

UFOs: A HISTORY

VOLUME 5: January-March 1950

'23-INCH MAN DIED IN CRASH'

241-10-1960 Says 'Super-Saucer' Fell In Mexico

LOS ANGELES, (AP)—A dynamite salesman told reporters yesterday he had seen the wreckage of a flying saucer in Mexico, but later changed his story to say he saw only a strip of metal which business associates told him came from a space ship.

Ray L. Dimmick, sales manager for the Apache Powder Company, refused to name the associates, saying only that one was an American and the other a Chilean-Mexican. Dimmick added he would furnish the names "if requested by the proper authorities."

He said he was told that the wreckage was on a mountainside in Mexico City and that top U. S. military officials had viewed it. However, the Air Force in Washington said it has heard nothing

about it and there was no confirmation from Mexico.

Dimmick said his friends told him that a "man" 23 inches tall was killed in the crash and the body embalmed for scientific study. The crash occurred three months ago, Dimmick said. He recently returned from a business trip to Mexico City.

He added his associates described the aircraft as 48 feet in diameter, built of a metal resembling aluminum but much harder, and powered by two motors.

In his original account, Dimmick said he had seen the wreckage, which he said was roped off. In his later story, he described the piece of metal as about six feet long, eight inches wide and three-quarters of an inch thick.

"It was about 48 feet in diameter, built of a strange material resembling aluminum."

Dimmick declined further discussion, except to say that high Mexican officials believed the machine came from some other planet, and that top U. S. military officials have viewed it.

"I think the government ought to make its position clear," he continued. "If it doesn't want to disclose these things for security reasons, why not say so? If it feels it is unwise to make the information public for fear of panic, there should be some way found to handle the situation diplomatically."

Reminded that the Air Force announced last December it was dropping its investigation of flying saucers because of a preponderance of evidence that they do not exist, Dimmick said:

"I'm big enough to take the consequences of what I've said and stand my ground."

Added Testimony

He said he has reports that similar objects landed in various parts of North America in the last year, "but governments have clamped veils of secrecy about their investigations."

"Why, he said, 'I received a telephone call from Mexico this morning that another saucer was seen over Mazatlan.'"

In Van Nuys, Calif., Wednesday night Composer Eddie Coffman said he, Actor Reed Hadley and Mrs. Hadley saw a ship through a foggy sky, which appeared to be about 400 feet in the air and traveling at extreme speed.

In Dayton, O., the control tower operator at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base said two jet planes and an Air National Guard plane pursued an object in the sky near there Wednesday, which he called "a bare pin point of light, with the brilliance of a star at twilight."

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1950: JANUARY - MARCH

by

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~~THE NEW~~

UFO's: A HISTORY

1950: JANUARY - MARCH

Fiery red the mysterious orb loomed ever larger, mounting higher and higher with the deepening of the night. After fifteen years the planet Mars once again approached opposition with the Earth. Long a suspected habitat of sentient beings, the crimson-tinted world drew near, crossing the gulf of space to make for itself a prominent place in the heavens. Blazing forth, it would meet with new suspicions of a sinister Wellsian flavor and they would be more widespread and devoutly held.

For the first part of 1950 a sprinkle of sightings of strange objects in the sky could be noticed throughout the Western Hemisphere, a phenomenon that would be augmented by sightings in Europe and Asia. The biggest UFO wave since 1947 was in the offing.

That Donald Keyhoe, Frank Edwards, and Frank Scully were provocative, causing a relapse of the "weird mental disorder" that produced visions of shiny speeding objects hangs well enough, superficially, on a speculative framework. One might espouse such a theory to explain a dramatic upswing of UFO activity in the year 1950, and yet there remains something down right eerie about the UFO wave. UFO reports came in from every point of the compass, but considered enmass, the "psychological turmoil" behaved like a physical thing. It moved! A discernible shift took place as the months passed, with a general movement ever northward.

New Years Day.

On January 1st, Mikel Conrad's motion picture, "The Flying Saucer", premiered at the Rioalto Theater in New York City. The flying saucers were off to a flying start.

Official interest in flying saucers, or UFO's if a person wished to be more precise, may have been declared comatose at Project GRUDGE headquarters, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, but that did not mean the saucers stopped flying. Some members of the 43rd Air Refueling Squadron stationed at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, sighted something suspicious New Years Eve and filed an official report on the sighting the next day in: "...compliance with SAC Regulation Number 200-5 dated 13 December 1948 [and that]...distribution of this report had not been made to Air Material Command [i.e. Project Grudge] or any other agency."¹ This shows that UFO reports were being collected and filed by various military units other than Air Force Intelligence (Air Material Command) and helps to explain why the total number of UFO reports on file at AMC, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base are not a true reflection of the level

of UFO activity at any one time, particularly for the year 1950. The Air Force would catalogue some 210 UFO reports for the year with some 13 percent officially unidentified. This total is small compared to the number of sightings made, but it is understandable when one remembers that the Air Force was making little effort to collect reports.

Returning to the previously mentioned sighting in Arizona, an interrogation summary states:

"When this object was first seen it appeared to be hovering in the air about 15 nautical miles north of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

"It stayed in this position for approximately 10 minutes. At the approach of a formation of three B-29 aircraft it moved rapidly toward the northeast and disappeared. In moving into the northeast it had an estimated speed of 500 miles per hour. It appeared to be in a dive at an angle of approximately 10 degrees to the horizontal. Sunlight glistening off the object led the witnesses to believe it was spinning."²

The Adjutant of the unit, who drew up the report, took a conservative stance, adding a notation that expressed doubt about the case:

"Recent newspaper reports concerning 'flying saucers' [i.e., Keyhoe] could have played upon the imagination of the witnesses resulting in their over estimating the speed and nature of the object."³

Someone, apparently an Air Force Intelligence expert, going over these files, read Captain Sizemore's remark and circled it in pencil while scribbling the words: "sensible comment."

"An investigation request."

The Inspector General, Headquarters, SAC, contacted the District Commander of the 13th OSI to make an inquiry into something witnessed by an aircrew of a C-47. The OSI did look into the matter and determined the following:

"On 6 January 1950, Captain Robert E. Zimmermann, Captain Frederick E. Howard, and 1st Lt. Harold G. Simpson, while en route by air from Carswell AFB, Texas to Offut AFB, Omaha, Nebraska, saw an unidentified object near Howard, Kansas. The object, 30 to 60 feet in length, shaped like a football and bright silver in color, was proceeding in straight level flight at approximately 2,000 feet, with an estimated speed of 300 to 500 miles per hour. The object was in sight for less than two minutes and then faded from view.

The weather was reported as CAVU."⁴

The "green fireballs" -- off to a good start.

The green fireball story of 1948 and 1949 continued into 1950, something we will soon discuss at length, but first an introductory comment. It is to be remembered that (most often) the mystery "fireballs" zipped through the heavens horizontally in a streak of green fire, only a few seconds in duration before burning out. The reader's attention is then directed to the following aspects of a sighting made by the Assistant Motor Maintenance Officer at Holloman Air Force Base, on January 7, 1950. While in an auto, south of Corona, New Mexico, at 10:15 p.m., he spotted a ball-shaped thing at 45 degrees elevation. Instead of the 3 to 4 seconds of the usual green fireball sighting, this time the fireball was in view 10 seconds. When asked about the object's course, the witness replied:

"Object descended at approximately 60 degree angle from horizontal to a position just above the horizon caused by the mountain range where it leveled out and traveled approximately 10 degrees east, at which time it dropped behind the mountain range out of sight."⁵

Was the thing falling or flying? In regards to the object's color the witness said:

"First appearance was yellowish white. During its travel downward at 60 degree angle, object appeared to be more orange than originally with a trail of flame projecting out to its rear or opposite the direction it was traveling. When it reached the position where it leveled out it became a bright blue-green in color and remained that color until it passed out of sight."⁶

As the curtain went up on the year 1950 we find that the big UFO (strange image) lingering high over Ohio the last half of 1949 made its first appearance of 1950 on January 11th. Members of the Ohio Air National Guard manning a searchlight at Norwood, Ohio illuminated the ghostly "space platform" again, and in spite of some haze in the atmosphere which quickly dissipated, the alleged aerial leviathan stood out sharply. Visible for a quarter of an hour, the mysterious round thing once more emitted satellite bodies noted on earlier occasions, the small bodies passing in and out of the searchlight beam.⁷

The Ohio phenomenon is a hard one to figure. Perhaps people were being taken in by an illusion. Perhaps, as an editorial in the Los Angeles Daily News said, supposed "space

objects" were nothing more than a mental quirk befitting the times.

Boogie men.

An excerpt from an editorial in the Los Angeles Daily News declared:

"It would not be too difficult to believe there are beings in the universe more intelligent than man. But it is still a bit outside the bounds of reason to believe spaceships from another planet have come here. Americans want their flying saucers and their men from Mars. They want their bugaboos and boogie men. They want their scandal and ordeals by fire. If the facts interfered with the achievement of these, to heck with the facts."⁸

To that the Air Force would say: "Amen." To others it just raised the question: "what are the facts?"

"Crashed saucers, the roots of the legend?"

Nothing thrills the casual reader of UFO literature more than tales of "crashed flying saucers," an understandable fascination but the evidence for such an occurrence is, at best, controversial. The most famous episode, the alleged "little men from Venus" yarn, promoted by Frank Scully, was certainly the most entertaining and even today (1982) the case is subject to continual discussion. Scully's yarn had its formative period during the late summer of 1949 yet months earlier, apparently, the seed of the concept had been sown.

"Believe it or not."

Walter Winchell, the most influential news commentator of his day, was amazed in May 1949 when he received a telegram from newspaper cartoonist "Believe it or not" Robert Ripley who boasted knowledge of the: "...only authentic Japanese flying saucer ever recovered in this country." Winchell scribbled on the telegram: "To J. Edgar Hoover--True?," and quickly forwarded the Western Union message to the FBI in Washington.

Ripley's claim was only partially true. It seems that the remains of one of the fireballoons launched by the Japanese military during the Second World War had been recently discovered by some civilians in an out of the way locale in the American West and the debris contained some large ring-like metal parts hence the use of the words "flying saucer."

Winchell assumed, of course, Ripley had the goods on the whereabouts of a "real flying saucer."

The FBI contacted the U.S. Army about the possible existence of a Japanese disc-like craft, since that service had occupied Japan since the war and should have acquired knowledge of any such contraption by 1949, yet inquiries drew a blank.

The next obvious course of action for the FBI was to approach the U.S. Air Force.

Records tell us:

"This matter was discussed with Colonel --- (deleted) OSI-USAF, who advised on April 27, 1949 that he had interested himself in the flying saucers and related subjects and that in so far as could be determined by him through his sources in the Air Force, which are excellent, there is no authentic information available concerning the phenomenon of the flying saucers. He advised he would check with the authorities at Wright Field to determine if any information is available concerning the recovery of a Japanese flying saucer.

"Colonel --- (deleted) has now advised that there is no information available in any arm of the Air Force to the effect that any flying saucers of any kind have been recovered in the United States. Colonel --- (deleted) stated delay had been encountered in determining this fact inasmuch as inquiries had been directed through individuals known to him and trusted by him not through the usual channels from which he possibly would receive a stock answer."⁹

The FBI had been frantic to gain possession of a downed disc ever since 1947, a desire that entangled the Bureau in jurisdictional disputes with the Air Force over the rights to any wreckage, so it comes as no surprise that the FBI restricted their information concerning what prompted their unusual question about a Japanese device:

"The details of this case were not discussed by either Special Agent --- (deleted) or --- (deleted) with the Army or Air Force and they are not aware of the telegram sent by Mr. Ripley to Mr. Winchell."¹⁰

Although cooperation between government agencies could have been smoother, one might accept Baron Johannes von Buttar's theory that states that in the spring of 1949 the Central Intelligence Agency entered into the UFO investigation*, a development, for example, that rendered unimportant the less than perfect relationship between the Air Force and the FBI. The CIA, according to Buttar's sources, decided that "public interest in UFO's was an obstacle" so the Agency developed a plan of deception, ridicule, and lies. Among those not having the "need to know" under the plan would include personnel in the military services, but as long as critical data found its

*Through its branch the Office of Scientific Investigation (OSI), an organization not to be confused with the Air Force's Office of Special Investigation (OSI), which has the same initials.

way to the CIA by one way or another, it didn't matter how incomplete the files were in the Pentagon, with any confusion cloaking the real importance of the UFO problem and the hand of America's super-secret spy organization.

One declassified CIA document indicates that the agency was indeed in the process of being initiated into the mysteries of UFOlogy early (March) in 1949. That the CIA was a newcomer to the field of study is indicated by the kind of questions discussed, a series of basic posers, but we might note also that the organization showed a quick grasp of the problem which could lead to a definite opinion about UFO reports in a short period of time. This leads us to ponder the Saturday Evening Post UFO articles of April and May 1949 and the numerous official communiques denouncing the UFO "hysteria." Was an official scheme to discredit the UFO mystery in operation during 1949? If so, was the CIA involved? In any event the debunking backfired. Critics saw the official conclusions as a challenge to be met by their own investigations. By the end of the year Donald Keyhoe, for one, had put together enough material and presented it in such a way as to engender doubts about what authorities were trying to sell John Q. Public. In a straight shoot-out official conclusions were in jeopardy, and in time Keyhoe might gain the upper hand.

Frank Scully's Venusians were no help to Keyhoe. The hoax was an enormous nuisance that would bedevil Keyhoe and every other researcher that took the UFO subject seriously. The passage of years didn't kill off the story, as it bobbed up in unexpected places with its lineage masked. There is even some circumstantial evidence that the Scully yarn inspired the Adamski catastrophe.

There is nothing definite in the way of documented evidence that would prove the CIA fathered the Scully nonsense, but the timing was perfect. From a counterintelligence viewpoint, the yarn was a masterstroke. Maybe it all started from that Japanese "flying saucer" report, and maybe it did not. Anyway, for the time being, the "little men from Venus" remains an orphan masterstroke as far as the CIA is concerned.

Returning to January 1950, we find the Scully story under fire.

Time magazine, incredulous that members of the Fourth Estate like the Christain Science Monitor would ever entertain in Scully's ideas, launched an attack. Referring to Keyhoe's declaration in True about the Earth undergoing a systematic surveillance by extraterrestrial scoutships, Time carefully quoted Washington's official denial: "Air Force studies of 'flying saucers' lend no support to the view that they come from another planet." But of all the wild rumors making the rounds, Time found Scully's yarn the topper, the most recent version stating that not four but fifteen dead aliens had been recovered from the saucer wreckage with one cadaver being sent to the Rosenwald Foundation in Chicago for study. Even better, observed Time, was the claim that other Venusian pilots from

other space ship wrecks were alive and were being kept comfortable in special rooms pressurized with carbon dioxide. Through sign language and drawings, it was alleged, the captive creatures confirmed that the second planet from the sun was indeed their home port. The skeptical publication summed up its commentary by pointing out that the Air Force apparently had not felt it necessary to denounce the Venusian yarn specifically, the military being satisfied with a blanket dismissal of the flying saucers. This dismissal by the Air Force was marked by the disbanding of its formal investigation, Project GRUDGE, and the announcement that future official activity regarding reports of strange aerial objects would involve a "conventional military watch," noted Time magazine. As a final touch, Time expressed total confidence in the military when the Air Force said its saucer files and any photographs of such objects would "soon be made available for public inspection at the Pentagon."11

The conservative New York Times printed a lengthy letter to the editor concerning the sky mystery, perhaps due to Keyhoe's investigative reporting that made saucer news once again. The missive originated from a woman in Pennsylvania who called attention to the strange silence on the part of the Fortean Society. Shouldn't the Forteans be whooping it up, she asked? In her letter the research efforts and theories of Charles Fort were summarized terminating with her own conclusion that the airship mystery of the 1890's was comparable to the flying saucer controversy. To her reckoning, Fort's ideas were finally coming into their own with orthodox scientists now planning space platforms that reminded one of Fort's envisioned space-anchored super-constructions which launched smaller vessels for planetary exploration.

In the Fortean journal, Tiffany Thayer, Secretary of the Fortean Society and the man who controlled Fort's copyrights, admitted responsibility for the low profile of the Forteans, favoring the status quo and having little enthusiasm for the UFO riddle. He resisted commenting on the aerial enigma in the Fortean publication, Doubt, and refused to urge the Society membership to spend time pondering the problem. Offers from television and radio pured into Fortean headquarters but Thayer stood fast, rejecting any proposed exploitation of his hero's speculations and data. Even the great Orson Wells tried to use his considerable persuasive powers to gain use of THE BOOKS, as Thayer liked to term Fort's literary accomplishments.

An echo in the Echo.

Air Force OSI agent James Shiley of the Maywood, California office, was hunting for the originator of the "crashed saucer" story and was making little progress until he got a lead from, of all people, the director of the Fruit and Vegetable Chemistry Laboratory of the Pasadena, California branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It seems that some persons living in the Mid-west had written letters to the Pasadena laboratory

asking about "flying saucers." The agricultural experts couldn't make sense of the inquiries and decided to turn the missives over to the OSI's Maywood office:

"We are forwarding herewith two letters which have been received today from Linden and Independence, Missouri, referring to an article published in a Kansas paper on the subject of "Flying Saucers." Since the account refers to "crashing the gate" at a radar station, it seemed that it might need investigation.

"We are naturally unable to reply to these letters, and are sending them to your office for such attention as you think necessary."12

The local OSI agent in Kansas, Lt. Lawrence A. Applebee, traced the newspaper article in question to the Kansas City weekly Wyandotte Echo. Lt. Applebee filed a report about the matter under the heading of "Unconventional Aircraft (Flying Saucers From Venus Come to Earth)." The synopsis went:

"Article in Wyandotte Echo Kansas City, Kansas, 6 January 1950, stated Kansas City auto dealer, Rudy Fick, while in Denver, met an engineer named --- (deleted) who claimed to have seen two 'Flying Saucers' which had crashed at a radar station near the New Mexico and Arizona border. These craft, each carrying a crew of two, were constructed of some unknown metal and were stocked with food in tablet form. --- (deleted) also claimed to have removed from one of the craft a radio receiving and transmitting set, which, at 1115 hours daily, received a message in an unknown language. --- (deleted) said that about fifty of these craft had been found in the United States in a two year period, forty of them being presently at the United States Research Bureau in Los Angeles. --- (deleted) stated it was assumed the craft had come from the planet Venus."13

Although OSI offices in Kansas, New Mexico, and California were cooperating in the investigation, there is no indication in Air Force records up to this point that the military was aware of Frank Scully and his crashed saucer story in editions of Variety (!), a definite handicap in determining the whereabouts of the individuals that they really wanted to talk to: Silas M. Newton and Leo A. GeBaucer.

Air Force investigators in Los Angeles determined that no such thing as the "United States Research Bureau" existed in California, their labor given urgency by numerous inquiries from the public directed at the Pentagon concerning fantastic rumors, the beginnings of a groundswell of fascination which grew into one of the supreme "legends" of UFOlogy.

The downgrading.

With the widely publicized "discontinuance of the Air Force's investigation of the flying discs," a policy statement that appeared in newspapers coast-to-coast on December 31, 1949, the status of the Pentagon's interest in further pursuit of the matter was suddenly murky to those in the lower echelons.

The Pentagon rescinded a number of memoranda and directives concerning the reporting of aerial phenomena on January 12, 1950. Over the years various documents had been sent to various commands about the sky mystery, and with the change of treatment, a clarification of official policy was required.

The following documents were declared void:

"1. Letter to Commanding Generals, Strategic Air Command, Tactical Air Command, Air Training Command, Air University, Alaskan Air Command, Air Transport Command, and Air Material Command, subject: Reporting of Information on 'Flying Discs,' dated 6 February 1948.

"2. Letter of Commanding Generals, Strategic Air Command, Air Defense Command, Tactical Air Command, Air Training Command, Air University, Alaskan Air Command, Air Transport Command, and Air Material Command, subject: Reporting of Information on 'Flying Discs,' dated 26 February 1948.

"Letter to Commanding Generals, Caribbean Air Command, USAFE, FEAF, Pacific Air Command and Air Material Command, subject: Reporting of Information on 'Flying Discs,' dated 26 February 1948.

"3. Memorandum to Intelligence Division, General Staff, U.S. Army, subject: Reporting of Information on 'Flying Discs,' dated 27 February 1948.

"4. Letter to Chief of Naval Intelligence, subject: Reporting of Information on 'Flying Discs,' dated 27 February 1948.

"5. Letter to Commandant (INT), U.S. Coast Guard, subject: Reporting of Information on 'Flying Discs,' dated 15 March 1948.

"6. Memorandum for the Director of Central Intelligence, subject: Unconventional Aerial Phenomena, dated 28 October 1948.

"7. Air Intelligence Requirements Memorandum No. 4, subject: Unconventional Aircraft, dated 15 February 1949."14

The document ended with:

"...in the future any information obtained on this subject should be accorded the same consideration as that given to intelligence information on other subjects."15

"Under attack" over the Gulf of Mexico.

A chilling story. Was it radar ghosts or something real? An Air Intelligence Information Report submitted by the 307th Bombardment Wing read:

"Observations noted from B-29 aircraft 1723, at 24 degrees 00 minutes North - 85 degrees 20 minutes West, while flying a course of 260 degrees, time 2325 EST, 12 January 1950, weather clear above an undercast, three objects were noted on the radar scope orbiting B-29 1723 from all quadrants. Objects were noticed by Radar Operator, Aircraft Commander, Navigator and Bombadier. The object was first sighted on a bearing of 330 degrees traveling South. The object traveled across the scope in approximately 15 to 20 seconds on the 100 mile range setting. In a few minutes this object was joined by two others, which disappeared in a few minutes. At short ranges the object was large and well defined on the radar scope. The object would go off for about 100 miles, turn and come in as if for an attack, pass through the center of the scope (where it was lost), and emerge on the other side. The object remained in the radar scope for approximately 30 minutes, following the aircraft all the time. The radar operator switched ranges and picked up the object on the 20 and 50 mile setting. No surface vessels were noted on the scope during the incident. Twice the object came to within 20 miles of the aircraft and then apparently had the ability to hover, for the movement on the radar scope would cease for 5 to 15 seconds. The altitude of the aircraft B-29 1723 was 10,000 feet pressure, flying straight and level at all times of observation. After altering course the object no longer appeared, but the radar was jammed for approximately 10 minutes and returned to normal after crossing over the coastline of Texas. No visual sightings were made by the crew.

"The speed of B-29 aircraft 1723 at the time of sighting is not known.

"Radar was switched to the 20, 50 and 100 mile range.

"First appearance was picked up with a bearing of 330 degrees, moving across the 100 mile range of the scope in a matter of seconds, disappear and reappear at 020 degrees, and 120 degrees bearings at various times. Estimated speed of the object between 2,500 and 3,000 miles per hour."16

Another step closer.

Agents in New Mexico, operating out of Kirtland Air Force Base, located, it is guessed, George Koelher, bringing them another step closer to the elusive GeBaucer:

"Investigation failed to reveal that --- (deleted) claimed visiting any radar installation but that such an installation was mentioned as the landing place of the flying saucers.

"This installation reported to be near Albuquerque. The installation which --- (deleted) claims to have visited is not a radar installation, but a place near Phoenix where scientific research is conducted..."¹⁷

Research group "OP 322F2."

The Air Force was not the only service with UFO problems. The U.S. Navy was baffled by an "unidentified phenomenon" in the vicinity of Kodiak, Alaska, on January 22nd and 23rd. A confidential Intelligence report issued by the Intelligence Division Office of Chief of Naval Operations Navy Department contained this summary:

"At 220240W (Jan. 22 at 2:40 a.m.), Lt. Smith, USN, patrol plane commander of P2V3 No. 4 of Patrol Squadron One reported an unidentified radar contact 20 miles north of the Naval Air Station, Kodiak, Alaska. When this contact was first made, Lt. Smith was flying the Kodiak Security Patrol. At 0248W (2:48 a.m.), 8 minutes later a radar contact was made on an object 10 miles southeast of NAS, Kodiak. Lt. Smith checked with the control tower to determine known traffic in the area, and was informed that there was none. During this period the radar operator, Gaskey, ALC, USN, reported intermittent radar interference of a type he had never before experienced. Contact was lost at this time, but intermittent interference continued.

"At some time between 0200 and 0300W, Morgan, BMC, USN, was standing watch on board the USS Tillamock (ATA 192), which was anchored in the vicinity of buoy 19 in the main ship channel. Morgan reported sighting a 'very fast moving red glow light, which appeared to be of exhaust nature, seemed to come from the southeast, moved clockwise in a large circle in the direction of and around Kodiak and returned but in a generally southeast direction.' Morgan called Carver, QMI, USN, also on watch, to observe this object, and they both witnessed the return flight. No odor or sound was detected, and the object was described to have the appearance of a ball of fire about one foot in diameter.

"At 220440W (4:40 a.m.), conducting routine Kodiak security patrol, Lt. Smith reported a visual sighting of an unidentified airborne object at a radar range of 5 miles, on the starboard bow. This object showed indications of great speed on the radar scope. The trailing edge of the blip gave a tail-like indication. At this time, Lt. Smith

called attention of all crew members to the object. An estimated ten seconds later, the object was directly overhead, indicating a speed of 1800 mph. Lt. Smith climbed to intercept and attempted to circle to keep the object in sight. He was unable to do this, as the object was too highly maneuverable. Subsequently, the object appeared to be opening the range. The object was observed to open out somewhat, then to turn to the left and come up on Smith's quarter. Smith considered this to be a highly threatening gesture, and turned out all the lights in the aircraft. Four minutes later the object disappeared from view in a southeasterly direction."18

The next day the Navy fliers were confronted with another strange aerial spook:

"At 230435W (Jan. 23 at 4:35 a.m.), the day following Lt. Smith's sighting, Lt. Causer and Lt. Barco of Patrol Squadron One were conducting the Kodiak Security Patrol and sighted an unidentified object. At the time of the sighting, the aircraft in which those officers were embarked was approximately 62 miles south of Kodiak. The object appeared to be on an ascending westerly course, and was in sight for ten minutes. During this period the object was observed by Lieutenants Causer and Barco, and Paulson, ADI, plane captain. At no time was radar contact made on the object. Lt. Causer was unable to close the object at 170 knots.

"The objects sighted have been described as follows:

- "1. To Lt. Smith and crew it appeared as two orange lights rotating about a common center, 'like two jet aircraft making slow rolls in tight formation.' It had a wide speed range.
- "2. To Morgan and Carver it appeared as a reddish orange ball of fire about one foot in diameter, traveling at a high rate of speed.
- "3. To Causer, Barco, and Paulson it appeared to be a pulsation orange yellow projectile shaped flame, with regular period of pulsation on 3 to 5 seconds, off 3 to 5 seconds. Later, as the object increased the range the pulsation appeared to increase to on 7 to 8 seconds."19

"These reports are always of interest."

Dr. Bruce S. Maccabee, who obtained the Navy documents on these cases from the Navy Historical Center,* also discovered an analysis of the puzzling incidents by research group only identified as "OP322F2." This group stated:

"Many of the previous reports of radar interference tend to indicate local interference. This looks more like external interference from sources outside the aircraft than previous report, though it is far from conclusive. These reports are always of interest."²⁰

Having commented on the radar returns, group "OP322F2" said of the reports in general:

"The possibility exists that incidents... might be jet aircraft; however, there is insufficient intelligence to definitely identify the unidentified objects as aircraft. Several reports of similar radar interference from another radar in the vicinity, malfunctioning of components within the radar set or both."²¹

UFO's closer to home.

The Inspector General's Office of the OSI in Washington, D.C. rushed investigators across town to the National Defense Building to question some statistical control officers and Army couriers because they had witnessed something "similar in structure to the so-called flying discs."

