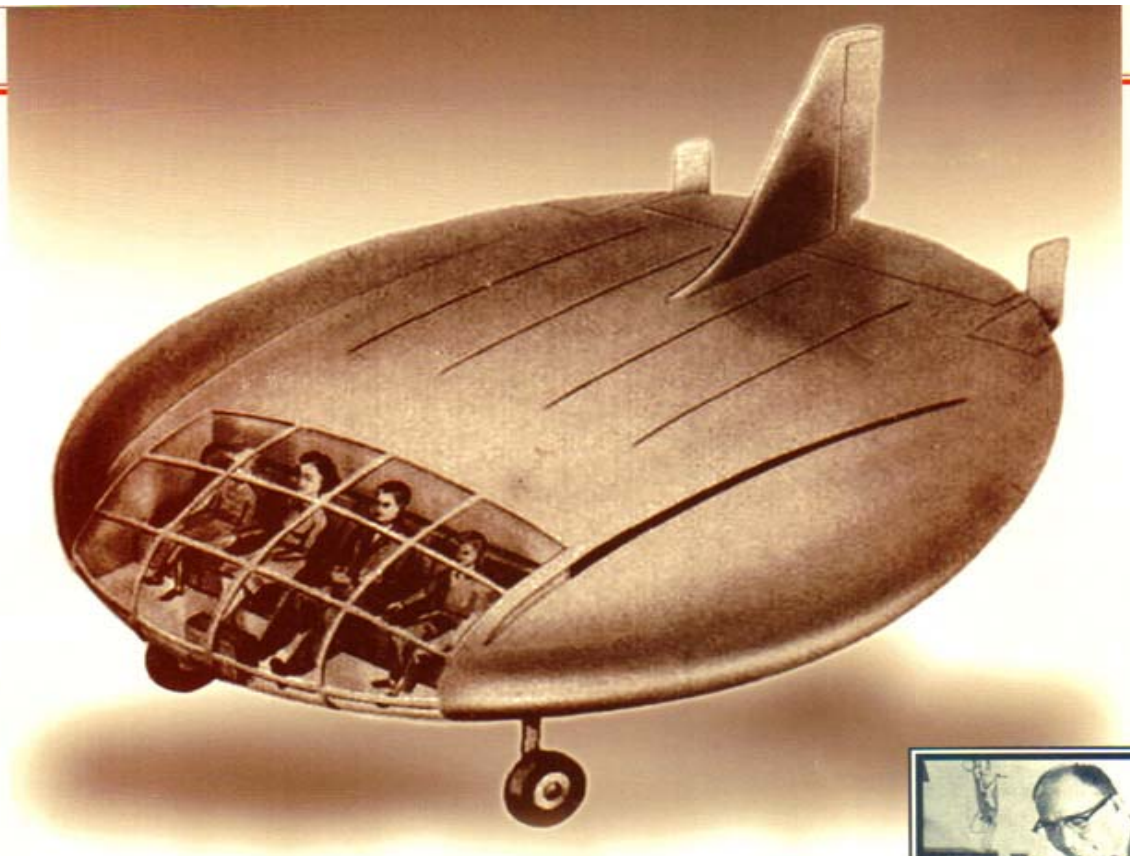

ALFRED LOEDING

& THE GREAT FLYING SAUCER WAVE OF 1947

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& Wendy A. Connors

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Special Preface

We must be cautious of the hubris of the present. When UFOs first appeared in numbers during the great flying saucer wave of 1947, few people made the jump to an extraterrestrial hypothesis. The subject of this book, Alfred Loedding, is significant because he did eventually lean toward that assumption. Because he played such an instrumental role in the first official Air Force investigation into the phenomena, it is important to analyze the progression of his theories.

