappeared from his view, but did not appear to be climbing at an exceptionally rapid rate."⁹⁷

This seemed to be something worth checking out but such action was not taken. The OSI at Westover told Washington: "No investigative action has been initiated by this office, in accordance with AFCSI Letter No. 85, dated 8 February 1950."⁹⁸

April 17th.

According to the London edition of the New York Herald-Tribune, a UFO was seen over the Montmartre section of Paris in France. On the other side of the world a report was made at Wellington, in New Zealand.⁹⁹

General Carl Spaatz, at this time retired as Air Force Chief of Staff, took the opportunity to lecture the American public about the folly of getting all worked up about supposed objects in the sky. He told Newsweek that the country wouldn't have a chance if the Russians started dropping bombs.¹⁰⁰

A mention of Mexico.

The Intelligence Division, Headquarters, MATS, Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, filed an Air Intelligence Information Report listing sightings by various MATS units in the Texas region. The 1923rd AACS Squadron based at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, in document dated April 17th, also mentioned civilian accounts and was part of the Air Intelligence Information report issued by Washington. The 1923rd document tells us:

"... (deleted) a San Antonio attorney, reported he saw a flying saucer passing over Laredo. He believes they are huge blobs of molten metal from some distant planet which are cooled and hardened into discs while hurling through space. He estimated it to be from 75 to 100 feet in diameter and travelling approximately six or eight hundred miles per hour and about 5,000 feet altitude. Later the same day he reported he saw another flying saucer. A flying saucer was spotted over Mexico City's Central Airport and reported as a shiny fast moving aerial object. It hovered over the airport motionless for awhile and then whizzed out of sight at high speed. The El Nacional declared that a flying saucer had crashed in the Sierra de Morones mountains making the ground boil. It was constructed of metal and

painted an orange color. It carried no crew."¹⁰¹

It is interesting to note that the above made the official UFO file while other more deserving information remains to this day ignored by the Pentagon. The reference to Mexico is noteworthy because it is one of the few acknowledgements by the U.S. military that anything at all was taking place south of the border.

An example of one of the better reports was one filed by a scientist from the University of California who was working at Los Alamos, New Mexico, when he saw something extraordinary. While peering through a Bosch and Lomb telescope at 1:30 p.m. on April 17th, he spotted a: "bright, metallic, circular and flat object travelling in a southeasterly direction..."¹⁰² The object was plainly seen in the clear air and seemed to be some nine feet in diameter. It appeared to be about 2,000 feet high and moved across the sky at an undetermined speed although the scientist (whose name was deleted from the official record) said the object travelled: "...faster than any known conventional aircraft."¹⁰³ In view for about 20 minutes, the UFO put on quite a show:

"Maneuvered up and down from 15 to 35 degrees and at times slightly to the sides. Object seemed to rotate end over end in a forward tumbling movement at a variable frequency of approximately one second. When the edge of the object was toward the scope, it did not appear to have any appreciable thickness."¹⁰⁴

The next day an equally odd report was forwarded to Washington by the OSI at Westover:

"The Springfield Union carried an article on 18 April 1950 in which it was reported that two Springfield, Massachusetts Technical High School students, --- (deleted) and --- (deleted) of Springfield saw a 'Flying Saucer' above Beckwood Boulevard, at approximately 2015 hours on 17 April 1950. --- (deleted) described the incident to the Springfield Union as follows:

" --- (deleted) and --- (deleted) were travelling on Beckwood Blvd., in the former's car when they spotted a red object approaching it. The object appeared to be two discs not visibly connected but with a reddish hue between them. It appeared that one disc was following the other. The discs were described as having a bottom section 'the shape of a slice of baloney,' approximately six feet in diameter and a convex top approximately four feet in diameter. The object was moving up and down through a distance of approximately twenty feet, and although not

afame appeared to be aglow. --- (deleted) stated that it was emitting what he thought to be sparks and was making a weird whistling noise. He stated that he pulled his car to the side of the road to avoid a collision. --- (deleted) stated that the object approached to within one hundred feet of his car. After several 'hops' in the air, the object ascended rapidly, vertically, and disappeared."105

As before, the OSI office told Washington it had taken no investigative action.

The OSI office at Carswell Air Force Base, Fort Worth, Texas, forwarded a message to the Director of the OSI in Washington, D.C. which stated:

"Two witnesses, housewives of military personnel, who reside in the North Section of Sherman, Texas, reported that at 1045 on 18 April 1950, they had observed from their residence 18 to 20 flat circular objects with polished silver surface in the air. These objects were quite some distance away--from thirty to forty degrees above the horizon and were first seen in the West going in a general direction East by Northeast. The objects appeared to have sort of a hooking circular motion and appeared to rotate in a counter-clockwise motion. They made no noise. Objects remained in view four to five minutes."106

Like other local OSI units, the Carswell District notified Washington that: "Pursuant to AFCSI Letter 85, no action is being taken on this matter."107

April 18th.

In an issue of the Marshalltown, Iowa newspaper, the Times-Republican, it was reported that a resident of the city of Fonda had spotted a UFO and the newspaper noted that the witness was the former mayor of the Iowa community.¹⁰⁸ The day's spotlight, however, was on the Texas turmoil.

For two days in Texas, April 18 - 19th, things were especially bewildering for those in the Lone Star state due to the clear skies and the apparent visit by a big skyhook balloon. Texans craned their necks skyward to watch a slow moving, translucent, top-shaped object pass over numerous cities at a great altitude. A few persons guessed that it was a balloon although not many people knew that balloons of such a giant size existed and so became convinced a mysterious craft was spying out the countryside. The balloon overshadowed reports of a more puzzling nature like the sighting made at the city of Sherman where three individuals said they

saw: "...eighteen saucer-shaped objects over Sherman about noon...the objects were noiseless and racing north, high and fast in formation."¹⁰⁹ And in Austin, a policeman reported: "...a saucer-shaped object in the sky, wingless and traveling at a high rate of speed."¹¹⁰ Likewise, citizens of Dallas spotted something skittering about the heavens. According to a Mr. A. J. Chennault, he and everyone in the apartment building where he lived perceived: "...a flying "dinner plate" very high overhead."¹¹¹ But the trophy for the case of the most interest goes to Fort Worth's "Flying Bananas." The incident received national distribution by AP wirephoto.

The story first appeared in print in the April 18th edition of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram and was given star billing on the front page no doubt because it was one of those rare instances when a photograph accompanied a flying saucer sighting. The headline in the Star-Telegram shouted: PIC- TURES OFFER PROOF VET SEES FLYING OBJECTS IN SKY AND PHOTO- GRAPHS THEM.¹¹² With publicity like that, Air Force Intelligence agents couldn't pass up the chance to make an inquiry. The Eighth Air Force sent agents to investigate in response to a directive from SAC. The title of the directive read: "Strategic Air Command, date 31 January 1950, subject: 'Reporting of Information on Unconventional Aircraft.'" The contents of the directive are not stated but it probably okays the passing on of UFO reports, subject to the judgment of the local military commander. The Eighth Air Force gave as its reasons for looking into the case the widespread notoriety of the incident and: "...as far as is known by this headquarters this is the first time a photograph purporting to be a 'flying saucer' had been published by the press."¹¹³ Moreover: "If analysis by expert photo technicians substantiated that the photographs are genuine, instead of abrasions or crimps, they will be of definite intelligence value."¹¹⁴

Agents located the photographer, I. Maaxy, and discovered that the newspaper's account was not entirely accurate. They learned that the exposures were made over a week earlier at 5:30 p.m. on April 9th. The phenomenon as viewed by Maaxy was "seven perpendicular streaks of light in three groups, moving horizontally across the sky."

A thorough study of the negatives revealed that the alleged saucer images were crimps resulting from mishandling.¹¹⁵ After a lengthy interrogation the supposed mysterious incident shrunk to nothing in the way of "proof." It was the type of case hard line skeptics dream about.

The Texas saucer epidemic did have at least one definite result; it sent newspaper reporters stampeding to find Air Force Secretary W. Stuart Symington. Cornered by the news-hounds in San Francisco, the Secretary proved to be of no more

of a help than any other official. He insisted that there was "nothing at all" to flying saucer sightings.¹¹⁶ Nonetheless, a move to pacify the public was made the next day. The Associated Press newswire carried the following announcement:

"The 8th Air Force still doesn't believe in flying saucers but its pilots will keep an eye out for 'any unusual aerial phenomena' said a recent memorandum issued by 8th Air Force headquarters."¹¹⁷

Yet another Farmington?

An aerial traffic jam over Missouri took place on April 19th. A swarm of glowing "spots" approximately 75 to 100 in number, but not clearly visible because they were cloaked by a thick overcast, appeared in the sky just east of Anderson. On the small side, about 3 to 4 feet in diameter if the estimate given is correct, the "spots" stayed in sight for a half hour after which the mass flight flew off on an eastern course. This happened just before sunrise.¹¹⁸

The reason for the caution was evident in news from people under government guidance, people who usually knew what they were doing. In New Mexico there was a split between scoffers and believers among the scientists stationed there. On April 19th the split was made public undercutting official statements from Washington that there was no UFO mystery. Teletype machines rapped out the following messages:

"WE NEVER SAW A FLYING SAUCER. AND NEVER HOPE TO SEE ONE. BUT WE CAN TELL YOU HERE AND NOW, QUITE A FEW PEOPLE AT AN ATOMIC BOMB PROJECT SAY THEY DID...NOT ONE, BUT MANY.

"MORE THAN 15 PERSONS AT THE SECRET ATOMIC ENERGY PROJECT AT LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO, REPORT THAT THEY SAW THE AIRBORNE CROCKERY ON THE EASTERN HORIZON.

"BUT NONE OF THE OBSERVERS COULD AGREE ON THE SHAPE OF THE OBJECTS. ALL ARE EMPLOYEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PERSONNEL DIVISION.

"ONE OBSERVER WATCHED ONE OF THREE OBJECTS THROUGH A TELESCOPE AND SAYS IT LOOKED FLAT, METALLIC, ROUGHLY CIRCULAR AND ABOUT NINE FEET IN DIAMETER.

"BUT ROBERT J. VAN GAMERT OF THE PROJECT GOES ALONG WITH THE AIR FORCE WHICH, AFTER MANY INVESTIGATIONS, HAS DEBUNKED THE SAUCER STORIES. HE SAYS OF HIS ATOMIC COLLEAGUES, 'I THINK THE REST OF THEM HAVE SPOTS BEFORE THEIR EYES.'

"JOHN HERZOG, ONE OF THE OBSERVERS, SAID HE DOUBTED IF THE OBJECTS WERE CARRIED OR MOVED BY WIND.

"THEY SEEMED TO MOVE WITH 'SENSE' TRAVELING FIRST IN ONE DIRECTION THEN STOPPING AND REVERSING DIRECTION."119

The same day, April 19th, an extraordinary phenomenon was on display in the heavens over Edmonton, Canada. Witnesses numbering in the thousands gazed toward the southwest where approximately 30 degrees above the horizon there was a remarkable sight which veteran Aurora watchers declared was something quite different from the usual northern lights. It was said the "thing" resembled a "giant luminous red pencil of light."120 This sounds a lot like the "thing" reported over Dallas, Texas, the same day: "...on April 19, 1950, 'a vertical luminous tube, of the color of red-hot iron,' was [seen]..."121

Eerie Episode.

An eerie episode occurred in California. Police officers B. Morton and D. Nielsen were motoring down Highway 99 outside Calexico in their patrolcar at the lonely hour of 3:00 a.m. on April 19th when three dark circular masses, each one about 150 feet in diameter, came into view. Moving slowly and silently, the objects emerged out of the mist in the west at about a 2,000 foot altitude flying in formation. One object carried no lights while the other two were well lit. The lawmen noticed that the objects were "crabbing and skidding" as they moved through the air. The strange aerial intruders circumnavigated Calexico a number of times and then took a wider track and circled the whole valley. Officer Nielson was puzzled at the absence of flame and noise and could only surmise that the weird aeroforms had no connection with the local Naval Air Station so the objects must have been some of the famous flying saucers.122

April 20th.

Early in the morning of April 20th, a painter by the name of W. C. Earterling arrived at his place of work in Houston, Texas. Looking up he spotted a big round disc in the dark sky. He thought it was just the moon until he peered closer and noticed that the "moon" had a distinct silver hue. Suddenly, without warning, the "moon" zoomed away "like a bolt" with a "mild roar" or "whoosh," spilling a shower of sparks. The plant's nightwatchman, S. Dobos, also got a quick look at the thing. Dobos said: I don't know what it was and I can't guess where it came from. All I know is that it was there and I got a little shakey about it."123

"Numerous inquiries."

A Major R. O. Rounds, weather officer of the Eighth Air Force, Carwells Air Force Base, Texas, pushed the idea that

weather balloons most probably were getting persons all worked up but he said his remarks were "unofficially suggested."¹⁰⁸

A more formal reply to the unsettled press and public was that of Lt. Colonel C. H. Scott, Public Information Officer for the Eighth Air Force Headquarters, who issued an official memorandum addressed to "All Concerned," a document that reiterated the usual Air Force position. The Fort Worth Times published it verbatim even to its military form. The document was necessary, as stated therein, due: "... to the numerous inquiries received by the office."¹²⁴

It was night time, April 20th, and in Texas one of the oddest UFO cases of the year took place. A motorist on a stretch of lonely road, Highway 94, suddenly got the "feeling" something was following him. The newspaper account picks it up from there:

"...he observed a round, flying object about eight feet in diameter, while driving alone nine miles west of Lufkin last night. ...the saucer stayed about 200 feet ahead of him for some time but he was unable to distinguish any details until he stopped....he got out of his car to see the object better and it hovered about 20 feet over his head, giving off a dull red glow."¹²⁵

And he further stated: "...the bottom of the object was rounded like a globe...[and] it appeared to be made of aluminum." Suddenly, he said: Sparks flew from a slot in the craft's bottom as it took off after hovering over his head about two seconds."¹²⁶ According to Robertson the thing took off with a "whooshing roar", speeding away at a 50 degree angle. About five minutes after the object disappeared, Robertson felt a burning sensation on his face. His clothing was not burned.¹²⁷

Farm folk southwest of Princeton, Missouri, tied up the party telephone line buzzing about a flying disc trailing white smoke that sped over that area April 22nd.¹²⁸

April 21st.

Major Levy, speaking for the Counter Intelligence Division of the OSI, sought a "current estimate" of UFO reportings as of March 21, 1950, because, as he put it, he: "...felt that a current estimate based on your analyses will enable this office to better furnish guidance to OSI District Offices as to the extent and nature of their future reporting of such incidents."¹²⁹

The Director of Intelligence, DCS/O, Collection Branch, referred Major Levy to the UFO directive dated 12 January 1950 that denied UFO's special status, adding:

"Reference is made to conversations on this subject between Lt. Col. Hearn of this Directorate and Major Cox of your office, on 3 March 1950, and between Major Boggs of this Directorate and Major Nold, of your office, on 28 March 1950. In both discussions, it was explained that none of the recent 'flying saucer' publicity has offered anything that would modify the Air Force's collection policy as contained in letter cited in paragraph 1 above."130

Photographs at Red Bud, Pacific City, and the Balearics.

A huge, reddish disc with a metallic "dome" projecting above the semi-sphere top, moved and hovered repeatedly over the countryside near Red Bud, Illinois, or so said a man named Dean Morgan. The witness to the alleged visit by a UFO claimed that it occurred on April 23, 1950. After awhile, the UFO was gone in a flash, disappearing over the horizon. A photograph was taken that shows a red blob but it was not submitted to authorities. Others in the area were said to have sighted a similar object zooming in the direction of Carbondale.131

Overseas at the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean, a newsreel cameraman by the name of Enrique Hausemann Muller allegedly caught a saucer on film, the image showing a spinning pinwheel-shaped object spewing rays of exhaust. The picture was said to have been taken April 24th. The supposed UFO looks suspicious. It is probably some fireworks pinned to a paper cup.132

A photograph of slightly more consequence was the result of the Pacific City incident.

An amateur photographer by the name of R. Hermann approached the Portland, Oregon, Oregonian, April 22nd, with a story about a picture of a strange object he had taken March 12th. It seems his friends had voiced a worry about the picture since it might be a violation of a government secret if the object had been on a classified test flight, therefore Hermann destroyed the negative but he could not bring himself to do away with the print. It seems that he had spent Sunday, March 12th, on the beach at Pacific City, one of the many beauty spots along Oregon's Pacific coast. It was a murky day with light rain that afternoon but Hermann had decided conditions were still good enough to test his new 45 R.B. Graflex, intending to take a picture of his wife romping in the surf. He was all set when an unusual object came into view spewing a vapor trail. It approached over the ocean on a south to north course moving fast. Oddly enough the object bore little resemblance to a saucer and Hermann thought that strange because he thought the object must be one of the mysterious flying craft he had read about. Instead, the thing was shaped like a turtle shell with a

"definite front and rear." The thing did not spin, and on the bottom were "six hole-like features, three forward and three aft. The latter details became visible when the object tilted slightly and turned to a new heading that sent it out to sea, passing out of sight in the direction of Tillamook headland. There were others on the beach at the time according to Mr. Hermann but he didn't think anyone else noticed the object.

Going into more detail, Mr. Hermann said the UFO had a polished silver finish and spurted an orange flame out the back leaving a white vapor trail.

Although he feared the Air Force might cause some trouble if he made the photograph public, he did feel its release would clarify some confusion surrounding the flying saucer mystery. Experts in photography examined the print and gave their opinion that the image on the emulsion did not appear to be an obvious fake, but of course, without the negative not much else could be determined.¹³³

A Salem, Oregon newspaper photographer concluded that the object was only a "water spot on the negative," that the negative had not been properly dried.¹³⁴ The image seemed transparent although there was no indication of retouching. The picture is reproduced in the book, Coming of the Saucers, on page 177. The image is a faded football shape and of little apparent value.

The Oregonian followed up the Salem photo story the next day with a mention about the 1897 airship mystery, a few lines about Charles Fort, and a few words from the now famous Kenneth Arnold.¹³⁵ Turning to the entertainment page, one finds an ad for the movie, "The Flying Saucer," the film now playing at theaters in the area and receiving free publicity every time a new saucer sighting was announced.

The day also brought with it a report from Klamath Falls, California,¹³⁶ and another from Saigon in IndoChina (Vietnam).

By April 25th, the northern movement of the UFO wave hit Laramie, Wyoming. The local newspaper noted that it was the first such saucer visit since the previous October. Nothing spectacular in UFO chronicles, the report mentions an extremely slow, round, glittering object on a western course at about 3,000 feet as viewed by four observers at a local university campus.¹³⁷

Ansonia, Connecticut, is a little farther north in latitude than Laramie but not much. The news from Ansonia on April 25th may, or may not, have been about a "real" flying saucer, because two reports made on the 25th, and another the day before, mention an object that looked more like a "gravy boat" then like a dinner plate. Glowing a beautiful amber, it was watched by Ansonia police. One lawman saw something that: "...resembled a half moon but was squared off on one end."¹³⁸ A patrolman named J. Folly phoned headquarters when he sighted the thing at 1:30 a.m. and then he asked the proprietor of an all night diner, D. Ceremans, to step outside and confirm the

sighting. The previous evening two other Ansonian lawmen saw something very similar about the same time of night (12:30 a.m.). Of the two patrolmen, one of them, a W. O'Brien, admitted ignorance of the phenomenon's identity and could only say that its motion was uneven and in appearance it seemed: "Squared at one end and the other end appeared to him more pointed than crescent shaped."139

What may have been the same aerial intruder cruised over Stanford, Connecticut, some 25 miles away on the night of April 20th.140

A woman told authorities she saw an "upside down banana," and the next night at about 10 o'clock a Stanford couple were surprised by an orange-reddish upside down "banana" or "crescent moon" floating over the three tops. At first glance, it was believed to be the Earth's lunar companion, but it suddenly struck them that the "moon" was upside down.141

Spying on storage areas?

"A Spot Intelligence Report sent to Washington declared:

"G-2 Sixth Army, Presidio of San Francisco, California, reports that the CID Field Office, Salt Lake City, Utah, reported unconventional aircraft sighting. Military security patrols at Dougway Proving Grounds reported to the Intelligence Officer of Western Chemical Center that on 25 April 1950 in the early morning hours over the Ammunition Storage Area in the vicinity of Dougway Mountain a series of unusual lights and flying objects of unknown origin were observed. The characteristics and size of a 'flying icebox' were described. This flying object while in flight was surrounded by an aura of spears of light jutting diagonally from the main body. A 24-hour search of that area at Dougway Proving Grounds is in effect until further notice."142

Again no action was taken by the OSI although the 19th District Office forwarded the above information to headquarters in Washington. Colonel John Swope, Commander of the 19th District Office, said of action: "None by this office. A 24-hour search of that area by Dougway Proving Grounds is in effect until further notice."143

The following case reminds one of the famous Betty and Barney case of September 19, 1961, when they encountered a strange craft with "windows around the side" while driving a road in New Hampshire.

The 1st District OSI office at Westover Air Force Base, Massachusetts, alerted Washington to the fact that:

"The Hartford Times carried an article on 26 April 1950 in which it was reported that a

Mrs. --- (deleted) and son --- (deleted), age 8, of --- (deleted) Road, Rocky Hill, Connecticut, at 1945 hours, 25 April 1950, saw a flying saucer described as oval in shape, having what seemed to be lighted windows around the outside. It was flying at a low altitude erratically at a high rate of speed."144

No investigative action was taken.

"Ice cream cone."

On April 26th, the Portland Oregonian had a new sensation for its readers, a story under the headline: "SPEEDING 'ICE CREAM CONE' SKIPS OVER VANCOUVER, B.C." It stated:

"A mystery aircraft, 'about 200 feet long and shaped like an ice cream cone,' flashed over the city Tuesday, and even authorities at the International airport here are puzzled.

"The aircraft, they said, first appeared in the west about 4:00 p.m. (PST) at about 15,000 feet. It passed beyond the airport at a tremendous speed, disappearing about one minute later to the southeast. The mystery ship was sighted by residents in all parts of the city. Police, newspapers and radio station switchboards were flooded with calls.

"Among those who saw the aircraft were F. V. Mager, superintendent of airport operations, and Allan Sharp, airport attendant.

"'I have never seen anything like it before,' said Mager, 'and I have never turned in a report about a flying saucer either.'

"It was Mager who gave the 'ice cream cone' description of the ship.

"He said a 'white substance hung about the tail, but did not trail out as vapor does from a fast-moving plane.

"'It must have been doing at least 700 miles per hour.'"145

A Reuters dispatch out of London on April 26th declared that UFO reports were being made at Lisbon and Berlin; moreover that someone had made: "predictions that the same will occur early next month in Sweden."146 The prognosticator and details of his signs or symptoms are, unfortunately, unavailable. This underscores again the lamentable lack of research on the 1950 UFO wave in Europe.

April 27th.

White Sands again.

Some very interesting events took place on April 27th. All month people all over the world were seeing "aerial visions," a phenomenon that had scientists scratching a collective head.

Offering some hope for obtaining some real evidence were the men and equipment at White Sands Proving Grounds in New Mexico, and by chance another photographic UFO record was achieved on April 27th by White Sands Asania theodolites. The camera technicians were thrown into confusion when a strange object suddenly zoomed overhead. Quickly one of the camera crews shot a number of frames. Their camera was the only one loaded with film as the others had expended their film during a just completed missile test.

When the film was developed, a "dark, smudgy image" showed up on the frames, results that did not impress the Air Force. UFO expert, E. J. Ruppelt, who claimed familiarity with Air Force files, stated that the film evidence was not satisfactory since just a single theodolite had caught the streaking object on film. Photographic tracking by more than one Asania station would have provided accurate data on height, speed, and size; and since that had not been the case, military investigators would only say: "...it does establish the fact that some type of object did exist."147

The foregoing was based on details derived from the writings of E. J. Ruppelt. Ruppelt, who is still widely considered a top notch UFO authority, is error prone and very often fails to give the whole story. Examination of official documents reveal that four objects and not one were photographed. Furthermore, more than one Asania station did obtain some interesting data. One of the other stations picked up a visual azimuth angle on the photographed UFO which enabled the experts at White Sands Data Reduction Unit to make some calculations. The official document that tells us this fascinating fact reads:

"According to conversation between Colonel Baynes and Captain Bryant, the following information is submitted directly to Lt. Albert.