The officers that were questioned appeared sincere and mature. OSI investigators also noted that said officers were reluctant to initiate the report. The OSI at first blamed this reluctance on, in their words, the:

"...recent opinion both pro and con by various individuals through popular newspapers and magazines. Each of the three officers, when queried as to whether or not they had read or were influenced by an article written by Keyhoe which appeared in the 28 December 49 issue of True magazine, stated that they did not read the article nor were they influenced by the public opinion of the article."²²

The Intelligence report read:

"On Tuesday, 24 January 1950, while en route from Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, to Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., in C-45 aircraft No. 7122, Captain Theron C. Fehrevach was first to notice the unidentified flying object. Fehrevach stated that the C-45 was pursuing a course of

*Another example that proves that not all UFO information is on file with Air Force Intelligence.

approximately 26 degrees at 5,000 feet when he first noticed the object slightly to the left of the course and about 2,000 feet higher at a distance of 5 to 10 miles from the C-45. The object was approximately 7,000 feet just above the top of the cloud level which was at this time approximately a 5/10 cloud coverage. It was darker than the clouds and easy to distinguish as not being a cloud. When first noticed the object was pursuing a course between and above two rather large cloud banks, which were estimated as being two miles apart. The object moved from the left cloud to the right cloud twice and never at any time did the object show any radius of turn. It moved to a stop and proceeded back again with a fine horizontal movement, at no time varying vertical in an ascent or descent motion. At this time Captain Fehrevach showed the unconventional aircraft to Captain Edwards who immediately altered his course some 6 degrees and climbed to 7,000 feet to be horizontally on the same level as the object. The C-45 pursued the object at approximately 160 miles per hour with a 20 mile tail wind. The C-45 at no time could overtake the object and at all times it seemed to stay between 5 to 10 miles directly in front and at the same level as the C-45. At this time Fehrevach had the passenger, Lt. Van Santen, view the object. The object then seemed to disappear in front of them by increasing its speed. The entire action thus far reported took approximately five minutes.

"After a minute and a half the object was again sighted at the same distance (5-10 miles) at approximately 35 to 45 degrees to the right of the course pursued by the C-45. The object then came back to a point immediately in front of the C-45. Before assuming this course the object seemed to oscillate to the right and left, a distance seeming to be about one or one and a half distance of its width. When assuming the course it appeared to disappear directly in front of the C-45 by increasing its speed until it was invisible. The entire incident took place in approximately 15 minutes. Captain Fehrevach and Captain Edwards stated that they had been airborne some 35 or 40 minutes or approximately 1650 when they first sighted the object. These two pilot officers further volunteered the following information."23

At this point in the report, the officers describe the object:

"The object was clearer when first noticed than at any time during the following 15 minutes that they could focus on it. The unconventional aircraft appeared to be hemispherical or spheroid in shape of approximately

200 to 250 feet in diameter. The object appeared to be flat on the bottom, but this is further explained that the bottom half of the sphere could have been obscured due to a black trail which appeared to follow the object. This black trail appeared to be three to four times as long as the object was in diameter precipitating at the end of the smoke trail (1 - 2½ minutes precipitation rate). At no time during the viewing of the object was it possible to determine the actual structure. The black trail was very pronounced at the bottom. As proclaimed by Captain Edwards, the object looked like an oversized parachute with a large black object hanging below it. The smoke trail would lag behind the object no matter which direction it moved."²⁴

Although the Pentagon had rescinded all of the various directives on UFO's, reducing the matter to a "conventional" Intelligence activity, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations was still stuck with monitoring such data.

The local OSI District Office at Maywood, California, asked for some clarification. Lt. Colonel William Turner, speaking for the Inspector General, notified the Maywood office on January 26th that:

"This Headquarters is presently preparing an AFCSI Letter which will furnish you instructions on current policy regarding the investigation of these incidents. However, until cited letter is received by your District office, AFCSI Letter NO. 85 will apply."²⁵

On January 30th all OSI field offices received word from Headquarters that the reporting of UFO information as stated in the AFCSI Letter No. 85, dated August 12, 1949, would be superseded:

"In the future any information received on this subject will be reported to Hq OSI through the media of Spot Intelligence Reports (See AFCSI Letter No. 106, 18 Oct. 49). Active investigation of incidents concerning 'Unconventional Aircraft' will not be conducted unless a specific request is made by competent authority."²⁶

The Maywood OSI office replied to the change in the official handling of UFO information by writing the following letter to headquarters:

"This office has interpreted the above AFCSI Letter to mean that your Headquarters is only interested in receiving Spot Reports on unconventional aircraft matters which appear to be

credible and emanate from substantial sources.

"This District Office has followed a practice of placing in the 'O' file (waste basket) those routine reports of flying saucers which do not fall in the above category. This practice will be continued until advised to the contrary by your Headquarters."27

A faulty fuse?

Regarding the supposed correlation between alleged flying saucer sightings and unexplained radiation signals detected at Mt. Palomar during the Fall of 1949, the Department of the Navy Office of Naval Research of Pasadena, California, had this to say:

"....in January 1950, in response to further reports of erratic equipment behavior, the apparatus was returned to NEL for a detailed check. A faulty fuse clip was found. According to reference (c)* a very slight jarring of this clip produced a visible arc together with a spurious signal indicated on the aural alarm and an aberration of the recorder pen."28

More reports.

If they existed, perhaps the enigmatic helmsmen of the saucers sought remote sites to dip close to the surface of our world, like the rocky crags of South Table Mountain near Denver, Colorado, where a F. Quintana crept up a steep slope and was amazed to hear a loud whirring in the air. Lying prone he raised his head and saw the source of the odd sound. It was coming from a "flattened sphere" over fifty feet in diameter which was dropping slowly out of the sky into a ravine. A metallic ship of some sort in his opinion, the thing had a wide band about its middle that was revolving while the underside had a flashing green light. Touching the ground lightly, the thing hesitated for a moment, and then zoomed skyward out of sight stirring up the air and wafting a pungent odor over the terrain. This was supposed to have taken place on January 29, 1950.29

Davis-Monthan again.

In the southwest again, at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Tucson, Arizona, air traffic controllers spotted a fiery object in the sky approaching the air field. Alarmed by the sight the air controllers started to give an aircraft in distress signal to the air field fire and ambulance crews, but there was something about the glowing speck in the sky, however, that made the controllers hesitate. Peering carefully at

*NEL Conf. 1st ser C570-388 dtd 30 Jan. 50.

the phenomenon the controllers decided that an aircraft was not in trouble and a few blinks later they weren't sure the thing in the sky was a rocket either.

Over Tucson on that afternoon of February 1st, there cannon-balled something that bewildered hundreds of Arizona sky gazers and not just the personnel in the Davis-Monthan tower. The sky phenomenon could hardly escape notice, for although it was about dusk when the thing appeared, it trailed: "...heavy smoke that boiled and swirled in a broad, dark ribbon fanning out in a straight line."³⁰ The most mysterious aspect of the manifestation was the assertion by witnesses that the speeding object paused in the sky over Tucson momentarily after which: "...smoke puffed out an angry black and then became lighter as the strange missile appeared to gain speed."³¹

A pilot flying a plane in the area tried to chase the object but gave up after a brief attempt and then radioed the fact that the thing was moving too fast to be intercepted.

An Andy Ross of the CAA claimed: "...he saw it streak through a cloud formation, later found to be 30,000 feet above the ground..."³²

Officials at White Sands Proving Grounds denied there had been any missile testing at the New Mexican facility the day of the mystery Tucson overflight.³³

Far to the east, some twenty days later, a curious incident of a similar nature was reported. At Key West, Florida, a pair of glowing things were seen hightailing it across the sky at great altitude. Pursuit by military aircraft was ordered, but there was no chance of overtaking the streaking objects. The two intruders were seen to pause for a brief moment over the city before speeding onward.³⁴ Radar readings placed the objects 50 miles high.³⁵ An Air Force headquarters statement reassured the American public: "There is absolutely no evidence that flying saucers exist."³⁶

Early February 1950, we find that on the 6th of the month at Falmouth Airport, Massachusetts, there occurred a real hum-dinger of a UFO sighting. The Falmouth Airport was swarming with both civilian and military aviation people at 5:10 p.m. when a couple of queer lights about 25 degrees above the western horizon attracted everyone's attention. The two strangely illuminated objects soon became more distinct since, although it was overcast directly over Falmouth Field, the sky was clear to the west. The man who managed the airport, M. R. Odom, was dumbfounded at the sight:

"I could make out long cylindrical bodies that weren't attached, but were apparently maneuveringat times converged then drifted apart. At 5:15 p.m., they climbed high in the western sky at great speed then were lost to our view."³⁷

A Lt. Foushee from Otis Air Force Base elaborated on one particular detail which was confirmed by other witnesses: "Something dropped from the body of the left object as we looked at it. Whatever was dropped was ablaze--a sort of fireball with no smoke."³⁸

The light given off by the UFO's was so bright Mr. Odom could see reflections inside the airport ready room.³⁹

"AFCSI Letter #85."

A measure of the level of official Air Force OSI interest is indicated by a directive issued at this time, AFCSI Letter #85, a document dated February 8, 1950, which said in part:

"Spot Intelligence Reports concerning sightings of unidentified aerial objects need not be forwarded by TWX unless considered to be of priority Counterintelligence interest to this (Air Force OSI, The Inspector General) headquarters."⁴⁰

This leads to the question, however, of how one defines an incident to be of "priority Counterintelligence interest?" The effect of this directive on the amount and quality of UFO reports being filed by the OSI, let alone the number investigated and forwarded to ATIC, is an interesting poser.

Wonders world wide.

UFO activity for two years (1948-1949) had remained sporadic and unimpressive outside the borders of the United States and Canada but the year 1950 would experience a world-wide flap, with Latin America in particular contributing a large number.

A "cigar-like" object in the sky was reported over the city of Comechingones in Argentina as early as January 15th, and on February 8th something strange was seen in the air over Chile's Golfo de Penas. Four days later a Mr. Martin-Louis Va Ballester of Buenos Aires, Argentina, told the press he had seen a UFO, and the next day, February 14th, persons living at Rosario, up the river from the nation's capital, said that a strange object had passed over their town.⁴¹ Much more information about South America will be given later.

In Europe, Reuters, the British news agency, reported that a flying saucer had been spotted in the sky above Caioggia, Italy, on February 27th.

America, however, continued to be the UFO's favorite country.

A "flying cone" buzzed around the San Francisco Bay Area on February 8th causing a number of UFO reports, with the most impressive witness being Lt. Commander J. L. Kraker who viewed the phenomenon from a site in Alameda. Not many people got a good look at the thing as it flew over the bay waters, but later a man in San Jose wrote the papers to say that he had viewed the UFO as it passed low over his home and he plainly

saw that the so-called mysterious object was just an ordinary airplane with engine trouble, spewing a stream of vapor.

What makes this incident interesting, however, was the interrogation of Lt. Commander Kraker by a Captain Starrett, who Kraker only identified as a "member of the U.S. Air Corps Secret Intelligence." Lt. Commander Kraker was stationed at the Alameda Naval Air Station only temporarily and when he returned home to New York he told about his UFO sighting when approached by a New York newspaper, The Watertown Times. The Times carried the following interview:

"He (Capt. Starrett) asked all sorts of questions,' said Kraker, 'and said it substantiated what the corps (Air Force) already knew. He said he knew what it was. It was not a flying saucer.'"

"Is it definitely something else?' asked Kraker.

'Yes.'

'Is it from this world, or is it interplanetary?'"

At that question Capt. Starrett only chuckled. The exchange then continued. Kraker asked another question:

"Is this your job?"

'Yes. All I have to do is check on these reports. And I'm way behind in my work. We have a man for this same job in Seattle, and one in Los Angeles. All of us are very busy.'"⁴²

At this point in the news story, the Watertown Times reported that Kraker interrupted his relating of the interrogation to allude to his personal feelings about UFO's. The Times stated that Kraker:

"...does not think President Truman's denial of the secret weapon possibility is true. 'It is certainly not the nonsense he would have the country think it is,' said Kraker."⁴³

The account of the exchange between Kraker and Captain Starrett then continued:

"Are we in as bad shape as the news would have us believe? Kraker said he asked Capt. Starrett.

'Things are much worse than you can even imagine,' the Captain replied.

'Is Russian espionage very hot in this country?'

'Spies here are thicker than flies. We let them go as long as they keep out of trouble, since we think we know where most of them are.'

'Is our counter-espionage in Russia just as good?'

'Yes, it is.'"⁴⁴

The Times ended with:

"Kraker said he concluded from this conversation that the mass-hysteria theory argued by many officials is 'just bunk.' He said he was convinced these objects exist and he was convinced that the air corps know what they are. He said, however, that he was at a loss to know whether they were developed by the air corps itself, or by Russia, or by another planet."⁴⁵

Navy Intelligence was quite interested in the news story, so interested they sent an agent to have a talk with Lt. Commander Kraker, but the second official interrogation of the Naval officer did not concentrate on the UFO, instead another angle played a prominent role:

"He (Kraker) claimed a Lt. Commander, Public Information Office 12 ND, authorized release of his story to Columbia Broadcasting System, then preparing recorded interviews, and that he did not give the interview to Columbia, but a story of the phenomenon did appear in the 'San Francisco Chronicle.' Subject admitted that the 'Watertown Times' had quoted him fairly accurately, but that he was unaware the disclosure was of classified material inasmuch as Public Information Office 12 ND, had previously authorized release of his visual observations..."⁴⁶

"Two little moons."

According to the Texas newspaper Waco News-Tribune, a couple of residents of Waco observed an overlight of a pair of green UFO's on February 14th. Speeding northward the objects looked like "two dimly glowing little moons" to the witnesses. Furthermore, the witnesses said the leading edges of the greenish objects: "...were not as bright as the trailing edges; the circumference lines were not quite straight, as if they might have been spinning."⁴⁷

Discussion of an official project to study the strange fireballs seen in the skies of New Mexico prompted a letter by Dr. Lincoln La Paz to Dr. P. H. Wyckoff of the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratory. Dr. La Paz wrote on February 20th:

"As a preliminary to setting down the project recommendations which you requested, I have very

carefully reviewed all available fireball data (observers' reports, transit measurements, calculated real paths, etc.) covering incidents from those of December 5, 1948 to the extraordinary incident of February 7, 1950, which has been under intensive investigation for the last weeks. As a result of this comprehensive review, particularly as it relates to the incident of February 7, 1950, I feel compelled to write you in somewhat different terms concerning my own part in the proposed fireball project. In my opinion, this evidence proves conclusively that the fireballs reported on fall into one of two categories: Those of the first category (the majority) are meteorite falls of unusual, but certainly not of impossible, magnitude, frequency and other characteristics; those of the second category (the minority) are U.S. guided missiles undergoing tests in the neighborhoods of the sensitive installations they are designed to defend. This interpretation of the latter category is the one that I proposed in answer to a question raised by Dr. Teller at the first Los Alamos conference on February 17, 1949. It was not taken seriously then and I doubt that it will be taken seriously at the present time. However, even if my interpretation of the unconventional fireballs is the correct one, it is obvious that those in position to confirm it should refuse to do so."48

Dr. La Paz then gives his reasons:

"The location and behavior of the bright green fireball of February 7, 1950 seems to me to furnish final confirmation of the interpretation given above, for it was the fifth unconventional fireball observed since June 1949, of which the real path emanated from what I can roughly describe as the Vaughn, New Mexico area. Furthermore, in the same time interval, three other unconventional fireballs have had real paths emanating from an area north and west of Socorro, New Mexico. Finally, it is precisely in these areas that top secret U.S. installations, apparently radar in nature, were installed last June, installations from which, in spite of their highly favorable location, we have never had a single green fireball report.

"Only one other point need be stressed, namely that if I am wrong in interpreting the guided missiles as of U.S. origin, then certainly intensive, systematic investigation of these objects should not be delayed until the termination of the present academic year. Recent international developments compel one to sense the imperative necessity of immediate investigation of the unconventional green fireballs, in case you are in possession of information proving that they are not U.S. missiles.

"If such an immediate investigation were to be under-taken, I would recommend that Dr. Fred L. Whippel,

of Harvard College Observatory, be placed in charge of the photographic phase of the investigation; that Dr. Peter M. Millman, of the Dominion Observatory, be placed in charge of the spectrographic phase of the investigation; that Dr. L. A. Manning of Stanford, and Dr. Millman be placed in charge of the radar investigation; and finally, that Dr. William Crozier, of the New Mexico School of Mines, be placed in charge of dust collection and identification. On the basis of many intensive field surveys, I do not anticipate that ground search will lead to any recoveries, but in case such ground search is to be attempted, it should be carried out on a scale stressed in my conversations with you and Major Oder last month."⁴⁹

Not wanting to wait, the Commanding Officer of Holloman Air Force Base called a meeting of some of the military experts under his command to determine what could be done immediately. Those in attendance included a Colonel Collett, a Colonel Norton, a Major Haynor; and Captains McGovern and Feagin. Handling the routine paperwork was a Lieutenant John G. Albert. Air Force records are so faded not much can be learned about the meeting itself but we know that it was decided to establish an observation post at Holloman Field to be manned by three Sergeants equipped with a theodolite, a telescope, and a camera. The sky watch began on February 21st and was only conducted during daylight hours.⁵⁰

"Psychoanalyzing the Flying Saucers."

An article appeared in the February 1950 issue of Air Force magazine that might be construed as a counterthrust to Keyhole in that it addressed itself to the "average citizen" and pushed for an explanation quite different to that of the ex-marine aviator's. The article, a section of which was built around an extract from the Project GRUDGE final report, gave the findings of the Air Force's Aero Medical Laboratory. The article was published anonymously, but we are not without suspicions as to the author. A letter with some clues to the possible identity of the author, dated January 27, 1956, has been preserved in Blue Book files. The letter in question was penned by Dr. Paul M. Fitts, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Aviation Psychology Department, Ohio State University; member of the Air Force's Scientific Advisory Board; and member of the NACA Committee on Flight Safety. Dr. Fitts was writing to ATIC, Wright Field, with a proposal for an essay which would attempt to explain how natural phenomena might fool a witness into believing something mysterious was being observed. Dr. Fitts' proposed 1956 essay was to: "...follow the general nature of the anonymous report that appeared in the 1950 issue of Air Force magazine..." The 1950 article, he said, was: "...based on the earlier report that I wrote while at the Aero Medical Laboratory."⁵¹

If Dr. Fitts was not the author there is still the question of why he had any use for the article since it had a glaring error. Likewise, why the Air Force allowed the article to be published in the first place is a puzzle for the same reason. Since the identity of the author is not established beyond a doubt, we will refer to the mystery man as "Dr. X."

The first thing one might discuss is the need for the article. "Dr. X" declared in the essay that one thing was absolutely certain about the "wild business" of flying saucers, and that was the fact that the American public needed to become much better observers. Making a pretence at being objective, "Dr. X" mildly castigated the Air Force's Project GRUDGE final report charging that those who prepared the document were guilty of a: "...slight pre-determination to index the saucer reports under headings of already known phenomena, or types of phenomena."⁵² Alluding to other students of the problem, no doubt meaning Donald Keyhoe-type thinkers, he dismissed with greater ease: "In certain non-official studies there was an even more discernible determination to ignore 'logical' explanations in favor of the more glamorous presumption that weird craft were the real McCoy."⁵³

To learn "Dr. X's" personal sentiments as to the "right" answer to the sky mystery it is essential to quote the last paragraph of the article which leads off with a capitalized word:

"CONCLUSION. It is concluded by the writer that there are sufficient psychological explanations for the reports of unidentified flying objects to provide plausible explanations for reports not otherwise explainable. These errors in identifying real stimuli result chiefly from inability to estimate speed, distance and size."⁵⁴

Put more succinctly, "Dr. X" was a skeptic. The skeptic's case then, as well as in later years, centers on three points which "Dr. X" puts this way:

1. Errors in identifying real stimuli.
2. Mistaking the imaginary for real events.
3. Deliberate falsifications.⁵⁵

Apparently, a psychologist, "Dr. X" attempted to deal with the above points using his scholastic training. Point number three was clearly within his area of competence, and to a large degree so is point number two, however the first point calls more for an expert in the physical science. Clearly "Dr. X" was on safer ground when he discussed things like vertigo, suggestion, or precedent. Superficially "Dr. X's" article is persuasive, but the reader who is uninformed of the character of raw UFO data would be deceived since he would not be aware that the vast bulk of good unknowns were reported by credible technically trained persons. This being the case, point number one becomes all important and it demands that a physical scientist be the principle evaluator

of the UFO mystery. This explains "Dr. X's" unremarkable impact as a UFO debunker compared to the likes of astrophysicist Dr. Donald Menzel in later years.

It is interesting to take note that a favorite explanation of many UFO reports, that experts like Dr. Menzel would rely on, i.e., weather balloons, "Dr. X" treats this way: "Shouldn't fool anyone with over two weeks in the Air Force."⁵⁶

Since "Dr. X" may have some connection with Project GRUDGE, it may be informative to check some of his views concerning top level Air Force policy:

"Of course there is the possibility--remote perhaps--that deep in its heart the Air Force is not nearly so convinced that the whole thing is a dream as it pretends."⁵⁷

Speaking of the Air Force, a theme that turns up again and again in Pentagon studies of the UFO problem is the possible use of flying saucer reports in some sort of psychological warfare, a fear that never appeared to be justified and "Dr. X" shares that puzzlement:

"Circulation of false reports has been a standard psychological warfare technique from earliest times. This procedure might have some utility in wartime, but it hardly seems likely that it would be resorted to at this time."⁵⁸

Before leaving "Dr. X's" interesting little essay, there should be a remark or two about his competence as a UFO expert which brings up that glaring error mentioned at the outset. First of all let us read a quote from his article on the UFO riddle:

"It's a tough thing to analyze. Take an ex-pilot of Boise, Idaho, the facts are indisputable. On July 4, 1947, Arnold and his crew watched from their plane window for ten minutes as two groups of objects described as 'thin and smooth on the bottom and rough on top' skirted the hills ahead of them. To Arnold the evidence was conclusive. The guy is reportedly only one jump ahead of a nervous breakdown right now, trying to persuade the authorities to accept his story. Yet, in its official summary the Air Force weighs Arnold's account with these words. 'Since the sighting occurred at sunset when light conditions change rapidly and illusory effects are most likely, the objects could have been ordinary aircraft, balloons, birds, or pure illusion. Insufficient information.' Who is in error in evaluating what was seen is impossible to say."⁵⁹

What is absolutely amazing about the forementioned "report" is that there is no such report in official files, or unofficial literature! After checking every available record, the only

guess that makes any sense is that "Dr. X's" alleged report is a composite of two well known reports: the Kenneth Arnold, June 24, 1947 sighting, and the July 4, 1947 sighting of Captain E.J. Smith of United Airlines. But, it might be noted that since the Arnold sighting was at three in the afternoon, and the Capt. Smith sighting in the morning, there is no clue to just where "Dr. X" got his "sunset" explanation!

If "Dr. X" is Dr. Fitts, who was responsible for a major section of the Project GRUDGE final report and was a member of the Air Force's Scientific Advisory Board, the implications of the error boggles the mind.

Commander McLaughlin

Outside the military events were picking up momentum. The Navy Commander that figured so prominently in the news media flap back in mid-1949 returned to the public spotlight on February 22nd. Somehow True magazine got Commander Robert McLaughlin to tell his story without pulling any punches, and McLaughlin, one-time chief of a Navy classified missile program at White Sands, was featured in an article that proclaimed: "How Scientists Tracked Flying Saucers." On the first day of publication (The March 1950 issue of True appeared on the news-stands February 22nd) the United Press gave the journalistic event a big play selecting to emphasize the Naval Commander's statement that: "...these disks are space ships from another planet, operated by animate intelligent beings."⁶⁰ After making the sensational assertion, the Navy officer attempted to back up his claim by revealing how a UFO was tracked during classified guided missile tests at White Sands. Sprinkling his essay liberally with impressive calculations derived from White Sands instruments, McLaughlin expressed his opinion that whatever was tracked could not be explained by natural causes. Because the UFO was tracked at long range, informational data as to the precise physical appearance could not be ascertained, but the empirical quality of the object's fantastic performance, the maneuverability and operation at extreme, near-Earth orbit altitude, suggested something unfettered by man's limited technology or the bounds of gravity. Making a guess, the Commander elected to favor the planet Mars as the source of the object, noting that the red world had been in excellent position to observe the test of the first atomic bomb in New Mexico on July 16, 1945 which might well be enough to prompt scouting missions by a concerned Martian race.⁶¹

Unexpectedly, the Pentagon cleared some relevant documentation through its Security and Review Office, affirming the existence of the UFO sighting described by Commander McLaughlin. When questioned about this unanticipated move, the Air Force quickly fell back into its usual defensive posture: "We have no evidence that the flying saucers are other than hallucinations, hoaxes, and errors in identification."⁶²

The same day the St. Louis Post-Dispatch carried a story that lent support to Commander McLaughlin's incredible theory:

"Two thousand feet over Pinckneyville, Ill., February 22nd, a Mr. R. Lemmon piloted his private plane. With him was his wife. Scanning the sky he spotted a strange shape some 3,000 feet higher. He nudged Mrs. Lemmon and gunned his plane's engine to reach a greater altitude. As he drew near, he could see what seemed to be disc-shaped object some 60 feet in diameter and 10 feet thick. Before getting close the disc tilted and then left in a hurry."⁶³

Providing another assist to the pro-UFO forces was a news dispatch that appeared the following day:

"Santiago, Chile--A Chilean naval officer said today that a group of antarctic explorers under his command obtained photographs of flying saucers at the Chilean antarctic base of Arthur Prat.

"Commander Augusto Vars Orrego, head of the base, said on several occasions during the bright antarctic night he and his men saw flying saucers one above the other turning at tremendous speeds.

"Don't think that this was an optical illusion," he said. "We have corroboration of what we saw from photographs taken of the phenomena."⁶⁴

Donald Keyhoe sought access to the Chilean UFO photos but was rebuffed on grounds of security. The Chilean Embassy in Washington D.C. told Keyhoe the pictures were classified.⁶⁵

Two men, AESS Inspectors in the Los Alamos, New Mexico Airport Tower, witnessed a mysterious aluminum-colored, round-like body going through some gyrations high over Los Alamos on February 24th at 1:15 p.m. For 20 minutes the object careened about with one AESS Inspector saying the object "circled slow and then fast while leaving an intermittent vapor trail." Similarly, the other Inspector remarked that the thing shifted position in an "erratic fashion, motionless at times but zigzagging while in motion." The Chemical Operator, standing near "M" building in the Tech Area, apparently spotted the same mystery body at 1:40 p.m. The object, he said, was a silver white in color and very high above Los Alamos. He noticed that the object went east to west, and then west to east. He remarked that it "hovered and moved as if observing and then moving to a new location." The Chemical Operator finally lost sight of the UFO when it went "practically straight up."⁶⁶

The next day eleven civilian experts at Los Alamos, New Mexico, observed another strange aerial object and Lt. Colonel John A. Carroll submitted a report to the Air Force's Office of Special Investigations. The object in this latest case was spotted emerging from some clouds on a descending trajectory. Circular in shape, silver and brightly reflecting the sun's rays, the thing fluttered and oscillated, and as it slid downward it appeared to change course and vary its velocity.⁶⁷

The momentous month of March.

An aeronautic official in the Mexican state of Chihuahua, Roberto Ostos, notified the El Nacional that an unexplained object of a metallic appearance had hovered over the city of Chihuahua at an altitude of 15,000 feet March 1st. After hovering for five minutes, the object sped off at great speed to the south. The Mexican department Aeronautics ordered an investigation, and when it did, the newspaper El Nacional sought further information, seeking an admission that a real flying saucer had visited Chihuahua but authorities refused to say that one of the famous mystery craft was responsible for the report.

Early in March 1950, radar equipment at Knoxville, Tennessee, picked up strange targets. At 11:30 p.m. on March 1st a blip appeared on Knoxville radar screens showing an altitude of 40,000 feet, and no aircraft flight plans indicated the presence of authorized aircraft in the area. The area was a sensitive one since it was in the vicinity of the Oak Ridge atomic plant.