For the best part of the summer of 1947 most serious minds studying the flying disc mystery, like Alfred Loedding, considered that a domestic secret project might account for the sightings. After eliminating that possibility, the "foreign origin" option was exhaustively explored. By 1948 foreign origin became a catch word for visitors from outer space, but in 1947 it meant only one thing—Russians. In fact, worries that the Soviet Union may have gleaned a Nazi super weapon at the end of the Second World War remained in the minds of Air Force officials up through 1952. But by late 1947 some aeronautical engineers, like Alfred Loedding, began to consider that "flying saucers" may represent intelligently controlled machines from another world. Why? What was the mind set in 1947 that could rationalize such a conclusion? What was his perspective? Where was the proof?

It is very difficult with our 1998 view of popular culture to consider a time when there was no extensive set of preconceptions on extraterrestrial life. Without a Steven Spielberg to help us dream, or a Star Wars trilogy and a thousand other such productions dating back to 1949, we would not have the present-day mind set that we do. Yet, that is not to say there was not already some basis for the consideration of alien visitation.

The best way for us to understand one early perspective is to look at Halloween night 1938. During that famous evening the dramatic actor Orson Welles produced and narrated a radio drama based on H.G. Wells' book, The War of the Worlds. Like the famous account of a Martian invasion, the radio play was a frightening success. Unfortunately for many East Coast listeners, it seemed so real that thousands flew into a panicked frenzy—actually believing aliens were landing in Grovers Mill, New Jersey. The nation was certainly in a vulnerable state of paranoia due to the brewing storm clouds in Europe. The Second World War would begin just one year later on September 1st and Americans knew that they would soon be impacted by Hitler's madness.

Many authors have used the panic caused by Orson Welles' radio drama as a foretelling explanation for later UFO sightings. In other words, a belief has arisen that the radio drama planted a seed in the public's mind—a self-fulfilling prophecy for extraterrestrial visitation. The historian, however, will realize the concept of extraterrestrial life had already been firmly ingrained in the public's mind since 1894 when Percival Lowell founded the Lowell Observatory near Flagstaff, Arizona.

Lowell believed he saw signs through his huge telescope of canals on the Martian landscape -- proving to him the existence of intelligent life there. Some scientists agreed while others were skeptical, but until the first Mars probes of the 1960s and 1970s showed just how lifeless the planet's surface actually was, many people kept an open mind about the possibility. UFOs, never the less, continued to be seen after we realized the near planets were uninhabited. Why?

UFOs are just that, unidentified objects in the atmosphere. Most of these turn out to be identified or IFOs—always representing something of physical reality regardless of what they turn out to be. For years debunkers have tried to use science fiction stories as an impetus behind UFO reports. But the stimulus for the sightings is real, not imagined. Orson Welles had no more responsibility than Percival Lowell for UFOs because as Alfred Loedding finally realized, whatever they represent, they are a real phenomena. True, no proof has surfaced to tell us what the UFO phenomenon represents. The continuing record of sightings detailed in this book will demonstrate clues to its anomalous

nature just as it did to Loedding. In the case of UFOs it seems the truth may be very extraordinary. That, at any rate, is what Loedding came to suggest. And for that reason it is perhaps best to remember the words of the late Dr. Carl Sagan who stressed that finding such extraordinary truths always requires extraordinary evidence. Unfortunately, if Loedding ever did come across conclusive evidence, it has not yet been discovered. As a result, this book studies the events of 1947 that we do know and presents them just as Alfred Loedding lived them.

We can not disavow that Loedding might have had some cultural preconceptions in the back of his mind. He did draft a formal conclusion to Air Force officials in mid 1948, stating that flying discs may represent extraterrestrial visitation. But, he based his famous Estimate Of The Situation draft on fact, not fiction. It was, however, rejected in part due to fears of generating another War of the Worlds fiction-like panic.

Beyond that no one can say if popular culture tainted the history of man's modern interpretation of UFO sightings. The point for the sake of objectivity had to be presented. Following is presented the story of Alfred Loedding and the great flying saucer wave of 1947.