"Film from station P10 was read, resulting in azimuth and elevation angles being recorded on four objects. In addition, size of image on film was recorded.

"From this information, together with a single azimuth angle from station M7, the following conclusions were drawn:

- "a. The objects were at an altitude of approximately 150,000 feet.
- "b. The objects were over the Holoman range between the base and Tularosa Peak.
- "c. The objects were approximately 30 feet in diameter.

"d. The objects were traveling at an undeterminable, yet high speed."148

"What do you make of that?"

Late in the evening, at 8:25 p.m., April 27th, a mysterious red glowing aerial object intruded on the peace of mind of Captain Robert F. Manning and co-pilot Robert Adickes at the helm of Trans World Flight 117 en route to Chicago. The Trans World airliner droned along uneventfully at 2,000 feet and was passing over Goshen, Indiana, when Captain Manning noticed a crimson colored point of light rapidly gaining in size. The red light did not blink and kept growing. Amazed, Captain Manning shouted to Adickes: "Look over there!" What do you make of that?" Air Traffic Control at Chicago was contacted about any other air traffic in the area, particularly jets as the red blob began to get uncomfortably close. Chicago radioed Captain Manning that it had no flight plans of any aerial traffic for their area other than their own flight. By now the red object was pacing Captain Manning's DC-3. The UFO looked like a "huge round wheel rolling down a road." The airliner's hostess, Gloria Hinshaw, was summoned to the pilot's cabin to witness the phenomenon. She did and then quickly returned to the passenger compartment to alert the passengers. Those passengers seated on the right side of the airliner peered out the small airliner windows. Meanwhile, Captain Manning said to Adickes: "Let's get a better look," and as he said that he banked the DC-3 toward the object, but the thing immediately reacted, moving away to keep its distance.149

Donald Keyhoe, who investigated the incident, reconstructed events inside the aircraft:

"Some of the passengers, including one who plainly had a drink or two before embarking, thought the whole thing was a gag. 'Sure, let's all see the Flying Saucer,' chortled the tipsy gentleman. 'Let's see the little men from Mars.'

"He stopped, his mouth hanging open, as he saw the strange red object glowing beyond the wing. Pop-eyed, he sagged back in his seat."150

The round mass, glowing dull red like hot steel, after about eight minutes, increased its speed to an estimated 300 to 400 m.p.h., leaving the airliner far behind.

The press was present in force when Flight 117 landed at Chicago and soon news service teletypes across the nation were tapping furiously. Fawcett publications phoned Donald Keyhoe and requested that he do a complete investigation of the case. Arriving quickly in Chicago, Keyhoe interviewed both Manning and Adickes. And since some of the passengers got a good look at the UFO, he tracked them down and quizzed

them too. The passengers, mostly important businessmen, knew little about aircraft so they could add little in the way of valuable data, but they all concurred that the UFO was a scary sight.

Adicks told Keyhoe he had heard strange accounts related by other pilots but such stories had only half convinced him something uncanny was going on in the nation's skies. Now, however, he said he wouldn't give anyone much of an argument about flying saucers.¹⁵¹ Questioned as to possibility, he had only seen a reflection of a spectacular barn blaze outside of South Bend, Indiana, Adicks shook his head and stated emphatically that the UFO: "...was definitely an object."¹⁵² In keeping with the theory in fashion at the time, Adicks remarked: "It was nothing from Mars. I think it was just a little flying machine."¹⁵³

Edward Ruppelt, with access to official information, tells us that the Air Force was cognizant of 35 reported aerial encounters between airliners and UFO's over a three month period, April through June, 1950.¹⁵⁴

How about the Air Force's UFO investigation at Wright Field in Ohio while this amazing UFO phenomenon erupted in the heavens? Ruppelt tells us that evaluating was nil and that all of the official files of the defunct Project GRUDGE were unceremoniously gathered up and chucked into storage and in the process a lot of data was lost or misplaced. Investigations of UFO reports, if any, were processed through "regular channels."¹⁵⁵

"Faster than a F-86!"

The Westover OSI office received a very intriguing report at this time:

"At 1100 hours, 27 April 1950, Lt. Beebe reported the following information to Special Agent Raymond I. MacKinnon, Det. 'G' 1st District OSI: On 27 April 1950, at approximately 0900 hours EST, Beebe, flying an F-86 Sabre Aircraft solo on a routine 1 1/2 hour GCI mission out of Otis AFB, Falmouth, Mass., at approximately 21,000 feet altitude, was heading approximately 345 degrees over Plymouth, Mass., when he sighted a light brown object, altitude approximately 17,000 feet heading of approximately 80 degrees, flying at a terrific speed about 10 miles ahead at 10:00 o'clock, to left of his ship. The object flew laterally eastward until it reached a position of 2 o'clock from Beebe, then climbed at an angle of 50 degrees until attaining an altitude of approximately 28,000 feet, then turned to an approximate heading of 0 degrees and disappeared approximately 15 seconds after Beebe

first sighted it over land. Beebe's approximate indicated air speed was around 500 MPH at the time and he did not attempt pursuit because of the terrific speed of the object. Beebe described the object's shape as a flat oval, no signs of support or propulsion, contrails, or exhaust and he did not get close enough to observe any other particular details. Weather conditions at the time were CAVU (contrails were produced by other F-86 aircraft at altitudes of 35,000 feet or above).

"Captain Ray E. Clark, Detach. CO, 654th AC & W Squadron and Controller on Duty, advised S/A Mac Kinnon: No indications were received on Ground Radar scopes from 0430 - 1200 hours, 27 April 1950, of any unusual aircraft or excessive speeds in any area within the range of their apparatus. No unusual incidents were noted in the AC & W Squadron during these hours.

"Major Jack C. West, Mobile Control Tower Officer on duty from 0800 - 1200 hours advised S/A Mac Kinnon: No radio interference was noted during his tour of duty and he was not aware of the reported unconventional aircraft until interrogated about radio reception. He did remember some radio squeals of 5 - 10 seconds duration at approximately 1000 hours which he concluded were repairmen testing equipment and thought no more of this common interference."156

While it appears the OSI did question some of the witnesses in the case, Colonel Martin of the Westover unit stated in the report on the case that: "No investigative action has been taken by this office, in accordance with AFCSI Letter No. 85, dated 8 February 1950."157

"It made my wife's hair stand on end!"

Two sightings were recorded at Rangely, Colorado, on April 28th. One involved an oil company superintendent on an outing with his wife and daughter. The three were entranced by a "phosphorus-like" globe that made the superintendent's wife's "hair stand on end" as it darted through the clouds. Elsewhere at Rangely, a Mr. and Mrs. G. Holden swore that a circular disc about two to four feet in diameter approached within 60 feet of them, flying past at eye level. In appearance, it seemed to have a glowing metallic paint job.158

Yet another red UFO was reported over Centralia, Washington, the following day, April 29th, when a housewife caught sight of a pair of discs in the sky near her home, and while she watched, six other discs joined the first two. One of the discs was a deep crimson in color. The objects sped southward and vanished in a cloud.159

The last day of the month the towns of Burlington and Muscatine in Iowa, joined the list of UFO sighting locales, but it was at the city of Mount Joy, Iowa that the most interesting case took place. A Mr. and Mrs. Wedemeyer related to the press that a disc-shaped object shifting around in the heavens, spinning and glowing like a white-hot hunk of molten metal, abruptly exploded producing a cascade of sparks like fireworks.¹⁶⁰

April had been quite a month.

The May 1st edition of the magazine Air Facts had an article by Robert Fisher. He wanted to comfort those of the flying fraternity that were being subject to ridicule because of their reporting of encounters with UFO's. Fisher could have kept quiet but he decided to tell the world that he too had met up with one of the strange objects in his Bonanza NC 505 B on March 18th while in the air over Bradford, Illinois.¹⁶¹

The May 1st issue of Quick magazine also had something to say: "The high command will have to make its demands stronger to stop flying saucer rumors. The Pentagon is full of officers who don't know what to believe."¹⁶²

"Why does the flying saucer story stay alive?"

Out of Washington, D.C., May 4th, the Associated Press news service issued a long news story, attributed to no specific government source, asking the forementioned question. The story dwelled on all the old arguments, denying that the objects were real, that they are ours, uninvited imports from Uncle Joe, or crockery convoys from Capella. The hardest knock was put on the extraterrestrial hypothesis. The news service terminated with: "But if you want to start an argument, just bring up the subject at a dinner party."¹⁶³

Behind closed doors Hoover's FBI received another update on the status of the Air Force's thinking concerning the UFO problem, but the Bureau fared no better than the general public. Either the Pentagon meant what they said, or felt, as they apparently did from the first days of the controversy, that the FBI should not pry to significant evidence. The Pentagon told the FBI that the troublesome space visitor theory was not considered an impossibility, but there was no evidence to support such a notion. The High Command credited the current crop of reports to hysteria and suggestibility.¹⁶⁴

Birmingham's ghostly bogey.

The Birmingham Post told of a "ghostly visitor" on the evening of May 4th:

"D. L. Reid, a former newspaperman on the staff of the Montreal Star and now president of the Southern Discount Corp., 5113 Farrell Ave., said today he and his family were returning from a theater last night when they were attracted 'by a bright light in the sky.'

"Mr. Reid said he and his family--and other persons in the neighborhood, saw a glowing object in the sky.

"It was the most amazing thing I've ever seen,' Reid said today. 'It appeared to be stationary for about 15 minutes. For the first minute and one-half, it was a very luminous white. Then it gradually turned to a bluish-white.'

"Reid said that at first the ghostly visitor appeared to be 'elliptical.'

"He said the object appeared to be revolving and that the longer he looked at it the more it assumed a 'bullet-shape.'

"It had a long fiery tail,' he said.

"It appeared to grow real bright, then dim again--almost as if it were taking flash pictures,' according to Reid.

"Suddenly at the end of about 15 minutes, the object turned vertically and disappeared straight up."165

The Birmingham Post got additional information from a Charles Bellsnyder who did his best to sound sincere: "I don't know whether it was a flying saucer or not. I've never seen a flying saucer. But I certainly never saw anything like it before."166 His account of the incident as it appeared in the Post went:

"Mr. Bellsnyder described the 'saucer' in the beginning as appearing 10 to 12 inches across 'from where we were.' Then, he said, a tail grew from the object until it appeared to be about 150 feet long.

"The tail was a long fiery streak,' he said. 'It appeared to get brighter and dimmer as we watched. Finally, after a few minutes, it turned, went up vertically and faded out.'"167

Hammersley Fork, Pennsylvania, had a single report on May 5th, but a more extensive UFO story originated in Australia:

Reports of 'flying saucers' poured into Sydney today from many parts of Australia, and officials said they could not shed any light on the mystery.

"Persons from four widely separated areas--

including Sydney suburbs--reported seeing a 'cigar-shaped object larger than any plane' flash across the sky shortly after dawn Saturday.

"Two of the reports came from airline pilots. One was from an air force officer, a veteran of World War II.

"The Royal Australian Air Force said there were no jet planes over the areas where the reports originated."168

The morning of May 6th in Italy crowds of Romans on their way to work spotted a couple of flashing objects the shape of stove lids (round) slowly moving through the air about a mile above the eternal city. The objects appeared to be spinning and emitting flashes of light at intervals. As the objects passed directly over the Piazza Colonna, traffic came to a complete stop as people gawked skyward and cried: "flying saucers, flying saucers."169 More to the north in Europe, England had its first visitation of a mysterious nature when on May 6th a "Saturn-like" UFO coasted over Llantarnam in Wales."170

In the United States, on May 6th, a whole "squadron of saucers" stirred up Abington, Pennsylvania. Speeding in circles above the city, the objects attracted the attention of the entire community and surrounding area, including Mr. R. Little, publisher of the Scranton Tribune who couldn't provide an explanation for the phenomenon. The occurrence was the talk of folks thereabout for weeks afterwards.171

A letter from a concerned citizen to Air Force Intelligence that was found in that service's UFO files reads:

"On May 7th my husband, my grandson, Lorrie Earl, and I were returning from a picnic, about 6:45 p.m. when we saw this silvery white object hovering quite low, I'd say possibly 100 feet from the ground. It moved back and forth for 10 minutes as though it was trying to gain altitude. Then all of a sudden it went up into the air and was out of sight in less than a minute.

"We were directly across from it and only about 2½ or 3 miles away.

"It was about 9 miles south of Ely, Nevada."172

With so many cases it just became a matter of time before the right circumstances produced a significant UFO incident that left its mark on UFO history. This assumes that the saucers were "real" of course.

Events unfolded slowly in regards to public awareness of the UFO incident in question. The actual day of its occurrence passed with no public notice at all.

The McMinnville Photos.

At this time the northward shift of UFO activity began to pick up in areas across the middle of America. This included areas in the State of Oregon. Newscaster Frank Edwards, who interviewed the witnesses by phone, wrote the following about the outset of the incident that would produce the famous McMinnville photos:

The sun had already set when Mr. and Mrs. Paul Trent turned into the driveway of their farm near McMinnville, Oregon. It was May 11th, 1950, and in her lap Mrs. Trent had a little folding camera with which she had been taking some family snapshots earlier in the afternoon."¹⁷³

After feeding some rabbits in their hutches in the backyard of her home, a farm located 10 miles southwest of McMinnville, in gentle undulating farm country of western Oregon, a Mrs. Paul Trent walked toward the house. That early evening she noticed a strange object speeding through the sky coming out of the northwest. She shouted for her husband who came running with the camera.

Interviewed June 12, 1950 at the Alderbman Berry and Vegetable Farm outside McMinnville, where he drove a truck, Mr. Trent said:

"...he was in the kitchen when his wife sighted the flying disc first about 7:30 p.m. She was in the back yard and called to him. He immediately ran for his folding camera, dashed outside and took the pictures. There in the sky was a 'thing' he believed was 20 to 30 feet in diameter..."¹⁷⁴

Approaching in the air was something brightly silver in color with a hint of bronze. It looked to be an inverted pie-pan shape with a small "post" on the top. Mr. Trent snapped a picture with his inexpensive Kodak as the UFO closed within about 500 yards and then veered west, gaining altitude as it retreated. Mr. Trent shifted his position slightly and took another snapshot before the strange object was lost from view.¹⁷⁵ Meanwhile, Mr. Trent's wife tried unsuccessfully to phone her in-laws that lived down the road.

Mr. Trent later told the press: "I was kind of scared of it you know, you hear so much talk about those things and the government."¹⁷⁶

It didn't occur to the Trents that they had photographed something that might be from Mars, so without undue concern they used up the rest of the film and only then did they have the roll sent to a drugstore for developing. It would be some time before the press would learn of the photographs, much less the authorities. Much more about this will be discussed later.

44

The Amarillo case, a very special story.

The District Commander of the 11th OSI unit stationed at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, immediately ordered agents to Amarillo, Texas to question the night serviceman at the Tradewinds Airport. It took something special to lure OSI investigators all the way to Amarillo but in this case the trip seemed worth the trouble. The serviceman swore that a strange "machine" had landed on the Amarillo airstrip! The man's story follows:

"I glanced aloft, and saw what appeared to be an exhaust flame approaching from the West-Southwest. I watched the approach of the flame until it passed overhead, and judged it's altitude to have been approximately 500 to 700 feet. I was mainly interested in it because it did not have any navigation lights and until then supposed it to be a plane.

"After the object passed overhead, I immediately returned to the main hangar, went inside and tried to awaken --- (deleted), a pilot employed by Tradewinds Airport, who was sleeping in the hangar. Being unable to awaken --- (deleted), I then returned to the front of the hangar, and saw the object approaching 200 to 300 miles per hour. I again went inside to try and awaken --- (deleted), and being unable to do so, returned to the front of the hangar. By that time the object had swerved to the right and was headed in the direction of English Field, North-East. Approximately five minutes later, I was going from the office, in the front of the hangar into the main hangar itself, and saw this brilliant light approaching from the West-North-West. I switched on the flood lights in the front of the hangar, and saw the object come to rest approximately three hundred feet in front of the hangar, on a grassy area. The approach of the object was accompanied by a slight swishing sound. By the time the object had landed, I had the flood lights on, and stepped outside the hangar to get a better view of the object. It appeared to be flat on the bottom, but otherwise elliptical in shape, with a sharp cut off section toward the rear. The rear of the object was sharply cut away. It had a bubble setting forward on the top of the object, which appeared to be about the size of a football helmet. Toward the rear of the object was what appeared to be a pipe or tube protruding from the body of the craft, approximately one foot high. The object seemed to be sitting on the ground, and small exhaust flames were coming from the rear of the craft. While it sat on the ground, it seemed to be idling.

"I again went inside the hangar to try and awaken --- (deleted), but being unable to do so, returned to the front of the hangar. The object remained on the ground for a period of three to five minutes, and after returning to the front of the hangar, I noticed the grass beneath the object beginning to smolder and burn. While watching the object, it suddenly raised, a whining sound was heard, accompanied by white flames, approximately three feet in length, shooting from the rear. After reaching a level of four feet, it then took off in a South-easterly direction, with a terrific roar. The take-off was gradual, and it started off in a shallow climb until reaching the far side of the field, when it started a steep climb. It then leveled off, and seemed to turn, but without the bank of a conventional aircraft. It appeared to remain on an even keel while making the turn, and then proceeded to gain speed and momentum; headed in a Westerly direction, and with a sudden burst of speed was soon lost to sight.

"I would estimate the size of the object to be approximately six to eight feet in length; from one and one-half to three feet tall at the highest point.

"After taking off I noticed the grass where the object had been sitting was still burning. I took a fire extinguisher from the hangar, and used almost all of the contents in putting out the fire."178

Records did not say if the investigation of this alleged incident was complete. Did the OSI agent question the pilot the witness tried to awaken? Was the fire extinguisher empty? Was the burned spot examined? Was the CAA weather station or the tower at English Field contacted about any strange aircraft in the area at the time? The only check that seems to have been made was an interview of the editor of the Amarillo Globe News who denied receiving any reports from people in the area.179 The lack of data leaves us at a dead end except for the fact that there was a similar incident that was said to have occurred October 27, 1952, at 2:15 in the morning at Marignane Airport, Marseilles, France.*

*The witness in the French case was a M. Gachignard. His story differs in a number of small details but nonetheless is remarkably similar to the Amarillo case. The reader can judge for himself by consulting the book, The Truth About Flying Saucers, by Aime Michel, New York: Criterion Books, 1956, pp. 157-160.

May 13th.

"Them there things are here again."

A UFO drought in northern California ended May 13th. Near Sutter Buttes, a small volcanic geographic feature that rises abruptly from the flat, fertile Sacramento Valley, a farmer and a field hand were wrestling an irrigation pump into place. High above, scooting around in the blue were brilliant white colored objects. Looking up the two men followed the wild maneuvers for several minutes and then the old farmer turned to his companion and with a shake of his head drawled: "Them there things are here again."¹⁸⁰

Another candidate for the growing legion of believers was a private pilot swinging his small plane around in the air over Forest Park, Missouri, on May 16th, a gentleman named E. Cullon. He glanced out of the corner of his eye and discerned something about 20 feet in diameter and 4 feet thick. It was round, cream colored, and moving fast. It was very fast, in fact he estimated it was zipping along perhaps ten times his own speed. Cullon had a passenger with him but hesitated to say anything until the UFO's presence became all too obvious. After drawing near, the UFO began to increase its distance. Banking his plane to keep things in sight after it passed by, Cullon failed to gain on the thing as he watched it zip toward the eastern horizon. Cullon's plane was hindered in its pursuit by a strong headwind but the UFO never slowed up the slightest.¹⁸¹

Captain Eddie Rickenbacker was very concerned about pilots encountering strange objects in the skies. As president of an airline he had an important reason to be worried. He contacted the news media to express his apprehensions:

"There must be something to them (UFO's) for too many reliable persons have made reports on them. I am duty bound not to say what I know about them--or what I don't know about them. However, if they do exist, you can rest assured that they are ours."¹⁸²

Commenting on Rickenbacker's comment in a confidential letter to the FBI, the Air Force remarked:

"Such statements of the type attributed to Rickenbacker, often solicited in the most sensational form by news reporters in order to make a good story, make people watch the sky and any object they cannot immediately recognize is called a 'flying object.' This helps to maintain the 'chain reaction' of such reports."¹⁸³

May 16th.

At 8:45 p.m., a doctor and his wife were in a parked car on the shore of Lake Michigan at Wilmette Beach, Illinois, the night of May 16th. The wife pointed out something in the sky:

"The object was traveling south at a tremendous rate of speed and at first Dr. --- (deleted) thought that it was a 'shooting star.' While watching it, Dr. --- (deleted) realized that the object was not a star but appeared to be some type of aircraft. The object was 'elliptical' shaped, approximately 50 to 100 feet in diameter and appeared to be traveling on a set course 6 to 8 miles from shore. The object was in sight for three or four seconds and traveled 50 or 60 miles in that time. Altitude was estimated as 25 degrees above the horizon. When last seen the object had changed course and was headed out over the lake. The object fluoresced with a pink hue."184

The Director of Research and Development, Major General S. R. Brentnall, USAF, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, notified Washington on May 17th that personnel and equipment on a limited basis were now available for an investigation of unexplained aerial phenomena being reported over Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. Askania photo theodolites, optical spectro-photography, and radio spectrum analysis equipment had been requisitioned. One hangup to the initiating of the effort, however, was the current "hands off" policy by the Air Force. General Brentnall asked Washington:

"...it would be very desirable to have the activities of the 17th District OSI at Kirtland Air Force Base reinitiate in making field investigations of light phenomena reports. Such reports would be important in the verification of any results of the project work at Holloman. It is therefore requested that action be taken for reinitiation of the 17th District OSI investigations for the period of this project."185

The next day another UFO report was recorded in England. A Mr. W. Campin, who resided in Timperey, was surprised when he saw something the size of an airplane speeding along in the sky in and out of the clouds. He told a reporter for the Manchester Guardian that the strange object appeared to be dark gray or black against the setting sun, and in shape it resembled a "huge smoke ring" even though he was sure it was a solid object.186

"Is there life on Mars?"

The Lowell Observatory at Flagstaff, Arizona, was established at the turn of the century with the specific purpose of detecting a suspected alien civilization on the planet Mars. Scrutiny of our neighboring world yielded tantalizing data but not much else so it could rank as one of history's ironies that the supposed evidence of alien life might be closer to home.

On May 20th the astronomer Seymour Hess was strolling the grounds of Lowell Observatory during lunch and as was his habit, he inspected the sky to check cloud cover. On this occasion, he perceived something unfamiliar approaching out of the southeast. Large enough to command immediate attention, Dr. Hess squinted and peered with more concentration. Having a four-power telescope handy, Dr. Hess followed the object with his spyglass as it passed in front of a small cumulus cloud, the object appearing dark against the cloud, but of a much lighter hue as seen against the blue sky. The professor of course was an ideal observer, for he was well aware of how objects appear under different lighting conditions and how to judge the object's size (an estimate derived from angular diameter) from cloud drift. Having ready access to the Weather Bureau office, Dr. Hess obtained exact data on cloud height in the Flagstaff area.

Without getting too technical, we know from the professor's calculations that the flying object in question was a round, gray-colored thing about four feet in diameter that was self-propelled since it was traveling at right angles to the wind. The object, according to Dr. Hess, was moving at 100 miles per hour.¹⁸⁷ When Dr. Hess told the press about the incident, reporters contacted Williams Air Force Base for a comment. A spokesman at the Air Base outside Phoenix denied having knowledge of anything in the air resembling Dr. Hess' UFO.¹⁸⁸

May 21st.

