

<b>1. DATE - TIME GROUP</b> 6 Feb 53 6/0913Z	<b>2. LOCATION</b> Rosalia, Washington (20 Min S. Spokane)
<b>3. SOURCE</b> AF Pilot	<b>10. CONCLUSION</b> BALLOON
<b>4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS</b> One	
<b>5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION</b> 3-5 Min.	
<b>6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION</b> Air-Visual	<b>11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS</b>  Round white light traveled at an est speed of 150-200 knots at approx 7000' alt. Maneuvers consisted of circling several times, flashing on & off, noticeable increase in speed, and disappearing in a S direction. Object was observed by pilot of B-36 a/c.  <b>COMMENTS:</b> 1. Weather balloon probably in the area of sighting from Griger Field Weather Bureau. See incident folder for explanation. 2. Weather records show balloon released from Geiger Field not Fairchild at 0900Z. Was lost in the clouds after rising to 3,000'. Could have very easily caused the sighting.
<b>7. COURSE</b> SE	
<b>8. PHOTOS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

FORM  
FTD SEP 43 0-329 (TDE) Previous editions of this form may be used.

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Rosalia, Washington

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R.M.A.

6 February 1953

State Report 10

I. Description of Incident

A B-36 aircraft was in flight in the vicinity of Spokane, Washington, when one round white omnidirectional light was sighted at 0913Z time. The light was at an altitude of approximately 7,000 ft. on a southeast course circling and rising as it proceeded. It was visually observed for a period of three to five minutes. The B-36 made 180° descending turn toward the light which was estimated to be moving at a speed of 150 to 200 knots. The aircraft was inbound to Spokane 15 miles out and located over Rosalia, Washington.

II. Discussion of Incident

ATIC determined that a scheduled piball balloon released at 0900Z from the U.S. Weather Bureau Station at Fairchild AFB was in the immediate area of sighting. The sighting was from Rosalia which is 12.5 nautical miles S.E. of Fairchild AFB and to place a balloon in the area of the sighting winds would have to be out of the N.E. Winds aloft at 7,000 to 10,000 ft. were from 270° to 280° at 50 knots per hour. Therefore, by computation, it would take approximately 15 minutes for the balloon to be carried to Rosalia by the existing winds. Since the unidentified object was sighted 13 minutes after the balloon launch time, and the description (climbing, orbiting, balloons carry white running lights) closely parallels the maneuvers of a balloon, ATIC concludes that the object probably was the piball weather balloon. All local air fields were checked by McChord AFB and no aircraft were in the area at the time of observation other than the B-36.

III. Conclusion

Probably balloon.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DGD DIR 5200.10

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*16 Feb 53*

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McChord Flt Sv Cen  
McChord AFB, Wash

061000U Feb 53

Priority

Director of Intelligence  
Hq USAF  
Wash, D. C.

X

X

Air Technical Intelligence Center  
ATTN: ATIAA-2c  
Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

*05/0134PST  
ROSALIA, WASH*

Commanding General  
Ent AFB  
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Commander  
FS  
Wash, D. C.

Commander  
MATS  
ATTN: Intelligence Div  
Wash, D. C.

FSC 06-B-2. FLYOBRPT

- A. One round light; size unk; white; aerodynamic features unk, no exhaust trail, no observed propulsion system; speed 150 to 200 knots; no sound was heard; flew south bound under AF 2708 B-36 at aprx 7000 ft, circled several times turned south heading 182 degrees Magnetic. Light commenced flashing 1 to 2 second intervals with noticeable increase of speed and disappeared on southerly heading.
- B. Obj sighted 0134PST, 6 Feb 53, for aprx 3 to 5 minutes.

[REDACTED] 1 3

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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McChord Flt Sv Cen  
McChord AFB, Wash

061000U Feb 53

Priority

X

X

FSC 06-B-2. FLYOBRPT - [REDACTED] - CONT'D

- C. Manner of obs was visual from the air by a B-36, speed 150 to 200 knots at 7000 ft, visual obs only.
- D. Obj sighted at 47 degrees 20 minutes North, 115 degrees 30 minutes West, vicinity of Rosalia, Wash. AF 2708, B-36 inbound on south course of Spokane Range, 10 to 15 miles from sta descending fr 10,000 ft to 7000 ft, sighted obj approaching fr the North, dir of flt AF 2807 001 degrees magnetic. Dir of flt of obj aprx 182 degrees magnetic, altitude of obj aprx 7000 ft.
- E. Major Leo J Moffatt, AO 758603, 327th Bomb Sqd, Fairchild AFB, Spokane, Wash. Obs considered reliable.
- F. Weather: Fairchild AFB, Wash. measured 1200 ft broken, 9000 overcast, visibility 15 miles. Light drizzle, winds aloft 270 degrees, 50 knots, 10000 ft.
- G. No known conditions would account for sighting.
- H. Photographs: None
- I. Pilot of AF 2708 made 180 degree descending toward obj after turning toward light, the light started circling then headed south commencing to blink.