Introduction

The morning of July 4th, 1947, at 3733 Shroyer Road Dayton, Ohio, began very peacefully. An initially hazy dawn yielded to a blue sky and a sunny but muggy day of eighty-one degrees. With the after effects of the Second World War still being felt, the nation welcomed the long and bright three-day holiday despite the heat. It felt strange, however, for Alfred Christian Loedding not to be at work on a Friday morning. Loedding was a civilian aeronautical engineer at the well known Army Air Force labs just down the road at Wright Field. He was also a workaholic who lived and breathed aviation. Yet for all his talents, relaxing at home was not one of them.

His son, Donald, remembers his father always doing something when at the house. So maybe that morning he was hard at work cleaning and tuning his prized 1946 Buick. Maybe he was down in the basement working on a host of experiments that over the years made him one of America's first Army-employed engineers to study rocketry and jet propulsion. Alfred preferred to be designing away in his cellar as to be anywhere else.

His home-spun research did pay off over the years, giving him the experience needed to start the first jet propulsion division at Wright Labs and file a whole host of patents. One of these even included a design of a low aspect ratio (flying wing) aircraft — another one of Alfred's specialties.

It is, in fact, because of his cutting-edge innovative brilliance that we would like to know Alfred's exact thoughts. Undoubtedly sometime during that Independence holiday he stopped to pay close attention to the news. Since June 24th there had been a small number of unique stories in the press concerning sightings of unidentifiable flying objects.

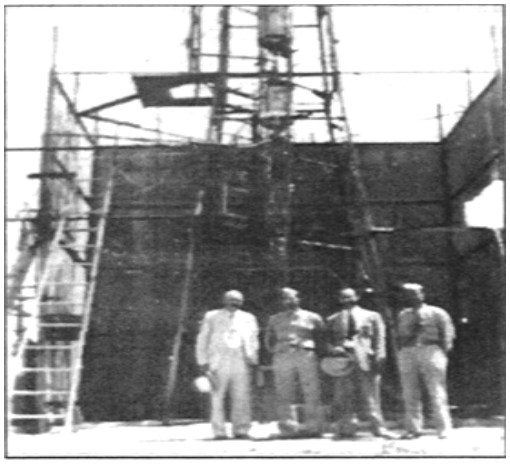
At the time these were coined "flying discs" or "saucers" after private pilot Kenneth Arnold likened the nine objects he saw over the Cascade Mountains to "saucers skipping across the water." No one then used the phrase UFO so "saucers and discs" became the catch words. But it was not until that Independence day weekend that the sightings dramatically increased in intensity and started to dominate news headlines. West Coast newspapers were the first to detail the stories, although, by Sunday of that weekend even the New York Times had a page-one feature on the discs and would do so for the next three days.

Alfred Loedding may have heard accounts of the latest sightings on the

WNBC Bob Smith morning radio news show that Friday at 9:00 A.M. By Saturday he could have caught some Midwest stories in print. Although when he began hearing or reading the accounts, it is unlikely that he was surprised. Well, perhaps surprised, but certainly not unprepared.

Loedding, like a number of people in the years prior to the famous Arnold account, had observed similar phenomena themselves. It was back in 1932 that Loedding, together with his wife Marion, saw something that they never could explain. A Dayton, Ohio, news article detailed their incident as follows:

> **In October, 1932, the couple saw such an object one evening while driving near Plainsboro, N.J., he reported.**
>
> **At first they thought an aircraft was crashing nearby, Loedding said. Then the craft leveled off and flashed away at high speed, emitting a changing bluish-green light. On reaching his home, he immediately sketched the object from memory. Later, Loedding said former New York congressman L.G. Clemente reported he had seen such an object at about the same time. Loedding estimated the object he and his wife had seen was 100 feet in diameter and 500 to 600 feet high. He said the object gave off a weird light "like looking at a fire-fly" and appeared to change shape.**
>
> **He said he had seen nothing of a similar nature since.** 1

