

Testimony of Sgt. Chuck Sorrells, US Air Force (ret.) December 2000

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Chuck Sorrells is a career Air Force military man who was at Edwards Air Force Base in 1965 when not one, but at least seven UFOs appeared over Edwards Air Force Base airspace, moving in extraordinary fashion at enormous speeds, making right-hand turns and other maneuvers which no known aircraft was capable of at the time. They appeared on multiple radars, were seen visually by several people, and a special UFO officer scrambled and authorized a jet to intercept these objects. This event lasted for five or six hours. An edited transcript of the audio tape of the event follows his testimony.

CS: Sgt. Chuck Sorrells                      SG: Dr. Steven Greer

CS: My name is Chuck Sorrells. I went into the Air Force in 1954 and retired in 1974. I was a Tech Sergeant. Most of the time I was an Air Traffic Controller. I've been at Edwards Air Force Base in California, and in Japan, Thailand, Alaska, and several places in the states.

This event happened October the 7th of 1965 at Edwards Air Force Base. It was on a midnight shift and I was the Air Traffic Controller on duty in the tower. At about 1:30 or so in the morning, I noticed this real bright light to the east of my tower. It was a light green and it had a red light underneath it. The red light was a pulsating type light, and it had a white light on top that just glowed. It was very bright and quite large. I observed it for quite a while, because there wasn't any aircraft in the area at the time. I called the dispatcher down at the base operations and the weatherman that was on duty that night (the forecaster), and got them all to go outside and take a look. I had one of the guys from the interceptor detachment that was on the base look also, and I had the captain down there look. We talked about it for a while, and the RAP-CON people (that's radar people on the base) didn't have any aircraft in the area at the time.

We called it down to the Air Defense people at Los Angeles defense sector. The director down there called around to his sites, and at one point in time they had at least four different radar sites that were getting radar returns on it. [The UFOs] were getting seen at a couple of other towers, like George Tower, and there were a couple of other places that were seeing them. So, there were several people on the ground looking at these UFOs, and about four radar sites [looking at them]. This [went] back and forth and back and forth for two or three hours. They finally decided to scramble an aircraft on it, to go up and take a look at it. This was coordinated with the other, higher headquarters, and I think NORAD was involved.

The jet [went] up to take a look at it, and they tried to run him in to intercept these targets. At the very beginning, I had one—the big, large light. Some time later, it was just sitting there, mostly stationary, but it was too close to the horizon to be a star or anything like that. It was down below the mountains [and] the hills and stuff, so it wasn't a star, [and] I couldn't correlate for what it could possibly be. Then, all of a sudden, there [were] three more objects, and they had similar characteristics as far as the lighting [was] concerned. But these three stayed together. They stayed in a formation and stayed together, and then moved down to the south of me and sat there, stationary, for a while. A little later on, three more appeared], but these three [were] individual ones. They would fly individually around and go north, south, east, west—a lot of maneuvers. At this point I had seven of them at one time. This is when they decided to scramble the jet interceptor. It was getting way up in the early morning hours by that time.

They were having no luck intercepting these UFOs. They kept asking me, in the tower, where was this object in relation to the airplane? The only thing I could do was line him up with my runway, where I knew what heading he was on in relation to where I was. Then, as soon as he'd get to the end of the runway, I'd tell him to turn to a certain heading and head straight forward. Well, about three different times that night, he'd say "contact", and that "contact" means he had contact with something on his radar in the cockpit of the aircraft. What it was, we don't know to this day. But they were real.

At one point in time the interceptor was up to 40,000 feet. When he went near the object, the object just rose real fast, real sudden, straight up, and he just went under it. There's a place on the tape where the Director says, "How's he looking, tower?" And I said, he's low. He [replied], "Well, he's at 40,000 feet", and I said, I don't care—he's still low.

*[The tape he refers to is an audiotape of the actual conversations of this hours-long encounter. We have this tape. Refer to the transcript of this tape below. SG]*

That UFO just went way high. They searched on their radar, the height finders, and everything for it. I highly suspect it was above their radars at that point.

SG: How high would that be?

CS: Probably 100,000 feet or something like that. 80,000 to 100,000 feet was probably their capability back in those days.

The interceptor did have contact about three different times, and then he'd lose it. These objects played around there for the remainder of my shift. About daylight, the UFOs started getting higher and higher and higher in the atmosphere. By the time it was light enough that you wouldn't see the rest of the stars, they were gone too—they just disappeared into the atmosphere.