Unfortunately, a camera doesn't figure in the next case. A Felix Zenon, 60 years old, of Montrose, Colorado, didn't characterize himself as a "believer," at least not until May 21st when he emerged from his house in Montrose and beheld something in the sky that appeared round and huge. Flashing in the sun, the object was hovering in the heavens, so Zenon summoned his wife and his son Bill. As the three watched, a second object like the first approached and parked next to the one in the air over Montrose. After a while, the two left together, moving off to the north toward Cerro Summit, a cut in the Rocky Mountains, but the objects altered course to an eastern heading before vanishing from sight.¹⁸⁹

A Gallup Poll released on May 21st showed that the percentage of those favoring a secret weapon theory to explain UFO's was running one out of three. Fans of the extraterrestrial idea lagged way behind. Way over half of those polled

expressed little interest in the subject or dismissed flying saucer reports as due to jokes or illusions, but with the passage of years belief in UFO's would slowly gain more and more devotees.¹⁹⁰

A May 1950 convert was a journalist widely considered the Dean of Science Editors, Waldemar Kaempffert. He admitted that back in 1947 he had shrugged off saucer stories as "unsubstantiated anomalies," yet with the latest cascade of testimony, he was ready to have a change of heart. He leaned toward the idea that the strange objects soaring over the nation were some sort of secret Pentagon contraption.

In spite of reports of excellent quality the Air Force continued to wear a mask of public indifference, even comic on one particular occasion. During Armed Forces Day at Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas, the loudspeakers blared out that the air show then in progress would have a "top secret finale." It was announced that "real flying saucers would make an appearance!" In an attempt to humor, thirty thousand paper plates were dumped over the crowd from Air Force cargo planes during a final flyby.¹⁹¹

The saucers put on a show of their own the same afternoon for seven members of Wyoming's Air National Guard, pilots of the 187th fighter squadron, as the airmen were standing watch at Cheyenne's airport scanning the horizon for the appearance of the rest of the unit's aircraft. T/Sgt. E. Ules was the first to sight the UFO's. His shouts brought the others running. All looked skyward and sighted: "...four perfectly round pure white discs coming in due south in a 'V' formation and heading north."¹⁹²

A "re-emphasizing."

Writing to General Carroll, Lt. Colonel Rees submitted a summary of observations made in the U.S. Southwest. The OSI District Commander broke down the observations into three classifications instead of gathering every report under the heading of just "anomalous luminous phenomena" like the military had done since 1948. The OSI was now evaluating each sighting into one of the following classifications: (1) green fireball phenomena, (2) disc or variation, and (3) probably meteoric. According to the Colonel, a number of military and government agencies wanted UFO information, naming the Federal Bureau of Investigation, El Paso and Albuquerque Field Offices; Atomic Energy Commission, Los Alamos, New Mexico; and USAF, Cambridge Research Laboratories. Lt. Colonel Rees sought to send the summary to the forementioned organizations and requested permission to do so from General Carroll as Director of the OSI. Until then Colonel Rees held such distribution in abeyance. Colonel Rees felt there was good reason to distribute the material:

"This summary of observations of aerial phenomena has been prepared for the purpose

of re-emphasizing and reiterating the fact that phenomena have continuously occurred in the New Mexico skies during the past 18 months and are continuing to occur and, secondly, that these phenomena are occurring in the vicinity of sensitive military and government installations."193

An enclosure with the letter gave the opinion of a professor who was an authority on meteors.

Dr. La Paz and the Russian rumor.

Dr. Lincoln La Paz who had served on a voluntary basis as a consultant to the Air Force's investigation of green fireballs and reported flashing over sensitive military and scientific installations in New Mexico, wrote Colonel Doyle Rees, Commander of the 24th OSI District to reiterate his previously stated conviction that the green fireballs were anomalous. On May 23rd, Dr. La Paz wrote that the only change he wanted to make in his nine listed mysterious characteristics about the fireballs would be to add two more. One was the number of reported vertical infalls of the green fireballs, something that is very rare for ordinary meteors. Secondly, the maximum frequency of green fireball sightings occurred at 2030 hours in contrast to ordinary meteors that peak at 1600 hours.

This time Dr. La Paz offered an interesting speculation about the Russians. He postulated that since the majority of green fireballs were reported between 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. in the Southwest United States, it meant that in the southern Urals in Russia it would be 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. With that in mind, he noted that the estimated speed of the reported fireballs could take them from the Urals to New Mexico in 15 minutes. The morning hours in the Urals would be the prime time to launch missiles due to weather conditions, thus he believed it significant that the fireball sightings occurred when they did. Even the days of the week figured in the theory put forward by Dr. La Paz. Since most fireball reports were recorded on Saturday and Sunday, he felt this indicated that the weekends were test periods for the Soviet scientists.

Furthermore he remarked:

"It is a curious and fairly well established fact that there has been a distinct decline in the number of green fireball sightings during the last two months, within which the number of so-called 'flying saucer' incidents in this region has attained an all time high.

"Although I have recently received from Dr. Joseph Kaplan of the Scientific Advisory Board a letter containing the statement:

A SPECIAL INSERT FOR THIS EDITION

It's Spring, Saucers Fly, and San Joseans See Them

A flying saucer is a flying saucer, no matter what it looks like, according to a growing number of San Joseans.

At any rate, increasing numbers of the city's residents are seeing things in the sky. Yesterday a lot of them saw apparitions, objects, shapes or something.

According to witnesses, the first manifestation of the flying whatever-they-were appeared about 4 p.m. yesterday, the second at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Even though officials at Lick Observatory and Moffett Field reported no unusual objects in the skies here are some descriptions of what people saw:

Alvin J. Wolf, 175 S. Cragmont Ave., a Pala School teacher:

"It was about 4 p.m. as I was coming across the campus at San Jose State College when I looked up and saw the object directly above me. It was like a dulling mirror reflection with the rays of the sun striking aluminum sides of the object.

"It moved exceedingly fast, making no noise. Apparently it had no propellor. I would judge it was up somewhere between 5000 and 6000 feet. I watched it continue out of sight vanishing toward San Francisco."

Jack Clewett, 131 Boston Ave., a plumber, and Mike Meyers, a carpenter living at the same address:

"Two other persons with us saw an object with a long fiery tail. It hovered in the direction of Moffett Field, staying up there stationary four or five minutes. Then three flaming tongues shot out of the tail and it vanished within a minute or two.

"The object appeared to be several thousand feet high. I thought jets of flame came out along each side of the tail and the third in between the other two. We hear a swishing sound. As it moved away, it seemed to flatten a bit."

And here's a description of the 6:45 p.m. heavenly visitor:

George Elkerton, 1120 S. Seventh St., a welder:

"The object was thicker in the center than on the sides. It gave off a blue flame like an alcohol lamp. It moved toward Santa Clara."

His son, George Jr., 11 years old: "I saw it and called the others. In front it looked like the middle of a great big saucer. It looked as big as a transport plane and it was five or six times higher than where one usually sees these planes. It left a reddish flare. It really was a streak of fire and it seemed like a silver ball was leading the fire."

And finally, Joe Wheeler, 1115 S. Seventh St., an auto painter:

"It seemed to turn around. It was a big red ball and then it changed and went flatter as it moved north toward San Francisco, moving to the left of Moffett Field. Quite a few of us saw it turn around."

Maybe Mars Is Whistling

**Britons Probe Strange
Vibratory Noises**

LONDON, April 8.—(AP)—⁵⁰ Britons are hearing strange noises in the air. And at least one of them—Ralph B. Cox, an elderly London barrister—is determined to find an explanation, a scientific one.

He started mass observations, is seeking the co-operation of Government scientists and has advertised in *The Times*.

"Unidentified continuous vibratory noise in the atmosphere," the ad said. "Will those who hear this write to me."

SOME GUESSES.

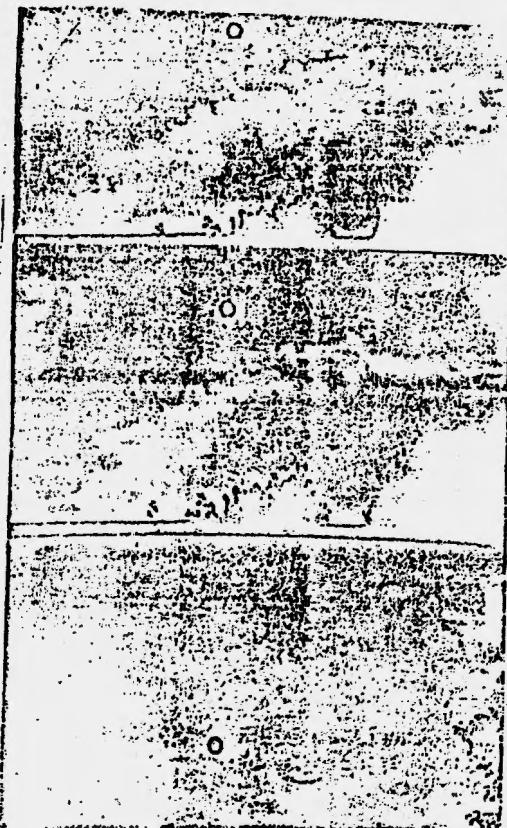
Letters have poured in. Some guesses have been eliminated. One writer thought jet motors might be responsible. But jets don't blow around a lot of air at 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning, when the noise is loudest. Some thought radar might be doing the trick. But the noise persisted, with or without radar.

Cox says the noise sometimes howls, then moans, then whispers, "and its a confounded nuisance." He says it has affected the health of his wife, who uses a hearing aid, but has no trouble hearing the unearthly wail.

MARS WHISTLES?

The most fantastic speculation is that Mars is blowing whistles at the earth, or perhaps the little men in the flying saucers are communicating with each other.

"I don't think it's anything that preposterous," says Cox. "There must be some scientific explanation."



Here's Real Flying Saucer, If There Is One

This is what a "flying saucer" looks like, if there really is such a thing. Al Hixenbaugh, Times' photographer, snapped movies of the object yesterday. The object appears almost as big as the twin-motored DC-3 to the right.

By Times Staff Photographer

POST-REQUIDER, Oakland, CA - April 17, 1950

Saucer Sound Described

WING PHOTOGRAPH, N.Y., April 17 (AP)—How does a flying saucer sound? It got some dry laughs and drew it on a tin roof.

That was the answer furnished today by George H. Randall of Waynesboro, a student at Plattsburgh Military School, who said he saw a flying saucer "going south and moving in a wavy, undulating manner."

Randall said he saw no tailstream or nose. "That was not an airplane," he said the object had two red lights, apparently coming from periscopes. It made a noise "like dry ice on metal" and suddenly disappeared, he added.

Disk Snapped

Movie of It Taken by Times Photographer
JUL 17, 1950

Yes, we have some flying saucers today, and for the first time, here are moving pictures for corroboration.

Many have reported seeing the saucers but it remained for Al Hixenbaugh to do something about it—with his trusty 16 mm. magazine-loading movie camera.

"Hix," Times staff photographer, took 50 feet of film in which the bright flying object shows clearly in all. Army officials have been informed and have indicated eagerness to examine the pictures.

The photographer was at Longest and Everett Avenues, near his home at 2205 Longest, at 4:15 p.m. yesterday. He was on his way to take some movies of birds.

Suddenly he heard the roar of a big plane—a twin-motored DC-3—and glanced overhead. At first he thought it was a jet plane. Then he looked to the west of the plane, which was flying southwest toward Standiford Field—and saw the large disk. It had a slight corona around it and seemed to be lower than the plane.

He aimed his camera and fired. While he ground out the film, he said, the object appeared motionless for about 10 seconds.

"It stood practically still, like a balloon," he said.

Then it began to get smaller, finally vanishing into the west. While the "saucer" appeared on all of the film he took, the plane was out of the picture field quickly, appearing only on about 10 feet. The disk was within his vision "about a minute."

"Hix" contacted the newsroom at WHAS and from there Jerry Gammons called Standiford and Bowman Fields and weather officials. None had heard any reports of a "flying saucer." He was advised to inform military officials at Godman Field.

Godman said it would notify flight headquarters at Wright-Patterson Field which might send an aide to examine the films.



Flying disks inspired silly hats

It's a Flying (Snowball) Saucer

FORT COLLINS, June 28.—(AP)—Now it's a flying saucer that looked like a snowball and sometimes appeared to be ringed like the planet Saturn.

Hubert Hutt, a post office worker in Fort Collins who lives about three miles north of town, reports he saw the weird object in the skies this morning.

At about 9:00 a. m., Mr. Hutt reported, he was watching an airliner wing along at about 3000 feet overhead. Then he noticed the other flying object. Mr. Hutt estimated it was at an altitude of about 4000 or 5000

feet and was traveling north northwest.

The craft looked something like a silvery snowball and now and then looked as if it were circled by some sort of ring, Hutt said. It was extremely maneuverable.

May 5, 1950

4 Louisans Report Flying Object That Isn't 'Saucer'

Louis, Ky., May 4 (AP)—A flying "something-or-other" was reported independently today by several Louisans.

They agreed it didn't look like a "saucer."

R. L. Vinson, retired businessman; Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Rice, and Joe Hardin, freight agent for the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway, told of the flying object.

It seemed to be about 10 feet long and perhaps two feet wide at about 1,000 feet, and emitted a "luminous red" glow.

All said the object was traveling at "medium speed" and remained in sight for some minutes about 9 p.m. yesterday.

Flying Saucers Air Whirlpools

June 3, 1950
LONDON, June 13 (Reuters)—The Daily Herald reported Tuesday that all flying saucers everywhere had been shot down in flames by the British Royal air force.

Not a gun was fired. The lethal weapon was a report from pilots of special high-altitude planes which exploded the secret of the mysterious objects seen in all parts of the world.

Said the report: They are air whirlpools.

Experts who have examined the pilots' evidence in the report to the British air council said light refraction would make an air whirlpool look like a fast-traveling disc, the Herald reported.

According to the experts, "under condensation the disc or 'flying saucer' might take different shapes. It might even seem to have jet propulsion in certain conditions."

"Appearances of a 'flying saucer' may be noticed at quite low altitudes but the explanation is the same—the condensation in the air is rather like that of a whirlpool in a stream, which reflects light and shines as a disc." PORTLAND OREGON

PAPER UNKNOWN
May 20, 1950

Disk Police Saw Just Jet Plane, Airport Asserts

Two detectives claimed they saw a flying saucer over Louisville yesterday. Standiford Field authorities disagreed. They said the object was a F-84 jet fighter arriving here.

The policemen, Kenneth Barrett and Carl Wohl, spotted the object at 1:10 a.m. while cruising on Fourth at Winkler. They notified Standiford Field.

Airport authorities said fuel tanks attached to each wing tip gave the jet plane an appearance "out of the ordinary."

Barrett and Wohl, both war veterans, said, "We don't care what Standiford Field says. We know a jet plane when we see one."

DAILY EXPRESS

ENGLAND June 6, 1950

It is seen again—but not heard

An engineer driving to work at Cwmbran (Mon) saw it yesterday. IT was flying at 6000 ft. IT was dove-grey in colour. IT looked like the planet Saturn. IT made no sound. IT was "definitely a manufactured object."

IT, he says, was a flying saucer.



The Northern California Air National Guard says it isn't pulling the public's leg in displaying a flying saucer at the old circus grounds, S. First and Alma Sts.

It says the gadget is the only "captured" one in the country. The gimmick is an attention-getter for recruiting candidates for the 194th Fighter Squadron and the 244th Air Service Group, which meet at Hayward Airport for weekly drills.

National News April 10, 1950 Newsweek

There are sane and serious high Air Force officers who'll solemnly assert in private conversation that they believe the flying saucers come from Mars, now at its nearest point to earth.

San Jose News 4/4/50 Military Denies Use of 'Saucers'

WASHINGTON, April 4 (UP).—Two new "real" stories of flying saucers today provoked vigorous denials from the Armed Forces that they are, in reality, secret U.S. weapons.

Both the Air Force and the Navy said flatly that they are not experimenting with any plane or weapon that could account for widespread reports about the flying disks.

A spokesman for the Air Force, which has been investigating hundreds of flying saucer stories, said the armed services are standing on conclusions reached last December that flying saucers just don't exist.

soaring through space, often at fantastic speeds, keep cropping up.

Radio Commentator Henry J. Taylor and U.S. News and World Report, a weekly news magazine published here, gave the latest versions yesterday. Both stated flatly that flying saucers do exist, but neither quoted any authority for their statements.

In a broadcast over the American Broadcasting System, Taylor said that there are two types of "flying saucers" which the military has classified as secret.

One, he said, is a harmless, pilotless disk which usually disintegrates in the air. Its purpose, he said, is a top military secret.

He said the other is the Navy's so-called "Flying Phantom" or jet-propelled XF-5-U-1. The Navy, he said, is experimenting with the radical plane at its Patuxent, Md., test center.

U.S. News said simply that the saucers are revolutionary new planes, probably developed by the Navy as part of its guided missile experiments.

The Air Force issued its denial promptly.

"German newspapers have always loved April Fools Day."

The following story appeared in the April 1, 1950 issue of the Wiesbadener, West Germany, newspaper Wiesbadener Tagblatt:

"FLYING SAUCER OVER WIESBADEN

A GIANT FLYING DISC CRASHED AT BLEIDIENSTADTER KOPF

CREW MEMBER IS IN CUSTODY

NO CAUSE FOR PANIC.

"A story was told of how a flying saucer crashed during the night over Wiesbaden, there was also a survivor, a crew member, he was put into protective custody. The strange creature was said to have only one leg and moved about on a rotating plate, his arms come to an end in four stubby like fingers, he has large glaring eyes his head was an oval shape, one of the US policemen was carrying an air tank with a hose attached to it.

"The mysterious Mr. X was taken to the Wiesbaden Heroberg hotel. The Americans would not comment on the incident. So that Mr. X can get used to our air, he will be taking a walk around the grounds of the hotel daily between 14:00 hrs and 15:00 hrs.

"It was also stated that special trips would be arranged on the world famous Neroberg railway around the area, there was no danger to the local population from the crashed saucer and special units were out searching the area with apparatus similar to mine detectors called Telesearchgerats, the special units will be searching the woods and looking for other crew members.

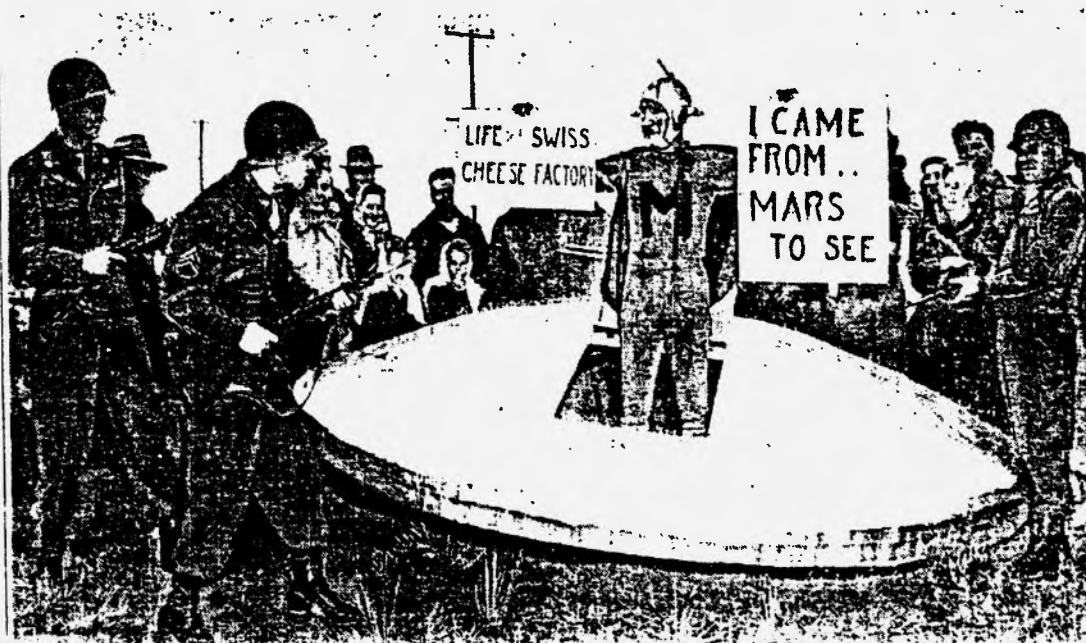
"Anyone who has observed anything strange in the area is requested to call the incidents room at the Town Hall, further investigations will then be carried out, we ourselves will do everything in our power to keep the public on its toes in the truest sense of the word!" (English translation by Mr. J.P. Johnson M.U.F.O.I.T./Germany)

The above "Mr. X" story was investigated in depth by the German UFO investigator Klaus Webner in 1981. Mr. Webner visited the offices of the Wiesbadener Tagblatt where he met with reporter William Sprunkel who admitted dreaming up the "Crashed saucer" story after noting the great number of flying saucer reports on the newswires. Since April Fool Day is a widely observed tradition in Germany and the American occupation authorities were eager to please, Sprunkel had little trouble borrowing two U.S. soldiers to pose for a "captured saucer pilot photograph." The local U.S. Army liaison officer, laughingly agreed and phoned his Commanding Officer at Wiesbaden. The CO, in turn, got approval from U.S. HQ located at Heidelberg.

Having arranged for two American MPs, reporter Sprunkel then recruited a photographer Hans Scheffler and made him part of the scheme. Scheffer's five year-old son, Peter, who enjoyed the "game" immensely, was dressed up as the "Mr. X," the saucer pilot (After the picture was taken Peter's fingers were touched up on the negative to resemble claws).

Pictures in the Tagblatt showing "flying saucers" in the sky over Wiesbaden were also faked. Scheffer photographed a glass cover on a city water fountain and then prints of the cover were cut up and glued on a picture showing the Wiesbadener Markt church. The glass cover gave the saucer image a ghostly appearance which Sprunkel explained in his April 1st story in this way:

"The Infra-red Kathoden ray projector cylinder together with a special photographic technique and a new film process reveals what is invisible to the human eye. This is how we got this proof of the flying saucers over Wiesbaden. No noise was heard from the objects because ultra short waves cannot be heard by the human ear." (Translation also by J.P. Johnson)



IT'S ANOTHER SAUCER—When an object shaped like a flying saucer was found in Krusi Park, Alameda, a man emerged with a green suit and a sign saying he was from Mars. That sign was found to be false but the other sign he carried indi-

cated the Alameda Junior Chamber of Commerce will stage a show called "Life in a Swiss Cheese Factory." The visitor in the saucer is Warren Francis, Alameda census taker, shown guarded by National Guardsmen who suddenly arrived to take charge.

—Photo by San Francisco Examiner.

ALAMEDA FINDS FLYING SAUCER

A flying saucer, three feet thick with a diameter of ten feet, was found early yesterday in a corner of Krusi Park, on Otis Drive, Alameda.

Inside was a man in a green suit with a cape, helmet and mask to match.

Police and National Guardsmen kept a crowd of 300 away from the object.

After police lines had been set up, the man emerged from the

saucer to display a banner reading, "I Came From Mars to See 'Life in a Swiss Cheese Factory'."

Investigation disclosed he was not from Mars, but Warren Francis, a census taker, from the Alameda Junior Chamber of Commerce.

The chamber pulled the stunt to advertise its show, to be staged Friday and Saturday nights, at 8 p. m., in the Porter School.

LG Times 4/14/50

Saucers 'Unknown' To Truman

KEY WEST, April 4—(UP) — Those stories of flying saucers have gone clear to the top of our government, to President Truman himself.

Mr. Truman's news secretary, Charles Ross, says the President knows absolutely nothing whatever of the existence of any type of flying saucer. Ross says the stories are not being denied just because we're developing a secret weapon that officials can't even hint about.

Ross says it's just that the White House knows nothing to support the rumors of saucers.

When recent reports of them reached the White House, Mr. Truman checked with General Robert Landry, Air Force aide to the President. Landry told Mr. Truman the Air Force investigated the saucer reports for two years and found no support for them.

As for reports that saucers are radically new planes being developed by the Navy, Ross says it simply is not true so far as the President knows.

The only saucers concerning the President today were on the dinner table at Key West, Florida. He spent a quiet vacation day with his family on the beach.

Other Stories

But still the stories come. At Tipp City, Ohio, nine persons say they saw flying saucers both hovering and speeding in the sky over town and over the Air Force base at Wright field, near Dayton. Wright field officials say they don't know anything about it. Nothing, they say, showed up on their radar.