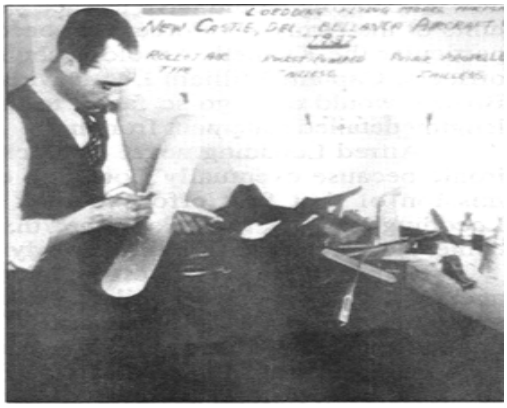


Alfred Loedding pictured second from the right with Dr. Goddard on far left at his testing sight in Roswell, New Mexico, during 1941.

Because he did not reveal that story until 1957, it is impossible to know his thoughts during that first rash of disc sightings. Yet it would be fun to have read the mind of this brilliant engineer who had graduated the Daniel Guggenheim School of Aeronautics back in 1930. This is especially important because Alfred had been privately designing flying wing-shaped aircraft (then termed low aspect ratio) and lecturing about the concept with a slide show since his 1932 sighting. Some of these concepts by 1947 were translated into small working models, looking more like flying saucers than flying wings.

He certainly knew aviation, having held a key position with the Bellanca family in their famous aircraft company before coming to work for Wright Labs in 1938. At Wright Labs he established the first jet propulsion division and became the resident expert on rocketry. Loedding became the base's key contact with rocket pioneer Robert H. Goddard. 2 However, having been periodically utilized from his T-3 engineering section by the base's T-2 intelligence branch, it is fair to speculate that

Loedding might have had some hint of the more spectacular saucer stories before he returned to work on Monday, July 7th.



Loedding at Bellanca aircraft company circa 1937.

He may have even been intrigued by the July 6th Sunday New York Times exclusive on the recent deployment of two reactivated B-29 bomber groups to the West Coast—and how their appearance coincided in place and time with many of the disc sightings. Being a dedicated German Catholic he would have digested these stories after church on Sunday. And certainly that last day of the long weekend he would have been mulling over all he had learned to date.

Up to this time the military had only issued a few and very contradictory statements on the incidents. Loedding would have surely been aware of these because he knew and worked for many key figures in the Army Air Force. On July 3rd, for example, Army Major Paul Gaynor stated that a preliminary investigation had been dropped for lack of evidence. Then that same day Boise Evening Statesman reporter Dave Johnson got a different slant from the commander of the Air Materiel Command, Lieutenant General Nathan F. Twining. Twining, who had the T-2 Army Air Force Intelligence group under his command, commented that officials were indeed looking into the matter of flying discs. He stated that even the top secret research conducted at the aviation labs at Wright Field had not produced technology comparable to that being observed. Continuing, he added that a "reputable scientist" had seen one of the discs and that his report is being studied.

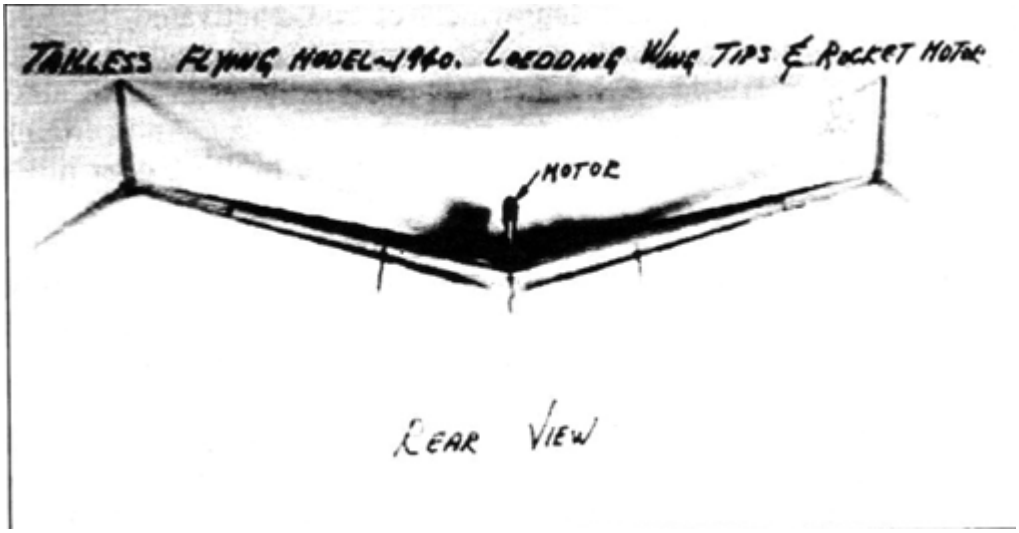
6 Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

