

Incident No. 176 -- 23 Sept. 1948, 1200 Hours, San Pablo, Calif.
On a dull hazy day, two men saw a large translucent object over a mile overhead. It was the size of a four-engine bomber, buff-gray in color, and appeared to be made of canvas. According to the first observer, the center portion was spherical and undulated, having appendages fore and aft, like an anoeba. The second observer said the object looked like a "vegetable crate" covered with translucent material. The investigator states one observer's description was in direct contradiction to the other. One observer was far-sighted but wore no glasses, the other was over seventy, needed glasses to read but wore none at time of sighting.

AMO Opinion: The only fact that might be accepted is that an object was seen. Two observers, side by side, could not agree on its appearance. The evidence is useless. A balloon or cluster of balloons, an aircraft, or a cloud could have been the stimulus.

Incident #176, a - Castro's Ranch, California -- 23 September 1948

The two observers of this incident make, in several respects, directly contradictory statements: diffuse object versus definite box-shaped object, easterly line of flight versus north-westerly, etc. They agree on speed (very fast).

It does not seem likely that the incident can be explained astronomically. The only possible astronomical hypothesis would be that the object observed was the smoke mass from an exploded fireball, which would probably have an amorphous-like shape, agreeing with the description of one witness. At noon a meteor outward-bound from the region of the sun could approach the earth head-on, explode, and not leave any long trail.

However, in view of the conflicting descriptions, very little weight can be given to the whole incident. Perhaps the observers were looking at different things. There was a west-bound United Airlines plane in the vicinity at approximately that time; one observer may have seen that. The description of one observer suggests a box kite, such as those once used by weather observers.

With 11 incidents thus eliminated, there remain thirty-
certain and evident but have no present ready explanation.
statement is true only under the assumption that the evidence
is reliable and accurate. When regarded in this way,
the data are treated into consideration, all of the
evidence is reliable, as shown by the fact that
the data are of a high order of accuracy.

The following table shows the results of the
analysis of the data.

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analysis of the data. The data are of a high order of
accuracy and are reliable and accurate.

All of the remaining 34 incidents are treated in a
similar manner. The data are of a high order of
accuracy and are reliable and accurate.

RESULTS

The following table shows the results of the
analysis of the data.

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analysis of the data. The data are of a high order of
accuracy and are reliable and accurate.

CONCLUSIONS

The following section of this report, each remaining
is considered separately. It is not the intent to
present a summary of the results, but each case has
unfavorable elements. The general conclusion is
that the data are of a high order of accuracy and
are reliable and accurate.

21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

HEADQUARTERS
AIR WEATHER SERVICE
Andrew Air Force Base
Washington 25, D. C.

In Reply

Refer To: AFS DSS

11 May 1949

SUBJECT: Unidentified Flying Objects

TO : Commanding General
Air Materiel Command
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio
ATTN: MCIAKD-3

1. Reference is made to letter from your headquarters, MCIAKS, dated 9 March 1949, subject "Unidentified Flying Objects," and first indorsement thereto by this headquarters, dated 31 March 1949.

2. The incident summaries 173 through 233 have been checked against routine weather-balloon ascents made by the Air Force, Navy and Weather Bureau. Comments based on this review are inclosed.

3. It is recommended that the "Guide To Investigation Of Unidentified Aerial Objects" be changed as follows: Item 13, "Direction of Flight of Object," should be clarified so that vertical and horizontal motions are distinguished if possible, and so that motion is specified as the direction towards which the object appears to move. "Relative to Radar Settings" should include a statement of the type of radar set used.

FOR THE CHIEF, AIR WEATHER SERVICE

2 Incls:

- 1 - Incident Summaries
- 2 - Comments 173 thru 233

/s/ W. A. West
W. A. WEST
Lt. Col., USAF
Adjutant General

No. 176: Navy rawinsonde and Weather Bureau pilot balloon sounding were released approximately one hour prior to sighting. Wind flow, however, was WNW at all levels from the surface to 15,000 feet which would seem to preclude the possibility of either balloon drifting North to the San Pablo area. Both witnesses also agree that the object was travelling at high speed. Winds for that region did not exceed 25 K. Conclusion: No balloon.