At Elizabeth, Illinois, Police Chief J. C. Lee said he saw a red and blue thing that looked like a disc whizzing over town Sunday. He kept quiet about it until now, he says, because he was afraid people would laugh at him.

Pravda Unveils Flying Saucers; They're U. S. Pirate Planes

June 7. By Steffen Andrews 1950
North American Newspaper Alliance

David Zaslavsky, hatchet man for the Soviet newspaper Pravda, joined the lingering controversy over flying saucers today—with the flat assertion that he knew their real secret.

There is nothing "mysterious" about them, he said in a lead Pravda article beamed by Soviet radio to North America and monitored here by Government agencies.

"Behind the 'mysterious saucers' there are real flights of

American pirate planes in the air over foreign territory," Zaslavsky asserted.

He said the flying discs had appeared recently in Norway, over Africa and also "in some of the States of the United States."

"This is not a ridiculous fantasy of the newspaper clowns, but the smokescreen put out by the professional instigators of war," Zaslavsky charged.

He explained that the various rumors about saucers had been spread by the "treacherous bourgeois press."

'KIND OF SILLY,' BUT THERE THEY WERE, 6 FLYING SAUCERS

A squadron of six flying saucers flew over the Contra Costa hills southeast of Orinda yesterday.

A woman who drove into a service station at the Orinda crossroads, first spotted them and shouted to Rod Kellogg, 26, of 1833 57th avenue, Oakland, the station attendant. She refused to identify herself because "people will ridicule me."

Less fearful of ridicule was Kellogg, a former Coast Guardsman, with training in aircraft identification.

"I'd read about these things in the paper, but I never thought I'd see any," said he. "It's kind of a silly deal, sure, but they weren't planes. I'll guarantee anybody that. What the devil they were, I can't say."

Don Bradley, crossroads grocer, corroborated Kellogg's story. The objects were described as shiny, aluminum, small, flying at hilltop height and not too fast. A check of military air stations disclosed no group of planes was over that area at the time.

San Francisco Chronicle
4/30/50

Farmer's Ploving Slowed by Sight Of Flying Saucer

By Staff Writer
AP Wire Service
A farmer told of a flying saucer while ploving a field.

John McClelland, who said he was reluctant to report it, said he saw a "big, round, white disc" flying in the sky, slowly at first, then faster, in a southerly direction while ploving a field on Memorial day.

The farmer said the saucer attracted his attention by casting a reflection on the ground near his plover, causing him to look up. He said it appeared to be "spinning" and matched descriptions he has heard of other flying saucers.

He said he has seen weather balloons and other such objects, but this was different from anything he has seen before. He lives four miles south of Aberdeen.

SAUGERS AT TELENEWS

The story of a 20th Century enigma is brought to the screen in a new documentary, "The Flying Saucer Mystery," currently at the Telenews Theater. The only motion pictures of a flying saucer in flight are shown. "Grand fathers Follies" and "Just Fur round out the short sub- scription of the bill.

The line films
China are selected

(The Telenews documentary mentioned above ran about 20 minutes and featured interviews with Frank Scully and Donald Keyhoe. --L. Gross)

Fair Offers \$50,000 for Flying Disc

DALLAS, TEX., APRIL 13 (AP).—The state fair of Texas has posted a \$50,000 reward for the discovery, preservation and delivery to it in its original form, a so-called flying disc of interplanetary origin.

R. L. Thornton, president of the fair, said the offer was made because of the fair's interest in bringing its audience the first information of all new and important scientific developments.

Thornton said the fair does not know whether such flying discs actually exist, but it would "gladly pay \$50,000 in order to be the first to exhibit it."

San Jose News Want to Ride 74-5-50 A Flying Saucer?

NEW YORK, April 5 (AP).—Signs of the times: Palisades Amusement Park of New Jersey announced today that when its outdoor season opens on April 22, the major new thrill ride will be called "The Flying Saucer." Another planned is "The Jet Bomb."

San Jose News -

April 3, 1950

CAN'T LAUGH IT OFF

Flying Saucer Jitters Finally Invade Britain

LONDON, April 3 (AP).—The British, who have been feeling superior to such things, have come down in great numbers with a case of flying saucer jitters.

A bus conductor was the first yesterday to report by telephone to the air ministry:

"There's a flying saucer right over my vehicle with lots of little men with ginger hair inside."

The ministry laughed it off—one bus conductor doesn't count for much. But not for long. The phone kept ringing. Dozens of citizens reported variously:

"It has dots on the bottom ...

It's silvery ... It's stationary ... It's moving fast ... the little men inside are having tea."

Other phones were ringing, notably those at the meteorological office. The thing was high, low, circular, tear-shaped.

Gentlemen of the meteorological office finally climbed to the roof and swept the skies with their eyes.

Then it was explained—maybe. A call came from the parachute training center at Weston-on-the-Green, near Oxford, to report that a parachute jumping balloon was missing, the presumption being that it had torn away from its moorings. It was about 60 feet long and the jumping school feared that in yesterday's squall it might drift over London and cause alarm.

The explanation isn't quite generally accepted. It doesn't account for the ginger-haired men, and no balloon has been recovered.

More Saucers Seen—Chasing After Jets!

Flying saucers in the shape of silver dollars were reported zipping across San Jose skies Sunday afternoon by Roy Mische, Georgian Hotel, 99 S. 14th St.

Mische and three companions say the saucers passed directly overhead at a high rate of speed following two jet airplanes.

'Pancake-Shape' Craft Flown, Navy Discloses

Through its public information desk in the Pentagon, the Navy issued a quick denial it was operating any flying saucers.

"The Navy is not engaged in research or in flying any jet-powered, circular-shaped aircraft," the statement said.

It acknowledged that Chance Vought "did construct a pancake-shaped aircraft called the Zimmerman-skimmer in 1948," a full scale prototype called the X4 SU-1, "but it never flew," the Navy said.

However, a small, 3,000-pound scale model, powered by a Lycoming engine, did fly and was under radio control in flight.

"This," the Navy spokesman said, "probably accounts for the in flight photos shown in the magazine."

Zimmerman Is Doubtful His Plane Is Saucer

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va., April 4 (AP).—Charles H. Zimmerman says he doesn't believe a plane he helped develop several years ago is a forerunner of the flying saucer.

Mr. Zimmerman is head of the dynamic stability branch of the Langley Aeronautical Laboratory, National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics.

Mr. Zimmerman, who is well known as the designer of the XP5U-1 "Flying Pancake," said he was connected with the building of such a plane several years ago during the war. He said it was built and flown at Stratford, Conn., and was a fairly well-known project.

But he added, he doesn't believe the plane—which was roughly circular in its planned

form—is a forerunner of the flying saucer.

"It's an obvious conclusion to reach," Mr. Zimmerman said, "but it's obviously the wrong conclusion."

"Flying Saucers" Really Exist, According To Rocket Expert

MONTVALE, N. J., April 6 (UP)—Willy Ley, one of the world's outstanding authorities on rockets and flight above the stratosphere, said today he is firmly convinced that "flying saucers" have been winging across the United States.

Ley, a founding member of the German Rocket society from which Nazi Germany drew scientists to produce the rockets which bombarded Britain, said the "saucers" probably are United States military secrets.

"One thing I can say in a loud, and clear voice," Ley said. "Flying saucers are not rocket-propelled, never seen a flying saucer, he is. If they are, they have the worst possible shape for speed and efficiency."

But, he said, it is entirely possible and probable that the U. S. has learned how to send discs soaring over the nation in controlled flight.

"The answer to whether discs can fly is simple," he said. "The second is that they are the I was a student, we used to make secret of some foreign power, pre-flat round paper discs sail through sumbably enemy. They can't be the air just by throwing them. stupid enough to test them over Anyone can learn how to throw an enemy's territory. So that is such a disc 100 feet or more," he discounted.

The problem facing engineers would be how to control and sustain the flight. One of the secrets, use atomic energy in a different he said, could be that the discs do, way from us, the size of the not really fly.

"I don't think the flying saucers insufficient to make a direct flight which have been seen really fly to any other planet. in the sense that a bird or an airplane flies," he said. "I do think possibilities. I believe the saucers they fly only in the sense that a are a military secret and there's projectile fired from a gun flies." not much can be done about it."

Flying Discs Real, Says Rickenbacker

INDIANAPOLIS, June 11. (AP) Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker today came to the rescue of the people who can't get anyone to believe they've seen flying saucers.

"He thinks they're real, too. "Too many good men have seen them that don't have hallucinations," he said in an interview here today.

"And if they exist," he added, "you can bet they belong to the United States Air Force—they're not from Mars and not from Russia."

Rickenbacker, a colorful ace of World War I aviation, came here on an inspection tour as president of Eastern Air Lines.

Air Force officials have denied launching any such objects. Rickenbacker declined to amplify his remarks.

Monterey Man Tells of 23-Year Old Saucer Plan

MONTEREY, April 14 (UP)—A Dutch-born engineer and sculptor, Alexander G. Weygers, has told of a "workable" flying saucer which was designed 23 years ago and rejected during World War II as "too far advanced."

Weygers said in a story copyrighted by the Monterey Peninsula Herald that his flying disc, which he calls a "discopter," was patented in 1944, three years before the first flying saucer report came out of Oregon. He says his saucer is still in the paper design stage. He hasn't made a model of it. But he insists the design is aeronautically sound. Blueprints show the craft as resembling a percolator top or a covered shallow bowl with a bubble on top. Gasoline engine driven rotor blades are enclosed in the circular metal frame or rim of the craft—similar to the rotor of a helicopter. Weygers says he believes jets can be used in place of the rotors.

Ozzie To Resume Pole Sitting; Promises To Explain 'Saucers'

George A. (Ozzie) Osborne, self-styled king of the flag pole sitters, is ready to try again.

And this time it's not only with the thought of breaking his own claimed record of 32 days, 14 hours and 33 minutes atop a precarious 39 by 30-inch platform.

Not at all. This time Ozzie expects to solve once and for all the mystery of the flying saucers.

Ozzie announced his intended ascendancy next Sunday of an 86-foot-high pole at San Jose-Los Gatos Road and W. San Carlos St. in a special communique last night.

The announcement indicated Ozzie expects to scan the skies with a long glass during his intended 90-day stay.

He will have two telephone

to report to the world any discoveries he may make.

"I intend to have a complete report on the flying saucer mystery for the people of San Jose before I come down," Ozzie declared.

An attempt to break his 52-day record here last year ended dramatically when Ozzie was hauled down from his perch unconscious.

He was hospitalized with bronchial pneumonia and exhaustion after 50 days aloft. The pneumonia was caused by a two-day storm which Ozzie stubbornly weathered in his attempt to set a new record.

During his self-imposed confinement, Ozzie claimed to have received "2000 proposals of mar-

San Francisco News CA 4/23/50

The joke was more of a success than Sprunkel expected. Excited inquiries came in from all over. One man called, a journalist, offering to pay big money for the story and pictures, and when Sprunkel insisted the incident was a hoax, the angry fellow charged that the hoax explanation was just a ploy to avoid sharing the world-shattering information!

The Wiesbadener Tagblatt felt compelled to set the record straight, so on April 3rd it ran a item asserting the incident was a hoax and that people should stop taking the story seriously.

The story persists.

UFO investigator Klaus Webner was critical of Moore and Berlitz for the two writers' failure to identify the Sprunkel hoax when it was mentioned in the 1980 book The Roswell Incident. The reader is referred to pp.102-103. It seems that an FBI agent named John Quinn of the New Orleans Office was given a crude reprint of the 'Mr. X' picture on May 22, 1950, by an unnamed informant who felt it was his duty as a good citizen to turn in the photograph (which he brought from an Army man for a dollar) to the U.S. Government since it showed a 'Martian survivor of a saucer crash in the United States.' Further data transmitted by the informant correctly identified Wiesbaden, West Germany, as where 'it first surfaced,' but the time frame of its origin is incorrectly named as the 'late 1940s.' That a U.S. GI stationed in far away Wiesbaden would have in his possession such 'American saucer evidence,' puzzled the Roswell Incident authors.

The source of the Wiesbaden information is contained in the document: 'Mister X was an April Fools Joke, Saucer Crash Never Occured,' by Klaus Webner, privately published. Copy on file. A story on Webner's work was published in the April 22, 1981 issue of the Wiesbaden Tagblatt.

"The Flying Warming Pan."

The sensational Oskar Linke UFO landing case which has invariably been placed in the early July, 1952, time period; should be listed, if one is believe the German UFO witness, as occurring 2:30 a.m. Central European Time, Saturday, June 17, 1950. According to the ex-Mayor of the East German village of Gleimershausen, he and his daughter Gabrielle viewed a UFO which had a "warming pan" shape in June 1950, and when word eventually got around that Linke may have seen a possible secret Russian aircraft, the frighten fellow fled to the West on April 20, 1951. Once in the West, Linke learned about flying saucers for the first time, he claimed, so he made his story public.

The very first appearance in print of Linke's story was in an obscure Berlin newspaper called Nacht-Depesche which UFO researcher Ted Bloecher believes was published the first week of July 1952, therefore it is impossible to obtain evidence as to the 1950 date as the actual date of this supposed incident. Widespread notice of the case came with the publication of the story in the July 6, 1950 issue of the London Sunday-Graphic, thus Herr Linke's experience has usually been identified with the year 1952.

Bloecher, Ted. "Herr Linke and the Flying Warming Pan." The MUFON UFO Journal. ed.: Ricard Hall. #153. Sequin, Texas. November 1980. pp. 6-8.

The reader might also want to check a source unavailable to this writer: "Just What ARE Those Flying Saucers -- A Secret Weapon?" Public Opinion News Service. Princeton, N.J. 20 May 1950.

Ein Tagblatt-Aprilscherz im Archiv des FBI

... und jetzt auch noch als Ufo-Tatsachenbericht in einer Buchveröffentlichung

Das hätte wohl niemand ahnen können, daß ein Tagblatt-Aprilscherz vom 1. April 1950 Jahrzehnte lang im Archiv des Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) als Dokument aufbewahrt werden würde. Selbst der phantastische Verfasser dieses Artikels hätte nicht daran gedacht. Noch mehr aber muß man sich wundern, daß diese Fliegende-Untertassen-Story jetzt als Tatsache in dem Buch „Ufos und Fliegende Untertassen“ veröffentlicht wird.

Wie kam es dazu? Nachdem das Gesetz zur Freigabe von Urkunden, die die nationale Sicherheit der USA nicht gefährden, erlassen war (1980), erstanden der Amerikaner Charles Berlitz, Nachkomme des Gründers der Berlitz School, und sein Triihuber Harry Queenwood zwei Wochen nach Freigabe des FBI-Archivs in Hundert der Dokumente und fanden auch eine Kopie jener Tagblatt-Seite, in der die Untertassen-Geschichte abgedruckt worden war. Schnell machten sie sich an die Arbeit, verließen das 1894 Seiten starke Buch unter dem obengenannten Titel. Die FBI-Leute selbst haben wohl nicht so recht an diese Mär geglaubt, der Sicherheit halber haben sie den Bericht dennoch 30 Jahre in ihren Safes aufbewahrt.

Weltweit hat das „Werk“ nun Aufsehen erregt, es enthält auch den „Roovetzeit-Zwischenfall“ und anderes, was Interesse verdient. Noch jenen Tagblatt-Aprilscherz als Lachschreiberchen herauszustellen — hochinteressant und merkwürdig.

Wie aber entstanden die „Fliegenden Tagblatt-Untertassen“? Lassen wir den Erfinder selbst zu Wort kommen:

„Alomate vor dem März 1950 erschienen zunächst in Nordamerika, dann aber auch in anderen Ländern Zeitungsberichte über Fliegende Untertassen, die gesehen worden waren. Schließlich wurden sie auch über dem Kattegat und über Italien beobachtet, wie Presseagenturen bekanntgaben.“

Exakte der 1. April 1950, und in der Redaktion-konferenz wurde die Frage laut, ob auch das Tagblatt Aprilscherz bringen sollte, und welcher der Kollegen eine solche bewußte Irreführung erfinden wollte. (Obwohl ich nur eine vage Idee hatte, übernahm ich die Aufgabe. Die Untertassen-Geschichte hatte mich angeregt.

Wie aber sollte ich zu einer „Fliegenden“ kommen? Da fiel mir der Kurhaus-Weiber mit seiner Leuchtlunte, die von unten her hant ausleuchtet werden kann. Die waserdichten Glascheiben — das waren meine Untertassen. Und so besprach ich mit unserem Halberichter Hans Scheffler die gesamte Geschichte, er war einverstanden. Zunächst photographierte er bei Abenddämmerung die Marktkirche mit ihren Türmen. Danach wurden die Kurhaus-Weiber-Glascheiben aufgenommen. Das hatte also geklappt. Woher aber ein Untertassen-Besatzungsmitglied, oder vielleicht auch mehrere, nehmen. Hans Scheffler wollte flut und sagte, sein fünfjähriger Sohn Peter mache das. Auch dieses Hindernis war also genommen. Fehlt nur noch die MP-Soldatin, die Mister X — so nannten wir den Untertassen-Gefangenen — bewachen mußten? Also be- rief ich mich zum amerikanischen Verbin-



DIE TAGBLATT-LOKALSEITE vom 1. April 1950.

Bild: Scheffler



TAGBLATT-APRILSCHERZ vor dreifig Jahren: Fliegende Untertassen umkreisen die Wiesbadener Marktkirche; rechts: Zwei MP-Polizisten führen „Mister X“ am Neroberg-Tempel spazieren.

Bild: Scheffler

dungssolizier in der Bierstadter Straße und erzählte ihm meinen Plan. Er lachte und sagte: „du mußt mich mit dem Stadtkommandanten unterhalten.“ Da geschah, und der lachte ebenfalls, gab aber zu bedenken, daß er hierzu die Genehmigung des amerikanischen Generalquartiers in Heidelberg einholen müsse. Dort lachten die zuständigen Herren ebenfalls über diese Komodie und erteilten ihr Einverständnis. Es konnte also losgehen.

Hans Scheffler photographierte und machte gelungene Bildmontagen. Die MP erschien mit einem Jeep auf dem Neroberg und fuhrte — wie es in dem Bericht hieß —

Mister X spazieren. Nun hatte ich alles zusammen. Ich setzte mich an die Maschine und schrieb in der Nacht zum 1. April 1950 die erdundene Geschichte, die jetzt als Tatsachenliterat und bebildert — in dem Buch „Ufos und Fliegende Untertassen“ dargestellt ist.

Übrigens: Hätte der schlaue Kopf, der das FBI mit diesem Bericht beliefert hat, zwei Tage später das Tagblatt aufgeschlagen, dann hätte er an erster Stelle die Auflosung der Wiesbadener-Tagblatt-Untertassen-Geschichte gefunden.“

WILHELMSPRUNKEL

Guided Missile Is Spotted Near U. S. Bases in Alaska

FAIRBANKS, Alaska, July 3. (UP)—The Alaska Air Command said tonight "something" which appeared to be a guided missile definitely passed over this strategic U. S. defense outpost Saturday night.

Officers were investigating reports that a similar object was seen this morning.

Capt. Ruth Maryilees, Alaska Air Command public information officer, confirmed that "something" passed over Fairbanks late Saturday night and was seen by both civilian and military personnel at bases near Fairbanks and in the city.

In Early Morning

Both civilians and military personnel told intelligence officers that they had seen the mysterious "missile" at 6 a. m. today.

Persons who said they witnessed the strange flight this morning reported that the object was traveling about 600 miles an hour in a southeasterly direction.

They said it flew over Elleson and Ladd Air Force Bases at Fairbanks and an Army camp at Big Delta, Alaska, about 70 airline miles southeast of here.

Over Montana Saturday

Civil Aeronautics Administration, air force and commercial airline officials said they also saw a strange object in the sky over Montana and Washington state Saturday night.

James Seaking and Paul Hopkins, who were on duty in the control tower at the Spokane, Wash., Air Force base, reported a "long yellow object" headed for the control tower and "scared the devil out of us for a minute."

Seconds later, CAA communications officer Jack Davis in Missoula, Mont., saw an orange-yellow object shaped like a Zeppelin speeding toward Great Falls, Mont., 140 miles away.

Flying Flounder Is Not Flying Saucer

WASHINGTON, April 1.—(AP)—The Navy today discounted a California report that perhaps its twin-engine Chance-Vought XF-5U fighter plane had been mistaken for a flying saucer.

The plane was nicknamed the "Flying Flounder" for its broad, flat appearance.

But the Navy said it bought only one of this type of aircraft and that was two years ago. The plane was not successful, the Navy said, and the project was dropped.

A Naval Aviation Headquarters spokesman said he did not know if the plane ever had been flown. He said it probably is now stored in some naval aviation hanger.

Caledonia Times 4-2-50

RICKENBACKER HINTS TRUTH IN 'SAUCERS'

SAVANNAH, Ga., May 16 (UP).—Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, World War I flying ace, apparently does not agree with present day Air Force leaders that flying saucers are nonexistent.

"There must be something to them, for too many reliable persons have made reports on them," Rickenbacker said during an overnight stay here.

"I am duty-bound not to say what I know about them—or what I don't know about them.

"However, if they do exist, you can rest assured that they are ours."

Never Seen Flying Saucer? Join Up '50

ST. PAUL, MINN., April 28 (UP).—R. G. Stewart has organized and become myopic master of the "I-Never-Have-Seen-a-Flying-Saucer Society."

Stewart, Northwest Airlines official, formed the club when, after making cautious inquiries, he learned there were other scattered persons who never had seen the 20th century phenomenon.

He hopes to hold the membership to persons who not only never have seen a flying saucer but also hope they never will see one.

Publisher Defies 'Military' Pressure

NEW YORK, May 26. (AP)—An editor reports that Defense Department officials have exerted "a lot of pressure" to prevent sale of a book by Donald Keyhoe entitled "The Flying Saucers Are Real."

Jim Bishop, editor of Fawcett gold medal books, said, however, that the book will be put on sale June 5 anyway "unless the Defense Department gets out a restraining order."

"If they can prove publication will do the country harm, involve national security," he said, "we'll withdraw it."

The department, which repeatedly has belittled reports of "flying saucers," said in Washington that it had "no interest" in Keyhoe's book.

Bishop said the book already had been put on sale at midwestern newsstands but was withdrawn after five days when the department applied "pressure."

S J News 4/10/50 San Josean Reports 'Saucers'

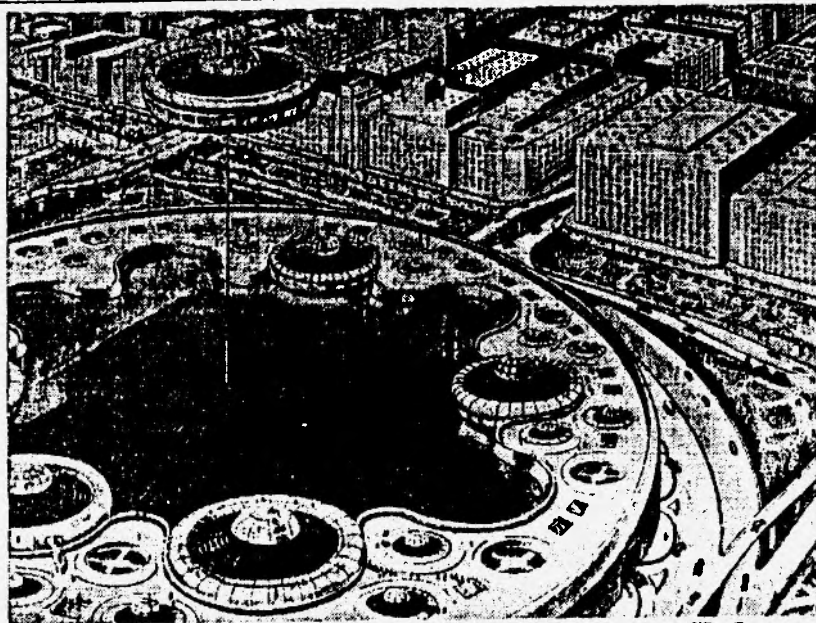
Well, here's another report of flying saucers.