Loedding would have learned shortly following that weekend that other units of the Army Air Force were becoming interested in the sightings and in particular the Kenneth Arnold account. Fourth Army Air Force Intelligence officers, Captain William Lee Davidson and First Lieutenant Frank Mercer Brown, would even go so far as to interview Arnold for six hours, taking a lengthy detailed statement from him.

Alfred Loedding never had a chance to meet Brown or Davidson. It is ironic because eventually Loedding ended up inheriting and expanding the mission of that first effort to look into disc sightings. But by the time Loedding got back to work on the 7th, he would have had no idea what was to come. He may, however, have already started to be absorbed by the events.

It must have been shortly after driving onto Wright Field that morning and parking in front of building 11A that he caught the first hint of the mounting excitement and concern. Walking up to his office in room 252 in the overcrowded pre-war building that had been converted from an aviation museum—he heard the scuttle butt. The Independence holiday had indeed accounted for a huge

number of sightings. The term "flying saucers" had arrived and was here to stay.



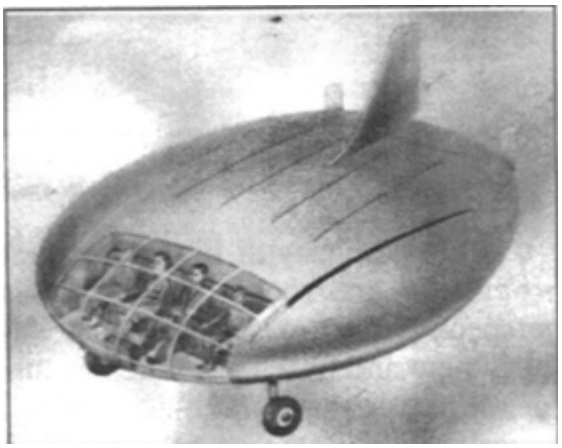
A model of one of Loedding's flying wing designs circa 1940.

1. Dayton (Ohio) Journal, 9 August 1957.
2. Milton Lehman, This High Man, The Life of Robert H. Goddard (New York: Farrar, Straus and Company, 1963), pp. 309,319-320.

Chapter One
The
Famous Flying Saucers

In the summer of 1947 the phrase "flying saucer" entered the vocabulary of popular American culture. Before this period there were some rare and unverifiable stories of disc-shaped aircraft seen around the world, but only a few significant reports of any kind came to light after a series of so-called "phantom" airship" sightings in America around 1886 and 1887. The truly notable incidents, although not really describing saucers, centered around the "foo-fighter" of World War II and mysterious "ghost rockets" over Sweden in 1946. By 1947, the famous saucers had arrived and were here to stay.