I know craft of all types, so I know a lot of things this was not. I know it was not a helicopter. I know it was not an airplane. I know it was not a balloon—a weather balloon or any other type of balloon. I know it was no known aircraft or flying object that we know of today, or at that time. And it wasn't a laser show. It wasn't anything like that, but they could move real fast. They could be to the east of my field, and then in just a short period of time they could be to the west. They could probably go 30-40 miles in the time you could snap your fingers twice. I mean, just fast! And they could rise—just go straight up. It seemed like they could do that instantaneously. At some points they would hover and just sit for a long period of time—then they would move. The smaller three individual ones had a lot more movement than the other ones. The original very large UFO didn't move all that much. After a couple of hours, though, it moved a little bit from the east, down a little bit toward the south, and then moved back toward the east a little bit again—like that. But it didn't make any sudden, fast movements until they tried to run an intercept on it, and then it went straight up.

The three that were flying around individually would dart north, south, east, [and] west, and they were the ones that really went fast. They were the ones that were actually nearer to the base and nearer to the ground. I judged that their altitude would be around 2,000 feet or less at times. I know that we were getting radar cuts on them. I'd find a cut anywhere from 4,000 to 10,000 [or] 11,000 feet. So, that's pretty low to the surface.

These UFOs had to be something that would return a radar signal, and that had to be something solid and metal. Radar is a very simple thing: it's a radio beam that hits something, bounces off something, and comes back. So, it had to be something the radar would bounce off, and it wouldn't bounce off a rubber balloon or anything like that. It would have to be something with a metallic nature that would cause it to bounce back and make an indication on your radar screen.

SG: Can you estimate the speed of these objects?

CS: It would have to be in the thousands of miles per hour—up in that area, speed wise. These things would have to be very, very fast. The radar people were having a hard time determining [their] speed because they'd be in one place and they'd sit for a little while, and then they'd move real fast. By the time the radar screen got around to finding them, the UFO was already at another location. It was very difficult to get any kind of a speed on them. You could be watching one in the east, and if you looked around for a little bit, if your attention was diverted someplace else for just a minute, you'd look back and he'd be over in the west. They could make quick turns and had all sorts of maneuverability that we didn't know anything about at the time. It was a very strange evening.

These events happened over at least a four-hour timeframe. In those days, every base had what they called a UFO officer—an unidentified flying object officer. We had one, and he was the guy that actually gave the order to take a look at this thing. The Air Defense Director for the Los Angeles defense sector and the radar controllers wanted to take a look at it, but they had to get his say-so before they could go ahead and do it legally.

At that point in time at Edwards Air Force Base, we had a rocket site. They were experimenting with a whole lot of different fuel combinations, and they were doing a lot of rocket burns over there just to see what thrust they could get. From my standpoint, that looked like the area where this huge UFO was just sitting—just about over that rocket site.

The F-106 that they did scramble that night was what they call a cold bird. It wasn't armed in any way.

SG: During your Air Force career, did you hear of other people having these types of encounters with UFOs?

CS: Yes, there were. I've heard guys talk about seeing things like that, but they wouldn't necessarily come forward and say what they had seen, because they didn't want the stigma attached to them that they were crazy or they were seeing things. Or they didn't want the ribbing that they were going to get from their buddies.

The tape that is in existence now of the event that night is made up of radio patches and telephone patches that were recorded at the various radar sites that were involved. There would be another tape as well, someplace, from the tower that I was in, because everything that was going on in the tower [was] recorded.

The [largest number of] objects that I saw at any one time was seven. There was one large one, and then there [were] three smaller ones with the same type characteristics, but these three kind of stayed together. At a certain point after this, there were three other ones that were flying around individually, but at one point, I had as many as seven, visually, at one time. From hearing the tapes now, I hear that there might have been as many as 11 in the area that night.

I can't tell you what [they were], but I can tell you a lot of things [they weren't]. [There isn't] anything that we know of today that has those types of characteristics—could do the maneuvers and do the speed, with no sound. At some points, they were close enough to the tower that if it had been a jet or something, I would have heard the sound from it. I wish I knew what they were...

*[This extremely important case involves a seasoned Air Force Air Traffic Controller, an official "UFO officer", 4 separate radar stations, lock-on from on-board radar on a jet interceptor, many hours, and many objects over several hours. The debunkers and those who would ridicule the UFO matter need to be able to explain away all of these elements—and the voice tape of the actual event. The only conclusion is the obvious one: these UFOs were real and were not swamp gas, ball lightning, hallucinations, or any of the other absurd explanations offered by academia and officialdom for these events. SG]*