The next day at 11:05 a.m. in the morning and later that night at 10:00 p.m., unidentified targets were again detected, but this time at a much greater altitude of 80,000 feet. Finally, much to the vexation of the Oak Ridge Security Division Chief, on March 3rd at 1:35 p.m. a large blip appeared on Knoxville radar at 40,000 feet altitude and moving at 200 miles per hour.⁶⁸

The OSI District Commander, Lt. Colonel Patrick Hays, stationed at Maxwell Air Force Base, telephoned his superior, General Joseph F. Carroll, Director of Special Investigations, at the Pentagon on March 3rd. Three days later General Carroll composed a memorandum for the official record that detailed a talk with Colonel Hays, writing that the District Commander had advised him that experts at Oak Ridge were urgently requesting that better radar equipment be sent to Tennessee. General Carroll's memorandum included comments that illustrated the tight reins being kept on local OSI investigations of UFO's:

"Colonel Hays advised that he had been informed that Wright-Patterson will not send the radar sets unless the OSI could not provide necessary sets from local sources. Apparently official circles have become somewhat excited concerning these reports and Hays thought it well to advise this Hq of the matter.

"I told Colonel Hays that his office should not on its own arrange for obtaining and providing radar sets, that we should merely render the facts made available to us to appropriate authority for necessary determination and action if deemed desirable."⁶⁹

At the same time (March 3rd) Lt. Col. Heran of the Air Force Intelligence Directorate assured Major Cox of the OSI office, that so far, it had not been determined that the so-called flying saucers had any concrete basis.⁷⁰

More radar returns.

The 661st and the "phantom aircraft."

The narrative report of an Air Force officer stationed at Selfridge Air Force Base to the north of Detroit, Michigan, is exceptional since it involved both radar targets and visual sightings. The report reads:

"On the first occasion of noticing the strange object 3 March 50, at 2305, I had just come from the Selfridge AFB Officers Club and as I turned down Wright Blvd. on the way to the main gate, I noticed a strange object directly over the Post Exchange Bldg., descending vertically at a slow rate. I stopped the car and watched this object descend to an approximate height of 5,000 feet, hovering there for approximately (1) minute then proceeding in a westerly direction to approximately fifty (50) miles west of my position. Then the object turned south and flew approximately fifty (50) miles, then stopped and disappeared from view. The above took place in four minutes (time checked with my personal wrist watch)."⁷¹

More on the motion:

"The object was distinguished from an airplane by its vertical descent and its great speed in the lateral plane. It was distinguished from heavenly bodies by its rapid change in relative position from the vertical to the horizontal. Also its abrupt change in course."⁷²

This same officer had a second experience five days later.. During routine interceptor exercises by F-80's of the 56th Fighter Interceptor Group being directed by the 661st at Selfridge, an odd target appeared on the radar screens which indicated an aerial object moving around some 20,000 feet above the fighter aircraft making their practice runs below. The strange unexplained target performed rapid changes in position and elevation, at one point it even hovered. In the opinion of the officer manning the radar, the blip indicated a real object: "The clarity, narrowness, and definition of the presentation was definitely that of an aircraft."⁷³

This officer, which had visually sighted something strange in the sky over Selfridge Air Force Base a few days before, was now treated to a radar mystery:

"I went on duty as Controller at 1830, 8 March 1950. At 1948 hours a blip was pointed out to me that was at 270 degrees, sixty-eight (68) miles, 40,000 feet (measured by the HRI scope). We (Cpl. ----[deleted] and I) watched this blip and it did not move for three minutes, then faded. At 2002 hours the target was picked up again and it was at 40,000 feet, lateral movement was detected in a northeasterly direction; at this time I estimated the speed at 1,500 m.p.h. At 2006 hours a target appeared at 350 degrees, fifty-eight (58) miles at 45,000 feet. There were four (4) jet aircraft flying in the local area at this time at 24,000 feet and the altitude of the jet aircraft on a bearing of 340 degrees, thirty-eight (38) miles, was checked at 25,000 on the HRI scope. The pilot stated that he was flying at 24,000 feet. This lends support of the accuracy of the HRI scope. The strange object faded after one minute. Captain (----deleted) and Lt. (---- deleted) came in and I left the radar scopes. "At 2020 hours I returned to the HRI scope to see an object at 350 degrees, thirty-eight (38) miles climb from 30,000 feet to 45,000 feet in one minute, with no lateral movement detected. I went off duty and left the GCI room at 2025 hours."74

The "phantom aircraft" tracked by 661st Aircraft Warning and Control radar at Selfridge Air Force Base caused an inquiry which learned:

"...the approximate size of the unidentified 'blip' would be similar to a B-36 and that the 'blip' at times apparently was following the vectors of various jet fighters in zones 2 and 4. ---- (deleted) also believed that the erratic vertical readings could be deliberate on the part of the 'blip' as it appeared to occur after the radar would hold steady on the 'blip' for a period of several seconds to a minute or so. ---- (deleted) further estimated speeds to be from 420 miles per hour horizontal to 2500 miles per hour vertical. They observed more activity to be in vertical readings. ---- (deleted) explained that the Radar Observation Room was in total darkness and the readings on the logs for the time element concerned would vary and it was caused by the man making recordings to have his watch position wrong. Both ---- (deleted) and (deleted) recalled 15,000 feet altitude variations within a matter of seconds[!] on the part of the unidentified 'blip.' The rapid changes in vertical readings would occur between 3,000 and 45,000 feet. At one time, Lt. ----- (deleted) followed the unidentified 'blip' to a distance of 120 miles."75

Technical experts from the headquarters of the Continental Air Command, Mitchel Air Force Base, New York, were solicited for comment. The immediate likelihood for an explanation was a possible anomalous propagation effect due to temperature inversions or other atmospheric conditions that would produce ducting or spurious reflections. However, that possibility did not seem likely:

"...validity is lent to the contention of the reports by statements that first indications, which were at high altitudes, were observed on the CPS-4 height-finder before being observed on the CPS-5 surveillance radar set. This follows logic and field experience, inasmuch as the high altitude coverage of the CPS--5 is known to be poor and the antenna is not capable of being automatically tilted as in the case of the CPS-4 on which the controller may tilt the antenna within wide limitations to observe any high altitude or high angle objects. It is to be noted that previous field experience with a CPS-5 surveillance radar set has indicated that targets picked up at ranges and altitudes indicated in subject report would probably have a reflection aspect ratio in the order of magnitude of a B-29 or greater."⁷⁶

The summary deemed the episode inexplicable: "...no known electronic phenomena, nor combinations of several electronic phenomena could conceivably produce all of the observations covered by the attached reports."⁷⁷

Colonel Neal O'Brien, Air Adjutant General of the Continental Air Command, made some remarks (that were influenced by the report from Selfridge Air Force Base) which indicate concern over the UFO problem and also over the cessation of interest by Air Force Intelligence as indicated by the termination of Project GRUDGE. The reader is invited to judge for himself. The Colonel wrote:

"The frequency of reports of this nature has recently increased; instructions have therefore been directed to all radar installations within this command to report scope sightings of unusual objects.

"It is recommended that reports of unidentified object sightings be reconsidered for submission from all Zone of Interior Air Force agencies."⁷⁸

The Colonel's message was marked "urgent, secret" and was dispatched to the Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, USAF, Washington, D.C. The message was bound to carry some weight since only a few days afterward a big UFO wave was going full blast. UFO activity had started to intensify around March 5th.

Personnel from New Mexico's Holloman Air Force Base, and representatives of the Air Force's Geophysical Research Division, were summoned to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base March 5th for

consultations on an enhancement of the Holloman aerial phenomenon observation post's capabilities. The observation posts had been established two weeks before but it was felt more sophisticated equipment should be obtained and utilized.

The meeting was held and out of it came a three-point plan which was then submitted to higher authorities for approval.

The UFO with a "tail" and the mysterious "Mr. Crawford."

Silent for days, the Houstonian witnesses put aside their fear of ridicule and came forward to say that a strange flying disc had been visible in the sky over Houston, Texas, on March 5th. The witnesses to the phenomenon had been a bus driver at one location; and a mattress company executive and his family at another.

In regards to the family, one of the children, a little 10-year-old girl, described the UFO as hovering in the air when first spotted before scooting behind a cloud. The family had just left Houston's Village Theater where they had just seen the film: "The Heiress." Asked if she knew what the disc could have been, the 10-year-old exclaimed: "I dunno. But gosh, it was even better than the movie!"⁷⁹

The bus driver had spotted the UFO independently of the family, noticing the weird object as it hovered directly over the Meilie Experson Building. He said the UFO resembled a glowing auto tire, an object that lurched left, and then right, before backing off in the direction of the bayou. As the UFO dodged to one side and then the other, the bus driver detected something odd: "Right then I saw it had a tail, kind of like a kite tail."⁸⁰

Two weeks later a mysterious government agent who identified himself as "Mr. Crawford" would call on the witness and express a keen interest in the sighting.

"Flying Moon."

A weird "what's it" was spotted over Gering, Nebraska, on Sunday, March 5th. The local newspaper reported:

"An intensely brilliant moving light was observed in the sky near here early Sunday morning, according to nearly a score of Gering residents.

"E.L. Ekberg, Gering police officer, apparently was the first to spot the object. He reported seeing a brilliant light, 20 to 25 feet in diameter, about a half mile west of here early Sunday. It was last seen by him shortly after 7:00 a.m., he said.

"It appeared to be about one hundred feet in the air and traveling very fast," Mr. --- (deleted)* said. 'It was so bright that I had to look away from it,' he added.

*This clipping was found in Air Force files. Sometimes the censors even deleted names in newspaper accounts!

"The police officer said the object glowed with a steady, very white light.

"'There was no appearance of burning, no smoke, nor any orange flame,' he said.

"Mr. --- (deleted) watched the light for some time, then went in search of witnesses. Before long, 15 to 20 persons were viewing the spectacle from the main street of Gering and the object was traveling southeast.

"'It was just like a big light that changed shape,' Mr. --- (deleted) stated. He said at first it appeared to be flat and wide, later triangular, hour-glass shaped and round. 'When I first saw it, it lighted up the countryside,' the officer said.

"State Safety Patrolman Dale Justice of Gering reported that he and Trooper Victor Hansen of Scotts-bluff saw the object. He said they attempted to follow the light and traveled about seven miles before giving up the chase.

"'The light appeared to be suspended, dangling like a pendulum, weaving back and forth,' Mr. Justice said. 'It was very brilliant white light,' the patrolman said."⁸¹

March 7th the INS noted reports of UFO's flashing over areas of the Tunisian and Algerian coasts.⁸² This North African activity was a prelude, as it turned out, to more aerial mischief in Europe later.

"Hey look at that big bird!"

A startling exception to dots in the sky reports was the encounter on a highway outside Bloomfield, New Mexico, the first week in March. Motoring along at 50 miles per hour, two Colorado businessmen, L. Locke and H. Tanner, were enjoying an uneventful journey when Tanner suddenly shouted: "Hey look at that big bird!" Locke glanced up and yelled back: "Bird, heck--no bird can fly that fast!" Braking to a stop, Locke and his companion peered closer at the "thing." It looked sinister, dark, and flat, in the night sky. Once the auto had halted, the "thing" started flying circles around the vehicle at a dizzying speed in a 25 foot radius. The circling went on for a full five minutes. Clearly visible when it cut through the car's headlight beams, the men estimated that the "thing" was about five feet in diameter. When the "thing" departed, both agreed not to call the "thing" a flying saucer and have them become a laughing stock.⁸³

Sunrise on March 8, 1950, the UFO's picked the best place in the USA to start their day. That morning something unidentified appeared in the sky above Dayton, Ohio, where Air Force Intelligence was headquartered. A civilian air controller at Vandalia airport, George Barnes, noticed something in the pre-dawn sky and claimed that it showed: "...definite movement toward the southwest."⁸⁴ Another man in the tower, Sherman Seydler, chief tower operator for the CAA, also claimed that the thing was moving.

Two unnamed witnesses were quoted by the press. One said: "It seemed to suddenly stop then made a long sweeping climb."⁸⁵ Another anonymous witness remarked: "The thing looked like a bullet and it left a vapor trail behind it."⁸⁶ A witness that was named, Adeline Rudick, a TWA ticket-counter employee, thought the UFO appeared: "...like a bright and shiny dime."⁸⁷

Lt. Colonel Dale Shafter, Air National Guard, tells what he experienced that morning:

"I was having some coffee when word came from the control tower that some kind of an object had been sighted," the officer explained. "A short time later--about 9 a.m.--I was up in the sky trying to find out what all the excitement was about."

"I saw it, all right...a light about the same as you see when you look at a star in the evening."⁸⁸

Taking his fighter to 38,000 feet, the Lt. Colonel may have been the last person to view the object since observers on the ground had their vision obscured by clouds. Whatever Lt. Colonel has in sight didn't seem that mysterious. The officer remarked:

"It didn't wiggle one iota." That's why I'm convinced that it was some kind of celestial body and not a flying saucer. 'If it had been a saucer it would have unquestionably shown some movement.'"⁸⁹

Other Air National Guard pilots that joined the chase were Captain William Littlejohn, Captain Charles Cook, and Major Henry Sturtenvant. The press was notified at 10:30 a.m. by the Dayton Public Information Office that: "...neither of the two jet planes [F-80 jet fighters sent up by Dayton and not Shafer's F-51] had seen the object [and] neither was the body picked up on any of the radar screens."⁹⁰

The chief of the U.S. Weather Bureau at the Dayton Municipal Airport was quoted as saying:

"Movement of the body was almost imperceptible. As we observed it at intervals, however, it was clear that its motion was toward the southwest. It finally disappeared from view of the naked eye in that direction."

"The body had no relative position to the sun. I don't believe it was either a star or planet however."

"As to its appearance it shone as would a silver weather balloon or aircraft when the sun was shining on it."⁹¹

The press said of Barnes:

"Barnes said the UFO looked to be two feet across [At arm's length?]. Suddenly the body seemed to stop. It hovered for a few seconds then shot upward at a

terrific speed. It was like a balloon rising. In a matter of minutes the object was no more than three inches across. After a half hour it was just a pinpoint of light. We all expected it would continue right out of sight, but it didn't. It stayed in that relative position for some time."⁹²

Colonel Watson of MCI, Dayton, at 10:20 a.m., directed that two military witnesses stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base be interrogated. The military men were a Captain Howe and a Sergeant Guzi.

Sergeant Guzi had manned a radar scope during the UFO incident. He testified:

"...the radar scanner that he was operating gave a signal of tremendous size and that the random motion of the signals precluded cloud formations. He further stated that the range of the signal covered 90 degrees and was from 20-40,000 [?] distance in range. These reports varied until 1140 at which time he notified me that he had lost the signal because the object had come closer to the field than fifteen miles."⁹³

Agents Deyarmond and Kobernuss also went to Vandalia Field to question civilians. Since the UFO was seen to the southwest and was visible for some two and a half hours as a point of light, it was suspected that the object in question must have been the planet Venus. Even controller Barnes' testimony, that told of movement and a change of size, was explained as the planet Venus, the image of planet distorted by ice laden clouds. This explanation of ice laden clouds played a critical role in explaining a radar return registered on a scope at Wright Field.

Civilian radar experts were summoned. Here is their version of the incident. R. A. Johnson drew up a statement:

"At approximately 11:30 a.m., 8 March 1950, Mr. R. L. James and the writer were informed that unidentified signals of very large amplitude were being received on the SCR-54 in Area B. It was also reported that unidentified objects described as celestial bodies were observed earlier in the day. Mr. James and the writer proceeded to the radar site in order to observe the signals and suggested that, although the signals were undoubtedly weather conditions, it would be advisable to check by performing an air interception. An F-80 aircraft was victored to the approximate location of the targets and reported back that strips of ice laden clouds running northwest to southeast were visible at approximately 10,000 feet. This information concurred with plots obtained by radar forming conclusive evidence

that the radar targets were in fact reflections from the ice laden clouds."94

Captain Robert M. Howe said the following:

"At approximately 7:45 a.m., I was informed by the Control Tower, Patterson Field to search for an unidentified object which was high over the field. The Tower told me this object had been originally reported by two airline pilots to the Vandalia Control Tower. The pilots described it as a long slender body at an estimated altitude of approximately 10,000 feet and approaching from the northwest. By the time I received this information, the Vandalia Control Tower had the object sighted with field glasses."95

Was the object Venus? When Barnes first saw the object it was no where near the southwest horizon. The interrogation report states: "Mr. Barnes stated that at approximately 0650 he sighted an object in the direction of E/NE; that is at a bearing of about 70 degrees. Also: "When the object finally stopped it was at a bearing of approximately 120 degrees, and in the general direction of S/SW. It took approximately five seconds for the object to travel from the 70 degree bearing to the 120 degree bearing."96

Years later, as head of the Air Force's UFO investigative project, Captain Edward Ruppelt ran into an angry Air Force Sergeant, the same noncom that had tracked the strange target over Wright-Patterson Air Force Base that March day in 1950. The Sergeant insisted that he had gotten a solid pip on the radar scope and not a fuzzy cloud image. Moreover, the Sergeant said, the target climbed so fast he had difficulty keeping the tilt of the radar antenna trained on whatever was bouncing back the radar pulse.97

Aircraft in the aerial chase used a standard radio frequency and control tower operators in the region had eavesdropped. A Mr. J. Moore of Stout Field at Indianapolis heard the radio conversations and remembered that the Air Force pilots (this must have been the F-80 jets), had: "...reported that the object had outdistanced them and had disappeared." This bothered newsman Paul Janes of the Indianapolis Star. After interviewing Moore, Janes contacted Wright Field but: "...the Air Force quickly denied that such a chase had occurred."98

The Dayton, Ohio, Journal-Herald had its own comments on the activities of authorities:

"Late yesterday afternoon investigators from Wright Field were at the airport interviewing the Air Guard officers and other personnel who said they had seen the object in the sky.

"The 'investigators' moved about almost as mysteriously as the mysterious object itself. They refused to give their names to any outsiders including the press and they seemed very 'secretive' about their mission.

"One of the operatives said he was connected with the 'office of special investigation' at Wright Field."99

Charles Moore (who had been making theodolite observations near Caballo Dam close to Arrey, New Mexico, back in April 1949, when men under his command picked up and tracked a huge, high flying UFO) chose this moment (March 8th) to release his story to the United Press, snapping to reporters: "Official reports of the observance were made to both the Navy and the Air Force, but no official reply was made to....[him].100

The evening of March 9th, at Norwood, Ohio, eleven witnesses besides Sgt. Berger, saw the mammoth intruder at 8 o'clock high in the sky speared by the searchlight beam. Hanging motionless, it appeared innocuous in the heaven.101

Radar returns caused more of a shift of opinion than any visual report as evidenced by official documents.

"A new technological advancement by an alien power?"

The concern of the Continental Air Command over the Selfridge manifestation and the closure of Project GRUDGE received no sympathy from Air Force Intelligence. Although admitting that the Selfridge incident had some similarities to the incident at Dayton, Air Force Intelligence headquarters at Wright Field, Ohio, said that Air Force headquarters in Washington, D.C. pulled the strings.

"As in the case of such incidents examined in the past, there has been no evidence that unusual observations have been the result of a new technological advancement by an alien power. In every case where there has been sufficient usable data, it has been found that a seemingly unusual observation was the result of misidentification. It was for this reason that requirements for special investigation of such incidents and the entire Project Grudge (unidentified flying objects) were cancelled by Hq. USAF earlier this year. The discontinuance of special reporting and consideration has not stopped the reports of such incidents. cursory examination of such reports as have come to the attention of Hq. USAF have merely confirmed the conclusions which justified discontinuance of the special considerations once given them. Hq. USAF has outstanding requirements with all commands, domestic and overseas, for the collection of technical intelligence.

These are continuously re-emphasized and focused on priority items."102

March 9th.

The area of Vaughn, New Mexico, was the site of more than its share of UFO reports, specifically aerial flares which incurred the interest of the Commander of Holloman Air Force Base. This Commander sent a team of investigators to the area which included Col. Baynes, Major Watras, Major Haynor, Lt. Albert, M/Sgt. Holmes, and three civilian experts: Mr. Knott, Mr. Proctor, and a Mr. Cottler. The team questioned witnesses to determine to their satisfaction that a correlation between radio disturbances and visual reports of aerial phenomena might exist. After talking to the UFO observers, the team recommended that instrumentation be set up at a location specifically in the Vaughn area, an Askania instrument operated by Land-Air, Inc. and Signal Corps frequency spectrum analysis equipment. This effort was held up for the moment, being aborted by news that Air Force headquarters had already authorized a similar plan to be carried out by the Cambridge Research Laboratory. After a meeting at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, on March 9th, the Vaughn scheme was given the go-ahead after establishing coordination with a Major Curtis of Research Development at Headquarters, AMC.103

"Man from Mars?"

Mexico also began to see "visions." A flying saucer was reported over the city of Durango on March 7th, and a Mexican Naval Commander said he had spotted something in the sky over Mazatlan on March 8th. He suggested to the press that the thing was some sort of artificial device, most importantly, however, was some news on March 9th that amazed everyone. Word from Mexico was that someone was claiming that a flying saucer from Mars, with a "little man" aboard, had crashed in the countryside!

The Los Angeles Herald-Express broke the news in its March 9th edition. It seems that a R. L. Dimmick, a Los Angeles businessman, was telling people that a saucer-shaped craft had crashed just outside Mexico City. Dimmick also was charging the U.S. Air Force with imposing undue security restrictions on the fantastic discovery. The businessman referred to a pair of unnamed business associates, both mining engineers, one an American and another a Chilean-Mexican (our old friends Silas Newton and DeBaucer?), as his original source of information on the momentous find. The pair, Dimmick said, had seen the saucer before authorities removed the wreckage. In the ship had been a pilot 23 inches tall whose body was taken away to be embalmed and examined. The Los Angeles businessman disclosed that nothing had been officially announced because high government officials were in a quandary about what to say about the incident. As for himself,

he stated he had hiked to the crashed site three months earlier (January) and had inspected a strip of aluminum-like metal, 6'x3'x3/4" in size. Furthermore, Dimmick claimed he learned of other crashes in Mexico and the U.S., that had occurred in 1949.¹⁰⁴

Making Dimmick look good was an apparent chance comment by a Mexican scientist who was quoted in the press as saying that he felt the flying saucers carry visitors from Mars and that the fact would be confirmed: "...when in the near future one of the discs is chased to earth by some military airplane."¹⁰⁵

Commenting further, Dimmick boasted that he had visited the military post where the saucer was being kept, a location under guard and out of public view. He said he had been escorted to the place by a friend, a Mexico City executive of the company that employed him. Going into more detail, Dimmick described the crashed saucer as a twin-engine craft some 46 feet in diameter that had suffered extensive damage to its underside. Moreover, he asserted that important military people from the Pentagon had rushed to Mexico to inspect the strange contraption.¹⁰⁶

Teletypes sent the story across America. Radio stations filled the airwaves. This triggered scores of requests for more information about the alleged amazing event. The Chicago Tribune complained that its phone lines became tied into knots. The Pentagon came under siege by newsmen seeking details but the annoyed High Command professed ignorance declaring: "if they had had any information they had no reason to hide it."¹⁰⁷ The Los Angeles Times got through to some acknowledgeable spokesman at Air Force Headquarters, a source that firmly assured the West Coast paper the military had "absolutely no information" on any sort of saucer crash adding that the Pentagon had even gone to the trouble of checking with the U.S. Air Attaches stationed in Mexico City.¹⁰⁸ The American Embassy in Mexico City had a top official meet with the press to say: "I can definitely and officially state that this report is not true."¹⁰⁹

The assistant U.S. military attache at the embassy, Colonel Joseph Anderson, snapped:

"This is beyond me. I have not heard of any such thing nor seen it, and were it true I feel positive I would have been informed by the Mexican defense ministry since we are in closest touch with them."¹¹⁰

Word of a so-called midget pilot landing in Mexico reached the Acting Chief of the Counter Intelligence Division, OSI, IG, USAF, Major Gilbert R. Levy, by the unextraordinary means of a news story in the Washington, D.C. Times-Herald. Major Levy quickly notified his superior General Carroll that:

"Statement is made in this article that crash occurred three months ago which roughly

coincides with the period that similar accounts were appearing in several mid-western newspapers. The previous accounts were generally traced to statements made by a Radio Announcer in Denver, Colorado. Interview of that source by DO #14 served to discredit most of the statements made inasmuch as the announcer retracted some of his previous assertions and refused to provide any credible confirmation for others."¹¹¹

Bernard Newman's flying saucer.

An alert member of the staff of the San Francisco Call-Bulletin observed that there existed a precedence of sorts of a mighty mite from outer space in author Bernard Newman's recently published science fiction book.¹¹² Newman, much better known in Europe than in America, was adept at both fiction and nonfiction with his special interest being travel essays and accounts of war time experiences. His latest attempt, however, was something of a departure from his usual themes. Written in 1948 but not published until 1950, Newman's newest work was a novel titled The Flying Saucer, a story about a crashed flying saucer.¹¹³ Its plot concerned a group of scientists of a neutral political persuasion that concock and carry out a scheme of faking an alien threat to Earth by utilizing a fake crashed saucer containing the messy "remains of a Martian." The nations of the world are successfully fooled and the leaders of the world stop their bickering to act in concert to meet the danger from outer space thereby justifying the deceit of the peace-loving perpetrators. In passing, it might be noted that Newman's fantasy-thriller was similar in storyline to an episode of the later television series, "Outer Limits" titled "Architects of Fear."

In 1950, however, mankind had no need of a scarecrow with Donald Keyhoe busy trying to establish proof of the real McCoy. As for guys like Frank Scully and R. L. Dimmick, they only confused the issue.

The confession.

Before the first week of March ended, Time magazine proclaimed it had solved the crashed saucer business blaming it on the newspaper that had first broke the story: the Los Angeles Herald-Express. According to Time, an editorial writer on the Herald-Express learned of the story of a crashed saucer "over a convivial round" with the originator of the tale."¹¹⁴

The Pentagon didn't take kindly to being put on the spot, so to clear the air, a military investigator was sent to interrogate Dimmick. When the military agent caught up with Dimmick, the shaken businessman admitted: "...he didn't claim to have seen the thing himself. He said he was told about it by an 'unimpeachable friend'." Thus, as far as the INS felt, the "vivid" saucer story "withered away today to a second hand tale."¹¹⁵

Four p.m. March 9th.

At Palomar Gardens cafe, George Adamski, our philosopher-amateur astronomer friend, who had supposed understanding with the Navy to maintain a saucer watch in the vicinity of Mt. Palomar, California, tuned to Beverly Hills radio station KMPC to get the 4 o'clock newscast. At that moment Adamski's acquaintance, G. L. Bloom of the Point Loma Navy Electronic Laboratory near San Diego, walked in and sat down at the lunch counter. Instead of talking, both listened with intense interest to the news broadcast which gave the lowdown on the fantastic Dimick crashed saucer story.

Adamski claims that Mr. Bloom reacted to the news story this way: "They did not give all the truth. There was more than that to it."¹¹⁶ Adamski further asserts that he sensed that Mr. Bloom dared not reveal more. They both made small talk and before Mr. Bloom left, Adamski gave him a couple of prints showing some unusual images near the moon. Mr. Bloom allegedly promised to show the pictures to his colleague, J. P. Maxfield of the Point Loma Laboratory.¹¹⁷

Saucers, rumors, keep flying.

The head of the Mexican Air Force, Brigadier General Rodriquiry Cardences, swiftly moved to the aid of the American High Command by issuing a disclaimer that there had been any stifling of the truth on the part of the Mexican government while suggesting that the so-called flying saucers still remained the stuff of which dreams are made. United Press insisted that Mexican authorities had evaded comment on the crashed saucer story for the most part because it was felt such recognition might endow the Dimmick story with some credibility, but off the record remarks were heatedly anti-saucer with the blame being placed on American writer Donald Keyhoe whose article in True magazine, "The Flying Saucers Are Real," was being reprinted in Mexican newspapers, the hysteria heightened by a radio broadcast of a fictional Martian saucer landing by a station in North Carolina (this is probably the Richmond, Virginia broadcast aired late December 1949).¹¹⁸

One newsman had a few laughs with the wee men yarn when he phoned Washington to ask the Air Force if they would hire mid-gets now that the Defense Secretary Johnson had insisted on a frugal budget, but it wasn't too funny to the military spokesman who had to drag himself out of bed to answer the phone.¹¹⁹

A story that refuses to die.