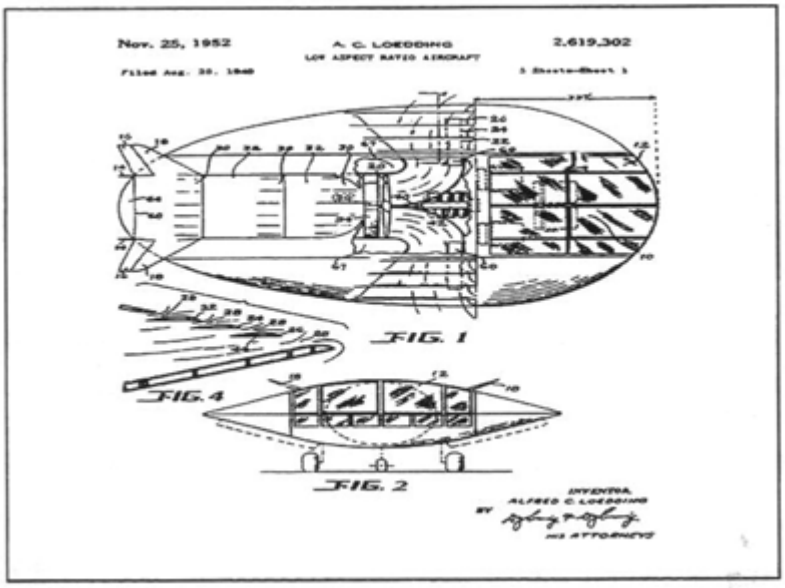
When the sightings hit the headlines, they almost exclusively described flying objects in the shape of discs. Actually, when the primary accounts of many of these reports are studied, the researcher reads stories more descriptive of Alfred Loedding's favorite obsession—flying wings or delta and swept-wing shaped aircraft. Such aerodynamic forms did emerge at the end of World War II and without doubt generated numerous flying saucer reports.



An artist's conception of one of the saucer-shaped aircraft that Loedding designed during this period.

For that reason it is understandable why Alfred Loedding became a chief player in the drama surrounding the early history of UFO sightings. By this period he was often seen running between the buildings at Wright Labs carrying his working models of an all-wing lifting body airfoil. Loedding hoped his design would eventually prove to be the ideal concept for light private aircraft. He envisaged a day when small flying airfoils would even

replace the family car. [1] Today we may laugh at his planned application for such a design, but at the time Loedding was justly respected for his interest in the concept of a saucer-shaped airfoil. This became all the more relevant by late June 1947 when "real" flying saucers were being seen in the skies of America. No one knew what they represented, but many were seeking answers from American scientific experts. Alfred Loedding thus entered the flying disc mystery of the great UFO wave of 1947.



Pictured above are actual blueprints of a saucer-shaped aircraft designed and patented by Alfred Loedding.

Loedding, with his background in radical aeronautics as well as jet propulsion and rocket design was a logical resource to utilize, as little perspective then existed for what was being seen. Jets, of course, were still fairly new and posed a possible solution to the mystery. The German jet and rocket planes that came into service at the tail end of the war startled even experienced pilots not only for their swept-wing design but also for the absence of a propeller. Those German aircraft along with the British Meteor and American P-80 jet fighters had speeds exceeding 500 miles per hour. Such speeds, even two years after the war, still attracted great attention. But jets could account for only a few of the many saucer sightings that summer—which often involved velocities accurately calculated by qualified observers at greater than 1,000 miles per hour.

Neither could other new aircraft designs answer all the questions raised by the disc mystery despite the fact that both the Germans and Allies had experimented with the flying wing concept. The Northrop company, for

example, tested large flying wing bomber designs in 1947 known as the XB-35 and YB-49 prototypes, but their flights were always documented. Despite many sensational stories on the subject, the well known Horten brothers who designed flying wing aircraft in wartime Germany never saw their machines attain practical use. Nor did the Soviet Union ever utilize the radical Horten airfoil concept.

Loedding with one of his many innovative aircraft test models.

Balloons, although a much lower level of technology, generated other reports as scientists began using this old invention by the thousands to conduct weather and cosmic ray studies of the stratosphere in the 1940's. The early balloons were made from neoprene which would turn smoky gray or black in the sunlight—just as some witnesses of suspected flying saucer events described seeing. The military and their civilian contractors also used balloons for a whole host of research and intelligence gathering duties. By July of 1947 many of these were no longer small gas bags, but huge silver (and sometimes clear) plastic envelopes made from polyethylene. These f would appear cone-shaped before their helium gas expanded and rounded out their internal volume at high altitude.

