

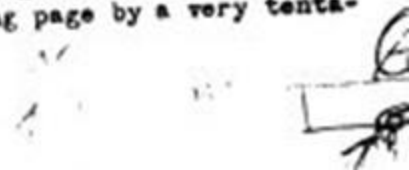
MEMORANDUM TO: AC/AS-2, Counter Intelligence Branch

J. Lee

1. Information contained herein and opinions expressed are based upon conversation with and request by Mr. Butler of your office. All pertain to certain phenomena connected with recent widespread talk of "flying saucers".

2. Approximately three weeks ago, on or about 7 July 1947, I prepared to go to bed around 2230 or 2300 EDT. I was living at 2807 North Globe Road, Arlington, Virginia, with my wife. Illustration No. 1 shows the general layout of the room we occupied at that time. See Illustration No. 1.

3. I had just turned off the light by my bedside, but sat down on the side of the bed to listen to the end of a radio program before reclining. In the meantime, my wife and I were having some conversation about the selection of certain furniture for a home we had just purchased. At the time of these events, as I sat facing the windows, a light appeared at the right-hand edge of the extreme end window and moved rapidly along to disappear below the trees or horizon, or to be extinguished in some fashion at some place in a general southerly direction. This is illustrated on the following page by a very tentative sketch. See Illustration No. 2. X



4. At the time, since my attention was divided and absorbed among the subjects mentioned, my reaction was simply that "a light passed by," and I gave no further thought to the matter until some moments later, when the thought came to me that I had never seen such an object before, and that although the first explanation would have been that a meteor had fallen toward earth in that direction, it did not have the appearance of any meteor or "shooting star" I had ever seen. Thinking of the then-prevalent talk of flying disks, I reflected that probably some such thing as I had just seen was the source of a large amount of newspaper and radio publicity on the subject. The next morning I jestingly announced in the office that I saw a flying saucer the night before and thought that it was enroute to Alexandria, where some of our officers live. I then went on to say that I supposed it was a shooting star, but that it did look somewhat peculiar. After we had discussed the general topic for some time, I dropped the subject, not wishing to add to the supposed rumors, which I envisioned as a source of serious panic over the country.

5. A description of the light, or object is almost impossible, since observation of it was so limited. As shown in Illustration No. 2, the object appeared to pass in closest proximity to me at the time it came into view. All of my mental calculations were based upon some impression or conception of its distance at the closest point, (AC). I had no way of judging this, except in the form of very crude depth-perception. If this by any chance were correct, and instead of a distant meteor some object had passed near-by, I would assume for purposes of description that the distance AC on the sketch was some three quarters of a mile. One factor which I could judge quite reliably was the angular elevation. This must have been approximately 3 or 4 degrees; at any rate, the light was intermittently behind the tallest trees forward of my position as it passed, and these trees are of a normal height, perhaps sixty or eighty feet at a distance several blocks. Based upon a mild assumption as to distance, and a reasonable assumption as to angular elevation, the object would be at a low altitude, considerably below 500 feet, and of a size approximating a small airplane, say 30 feet across. The shape may have been round, oval, discal, or irregular; at the speed with which it travelled, I could only perceive it as a "blob." I do not consider the distance mentioned to be less than 3/4 mile, because had it been, I feel sure that, late in the evening and with all my windows open, I would have heard some sound, which I definitely did not in this case. It might be well to point out here the relative similarity in size, altitude and airspeed of a firefly at a distance of 30 feet, an airplane at about 3/4 mile, and a meteor at several hundred miles. Most of us are familiar with this illusion.

6. Although I could not accurately judge the time, I seem to recall the object or light was visible for a couple of seconds. Taking this figure literally and applying it to the sketch, No. 2, one could roughly compute the speed of the object at 1350 mph; however, I did not sense that it was moving with such great speed as this. It rather appeared to move with the speed of a jet-powered airplane. It did not deviate from a straight course while I observed it, and did not perceptibly lose altitude.

7. In color, the subject had the appearance of a reflected white light, a cool, bright white light with no red in it, like the moon on a clear night. There was no train visible to me, in the form of fire, smoke, or sparks. The weather at the assumed time and date was checked through records of the Bolling Field weather office, and consisted of scattered to broken clouds with visibilities of 10 - 12 miles. The cloud condition is further indication that the object was not necessarily a meteor, since it might have been impossible to see a meteor. I do not personally remember the weather condition, except that I am sure it was not raining.

8. At the time of this occurrence, I was not inclined to think of it seriously enough to wake my wife and describe it to her, nor by any reasoning to make official report. As time passed, I thought considerably about the fleeting glimpse I had of whatever I saw, and am still somewhat confused, but feel that it was some natural phenomenon which occurs but rarely. I have flown approximately 2500 hours during the past seven years and being generally familiar with aspects of aviation can emphatically state that (a) it was no weather balloon, (b) it was not the flash of a beacon on the cloud-base, (c) it could hardly have been an airplane on fire, since it would have at least crashed in this general area, (d) it was not entirely a result of imagination, and (e) it was not spending much time in one place.

JAMES O. COBB
Lt Colonel, Air Corps

80
B4

UNCLASSIFIED

CHECK-LIST - UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

- Incident # **80**
1. Date: **7 July 1947**
 2. Time: **2230-2300**
 3. Location: **Arlington, Va.**
 4. Name of observer: **James A. Cobb**
 5. Occupation of observer: **Lt Col., AC**
 6. Address of observer: **N/S**
 7. Place of observation: **Arlington, Va. - 2807 N. Glebe Road.**
 8. Number of objects: **1**
 9. Distance of object from observer: **3/4 mile**
 10. Time in sight: **2-3 seconds**
 11. Altitude: **less than 500 ft**
 12. Speed: **that of jet**
 13. Direction of flight: **SOUTH EAST**
 14. Tatties: **N/S**
 15. Sound: **N/S**
 16. Size: **Small plane**
 17. Color: **Reflected white light**
 18. Shape: **"blob"**
 19. Odor detected: **N/S**
 20. Apparent construction: **N/S**
 21. Exhaust trails: **None**
 22. Weather conditions: **Scattered clouds - Visibility: 10-12 mi.**
 23. Effect on clouds: **None**
 24. Sketches or photographs: **2**
 25. Manner of disappearance: **behind trees**
 26. Remarks: **(over)**

DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR
INTERVALS; NOT AUTOMATICALLY
DECLASSIFIED. DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

70



Observed from a bedroom window as a blob of light crossing at very high speed estimated by observer at approx 1350 MPH. "In color, the object had the appearance of a reflected white light, a cool bright white light with no red in it, like the moon on a clear night."