Did Dimmick really make up his story? Was he inspired by Bernard Newman or Frank Scully? Or, for the sake of covering all the bases, did a flying saucer actually crash? If there had been a "real crash" somewhere, was the Pentagon utilizing the same weapon they often expressed fear of, which was psycho-

logical ploys. If so, was the Pentagon trying to cover up a real Martian crash, or were the generals in Washington attempting to spook the Russians into thinking the U.S. may be testing a super-airplane?

The anonymous Naval Officer.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, a news story only locally reported, so it went unnoticed for the most part and unchallenged, appeared in the San Francisco Call-Bulletin. Someone identified only as a "U.S. Naval Officer" had briefed some civilians around March 1st, some eight days before the Dimmick story appeared in the Herald-Express. The unnamed officer said a disc-shaped machine constructed of an unidentified metallic substance had come down in Mexico sometime before February 24th and that three little men about three feet in height with huge heads were found in the wreck. The Mexican military had roped off the crash site and had hushed up the incident while sending for American scientists for help in determining the secret of the alien machine's mode of propulsion. Making inquiries, the Call-Bulletin was surprised to find that various Bay Area military officers were inclined to believe the fantastic story.¹²⁰ The San Francisco Chronicle, referring to the same mystery man, added: "He intimated there can be no official disclosure until it is certain the news will not give aid and comfort to the Iron Curtain countries, which kept typically mum about whether they had any saucer wreck to work on."¹²¹

The University of Denver lecture.

A general science class at the University of Denver, Denver, Colorado, was studying astronomy in March 1950, and perhaps it was inevitable that the subject of flying saucers should be mentioned. At this early date in UFO history, little printed matter concerning the sky mystery was available for the curious, but one of the students said he was acquainted with a man who was an alleged expert on flying saucers and might be willing to share his knowledge. Excited at the prospect, the students in the class voted to invite the "expert" to give a lecture at the school. The class instructor, Francis Broman, went along with the idea on the condition the students agree to consider the talk a learning experience in methods of judging reliability and authenticity of testimonial evidence.

The gentleman the students invited was George Koehler whose Venusian yarn had appeared in a Kansas City newspaper the first week in January.

The day of the lecture, March 8th, the classroom was jammed with people. Besides the students, guests and inquisitive strangers found places to sit or stand. At the last minute, Koehler insisted that another person speak in his stead, a certain Silas Newton (the same fellow the Air Force OSI had been attempting to identify and question since late 1949).

Mr. Broman thought it a bit irregular but let Newton go ahead. Newton, the polished con man, spoke convincingly. The crowd, for the most part, hung on every word, finding the handsome Newton brilliant and fascinating. At the end of the lecture, Newton was saved from any difficult questions by the timely interruption of Koehler who reminded Newton: "You will have to come now, or you will miss your plane." As Newton and Koehler drove away, they left in their wake quite a few persons inclined to believe the Venusian visitor story. Someone must have phoned the Air Force because within two hours OSI agents arrived and began to question everyone connected with the incident. This official interest only enhanced Newton's credibility in the eyes of some, but Mr. Broman was not taken in, nor was the University Chancellor, Albert C. Jacobs, who was embarrassed by the episode and cautioned his deans to take care in screening future speakers. 122

Determined to follow any lead in the UFO mystery, editor Ken Purdy of True magazine assigned Donald Keyhoe to the Venusian case and was willing to pay for plane fare to Denver. Keyhoe accepted the job and was soon on a flight to Colorado. Before landing Keyhoe went over some notes.

Keyhoe did his home work as usual and had checked the "little men from Venus" account as it had appeared in the Kansas City Star earlier in the year. In the article it was stated that Koehler had "personally inspected" a flying saucer that crashed at a radar station in the southwest (actually Koehler was just passing on Newton and GeBaucer's story).

When Keyhoe arrived at Denver he went directly to station KMYR to grill Koehler. Confronting Koehler, Keyhoe stated that True stood ready to print the Venusian story if Koehler would provide concrete proof. Koehler was agreeable, claiming to have pictures, metal fragments, and even an odd "alien clock," but, and here was the rub, the tangible items were either being analyzed at a laboratory* or were otherwise unavailable. When Keyhoe's reaction turned out to be annoyed scepticism, Koehler feigned indignation. In a huff, Keyhoe left and caught the next plane out of Denver for New York.

After his return, Keyhoe reported his Denver experience to Ken Purdy in True's New York office. Purdy's reaction was: "Well, thank God that's laid to rest."

Keyhoe, however, thought different. On a stopover at Chicago on his way to New York, Keyhoe had bought a newspaper and noticed an article. Keyhoe tells us:

"On an inside page, I ran across Koehler's name. According to the A.P., he had just admitted the whole thing was a big joke.

"But in spite of this, the 'little men' story goes on and on. Apparently not even Koehler can stop it now." 123

*Leo A. GeBaucer, proprietor of a Phoenix, Arizona radio and television parts supply house, was partial to pretending to be a government scientist specializing in magnetics. His parts store he liked to refer to as an "important governmental laboratory."

Keyhoe turned out to be a prophet.

The UFO wave of 1950 continued.

Various sections of South Carolina sighted a bright object in the heavens. A family of three en route to Columbia spied the phenomenon and described it as bearing a likeness to a "silver sunset with a wide streak, a section like a fine thread and another wide streak." Two residents of Columbia said they saw it as it passed over the fair grounds: "The tail end was wide and narrowed down to a point." Another Columbia citizen, a former Air Corps gunner thought the thing was a secret new type of aircraft and said it took 12 minutes for the UFO to fly pass.¹²⁴

Some 43 miles from Columbia, the "thing" appeared over Orangeburg, South Carolina. The UFO was assured of publicity for when it rushed into view over the city at about 6:20 p.m., March 10th, one of the first persons to notice was the wife of the editor of the local newspaper. Summoning her husband, Donald Law, and five other members of the staff of the Orangeburg Times-Democrat, the woman pointed out to them a "bright shinning disc the size and color of a new moon only brighter" soaring through the heavens tilted at 36 degrees from the vertical, changing the tilt as it sliced slowly through the air, finally passing over the horizon at 6:35 p.m. The UFO left a vapor trail, but as the editor of the Times-Democrat said, the thing bore no resemblance to an aircraft.

A farmer, J. W. Wallace, at Florence, South Carolina, saw the same object. He told the press he witnessed a "tremendous object" like an airplane followed by a long tail. Mr. Wallace expressed wonder: "It was the 'foolest-looking' thing I ever saw." I called some of the helpers to watch so no one would think I'm crazy."¹²⁶

The same object, apparently, was reported near the city of Salley.

"Law's Confession."

Editor Donald Law penned an editorial titled: "Confessions of an Admitted Flying Saucer Witness." It went:

"'You'll be all right in the morning,' my co-workers said.

"'Sure, sure, you saw a flying saucer. Just get a good night's sleep and you'll forget all about it,' said a voice from the sports department. There were veiled references to nice rest homes where I could go quietly. "Nevertheless, I saw a flying saucer yesterday.

"It wasn't a weather balloon. It wasn't a B-36 at 40,000 feet. It wasn't a cloud.

"I don't believe in flying saucers. They're something folks see because they read about other

people who saw them I always figured.

"This one was shown to me by my wife, who ran a good two blocks with our two-year-old in her arms to tell me. As an ex-newspaperwoman, she knew a flying saucer when she saw it.

"I don't know anything about men from Mars, Russian weapons and midget pilots--two headed or otherwise.

"But this disk was just about the shape of a saucer. It glowed brightly and it was tilted in the air. It moved slowly, but swiftly enough for me to see it moving.

"There was a long vapor trail. I've seen vapor trails from underneath and from above and this was similar to those made by highflying planes. But I never saw a plane shaped like a saucer.

"My fellow newspapermen have been very considerate of me since I saw the flying saucer. One even offered me a cigarette. I couldn't even eat without my restaurateur Jack Nolen, making a crack about cups and saucers.

"And unless somebody finds out what the contraptions are, I may go through life marked as the fellow that saw a flying saucer."127

Overseas the English began to sense that something big was looming when the Orangeburg account was received. The editor of the London Times directed that a straight forward version of the story be published in its pages without the slightest allusion to humor.

Norwood again.

The last of the series of "space platform" visitations in the sky over Ohio took place March 10th. At Norwood that night, gathered around Sgt. Berger's searchlight were the following witnesses: The Catholic priest Father Miller, two men named R. Wyers and William Winkler, and an Air Force Captain by the name of Wilks. Perhaps because of the recent manifestations in the sky over Selfridge Air Force Base and Dayton, Captain Wilks had brought along a pair of binoculars to get a good look at the sky phenomenon.

Around 7 o'clock the giant UFO was caught by the searchlight beam and for once it seemed to display a dislike for being illuminated, rising to a higher altitude to escape the beam's reach. Yet, after a half an hour, the UFO returned to altitude where it was easily visible. The UFO lingered for so long people got tired of staring and went to bed. Captain Wilks was seen spending time on the phone passing along his personal impressions of the phenomenon. The finale of the Ohio searchlight series was not the most spectacular. There were no satellite bodies seen, but perhaps the thing had already launched its brood which were flitting here and there annoying and exciting persons elsewhere.128

"They observed what they believed was a flying disc."

A March 10th sighting southeast of Phoenix, Arizona, was deemed fit to warrant a "Spot Intelligence Report" to be sent to Washington by the 17th District OSI office. Four adults and three teenagers were interviewed by Air Force OSI agents. The Intelligence officers prepared a report, listing the names of the witnesses and then writing a composite description of the event since individual interrogations amounted to substantially the same account. The report states:

"That between 1800-1830 hours, 10 March 1950, all of the above listed persons were traveling south on Indian School Road, toward Litchfield Park, Arizona. That the party noticed an object in the sky which appeared to be hovering at a fixed altitude with no perceptible forward motion. This object was observed from the moving automobile for approximately ten (10) minutes but never increased or decreased in size. When the party arrived at the junction of Indian School Road and Litchfield (Goodyear Road) they turned east, stopped the automobile, --- (deleted) and --- (deleted) walked to the edge of Litchfield Road to further observe the object. The following composite description of the object was afforded:

"Direction from Point of Observation:	-South by 20 degrees east
Height:	-40,000 to 50,000 feet
Size:	-From point of observation about the size of moon, estimated 200 feet diameter, 30 feet thick, tapering to narrow proportions at rear.
Shape:	-Oval or oblong.
Color:	-Aluminum or color of quick silver.
Position:	-Hovering in a position of approximately 60 degrees to horizontal and 60 degrees above the horizon.
Sky:	-Perfectly clear, no clouds and unobstructed visibility.
Object at Standstill:	-No windows, appendages, smoke, trails of exhaust fumes, or apertures observed.

Object in Motion:	-Moved from standstill in the sky upward at 60 degrees angle until out of sight leaving a trail of what appeared to be red fire 75-100 feet in length. Trail of fire vanished approximately 75-100 feet behind the object and left no condensation trail after object passed through the atmosphere.
Direction of Flight:	-Skyward 60 degrees angle in southeasterly direction.
Speed:	-Extremely high. Traveled out of sight in 4 to 5 seconds moving so fast could only be followed by observing trail of red stream of fire behind." ¹²⁹

March 10th finally expired, the hands of the clock passing midnight. It had been quite a day.

UFO's thicken over Mexico.

March 11th the United Press news service was telling the U.S. that:

"Newspapers in Mexico City were printing reports from all parts of the country about 'silvery balls,' 'luminous disks,' 'strange objects,' and 'fantastic phenomena.' The reports followed the wide play given by a Mexico city newspaper to a series on 'flying saucers' derived from an American magazine True. Practically all reports followed the patterns outlined by the magazine."¹³⁰

The director of Mexico's Tomantzintia Astronomical Observatory issued a statement carried by the newspaper Excelsior concerning a photographic plate the Observatory exposed on March 2nd which showed an unexplained diagonal streak or light indicating that a brilliant body passed overhead. The Mexican astronomer, Luis Enrique Erro, director of the Observatory, stated: "...we have wondered what it could have been. We don't know."¹³¹

A flying "whatisit" was spotted over Juarez by Mexican border guards and custom officials, and just across the border at Deming, New Mexico, an American by the name of J. E. Baird sighted a saucer in the air as he drove through town.¹³²

*More than once astronomers have remarked that if UFO's existed they would leave light streaks on telescope photographic plates but that such a thing has never happened to their knowledge. Perhaps this Mexican case is an exception?

Other Mexican localities joining the saucer parade included Guadajara, Mazatlan, Monterrey, and the capital, Mexico City.

American uneasiness grows.

So far the UFO wave of 1950 had not reached very far into the U.S., but nonetheless the press expressed concern. The San Francisco Examiner, for one, noted that suddenly witnesses with 20-20 vision and of unlikely reputation were sighting odd "heavenly intruders" again, making the newswires dance with saucer stories. When the Examiner contacted the nearest Air Force base for a comment, Hamilton Field in Marin County, a spokesman there tried to reassure the paper. The Examiner got an officer on the line that declared that another silly season was in the offing and the military would be stuck with the same old deal of "trying to lay to rest the saucer's ghost."¹³³

A lively ghost. Calls bombarded the Sheriff's office in Salinas, California that eleventh day of March and one report stands out, that of a woman from the small community of Chuslar. She had been driving her mother and two children to Salinas when a flying disc "swooped" down on her car. Terrified, the woman told the sheriff: "I hope I never see anything like that again!"¹³⁴ As the object zipped by, it cast a brilliant bluish light as it "loop-the-loop" before whizzing off to the south. The woman said it: "...looked like two dinner plates placed together."¹³⁵

Before March 11th ended, word was received from the Chilean Navy's Meteorological Observatory at Punta Arenas, a report about an unusual celestial body. A phenomenon that had excited the populace in the region was described thusly:

"A spheroid celestial body, visible to the naked eye, of about seven inches in diameter, crossed the sky in an east to west direction.

"The body remained in the sky from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at an estimated height of 18,000 feet and then disappeared."¹³⁶

Another "strange meteor" coasted through the sky southwest of Holloman Air Force Base on March 11th at 0100 hours, remaining in view for about five minutes. It changed color during its passage, from orange to red, to amber, and finally to a light green. Like a brilliant ping pong ball held at arm's length, the object slipped down in a slight straight descent diminishing in size until it became too small to be perceived.

The witness was Major William J. Haynor, an Air Provost Marshall at Holloman Air Force Base.

March 11th.

According to the Mexican press a great sensation was caused at Central Airport, Mexico City, by a young student of the Tampico Naval Academy, a Gonzalo Ibanez, who was watching from the roof of his home the night of March 11th scanning the Big Dipper with

a small telescope when he spotted a high speed round object zooming toward the southwest. The object was not a meteor to his reckoning since it was a dull gray color and non-luminous. 137

Another story in the El Nacional told of persons in the capital, especially street vendors and their customers, agreeing that the strange objects seen in the sky were round in appearance with a slightly oval outline and convex in profile. Furthermore, speaking of the object's movements, it was said that the object's: "...stop and go up and down with a distinct impulse different from the other movements or directions."138

March 12th.

A photograph of a circular blob, touted as a picture of a flying saucer, was submitted to the Los Angeles Times on March 12th. The picture prompted a full page recap of the UFO mystery and various ramifications. This continued fascination by the press extracted from Washington yet another official statement that asserted that although a few unsolved UFO cases were on file (at least they didn't say all had been explained) that hardly meant that the latest reports: "...are necessarily spaceships or high altitude cruisers from another nation."139

An early arrival of the UFO's northern advance appeared over Gering, Nebraska, March 12th. Police watched a brilliant object, some 25 feet wide, just after the sunrise skimming along 100 feet above the ground while throwing off a white glare that lit up the whole neighborhood. Pursuit by a patrolcar proved useless.140

Bright discs tumbling about the sky were reported over Mexicali and Calexico, Mexico, which the mayor of Calexico excitedly described to the press as: "crescent-shaped things circling very high over the city," seemingly "about half way to the moon." Later a round-shaped object seen over Calexico started debate about a possible weather balloon, or the balloon of a prankster attempting to augment a recent UFO invasion of the Riverside, California area, just north of the border.141

The night of March 12th there were spooky goings on in California's Riverside district. Strange, unexplained glowing objects in the dark sky east of Riverside over the desert, had unnerved people. The tiny desert town of Mecca was particularly close to the nocturnal haunting. One Mecca woman whispered: "They made me so nervous I had to stop looking."142

The woman couldn't have been any more nervous than a A. T. Coca, who only hours later rolled into Santa Fe, New Mexico, all in a sweat, telling anyone who would listen that a couple of disc-like objects had swooped across the highway just ahead of his car as he approached the city.143

March 13th.

"Just look at that damned thing!"

Something uncommon in UFO reports, an auditory stimuli, is mentioned in a report made by a U.S. Army Major, Army Signal Corps (Reserve) concerning something spotted in the sky the morning of March 13th near the man's home in Clarksberg, California. The witness was disturbed in his sleep by a strange noise that registered with his subconscious. He awoke and leaped out of bed to begin a search of his house. The sound was an odd droning which he quickly realized was coming from outside. Going out in the yard to hunt for a possible prowler, he suddenly noticed that the source of the noise was a brilliant light in the night sky. Excited by the sight, the man, a Major Taylor, hurried back into the house to summon his wife so she could see one of those aerial things the whole nation was talking about. When he returned to the yard with his wife in tow, the UFO was so prominent in the heavens, so dazzling, the couple termed it awe-inspiring. The wife had expected some tiny speck floating by. The vision instead was a stunner, a big, solid, brilliant mass. The husband yelled: "Just look at that damned thing!" She gazed at it and thought: "What kind of supernatural sign is it?" Not metallic in appearance, the thing was rather a huge intense glow, the apparent size of one-half the full moon, perfectly silhouetted in the gloomy, dark, cloudless sky. For a quarter of an hour it shifted around, swaying to and fro until it departed on its arrival course.¹⁴⁴

"Platomania."

Mexico continued to be affected by "platomania" in spite of efforts to explain the reports as border incursions by U.S. weather balloons. At Monterrey the passengers and crew of an American Airlines airliner about to land observed a disc hovering high over the landing strip. It appeared as a bright point since it was bathed in sunbeams. On the ground an airline pilot of many years of experience, a Captain W. R. Hunt, using a theodolite, peered with fierce determination at the silver dot.¹⁴⁵ An airport inspector for the Mexican government, Francisco Martinez Soto, confirmed the sighting but shied away from calling the strange body parked above Monterrey that March 13th a "saucer."¹⁴⁶

Saucer with a "green tail."

A Mexican engineer by the name of Struck was in an airplane flying at 9,000 feet on March 14th on a course toward Mexico City's Central Airport when an object came into view he could not identify. Mr. Struck told the press that at first he thought it was a parachute from the Mexican Army. "It looked like a parachute but the color was gray," he said. The size he estimated was about 6 to 8 meters in diameter and that the object appeared to be carrying: "...a type of [sic] green color suspended beneath it..." whatever that meant.¹⁴⁷

Four discs in formation were seen in the sky over the Durango, Colorado area on March 14th, an event that prestaged a greater show three days later.¹⁴⁸

A little more to the north, at Salt Lake City, a brilliantly-lit blue-green object was seen shooting across the sky on a rising course. Some of the witnesses estimated the object to be 10x30 feet in size.¹⁴⁹

The island of Oahu, Hawaii, is at the same latitude as Mexico City and at Kailu on Oahu a Mr. R. Chunen was laboring in a field on March 14th when he happened to look up. He spotted a round silvery disc trailing "smaller shining streaks" and coasting in a northwest direction."¹⁵⁰

The buzzing of La Aurora.

Word was received from Guatemala City's La Aurora airport on March 15th that 3-4 highly polished silver-colored elliptical objects zoomed over the field in an altitude of 25,000 feet at 11:00 in the morning moving at 1,000 miles per hour.¹⁵¹

An Air Force Captain on a two week active duty tour piloting a TACA aircraft, had landed at La Aurora Field and engaged other TACA pilots in shop talk. He, a Captain Hall, learned that some flying saucers in formation had flown directly over the runway, going south to north. It was said that the objects appeared to be larger than a C-54. Captain Hall told the story as he heard it to American authorities:

"When the first object came into sight, it flew north a distance that was judged to be approximately 30 miles--about over the town of Ravinal--where it turned left 180 degrees and headed directly south. A few moments later two more objects appeared moving one directly over after the first two disappeared. It was surmised by the TACA personnel that the first object went back to pick up the second. According to --- (deleted) a fourth object appeared a few moments later. All objects were traveling north. --- (deleted) estimated the turning radius was 15 to 20 miles. The objects flew in a very stable manner going so fast it was hard to keep one's eyes on them. The weather was CAVU and the witnesses lost sight of the ovals as they diminished in the distance. A picture of one of the objects appeared in the March 16th edition of the Guatemala City newspaper."¹⁵²

To the north in Mexico the chief observer for a Mexican Aviation company, Santiago Smith, and an airport official J. De La Vega, were witnesses to four unexplained "flying bodies" directly above the Capital City at perhaps an altitude of 35,000 to 40,000 feet the same afternoon. The strange aerial quartet reminded them of silver pesos flashing in the sun, but looking at one of the objects through a telescope, it appeared to be a "half moon" in shape.¹⁵³

For two days now a strange, round object had hung in the sky at an estimated 20,000 feet over Calexico, a city on the California-Mexico border, while thousands gazed at it. Two

pilots flew their planes near the UFO and while one pilot thought the thing to be a weather balloon, the other pilot disagreed, basing his judgment on the fact that the object resisted the wind.¹⁵⁴

"Policia! policia!"

A correspondent for Time magazine viewed the saucers with a jaundice eye and had a ball compiling comic notes for the latest assessment the Mexican "plalivolo" hysteria, learning that pickpockets were enjoying a chance of a lifetime directing their victims' attention skyward while they deftly relieved the would be saucer sighter of his wallet. The streets of Mexico City echoed loudly with cries for the law. Some Mexican government officials even got into some legal difficulties because of the UFO's when they sought to get rich selling fake saucer pictures to the saucer-hungry newspapers. Also, it was amusing to note that Mexican chiropractors got into the act by advertising their services to stiff-necked sky watchers. The only actual disc news Time offered concerned the report of a big aluminum-like object skimming over Yucatan at a 1,000 foot altitude, and a weird tale from the northern state of Zacateca which (to this writer's knowledge) had never been checked out: "...a farmer had found a large kite-shaped [?] object in the mountains, with two passengers, each just under two feet tall."¹⁵⁵ All this commotion south of the border said Time, mirrored a psychological impairment that: "...still flickers occasionally in the States."¹⁵⁶

Flickering?

At Intelligence Headquarters at Wright Field the teletype tapped out the following message:

"...sighted visually 0730 GMT, 15 Mar 50, object first sighted 360 deg true from Pacific Beach, Washington. Observed for 4 minutes. Altitude, speed and heading unknown. Bearing changed to 270 degrees and descended from 15 degrees on horizon. One object, no estimation of size, deceleration to comparatively slowspeed and began a series of incalculable movements while maintaining relative position in air. Only one major course change noted while balance of changes appeared as random movements. No weather sequence available. No color reported. No sketches available, as yet, no photographs, no sound, no exhaust trail observed by --- (deleted) Airborne Civilian Technical Representative."¹⁵⁷

"My God!"

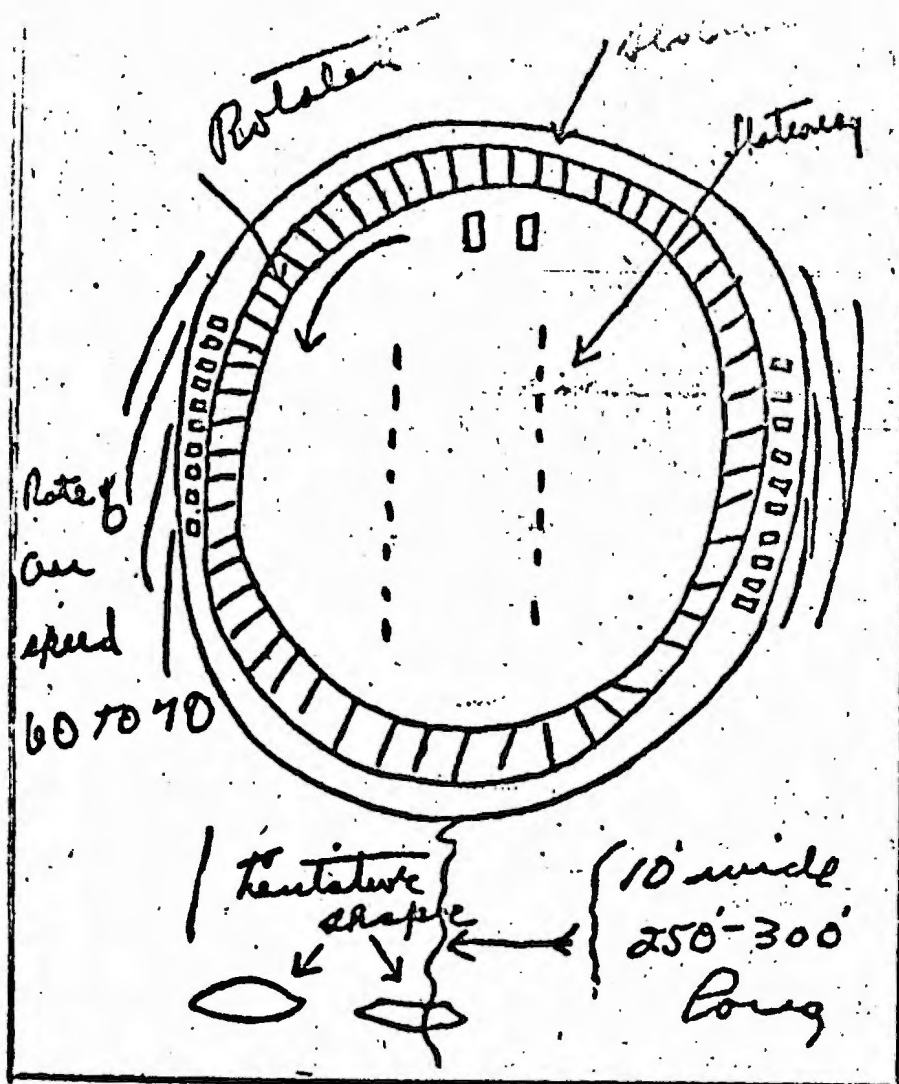
A better witness would have been difficult to find. A handsome, bespectacled doctor, both a licensed pilot and the technical director of a medical supply firm. In short, a gentleman of impeccable reputation. It was one of those cases that made the news media sit up and take notice.

On March 15th a Dr. Craig Hunter was driving his 1949 Hudson on Highway 153 near Penfield, Pennsylvania. Up to 6:15 p.m. his trip had been uneventful.