Many times these and the older, neoprene balloons were tied together in clusters which could resemble formations of discs. Some of these larger polyethylene balloons could be seen by the naked eye at altitudes as high as 60,000 feet. Many saucer sightings, especially after a lot of news play on the subject, were undoubtedly the result of balloon launches. Perhaps as many as seventy percent of all early UFO sightings are attributed to balloons. Yet, balloons cannot explain away, accounts of flying-wings or discs with extraordinary flight characteristics. Loedding soon learned this as he talked to balloon experts who had disc sightings themselves.

The disc reports came from all over North America and around the world in 1947. Many were seen traveling at tremendous speeds, flying extremely high, sometimes hovering, and on numerous occasions making controlled changes in their flight path. These cases remain a mystery because

missiles of the day were only being tested in specific designated areas and had little endurance or range. The next generation of rockets like Sputnik, that were capable of intercontinental flight or earth orbit, were still a decade away. Aircraft, on the other hand, had not yet attained reliable means of reaching supersonic speeds, altitudes above 40,000 feet, or developed methods to hover. Because a large percentage of the first disc sightings occurred during daylight hours, astronomical events are difficult to associate with any but a few of the reports. Thus, 1947 has become a very important period to study. Accounts from reputable witnesses during the time are also significant because they had not yet had the opportunity to have their observations tainted by a vast body of previously published UFO lore.

The military started a formal UFO investigation by the end of 1947, although, as early as July Army Air Force and Naval Intelligence as well as the FBI had studied some of the more well publicized reports. Loedding was associated with investigations out of Wright Field by July 9th, yet few records remain of this work. As in later waves, however, only a small percentage of the total number of sightings were reported to authorities. Less than five percent of the 1947 incidents were even indexed in military files.[2] Many of those can be found in the National Archives' holdings of USAF Project Blue Book files.[3] Some paperwork dealing with UFOs are also located at the Air Force Historical Center at Maxwell Air Force Base near Montgomery, Alabama, which primarily deal with records of the Fourth Air Force. Nine hundred and ten pages of lost Air Force documents from the late 1940s have also come to light from the National Records Center in St. Louis Missouri—via Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Microfilms of early intelligence files have surfaced as well but are now held in private hands although are becoming available for sale to researchers. Recently released FBI files provide a very good insight into some of the early investigations too. Despite dedicated efforts to locate Naval records containing UFO cases by historian and researcher Jan Aldrich, these files are in large part still missing.

Another very good source dealing with 1947 comes from a book by Ted Bloecher entitled Report on the UFO Wave of 1947. In his work Bloecher surveyed 853 North American newspaper accounts of flying saucer sightings. Regrettably, many of those stories were not taken seriously by the newspapers themselves and lack details. In fact, after some news play on the subject a great deal of silliness arose in the press. Often it becomes hard to weed out the serious stories from that madness. Because most accounts were not followed up on at the time, the articles remain as the only documentation to many of the early UFO sightings.

The authors are indebted to the help of Jan Aldrich for a number of the news accounts to follow.

Mr. Aldrich is engaged in a compilation known as Project 1947 that significantly expands on Bloecher's work. Aldrich has screened over 3,200 North American newspapers and others from all over the world for UFO reports. Aldrich's recent book, Project 1947: A Preliminary Report On The 1947 UFO Sighting Wave, is by far the most extensively researched publication available on the period. Today his work continues, searching out UFO accounts long lost in over 11,000 newspapers that were in print in the United States alone in 1947. When reading those accounts it is important to realize that UFOs were still not yet called unidentified flying objects. As stated, the term UFO simply did not yet exist. The media dubbed the strange objects "flying saucers" and "discs" following the Kenneth Arnold sighting. Those terms would predominate in the popular press until well into the 1950s.