Roy Mische, a resident in the Georgian Hotel, 99 S. 14th St., reports he and three friends saw some of the strange objects yesterday afternoon while they were standing in front of 145 S. 17th St.

They appeared for about a minute and a half and looked like silver dollars, Mische reports. The objects passed directly overhead at a high rate of speed and a high altitude, he says.

Shortly after he saw the saucers or whatever they were, Mische says he saw two jet airplanes flying in the same direction. They were leaving vapor trails behind them, but the saucers moved through the air without such tails, Mische says.

He wants anyone else in San Jose who might have seen the objects to confirm his observation by calling CY3-9753.



FLYING SAUCER ... 1927 VINTAGE—The above drawing, which shows saucer-shaped objects moored and one coming in for a landing, is the idea of a Dutch-born engineer and sculptor, Alexander O. Weygers of Monterey, Calif., who dreamed it up in 1927—long before the first flying saucer report came out of Oregon in 1947. Weygers' flying disc which he calls a "discopter," was patented in 1944 and rejected during World War II as "too advanced." He says the idea is aeronautically sound.

San Jose MERC. HER. -- 4/5/50

'Night Discs' Reported--- They Glow!

A new wrinkle in flying saucers —whirling discs that light up after dark— was reported last night by a Mount Hamilton Road housewife.

Mrs. June Sands of Box 102, Mount Hamilton Road, described seeing a playful game of tag among three or four of the things between 7 and 8 p.m. yesterday. Said Mrs. Sands:

"They look just like saucers and they light up. And they were running at each other, too." She described them as being slightly elliptical in shape, traveling at extremely high speeds and giving off a bright light.

San Jose Mercury News 'Discs' Merely Water on Film

SALEM, Ore., April 22. (INS).—A professional photographer declared today that an amateur's "flying saucer picture" was merely a water spot on the negative.

The original negative of the print, showing a football-shaped object in the sky over the Oregon beaches, was destroyed by Rand Hermann, Camas, Wash., who insisted he saw a flying saucer and was afraid he would be in trouble with the Air Force.

Don Dill, a Salem newspaper photographer, said they were all just water spots resulting from water not being properly dried on the negatives.

Round and Round

ROME, March 25. (AP).—Prof. Guiseppe Belluzzo, 73-year-old Italian turbine engineer, said today that designs for "flying saucers" were prepared for Hitler and Mussolini in 1942.

"According to those designs," he said in an interview, "the discs could carry a cargo of explosives of any kind—and today an atomic bomb—to destroy entire cities."

Of the present reports of "flying saucers," Belluzzo said: "It has passed my mind that some great power is experimenting with flying discs—without explosives or atomic bombs."

1950 Flying Saucers Baffle Senators Just Like They Do People

WASHINGTON, April 6 (U.S.A.)—Senators confessed today they are as baffled by reports of Flying Saucers as anyone else but most lawmakers declined to take the extraterrestrial claims seriously.

Senator Russell (Democrat), Georgia, a member of the Armed Services committee, declared:

"I am completely baffled by Flying Saucer stories. It seems unbelievable that so many pilots would have hallucinations or be fooled by cloud or atmospheric formations.

"From their testimony, it seems they do exist. But our Air Force says they do not. I just can't understand it. No, I don't think it is in the stage for a scientific investigation as yet."

Senator Magnuson (Democrat), Washington, suggested it would be somewhat unwise of Americans to write off the possibility that saucers flew from Mars. Magnuson said:

"After all, we have been talking of flying to Mars—or to the moon. It does not seem illogical for us to think that with all the planets in the universe, ours is the only one inhabited or the only one that has reached a high scientific development."

Senate G. O. P. Floor Leader Wherry (Nebraska), scoffed:

"There are so many claims made. It is like our foreign policy—it is in a state of confusion and no one seems to know what it is all about."

Senator Ferguson (Republican), Michigan, commented that he knew as much about Flying Saucers as he did of the commun, which he said he gave up reading several years ago.

"There are so many promises of pie in the sky here in Washington that I'm afraid to look my legs into the sky. The Flying Saucers may be 'Pie in the Sky' pie in the sky."

Senate Armed Services Chairman Tydings (Democrat), Maryland, said his committee has not discussed the discs with anyone, let alone defense officials. Tydings

said: "I have not taken the matter seriously. If there is anything to it, I would assume it was our own experiments in embryo stage rather than men flying Mars."

14 Oakland Post-Examiner Thursday, April 6

1950

WHOOOPS—

—HERE WE GO AGAIN, BOYS!



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ *U.S. Testing 'Flying Saucers,' Radio Commentator Asserts*

Top-Secret Planes, Missiles Denied by Military Services

NEW YORK, April 3. (UP)—“Flying saucers” reported hurtling through the North American skies actually are two types of top-secret United States military inventions, Radio Commentator Henry J. Taylor said tonight.

The real facts behind both are good news for the nation, Taylor said, in a nationwide broadcast over the American Broadcasting Company network.

WASHINGTON, April 3. (UP) The Armed Services tonight emphatically denied that they are developing secret planes, guided missiles or anything else that could be mistaken for “flying saucers.”

The new denials were issued after two published reports traced the “saucers”—reportedly spotted from time to time at various points on the North American Continent—to Navy and Air Force secret projects.

“The Armed Services are not doing anything that could be traced to being the basis of reports of flying saucers,” an Air Force spokesman said.

One type of the true flying saucer, Taylor said, a disc that whizzes through space, hails sus-

pended in the air, soars to 30,000 feet and more, drops to 1000 feet, and then usually disintegrates in the air. The saucers are harmless, pilotless discs, ranging from 20 inches to 250 feet in diameter, he said, and they’ve been haunting the skies for three years.

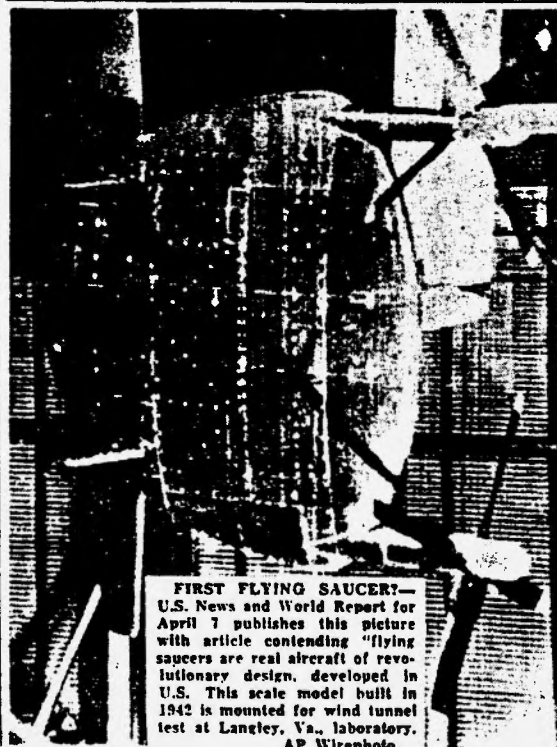
The other zooming objects, which some persons have thought were saucers, really are flying phantoms,” the XF50 jet-propelled air-

craft, with which the Navy acknowledges it is experimenting at Patuxent, Md., Taylor said.

These planes, he described as circular and wingless and capable of flying at a fantastic rate of speed. Persons who have seen them claimed they looked like a flying cigar, giving off a shower of sparks, but Taylor said that anything round, moving at “such speed” looks elongated—“even a cannon ball, if you could see it.”

The commentator first mentioned saucers when he spoke from Dallas, Tex., on March 27. He told about a “flying saucer” which was found on the ground in Texas, and at that time said it was a secret development which would be “good news” when finally disclosed.

(Continued on Page 4, Column 1)



FIRST FLYING SAUCER?—U.S. News and World Report for April 7 publishes this picture with article contending “flying saucers are real aircraft of revolutionary design, developed in U.S. This scale model built in 1942 is mounted for wind tunnel test at Langley, Va., laboratory. AP Wirephoto.

PITCHING HORSESHOES

Billy Rose

By BILLY ROSE

THE SAUCER THAT CHEERS

At the risk of being laughed out of court and countenance, I'd like to report that I've seen Flying Saucers.

It happened on a clear and moon-minus night two Summers ago in Newton, Conn., on the lawn of the home belonging to Paul Osborne, the playwright. Among my fellow oglers were Paul and his wife, Director Josh Logan and his missus, and Author John Hershey and his. What's more, none of us was in his cups the night we watched the flying saucery.

The show began about 10 p.m. while we were sitting outdoors, enjoying and shooting the breeze, and the first thing we noticed were several searchlights some miles away poking their yellow fingers into the sky. A few minutes later, three bits of celestial chinaware skittered into view, and from then until midnight they skipped and scampered above our bewildered heads.

As nearly as I could judge, these Whatzises were at least 200 feet in diameter and were flying at an altitude of from 3,000 to 5,000 feet. Their edges gave off a ghostly glow, very much like blue neon tubing seen through a heavy fog.

DISCS DISAPPEAR

When the searchlights finally cut off and the discs got lost in the stars, we put what was left of our heads together and decided that what we had witnessed must have been some kind of hush-hush military exercise. We also decided that, if we didn't want a butterfly net slipped over our heads, it would be smart to keep our lips zipped about the whole thing.

How come, then, that with my bare face hanging out in print, I'm spilling the story now? Well, until recently the talk about the pernickety pancakes has been more

loose than lucid—according to some writers, they were manned by Martians two inches tall; according to others, by Russians two droshkies wide. Recently, however, documentation has begun to replace delirium, and it's becoming evident that the overgrown man-hole covers are not only real, but, despite all denials, one of the top-secret weapons of our own Navy and Air Force.

The most convincing testimony was offered April 3rd by Henry J.

Taylor on a General Motors broadcast over the ABC network. Taylor, after trekking all around the country and talking to people who had seen, touched and even flown these credulity-cracking craft, made the following flat and unfrivolous statements about them:

One type of saucer is the "true" disc, which ranges anywhere from 20 inches to 200 feet in diameter, is unmanned and generally guided by some form of remote control. The other is a jet-driven platter

which carries a crew and is capable of such supersonic speeds that in flight it looks like a hundred-foot flaming cigar.

Furthermore, according to Henry J., a "true" disc was actually photographed near Wildwood, N.J.; another was found in the vicinity of Galveston, Tex., and stenciled on its surface was the following:

"Military secret of the United States of America—Anyone damaging or revealing description or whereabouts of this missile is subject to prosecution by the United States Government. Call collect at once." (Then a long-distance telephone number, and the address of a U.S. Air Base, and finally the words on the "saucer" in big black letters: Non-explosive.)

"I know what these so-called flying saucers are used for," Taylor concluded. "When the military authorities are ready to release the information it will be a joy to tell you the whole story, for it is good news—wonderful news."

WARSAW PLEASE COPY

Well, I don't know what the saucers are for, but on the basis of this and other reports—plus the evidence of my own bug-eyes—I'm convinced they exist and, praise the Lord and pass the ammunition, are ours. Moscow papers please copy.

As you may remember, I wrote a column last week about the bureaucratic blabbermouths in our Nation's Capital who, at the drop of a dalgiri, blurt out top military secrets to anyone who will listen. Well, I'm plenty happy to learn that—at least as regards one vital

weapon—there are some folks in Washington who not only know their beans but can keep from spilling them.



Rose

"LOS PLATIVOLOS" June 1950 Flying Saucers have been more clearly observed over Mexico than elsewhere. A TRUE report on the facts.

Mexico City, March 27, 1950

At noon, August 27, 1949, the crew and passengers of an Aerovias Reforma commercial plane saw a Flying Saucer over the port of Yavaros in the Mexican state of Sonora, south of Arizona. Pilot Francisco Lopez Urrutia reported to the Secretary of Communications and to the National Defense Administration of Mexico that the disk-shaped object appeared to be about 16 feet in diameter. He said that it was made of gleaming metal and was followed by a tail of fire some 100 feet long. It was traveling from southeast to northwest.

I am the correspondent in Mexico for Quick Magazine and I included the story in my news letter that week, as it was the first instance I knew of Saucers being reported over Mexico.

At that time, Mexicans had a cynical attitude and attributed reports of Saucers in the U. S. to "Yanqui" hysteria. They just took the term Flying Saucers into their language as *platillos voladores*. But when the three-week wave of Saucers that I am reporting in this article hit the republic last month from the Rio Grande to the Guatemala line, Mexicans took a more sober view and dignified the Saucers with a newly coined Spanish word. They became *Plativolos*.

The next word of Mexican Saucers appeared in the Mexico City newspaper Excelsior of February 27, 1950. Frightened villagers of Paso Hondo near the Guatemala line had rushed into near-by Comitán, in the state of Chiapas, and told of a flight of spiral cones which had raced south over their town. The villagers said the formation kicked out red-yellow sparks, left trails of white smoke and sounded like boiling teakettles.

Early this March, the Saucers stepped up their tempo over Mexico. Mexico City dailies quoted two air-line pilots who spotted a Saucer traveling at "incredible speed" near Ometepe, Guerrero. Then twenty military and civil-aeronautics personnel said they watched a pale-cream Saucer hover stationary over the airport of Chihuahua for three minutes. They reported that the Saucer raced off toward the northeast when fighter planes were sent aloft. The director of the airport was called to Mexico City to make a confidential report to the director of civil aeronautics. His report has not yet been released to the press.

On March 8, the *Plativolos* moved onto the front pages of Mexico's great dailies and stayed there. Excelsior headlined: **ALL DURANGO SAW THE FLYING SAUCER. ENORMOUS COMMOTION IN THAT CITY OVER THE STRANGE SHIP.** Durango is one of Mexico's largest cities and is the capital of Durango state. The report said that practically the entire population, including lawyers, doctors, engineers, teachers, students, and businessmen, watched the Saucer from the streets and plazas of the city. Professor Maria Luisa Badilla of Durango College suspended classes so her students could watch the phenomenon.

The newspaper listed dozens of names of those who watched the Saucer from 11 a. m. to 12 noon. Many agreed that the object remained at a great height "as if the occupants were observing all the characteristics of the town and the reaction of the inhabitants." Eyewitnesses reported that it appeared to be about "the size of a round pocket mirror." Those who used telescopes and binoculars declared that it seemed to be of some shiny aluminumlike metal.

The same day, Mexico City dailies told of a group of hunters who returned to Guadalajara, Jalisco, and reported a Saucer which they had seen at 10 p. m. on March 6. They had observed a disklike object which flashed through the sky over the Cerro del Cuatro at a "fantastic velocity."

Next day, March 9, the Saucer again visited Durango at noon. This time its movements and appearance were carefully checked by a scientist. E. Nuncio, professor of astronomy in the technical school of Durango, studied the Saucer through a telescope and other instruments. Afterwards he gave his data to the press. Nuncio said that the Saucer maintained 40,000 feet altitude. It was shaped somewhat like a child's top, and had fracture bands around it where its material was joined together. The tip or point of the top was red, and was tilted down and toward the east. Its altitude over the horizon was 53 degrees 20 minutes and its position was southeast. While Nuncio checked, the Saucer moved toward the east 3 degrees in each five minutes until it was out of sight. He pointed out that Venus and other heavenly bodies move to the west.

The same day, a disk-shaped object hovered over Mazatlan, Sinaloa, from 10 a. m. to 2 p. m. Mexican Naval Commander Manuel Malachi reported that he watched it through a spyglass and thought it was made of aluminum. He said it hovered for hours, then disappeared toward the northeast.

On March 10, the Mexican press front-paged that the wandering Saucer visited Pachuca, Hidalgo. This is a large mining town 55 miles north of Mexico City. At 1 p. m., hundreds of Pachuqueros reported seeing a white ball, which rotated in its axis, move slowly across the sky and disappear in a bank of clouds. They said that it stopped still several times during its passage.

The same day, a Saucer reappeared over Mazatlan, and the citizens of Irapuato, Guanajuato, reported an automobile-hub-cap-shaped object over their city at 11:45 a. m.

Then, on March 11, the Mexico City Excelsior scooped the republic with the most authoritative story on the controversy thus far. Their eight-column front-page headline was: **THE OBSERVATORY OF TONANTZINTLA PHOTOGRAPHED A STRANGE OBJECT.** Below was a long, sober article signed by Luis Enrique Erro, director of Tonantzintla, the largest astrophysical observatory in the nation, which is located 80 miles east of the capital. Director Erro started his article with, "An exceptional object crossed space through the field of the Schmidt telescope of Tonantzintla on March 2. From that day until today, we have wondered what it could have been. We do not know." Erro's article told how staff astronomers Luis Munch and Professor Lauro Herrera were photographing the midnight sky when the mysterious thing crossed the field of vision and left its track as a wide, white, diagonal band on the photographic plate. Munch was using a red filter and the sky wanderer photographed strongly red. The director said, "It could not have been a passing airplane. It could not have been carelessness in the operation of the camera." He pointed out that one of the astronomers saw the brilliant object with his naked eye, and the other watched its trajectory through the finding telescope.

Erro's report was cautiously phrased and too long to give in detail here. He minimized the possibility that the thing could have been any of various known astronomical objects such as meteors, and then he mentioned Flying Saucers. The astronomer pointed out that with present-day knowledge of physics there might be strange missiles, guided from afar, "which are unknown to us but might very well be the secret of modern armies."

On March 11, a further rash of Saucers was reported. The crew of a Compania Transportes cargo plane described an object which they saw while flying at 11,000 feet from Guerrero to Puebla. They said it was a reddish disk, 2 meters (about 6 1/2 feet) in diameter, which passed 2,000 feet above them. It was moving at 400 m.p.h.

South toward Juchitán. A passenger, government attorney Francisco Castro Rayon, confirmed the report of the crew.

On that day, also, the astronomical observatory at Culiacán watched a disk-like object through the telescope, and in Tampico, Tamaulipas, amateur astronomer Gonzalo Ibanez reported watching a Saucer through his telescope at 9 p. m. in the direction of the Great Bear constellation. It moved toward the southeast at a great velocity.

During the afternoon, traffic in Monterrey, Mexico's third city, was disrupted for two hours while hundreds of citizens watched an object in the sky which was shaped "like a tennis racket without a handle." The reports said that the object remained stationary at times and darted about at others.

(cont. next page)

Next day, March 12, the Saucers moved in on Mexico's great capital city. The English-language Mexican City Herald headlined: Four Flying Saucers Circle Over Capital. The feature article began: "Mexico City yesterday got its first view of the Flying Saucers. It was a good long look. Four of the mysterious visitors hovered over the Central Airport while several hundred . . . looked on. Most of them agreed as to the phenomenon's appearance, as disks of white metal, resembling aluminum." The Herald included many eyewitness accounts including that of J. de la Vega, a veteran employee of the airport commander's office, who said that he saw "all four" of the Flying Saucers. De la Vega said that meteorologists, with weather-balloon tracking instruments, calculated the altitude of the disks at 35,000 to 40,000 feet. "They seemed about the size of a silver peso," De la Vega said.

I talked with Salvador Arreguin, aviation editor of Prensa Grafica, who photographed one of the strange objects through the meteorologists' theodolite at the airport. "It looked like a tiny, white, shiny globe when I looked at it through the theodolite," Arreguin said, "but when the film was developed, only the crescent part, lighted by the sun, appeared. In reality, it was round."

The Saucers over the airport were a four-day wonder to the Mexico City dailies. Hundreds of tourists and airport officials described the Saucers, which reappeared on March 13, 14, and 15.

It was on this last day, the 15th, that I obtained my most authoritative description. Carl Kupfer, Mexico City bureau chief for the International News Service, watched one of the objects with his naked eye and through a telescopic lens for several minutes. Carl is an experienced newspaperman and foreign correspondent. This trained observer had been frankly skeptical of the Saucers, until midday on the 15th. A unit from Columbia Pictures is filming The Brave Bulls on location here. Unitman Homer Davies had invited Kupfer to the airport with the promise that if a Saucer appeared, sound engineer Lodge Cunningham would shoot color pictures of it with a 16-mm. movie camera equipped with a 102-mm. telescopic lens.

I saw Carl Kupfer in the afternoon when he returned to his office to file his eyewitness wire-service story. He was a skeptic no longer. Here is the story he told me:

"Homer and I arrived at the airport shortly after noon. Within a few minutes of our arrival, several members of the tower crew told us they saw a Saucer hovering over the city to the southwest of the airport. Then we found Lodge Cunningham. I looked through his telescopic lenses and saw an object in almost the center of the field. It appeared to have a diameter of about three millimeters and was of a white-silvery color. It was shaped rather like a pingpong ball with an elongated tail below. To obviate the possibility that it was a refracted image in the lens, the camera and lens were both turned on the tripod, and the object changed position in the field. Also, several people around us saw it with the naked eye."

I asked Carl if the object was moving or stationary.

"Both," he exclaimed. "At first it was stationary in the field of vision, then it began to move across the scope from eight to two-o'clock position. Its movement was erratic, and it took just five minutes to move across the scope. It stopped and started. At times, it had a vertical movement. It was impossible to see any markings, and consequently I can not guess what it was."

I asked Kupfer if he could have seen a planet or a balloon.

"It is highly improbable that it could have been either," he replied. "The erratic movement would obviate the planet hypothesis. The strong wind which was blowing would have made a balloon move much faster than the object we observed."

Kupfer appeared somewhat shaken up by his experience.

Cunningham shot fifty feet of color film and gave it to Kupfer to send to the New York office of International News Photos for processing. (Word came back sometime later that despite painstaking developing and enlarging, no image of the object that had been photographed could be discerned on the film.)

The next morning I talked with Homer Davies, and he corroborated Kupfer's story exactly.

"I am convinced," he said, "that the usual planet and balloon arguments can not apply to what we saw yesterday over the airport. It was something strange. I can't explain it."—Lowell Harner

(This dispatch is most interesting if considered in connection with a statement by Senator Clinton Anderson of New Mexico made at about the same time. Said Senator Anderson, as reported by Robert S. Allen: "I believe something big is underway. There is too much going on in those large research centers in my state to push-noon the numerous eyewitness stories of Flying Saucers and other mysterious devices roaring over the countryside. Also, those official denials are making new. They are both proper and to be expected."—The Editor.)

Still Another Flying Saucer

Flying saucers, varied in form and operation, continued to haunt skies over San Jose yesterday. Latest report came from Mrs. F. M. Whitlatch, 1048 Ramona Ave., who says she watched a whirling disc which appeared overhead at 3:35 p.m. trailing white smoke for five minutes until it dipped over the horizon. Son Jerry, 11, and a housewife neighbor who dodged identity also saw it, they say.

Canon City, Colorado
May 25, 1950

Canon City Man Sees Eleven Flying Saucers

A Canon City man Thursday night saw not just one flying saucer; he saw eleven.

Ben C. Herzel, operator of the East Canon store, Friday described how he stood at a window in his home between 10 and 11 o'clock Thursday night and saw a parade of the discs in the vicinity of Pikes Peak, northeast of Canon City.

"I happened to look out and saw a peculiar thing go sailing past," Herzel said. "I was a little startled and surprised and kept looking in that direction. About a minute later another one came by, then another and another, each about a minute apart. There were seven, then I called my wife, she and I counted four more before they quit."

HERZEL DESCRIBED them as "moving fast and looking like saucers all right. They were sort of star color, but they weren't falling stars, or that I'm sure."

He said it was "pretty hard" to tell how high they were; "they looked about as high as Pikes Peak, but of course that is decreasing from where we saw them."

He added that it was difficult to tell the size, "but they looked about three feet across from our window. Up close they would be much, much bigger, of course."

HERZEL ADDED that he didn't see any tail, as has been described by some saucer-spotters. There was, however, a "little streak behind, that looked like it might have been from an exhaust of some kind."

The East Canon man added that "there's no question in my mind now about flying saucers." He stated that he was a little reticent about calling The Record because "people might think I was imagining all this; but my wife will bear me out."

Not Missing Saucers

DENTON, Tex., May 8.—Members of the Trojan fraternity at North Texas State College wanted to make certain no flying saucers passed over town unnoticed. So they set up a flying saucer observation post on the roof of the house.