On 23 Sept 1948 Mr Sylvester Bentham was talking to Col. Ekins when the Colonel called Bentham's attention to a single object in the sky. Object first appeared in the northeast and was moving faster than any airplane that Bentham had ever seen. Object appeared very high. Both Ekins and Bentham watched it for at least 3 minutes. It moved toward the northwest in a straight line at a constant speed finally turning to the North and faded from view. To Bentham the object appeared to have a regular rectangular outline with sharp corners. It was buff or gray in color with several darker vertical lines like ribs. (See drawing attached.) Object appeared like a "vegetable crate" flying thru the air and seemed to be covered with a translucent material. It made no noise and left no exhaust or trail. Apparent size was approximately 2 inches by 1 inch by 1 inch.

Mr Bentham's description as to the shape, direction and overall appearance of this object is in direct contradiction with statements made by Col Horace Ekins.

Mr Bentham further stated that neither he nor col Ekins were wearing glasses at the time and that he wears glasses only for reading. Mr. Bentham is 70 years of age. He is a retired butcher.

While watching an Army bomber which was flying rather low, Col Eakins observed above and going nearly due east an unknown object. He asked his companion, Mr Bentham, if he were seeing things. Bentham substantiated the fact that there was an object above the bomber. Col Eakins described the object as being approximately the size of a large four-engined bomber. It appeared undulating in shape resembling an amoeba (See sketch inclosed). The object appeared to have 3 appendages forward and 2 aft which seemed to be flapping or oscillating while the center portion remained stable. Col Eakins thought it was a mile or more above the bomber. In the center of the object there appeared a round, dark circle which, in Col Eakins' opinion, seemed to be above the main body of the object. Further it appeared that the main part of the object was translucent and of a dirty gray color and that the dark, circular portion appeared to grow more dense in color as it approached the center. From this observation Col Eakins concluded that the dark portion was spherical having the shape and depth of a globe. He further stated that the main part of the object appeared like canvas. He could not estimate the speed of the object but said it was traveling at a far greater speed than the bomber or anything else he had ever seen. There was no noise of any type and no evidence of exhaust or trail. The object did not reflect or give off light of any type.

Col Eakins prior to his retirement in 1948 was on duty in Panama as a veterinarian with the Army mission. He retired because of personal reasons and not because of physical defects. However, Col Eakins is far-sighted and has to wear glasses. Neighbors and business associates established the fact that he is highly thought of and is reliable in all his dealings and associations with them. He impressed the investigator as being stable, intelligent and above average in common sense.

PROJECT "SIGN"
Action Slip

Refers to **Bekins Sighting**

Incident No. **176**

Location **Pinole, Calif**

Date & Time of Incident **23-Sept 48** Time: **12:00 noon**

Initially Reported To **Hq, 6th Army, Office Assis Cnf of Staff G-2,
Presidio of San Francisco, Calif**

Info Recorded On: McBoe _____ Witness File ☒ Incident File ☒ By _____

Check & Initial: Check List ☒ Chart _____ Graph _____ By _____

Coordinated With: MCIAAO _____ MCIAO _____ MCIA _____

Investigation Started: Type **ltr - local** Date Initiated **14 Oct 48**

Initial Investigation Report Rec'd _____ Date _____

Information Requests

1. To **Distr Commander 18th OSI Distri 3, To**
San Bernardino AF Base, San Bernardino, Calif
Subject **Project "SIGN"** Subject _____

Date _____ Date _____

2. To _____ 4. To _____
Subject _____ Subject _____

Date _____ Date _____

Checked:

Meteorological Data File		Navv		Other	
Radar		Air Force		Other	
Electronics		Guided Missile		Other	
Astro Physical		Atomic Research		Other	
Domestic Flight		Weather Station		Other	
Army		Private Flights		Other	