As Dr. Hunter slowly drove up a mountain road in the sparsely populated country, a warning light lit up on the dash. The car's ammeter indicated that the battery was discharging so Dr. Hunter parked and got out to check under the hood for an electrical short. While the physician poked around inspecting wires leading from the battery, a truck with a farmer by the name of Yeager* at the wheel pulled up along side and screeched to a halt. Yeager introduced himself and offered to help. It was at that point that both men heard an odd hissing, whistling sound. Dr. Hunter glanced at the sky and saw an astounding sight. According to his testimony, he saw a weird machine a dirty aluminum grayish color, which had coasted into view leisurely soaring through the air about 350 feet above the ground. The atmosphere was still and the weather crystal clear so there was no mistaking the thing for a balloon. He estimated that the UFO was a 100 feet or so in diameter and some 30 feet thick, trailing a streamer (?) 200 feet long and some 10 inches wide. Dr. Hunter told the farmer to look in the direction of the approaching UFO, and Yeager, when his eyes focused on the object, stared in disbelief for a few seconds and then gasped: "MY GOD!" Stomping on the gas, Yeager drove away at high speed, a terrified witness to a spectacular "UFO vision." Dr. Hunter, in contrast, stood his ground although he later confessed he had been as frightened as the farmer. Overcoming his fear as best he could, Dr. Hunter studied the aerial craft carefully, noticing three concentric sections on the underside that showed a slowly rotating inner ring. He mused the possibility he was in awe of a radical new warplane, but after the UFO passed out of sight, Dr. Hunter got back in his car and drove to the city of St. Mary's, Pennsylvania, where he checked into the Hotel Franklin and went straight to his room to ponder whether to tell anyone about the strange object. Finally, after giving it considerable thought, Dr. Hunter convinced himself that, if for no other reason, it was his civic duty to contact authorities. His first approach was to the local newspaper, the St. Mary Daily Press, and the editor was so impressed he immediately contacted G. Staley of the Associated Press bureau in Pittsburgh. Staley requested that Dr. Hunter be put on the phone so he could ask his own questions and one can hardly blame him, it was one of the biggest stories of the year or else someone was pulling his leg. A conversation with the doctor satisfied Staley that the story might be true so an account of the UFO sighting appeared on the AP newswire.¹⁵⁸

The publicity caused Dr. Hunter's phone to ring constantly, and of the many calls he got, the ones that most pleased him were from people living in the Penfield area (160!). It seems

*Some news accounts have incorrectly identified the farmer as a "Mr. Jager."



SKETCH OF FLYING SAUCER—This rough drawing of the flying object sighted near St. Mary's Wednesday by Dr. Craig Hunter was reported similar to a detailed diagram recently run in a national magazine, made by Naval Commander Robert D. McLaughlin.

SPECIAL INSERT FOR THIS EDITION

Some additional notes:Europe.

There were two attempts to catalogue UFO phenomena in Europe in 1950. One was a Belgium organization that compiled the following data in the 1970s. The report states:

"In March 1950 many reports were published in the Belgian press concerning the sighting of a fireball that left a smoke trail as it passed over the northeastern part of Belgium at Spa. No date is available. From: Le Soir of Brussels, 17 March 1950.

"Two interesting reports were made in the province of Limbourg, one at Berensheuvel and another at Schalkhoven; on the same day: 24 March 1950. There were eight hours between the two incidents.

"The first incident took place at Berensheuvel at 1:25 p.m. when two mineworkers, a Mr. Cortsjans and a Mr. Brepels, hear a strange noise coming from the sky which sounded like 'the wind blowing through a funnel.' Looking at the sky, the men saw between the clouds a flat, oval-shaped machine which was spewing smoke from a hole in the rear portion of the object. The object flew in a zig-zag motion while maintaining a general course NNE to SSW, passing between the towns of Maaseik and Maastricht. From: Belang van Limburg, Masselt, Belgium, 26 March 1950.

"The second incident occurred at 9 p.m. when a group of people spotted something in the sky as they left meeting. One witness, Peters Jos, suddenly saw an object which he said 'was similar to the so-called flying saucers.' The object was visible to the group for about one minute as it came out of the west, flew in some circles, and then sped out of sight toward the west at great speed. There was no sound and the thing left behind a trail of smoke like 'the trail of a V1 during the last war.' From: Belang van Limburg, Masselt, Belgium, 26 March 1950." *

*Bonabot, Jacques. "UFO's in Belgium during 1948 -1951." Groupeement Etude Sciences Avant-Garde. Leopold laan, 141 B-8000 Bruges, Belgium.

Another part of Europe that was studied was the Iberian peninsula by some Spanish UFO investigators. One such effort was by Antonio Ribera, who, working alone, first discovered the 1950 Iberian UFO wave and the fact that it preceded the 1954 French flap. Studies by other investigators like Carlos Orlando, Ballester Olmos, Jacques Bonabot, and Michel Roy; however are more complete than Ribera's, even so only some 86 cases were available for a examination by statistical methods, as a result conclusions are not that firm. Generally, UFOs that were reported were "saucer" or ball-like in appearance; and were metallic, gray, or white in color. Most of the time, however, the object was merely brilliant, or luminous. UFO activity during 1950 in the Iberian peninsula was low level for most of the year, 0-3 reports a day on average, with the exception of the "flap period" that ran from March 19th to April 1st when reports averaged approximately 10 a day.

For further information consult:

Ribera, Antonio. El gran enigma de los platillos volantes. Pomaire, 1966. (Barcelona, Spain).

Michel, Aime. Flying Saucers and the Straight-Line Mystery Criterion Books. (New York, New York)

Ballester Olmos, Vicente-Juan and Carlos Orlando. "Statistical Notes on the 1950 UFO Flap." Data-Net, ed.: Michel Jaffe. Vol.VI, No.4. Ben Lomond, California.

Bonabot, Jacques and Roy, Michel. "L'anne 1950." Visiteurs Spatiaux, 26, June 1972, 8-14.

Las Vegas Daily Optic March 15, 1950

Now Flying Saucers Aren't Saucers: They're Globes with Row of Windows

By The Associated Press

This flying thing-a-ma-jig business is getting completely out of hand.

They're getting all puffed up about something and turning into flying globes—at least over some parts of New Mexico.

They're not saucers at all but only look that way from the front and rear—and have a long row of windows along the fuselage. And they're getting down to 500 feet and making right angle turns.

Those were among the reports yesterday in the latest wave of claims of strange objects in the sky.

In Santa Fe, high school student Fred Richardson reported sighting a "huge shining globe" over the mountain peaks about 10 miles northeast of the capital. He said it hovered over the mountains, then put on a burst of speed "faster than any jet plane I have ever seen and disappeared to the northeast."

"I don't know what it was, and I haven't believed any of these flying saucers, but I sure saw something bigger than any weather balloon and a lot faster than any plane I know about," 18-year-old Richardson said.

At Hobbs, house painter Frank Bond, 39, said he thinks he's solved the mystery. He said the

objects aren't saucers—they just look that way from the front and rear.

Bond said he observed four of the strange craft over Hobbs Monday in formation. They were traveling at about 2,000 feet toward the northwest and he saw their fuselages with windows running the full length, he related. They made a noise like a jet and vanished in about 30 seconds.

Bond said the front of each bright silver object was shaped like a half moon, each had a square fuselage and they were about the size of a B-29 bomber.

Now They're Seeing Flying Snowballs

MOUNT VERNON, WASH., March 6 (UP).—Walker Ainsworth never has spotted a flying saucer but he claims he's seen a huge snowball flying at about 2000 feet.

Ainsworth said the flying snowball was cruising from north to south and seemed to be traveling at the speed of a plane, but it didn't look like a plane.

Flying Saucer Story at DU Is Just Hoax

DENVER, March 8.—Stories of a report by a secret government expert about finding flying saucer space ships and "little men" from another world spread like wildfire on the Denver university campus today until authorities explained it as just a bit of scientific spoofing.

The unidentified "expert" appeared at a joint class of 100 basic science students yesterday. He told of the findings of the flying saucers, for which he gave exact measurements, and added that in one case, a group of tiny men had been seen around one of the craft parked in a desert.

Francis Bromann, instructor of the basic science class, who said he arranged for the "lecture," explained that he planned the talk by the "expert" to teach his students to critically evaluate scientific information.

Bromann told university authorities and reporters that only four of the 100 students later reported they believed the story.

Fourteen Iowans Join Ranks Of 'I've Seen Saucer' Club

SIOUX CITY, Ia., March 31 (UP).—Fourteen Iowans, including five National Guardsmen and a weather observer, today joined the swelling ranks of the I've-Seen-A-Flying-Saucer Club.

Leo Jeske, employee of the U.S.

Weather Bureau, said he saw a strange object yesterday and at first thought it merely was a weather balloon.

"Then I decided it wasn't," he said.

Jeske said the object remained stationary at an altitude of 10,000 to 12,000 feet for a while, then flashed out of sight.

The National Guardsmen at the Sioux City Air Base said they saw a white, round "something" apparently following an airplane.

Leroy Wagner said "the disc seemed to hover about 300 feet above the plane," but Air Base officials were unable to contact the plane by radio to find out if the pilot saw the object.

Other persons who saw "it" described it as a "shiny, pencil-shaped" aircraft which swung back and forth over Sioux City.

U.S. Air Force officials repeatedly have denied any knowledge of the saucers and have reported that thorough investigations have failed to turn up any proof that they exist.

Now We've Heard 'Everything' About Flying Saucers

SAN DIEGO, Mar. 31.—(UP).—

An unidentified woman telephoned San Diego newspapers today that a flying saucer landed on Highway 80 near Jacumba and "a little man jumped out and ran down the highway in the direction of Imperial valley."

The woman said he ran faster than Jesse Owens.

Sheriff's deputies at Jacumba, 75 miles east of San Diego, found no trace of the reported saucer or the little man.

The same answer was reported by Charles Thomas Akers of Jacumba, who telephoned the United Press in Los Angeles to report that he had talked with the man inside.

"He talked English like you or me," Akers said. Akers didn't say what the man said. After the conversation, the saucer took off, spouting blue flashes and leaving the grass burnt.

Akers, who said he knew the Air Force says there is no such thing as a flying saucer, denied several times that he had been drinking.



Whether flying saucers are fact or fancy, the saucer situation provides plenty of material for the cartoonist's pen. This is how Associated Press artist John Carlton depicts some aspects of the current crop of saucer stories.—AP Wirephotos.

Air Force Interested in Latest "Saucer"

1950 MEMPHIS, March 22 (UP). The Air Force, official debunker of flying saucer stories, apparently was interested in the newest one today. So was Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt.

Capt. Jack Adams and 1st Officer G. W. Anderson, airline pilots who saw a strange object flying over Arkansas Monday night, said they had been notified that Air Force intelligence wanted to talk with them.

Adams and Anderson were flying a plane from Memphis to Shreveport, La., where they spotted the flying disc over Stuttgart, Ark. They gave perhaps the most detailed description yet offered of a mysterious disc in the sky.

"We are certain this was no meteor," they said. "It was an aircraft in controlled flight, traveling at a terrific speed. It was not a jet plane." They said the "strangest, strongest blue-white light we've ever seen" blinked very rapidly on top of the object.

Meanwhile, NBC announced

in New York that Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt has invited Adams and Anderson to appear on her television show Sunday. They plan to build a model of the saucer to display on the program, the network said.

No Alarm Is Needed On Saucers

But Flying Disks Are Not Imagination

Dallas, Tex., March 28, (UP) — Radio Commentator Henry J. Taylor was convinced to-day that the flying saucer is a "military secret" and "not hallucinations or pipe dreams."

Mr. Taylor said last night that the nation should not become alarmed over repeated eye-witness accounts of flying saucers hurtling through the skies at unbelievable speeds.

"These disks that are flying in our air are very real," Mr. Taylor said. "The answer will be wonderfully reassuring when the Army Air Force is prepared to give it."

The Air Force, which has made an exhaustive investigation of reports, has said it has not found any evidence or proof of the existence of flying saucers.

Mr. Taylor said, however, that reports of veteran airmen on flying saucers they had "seen" were too concrete to be discredited.

"Meanwhile, this is a military secret and I do not believe it is the proper business of anybody other than the military authorities regarding where they come from or where they go to."

Mr. Taylor did not disclose the source of his information that flying saucers are real.

"They are not coming from other planets," he said. "They are not coming from Russia."

Earlier to-day two University of Houston professors offered conflicting explanations on the non-existence of flying saucers.

Dr. A. L. Pierce, a psychology professor, said people might be seeing "sundogs," or reflections of the sun on high-altitude clouds composed of tiny crystals.

L. F. Gray of the University of Houston physics department said many persons have "deficiencies in the eye that could cause them to think they saw flying objects."

FLYING SAUCER AGAIN REPORTED OVER CALIFORNIA

SALINAS, Calif., March 11 — (UP)—The little men from Mars were cluttering up the northern California skies here Saturday night.

More than a score of persons reported seeing a flying saucer in the Salinas area. The various reports had the saucer diving on an automobile, looping the loop, and or speeding across the horizon at a low altitude.

The sheriff's office reported a "lot of calls" shortly after 8 p. m. (PST) by people claiming to have seen the phenomenon. Simultaneously, a number of calls were received by the Salinas newspaper.

The sheriff's office said the first call came from Mrs. Sam Ragundin of nearby Chualar, Calif., who said the saucer "swooped down" over her automobile as she and her mother and two children were driving south of Salinas.

She said she at first thought the object was a falling star but changed her mind when it swooped down toward the car.

"It looked like two dinner plates placed together," she said. "It came down to about 2,000 feet and as it came close it gave off a strong bluish-white light that hurt our eyes like a welder's torch."

She said it seemed to "loop the loop" and then sped away in a southerly direction at a great rate of speed.

"I'm still scared," Mrs. Ragundin said. "I hope I never see anything like that again."

The saucer was next reported by Hiram Don, a Chinese market owner, who said he saw it in the sky as he left his market to take some groceries to his automobile. He said it appeared bright in front and had a long fiery tail. It was traveling quite close to the ground, he said.

Another man said it looked like a falling star—"but not quite the same."

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

DATE: March 22, 1950

FROM : SAC, WASHINGTON

SUBJECT: FLYING SAUCERS
INFORMATION CONCERNING

Following Report on Flying Saucers

The following information was furnished to SA [redacted] by [redacted]

An investigator for the Air Force stated that three so-called flying saucers had been recovered in New Mexico. They were described as being circular in shape with raised centers, approximately 50 feet in diameter. Each one was occupied by three bodies of human shape but only 3 feet tall, dressed in metallic cloth of a very fine texture. Each body was bandaged in a manner similar to the blanket suits used by speed flyers and jet pilots.

According to Mr. [redacted] informant, the saucers were found in New Mexico due to the fact that the Government had a high-powered radar set-up in that area and it is believed the radar interferes with the controlling mechanism of the saucers.

No further evaluation was attempted by SAC [redacted] concerning the above.

BRK:VM

RECORDED - 3

INDEXED - 3

162-83894-209

MAR 23 1950

34

1 MAR 29 1950

Office Memorandum : UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : The Director

DATE: March 28, 1950

FROM : D. E. Ladd

SUBJECT: FLYING SAUCERS

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Egan
Mr. Gurnea
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Pennington
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Tele. Room
Mr. Nease
Miss Gandy

Reference is made to your inquiry on the attached routing slip:

"Just what are the facts re 'flying saucers'? A short memo as to whether it is true or just what Air Force etc. think of them."

J. W. Reynolds

In response to your inquiry, Special Agent [redacted] obtained the following information today (3/28/50) from Major [redacted] and Lieutenant Colonel [redacted] of Air Force Intelligence. The Air Force discontinued their intelligence project to determine what flying saucers are the latter part of last year. They publicly announced to the press in December, 1949, that the project had been discontinued. They advised that the press release had been concurred in by the Army and Navy. The reason for the discontinuance, according to Major [redacted] and Lieutenant Colonel [redacted] was that after two years of investigation over three-fourths of the incidents regarding flying saucers proved to be misidentifications of a wide variety of conventional items such as lighted weather balloons and other air-borne objects.

Colonel [redacted] pointed out that the Commanders of the various areas are charged with the security of those areas. Reports concerning flying saucers received at this time will be investigated by the Area Commander and his report submitted to the Air Force Intelligence Division as an intelligence item.

Major [redacted] and Lieutenant Colonel [redacted] made the observation that many of the reported sightings of flying saucers at this time appear to be an outgrowth of recent magazine articles. They reiterated that the Air Force is conducting no active investigation to determine whether flying saucers exist or what they might happen to be.

You will recall that the investigation of flying saucers was discontinued by the Bureau in October, 1947, in order that the Air Force could take over such investigations.

Attachment

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MAR 30 1950

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270 NOV 18 1964

EVEN SEEN IN ADDIS ABABA CANADA

Observe Flying Saucers In Many Parts Of World

London, March 29. (Reuters) — Flying saucers, variously described as full moons, moons with wakes of fire, or strange bodies emitting smoke trails, have been reported skittering in all directions across the heavens above the Mediterranean.

In Haifa to-day, reports circulated that they had been seen over northern Israel.

A Lebanese pilot who took Lebanese Prime Minister Riad es Solh to the Arab League conference in Cairo, said he had seen them over Acre — travelling at a high speed in a westerly direction. Others described them as disks travelling northwards at a great altitude and emitting a smoke trail.

Italy reported that they had been sighted over various parts of the country five times yesterday.

At Salo, on Lake Garda, they were "as large as a full moon streak-

ing across the sky in a north-easterly direction."

In the marble towns of Carrara, "four saucers, three miles up, flying southwards from the direction of Pisa," were sighted.

In the Castanzaro area of Calabria in southernmost Italy the disks zooming westward was described as "like a moon with a wake of fire."

In Cagliari, on the Island of Sardinia, eyewitnesses said the saucer remained suspended over the city for 20 seconds before disappearing towards the south.

And from Val d'Aosta in northern Italy 10 persons vouched for the presence of a "saucer."

Saucers were observed yesterday at Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital; at Santiago de Chile; over Nicotia Airport, Cyprus; over Bogota, Medellin and Cali, all in western Colombia; and at northern Caribbean port of Barranquilla.

FUERLO CHIEFTAIN

January 29, 1950

SCIENTIST THINKS FLYING SAUCERS FRAGMENTS OF AIR FORCE ROCKETS

PITTSBURGH, Pa., Jan. 29 (UP)—Dr. Gerald Wendt, one of the country's top-ranking scientists, said Saturday he believes he cracked the mystery of the "flying saucer."

The former science editor of "Time" believes they are fragments of rockets exploded in the stratosphere by the air force. This was done in an experiment to establish a global radar screen.

"The air force wants to put rockets in outer space to use as reflectors for ground radar," Dr. Wendt said. "These reflections, returning wider radar detection zones to earth, would increase the range of present radar."

Before it puts the scheme into effect, the air force has blown up rockets in the stratosphere, he said. It wants to study the fragments, to see if they react favorably.

Dr. Wendt said the rocket fragments are blown away at high speeds, they can keep in flight definitely. Since there's no air resistance in outer space to act as braking force, the fragments may

even become satellites, constantly circling the earth.

Dr. Wendt believes these fragments are our "flying saucers."

If they prove the theory is sound, permanent rockets will be shot up to act as radar reflectors.

Dr. Wendt, formerly dean of physics and chemistry at Pennsylvania State college, was science director of the New York World's fair. He's currently on a science lecture tour of American cities.

Flying Disc Reports Again On Upsurge

Air Force Closes
Probe; "No Such
Thing," It Declares

BY JIM G. LUCAS
Scripture-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9.—The Air Force again is swamped with reports of flying discs.

Only last week, it announced there was no such thing. It said it had closed its Project Saucer after investigating 375 instances. It found "no direct threat" to national security. Instead, it said, reports of unidentified flying objects were (1) misinterpretation of conventional objects, (2) a form of mass hysteria, or (3) hoaxes.

The Air Force isn't surprised, however, that a new batch of flying-disc stories arrives in every mail. That always happens, it says, when the subject is revived in the newspapers.

Incident Probed

Case histories of the 375 incidents investigated are not always as flat as the Air Force press release in discounting existence of the saucers.

There was the disc reported by an Air Force officer at Hickam Field, Hawaii, on Jan. 4, 1949. The account, investigators reported, "seems to be trustworthy, even though only one person saw the disc. The report differs from many others in that the description of maneuvers executed by the object is definite rather than hazy. There is clearly no astronomical explanation for this incident."

In another case, at West Rindge, N. H., on July 7, 1948, several persons reported seeing a flying saucer. Several saw it explode. Later, small metal fragments were found. The Air Force suggested they came from a meteor. But the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Project Saucer reports, "identified them as parts of a cast iron cylinder." In view of this it concedes, "an astronomical explanation is precluded."

LAS VEGAS DAILY OPTIC

Saturday, March 18, 1950

Give us the Facts

There are those who scoff at flying saucers. There are also those who believe firmly that such objects seen in the skies are space ships from another planet. Then, too, there are those who just plain don't know, and furthermore don't want to know.

Yesterday hundreds of reliable, sober people in Farmington saw "Something" in the skies. At least half believe what they saw was an armada of space ships. Others saw something they never saw before, but won't venture a guess what it was. And still others say that what was seen was cotton, or jet planes or some other familiar object.

Not being omniscient, this newspaper cannot say with any certainty exactly what was seen. We can say, however, that it is high time the government of the U. S. cast aside the cloak of evasion and secrecy surrounding these manifestations, and present to the public the findings it has reached on such matters.

It is hardly a secret that despite public announcements to the contrary, the Army Air Forces have been conducting long and detailed investigations of flying saucers. Other agencies, in speaking privately, do not laugh off these phenomena as "imagination."

We strongly doubt that approximately half of the population of Farmington could be duped or hypnotized into believing they saw something that wasn't there. Descriptions from widely separated points, from persons who had no contact with each other, tallied too closely. Something was up there.

The American population is not composed chiefly of children or idiots. Most of us are adults who are willing to embrace new concepts of time and space without panic. Attempts to keep the public in the dark invariably have hurt the general welfare, not helped it.

It is time for the government to make available, in blunt language, exactly what is known and what is suspected about these sky visitors. If there is proof—one way or another—the people will accept it. If there are only indications, we still will accept it. But we think we have the right to know.

Suppose—just for a minute—that visitors from another planet are looking us over. They have not been hostile. We would have no reason to be hostile to them. It just could be possible that a fleet of such objects would land in New Mexico, or elsewhere. What do we do then? Do we shoot them or shake hands with them? Or do they have hands?

Still supposing these things are interplanetary space ships, let's keep on friendly terms with them. Blasting away with a shotgun or trying to shoot them down by plane is not the cordial way to greet guests. If the objects are occupied by space travelers, they're probably trying to find out if we're friendly.

Meanwhile, let's have the facts, insofar as they are known.

1950 Saucer 'Invasion' Recalled

Who would have believed, back in March, 1950, when scores of Farmingtonians declared they saw a huge armada of flying saucers over the city, that they and the rest of the world today would be watching spaceships circle the earth and head for a destination on the moon.

No one has determined, at least it has never been officially announced, just what those flying objects were. But, they created plenty of conversation and some consternation during three days, when they reportedly appeared between 11 a.m. and noon, starting March 17.

Most of those who contended they saw the flying saucer armada, changed their stories the next day. Even the Air Force appeared on the scene to caution against publication of stories about flying objects.

Persons on Main Street, looking skyward, snarled traffic during those days, to the point where vehicles had to be slowed down for pedestrian safety.

While the stories were changed the next day, many of those who said they saw the UFOs, probably still today wonder just what it was they saw.

They said, at that time back in 1950, that the sighting was of "several" or "more than 500". According to observers the objects, whatever they were, seemed to play tag high in the sky, at speed that was too great to estimate or comprehend.

Harold F. Thatcher, then head of the Soil Conservation Service, took a triangulation on the objects and said had it been a B-29 it would have been 20,000 feet high and traveling at more than 1,000 miles an hour.

Many said the flying objects were silvery discs. Several agreed that they saw one that was red in color, larger and faster than the others, and apparently the leader.

Clayton J. Boddy, now a Farmington insurance man who

at that time was business manager of the Farmington Times and a former captain in the army engineers, said while he was on Broadway he noticed "a few moving objects high in the sky. Moments later there appeared what seemed to be about 500 of them."

He said he could not estimate their size or speed, but said they appeared to be about 15,000 feet high.

His story was confirmed by Joseph C. and Francis C. Kelloff, Antonito, Colo., who were in Farmington on business, and by Bob Foutz and John Burrell, Farmington residents.

The Kelloffs contended the objects seemed to be flying in formation.

A report that the sighting may have been pieces of cotton fuzz floating around in the atmosphere, was brought forward by the late Andy Andrews, then a New Mexico State Police officer. This theory was refuted by residents, and Thatcher.

Scores of people deluged the Times office with their reports of seeing the UFOs.

Later, during the three-day period, a second large scale sighting was reported by Mrs. Wilson Jones and Mrs. Roy Hicks, who said they saw the objects north of Farmington flying in perfect formation. Others reported the same sight.

Johnny Eaton, real estate and insurance salesman, and Edward Brooks, an employee at Perry Smoak's garage, were the first to report a red-colored sky object.

Brooks, who had been a B-29 tail gunner during World War II, said he was positive the objects were not airplanes.

Another Smoak employee, John Bloomfield, said the objects he saw traveled at a speed that seemed to him to be 10 times as fast as that of jet planes.

He also said the UFOs frequently made right-angle turns.

"They appeared to be coming at each other head on," he said. "At the last second one would veer upward at right angles and the other downward at right angles. One would pass another, and immediately the one to the rear would zoom into the lead."

Mario Webb, another garage employe at that time, said the objects to the naked eye appeared to be about the size of a dinner plate from the ground view.

"They flew sideways, on edge and at every conceivable angle," he said. "This is what made it easy to determine they were saucer-shaped."

The reports did not note vapor trails, engine noise or windows or markings on the crafts.

Opinion varies among those who said they saw the objects, as to whether they were from another planet or were some new design in use by the United States.

There were those who said the entire incident was the fulfillment of a Biblical prophecy.

FARMINGTON

DAILY TIMES

DEC 24 1950
New Mexico Press Clipping Bureau
Albuquerque, N. M.

FARMINGTON

DAILY TIMES

MAR 14 1950

New Mexico Press Clipping Bureau
Albuquerque, N. M.

Early Times

15 Years Ago

Clayton: Clayton had a new set of "flying saucer" converts Friday as a result of a two-hour aeronautical display by two unidentified objects. Witnesses said two large disc-shaped objects alternately zipped around the city at immense speeds and "buzz" motorists.

The Time Farmington Looked Skyward

By David Yeager
And Tim Farrell

In the middle of March 1968, Farmington residents were looking skyward and seeing strange craft in the spring blue. It was one of the earliest sightings of what have since become known as Unidentified Flying Objects and caused quite a stir in the community at the time.

A story which appeared in the Daily Times on March 18 of that year described the incident: "For the third consecutive day flying saucers have been reported over Farmington. And on each of the three days, their arrival here was reported between 11 a.m. and noon. Three persons called the Daily Times office to report seeing strange objects in the air just before noon. Persons along Main Street once again could be seen looking skyward and pointing."

The news account estimated that "fully half" of Farmington's population said it saw the "strange aircraft" - hundreds of them - "zooming through the skies."

There were several people interviewed who said they saw the aircraft flying over the area. Many of those people have either moved from the area or have since died.

Jehany Eaton, a real estate and insurance salesman at the time, and Edward Brooks, an employee of the Perry Smoak garage, reported seeing a red object in the sky.

According to the story, Brooks had been a B-36 tail gunner during World War II and "he was positive the objects sighted were not air planes." Brooks stated that "the very maneuvering of the things couldn't be that of modern aircraft."

John Bloomfield, another employee of Smoak's garage, said the objects he saw traveled at a speed that he said appeared to be about 10 times faster than that of jet planes of that time. In addition, he said that the objects frequently made right-angle turns.

"They appeared to be coming at each other head-on," he said. "At the last second, one would veer at right angles upward, the other at right angles downward. One saucer would pass another and immediately the one to the rear would zoom into the lead."

Marie Webb, a former mayor of Farmington, and in 1964 a garage employee, said the objects to the naked eye appeared to be about eight inches in diameter as seen

from the ground. He described them as about the size of a dinner plate.

"They flew sideways, on edge and at every conceivable angle," Webb said in the 1980 interview. "This is what made it easy to determine that they were saucer-shaped."

Clayton Boddy, a Farmington businessman, said in a recent interview that he had seen the objects. "I haven't the faintest idea what the

for sure. I just don't know. Now there were stories going around about it being cotton fluffing in the air, but this was not cotton. There were some kind of aircraft going at very high speed."

Boddy estimates there were 50 to 100 objects. "We contacted the Air Force and they denied everything. They said it didn't happen."