Oakland Tribune
5/8/50

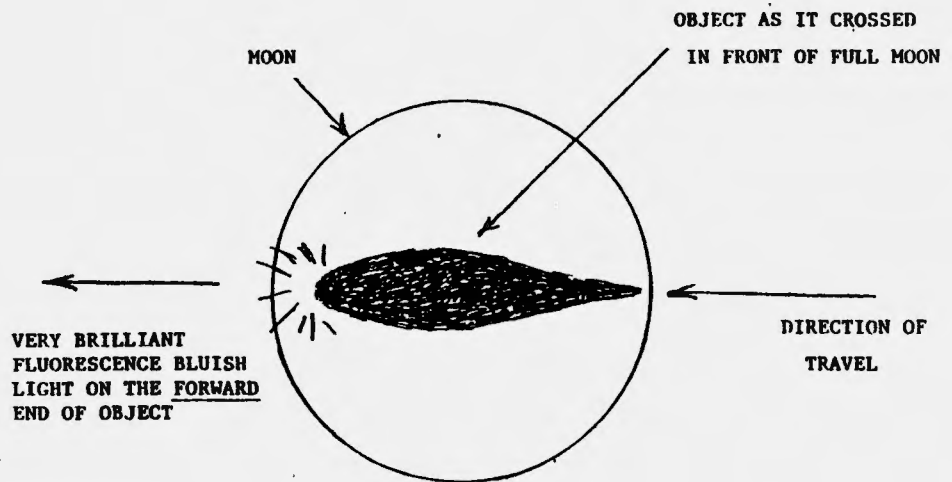
'Frankly I don't know of any U.S. experiments that would result in the appearance of these unconventional objects, and neither does Von Karman.' I still consider the most probable explanation of the green fireballs to be the one given in the first of the three paragraphs ...[here Dr. La Paz refers to a letter he wrote to Dr. P. H. Wyckoff back on February 20, 1950.]."¹⁹⁴

After quoting his letter to Dr. Wyckoff, La Paz ends with: "Although the above paragraphs were written some months ago, the recommendations contained in them are the ones I would urge you to consider at the present time."¹⁹⁵ What he had suggested was that the minority of luminous phenomena being reported could not be meteors and if the fireballs were not American secret devices an intensive, systematic investigation was urgently needed.

UFO activity since January had been so intense Donald Keyhoe had no trouble expanding his True magazine article into a 173 page manuscript when commissioned to do so by Fawcett publications; and in spite of the tremendous popularity of Keyhoe's magazine article, Fawcett felt there was a need to engage in some sort of promotional stunt. On May 25, 1950, Fawcett announced that there would be a temporary delay of the publishing of Keyhoe's book because "some unknown government agency thought the work revealed information vital to national defense." Nonetheless, Fawcett assured the public that the book would still appear in bookstores on June 5th as originally scheduled after a study of the government's complaint. Two days later, on May 27th, Keyhoe's book, Flying Saucers Are Real, was released to bookstores on a test basis in various midwest states undeterred, apparently by any alleged government displeasure.¹⁹⁶ Keyhoe's book pushed hard for the extraterrestrial theory, attacked Air Force censorship (real or imagined), and stated confidently that Americans wouldn't panic if the truth about the enigmatic sky wanderers was made known. Keyhoe's writing had punch, a readable narrative style, and made good use of some spectacular UFO cases that had taken place in the previous months.

"Watch it! Watch it!"

During the evening of May 29th, about 50 miles southwest of Washington, D.C., an American Airlines DC-6, piloted by a Captain Willis T. Sperry, cruised along at 8,000 feet. The airliner had just taken off from Washington Airport and was passing over Mt. Vernon, Virginia. The sky was dark since it was after 9 o'clock. Captain Sperry's attention was temporarily diverted as her fumbled with a map. His co-pilot Bill Bates caught sight of a brilliant blue glow and thought a collision was imminent so he yelled: "watch it, watch it!" Captain Sperry grabbed the controls and jerked the airliner



(Copied from an illustration made by Willis
T. Sperry, Captain, American Airlines)

into an abrupt turn as the strange glow zoomed toward his plane. As the light approached, it appeared as a brilliant, bluish, fluorescent light. After returning to a straight course and collecting their wits, Captain Sperry and his co-pilot spotted the blue light which was now motionless.

When first seen the UFO appeared to be a light about 25 times the magnitude of the brightest star. Later during a brief moment the blue light passed in front of the moon, which was full at the time. Sperry, Gates and Flight Engineer Robert Arnholt, all discerned a silhouette. The blue light was coming from the front of what appeared to be a smooth surfaced spindle. Some 30 seconds went by as the object hovered motionless and then the cigar-like shape resumed its forward motion. Said Sperry:

"When the object first appeared coming toward us, I started a turn to the right, then when it changed its course to parallel us, I started turning to the left so as to be able to follow its path. Even so it went to the rear of the plane, circled around to the right far enough so that the First Officer (Gates) saw it on his side before reversing its direction and going out of sight."¹⁹⁷

Captain Sperry radioed Washington Tower but the controllers had not seen anything unusual. Tower personnel alerted the press and the next day in Tulsa reporters questioned Captain Sperry.

Instead of being ridiculed by his fellow pilots, Captain Sperry was approached by other airline flying officers who insisted on having "serious discussions" about the flying saucer problem. One flyer was even able to provide information that seemed to lend support to Captain Sperry's story. Captain Sperry heard from a pilot who had been flying another American Airlines plane over Virginia some 400 miles to the south, a pilot named Henry H. Myers, President Franklin Roosevelt's personal pilot during World War II. Myers had noticed a brilliant "shooting star" that night the same time as Sperry's UFO encounter. The "shooting star" dropped down out of the night sky off to the north of him where Captain Sperry's plane was at the time. To Myers' astonishment the "shooting star" fell a distance and then moved horizontally.¹⁹⁸

Of his own UFO encounter, Captain Sperry told the press the Air Force was interested but had kept their agents at a distance. The press reported:

"He made no report to the Air Force but answered questions posed by a major who called him at Tulsa long distance from the Pentagon on 30 May."¹⁹⁹

That the UFO could have been a meteor was emphatically discounted by both Sperry and Gates. A spokesman for American

Airlines reacted to Sperry's description of the UFO's astounding speed by expressing amazement, noting that to be able to circle a 300 mile-per-hour airliner twice demanded an engine of incredible power.²⁰⁰

"Damned nonsense."

If Edward Ruppelt is accurate, the Pentagon hit a high of irritability by May 1950. Ruppelt has one unnamed Air Force general bellowing: "It's all a bunch of damned nonsense." And of pilots reporting UFO's, the same military bigshot snorted: "They were just fatigued."²⁰¹

More of McMinnville.

Meanwhile, at McMinnville, Oregon, the Trents received their developed film from the local drugstore in early June. Not only did Mr. Trent get two fairly clear pictures of the UFO, but each picture included many things in the foreground and the background that would prove of considerable value in subsequent scientific analysis. The prints remained a family curiosity until a boyfriend of one of Trent's nieces saw the images and since he was in the Army at the time, he urged Mr. Trent to tell someone about the photographs. Eventually, Mr. Trent confided in his banker. The banker knew Mr. Trent well and was convinced of his excellent character. In fact, the banker was so persuaded that there was something to the story he did a bold thing. He put the prints in the bank's front window! It wasn't long before a reporter for the McMinnville newspaper stopped by to ask questions. The newsman went out to Trent's place and got the complete story including the negatives. The editor of the paper was well aware of the veracity of the Trent clan and splashed the pictures and story over the front page of the McMinnville Telephone-Register on June 8th.

In the story Trent is quoted as worrying about photographing some sort of secret weapon. Mr. Trent would never claim to have taken a picture of a space ship as some critics would charge.²⁰² As word spread, the Trents recorded an interview for Lew Gillette of radio station KMCM, while the Portland Oregonian, picked up on the case June 10th followed by the Los Angeles Examiner on June 11th. Life magazine, hot for such visual titillation, grabbed a print for its June 1950 issue. Incredibly, there is no Air Force (Project GRUDGE) UFO file on the important McMinnville case. The only acknowledgement in the Air Force (Project GRUDGE) UFO file is a statement made by Lt. Colonel John P. Spaulding, Chief, Civil Branch, Community Relations Division, Office of Information. The Colonel had answered a letter written to the Air Force by a civilian in 1965. The civilian wanted to know what the Air Force thought about the Trent pictures that were causing so much excitement among students of the UFO mystery. The reply by the Colonel was short and to the

point: "The Air Force has no information on photographs of an unidentified flying object taken by Mr. and Mrs. Trent of McMinnville, Oregon."²⁰³ Actually, the Air Force does have some information on the case, but it is in records of local Air Force OSI unit activities. It is not clear if it was the Air Force's intention to hide data in local files but it sure helped to keep a lot of UFO material out of public view and away from journalists and others who wanted to see "all of the Air Force's UFO evidence."

The OSI records that refer to the McMinnville case will be discussed later in this text.

Radio commentator Frank Edwards, who was fascinated by the UFO puzzle, jumped on the Trent case as soon as it hit the newswire. He phoned the editor of the McMinnville paper to get the complete story and that evening went on the air to tell his listeners about the amazing photos, adding that if anyone wished a copy of the now famous June 8th edition, they should write the office of the Telephone-Register. So many took pen in hand, the small town paper was swamped, so the front page of the June 8th edition was reprinted and sold through the mail for 10¢.²⁰⁴

While The Air Force may have claimed ignorance of the Trent photos for years, Frank Edwards would have us believe the Pentagon was well informed:

"I secured two enlargements from the original negatives and took them to the Air Force at the Pentagon. They attracted quite a bit of interest, and at that time (June 1950) I was told that they were the best civilian photographs of an Unidentified Flying Object that the Air Force had seen up to that time."²⁰⁵

The photos were so good many people assumed the Trents were trying to pull their leg. The images could not be clouds, birds, balloons, or even flaws on the negative. It seemed certain the images depicted a small model which meant a deliberate hoax, or a large and extremely strange flying craft. Concerning the possibility of a hoax, Paul Trent's brother, Clayton, snapped: "Paul doesn't know enough about photography to fake something like that."²⁰⁶ Investigators agreed with Mr. Clayton, finding that Paul Trent was an unsophisticated photographer. Paul Trent remained bewildered by it all: "...I didn't believe all that talk about flying saucers before, but now I have an idea the Army knows what they are..."²⁰⁷

The UFO in the photographs resembles a garbage can lid thrown in the air, a suspicion that required careful examination by experts. Another suspicious fact was a statement by Mrs. Trent when interviewed by Lew Gillette. She told of spending weekends at Delake, Oregon, where: "...she had seen

similar objects on the coast three different times, 'but no one would believe me.'"208

If there is one tip off to a hoax it is a person that claims multiple UFO sightings. Did the Trents, specifically Mrs. Trent, fake the photos to "prove" she had seen a UFO? Were the Trents inspired by the alleged UFO photo taken at Pacific City, Oregon, a story of which appeared in the Portland Oregonian on April 22nd? The Trent's story contained numerous details that could be checked, and the photographs had enough potential to draw many experts into a heated fray.

Seventeen years' later the Mc Minnville case was subject to a complete investigation. A visit was made to the Trent's homestead. Geological survey maps were studied and the Trents requested. Most importantly, the UFO negatives were given a scientific examination. Results showed that sophisticated optical fabrication was ruled out. Some actual object had been photographed, even the most severe critic conceded that, but the cardinal question was what kind of solid object? Was it a small object very close, or was it a large object at a distance as claimed by the Trents?

A densitometer measurement of the pale shadowed bottom of the UFO image on the negative indicated that the UFO was a large object in the sky at a distance due to evidence of atmospheric extinction and scattering that reduced contrast, but a critic attacked the case on a number of points. Phillip J. Klass listed a few things that bothered him:

1. Confusion over whether Mr. Trent was in or outside the house when the UFO was first sighted.
2. Claims of previous sightings (a rare occurrence in UFO history).
3. The apparent unconcern over making the pictures public.
4. The possibility that a smear of oil on the camera's lens may have falsely enhanced the photometric value for the shaded bottom of the UFO image.
5. A shadow under the eaves of a building in the photos indicated a possible late morning photo instead of the witnesses' claimed 7:30 p.m. time.
6. Lack of collaborating witnesses.
7. The shift of the UFO in the two photos was not dramatic enough to rule out entirely a small model suspended by an undefined string, apparently from a wire shown crossing the top of the photograph.

On the other hand, those that look with favor on the Trent's story countered with:

1. Weather conditions on record correlate with the Trent's testimony.
2. Veracity of the Trents was rated excellent by neighbors and local businessmen.
3. Likewise, the Trents made a favorable impression on the experts that questioned them in 1967.
4. There was no apparent motivation to undertake a hoax.
5. Over all appearance of photographs consistent with early evening time.
6. No apparent reason for claiming an early evening time rather than a late morning one.
7. The sky shown in the photo is brighter toward the west indicating a sunset.
8. An analysis of the photo's images shows an absence of rotation which agrees with the Trent's testimony.
9. The size of the UFO image in photo #2 taken a moment after photo #1, showed that the image is slightly smaller which is consistent with the witnesses assertion that the UFO was moving away.
10. Another aspect, termed psychological reaction, makes much of the shift of Mr. Trent's position as he snapped photo #2. If the UFO had been a mere model suspended from a wire a short distance away, why did Mr. Trent suddenly step to his right and backward into the yard instead of forward. Mr. Trent claimed that the UFO tipped and circled while being photographed thus a shift away by him was required as well as to the right due to the layout of the yard.
11. Measurements of known distances of landmarks shown in the photos correlate with photometry readings. This lends support to the accuracy of readings of the UFO image itself. The UFO's size as estimated by the Trents given as "20-30 feet in diameter," compares favorably with densitometer measurements that indicate a large object tens of meters in diameter, and although no guess was made of the distance of the UFO, photometry results suggest an object 1.3 kilometers away, a range that seems reasonable if the sighting was authentic. It also has merit in that it agrees with the object's suggested diameter.
12. The Trent's description of the UFO's surface brightness, the appearance of aluminum, was confirmed by photo analysis.

Klass disputed points number 1, 4, and 6,²⁰⁹ but those objections and additional clarifications were discussed with the results in the Trent's favor by Dr. Bruce S. Maccabee in his own investigation conducted in the late 1970's.²¹⁰

If Dr. Maccabee is right, then the results of the 1967 government sponsored study are still valid: "...the simplest and most direct interpretation is that the photos correlate with the witnesses testimony."²¹¹ This is apparently so in spite of Phillip Klass' arguments.²¹²

Close scrutiny of the Trent case was still some time in the future as of mid June 1950, therefore, it is best we leave it for now.

One of the more remarkable displays of UFO maneuverability was described in a report from California dated June 12th. The witness, a A. C. Fisher, was observing a jet aircraft speeding through the sky leaving a long vapor trail behind. Suddenly it was noticed that the vapor trail had been "cut." Peering skyward with greater care, Mr. Fisher discerned a metallic looking disc executing a vertical loop around the streaking aircraft, performing the feat several times in succession. Two other discs came into view and performed the same aerobatics.²¹³

"If its one of ours, I'm mighty proud."

A certain Air Force Sergeant assigned to the Mt. Tamalpais military radio station in Marin County, California, boasted: "I've seen 'em all [aircraft] and I never saw anything like that." While driving home from his duty shift at the radio station one afternoon he thought it funny people in town were staring at the sky. Arriving home he grabbed an eight-power pair of binoculars and looked to the south at the object in the sky that was drawing everyone's attention. Very high up in the sparkling clear air that day of June 13, 1950 was a huge, circular object with a flat bottom. The thing hung there, motionless. Mulling the extraordinarily good weather, the Sergeant thought to himself: "If somebody wanted to look at the Bay Area, they sure got a good look..." Suddenly, as he watched, a puff of smoke erupted from the UFO's underside, which was followed by an incredibly swift departure, so fast the Sergeant lost it almost immediately. The Sergeant made a phone call to the Oakland Tribune. He identified himself and told his story. He finished up by saying that he thought the UFO was larger than a B-36 and capable of faster and higher flying than anything he knew about, terminating the telephone interview with: "Doc, if its one of ours, I'm mighty proud of it."²¹⁴

Both the Sergeant in the above account and Mr. Trent seemed to have been influenced by the secret weapon theory postulated by men like Henry J. Taylor, although the extraterrestrial idea was still being promoted. In June 1950, a small newsweekly

Talk of the Times, carried the April Fool joke concocted by the Cologne, Germany newspaper Neue Illustrierte. The Illustrierte's jazzed up version of the Newton and GeBauer's hoax had returned to the U.S., its origin almost untraceable.

The space visitor angle got another boost, this time in Man to Man magazine in a story titled: "Did the Mystery Plane Come From Mars?" The whole essay was built around the proposal that the phenomenon reported by airline pilots Chiles and Whitted back in the summer of 1948 was most probably a spaceship from the red planet. Now Man to Man, a cheap pulp, was hardly in the same league as the Saturday Evening Post, but the author of the forementioned article might lift a few eyebrows: Captain Corley McDarment, USAF (Reserve), Director of the Aviation Writer's Association, Executive Secretary, Air Reserve Association, and Assistant Chief of the Information Division, Army Air Corps when General H. H. Arnold was Commanding General. 215

"Discourage the public."

Approval of a limited dissemination of the summary prepared by the 17th District OSI dealing with aerial phenomena was received by the Kirtland Air Force Base unit on June 15th. The reply was made by an Acting Chief of the Counter Intelligence Division on behalf of General Carroll. The tone was not too favorable. The letter noted that nearly every OSI unit had submitted reports of UFO activity even though such reporting was voided by AFCSI Letter No. 85 dated 8 February 1950, with the most reports being forwarded by the 17th District Office. Taking note of Dr. La Paz, the Counter Intelligence Chief stated:

"Dr. La Paz has carried on considerable correspondence with the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board and the Research and Development Board. Opinions vary among qualified scientists in both of the above agencies as to the motives of Dr. La Paz and his qualifications as a specialist in the field of celestial phenomena." 216

The mention of flying discs as a classification of aerial phenomena to be studied incurred a sharp reaction:

"Pertinent to OSI participation in the investigation and study of aerial phenomena are the conclusions reached by all Services through the JIC that studies of all available data had resulted in the conclusion that only natural or explainable phenomena were involved. These conclusions served to give no credence to reports in the public press that such phenomena may have been of unfriendly origin.

"In December 1949 the Directorate of Intelligence, DCS/O, cancelled all outstanding intelligence

requirements for collection of information concerning 'flying saucers.' As previously mentioned, this action was with the concurrence of all Services through the JIC. Official releases were then made to the press that 'flying saucers' had been established to be the result of natural or explainable phenomena and that the USAF would discontinue the investigation and study of reported observations."217

This attack on flying saucers, however, still allowed for an investigation of unexplained celestial phenomena which was assumed to be of natural origin, although an authorized scientific approach might appear to be related to the matter of flying saucers in the public mind.

Finally, while permitting a distribution of the 17th District's summary, the distribution had to be kept limited because:

"Inasmuch as present Hq. USAF policy is to discourage public interest in 'flying saucers' it might not appear consistent for the OSI to undertake a broader dissemination of material which relates in part to the discredited 'flying saucer' reports."218

Australia, Japan, and South America.

In Australia, in June, a Fred Beppo, a former flying instructor, noted something over Geelong in Victoria. His son, a mere four-year-old, had noticed it first and shouted that an "airplane was in the sky." Beppo, looking up, beheld: "...a round disc, bronze on the top and silver underneath, moving southwards in eerie silence at an estimated one thousand miles per hour and leaving behind it a trail of blue vapor or smoke." The report caused a sensation in the Australian press.219

A military teletype message from the Far East notified the Pentagon in Washington that at 0605Z on 21 June:

"...A CIRCULAR SHAPED OBJECT OF NATURAL COLOR WHICH APPEARED WHEN TILTED TO BE OF HIGHLY POLISHED SILVER AND METALLIC CONSTRUCTION. OBJECT WAS APPROXIMATELY 2 MILES HORIZONTALLY FROM OBSERVER. ESTIMATED ALTITUDE 7000 FEET. ANGLE OF ELEVATION FROM HORIZON WAS 60 DEG. OBJECT IN VIEW NO LONGER THAN 20 SECONDS. SIZE ESTIMATED 30 FEET DIAMETER AND 5 FEET THICK. FIRST OBSERVED TRAVELING PARALLEL TO AND 1000 FEET ABOVE F-80, CAME ABREAST OF F-80 TILTED AT ABOUT 43 DEG TO HORIZONTAL FLASHED BY SUNLIGHT AND APPEARED TO SHIMMER, THEN RETURNED TO HORIZONTAL AND REMAINED IN SAME PLANE. ROSE ALMOST VERTICALLY ABOUT 1000 FEET, SEEMED TO CHANGE DIRECTION SLIGHTLY AND

RAPIDLY DISAPPEARED. NO SOUND COULD BE DETECTED DUE TO OTHER ACFT. SPEED ESTIMATED 650 MPH WHEN FIRST SIGHTED TO 975 MPH WHEN LEAVING. OBSERVER RATED WITH 1100 HOURS IN TRANSPORT AND FIGHTER ACFT."220

An extremely brief note from South Africa reported that UFO's were now being sighted over the countryside, especially the Pertoria area.221

"Roaring like Thunder."

Airman Garland, on duty in the Hamilton Air Force Base Control Tower with airman Roger Pryor, first detected the blue flame's approach that unforgettable morning of June 21st. Brilliant and swift, the strange light gave the impression of being a bolide. Fog hung like a heavy curtain all over the Bay Area except for Hamilton Field where good visibility prevailed. At 1:35 in the morning there was not much air traffic so the onrushing phenomenon drew Garland's and Pryor's undivided attention. Somewhere between 2-5,000 feet high the UFO rocketed over Hamilton Field doing an estimated 1,000 to 1,500 miles per hour. In the darkness the airmen claimed to have seen through binoculars a "circular craft, thick in the center and tapering to edges similar to a cone or fan." Pryor added that he saw: "...a blue flame shooting out as the object flashed from southwest to northeast," and agreed with Garland that the thing exhibited controlled flight. Within moments after the UFO had left the area, it reappeared out of the northeast and made another pass over Hamilton, "roaring like thunder."

Two NCO's, Staff Sgt. Ellis Lorimer, Control Tower Operator, and Staff Sgt. Virgil Cappuro of the Airways Communications Unit were summoned. The four Air Force men watched as the UFO made four more passes over the airfield during a 25 minute period before finally veering toward the ocean and disappearing for good. To the airmen's reckoning the UFO's movement suggested repeated trips over Hamilton Field's radio beacon located just north of the airstrip.

That afternoon the San Rafael Independent-Journal, serving the urban area adjacent to Hamilton, carried a big page one scare-head: AIRMEN SEE FLYING DISCS ROAR OVER HAMILTON FIELD. A Major Johnson responded to press inquiries in a low keyed manner admitting that the UFO, as reported, "traveled much faster than an ordinary aircraft" in quick sweeps over the airfield. He confirmed the absence of scheduled air traffic at the time or the subsequent emergency landing of any aircraft in distress. The Pentagon bounced the problem back to the commander of Hamilton Field, terming it a "local matter." Casual talk around the airbase most often mentioned the possibility of a "lost jet plane."222

The Oakland Tribune did a little investigative work and learned that questioning by Intelligence officers would be

released and insistent referred to the Air Force's published report that there are no flying saucers.

"The Air Force report was made last December after two years of investigation.

"Reports from persons who claim to have seen saucers in the Bay Area particularly, have been frequent ever since, however."223

On June 22nd, a press conference was suddenly called at Hamilton Air Force Base. The airmen who reported the UFO were there with Air Force Intelligence and Public Relations Officers. It seems the airmen had changed their story. No, the UFO's shape was not discernable. Also, there had been no "roaring like thunder,"--just a blue-white flame.224 The Air Force officers present stated that an official written opinion on the incident was being sent to Washington and no further comment about the episode was foreseen.225

A week later, across the bay in the city of San Leandro, a respected retired Oakland educator and California historian, a R. Stuart, slumbered quietly with his wife in the backyard of his home as was his habit during the hot summer nights.