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McChord Flt Sv Cen  
McChord AFB, Wash

061000U Feb 53 [REDACTED]

Priority

FSC 06-B-2. FLYORRPT - [REDACTED] - CONT'D

- J. A check with all agencies in this area indicates no other acft should have been in that vicinity.
- K. Pilot of AF 2708 contacted at Fairchild AFB Operations.

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

[REDACTED] 3 3

JOHN S BATTIE, Major, USAF

FSC

5206

Comdg

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USA-MATS

IR-133-53

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Unidentified Flying Object Sighted Near Spokane, Washington

State of Washington, USA

Flight Service, MATS, 3800 Newark Street, N. W., Washington 25, D. C.

12 February 1953

6 February 1953

B-2

Frank M. Allen, Lt Colonel, USAF

Major Leo J. Moffatt, A0758603

Teletype FLYORRPT 061800Z February by McChord Flight Service Center

B-36 number AF 2708 was in flight in the vicinity of Spokane, Washington, 6 February 1953, when one round white light was sighted, approaching AF 2708 from the North. The light was at an altitude of approximately 7,000 feet, on a south bound course, when it passed AF 2708, AF 2708 made a descending 180° turn toward the light, which was moving at about 150 to 200 knots. The light circled several times, then turned to a course of approximately 182° magnetic, began to flash at one to two second intervals, its speed increased noticeably, and it disappeared on a Southerly course.

The light was sighted at 0134PST, by Major Leo J. Moffatt, A0758603, 327th Bombardment Squadron, Fairchild Air Force Base, Spokane, Washington, from aboard AF 2708, and was visually observed for approximately three to five minutes. AF 2708 was inbound, approximately 10 to 15 miles out on the South leg of the Spokane radio range (inbound course 1° magnetic), at the time of the sighting, descending from 10,000 to 7,000 feet. During sighting aircraft turned to proceed toward Rosalia, Washington (47°20'N, 117°30'W).

Weather report for Fairchild Air Force Base at time of sighting: Ceiling measured 1,200 feet, overcast above at 9,000 feet, visibility 15 miles, light drizzle, and wind at 10,000 feet above the surface from 270° at 50 knots.

Check of all area agencies revealed no aircraft which should have been in the area. No known conditions would account for the sighting.

Wind can't change 180° within 3,000 ft. approx:

0134 PST  
8  
0934 Z

SP FEB 1953 10 08

FRANK M. ALLEN  
Lt Colonel, USAF  
Intelligence Officer

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[REDACTED]

Flight Service, MATS  
3800 Newark Street, N. W.  
Washington 25, D. C.

IR-133-53

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The following teletype report was received from McChord Flight Service Center, McChord Air Force Base, Tacoma, Washington:

FSC 06-B-2. FLYORRPT ATTN: ATIAA-2C at Wright-Patterson AFB, ATTN: Intelligence Division at Washington D. C.

A. One round light: size unknown: white: aerodynamic features unknown, no exhaust trail, no observed propulsion system: speed 150 to 200 knots: no sound was heard: flew south bound under AF 2708 B-36 at approximately 7,000 feet, circled several times, turned south heading 182° magnetic. Light commenced flashing 1 to 2 second intervals with noticeable increase of speed and disappeared on southerly heading.

B. Object sighted 0134PST, 6 February 1953, for approximately 3 to 5 minutes.

C. Manner of observation was visual from the air by a B-36, speed 150 to 200 knots at 7,000 feet, visual observation only.

D. Object sighted at 47° 20 minutes north, 115° 30 minutes west, vicinity of Rosalia, Washington. AF 2708, B-36 inbound on south course of Spokane Range, 10 to 15 miles from station descending from 10,000 feet to 7,000 feet, sighted object approaching from the north, direction of flight AF 2807 00° magnetic. Direction of flight of object approximately 182° magnetic, altitude of object approximately 7,000 feet.

E. Major Leo J. Hoffatt, A0758603, 327th Bombardment Squadron, Fairchild Air Force Base, Spokane, Washington. Observation considered reliable.

F. Weather: Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington measured 1,200 feet broken, 9,000 overcast, visibility 15 miles. Light drizzle, winds aloft 270°, 50 knots, 10,000 feet.

G. No known conditions would account for sighting.

H. Photographs: None.

I. Pilot of AF 2708 made 180° descending toward object after turning toward light, the light started circling then headed south commencing to blink.

J. A check with all agencies in this area indicates no other aircraft should have been in that vicinity.

K. Pilot of AF 2708 contacted at Fairchild Air Force Base Operations.

06/1945Z Feb JWPDM

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Flight Service, MATS  
3800 Newark Street, N. W.  
Washington 25, D. C.