Boddy, who laughs about the sighting now, said that he takes it all in stride because

rumors about something being developed by the Air Force or visitors from outer space and so on.

Another account came from Harold F. Thatcher, head of the Farmington unit of the Soil Conservation Service in 1968. Thatcher said he made a triangulation of one of a number of flying craft and said if it had been a B-36 it would have been 20,000 feet high and travelling more than 1,000 miles per hour.

Force, which from 1948 to 1968 investigated UFO sightings has no record of the Farmington sightings, strangely enough. That news came from Edwin Coffey, assistant branch chief at the Modern Military Records Branch at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. "Project Bluebook, which should have these sightings, doesn't," he said. "There was a reported sighting near Sandia Base near Albuquerque at about that time, but there were 230 total sightings in that one year. Out of those, 27 of those sightings were identified." In other words, only that small number were ever disproved.

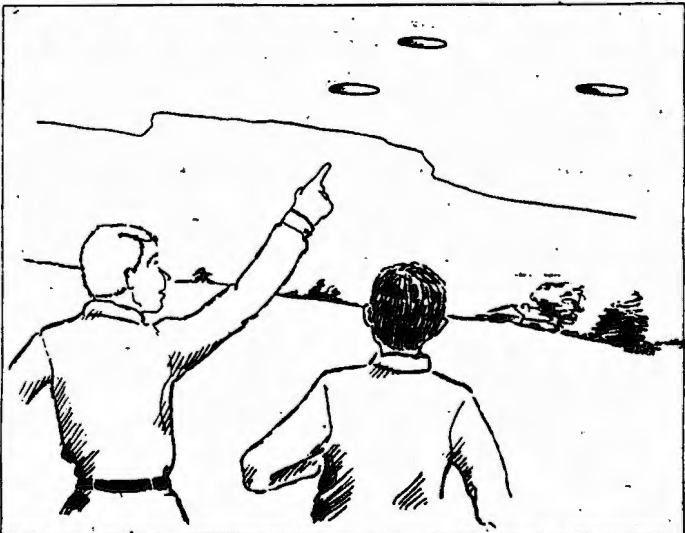
The spokesman said that Project Bluebook wrote its last page in 1969, when a study by the University of Colorado determined the project had not really proven anything of significance. "One, no UFO reported, investigated and evaluated by the Air Force has ever been proven to give an indication of a threat to national security," he said. "Two, there has been no evidence submitted to or discovered by the Air Force that the sightings categorized as 'unidentified' represent technological developments or principles beyond the range of present scientific knowledge; and three, no evidence has ever been brought forth indicating that the sightings categorized as 'unidentified' are extraterrestrial vehicles."

Bob Werth, president of the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained, located in New Jersey, did find some information in his group's files concerning the Farmington sightings.

He said that 1,200 citizens observed groups of discs "flying silently. They (the citizens) watched the formation pass high above the city. The Air Force refused to admit the existence of flying saucers. On March 18, the Air Force flatly denied they (the objects) were there or that they were secret missiles or space exploration devices."

Werth said that his group has theories about what UFOs are. "They possibly could be experiments by various governments to develop propulsion systems that their (alien) craft have. We feel many of the craft are real objects. They have been around for a long time; possibly they are from other worlds and are here for our protection and to observe our progress."

The sightings of the UFOs in Farmington may never be totally understood. And they may never be proven one way or the other. But many citizens of Farmington who lived here at that time believe they saw something and that it was very much out of the ordinary. It will most likely go down in UFO history as just another sighting, along with the thousands of other sightings around the world since 1948.



things were," he said. "I've always misnamed it (the sightings) because it was unusual and no one could say for sure what they were."

Boddy said that he and two friends were walking down the street, going to lunch, when they saw "these unusual things up in the sky. They looked like elongated silver cigars or plates that weren't exactly circular."

Boddy remembers it as being "a very bright day, so we could see very clearly. The sun would reflect off the objects - they were silver in color. They had a leader which had a reddish color to it."

Boddy said that he gets inquiries from around the world about the sighting. "I've gotten letters from all over," he said. "I tell them I saw, but as far as saying they were spacebobs or not, I am not going to say

"If you see something like I did, then people look at you kind of funny. I usually don't talk about it because of that. You see, every look in the country has seen a UFO. I saw something though, and I'm not a look. Really, it doesn't matter a great deal to me whether I saw a UFO or some military aircraft. All I'm saying is I saw something pretty strange."

Lincoln O'Brien, founder of the Daily Times, said in a book on his life, which was recently published, that "we finally got the AP to accept the story, phrased in a rather doubting manner, and some national TV program wanted to put on a show and pay my expenses to New York if I would come and testify. I really had nothing but hurry as I was in Santa Fe and refused. We never did learn what all this was about although there were all sorts of

"I'm not a professional engineer," he said at the time, but I have engineers working under me and I know how to work out a rough triangulation on an object."

Thatcher said that the objects were not pieces of cotton fluff floating in the atmosphere. "It was not cotton," he said. "I saw several pieces of cotton fluff floating around in the air at the time, but I was not sighting on any cotton."

Thatcher has since moved to Las Vegas, N.M., and talked briefly about the 1968 sightings. "It wasn't normal," he said of the aircraft. Thatcher said that some of the townspeople who had seen the UFOs were of the opinion there was nothing in the story. He said it was like "the farmer looking at a nebula and saying there's no such animal."

The United States Air

Force at about that time, but nothing reported in Farmington."

The fact that Project Bluebook has no record of the Farmington sightings is rather odd, due to the fact that there was a lot of publicity on the incident. The Associated Press picked up the story, but the Bluebook report has no record of AP stories on the sightings. "That is rather strange," Coffey said. "If there were AP stories on the sightings, then at least that would have made it into the Project Bluebook files. But I haven't found anything on it."

An Air Force spokesman in Washington said that he could not explain why the Farmington sightings were never included in Project Bluebook or even if the Air Force investigated the incident. "The Bluebook was in

passengers saw the shiny disk in the air according to Murciano and a large group on the ground."168

March 16th UFO excitement had broken out in Colorado. A flying saucer had been seen over Pikes Peak (late on the 16th) and another was seen streaking over Colorado Springs. The Colorado Springs Gazette-Telegraph's switchboard was swamped. 169 UFO's had also been spotted at Hobbs and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

In a directive dated March 16th the Air Material Command granted Holloman Air Force Base's and the GRD's request for instrumentation for a UFO watch. Approval was given for:

- "1. Askania instrument triangulation by Land-Air, Inc.
2. Observations with Mitchell cameras using spectrum grating by Holloman Air Force Base personnel.
3. Electromagnetic frequency measurements using Signal Corps Engineering Laboratory equipment."170

Land-Air, Inc. was contracted under the guidance of GRI to operate two Askania stations for six months, with one station at Holloman Air Force Base and the other at a site near the New Mexico town of Vaughn.

"Calling all cars."

Sirens wailed and red lights flashed. Alerted to some excitement on the outskirts of Riverside, California, an area of recent massive UFO activity, police raced to the scene. If it could be believed, the word was that the answer to the UFO mystery could be found, at long last, in an open field near March Air Force Base. The patrol car skidded to a stop in a cloud of dust and lawmen tumbled out. Their eyes darting left and right intent on focusing in on the elusive, world-famous phantom of the skies, the cops searched frantically among the trees and shrubs. Nothing but discarded trash met their nervous gaze. And then there was something a short distance from the road. In an open space a pole stood against the hazy sky, and from it, rippling in the gentle wind, was a crimson banner emblazoned with the hammer and sickle.171

Pranksteers helped to take the edge off the seriousness of the UFO problem but occasional humor never effectively braked the increase in concern about the sky riddle.

March 17th.

Three green-colored fireballs flashed over Los Alamos, New Mexico, early in the morning of March 17th, and later in the day there was more such "meteor" activity.

At 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon an orange/green light streaked straight down out of the sky leaving a long green wake; the phenomenon observed from a location a quarter of a mile east of Los Alamos. Just ten minutes later a witness at a place called Vicinity Point Zebra, Los Alamos, observed something flash down out of the sky which at first was reddish, and then green in color.

At 4:45 p.m. a green light flashed across the heavens in an arc heading in a due west direction.

The last three sightings were made by the following Atomic Energy Security agents: Harold W. Reid, John L. Boza, and Bernard G. Greene.

This sudden increase of the mysterious "green meteor" activity was as puzzling as the fireballs themselves but perhaps there was some connection, some sort of significance, in the fact that on the same day, March 17th, an extraordinary series of events were taking place not too far away from Los Alamos.¹⁷²

"HUGE SAUCER ARMADA JOLTS FARMINGTON."

The state of New Mexico had always been a UFO hot spot, but up to 1950 strange sky objects seemed interested only in the atomic and missile installations in the middle and southern parts of the "Land of Enchantment." In the far northwest corner of the state was the small town of 3,000 (in 1950) souls called Farmington. On March 17, 1950, Farmington became the UFO capital of the world.

The spectacle started the morning of the 17th when strange objects were noticed milling around high in the sky over the town. Traffic and business in downtown Farmington came to a standstill. The townspeople were mesmerized by the aerial show, particularly the staff of the Farmington Daily Times whose news story on the big sky show was headlined: HUGE SAUCER ARMADA JOLTS FARMINGTON.

The number of UFO's over Farmington that morning was estimated to be about 500! No sound was heard, nor was there any exhaust smoke visible that would indicate the object's were devices powered by vapor-producing engines.¹⁷³

UFO expert Edward Ruppelt mentioned the Farmington excitement in his highly regarded book on UFO's, The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, but says remarkably little about the amazing case since he favored a rather unspectacular explanation. This solution was simple. According to Ruppelt a Skyhook balloon had been tracked to a point near Farmington where it burst, and it made sense to him that the giant plastic bag had showered the countryside with fragments which, being tossed about by the wind, resembled "flying saucers" zooming around the sky.¹⁷⁴

For decades little more than the forementioned could be found in books on UFO's about the massive manifestation over Farmington and to rectify that we will take a closer look at the case.

THE TIMES

Today 25-35 N.W., 25-35 E. and
S. low tonight 20 N. mon-
soons, 70-80 elsewhere N.
25-45 south.

New Mexico SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 1950

Five Cents

'S FARMINGTON



Large vessels, the British submarine,
multiple mine-laying hawfers of the
where she had rested since her sink-
(AP Wirephoto)

Writes Letter Saucer Pilot

Crafts #68 Seen By Hudreds

Speed Estimated
At 1000 M.P.H.
Altitude 20,000 Feet

For the third consecutive day
Flying saucers have been sighted
over Farmington, Tenn. on
each of the three days their ar-
rival here was reported between
11 and noon.

Three persons called the
Daily Times office to report see-
ing strange objects in the sky
just before noon.

Persons along Main street
once again could be seen look-
ing skyward and pointing.

High winds and a dust storm
prevented clear vision.

Fully half of this town's popula-
tion still is certain today that
it saw space ships or some strange
aircraft—hundreds of them
—zooming through the skies yes-
terday.

Estimates of the number ran-
ged from "several" to more than
500. Whatever they were, they
caused a major sensation in this
community, which lies only 110
air miles northwest of the huge
Los Alamos atomic installation.

The objects appeared to play
tag high in the air. At times
they streaked away at almost
unbelievable speeds. One wit-
ness who took a triangulation

Physicist James E. McDonald of the University of Arizona, an intensely devoted "UFOlogist" with excellent scientific credentials, visited Farmington some years after 1950 to interview witnesses in the hope to verify or negate the various aspects of the case. Professor McDonald found, after discussions with citizens, that had seen the UFO's, that the objects were definitely disc-shaped and were in different groups. Furthermore, he could find no record of a skyhook launch around the date of the sighting.¹⁷⁵

Ruppelt had alluded to a few other UFO reports made in the Four Corners area for two days prior to the big Farmington display, and according to the Las Vegas (New Mexico) Daily Optic this is correct: "For the third consecutive day flying saucers have been reported over Farmington. And on each of the three days their arrival was reported between 11:00 a.m. and noon."¹⁷⁶ An examination of the files of the Farmington Daily Times mentions even more details of interest. We will consider the events of the day in sequence.

Early in the morning, Friday, March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, a saucer-shaped object approached the city of Farmington, circumnavigated the community, and then sped away. This was an archtypical UFO sighting and gave no hint of things to come.

At 9:15 a.m., Friday, March 17th, a dozen round objects appeared over downtown Farmington. The objects zipped around for ten minutes and then departed in a northeasterly direction. Some 45 minutes later word was received that "hundreds" of such aerial objects had been spotted west of Farmington.

At 10:30 a.m. a red-color object came into view and within minutes three other objects without a crimson hue hove into sight and put on a "dogfight" in the sky over the city. At 11:15 a.m. a huge swarm numbering in the hundreds came into view (apparently these were the ones seen west of the city earlier). Of the many milling objects, the red one seemed larger and faster than the rest. Some observers guessed that the red object was the "leader."

The business manager of the Farmington Daily Times, Clayton Boddy, was walking on Broadway Avenue when the massive sky movement attracted his attention. He remembers looking up that day and seeing a big cluster of objects overhead flying around at 15,000 feet altitude. His impression was that the objects were flying in some semblance of order at that particular moment.

Interviewed 30 years later (17 January 82) about the episode, Clayton Boddy was able to add more detail:

"I haven't the faintest idea what the things were, he said. 'I've always minimized it because it was unusual and no one could say for sure what they were.'

"Boddy said that he and two friends were walking down the street, going to lunch, when they saw 'these unusual things up in the sky. They looked like

elongated silver cigars or plates that were exactly circular.'

"Boddy remembers it as being a very bright day so we could see very clearly. The sun would reflect off the objects--they were silver in color. They had a leader which had a reddish color to it.

"Boddy said that he gets inquiries from around the world about the sighting.

"'I've letters from all over,' he said. 'I tell them what I saw, but as far as saying they were spaceships or not, I am not going to say for sure. I just don't know. Now there were stories going around about it being cotton floating in the air, but this was not cotton. These were some kind of aircraft going at very high speed.'

"Boddy estimates there were 50 to 100 objects. 'We contacted the Air Force and they denied everything. They said it didn't happen.'¹⁷⁷

All over Farmington more and more people stopped what they were doing and craned their necks to stare skyward.¹⁷⁸

The weather conditions that day were given in the news account of the UFO sightings: "...the day was clear with only a light scattering of cirrus clouds at an altitude estimated at 20,000 feet, and with no strong winds capable of picking up paper or similar material."¹⁷⁹ Did that unravel Ruppelt's balloon theory?

In appearance witnesses said the objects resembled dinner plates, in fact one person remarked that it would be very hard to come up with a more descriptive term.¹⁸⁰ He also asserted that up to 20 of the objects dipped low enough to be seen clearly as "saucers." "No better description could be given," he said. The shape of the objects was clearly discernible since the discs flew sideways at times.¹⁸¹ Edward Ruppelt suggests that plastic pieces of a shattered skyhook balloon may have just "looked like" discs as they slipped and tumbled toward the ground although he admits no such fragments were found at Farmington. This he explains by assuming the pieces of plastic were carried by the wind far from Farmington.¹⁸² Harder to pass off as a fragment of plastic was the large "red saucer" that shot across Farmington at a low altitude, crossing from horizon to horizon in seconds.¹⁸³

Two witnesses of the 11:30 a.m. overflight insisted that the discs were maneuvering in formation.

An Edward Brooks refused to consider the possibility the discs were any sort of American warplanes because of the craft's astounding maneuverability. A fellow who worked with Brooks, John Bloomfield, agreed and added his comment that the UFO's were tremendously fast, a lot faster than any sort of American warplane, even a jet. Most incredible to Bloomfield was the ability of the discs to execute right-angle turns. He expanded on this last point saying that the discs occasionally: "... charged each other headon only to veer away at right angles

at the second, avoiding a collision."*184

Another antic displayed was: "One saucer would pass another ahead, and then immediately the one to the rear would zoom into the lead."185

The "cotton theory."

One aspect that has to be mentioned concerns some people watching the sky show from Perry Smoak's Chevrolet garage in downtown Farmington. One of them was the previously mentioned John Bloomfield, who noticed some bits of cotton swirling in the air about 40 feet high so he called the garage foreman, H. Pace, over to see the white fragments. A New Mexican State Patrolman, A. Andrews, was nearby and joined Bloomfield and Pace observing the pieces of cotton, each piece the size of a quarter, float down to a soft landing on the roof of the garage. The law officer would later remark that perhaps Farmington residents may have just got excited over a few bits of cotton. The Associated Press reported the comment as a seriously proposed hypothesis.186

Farmington citizens scoffed at the cotton theory. The director of the Farmington area branch of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, Harold F. Thatcher, managed a triangulation of one 'discs' flight and calculated that it must have been going at 1,000 miles per hour. Thatcher laughed at the cotton idea when he heard about it and was adamant the UFO's were not so much fuzz wafted by the wind.187

Said Thatcher:

"I'm not a professional engineer but I have engineers working under me and I know how to work out a rough triangulation on an object.

"It was not cotton. I saw several pieces of cotton fuzz floating around in the air at the time, but I was not sighting on any cotton."188

He also touched on a profound social/psychological phenomenon. The press printed:

"Thatcher said that some of the townspeople who had seen the UFO's were of the opinion there was nothing to the story. He said it was like 'the farmer looking at a zebra and saying there's no such animal.'189

*"Playing chicken" is not rare with UFO's. There are many reports of UFO's approaching aircraft headon only to turn away at the last second much to the consternation of the aircraft's pilot. There are also many reports of UFO's charging each other and dodging a collision at the last instance. If UFO's are real why they do this is a puzzle. If UFO's are not real, then just why people would make up such a characteristic is also a puzzle!

Marlow Webb, one of the Chevrolet garage employees, said: "...the objects to the naked eye appeared to be about eight inches in diameter as seen from the ground."190 Some fuzz! It was a subjective guess of course, but some witnesses believed the discs were the size of a B-29 bomber. One observer, J. Eaton, a one-time B-29 tail gunner, shook his head as he watched the cavorting mystery objects. They could not be any kind of aircraft he knew of, the twists and turns were too violent. He said the objects were: "...perfect replicas of a dinner plate--even to the bottom ring."191 Eaton asserted that as the discs loafed over Farmington, a red-tinted object appeared to be in the center of the formation.192

The same person who first sighted the bits of floating cotton, John Bloomfield, admitted the sky objects (not the cotton) moved ten times faster than jet planes and made right-angled turns. He, like Brooks, was amazed by the head-on runs the discs made on one another.193

The local Air Force OSI Office did not, oddly enough, pass on its Farmington data to Project GRUDGE at Dayton, Ohio. This fact was established by reporters for the Farmington Daily Times who made inquiries in 1982 and learned:

"The United States Air Force, which from 1948 to 1969 investigated UFO sightings, has no record of the Farmington sightings, strangely enough. That news came from Edwin Coffee, assistant branch chief at the Modern Military Records Branch at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. 'Project Blue Book, which should have those sightings, doesn't,' he said. 'There was a reported sighting near Sandia Base near Albuquerque at about that time, but nothing reported in Farmington.'

"The Associated Press picked up the story, but the Blue Book report has no record of AP stories on the sightings. 'That is rather strange,' Coffee said. 'If there were AP stories on the sightings, then at least that would have made it into the Project Blue Book files. But I haven't found anything on it.'

"An Air Force spokesman in Washington said that he could not explain why the Farmington sightings were never included in Project Blue Book or even if the Air Force investigated the incident."194

Besides the fact that the local OSI office did not forward its two reports on Farmington to Wright Field, was the fact that there was a mistake in the dating of the material, which hinders finding the data in official files.

Because of the significance of the Farmington case the only two references to it in office files will be quoted in detail:

"Mr. --- (deleted) and Mr. --- (deleted), both employees at Perry Smoak Garage, Farmington, New Mexico, stated substantially that they had observed what appeared to be a group of flying discs. This observation took place at Farmington, New Mexico, 1000 o'clock 16* March 1950. Interviewees afforded the following information regarding said objects:

"Direction from Point of

Observation:	-North to Northeast.
Altitude:	-Over 20,000 feet.
Size:	-From one-sixteenth to one-half inch held at arms length.
Shape:	-Oval and oblong.
Color:	-Bright aluminum.
Position:	-From sixty to eighty degrees above.
Number:	-From three to five.
Objects in Motion:	-One maneuvered erratically in same area. Others at faster speed turned sharp angles.
Formation:	-Not specific, staggered.
Direction of Flight:	-Skyward to 60 degrees to 80 degrees in a North-easterly direction.
Weather:	-Exceptionally clear day (no clouds).
Speed:	-Not determined (faster than conventional aircraft).
Manner of Disappearance:	-Gradually disappeared to Northeast.
Trajectory:	-Steady between 60 degrees to 80 degrees above horizon.
Sound or Order:	-None.
Trail or exhaust:	-None.
Observed for period of:	-30 minutes.
Number of Observers:	-Ten.
Remarks:	-Both observers are officers in the USNR and are engaged in flying."195

The other file mentions an observation made an hour later:

"Mr. --- (deleted), and Mr. --- (deleted), both of Farmington, New Mexico, stated substantially that on 16 March 1950,** at approximately 1100 o'clock,

*For some reason Air Force records give the wrong date, the 16th, instead of the correct one, March 17th.

**Again the wrong date.

they observed what appeared to be a group of flying discs. Information listed below was furnished by both interviewees:

"Point of Observation:	-Downtown, Farmington, New Mexico.
Altitude:	-Not determined.
Size:	-One to six inches.
Shape:	-Flat spheroidic.
Color:	-Bright luminous as tinfoil.
Sound or Odor:	-None.
Trail or Exhaust:	-None.
Weather:	-Very clear.
Position:	-Estimated seventy-five degrees parallel with horizon.
Number:	-Twelve to fifteen.
Objects in Motion:	-Turned on their axes and maneuvered up and down, sometimes turning at very sharp angles.
Formation:	-No specific formation (staggered).
Speed:	-Unknown. Faster than con- ventional aircraft.
Direction of Flight:	-North to Northeast.
Manner of Disappearance:	-Did not continue obser- vation until objects went out of sight.
Trajectory:	-Ascended and descended at about 75 degrees elevation, traveling from north to northeast.
Observed for period of:	-Three to five minutes.
Observers in immediate area:	-Approximately ten.
Remarks:	-Mr. --- (deleted) asserted that there was a garble in his teletype the three days following said obser- vation."196

Returning to the civilian press we find...

The editor of the Daily Times interviewed a number of town-folk and found that there was: "...no sensation of fear, but rather stunned wonderment at seeing such things."197 An exception was the workcrew at the laundry where some women became upset and even panicky.198

Lincoln O'Brien, owner of the Daily Times, remarked that the news services in 1950 were reluctant to believe the incident: "We finally got the AP to accept the story, phrased in a rather doubting manner..."199

The eerie aerial fleet waltzed about with the apparent carelessness of elves dancing on a summer's eve until 11:30 a.m. when they all rushed out of sight to the northeast. There was no doubt about the physical quality of the saucers. Many witnesses guessed the things were spaceships, while others liked the idea the sky objects were secret U.S. aircraft. A very few saw the manifestation as a Biblical prophecy coming true.²⁰⁰

Three and a half hours later.

At 3:00 p.m. a large aerial fleet approached Farmington again, this time flying in formation. The mass of discs came out of the northeast, the direction they departed hours before.

This time the saucers didn't stop to tarry, they continued on and passed over the horizon to the southwest.²⁰¹

A saucer pilot?

One of those Farmington witnesses got the fright of his life when upon returning home he bumped into a small figure with green hair. It turned out to be just a young boy. The man asked him: "Son, where did you get that hair?" The youth answered: "I dyed it for St. Patrick's Day."²⁰²

UFO reports came in from Las Vegas, New Mexico, at 11:35 a.m. some five minutes after the last UFO over Farmington disappeared at 11:30. Little detail is known with the exception of a story told by 12 postal employees that watched one UFO in the sky maneuver for a half an hour. A Robert Hilgers, one of the employees that happened to have a military background, believed that the UFO was flying at a very great altitude, perhaps 20 miles up.²⁰³

The aerial riot over Farmington overshadowed the events at yet another location.

"Good grief Tucumcari too!"

The Tucumcari, New Mexico Daily News office became swamped with phone calls from all over the city March 17th as that community underwent a Farmington-like UFO manifestation. The paper's editor, R. Everet, reported that townpeople were seeing saucer-like objects "playing in the sky and turning sideways." The incident resembled the Farmington case even to the presence of a single red-colored object in with the covey of disks.²⁰⁴

Three o'clock in the afternoon on March 17th.

The weather was clear with scattered cumulus at 15,000 feet at Kirtland Air Force Base some 100 miles from either Farmington to the northwest or similar distance to Tucumcari to the east. The following account is the only UFO report in Air Force

records (Wright Field) that indicate UFO activity in New Mexico at this date.

Four Air Force men at Kirtland, Captain Chenchari, T/Sgt. Miller, T/Sgt. Key, and T/Sgt. Keumann, were on the ramp in front of the Air Operations building at 3:00 p.m. when they:

"...observed three objects at an altitude of between ten and twelve thousand feet. At first glance the observers thought they were parachutes. This was ruled out because of a tumbling motion exposing silver and dark side alternately, leading the observers to believe them to be wing tanks from fighter in the area. This was ruled out when suddenly one object rose vertically at a high rate of speed disappearing into the scattered cumulus clouds over the field, the other two objects seemed to be descending, one toward the North, the other Northeast. The object descending toward the Northeast was observed for a period of 15 minutes disappearing into the mountains approximately 20 miles away.²⁰⁵

Military spokesmen in New Mexico on March 17th had stayed mum in the first few hours, especially Kirtland Air Force Base. Nonofficial sources were not so tongue-tied.²⁰⁶

"Give us the facts!"

Heated over the fantastic UFO demonstrations, the Las Vegas Daily Optic carried an editorial that shrieked: "GIVE US THE FACTS!" Complaining that most American adults were not childish or idiots and were capable of embracing startling disclosure without panic, the editorial bemoaned present official policy which seemed detrimental to public welfare, and going further stated: "...it is high time the government of the U.S. cast aside the cloak of evasion and secrecy surrounding these manifestations, and present to the public the findings it has reached on such matters."²⁰⁷

The editorial could have been a direct quote from Donald Keyhoe's writings in True magazine. Speaking of True magazine, its editor, Ken Purdy, sensed a spectacular break in the UFO mystery and contacted the president of the Society of New Mexican newspapers, a L. O'Brien, to announce that True would send investigators to Farmington.²⁰⁸

The Farmington swarm was deemed a "serious" UFO case by Dr. Lincoln La Paz of the New Mexico University Institute of Meteoritics, who had continued his interest in strange aerial phenomenon reports. La Paz related to United Press that he considered 99 percent of saucer reports were due to hoaxes or illusions but the 1 percent of the remainder deserved serious attention.²⁰⁹

It was obvious the Air Force's hold on public opinion was slipping. Thrown on the defensive, the Air Force nonetheless said it had not changed its mind one whit, and in the process revealed something of its current handling of UFO reports. After stating that Project GRUDGE had been terminated in December 1949, an Air Force spokesman in Washington remarked:

"Since then, preliminary investigation of such reports has been left to Air Force technical and Intelligence officers of field bases. But if they should decide further investigation is warranted, Air Force headquarters here (Washington) will be advised.

"So far, no report has had enough credibility to be forwarded here. Air Force officials are confident no future report will have either."210

Clearly the Air Force was in an awkward position by issuing an unimaginative retort, slavishly adhering to the stiff guidelines laid down by Project GRUDGE policy papers. It was the second such press release in ten days. The following day they issued a third.

Denied they're denying.

Another official announcement on March 18th carried further Air Force denials:

"A spokesman said that Air Force intelligence and technical officers had not been impressed by any of the latest accounts of the sky-flying discs from New Mexico, Mexico, and Cuba.