The time was a little after 1:00 a.m. in the morning. Suddenly he was rudely awakened by a "roaring like thunder." Overhead at about 2,000 feet, rocketed something "circular with jets of flame shooting out from the edges." [!]226

Daggett's shimmering mystery of June 24th.

Back in the U.S. still another aerial sighting of something odd occurred near Daggett, California, to the northeast of Los Angeles. A spindle-shaped object sped across the sky at an altitude in excess of 50,000 feet. A pilot of a Navy transport spotted the streaking object and was impressed by a faint shimmering about the trailing end of the spindle although there were no words used that might be construed as describing a jet exhaust. The mystery object headed north, as the crews of two commercial airliners alerted by the Navy pilot looked on. Before flying out of sight, the spindle changed course to a western heading enabling the aircrews to make out the spindle's pipe-like cross section.227

Ground observers of the blazing object were located at Las Vegas, Nevada, and Silver Lake, California. At a news conference, Captain Sam B. Wiper and First Officer David Stewart, pilots of one of United Airlines' airliners, described the UFO as a brilliant blue and orange in color, and that "long trails of light streamed from it."228

First Officer Stewart remarked: "...my ship was flying at 14,000 feet and the object flew a parallel course for 20 miles and then faded into the distance. He estimated its speed as faster than his plane's 200 miles per hour."229

The United Press reported that: "The pilots insisted the object was no optical illusion and pointed out that all their passengers witnessed the phenomenon."230

The news service needed the Air Force with the inclusion of a few extra words as the story was sent out over the tele-

type: "Neither First Officer David Stewart or Captain Sam Wiper identified the dirigible-like object as a flying saucer, which deprives the Air Force of an opportunity to say once again that such things don't exist."²³¹

Meanwhile, the Trent's in Oregon had so far been spared any hassle over their UFO experience. What happened then is not too clear. According to Mr. Trent, about three weeks after his UFO pictures were first published, he had some "visitors." This would mean sometime close to the end of June. It is known that an agent of the Air Force's OSI stationed at Fairfield-Suisun Air Force Base, California, was from Mc Minnville and could vouch for the Trents as solid citizens and may have triggered an inquiry. On the other hand, Frank Edwards claims he may have initiated interest when he personally went to the Pentagon. Anyway, microfilm records in the National Archives show that a brief report on the Trent story had been filed with the local 19th OSI California District office by the agent in question on June 26th. Allowing a few days for decision making and travel time, would bring us to the end of June. In fact, at the end of the month some men showed up at the Trent farm, took pictures of everything inside and outside the house. They even searched the house. Mrs. Trent remembers with irritation that the men left dresser drawers a mess. All kinds of questions were asked. In the yard various objects were tossed in the air and photographed.²³² The men excused their actions by saying it was their job. It is not known just what the men were looking for but it is assumed they were seeking the "model used in the hoax." A plain clothesman also visited the office of the Telephone-Register and obtained some prints of the Trent pictures. Luckily the Trent negatives did not vanish forever into some classified military file like some other UFO film. The last to have the negatives had been Life, and that magazine insisted it had mailed them back to the Mc Minnville Telephone-Register. For years they were presumed lost until they turned up in the possession of the International News Service in the 1960's.²³³

The men who swarmed over Trent's house and yard may well have been from the Air Force's OSI. One of the residents of Mc Minnville, Oregon was a Lawrence Hyder, an Air Force Sergeant stationed at Fairfield-Suisun Air Force Base, California. While home on leave on June 8, 1950, he read about the Trent photos in the Mc Minnville Telephone-Register and when the Sergeant returned to duty in California, he urged the OSI to check on the "saucer pictures" since the Trents were known by the Oregon community as substantial and honest citizens. Lt. Colonel Kenneth King, Commander of the local 19th District of the OSI, forwarded a note detailing the Sergeant's suggestion to OSI headquarters in Washington. No more information on this case is available in OSI records.²³⁴

"The 90 second meteor."

Was Mother Nature breaking her own laws, or were there things under intelligence control penetrating the Earth's atmosphere? Such a question is valid when we ponder an official report by a weather reconnaissance mission over the Gulf of Mexico called a "Pelican Mission." The aircrew declared:

"At 1940 CST, 24 June 1950, flying on a routine Pelican at 10,000 feet, course about thirty degrees, ground speed 173 knots, position 26 degrees 50 minutes north, 86 degrees 5 minutes west, a brilliant light was observed high in the sky at what seemed a great distance at a relative bearing of about 80 degrees. The light proceeded earthward at what seemed a slow (90 seconds) rate and in a surving erratic path leaving an extremely bright glowing trail. After about a minute and a half the light disappeared but the trail continued to glow blue-white with undiminished brilliance for another fifteen minutes after which it faded slowly to a soft blur and finally dissipated at about 2000 CST."235

The 11th District OSI Office forwarded a news clipping from an issue of the Daily Oklahoman to OSI headquarters in Washington. The clipping read:

"Holdenville, June 24 -- (UP) -- Central Airlines here reported Saturday that one of its pilots followed 'a saucer-shaped object' for 20 miles in the sky near Commerce, Texas.

"The airline said its Forth Worth office reported by teletype that both flight captain Harry Logsdon and a passenger, identified as W. Crowder, Texarkana, Texas, said they saw the object.

"Logsdon, a veteran commercial pilot, was quoted as saying he kept the object in sight for about 20 miles before it pulled away from his airliner in a sudden burst of speed.

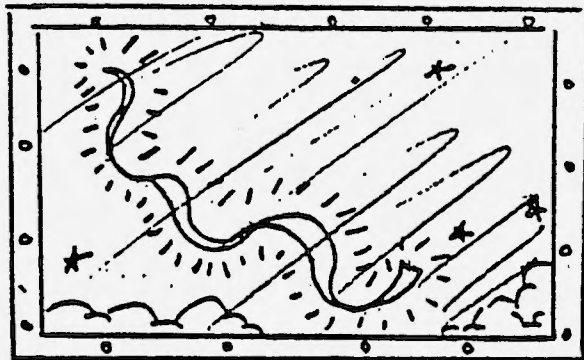
"He estimated the object's speed 'in excess of 400 miles an hour,' the airline said."236

Lights of an unidentified nature caused speculation that flying saucers had visited the Newburgh, New York, area during the night of June 25th. At least one witness, a reporter for the Newburgh News, described the lights as disc-like and that they shifted position in formation. The reporter, a Mr. Connolly, had considerable wartime experience as an aircraft spotter but he still insisted the lights he saw on June 25th had no likeness to any aircraft he was familiar with.237

Stalin strikes.

"At 1940 CST, 24 June 1950, flying on a routine Pelican at 10,000 feet, course about thirty degrees, ground speed 173 knots, position $26^{\circ}50'N$ $86^{\circ}05'W$, a brilliant light was observed high in the sky at what seemed a great distance at a relative bearing of about 80° . The light proceeded earthward at what seemed a slow rate and in a curving erratic path leaving an extremely bright glowing trail. After about a minute and a half the light dissappeared but the trail continued to glow blue-white with undiminished brilliance for another fifteen minutes after which it faded slowly to a soft blur and finally dissipated at about 2000 CST."

Appearance from Navigator's window.



"At this time the portion of the sky in which the phenomenon occurred had turned dark enough for most of the stars to be visible. Skies in the immediate vicinity were clear but a few thunder storms on the horizon, especially to the South and East, gave off intense

These were quiet days when our own world was so peaceful that it could think about others, but not for long. There could be some truth in a supposition that a die-hard attitude by those few experts favoring a Soviet solution were behind an imposition of UFO secrecy. An aggressive move was believed possible and the saucers may have been scout craft or first strike missiles of Stalin's. UFO reports in Europe and the Far East had proved worrisome as can be seen by comment in official communiques. On June 25th war broke out.

Without warning, Communist armies struck south across the 38th parallel in Korea. American troops were caught up in the fighting. President Truman, with the backing of the United Nations, declared North Korea an aggressor and ordered the Pentagon to rush more troops to Korea to throw back the invasion. Fears of a military move by Stalin had been justified.

"Wonderful news."

The July issue of Reader's Digest was on sale and the editors had selected Henry J. Taylor's radio broadcast about UFO's as the subject of a "condensed article" as odd as that sounds. Of all the articles in that particular issue, it was Taylor's claims that were used to sell the magazine, with big ads in the newspapers trumpeting the "fact" that the flying saucers were not Russian or Martian, but were Uncle Sam's secret weapon which would "prove wonderful news for America."²³⁸

The UFO's continued their bad habit, especially with shooting going on in the Far East, of snooping around sensitive military installations. At the Army's Red River Arsenal, Texarkana, Texas, on June 27th, a bright, glittering object was noticed by two men driving a Federal truck on Van Buren street. The description of the object said it appeared to be: "...as large as an ordinary dishpan 18 inches by 5 inches deep as the dishpan would appear at about 15 feet distance..."²³⁹ It looked: "...flat on top and bottom and rounded on the sides, similar to two dishpans turned together."²⁴⁰ It moved, they said, "plenty fast." Both witnesses, according to military interrogators, were beyond reproach in regards to character and integrity and were employed by the Arsenal in supervisory capacities.²⁴¹

When a local television station in Louisville, Kentucky sent one of its staff photographers out on a routine assignment, he came back with something other than routine news. The newsman heard a plane pass over and happened to look up. He spotted a roaring aircraft and to the left of the plane a "large bright disc with a light corona around it." Bringing his movie camera to bear, he shot 50 feet of film while the UFO hovered. For some 10 seconds the UFO remained motionless and then moved off toward the west.²⁴² The Air Force put into motion a secret investigation of the incident which we will discuss a bit later in this text.

A couple of housewives at Oakland, California, one June 27th, were outside about noon, 11:30 a.m., and they idly watched a big bomber fly over when: "...a shiny, spinning object overtook it from the rear, flew over it and disappeared in the east."243

The airborne will-o'-the-wisp flap then rampant extended to Cairo, Illinois, the same afternoon, June 28th, as the Louisville UFO movie session. Five inhabitants of Cairo noticed egg-shaped objects with a chrome-like finish in the atmosphere. Mr. A. L. Morris saw one "egg" pause for awhile and then tear off to the southwest.244

An Air Intelligence Report from Georgia reported an "erratic" object:

"Between 0415 and 0500 EST on 28 June 1950, an unidentified aerial object was observed by --- (deleted) and his wife from Chatham City housing project in Savannah, Georgia. Object was described as a round ball of colorless light which moved in an erratic manner vertically and horizontally over an area NE of the city for 45 minutes until it disappeared, climbing swiftly to the NE."245

The July issue of Flying joined Reader's Digest on the newsstands with its own flying saucer article. The article was "The Flying Saucers Fact or Fiction?" by the magazine's editor Curtis Fuller. It was an effective essay since it was built around four close-up UFO sightings by airline pilots. Fuller dissected and then rejected theories that attributed the strange objects to the science of mankind, which automatically put him in opposition to Taylor's "good news." The effectiveness of the essay was aided by its temperate tone and the fact that it reached thousands in the aviation industry.

While we're at it, another literary event at this juncture should be mentioned. To put an end to the tiresome chore of retelling his June 24, 1947 experience of three years before, Kenneth Arnold had a 16-page booklet printed titled, "The Flying Saucer As I Saw It." Price: 50¢.

A UFO report came out of Lexington, Virginia, June 29th, which was printed by the Rockbridge County News, but the next day a sighting that was far from a "dot-in-the-sky" story was observed.

A startling example of a reported encounter between a UFO and an aircraft was recorded at Dowagiac, Michigan. A farmer, J. Keller, well known locally for honesty and for being a hard worker according to the press, was plowing his hay field near the city of Dowagiac the afternoon of June 29th,

Opposite page:

A Canadian document, dated June 29, 1950, from that nation's Department of Scientific Intelligence, states that it learned the U.S. Air Force was following a policy of "playing down" flying saucer reports.

26

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DBI

"Flying Saucers"

1 You will recall reminding me the other day of a decision taken by the JIC at the 220th meeting in regard to the preparation of a questionnaire suitable for investigating and reporting upon the occurrences or alleged occurrences of flying saucers passing over Canada.

2 This Directorate sent an officer to Washington to obtain the results of a special study on this subject undertaken by the USAF. This study investigated some 375 incidents from all points of view and concluded that there were very few of the alleged sightings which could not be explained either by natural phenomena or by unduly active imagination. It was felt by the USAF that any further publicity in regard to "flying saucers" would tend to induce further sightings of an imaginative character. Hence their present policy is to "play down" the subject and deal with such reports as do come in on individual bases, without any special arrangements for reporting or investigation.

3 It seems to me that a similar policy on our part would be wise and that it would be undesirable therefore for us to produce a special questionnaire or make any special arrangements for investigation since this would tend to give emphasis to the matter. I shall, however, pass to you for your information and any further action you care to take such unsolicited reports as are received.

4 I shall report this view to the Joint Intelligence Committee; perhaps however you would like to discuss the matter first.

Handwritten: 2012
Classification cancelled / Changed to Unclass
By authority of DSIS
Date 25 May 84
Signature [Signature] (N.W. Bean) G/C
Title / Rank / Appointment G/DSIS DAI

unconcerned with such things as flying saucers. He testified that he nearly jumped out of his skin when an Air Force C-54 swooped over his farm at an altitude of only 500 feet. Perched atop his tractor, Keller said he had a good view of the C-54 as it sped by only a quarter of a mile away. Keller swears that he saw something directly beneath the aircraft, something shaped like a huge, chrome-colored, hubcap, about 25 feet in diameter and about 15 feet thick in the center. He claimed that the curving top had a small dome protruding in the middle. The thing wobbled a little and then dropped down away from the C-54 and zoomed off at a terrific velocity, vanishing from sight in about five seconds. According to Keller he waited a week before telling anyone fearing horselaughs from his neighbors, but when he got up enough courage to relate the story to friends, he softened the account by suggesting that the plane must have launched the saucer. When Washington heard about it, a military spokesman suggested that Mr. Keller may have just witnessed the loss of a piece of cowling from a four engined bomber.²⁴⁶

The strangest "prank of nature" to take place in the skies over Cincinnati, Ohio, since the "space platform" sightings the previous Fall and Spring occurred in July 1950. The exact date was not remembered by the witness, a "Mr. R," who had a decade of experience as a CAA engineer. The witness described the UFO antics. The witness said the UFO climbed:

"...up at a 60 degree angle into a sunny sky filled with cumulus clouds. After a quick acceleration, the grayish metallic object reached its new elevation at 16 to 18,000 feet, then stalled for about 10 seconds. While calling to his wife to witness the event, Mr. R. watched the object dive back to its original elevation before levelling off and racing westward..."²⁴⁷

The Vermillion case.

On patrol near Furley, Kansas, two sheriff deputies noticed a red glow in the night sky. One deputy, for an instant, thought he was watching a meteor until he realized that meteors don't fall upward. The lawmen switched off the engine of their patrol car but could hear no sound coming from the mysterious object as it streaked upward at a 45 degree angle, a course that quickly carried it out of sight. The two officers said nothing until they heard a much stranger story about a Minister's experience.

Darkness covered the flat countryside nine miles west of Kingman, Kansas, midnight, June 30th, as a Rev. R. Vermillion drove toward town on U.S. Highway 54. Beside him sat his wife who had dozed off:

"We had been to Kiowa and were returning home when I noticed a bright red light near Cunningham. Then I saw a white light and figured it was a heavy bomber heading for Wichita."

"As we drove near the ship I detected a rotary movement on its outer ring. The object was about 250 feet in diameter, about 10 feet thick and had a small canopy raised about two feet on the top."

"I slowed down and awakened my wife. When a car passed me, I waved at the driver and cried 'flying saucer!'"

"At the bridge over the Minnescah River I stopped and the driver of the other car-- Mr. Muinix joined us. He told us that one of his daughters had seen the object near Greensburg and that he told her she was crazy when she said she had seen a flying saucer. He added that she remarked to him that he might think otherwise if they encountered someone else who saw the ship."

"At first I thought we might be observing a helicopter. I looked closely for retracting gear but saw none. The ship was hovering over two tractors which were in operation on a small plot of ground."

"The canopy part of the object was made, I am sure, of Alcoa because I have seen a lot of that type of metal. The moon was shining brightly and the craft was plainly discernible."

"After we had watched it for several minutes we decided that we would get in our cars and try to drive as close to it as possible. I turned out the lights on my car but Mr. Muinix had his on."

"...the object was not shaped like a saucer but more like a disc, or two saucers stuck together with a small protrusion or canopy about 10-15 feet in diameter on top. The rotor or outer spinning portion of the disc was approximately 10-15 feet from outer edge to inner edge; no vanes, blades, etc. were detected. Disc had a white light on top, a red light on the north side and a green light on the south side as viewed from the west side of the disc. Disc was estimated to be 200-250 feet in diameter and approximately 15 feet thick at center."248

Later when interviewed by the press, the Minister said:

"I was going to shine my car's spotlight on it..."

"But I stopped him," put in Mrs. Vermillion.

'I didn't want that dingus taking out after us. Chances are we'd have gone up in a puff of smoke or something.'

"So I just watched,' her husband continued. 'It was about as big around as a B-29 is long. And it was a perfect circle. The edge was toward us when we first saw it. It had exactly the shape of a discus like they throw in the Olympics, except for a sort of pilot's canopy on top.'

"There wasn't anyone or anything under that canopy.'

"When we drove closer we had a bottom view. The outer rim was rotating--we could tell that--and the inside was stationary.'

"After the man from Meade and his family came up, we started back to where we'd been. I turned off my lights, so as not to scare whoever was flying it. The other guy didn't though, and when that gadget saw both of us coming--it took about six seconds to get clean out of sight.'

"That's all there was.'

"I was scared,' said Mrs. Vermillion.

"So was I,' agreed her husband. 'If it had a gun I didn't see it, but it wouldn't have needed one. I'd have died of fright the first move it made after me.'

"With regard to the possible effect of the 'disc' on his work as a minister, Rev. Vermillion said he 'wasn't sure.'

"Probably won't have much effect, I hope,' he said.

"I had thought of including it in my sermon Sunday, but I don't think I will now. People are funny about things like that. I'd hate to have a member of my congregation sit on my head while someone called the laughing-academy.'"249

A follow-up news story went:

"He reported the incident to the Wichita Eagle and since then life at his house has been 'just one telephone call after another.'

"First it was the Associated Press, then another newspaper, then the Air Force, and I don't know who all,' said Mrs. Vermillion. 'I'm afraid the children will begin to wonder what it's all about. We haven't told them just what happened yet.'

"Right now, before anyone starts spreading screwy stories about us,' the minister continued, 'I want to say that we didn't see anything alive on that thing.'

"There were absolutely no little green men with egg on their whiskers or any other assorted

do-bobbies.'

"I was a pilot during the war, and I've been a minister here in Cheney for two years. I have no desire to be pointed out as a nut or to have my children pointed out as little nuts.'

"But the fact is that we saw this thing-- I won't call it a flying saucer because it wasn't shaped like one--this 'disc' in the sky.

"We have people to back us up--the man from Meade who met us on the road. It was only up about 300 feet and there were no clouds with a full moon. We had about as clear a view of it as anyone could hope to have.'"250

The article continued:

"The Rev. Mr. Vermillion said he saw test-ing of F-86 Shooting Stars and that he has seen B-47 jets in operation but that he never before had witnessed acceleration like that of the unusual object.

"I saw a lot of weird things while I was in prison camp in Germany,' the past related, 'but nothing as weird as that ship. I couldn't help but think what pictures it might get by use of infra-red film over the Boeing plant.'

"I am convinced that it is not radio-controlled. I think the pilot saw us. Why the ship was hovering is a mystery. The pilot may have been checking a camera or, since the plane was seen near Greensburg, he may have been checking traffic on U.S.-54 Highway.'

"The minister drew two sketches of the 'saucer' Friday, one as he actually saw it and one as he imagined it would appear to someone looking at it from above.

"A former resident of Cunningham, the Rev. Mr. Vermillion said he graduated from high school at Santa Anna, California, and then entered the air corps. He was with the 95th Bomber Group, 334th Bomb Squadron of the Eighth Air Force.

"Mr. --- (deleted) said that he estimated the speed of the object at 700 to 800 miles by comparing its rate of movement with that of commercial airplanes.

"The informant advised that he is a meteorologist with United Airlines and the object he observed was not a plane, nor was it a fireworks display."256

In keeping with current Air Force policy, the 24th District Office informed Washington that no action was being taken or was even contemplated.257

June 28-1950
FIVE PEOPLE IN THREE SECTIONS OF THE CITY OF
WHIZZING THROUGH THE SKY...
---THEY SAID, LOOKED LIKE ANYTHING FROM A SILVER STREAK TO
"A BIG ROUND CIRCLE TRAILING SMOKE." ONE SAID HE SAW A BLUE BALL
OF FIRE TOO BRIGHT TO WATCH...HE SAID IT COULDN'T BE DESCRIBED AS A
FLYING SAUCER, WHICH THE AIR FORCE HAS SAID DOESN'T EXIST.

AV105447/21

WARS

June 28-1950
CAIRO, ILLINOIS---FIVE PEOPLE IN THREE SECTIONS OF THE CITY OF
CAIRO (KEHR'-ON), ILLINOIS SAY THEY SAW A FLYING SAUCER NEAR THE
CITY.

ALL AGREED THAT THE OBJECT WAS ECC-SHAPED AND WAS FLYING AT HIGH
ALTITUDE. THEY CLAIM IT DIDN'T RESEMBLE AN AIRPLANE.

THE AIR FORCE, AFTER A LENGTHY INVESTIGATION, HAS DENIED THAT SUCH
THINGS AS FLYING SAUCERS EXIST.

Z242P6/28

June 30-1950
A MINISTERS FROM CHENEY, KANSAS, SAYS HE SAW A FLYING SAUCER THE
"SIZE OF A B-29" NEAR KINGMAN, KANSAS, EARLY TODAY. THE REPORTER
VERMILLION---WHO SAYS HE WAS A SCREW-UP TWO B-17 PILOT AND WAS MORE
THAN THREE-THOUSAND HOURS IN THE AIR---SAYS HIS WIFE, ANOTHER NOTORIOUS
AND HIS FAMILY SAW THE SAUCER, TOO. THE AIR FORCE, AFTER A CAREFUL
INVESTIGATION, HAS DECLARED THERE IS NO SUCH THING.

Z241P6/30

More evidence of the northward shift.

It came to the attention of authorities at the Steep Rock Iron Company, Ontario, Canada, that workmen working the company's mine had seen strange things in the night sky. This was confirmed by residents of the nearby community of Atitokan. UFO's were spotted maneuvering over a large area from Fort William to Port Arthur. An official of the Steep Rock Iron Company defended the publication of UFO reports in the Company's magazine, The Steep Rock Echo, by referring to the fact that local folks had seen many strange aerial objects. He cited the additional fact that telegraphers of the Canadian National Railroad had alerted each station up and down the line one night to track a UFO. The UFO was tracked to a point where it turned and retraced its course. 258

With Communist spearheads thrusting deeper and deeper into South Korea, Americans were jittery over the possible expansion of the conflict. Large Soviet troop movements were reported in Europe, and on the domestic front Congress hesitated over the admission of Alaska and Hawaii to statehood, a hesitation some felt was an invitation to the Russians to threaten those two strategic regions. Thus when a UFO report came out of Alaska, the Commanding General of that military district drew up an official communique on the incident for public release which emphasized that the object sighted was not a "guided missile." Lt. General Natham F. Twining, Commander of the district, termed the thing a "small phenomenal object." Reported by the military at Ladd Air Force Base and civilian observers at Eielson Field, the mystery object "bounced around in the sky" at an estimated speed of 600 miles per hour before taking off and vanishing over the horizon to the southeast. Any further inquiries about the episode, General Twining said, were to be forwarded to Air Force headquarters in Washington, D.C. 259

On July 5th, sightings were reported at Hamilton, Ontario, in Canada, and at Detroit, Michigan in the United States. Such sightings might be due to excitable civilians without technical training so perhaps it would be better to go into detail with an official Department of the Air Force Staff Division Message, classified confidential, filed the same date:

"At 1540 hours MST 5 July 50, three Staff Sergeants on duty at the Hill AFB Radar Station observed an unidentified aerial object flying at an estimated 25,000 feet altitude on a course of approximately 120 degrees and passing almost directly over Hill AFB. Object reportedly under observation for approx. 3 minutes, and described as about 50 feet in length, circular in shape with diameter-thickness ratio of about 4 to 1. Estimated ground speed of between 5 and 700 per hour. No sound or exhaust trail observed.