IR-133-53

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Comments of Preparing Officer:

1. Sighting position of  $47^{\circ}21'N$ ,  $115^{\circ}30'W$  indicated by paragraph D of the teletype message is apparently in error, as this position is approximately 90 statute miles from position indicated by South leg of Spokane radio range and Rosalia, Washington. This position has been resolved to  $47^{\circ}21'N$ ,  $117^{\circ}30'W$ .
2. Crew position of Major Moffatt, and/or position in AF 2708 at time of sighting, was not indicated.
3. Direction, number, and size of circles by the light, and whether at constant altitude, was not indicated.
4. No variation in intensity of the light, between approach and departure, or during circling, was reported. This indicates that the light was horizontally omnidirectional, instead of focussed like a landing light or jet exhaust glow. It is also noted that although AF 2708 was apparently constantly descending during the sighting, no change in light intensity was caused by this descent. This could indicate vertical omnidirectional light qualities.
5. Manner of disappearance of the light was not reported (whether extinguished, or diminished by distance) but message indicates that it faded due to distance.
6. The area in which sighting occurred is in an Air Defense Identification Zone, and any aircraft or flying objects should have been under radar surveillance. Positive statement that radar sites had not observed the incident is not included.
7. Although teletype message indicates that no propulsion system was observed, the correlation between flashing of the light and its increase in speed could indicate action of a propulsive system.

52 FEB 1953 10 08 N

[REDACTED]

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### *Weather Balloons and Saucers*

In the early years of the saucer era balloons accounted for some 25 percent of the unidentified flying objects reported to ATIC. The pattern of these sightings is unmistakable, and the identity of balloon and UFO is often certain—as certain as any evidence can be. Nevertheless many such identifications are resolutely rejected by the saucer enthusiasts. It would be pointless to discuss all the UFO reports of this class, but we can summarize a few of the most famous. Major Keyhoe, a leading proponent of the interplanetary hypothesis, describes such a sighting:

*UFOs*  
"On February 6, near Rosalia, Washington, a saucer had circled a B-36 bomber. During this maneuver the pilot saw a white light blink at two-second intervals. Before he had time to blink his own light in answer, the machine swiftly turned south and disappeared."  
[5, p. 240]

No evidence exists that the light was either a "saucer" or a "machine"; a great deal of evidence exists that it was a balloon. Investigators from ATIC determined the following facts:

At 1:13 A.M. on February 6, 1953, the pilot of a B-36 plane bound for Spokane, Washington, was near Rosalia when he sighted a round white light below him, circling and rising at a speed estimated at 150 to 200 knots as it proceeded on a southeast course. The B-36 made an 18-degree descending turn toward the light, which was in view for a period of three to five minutes, but the pilot could not identify it.

At 1 A.M., thirteen minutes before the sighting, the United States Weather Bureau station at Fairchild Air Force Base had released a pilot balloon. Winds aloft at altitudes of 7000 to 10,000 feet were from the northwest with a speed of about fifty knots. Computations showed that the existing winds would have carried the balloon to the southeast, and it would have been over Rosalia, which is 12.5 nautical miles southeast of Fairchild Air Force Base, in about fifteen minutes. The plane sighted the unknown near Rosalia thirteen minutes after the launching. The balloon carried white running lights which accounted for the "blinking" described, and the circling climb of the UFO is typical of a balloon's course. Thus all the evidence supports ATIC's conclusion that the UFO was a weather balloon. [2]

6 February 1953 - Rosalia, Washington B-36 Sighting Analysis:

Piballoon released at 0900Z from U.S. weather bureau station at ~~Fairchild AFB~~. Track of balloon ESE.

*Geiger Field*

Sighting was from over Rosalia 12.5 nautical miles SE of Fairchild. Wind at 10,000' was from approximately 270° to 280° blowing SE at 50 knots per hour.

$$\frac{60 \text{ minutes}}{50 \text{ nautical miles}} = \frac{X \text{ min}}{12.5 \text{ N.M.}} = 15$$

or the balloon would have covered the 12.5 nautical miles in 15 minutes.

Which means that the piballoon released at ~~Fairchild AFB~~ *Geiger Field* would have taken approximately 15 minutes to drift to the area of sighting; since the unknown object was sighted at 0913Z and by taking into account the winds aloft, it can be deduced that the object sighted by the B-36 and the piballoon are probably the same object.

The time difference of 2 minutes can be ignored in that intangible factors such as different wind speeds at various altitudes ~~could~~ *cause the difference.*

*R. Olson 114.*

Note:

Ascension rate of a 30 gram standard 30 inch diameter piballoon is 500 to 600 ft per minute;

thus

$$\begin{array}{r} 550 \text{ ft} \\ 15 \text{ minutes} \\ \hline 2750 \\ 550 \\ \hline 8250 \text{ ft} \end{array}$$

the piballoon would be at the approximate level (11,000 ft) of the sighting B-36 at 0913Z.