"A spokesman categorically denied the Air Force is denying the existence of flying discs to cover up some of its own experiments in space ships and similar air machines."211

At Farmington people called the office of the Farmington Daily Times to inform the paper that more strange objects could be seen over the city just before noon, but strong winds, in contrast with Friday's calm and clear weather, had kicked up a lot of dust obscuring the sky.212

UFO activity on March 18th began early, beginning at 8:40 in the morning near Bradford, Illinois, when a private plane piloted by a Mr. Robert Fisher encountered an oval object in the sky with a metallic sheen zipping through the air many times the speed of Fisher's Bonanza. When the UFO flew behind some thin clouds it remained visible which indicated to Fisher that the object must have been self-illuminated.213

Things picked up in South America too. A news dispatch from La Paz, Bolivia, on March 17th read: "Residents of this city spotted a quartet of glowing discs pass overhead and out of sight to the northeast."214

South American reports on March 18th were tallied at Mar del Plata in Argentina; Montevideo, Uruguay; Amancer, Chile; and a weird, really weird story from Lago Argentino in southern Argentina. Since the South American press at this time compares somewhat with the yellow press of the United States in the late 1890's, one cannot be sure how much, if any, of the following account relates an actual event. For the record it will be reprinted in full:

"At 6:30 p.m. on March 18, 1950, an Argentine rancher, Wilfredo H. Arevab, saw a disc land, while a second craft hovered above. He got to a distance of 150 meters from the landed disc, which was giving off a greenish-blue vapor and 'an intense smell of burning benzine' and appeared to be of a phosphorescent metal like aluminum. Above the disc, a large flat part was revolving, 'like a gramophone record.' In the centre the disc had a cabin of very transparent 'glass' through which he could see 'four tall, well-shaped men, dressed in something like cellophane,' working at various instruments. He was particularly struck by the pallor of their faces.

"On seeing him, the men shone a searchlight at him, a blue light lit up the craft, there was an increase of the vapor, and flames, alternately reddish and greenish, shot out from the base. The craft then rose with a faint hum and both machines vanished over the Chilean frontier, leaving bluish trails.

"Searching the area next day, Arevalo and his cowhands found the grass burnt, and advised the Argentine Air Force and the Buenos Aires paper La Razon, which reported later the names of various other people who had seen similar craft in the same area at the same time."215

Unfortunately, we have no exact day of the next alleged occurrence, the file on the case just stating "March 1950," but it could be worth mentioning here. On a farm near Bahia Blanca, Argentina, another "landing" was said to have taken place: "Six people, including the owner of the farm, Senor Juan Giratti and his wife, observed the landing of a luminous object shaped like a half-moon, which remained on the ground for 20 minutes."216

Europe contributed two UFO reports on this date. One off the Reuters news wire merely mentioned that a flying saucer had been reported near Torino, Italy*. The second was just

*If the reader is wondering what value such mentions can possibly be, after all the remark: "a flying saucer was seen" really tells us nothing, he should know that one of the principle purposes of this manuscript is to provide leads to further inquiry. The "Turkish priest" item that follows the Torino, Italy report is a perfect example. The author of this book cannot check out every rumor or minor reference but he can assist others.

a brief note also but it was far more interesting and sadly it has never been investigated fully. Westerners are aware that at various times during the day the Muezzin, or Moslem caller, wails from a minaret "La ilah ila 'llah Muhammadun rasulu'-llah (there is no god but God and Mohammed is the Messenger of God). This call to prayer is a serious ritual and it is difficult to understand how the Muezzin could be distracted by anything that was not extraordinary. The following news item is what prompted the forementioned comment.

"Turkish priests see saucers."

United Press story: "BURSA, Turkey, March 18. --Mohammedan priests chanting the morning prayer call atop minarets of this ancient city reported today they had seen 'flying saucers' in the sky."217

Meanwhile, back in the States.

Making fun of the "little men" excitement, a restaurant owner in Beverly Hills set up a tiny table complete with all the trimmings to scale and a printed card that read: "Reserved for Flying Saucer Pilots 23 Inches Tall or Under."218 And Ralph Edwards on the "Truth or Consequences" program (remember that show?) offered \$1,000 to the first person to appear at the studio with one of the "little men from Venus."

An A. R. Kirt of Chicago, driving near Orland Park, sighted and photographed a "brand new type," he said, of saucer which resembled a "silver pie plate." He said it was 100 feet across and when sighted was playing hide and seek among the clouds. No copy of the photo was made available.219

The International News Service on March 19th felt that the saucers had risen from the dead and that scattered communities in the South and Southwest were now reporting the objects like never before:

"There were two different versions of the flying disc story from the Dallas, Texas area. Six bus passengers said they saw a disc or saucer shortly after 6 p.m. Several hours earlier, a naval petty officer related seeing a disc streak at a B-36 bomber, follow it for an instant, and then break away."220

"My God what's that!"

Reports that grabbed the most newspaper space involved encounters between UFO's and airliners, and one of the better cases took place March 20th and involved a Captain Jack Adams, and his co-pilot, G. W. Anderson, at the controls of Chicago and Southern Flight 53. At 9:29 p.m. the evening of the 20th, the plane was at 2,000 feet altitude and on a southwesterly course. Captain Adams checked his position and determined

that he was passing over U.S. Highway #70 some 15 miles north of Stuttgart, Arkansas.

The first indication that something unusual was about to happen was a light in the dark sky so bright it engaged Captain Adams' attention. Said Captain Adams: "The light had an unusual bluish and brilliant glow, flashing on and off far more rapidly than the normal blinking of civilian aircraft lights..."²²¹

Captain Adams nudged his co-pilot and exclaimed: "My God what's that!" Anderson took a look at the bright spot of light growing steadily larger above the southern horizon, apparently coming at them at great velocity.

The light, extremely bright, was flashing at a rate of once every three seconds. The pilots assumed that this blinking light was on the center top of a flat, round object because, whatever it was, it crossed in front of the airliner in an arc at an altitude of 1,000 feet higher than Flight 53, and doing so, tilted at an angle so that only its underside was visible. The Chicago and Southern pilots testified that some 9 - 12 glowing "ports" on the underside could be discerned, the "ports" giving off a soft purple fluorescent light. The "ports" were approximately 3/4 of the distance from the center to the outer edge or rim of the object. As the thing sped by, Captain Adams observed: "Although the object was moving at a terrific speed, the pattern was clear and constant. It did not change shape as it darted past..."²²² Adams: "The night was dark but clear and visibility was perhaps 80 or 40 miles. We could see no portion of the object other than lights..."²²³

Both Adams and Anderson were convinced that the phenomenon was not a meteor but some sort of craft, they guessed, about a 100 feet in diameter.

As for the object's speed, Captain Adams said: "We... kept the object in sight for about 45 seconds, until it disappeared from sight presumably because of its speed. I would estimate that it was traveling between 500 to 600 miles per hour..."²²⁴ Asked if any of the passengers were requested to confirm the sighting by peering out the windows on the side of the plane, Adams remarked: "We didn't tell them because we didn't want to alarm them..."²²⁵

As the UFO moved out of sight to the north, Captain Adams contacted Little Rock Tower to report their position, adding that a "flying saucer had just zoomed passed..."²²⁶

News commentator Frank Edwards managed to contact Captain Adams while he was still airborne over a radio-telephone hookup. Edwards recorded the conversation and played it back over the air on Mutual Radio Network. The broadcast was a sensation. Adams and Anderson became instant celebrities.²²⁷

When Flight 53 landed, representatives of the United Press met the plane. Questioned by reporters both Adams and Anderson expressed a conviction they had witnessed the flight of an actual mechanical device which was probably a secret American experimental aircraft and not "Mars throwing dishes." Also, they were aware of the recent Air Force statement that dismissed UFO reports but they declared it would be hard to fool them with all their flying experience.²²⁸

"We've heard and read a lot about flying saucers and were as skeptical as anyone else," smiled co-pilot Anderson. 'But when you see something with your own eyes, you have to believe it.'"229

As the pilots put it, "we were flabbergasted."

Captain Adams' next flight took him to Memphis, Tennessee. Upon landing, Captain Adams was approached by Air Force investigators. The agents discussed the UFO sighting with Captain Adams for a few minutes and then insisted that Adams had misinterpreted the passage of a meteor for a "strange aircraft." This shocked and angered Adams.²³⁰ Officially, however, Air Force records carry this case as "unidentified."

According to Air Force records, the questioning was not done by the OSI but by Major Dewey H. Orr and Major Richard K. Easley, both local Intelligence officers attached to the 516th Troop Carrier Wing (Reserve), Memphis. The two officers had been dispatched to interrogate Adams and Anderson by their Commanding Officer (Colonel Willis Mitchell).

At Washington, Major Nold, Headquarters, OSI, the Pentagon, telephoned the Memphis OSI Detachment asking if OSI personnel were responsible for questioning being reported in the press. The OSI officer in charge at Memphis, Captain William T. Heckart, took the call and said his men had done no such questioning and in fact were purposely avoiding action because of "AFCSI Letter 85."²³¹

Besides Adams and Anderson, two other Chicago and Southern pilots came forward with a story of seeing something strange flitting about the sky over the Southland:

"Captain Paul W. Bennett and First Officer William T. Tuero have related seeing a 'bright and strange object' in the distance off Greenwood, Miss., at 12:30 p.m. Monday, Morris J. Baker, C & S public relations official, said today.

"The two pilots were bound from Memphis to New Orleans when they sighted the object.

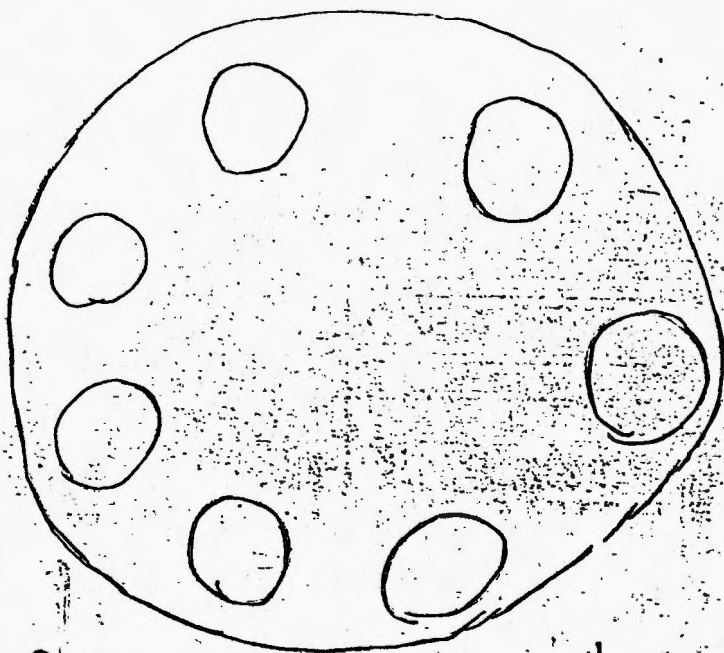
"It was east of their course and they watched it for about 10 minutes before it suddenly disappeared.

"Bennett and Tuero told C&S Chief Pilot Jack McKee about the object when they reached New Orleans but did not report it officially, Baker said.

"The pilots said they didn't want 'friends kidding us about flying saucers.'"²³²

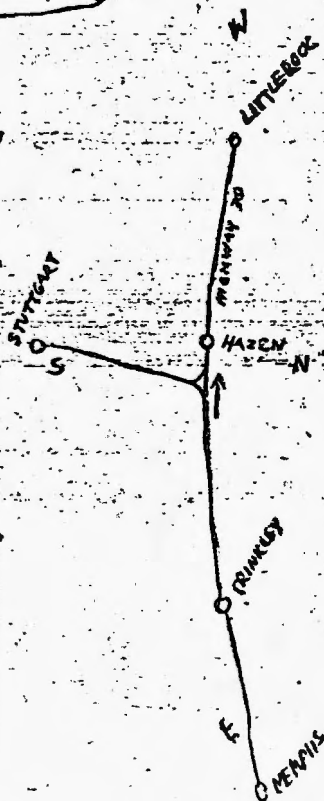
The pilots also told the press:

"Their saucer remained in view long enough to call the stewardess, Patricia Hicks, of 19 South Tucker, and she pointed out the object to several passengers. One of them was Capt. Tommy Bridges,



Jack Adams
G. W. Anderson

IT LOOKED LIKE THIS—
This is Capt. Jack Adams' conception of the strange object which he and First Officer G. W. Anderson Jr. saw over Hazen, Minn., Monday night while flying to Chicago & Southern Air Lines DC-3. The drawing represents the bottom of the "saucer," with its lighted portions. After making the sighting, the pilots added their autographs.



THEY SAY
and Capt. Jack
flying to Chicago
saw Monday night



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a C & S pilot making the trip as a passenger."²³³

The Adams-Anderson sighting sparked interest nationwide. Mrs. Roosevelt, the widow of the late President, even invited the two airline pilots to appear with her on television.²³⁴ All of America's top news commentators like Walter Kiernan, Drew Pearson, and Fulton Lewis, Jr., took time out to comment about the UFO mystery. W. H. Shippen of NANA even did a piece about the Air Force and attempts to hush up witnesses, which shows how Donald Keyhoe, long denounced as a fantastic rumor monger, was being imitated rather than criticized.

One uniquely American measure of fame that proved the UFO's had made the big time was the fact that comedians were regularly using UFO jokes in their show business acts.

The United Press polled the man-in-the-street across America March 20th and found that only 26 percent of the persons asked firmly believed in flying saucers, but the news service singled out one of those intriguing testimonials that kept the mystery going. Asked if he believed in flying saucers, a retired Air Force Lt. Colonel H. Morrison gave more than a monosyllable reply: "I didn't believe in flying saucers until I saw them." He explained that he and six friends were playing golf one afternoon when five of the mystery saucers tore by. The Lt. Colonel Morrison stated forcefully: "They were definitely not aircraft and two of them appeared to be in loose formation."²³⁵

Here is a more detailed and a more official story filed by 1st Lt. Charles O. Wiedman, who walked into the office of Connally Air Force Base Detachment, 10th District OSI, Waco, Texas, on March 24th to prove once again that "flying saucers" were not just a civilian problem. Official records of the 10th District state:

"...on the morning of 20 March 1950, he was flying from Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Lubbock, Texas; that he had just finished taking a 'fix' on radio compass at 0115 hours Mountain Time, and had established his position as 35 miles southeast of Clovis, New Mexico, when he noticed a white object approaching from about eleven o'clock; that the object was traveling at a speed which he estimated to be 2,000 miles per hour; that the object passed his T-6 aircraft and disappeared behind the ship in a matter of seconds. Lt. Wiedman further stated that when first sighted, the object appeared to be spherical, white and luminous, but as it passed on his left he noticed that it appeared to become elongated in shape and that the rear sections appeared to be a light bluish lavender; that a very definite and easily visible stream of matter, resembling a vapor trail, was left behind. Lt. Wiedman also stated that he was flying a magnetic heading of 97 degrees and

estimated course of the object to be about 260 degrees; that he was flying 9,500 feet and that the object was several thousand feet above him, and that the extreme velocity made distance and altitude and size difficult to estimate."235

The formal language of a comment by the 10th District OSI probably does not convey the extent of amazement felt at the OSI office over a report describing such a strange "meteor." It said:

"Request that this office be furnished a current estimate of the information contained in reportings of unconventional aerial phenomena as are received and evaluated by your Directorate.

"It is felt that a current estimate based on your analysis 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."237

Major Abram E. Gwynne, USAF, Assistant Executive, Directorate of Intelligence, speaking for his department, wrote back:

"In reply to inquiries made in Comment No. 1 above (see quote of Major Levy given above), attention is invited to letter of Department of the Air Force, Hq. USAF, subject 'Reporting of Information on Unconventional Aircraft,' dated 12 January 1950. This letter cancels all outstanding special directives for the collection of information on unconventional aerial objects or phenomena and states that 'in the future any information obtained on this subject should be accorded the same consideration as that given to intelligence information on other subjects.'

"Reference is made to conversations on this subject between Lt. Colonel 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."238

"Hey, come look at the flying saucer!"

Mr. Roy J. Deig, superintendent for the MacDonald Engineering Company, Rapid City, South Dakota, told Air Force OSI agents:

"...that on 21 March 1950, while he was working in his temporary construction office at the South Dakota Cement Plant,...one of the employees, --- (deleted), came running in and said, 'Hey, come'

look at the flying saucer.' Deig stated that he immediately went outside and saw what appeared to be a metal disc traveling north at about 8,000 feet and about two miles distant in a direction NNW of him. He stated that he watched the object for about two minutes, during which time it made a circle about a mile in diameter, traveling a clockwise direction, and then shot straight up and disappeared in some clouds."²³⁹

Farmington UFO's over Kirtland?

A synopsis of the latest from Kirtland Air Force Base read:

"Unidentified aerial objects observed from Kirtland Air Force Base and Sandia Base, New Mexico, between 1300 and 1330 hours, 21 March 1950. Objects were silver in color, size approximately that of a dime at arm's length; left no trail or exhaust, had no effect on clouds, and there was no sound or odor detected."²⁴⁰

Of special interest was the reported movements of these UFO's. Here we have some evidence that whatever the objects were in the sky over Sandia, they might well be the same things that maneuvered over Farmington, New Mexico on March 17th.

S/Sgt. Earl L. Wamsley stated that the objects in question made: "no conventional turns, moved up, sideways at great speed."²⁴¹

S/Sgt. R. D. Woods offered this description:

"Appeared more maneuverable than any known aircraft. The tactics used were similar to the change of positions during dog fights involving two airplanes. However, the way the objects changed position there seemed to be no similarity to the maneuverability of a conventional plane. Were very maneuverable, made right angle turns, also appeared to reverse (back up) the direction of flight."²⁴²

Another witness, whose name was deleted, viewed two small white objects 15 minutes later from the Sandia Ordnance Area. He said the objects were traveling about 600 miles an hour on an eastward course, while adding: "One made a complete circle around the other just prior to disappearing."²⁴³

About the same time, between 1:00 and 1:30 p.m., four enlisted men: M/Sgt. Guy Johnson, S/Sgt. R. E. Bedwell, Sgt. C. D. Byzewski, and Sgt. M. B. Woodward, sighted a bright silver object, round, and the size of a dime at arm's length, flying over Kirtland Air Force Base. As the object sped in a south-east direction, the witnesses noticed that it was: "Very maneuverable. Zigzag motion up and down. More maneuverable than jet aircraft. Sort of floated like piece of large paper in the air."²⁴⁴

"Proper Channels."

A memorandum for the Chief of General Investigations Divisions, Pentagon, classified "Secret" and dated March 22nd, stated:

"On 21 March 1950, at 1640 hours, Major Joseph J. Jackson, Chief, Security Division, Armed Forces Special Weapons Project, telephonically advised the undersigned [signature on document not legible] that his office had received information a short time previous to his call, through Mr. Lee Hargus, Chief, Press Section, Office of Public Information, Department of Defense, to the effect that 'aerial phenomena,' or flying saucers, had been observed earlier that date over Kirtland AFB, New Mexico and Camp Hood, Texas-- both installations are of peculiar interest to AFSWP.

"Major Jackson was anxious to insure that the information was in proper channels and asked that the writer relay it, whereupon I notified Major Nold, IG Division, OSI, who related that he would refer the report to Collection Branch, Director of Intelligence, Hq USAF."245

Mars spins closer.

Rising in the east after sundown with an increasingly bright reddish glow, the planet Mars spun closer to the Earth. The near approach of 1950, some 44,000,000 miles, came on March 28th but as early as March 21st the opposition was getting big play in the newspapers, with telescopic photos of the mysterious world and articles dealing with speculation about detecting an alien civilization. To head off any wild talk: "...scientists advised observers not to strain their eyes looking for 'flying saucers' zooming off the surface of the planet."246

March 21st found George Adamski lecturing to the Everyman Club in La Mesa, California, which was nothing new for him, but instead of the usual philosophical topics he had yielded to his fascination with the aerial mystery. In the subject of flying saucers he discovered a sure-fire attention getter.

Press interest had reached unprecedented levels so it was not surprising that the San Diego Journal sent a reporter to cover the talk. The Journal's representative, Sanford Jarrell, apparently was impressed with Adamski because a story appeared on the front page of the Journal the next day, a treatment that incurred the interest of the other San Diego papers which got in touch with Adamski and expressed a desire to examine the two pictures he said he had submitted to the Point Loma Laboratory. Since Adamski had no extra prints on hand, he said he couldn't oblige. As for the Point Loma Laboratory, a spokesman there denied having any knowledge of so-called saucer photographs so the San Diego newspapers took the extraordinary step of contacting the Pentagon.247

A Copley Press Leased Wire datelined Washington, D.C., March 22nd, carried an Air Force denial that they had in their possession any photographs taken by a George Adamski of California. This was accompanied by the usual skepticism about UFO reports being spaceships and that the military was filing reports as they were being received.

That the Air Force might be right in assuming that visitors from space was bunk never dismayed Adamski. The idea was magic and that was enough.

At his small cafe down the road from the Mt. Palomar Observatory, George Adamski passed humdrum days and nights. In the back of the cafe he spent his leisure hours with his two small camera-equipped telescopes searching the star-strewn heavens as off in the distance coyotes howled at the Moon. Adamski, the dreamer, gazed into the dark unmeasured spaces above him contemplating the planets as immense globes swinging in their orbits as if they were mighty pendulums controlling the cycles of the ages and regulating the mechanism of the universe. All the while he wondered about those worlds, whether they were barren wastes or tennanted by more nobler races than humankind. Questions momentous as these made his pulse race.

During the day Adamski gabbed to people that got off the tourist buses that stopped for refreshments at the Palomar Gardens cafe. He was always ready to fill an ear with what was "really going on up at the big observatory."248

Office memorandum to the director of the FBI.

A document was placed on J. Edgar Hoover's desk on March 22nd titled: "Flying Saucers--Information Concerning." The Scully yarn, its origin obscured, was finding a reception in the most unlikely places. As Keyhoe predicted, the story went on and on. The memorandum to Hoover read:

"The following information was furnished to Special Agent --- (deleted).

"An investigator for the Air Force stated that three so-called flying saucers had been recovered in New Mexico. They were described as being circular in shape with raised centers, approximately 50 feet in diameter. Each one was occupied by three bodies of human shape but only three feet tall, dressed in metallic cloth of a very fine texture. Each body was bandaged in a manner similar to the blackout suits used by speed fliers and test pilots.

"According to Mr. --- (deleted)'s informant, the saucers were found in New Mexico due to the fact the Government has a very high-powered radar set-up in that area and it is believed the radar interferes with the controlling mechanism of the saucers.

"No further evaluation was attempted by S/A --- (deleted) concerning the above."249

Since the source of the forementioned information was an "Air Force investigator", the memo was an eye-popper. Hoover scribbled a note on a routing slip addressed to his aide D. M. Ladd: "Just what are the facts re 'flying saucers?'" A short memo as to whether it is true or just what Air Force, etc. think of them."²⁵⁰

Ladd requested that Special Agent S. W. Reynolds approach the Air Force to "get the facts." This would be the third time such a request was to be made by the Bureau since 1947 and the result, as it turned out, would be the same.

World wide wave increases.

A white colored object flashed over Cordoba in Argentina on March 21st going east to west. The same day another UFO was detected over Yumbel in Chile.

March 22nd a UFO was seen over Santiago, Chile, at 1:00 in the afternoon, and over the city of Concepcion at 2:30 p.m. Across the Atlantic, coast guards stationed along the northern beaches of Portugal reported they had spotted "scores" of strange flying objects.²⁵¹

Elsewhere in Europe a group of doctors and lawyers reported UFO's over Asiago, Italy, on March 22nd.²⁵²

March 23rd.

More reports came from Jiquil, Chile; and from Buenos Aires, Argentina, where, according to Reuters, police sighted UFO's.

In the U.S. a J. McCullen watched the passage of a huge disc over Yuma, Arizona, the same date. The UFO hovered at an estimated 20,000 feet and then left in a hurry in an eastern direction.²⁵³

A much better report, however, came in from California, on March 23rd, when eight objects of an elliptical shape soared over El Moro Bay, passing over the coast highway only 2,000 feet up and headed out to sea, as a military veteran watched in fascination. He counted the objects and tried to estimate their size. First attracted by a silvery glare, he blinked and rolled down his car window to insure he wasn't being taken in by a reflection. Well aware of the Air Force statements that the military could not substantiate any saucer sightings, the witness in this instance, an ex-Air Force aircraft observer, snapped to United Press: "I was an air observer for 14 months during the war and a sea coast air observer for 18 months. Let the Air Force laugh that off."²⁵⁴

Also on March 23rd a report came from Farmersville, Texas; and another one from Hamilton, Ontario, in Canada.

Flying things over Florida.

An extract from the newspaper Pensacola Journal (24 March 50) compiled by military intelligence stated:

"On 23 March 1950 two groups of persons in Pensacola, Florida, reported sighting 'mysterious flying objects.'

"A group of eight Navy enlisted men, ground crew members at Saufley Field were reported to have viewed the object through binoculars for about half an hour. A group of paper mill workers were reported to have seen the same or a similar object for about the same period.

"Both sightings were between 0900 and 1000 hours.

"The object sighted by Navy personnel was reported to be silverly flat round, and flying east at an estimated speed of perhaps 300 miles per hour.

"Navy officials are reported to have indicated that the object was not a weather balloon and pointed out that the object was flying directly against winds of high velocity."²⁵⁵

"Flying baseballs?"

Three men, a businessman, a granite company worker, and a restaurant proprietor, were among those who reported to the Barre, Vermont, Barre Times, on March 23rd, that they had seen objects like "flying baseballs" diving toward the ground and then zooming off in the direction of Montpelier the state capital.

Another report from the area at the time told of something like a flying hubcap.²⁵⁶

That was a newspaper account. According to Air Force records:

"Mr. Cozzi stated he saw an aircraft at high altitude. Three or four vapor trails were noted in the plane's wake. Mr. Cozzi thought that the aircraft was a B-36 type. The observer declared that two silver objects about the size of 'bowling balls' appeared to be flying in formation with the aircraft. Mr. Cozzi said the objects appeared to break up cirrus clouds through which they passed. The color of the objects was white and they were on a 330 degree heading.

More outbreaks in the southern hemisphere:

"Observers in several cities along the Brazilian coast and in the interior reported seeing the objects,

some of them complete with jet exhaust, colored lights and similar effects.

"Brazilian authorities said they have no official information and plan no investigation."²⁵⁸

March 24th.

Word came in from the northern California towns of Willows and Corning on March 24th. The local newspapers alerted people in the area that a "you know what" had been seen. A Deputy Sheriff of Butte County and the Police Chiefs of both Corning and Willows were eyewitnesses of some silvery discs visible for ten minutes.²⁵⁹

Other sightings were made at Springfield, Oregon; and Brainard, Minnesota.

Saucer over Sandia.

Four enlisted men, beginning with a Cpl. William Goultschmidt, spotted something strange over Sandia Base, New Mexico, at exactly 3:05 p.m. March 24th. In front of the BOQ 101, he saw a round, bright, silver, moon-sized object directly east some 45 degrees above the horizon over the Sandia Mountains. It was in sight three to four minutes and left a vapor trail which showed that it had flown in a "looping motion."²⁶⁰ The other three enlisted men reported substantially the same except for the "looping motion." One man though, a Pvt. Henry McMinn, Jr., said he saw the object travel in level flight and then shoot straight up.²⁶¹

A "Mr. Crawford."

The Houston, Texas bus driver that had told the press he had watched a strange saucer-like object "with a tail" over the city on March 18th, was visited at his place of work by an "official from Ellington Air Force Base" on March 24th. The agent wanted more information while identifying himself as a "Mr. Crawford." The Houston Chronicle became curious when it learned of the investigation and contacted the Commanding Officer of Ellington Air Force Base. The CO denied his men were investigating, but the Chronicle did find out that a "Crawford" was assigned to the Houston branch of the Air Force's Office of Special Investigation (OSI), a more secretive military unit. The OSI would not respond to the Chronicle's phone calls.²⁶²

Why the fuss over this particular report? Perhaps it is worthy of note that like Dr. Hunter's UFO, it had a "tail."