Described as silver in color. Radar set was switched on shortly after object was sighted, however object disappeared before radar set warmed up sufficiently for tracking. Advise extent of investigation this sighting and whether reports covering any future sightings are desired."260

The last sentence is an indication of the puzzlement among various military commands after the lack of interest by the Pentagon in the massive UFO wave, something we will delve into at greater length.

The Air Force, at this point in time, suffered from a peculiar malady which Dr. Hynek, long time military advisor, diagnosed as a condition of feigned disinterest. As an example, Dr. Hynek quoted from a memorandum, dated July 6, 1950, and addressed to the Chief of the Counter-Intelligence Division of the Department of the Air Force. The document was from the Chief of the Air Force's General Investigative Division, Lt. Colonel F. D. Garrachy:

"Subject: Unconventional Aircraft (Unclassified).

"Major Nold has contacted the Technical Capabilities Branch, AFOIN, who in turn discussed the request being made of DO#5, with Lt. Colonel Stattler, Acting Executive, AFOIN. Nothing was known about a recent personal request from General Cabell that action be taken to obtain the motion picture film through contact with the 'Courier Journal,' Louisville, Kentucky. Technical Capabilities Branch instructed Major Nold that they would take the responsibility for withdrawing any request made by that Directorate in view of their conviction that the film would not be likely to add anything new on this subject and could probably not be secured without compromising the Air Force interest.

"Colonel Roth, Executive to General Putt, was aware of a request to AMC which was based on the desire to Dr. Valley, Research and Development Board, to see such a film if one existed. The Directorate of Research and Development stresses that they would not desire that any interest in the film on the part of the Air Force be revealed to the 'Courier Journal.' Colonel Roth expressed a personal opinion that it would be nice if OSI could arrange to secure a copy of the film in some covert manner but if that was not feasible he would recontact Dr. Valley and recommend that if Dr. Valley still has an interest in seeing the film that he arrange to negotiate directly with the 'Courier Journal.'

"Lt. Colonel O'Connell, District Commander, 5th OSI District, was contacted at approximately 1615 hours on this date and informed of the above. He proposes to inform Colonel Watson of AMC that OSI representatives could not hope to make inquiries in this matter without risking an indication of Air Force interest. Colonel O'Connell proposed further to determine if Colonel Watson desires to recontact his requestors (AFOIN and AFDRD) for further evaluation of the matter."261

Lt. Colonel Garrachy then listed five points:

"1. At approximately 1300 on this date Lt. Colonel O'Connell, District Commander, 5th OSI District, called the undersigned and stated that he had received a request from AMC, to make certain inquiries as indicated below. He said that General Cabell, Director of Intelligence, this headquarters, had called Colonel Watson at AMC with reference to an article which appeared in the Louisville, Kentucky Courier-Journal concerning an individual who had taken moving pictures of a flying disk. Headquarters AMC told Colonel O'Connell that General Cabell had requested action to obtain the moving pictures and to interview the person who had taken them; further that inquiries in this matter should be made in such a manner as not to indicate Air Force interest.

"2. Colonel O'Connell also stated that General Putt and Colonel Boushey R&D Headquarters USAF, had made an independent request upon Headquarters AMC similar to the request by General Cabell.

"3. Colonel O'Connell stated to the undersigned that he is reluctant to have one of his agents contact representatives of the Louisville, Kentucky Courier-Journal and conduct the additional investigation indicated in this matter inasmuch as the identity of the agent as a representative of the Air Force must necessarily be disclosed and this would indicate the Air Force interest in this matter. Colonel O'Connell said that he feels the best procedure might be for him to contact the FBI locally and request that a representative of that agency conduct the necessary investigation thereby precluding any indication of Air Force interest. However, Colonel O'Connell said that he would like to have the approval of the Director of Special Investigations before proceeding in this matter.

"4. I discussed the above with Major Nold and he subsequently informed me that he had talked

to a representative and had stated that the OSI should not directly attempt to obtain the information indicated above.

"5. Inasmuch as this is a matter under the cognizance of the Counter-Intelligence Division, it is hereby referred for further action as necessary, including furnishing telephonic advice to Colonel O'Connell, 5th OSI District (For your information, I told Colonel that in this field, he should contact the Counter-Intelligence Division.)."262

Dr. Hynek feels that the Air Force had adopted a "counter-espionage" attitude toward the public during this period, and as for the evaluation of UFO reports, it went from unbiased to biased as typified by a memo dated July 19, 1950, which was exchanged between Colonel Bruno W. Feiling, Chief Technical Analysis Division, Intelligence Department, and Lt. Colonel Hemstreet. The memo discussed Intelligence procedures used to investigate UFO reports:

"Mr. --- (deleted) memo dated 14 July 50 has been reviewed. Although investigation was requested in the matter, it appeared that too much time was spent in the investigation. It is suggested that in the future we contact the individual concerned to get the story...If, however, there have been no reports by other personnel on the same incident, it seems that there is no justification for contacting as many agencies as was done in this case. It seems that if a legitimate sighting is made, it would be reported by a number of people. Excessive contacts can only serve to keep our interest in these matters a subject of discussion by more people than we would like."263

The last two sentences of this memo we will consider separately because they answer some obvious questions about Air Force behavior. We could ask: "Why didn't they investigate more UFO sightings if they were interested." The answer apparently was that they were selective. The second to last sentence established at least one qualification, and there may have been more: "It seems that if a legitimate sighting is made, it would be reported by a number of people." This would infer that there was such a thing as a "legitimate" sighting. This is certainly an interesting statement, although it does not mean it endorses a spectacular explanation for UFO sightings. The very last sentence had a bearing on what Dr. Hynek termed the "counter-espionage" attitude of the Air Force. We should zero in on the previously mentioned General Cabell, the Air Force Director of Intelligence, who becomes the vortex of controversy in the years ahead. It seems it was he who was calling the shots and was no doubt responsible for

sentiments of Colonel Feiling as expressed in the last sentence of the memo: "Excessive contacts can only serve to keep our interest in these matters a subject of discussion by more people than we would like." This attitude might explain why subsequent official "investigative projects" had more of a resemblance to a public relations effort than to anything like a scientific effort. There will be more discussion of this at the end of this booklet.

Taking up the continuing parade of UFO sightings, once again we find that Los Angeles had one July 6th. A brilliantly lighted circular object, an estimated 50 feet in diameter, was said to have been seen 1,000 feet in the air poking along at some 50 miles per hour, a speed that was increased many times as it zoomed over the Hollywood hills. Estimates were provided by a William Grant, former Marine Corps aerial photographer, and a Gilbert Magill, president of a concern conducting research with helicopters.²⁶⁵

July 6th three physicians on the staff of Menninger Clinic sighted a high speed object they said: "...sure looked like a disc or saucer."²⁶⁶ The thing, the "size of a nickel or quarter," (at arms length) was spotted as it sped over Topeka, Kansas.

The next day five more persons sighted something in the air that looked: "...just like a plain platter."²⁶⁷ The object was: "so shiny they could hardly stand to look at it."²⁶⁸

Phenomenon over Peril.

The U.S. Coast Guard reported what it termed an "unconventional aircraft" in the air over Peril Strait, Alaska, on July 8. The object in question was described as two opaque white oval discs "connected by a strut," with its overall dimensions of 100 feet by 60 feet. The thing was on a 290 degree heading and was making a speed of some 350 miles per hour. Three Coast Guard men were listed as witnesses. The official summary stated:

"The above described object was sighted directly overhead and observed until it disappeared two and one-half minutes later beyond 1500 foot level of FALSE LINDENBERG HEAD in Peril Strait, Alaska. Object was distinctly observed below the highest cirrus clouds, and it appeared to be banking and climbing, end and side view were observed in addition to oval bottom view."²⁶⁹

A skyhook balloon?

At Schenectady, New York, July 9th, a Mr. J. Sokol noticed a "strange white column" poised high in the sky over a U.S. Army Depot that day at 2:30 p.m. Sokol flagged down a police-car and talked to the lawmen inside. Sokol pointed skyward

and the policemen, Officers E. Harrison and J. Hill, saw what to them appeared to be a giant cigarette hanging in the air. Quickly radioing the nearby county airport, the police convinced authorities they should send Air National Guard fighters aloft to investigate. While the lawmen watched, the warplanes climbed to the object's altitude and began circling the UFO. The police did not see what finally happened to the object but they did make inquiries about the episode. Air National Guard headquarters refused comment.²⁷⁰

Army CIC agents succumb!

"At 1140 hours, this date, S. S. Deering, Major, Operations Officer, 111th CIC Detachment, Fort McPherson, Georgia, telephonically advised that he and Francis Riley, WOJG, 111th CIC Detachment, observed at 1025 hours, 10 July 1950, a round object south of Fort McPherson, Georgia, traveling in a northerly direction at an altitude between 35,000 and 50,000 feet. Major Deering advised that the object was quite distinct and was visible for approximately fifteen minutes except for periods when the object passed behind low hanging clouds. Major Deering advised that he heard no sound from the object and that it was the opinion of himself and Riley that they had not mistaken the object for a weather balloon. Major Deering further advised that Riley is a former Air Force officer and is accustomed to observing objects in flight."²⁷¹

The Osceola Oddity.

Of all the aircraft-UFO encounters during this period the one near Osceola, Arkansas, is singular not only for the fact that the UFO's presence was confirmed by radar, but for the fact that the object reported bears a resemblance to the image in the Mc Minnville photos. Two Navy pilots, J. W. Marin and R. E. Moore, who were flying training planes out of Millington Naval Air Station, Memphis, Tennessee, July 11th, were shocked when a large object passed through their field of vision dead ahead. The Navy pilots said the object looked to be 25 feet wide and about 7 feet high, its cross section similar to that of a "World War One helmet." Radar technician G. D. Wehner, operating the "electronic eye" aboard Moore's aircraft, reported that the UFO passed so close the helmet-shaped configuration showed up on the radar screen.

The press report reads:

"It looked like a round object when seen at a distance. It was in sight three minutes. They tried to pursue but their training plane proved too slow.

"Initially they thought they were seeing a bright glare from aluminum skin of a jet fighter but they changed their minds after they closed within a mile. They estimated the UFO was at 8,000 feet and moved with the speed of 200 miles per hour.

"The Navy has the report under study."²⁷²

"Wavering Doubts."

The Florida Times-Union had a reporter named Toni Veverka, who like many had wavering doubts about flying saucers, at least until the 11th of July 1950. The change was a rude awakening:

"My early morning sleep was shocked into full awareness by a tremendous roar, quite unlike that of several bombers, in that it lacked that steady sound. Nor was it like the whine of a streaking jet.

"Like the man in 'The Night Before Christmas,' I jumped to the window to see what was the matter.

"Out of the southeast, at about 500 feet altitude, was coming a great golden light. The machine carried no running lights. It didn't need them.

"The entire object seemed suffused (from beneath) with a glow that surged with each increase of the roar. It increased and diminished at a rate something like one would count one-two-three-pause; one-two-three-pause.

"The thing was curving toward the northwestward. As it passed, I could see violet and great flashes spurting into a short comet's tail. Viewed from the rear, and in the growing light, the thing seemed to waver in an up and down movement, similar to that of a gramophone disc on an uneven center.

"Far to the northwestward the not-so-fast moving object made a sweeping curve and returned, apparently from its starting point.

"Then started my vigil by the window. If there had been one, maybe it would return--or there might be more.

"The watch was rewarded in about 15 minutes. Only this time the thing was much higher. It followed the approximate course of the first visitor.

"In another 15 minutes, a third came."²⁷³

This was supposed to have happened at 5:00 a.m. in the Riverside area near Jacksonville. This case, like the one at Hamilton Air Force Base in California back on June 21st, is a puzzler in that whatever was making the noise was not

clearly seen. Jet aircraft were rare in 1950 so perhaps witnesses were confused, but on the other hand there were reports of people seeing thundering disc-like craft spewing smoke.

"Big meat platters."

A St. Louis police lieutenant had just gotten home from his duty shift, Wednesday, July 12th, and had stopped momentarily to chat with a neighbor who lived in the same apartment house, N. Dittlinger, an aircraft engineer. Suddenly Dittlinger glanced up and shouted: "look at that!" The lieutenant, W. Lohrum, turned and stared at what: "...looked like two big meat platters about 12 to 15 feet wide, headed in the direction of Lambert Field." Metallic in appearance, the UFO's were bathed in a silver luminosity. As the UFO's silently sailed over, they occasionally fluttered like paper. A woman some blocks away reported the same thing.²⁷⁴

A revealing statement was inserted in a reply to the 16th OSI District Office at Ogden, Utah, from OSI Washington headquarters. When the Inspector General informed the Utah unit that an investigation of UFO reports was not desired, only one exception was named: "...reports concerning sightings of unidentified aerial objects need not be forwarded by TWX unless considered to be of priority Counterintelligence interest to this headquarters."²⁷⁵

Having received a summary of UFO reports made in New Mexico from the 17th District OSI Office, the Atomic Energy Commission's Security Division expressed thanks and indicated that it did not think such phenomena was complete nonsense:

"The Security Division at Los Alamos desires to continue to cooperate in the work of your office in the investigation of these phenomena and will continue to report all observations from the Los Alamos area."²⁷⁶

A day later another St. Louis citizen happened to be observing the passing of an aircraft over the city. He was using a small spyglass and to his surprise he detected a "small, silver-white disc" stalking the aircraft. During the brief interval he had both under observation, the disc abruptly shot away at a 90 degree angle.²⁷⁷

Four groups of "unconventional aircraft" were observed during a thirteen minute period on July 13th. An Air Force reconnaissance aircraft on a routine photographic mission in the vicinity of Fort Peck, Montana, sighted a number of round, metallic silver objects. The crew of the Air Force plane estimated that the objects were about 15 - 20 feet in diameter.²⁷⁸

Three days after a UFO sighting at Osceola, Arkansas, a UFO report was made at a place with a similar Indian name, Ocala, Florida, where a doctor by the name of C. L. Quixley, claimed that a number of strange opalescent spherical objects sped over his home emitting a shrill sound. The objects approached out of the northeast, circled, or "played" in the air, and then left on a southwest course.²⁷⁹

"Things that go whoosh in the night."

An Associated Press dispatch dated July 17th from Pomeroy, Ohio, said:

"Hundreds of residents of Ohio River towns in Meigs County watched what appeared to be strange round objects in the sky last night over the Mason County hills in West Virginia. No one claimed they were 'flying saucers'--but the objects never more than three in number--gave off a 'yellowish white' light and appeared to be moving at a very high rate of speed, watchers said."²⁸⁰

Look magazine stayed on the conservative side with its July 18, 1950 article by Bruce Bliven titled: "Flying Saucers: Myth or Menace?" Bliven restated familiar material and did not venture to cross swords with the Air Force over official conclusions. The article closed by stating that scientific probability, the best guide, ran against an exotic answer.

Meanwhile, reports continued to come in from the northern tier of states notwithstanding a few sightings in Dixie. On July 15th, INS reported a sighting at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and July 20th the Washington Chronicle reported a UFO over Chehalis while Army Intelligence told the press a sighting occurred at Fort Lewis, Washington.

The continued concern over aerial phenomena in the skies of New Mexico seemed justified because of yet another report in that region. An Air Police Sergeant and two corporals at Holloman Air Force Base, on July 19th at 11:30 p.m., observed: "...two objects about the size of a softball, changing in color from green to red, red to green and red-dish brown."²⁸¹ The motion was nil at first and then the objects descended slightly before moving horizontally. The objects disappeared abruptly.²⁸²

Further foreign news.

On a farm near Avoca, Victoria, in Australia, in July, an Alex Holland was sleeping soundly until his bedroom filled with light. Holland was aroused from his slumbers thinking that an auto had pulled up outside. Looking out the window, Holland swears he saw a shining disc rise from the horizon from the south and cross the vault of the heavens. That wasn't all. According to him:

"Six more followed in quick succession. They all went in the same direction except one. It turned sharply and went back where it came from. Each one looked a bit bigger than a full moon. They were all the same size and travelled at terrific speed and at a great height."283

The sighting marked the start of a flood of reports in Australia.

As the UFO wave of 1950 surged northward and was about to wash over Canada, reports coming in from the northern part of the U.S. excited interest among Canadians. Canadians, according to a public opinion poll conducted in July 1950, accepted the idea that after a close inspection of reports there remained a balance of respectable evidence and curious data which could not be dismissed as delusions, as some mythopoeic faculty. Half of the adult population "believed."

Among those Canadians fascinated by the UFO mystery was a Wilbert B. Smith, a 42-year-old electrical engineer employed by Canada's Department of Transport (DOT). Smith began to collect newspaper accounts of UFO sightings about this time and started to correspond with others who were likewise intrigued with the sky riddle. Eventually Smith would be Canada's most famous personality in the UFO field.284

Wiesbaden, Germany.

"It's a flying saucer!"

An Air Intelligence Information Report dispatched to headquarters, MATS, Washington, on July 27th stated:

"At 1850Z, while sitting on the porch of the MATS barracks, I observed an object in the western sky at an approximate bearing of 315 degrees true and approximately 45 degrees vertically, well above the sun which was low in the sky. The body resembled an automobile headlight tilted so that a portion of its under elliptical surface was visible with no motion other than a slight oscillation of its lateral axis. At approximately 1851Z, I called Pfc. R. M. Grisillo, sitting near me, and requested that he observe the sunlight being reflected from the body and its lack of motion. Grisillo exclaimed, 'It's a flying saucer!' At 1854Z I observed an almost simultaneous acceleration and disappearance of the object."285

July 25, 1950:

"...two young men who live in a suburb of Los Angeles declared at 2:30 a.m. on July 25,

looking up as they drove along in their car they saw a grayish disc, light in color, one hundred feet in size. It was hovering about one thousand feet up, where two big brightly lit highways intersect. They thought they might track it but suddenly it dashed off. They thought, though, that it left a bluish-white vapor trail."²⁸⁶

Confronted by a reporter from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the official of Parks Air Lines simply stated that he wasn't going to name the phenomenon he saw on July 25, 1950 except to say that it was some kind of machine, some sort of aircraft he had never heard of even though he did his best to keep up with the latest developments in aviation. He told reporters the thing was: "...what is commonly known by the peasants as a flying saucer..." The editors of the Post-Dispatch mused the witnesses' description and dubbed it: "...a strange aircraft that glowed with a bluish-white light." The Parks official, W. Blandford, had been piloting a company DC-3 with Flight Captain G. Keller and First Officer H. Butts, en route to St. Louis when a bluish-white object was sighted motionless in the air. Slowing his DC-3, Blandford turned and approached the UFO for a close look. For some three minutes the strange thing held its ground, and then it zoomed off at a 30 degree slant at a terrific velocity.²⁸⁷

"Blue Sausage."

Trailing yellow fire, a 'blue streak about ten feet long and shaped like a "sausage" dived out of the sky at a plane piloted by Jim Graham, Chief Pilot for the Capital Aviation Company, while he was flying over Williamsville, Illinois, on July 30th. The "sausage" hit the plane's propellor and "exploded like a bomb." When Graham landed at Capital Airport at Springfield and inspected for damage, he couldn't find the slightest scratch. When the incident was reported in the papers several Springfield residents said they had also seen the "flying sausage." One woman said that when she watched it pass over Springfield it made a "popping noise." Many calls were made to the Springfield Journal newspaper office to report the phenomenon which was described as a mysterious streak across the heavens.

A second such streak was reported the following night on the 31st.²⁸⁸

Nuclear powered aircraft?

Unexplained objects over Oak Ridge National Laboratory gave one officer stationed there the jitters, a Colonel Hood, who knew that UFO witnesses were not luses on the way home from the bar. When he was approached by the head of the Physics Department at Vanderbilt University who postulated

a correlation between sightings of UFO's and peaks in background radiation, Colonel Hood agreed to run a check on the possibility. This was in July 1950. A similar plan carried out in the Fall of 1949 at Mt. Palomar, California, seemed to offer proof of such a correlation but the apparent positive evidence was deemed an "equipment malfunction."

Colonel Hood and the Vanderbilt professor decided on a course of action:

"To effect this correlation, they went to a radar site at the Knoxville Airport and got a copy of their log of unknown tracks. They then got the records from several radiation monitoring stations in the Oak Ridge area and attempted to make a correlation. Their attempts to correlate the data were not too successful. The radiation detection equipment that was used was the standard equipment set up to monitor the background count in four separate areas at the laboratory. One type of counter measured alpha radiation and one type gamma radiation (these were not the directional type of coincidence counters used at Los Alamos). Colonel Hood stated that approximately three times per month, peaks would be recorded on the tapes, sometimes on either the alpha counter or gamma counter and sometimes on both simultaneously. They took these peaks and the unknown radar pickups and in some cases were able to correlate them. No written record was made or kept."289

"Saucer clubs."

In his column in the New York Herald-Tribune on July 9, 1950, John J. O'Neil suggested forming saucer clubs, a portent of things to come. Meanwhile, the only group that in any way resembled a "saucer club" was the BSRA.

The Borderland Science Research Associates organization was busy publishing newsletters that listed the latest UFO reports, an activity it had been engaged in since 1948 and for awhile it appeared that BSRA might evolve into the first civilian UFO investigative organization, and to top it off, its publication of a book about the sky mystery in 1950 could have endowed the Borderlanders with even better credits as a pioneering investigative effort. Moreover, the head of BSRA, a Mr. Meade Layne, composed an open letter directed at the American public and government authorities which proclaimed that his group had determined that the UFO's, more commonly referred to as flying saucers, had peaceful intentions and that the objects originated from an extraterrestrial source. The government, he suggested, should attempt to establish contact with the helmsmen of the strange craft.

Superficially BSRA compares well with later groups that took an interest in the aerial riddle, but a closer look shows that Meade Layne's people had some really off-the-wall ideas.

BSRA's theory is contained in the organization's 1950 book, The Ether Ship Mystery and Its Solution.²⁹⁰ Besides Meade Layne, other members that contributed to the work were Millen Cooke, John A. Hilliard, and Edward S. Schultz. It turns out that little in the slim volume actually relates to what was being reported in the press. The BSRA "solution" was a mix of nonsense about an "etheric realm," a different invisible universe that vibrated at some greater or lesser speed than own. The BSRA people maintained that 4/5 of our world lies outside of our normal vision and that the saucers are launched from there, a place that is one of seven planes of existence between the Earth and its nearest planetary neighbor in outer space. This plane of existence they called "Etheria." Conjecture about the physics of that ghostly place called "Etheria" was the consuming passion of the book's authors, producing a wordy and arcane commentary.

According to the BSRA people, the saucer pilots, or "Etherians," were dwarfs because "their ships penetrated too rapidly our atmosphere," or (they offered a dual possibility) "they just chose to materialize in small forms simply for the convenience of operation." The aliens' avowed purpose, stated BSRA, was to prevent the destruction of the universe by the makers of Atomic weapons. The saucers, BSRA went on to say, traveled "along magnetic meridians north and south."

The BSRA absurdity was not without its effect. It had started with a "mental contact" with a UFO over San Diego on October 9, 1946 and took on garnishment in the following years. We can see where con artist Silas Newton apparently heard of BSRA's ideas during his travels in southern California and used it to piece together the "little men from Venus" yarn which entangled Frank Scully. As Keyhoe predicted, the story refuses to die. Thirty years later rumors of a "Hanger 18" persist. And then there was another person of interest to us watching from the sidelines in 1950, a George Adamski. He was taking it all in and making plans.

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