Reported to Washington By: _____

Telephone _____ Date _____ Teletype _____ Date _____

Letter _____ Date _____ Courier _____ Date _____

Other _____ Date _____

Dissemination: To _____ Date _____ To _____ Date _____

To _____ Date _____ To _____ Date _____

Status: Open ☒ Pending _____ Closed _____

1. Date and Time of Observation: 23 Sept 48 Approx 1200
2. Where Sighted: Castro's Ranch - 4 miles due east of San Pablo, Calif and 4-1 miles South of Pinole, Calif
3. Observer's Position: ground
(i. e., ground, air, control tower, etc.)
4. Name and Address of Observer: Horace S. Eakins, Col., U. S. Army (RET)
1024 Bether Drive, Walnut Creek, Calif.
5. Occupation and/or hobbies: Retired army colonel formerly a veterinarian
presently employed as a Meat Inspector by Calif State Dept of Agr.
6. Attention Attracted by: Was observing an Army bomber when he observed
an unknown object flying above the bomber
7. Number of Object(s) Seen: 1
8. Size of Object(s): About the size of a 4-engine bomber - longer than wide
9. Color of Object(s): Main part of body translucent and of dirty gray color
10. Shape (Sketch if Possible) undulating with center portion appearing
spherical having the shape and depth similar to a globe - like amoeba
11. Nature of Luminosity: Did not reflect or give off light of any type
(directed beam of light?)
12. Altitude of Object: Over a mile
(estimated)
13. Estimated Distance of Object from Observer: Over a mile directly above
14. Estimated Speed of Object: very fast speed
15. Time in Sight: Could not estimate
16. Tactics: Appendages seemed to flap or oscillate while center
portion remained stable
17. Sound Made by Object(s): No noise
18. Direction of Flight of Object(s) Nearly due east
19. Apparent Construction: Thought main part of object appeared like canvas
20. Effect on Clouds: N/S
21. Exhaust Trail Color of: No evidence of exhaust
22. Manner of Disappearance: Just disappeared from sight in a very short time
23. Weather Conditions at Time of Sighting: N/S Day was rather dull and
hazy - there were very few clouds in the sky at the time.
24. Peculiarities Noted: See drawing attached
25. Summary of Incident: (over)
(See attached page)

INCIDENT SUMMARY SHEET

Incident No. 176a

1. Date and Time of Observation: 23 Sept 48 Approx 1230
2. Where Sighted: Castro's Ranch - 4 miles due east of San Pablo, Calif & 4.1 miles south of Pinole, Calif.
3. Observer's Position: ground
(1. e., ground, air, control tower, etc.)
4. Name and Address of Observer: Mr Sylvester Benthon, 2655 Don Road
Richmond, Calif.
5. Occupation and/or hobbies: retired butcher
6. Attention Attracted by: Col Ekins calling his attention to the object
7. Number of Object(s) Seen: 1
8. Size of Object(s): Appeared from observer's viewpoint to be 2 inches by 1 inch by 1 inch.
9. Color of Object(s): Buff or gray in color
10. Shape (Sketch if Possible): rectangular outline with sharp corners
(See attached drawing)
11. Nature of Luminosity: N/S
(directed beam of light?)
12. Altitude of Object: Very high
(estimated)
13. Estimated Distance of Object from Observer: N/S
14. Estimated Speed of Object: faster than any plane he had ever seen
15. Time in Sight: At least 3 minutes
16. Tactics: horizontal flight
17. Sound Made by Object(s): no noise
18. Direction of Flight of Object(s): northwest then turned north
19. Apparent Construction: Seemed to be covered with a translucent material
20. Effect on Clouds: N/S
21. Exhaust Trail (Color of): Left no exhaust or trail
22. Manner of Disappearance: flew out of sight gradually fading from view.
23. Weather Conditions at Time of Sighting: N/S
24. Peculiarities Noted: Seemed like a vegetable crate flying thru the air
25. Summary of Incident: (over)
(See attached page)

AIR TECHNICAL SERVICE COMMAND

CABLE AND MESSAGE SECTION—ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

INCOMING MESSAGE

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DDO DIB 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

5D-24-4 (8 Dec 48)

1st Ind

5D-OSI/WHM/ds

SUBJECT: UNKNOWN OBJECT, PROJECT "SIGN"
Special Inquiry

5th District, OSI (IO), Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, O., 20 Dec 48

TO: Commanding General, Air Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air
Force Base, Dayton, Ohio ATTENTION: MCIAXO-3

Inclosed for your information and any action deemed appropriate
is the final report of Special Agent MATTHEW R. WILSON, District
Office, OSI, Fairfield-Suisan Air Force Base, California. With the
submission of this report, all logical investigative leads have been
covered and reported and this office considers this case closed.