An attorney and his wife, American travelers from Sacramento, California, were touring Guatemala March 24th and had just arrived in the capital, Guatemala City, when their auto was slowed to a stop by large crowds in the streets staring skyward. Getting out of their vehicle and looking up, the couple observed bright silver discs moving around over the city. Traveling with the two was another pair, a U.S. Federal Judge, and his wife, from Chicago.²⁶³

The Mexican Farmington.

The Mexican newspaper El Universal reported on March 24th that Jalapa had at least 300 flying discs zooming around above the city. About sundown the objects disappeared.²⁶⁴ This is one episode that certainly merits more investigation.

Europe heats up.

Sightings were made at Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, and Lisbon, on March 24th. In Italy there was a rash of sightings, with one UFO being reported over Turin, an object seen racing across a moonlit sky trailing a fiery wake. The wave of reports moved Italian scientist Giuseppe Belluzzo, a renowned authority on projectiles and cannon, to express his opinion that: "...some great power is launching discs to study them."²⁶⁵ To him it seemed a logical conclusion since both Italy and Germany had tested a disc-like airform during World War II. Briefing a reporter from Rome's newspaper Giornale D' Italia, he said that he believed the objects were: "simply applications of recent technical advances and hardly something supernatural or Martian."²⁶⁶

Actually a check of what Belluzzo had in mind shows that the good doctor had little awareness of the many reports that make mention of huge machines. What he was referring to was a small weapon, a mere toy.²⁶⁷

Columnist Frank Brutto writing from Rome told his American readers:

"Professor Belluzzo's article was accompanied by a sketch showing the possible construction for a disc, using nafta and air for propelling force. Belluzzo did not further identify 'nafta,' but it might mean naphtha.

"The truth is," wrote Professor Belluzzo, that these instruments of destruction can be built and operated. The principle of the flying disc is simple, and construction with light metal very easy."

"Launching of the discs, he said, can be done by rapid combustion of a cartridge similar to that with which torpedoes are launched."²⁶⁸

Little is known of the European UFO wave since a survey has not been made and only a few incidents are on record. Some UFO books show a "platillo volante" allegedly photographed at Spain's Balearic Islands but the value of the case is questionable since the blurred image suspiciously resembles fireworks pinned to a paper cup.²⁶⁹

In the Far East a report came from the Philippines. The Manila Bulletin reported that a flying saucer was visible for more than 40 minutes over Teaguegarao on the northern tip of Luzon.

Sacuer excitement also swept San Bernardo and Valparaiso, Chile, March 24th and 25th.

The watch begins.

Under Technical Directive #55, a \$20,000 contract was awarded on March 24th to Land-Air Inc. to establish constant surveillance at Vaughn, New Mexico, using Askania optical stations. The contract, issued by the military, found its biggest booster in the Commander of Holloman Air Force Base who was particularly concerned with strange aerial objects being reported with uncomfortable regularity by personnel under his command. The Commander was notified the stations would be ready April 1st. Hopefully, with the surveillance stations in place, some definite data on unexplained flying objects, or the mysterious green fireballs, could be obtained.

Oddly enough on that very same day a strange green fireball did appear, but at a location far from New Mexico.

Humid breezes and swaying palms of Hawaii were host to a brilliant green, flame-like object that coasted above the blue waters of Pearl Harbor, paused for a second, and then continued on in a straight line. It did not fall.²⁷⁰

While March 25th has nothing of interest for us, the following day does have several reports of possible value. Police in Vienna, Austria, reported seeing a UFO, but a more detailed case can be found in the American press.

A sighting in New York on the 25th turned out to be a searchlight playing on some clouds, yet another incident in Los Angeles that day was more mysterious, if true. The Los Angeles Mirror headlined: "FLYING 'DISK' DAZZLES L. A. WRITER." A writer living in North Hollywood observed an object near his home, it seems, appearing elliptical in shape, brilliant, and undimming.

At Reno, Nevada, a Mrs. Marie H. Matthews, a CAA Tower operator, and United Airlines employees Robert Higbee and Fred Hinkle, saw their UFO at 8:50 p.m. March 26th. A brilliant light northeast of Hubbard Field which was, according to the witnesses, so: "...bright it was impossible to determine any shape," hung motionless for 5 to 6 minutes, then it began moving slowly across the sky. Visible on each side of the white light was a green light. After it shifted a distance, it suddenly zoomed upward into a cloud bank.²⁷¹

March 26th.

A quote from United Press declared:

"Bertram A. Totten, a clerk at the Congressional Library Washington, D.C., sighted a flying saucer over Fairfax County. It was an aluminum-colored

disk about forty feet in diameter and about ten feet thick. Totten was flying his plane at 5,000 feet when he spotted the disk whirling along 1,000 feet below him. He dived toward it, but before he could get close, it zoomed up into the over-cast. It went up at a speed several hundred miles faster than his own speed, about 150 miles per hour. He saw no propulsion gear or controls on the saucer, but did note vapor trails like those from aircraft engines. The metallic disk glinted when the sun hit it through broken clouds."²⁷²

The United Press couldn't resist taking a poke at the military: "At the time, Totten was flying just a few miles from the Pentagon where the Air Force has its headquarters, the service that says the mysterious discs don't exist."²⁷³

Whoosh! A bird? A plane? Superman?

The day of March 27th was so young the sun had not yet quite peeked above the horizon when C. W. Hughes of Tulsa, Oklahoma, opened the front door of his house in search of the morning paper. As his gaze darted about the porch, something silver colored flashed in the sky reflecting light from the still hidden sun. His eyes rolled upward and focused on a cluster of "somethings" rushing through the air. The objects passed over close enough to show detail. According to Mr. Hughes, the objects resembled "pie pans" with a kind of flanged edge. In his own words, Hughes said the objects were: "blunt nosed, sort of black, rounded on the front with quite a long edge on the front side...[and] shaped like a pie pan only with drooped wings." The objects flew by at a low altitude in groups of two and three at first and then groups of four and five. All told some 25 objects were seen. Nearby, a Mr. Green of Tulsa apparently sighted the same objects as those viewed by Hughes. Green, although, contributed an additional detail: "One stopped dead in the sky. Then it darted off at great speed." Aside from Mr. Hughes and Mr. Green, three other witnesses in the Tulsa area sighted peculiar objects in the morning sky that conform to the usual descriptions of UFO's. These witnesses told the press they watched two fluorescent disc-like objects flying around in the sky, one above the other, for an hour. For the record it should be noted that one of the objects preferred a vertical position, flying on edge, a characteristic not often reported.²⁷⁴

Another impressive story came out of Brunswick, Georgia (see illustration).

Radar report.

The Twentieth Air Force in the Far East submitted an Intelligence report dealing with a strange object:

"Object sighted at approximately 1030 hours, on 27 March 1950, over Motobu Peninsula, island of Okinawa [Japan].

"When first sighted object was stationary, when it started to move heading was 220 degrees, speed of object after it started moving was approximately 500 mph. This rate of speed was arrived at as follows: distance between first and last sightings was 16.9 miles, length of time tracked was two minutes."²⁷⁵

Eleanor Roosevelt.

Back on March 22nd, the widow of the last President, Eleanor Roosevelt, had asked Captain Jack Adams and First Officer G. W. Anderson to be her guests on the NBC program: Today with Mrs. Roosevelt to be aired on March 27th. Adams and Anderson gladly accepted the invitation and during the television appearance the pilots retold their UFO experience using a scale model of the object they saw while giving their reasons why they were sure they had not seen a conventional aircraft. Mrs. Roosevelt impressed by the testimony, stumbled a bit in her reaction to the story:

"Well that of course is such as we have--at least I never remember hearing before, and I will say I've been a little skeptical before. I thought people were seeing things. But you honestly feel Captain Adams, that it had body and was something flown? You don't know whether anyone was in it?"²⁷⁶

The pilots were firm in their conviction that the UFO was intelligently controlled. They nodded at Mrs. Roosevelt's question.²⁷⁷

More March 27th items.

Rumors in Haifa, Israel, spoke of UFO sightings over the northern part of that country which were given credence by the New York Times. The Times reported:

"A Lebanese pilot, who took Riad es Sohl, Premier of Lebanon, to the Arab League conference in Cairo, said he had seen them [UFO's] over Acre traveling at a high speed in a westerly direction. Others described them as 'disks traveling northward at a great altitude and emitting a smoke trail.'²⁷⁸

Coverage of the Orient is lamently poor, therefore an AP report datelined Hong Kong is of interest due more to its geographical origin than to any particular mystifying aspect. The news item read: "American seaman telephoned the China Mail that they saw three 'flying fireballs' when their ship entered Hong Kong Harbor Monday [March 27th]. Nobody else saw flying fireballs that the newspaper could discover."²⁷⁹

On the other side of the world at Berlin, Germany, March 27th, astronomers observed an inexplicable body in the heavens, a rival

to the north star in brilliance. The luminous body zig-zaged its way westward, occasionally pausing, or so said the West Berlin newspaper Abend.²⁸⁰

What made the year 1950 unique in UFO history was that for a while the UFO problem achieved some respectability, but not the kind that meant widespread acceptability of the extraterrestrial hypothesis. People would not entertain such a notion without a threshing out of more conventional explanations.

Are they Uncle Sam's?

An Associated Press story datelined Dallas, Texas, March 28th:

"Radio Commentator Henry J. Taylor said in his opinion flying saucers are real and that when the U.S. Air Force confirms the news it will be wonderful.

"Taylor expressed his opinion in his regular broadcast [ABC] last night at a dinner meeting of the Dallas General Motors Club.

"They are not from another planet, not from Russia, but right here from the United States of America," Taylor said."²⁸¹

To give his story some authority Taylor referred briefly to an incident that was supposed to have taken place over Columbus, Ohio, when no less than eight Air Force pilots witnessed a "saucer as big as a two-story house and metallic in appearance, effortlessly out maneuver any pursuit as if guided by intelligence."* A written official report was compiled from the military eyewitness, he said. As Taylor expressed it, the document detailing the case: "...is in the Pentagon building files tonight."²⁸² Moreover, Taylor claimed that a small disc had fallen near Houston, in July 1947, with coded instructions that identified²⁸³ it as an American device but the episode had been hushed up.**

At the same time the University of Texas announced that the school was developing high performance pilotless drones to dog-fight guided missiles, a project authorized by the military. A

*This case is not known to this writer. There is a chance Taylor may be referring to the UFO sighting at Dayton early in March, but Dayton is over 60 miles from Columbus.

**There is little doubt this is the Galveston incident of July 1947. For more detail the reader is referred to the author's booklet: Charles Fort, The Fortean Society & Unidentified Flying Objects, pp. 89-90.

University spokesman said that the drones were of normal aircraft configuration but were capable of "fantastic speed and altitude." In many newspapers the University announcement was carried side by side with a story on Henry J. Taylor's radio statements. In fact the University announcement was made just a matter of hours after Taylor's broadcast.

The University of Texas spokesman said the acknowledge of:

"...the program's existence was approved by military authorities and was made with the knowledge that it would touch off new speculation with the recurring stories about flying saucers."284

There is a theory that Taylor was being used by the military to detour the public from the extraterrestrial hypothesis, but no official documentation or other evidence of a hard nature is available to support the idea. There is interesting circumstantial evidence however.

The Los Angeles Mirror took the cue from Taylor's broadcast by rehashing the old controversy of whether or not the Pentagon was flying an updated version of the Navy's "flying flounder," the experimental fighter that never got more than four feet off the ground. Front paging the speculation in the March 30th edition, the Mirror sold a record 195,000 copies that day.

Famed talk show host Jack Paar became all excited when Los Angeles television station KTTV broke into its regular programming to say it would reveal the secret of the flying saucers that evening, but Paar was crestfallen later when KTTV flashed a photo of the V-173 "flying flounder" on the screen. Like many others following the UFO mystery, Paar expected a more convincing solution.285

As the months passed Keyhoe's ideas looked better and better. Ever since December 1949, when Donald Keyhoe's essay on the saucer mystery was published in True magazine, the ex-Marine aviator had been receiving bags of mail on the subject with many of the letters telling of UFO sightings previously withheld due to the fear of ridicule. Keyhoe checked out as many as possible. Soon he had bulging file cabinets.

With the advent of the big 1950 flap, once more the issue was in heightened suspense and newsmen were dropping in to see Keyhoe with increasing frequency at the ex-Marine aviator's dignified colonnaded house at Alexandria, Virginia, close to Washington. The Major had nothing about him that suggested a wild-eyed eccentric and he discussed his beliefs in a thoughtful manner. In his upstairs library that had a beautiful view of the Potomac, Keyhoe received reporters and exchanged information on the UFO problem. The Major readily admitted that many UFO reports were not space ships yet he insisted that there was a lot of evidence, if human evidence could be trusted, to lift the stories out of the rut of ordinary explanations into a class by themselves. He showed off his big pile of documented data compiled on sightings by commercial pilots and expert scientific observers and expressed confidence his conclusions about the

mystery would be vindicated within a couple of years, or at the very most within his lifetime.* Keyhoe brushed aside current rumors of an American secret weapon, and with the basics out of the way, he launched into speculation about Pentagon policies. The powers-that-be, he assumed, knew the planet Earth was being visited by an alien lifeform and they were building up a public tolerance for the concept.286

IS EVERYBODY NUTS?

Now none of what Keyhoe was saying was really new, but continued UFO activity was lending increasing support to his ideas and he had the ear of more and more persons of influence.

One sample was the experience of the Washington representative of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, William Ewing. Exasperated at the upsurge in prominence of the sky riddle, he titled his newsstory out of Washington on March 28th with the words: ARE THERE FLYING SAUCERS OR IS EVERYBODY NUTS? Ewing, who had a nightly radio program originating from the nation's capital, besides writing for the Star-Bulletin, learned from private sources that the Air Force had taken up the UFO problem once again in spite of public denials. He found the renewed official activity intriguing although not entirely surprising since he knew that earlier military studies had actually been inconclusive. Ewing shared his feelings with his readers and listeners and finally paid a visit to Keyhoe.

Even after an interview with Donald Keyhoe, Ewing felt handicapped in his judgment on the aerial puzzle, a difficulty he felt the average individual shared. Could a person believe the credibility of those making sensational UFO reports? Personally, Ewing felt persuaded to an extent by the Adams-Anderson UFO encounter. Being a good friend of a top official of the Chicago and Southern Airlines, Ewing contacted the gentleman asking for an assessment of Adams and Anderson's competency and reliability. Ewing got a reply from the official that backed the pilots one hundred percent.287

Hoover's answer.

J. Edgar Hoover desired some answers too and it was on the 28th that Special Agent Reynolds was able to obtain some data for his boss, although the material was not very exciting, for the Air Force failed to enlighten the FBI about the alleged "little space men" (rumors started by Frank Scully) about which the Bureau asked specific questions, nor did the military offer any remarks about any data whatsoever.

In fact, in keeping with the strained relations between the FBI and the Air Force, Hoover got no more information than that contained in the handouts given to the news media. Hoover's aide D. M. Ladd authored the following memorandum for the Director:

*At this writing Keyhoe is still alive and in his 80's.

"In response to your inquiry, Special Agent S. W. Reynolds obtained the following information today (3/28/50) from Major Boggs and Lieutenant Colonel C. V. Hearn of Air Force Intelligence. The Air Force discontinued their intelligence project to determine what flying saucers are the latter part of last year. They publicly announced to the press in December 1949, that the project had been discontinued. They advised that the press release had been concurred in by the Army and Navy. The reason for the discontinuance, according to Major Boggs and Lieutenant Colonel Hearn, was that after two years of investigation over three-fourths of the incidents regarding flying saucers proved to be misidentifications of a wide variety of conventional items such as lighted weather balloons and other air-borne objects.*

"Colonel Hearn pointed out that the Commanders of the various areas are charged with the security of those areas. Reports concerning flying saucers received at this time will be investigated by the Area Commander and his report submitted to the Air Force Intelligence Division as an intelligence item.

"Major Boggs and Lieutenant Colonel Hearn made the observation that many of the reported sightings of flying saucers at this time appear to be an outgrowth of recent magazine articles. They reiterated that the Air Force is conducting no active investigation to determine whether flying saucers exist or what they might happen to be.

"You will recall that the investigation of flying saucers was discontinued by the Bureau in October 1947, in order that the Air Force could take over such investigations."288

A member of Congress lent support to the Air Force position. In a news report:

"Representative Melvin Price (Dem.) East St. Louis, a member of the House Armed Services Committee and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, said Tuesday (March 28) night he 'didn't believe in flying saucers, just as he didn't believe in ghosts.'

"Price, interviewed on a network program of the American Broadcasting Co., said he had learned nothing, as a member of either committee, which led him to question the conclusions of the Air Force.

"Of course no open-minded person can reject the possibility of flying saucers,' Price said. 'A man named Charles Fort has spent a life time collecting reports on phenomena for which there is no ready or conventional explanation, and some are

*What about that remaining 25 percent?

willing to believe flying saucers come from another planet."289

Amarillo's aerial anomaly.

Three men standing in front of David's Food Store on West Sixth Street in Amarillo, Texas, March 28th, were an audience for a silver-colored saucer parked in the sky south of the city for a ten minute period until it launched itself straight up out of sight.²⁹⁰

Another case came from Fairhaven, California (near Eureka) on March 28th. A nightwatchman at a local lumber company was thunderstruck at 3:15 a.m. when something sped overhead on a westward course. Visible for nearly eight minutes, it was, said the nightwatchman, "weird in appearance." Having sighted many aircraft after dark, the nightwatchman was absolutely stumped by the object. He wouldn't say the thing was a "flying saucer," just that he had seen a: "...cylinder-shaped object lighted by a yellowish glow."²⁹¹

March 29th.

"It made my hair stand on end."

One of the frightened witnesses exclaimed his fear after a batch of strange, round, black objects swooped over a couple of fishermen, a D. Whiteside and a H. T. William, trolling on Lake Marrowbone just outside Nashville, Tennessee, 7:00 a.m. on March 29th. A weird swishing noise heralded the approach of the UFO's which came into view suddenly because of their very low altitude, an estimated 250 feet above the water and just below an overcast.

The objects had dived through an opening in the clouds when first seen, after which they changed direction in unison before being obscured by the ridgeline, circling behind the hills on the west side of the lake. The men forgot about fishing and rowed frantically for shore to contact authorities. It makes us wonder if the men did glimpse something otherworldly and some deeply rooted instinct sensed it without fully comprehending, giving rise to cold fear. Anyway, the lake superintendent, J. W. Davis, encountered the sportsmen fleeing the area. He remarked: "They were scared." Phoning the press one of the witnesses said the UFO's were: "...about the size of a 300 pound bomb. They had no motor but they were traveling faster than any airplane I ever saw. They were fairly close together and they all turned together." The newspapers quoted R. J. Powell, Chief Communicator of the Civil Aeronautics Administration, at Nashville, about Lake Marrowbone sightings. He said: "I don't know what to say about it. The Air Force has been attempting to disprove reports of 'saucers' but they are keeping their fingers crossed."²⁹²

Other cases dated March 29th were from Trinidad, Colorado and Leavenworth, Washington. Coming out of the north and

FLA. TIMES UNION 28 March 1950

'Saucers' Fly Over Brunswick

BRUNSWICK, Ga., March 27—"Flying saucers" were spotted over here between 11:15 and 11:30 o'clock yesterday morning.

There were five of them, three in one group and two in another, flying at altitudes estimated at 30,000 to 40,000 feet.

Those who saw the objects admitted they may have been merely a new type of American aircraft but insisted such things had never before been seen here.

Frank Preston, garageman, observed the disc-like craft through binoculars and said they definitely were shaped like a plate, round in circumference but flat on bottom.

His description was substantiated by others, including four experienced aviators.

Clarence Dubs and J. M. Rozier, both members of the Brunswick Airport Commission, were flying in separate small planes and spotted the "space ships" independently. They landed at the St. Simons Island Airport and found two other veteran pilots had been watching the strange craft from the ground.

The saucers left vapor trails across the sky that were seen by many persons who thought they were from an ordinary plane unusually high up.

The aviators together estimated the speed of the craft as

from 1,800 to 2,000 miles an hour. The figures were obtained by estimating the altitude, distance covered, and time elapsed in flight.

The objects first were seen traveling south, then disappeared and were discovered again going north.

Dubs said the silver-colored saucers probably are a new model of jet plane with a unique shape and extraordinary flying characteristics that have been kept secret during development.

circling around the city of San Diego, California, about 9:00 p.m., March 29th, an aerial object, casting a light which was tinted an orange color, turned and sped away on an northeast course. Press reports indicated a similar visitation sometime earlier in the evening.²⁹³

What might have been an ordinary UFO report made on March 29th at Ironwood, Michigan, which described a round-shaped object zipping northward in the mid-afternoon, "slipping and sliding sideways" through the air, became notable because of the quality of the six witnesses to the object's passage. All were airline pilots. One of them, A. T. Christensen, an official for Wisconsin Central Airlines, followed the UFO with a pair of field glasses.²⁹⁴

This object may have fled north to Fort William, Ontario, where on March 29th some airport employees caught sight of something resembling a brilliant white star approaching high up and fast. Initially thought to be something ordinary, it quickly dawned on N. Evans, a flying-club manager, that a bird would be dark against the sky and would hardly be making such speed. Peering close as the thing streaked overhead, he saw no wings. Among the crowd of witnesses were Trans-Canada Air Lines officials which saw the white ball of light zip to a point over Lake Superior where four more such "things" joined it. The five mystery objects then sped back toward Fort William. Once over the city, the UFO's circled and then left in a northeast direction.²⁹⁵

UFO reports from South America on March 29th were tabulated at Las Salinas and Quilpue, Chile. Also, for 5 - 10 seconds something was visible to a U.S. Master Sergeant attached to the American Embassy at Santiago that afternoon. In a report sent to Washington it was stated:

"Observer did not stop to look or talk to anyone until he arrived at the U.S. Embassy where he went straight to the 9th floor and looked out and seen nothing, then went to the roof of the building there looked at object with BX. Object was moving in a straight line at an extreme rate of speed. It appeared to be more white than any other color. Observer went inside of building to get a camera to take a picture of the object and when he returned the object was gone."²⁹⁶

Back in the States the MATS Flight Service units forwarded a number of UFO reports to Washington. Here is one of the better ones:

"Between 2215 and 2230 hours, 30 March 1950, 1st. Lt. Edward A. Fioretti, who was Officer of the Day, 2239th AFRTC, Greater Pittsburgh Airport, Coraopolis, PA., accompanied by Pfc. Paul R. Runyan,

was going in a northerly direction across the ramp in a jeep when Lt. Fioretti noticed an object in the sky which he at first thought might be a parachute. Lt. Fioretti ordered Pfc. Runyan, who was driving the jeep, to stop and both men got out of the vehicle and stood on the ramp. They observed the object move from a considerable distance northwest of the field to approximately within two miles of the northern edge of the field. It appeared to be losing altitude and came to within an estimated 2,000 feet of the ground at its closest proximity to Greater Pittsburgh Airport. At this altitude and proximity it made several gradual flat turns at an estimated speed of about 50 miles an hour. Both men described the object as circular with a scalloped periphery, similar in shape to an open parachute observed from the underside. It was estimated to be approximately from 50 to 60 feet in diameter and emitted an exhaust from the center of the lower surface. The object made no sound. It was white with a tendency to grey toward the center of the lower surface. It maintained a flat attitude in turns and at all other times in flight. After maneuvering for a short period it began an almost perpendicular climb, at a terrific rate of climb, moving slightly to the east and in approximately one to two minutes was completely out of sight at possibly 50 to 60 thousand feet. Ceiling and visibility were unlimited."297

The thing moved against the wind but still there was much animated talk over the weather balloon possibility, so an actual balloon was immediately launched and it floated in the opposite direction of the UFO's course.298

The UFO activity spilled over into the next day when a bluish glowing disc seemingly afire with internal light, raced over Escanaba, Michigan, spewing a ribbon of bluish fire.299 In the same region, a University student topped that story with one of his own. He said a translucent saucer some 35 feet in diameter had overflowed the countryside near Vineland, Ontario, on March 31st.300

"Little Moons."

Another Dixie case occurred at Selma, Alabama, the same day. A chief engineer, named Townsend, for a local radio station was puttering around in his backyard when a neighbor called him over and pointed out something in the sky and asked the radio expert if: "...that's what we've been reading about." Eyes popping, Townsend saw "little moons" speeding noiselessly westward in formation. Coming to a halt, the trio of objects parked in the azure for five minutes, after which, the center object zipped straight up and the other two resumed their original course and speed. That night Townsend went on the air to tell his story. He got 20 telephone calls from people who had witnessed the same thing.301

The Montgomery Advertiser carried additional accounts:

"Four observers reported seeing three symmetrical spinning objects maneuver at high speed near Selma, Alabama, late Thursday, 30 March 1950. At first they were thought to be clouds but then the observers noticed that the sun's rays were shining off them as they were metal and that they were travelling at a rapid speed. They all agreed that the middle object disappeared and then returned, then it rose straight up in the air and the others peeled off and followed."³⁰²

Furthermore:

"Reports by Selmians that they had observed three objects--presumably flying saucers--Thursday were given substantiation Saturday. Mr. and Mrs. --- (deleted), Prattville, said they saw three circular objects streaking through the sky near Autaugaville between 5 and 6 p.m. the same day. 'They were circular,' said Mrs. --- (deleted) 'and each had a bright light about the rim. They seemed to be flying in formation, like those sometimes used by planes. We apparently got an edgewise view of them. They appeared to change their positions, up and down, and then disappeared from view.'"³⁰³

More March 30th items:

At Sioux City, Iowa, five Air National Guardmen at the local airfield watched as an aircraft flew overhead followed by a white-colored, round "something." The UFO was 300 feet above the plane "stalking" its "prey."³⁰⁴

Five more persons, this time in Oakland, California, saw something in the sky that puzzled them and the newspapers were thrown for a lost too. On March 30th, witnesses in Oakland saw a "thing" in the air that was egg-shaped, luminous, and at times glittered while trailing a stream of white smoke. Sometimes it moved swiftly and sometimes slowly, flying in circles.³⁰⁵

In a special news article titled: "Worried About Flying Saucers?" Drew Pearson noted that the Air Force currently was being harassed by a welter of new disc reports but it still insisted: "There ain't no such animal."³⁰⁶

On the West Coast the Portland (Oregon) Oregonian, observed:

"Meanwhile, to Kenneth Arnold a search for more discs has become a hobby.

"In his spare time he goes disc-hunting in his plane with a high speed movie camera equipped with a telescope lens.

"He is determined to prove he saw what he said he saw that June day in 1947."307

By now Arnold had a lot of company for there were many who shared his determination to prove that "flying saucers were real." In Eureka, California, on a business trip Arnold gave an interview to the local newspaper, The Humbolt Times. He said in part: "I am pretty sure that they (the saucers) are extraterrestrial in original and controlled by some type of intelligent beings [and]...we stand on the verge of the greatest discovery that man has ever made."308

The Miami Daily News sent a reporter on a 2,500 mile tour of the United States to question persons who had reported seeing flying saucers. On his return the reporter, Bill Baggs, wrote: "I don't know what to think but a strong case certainly can be made out for the saucers."309

Meanwhile, Captain Hall, the American pilot that had witnessed the buzzing of Guatemala's La Aurora Airport by flying saucers back on March 15th, returned to the states to a duty station at Mobile, Alabama, the end of March 1950. On March 30th, officers at the Mobile station decided to hold a seminar on the UFO mystery and selected Captain Hall as the principle speaker, but before the seminar convened an Air Force Intelligence agent with the rank of Major summoned Hall to his office. In the office the Intelligence Officer asked Captain Hall to be seated while he turned on a tape recorder to make a record of their conversation. The conversation was actually an interrogation with the Intelligence officer asking about the La Aurora incident in detail. During the session, the Air Force Major confirmed the existence of the other individuals in the case by making telephone calls. Captain Hall maintains that the A-2 officer ended the interrogation with the words: "Listen, there is no such thing as a flying saucer. You won't discuss them."310

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