1 Incl
n/c

H. B. GIBSON
Colonel, USAF
Acting District Commander

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

The Inspector General, USAF
491. District Office of Special Investigations
Fairfield-Suisun Air Force Base, California

File No. (24-3)

9 December 1948

SUBJECT: UNKNOWN ORIGIN, PROJECT "SIGN"
Special Inquiry

TO: Commanding General
Air Materiel Command
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio

1. Reference is made to Report of S/A MATTHEW R. WILSON, JR., of this Office dated 16 November 1948.

2. Attached for your further information and any action deemed appropriate are two copies of the Final Report of S/A MATTHEW R. WILSON of this Office dated 20 November 1948.

/s/ Bryden C. Moor, 1st Lt

for - JAMES L. WHEAT
Captain, USAF
District Commander

1 Incl
Rpt of S/A WILSON Jtd
CG Case 10 (top)

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS REPORT OF INVESTIGATION		FILE NO. 24-3	DATE 29 November 1948
TITLE PROJECT "SIGN"		REPORT MADE BY MATHEW R. WILSON	
		REPORT MADE AT EO #19, Fairfield-Guinn AFB	
		PERIOD 15 November 1948	
		OFFICE OF ORIGIN EO #5, Wright-Patterson AFB	
		STATUS CLOSED	
CHARACTER SPECIAL INQUIRY			
REFERENCE Ltr fr Hqs, Air Materiel Command, Reference File 00, AMC, AFM, MCIAD, dated 15 October 1948.			
SYNOPSIS Mr. SYLVESTER BENTHAM stated that on 23 September 1948 at approximately 1230 P.M., he sighted an object at a high altitude going at a very great rate of speed. Mr. BENTHAM's description as to the shape and direction and over-all appearance of this object is in direct contradiction with the statements made by Colonel HORACE BAKINS. This object was brought to BENTHAM's attention by Colonel HORACE BAKINS. - CLOSED -			
DISTRIBUTION		ACTION COPY FORWARDED TO	FILE STAMP
CG, AMC, Wright-Patterson AFB (Action copy) (Incl) 2 EO #5, Wright-Patterson AFB (Incl) 2 OSI Headquarters (Incl) 2 G-2, Sixth Army (Info) (Incl) 1 OSI, 12ND, San Francisco (Info) (Incl) 1 FBI, San Francisco (Info) (Incl) 1 File (Incl) 2		Commanding General Air Materiel Command Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Dayton, Ohio	
		APPROVED <i>Rayden E. Mann, 1st Lt</i> DONALD C. GORNEY Captain, USAF	UNDEGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS DOD DIR 5200.10 INCIDENT NO 174
UNCLASSIFIED Sub #1		DISTRICT COMMANDER	

[REDACTED]

DECLASSIFIED

2

DO #19, Case No. 24-3

DETAILS:

AT RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

1. On 15 November 1948, Mr. SYLVESTER BENTHAM, 2655 Dem Road, Richmond, California, a retired butcher, was interviewed at his home, and made the following statements in substance: On 23 September 1948 BENTHAM was visiting at Castro's Ranch and at approximately 1230 P.M. BENTHAM was talking to Colonel MORACE HAKINS when HAKINS called BENTHAM's attention to a single object in the sky. They saw the object, first, in the Northeast, moving faster than any airplane he (BENTHAM) had ever seen, and it appeared to be very high. HAKINS and BENTHAM watched the object for at least 3 minutes. The object moved toward the Northwest and in a straight line at a constant speed, finally turning to the North and fading from view. The object had a regular rectangular outline with sharp corners. It was buff or gray in color, with several darker vertical lines like ribs. The object appeared to be covered with a translucent material. It appeared like a "vegetable crate" flying through the air. The object's apparent size was approximately 2 inches by 1 inch by 1 inch. It made no noise and left no exhaust or trail. (Sketch is inclosed) Mr. BENTHAM further stated that neither he nor Colonel HAKINS was wearing glasses at the time and that he wears glasses only for reading. Mr. BENTHAM is 70 years of age.

Inclosure:

FOR COMMANDING GENERAL, AIR MATERIEL COMMAND, WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB;
 DO #5, WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB; OSI HEADQUARTERS; G-2, SIXTH ARMY;
 ONI, 12TH NAVAL DISTRICT, SAN FRANCISCO; FBI, SAN FRANCISCO; AND FILE:

Rough sketch of flying object as described by BENTHAM.

- CLOSED -