The most important historical hindsight a reader can possess concerns the nature of what flying saucers then represented. Very few made the assumption that these discs represented extraterrestrial intelligence. Belief in so-called "alien visitation" did not mature until 1949 and then mainly in the cinema and tabloid-like magazines printed on pulpwood paper—"the pulp fiction." In 1947 flying saucers were assumed to mean scientific balloons or most likely classified military test craft. What else could a rational individual who had just lived through the wartime environment of secret weapons development think? Most people just hoped they were American and not Soviet—especially the military. Loedding thought likewise. At first he gave great weight to the consideration that the Soviets may have acquired some lost Nazi technology. It is interesting to note, however, that Loedding eventually became one of the first in official circles to conclude that the flying discs could represent controlled extraterrestrial spacecraft. His chief, Colonel Howard M. McCoy, even said that November, "The possibility that the reported objects are vehicles from another planet has not been ignored." [4] But that was not a topic of discussion in the summer of 1947.

Although saucers were indeed very hot news by early July, they were not the only focus of the nation by any means. The Cold War had begun to heat up in late 1946 as tensions grew tighter each day. In that year, while responding to an invitation from President Truman to speak in Fulton, Missouri, Winston Churchill brought the phrase Iron Curtain into general use. Although voted out of office by that point, his beloved Britain then had to institute bread rationing in order to export enough grain to keep food riots from erupting in Allied occupied Germany. That was a hardship English

citizens had not even had to endure during the darkest days of the war. Subsequent pressure on Parliament led Britain to abandon efforts to check Communist expansion in the eastern Mediterranean. President Truman felt America had to fill that vacuum. To drum up Congressional support for aid to Greece and Turkey as well as aid to Europe, the Truman administration intentionally exploited public anxiety. The battleship Missouri sailed to the Mediterranean. [5] But as the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan took shape in 1947, real fears over a blockade of Berlin were already in the news.

The Berlin Crisis would only be a year off. President Truman would send a flight of B-29 bombers to England the next summer to dissuade ongoing Soviet threats to close the divided city from the West. The B-29s had no nuclear weapons, but the administration made every effort to suggest that they did. In fact, when the (Army) Air Force and thus Alfred Loedding officially became involved with UFOs, they did so largely out of fear of foreign, but earthly, intrusions into American air space.

The American military, after all, had already started mapping Soviet defenses on the Siberian frontier via the North Pole in converted B-29s. Recently declassified Air Force files even document US efforts to locate land masses in the Polar region that could be used for bomber bases. When the

British later flew nighttime radar mapping reconnaissance missions over major Russian cities with American RB-45C jets out of England, it only stood to reason that the Soviets would try to do the same. [6]

The crucial point so often missed, concerns the significance of the 1947 sightings. If the nation believed they were seeing experimental aircraft or spy planes, then they were in fact seeing something. Today we know they were not Soviet—the USSR made no early incursions into continental US air space. But what were they? Undoubtedly many were misidentifications of domestic aircraft, balloons, and astronomical events—probably as many as eighty percent. But even the military came to the conclusion that there was a disturbing number of unexplainable events. By September 1947 Air Materiel Command, Wright Field, commander, Lieutenant General Nathan F. Twining, produced a memo based on research which Loedding assisted with. It characterized the discs as "real and not visionary." Future Air Force Intelligence Chief Major General Charles P. Cabell even stated in regard to the discs, "The conclusion appears inescapable that some type of flying object has been observed." Wright Field Intelligence Chief Colonel McCoy then concurred, "it is obvious that some types of flying objects have been sighted." [7]

From July 4-11, 1947 UFO reports dominated the newspapers, often featuring flying saucer sightings on their front pages. The stately New York Times ran four continuous days of page-one features starting on July 6th, this at a time when editors jealously coveted space for stories dealing with Berlin, the Marshall Plan, and serious flooding in the Midwest—which was a significant domestic news story. National Guard air units, the Army Air Force, and Navy were sufficiently concerned to send up "saucer patrols" along the Pacific Coast. That's significant alone because the regular military then had what they perceived to be a need to conserve fuel for upcoming Air Force Day celebrations. The sightings attracted such attention because most of them took place in broad daylight. This stood in great contrast to earlier and later UFO cases, many of which occurred at night or generated vague descriptions of objects that appeared so luminous or distant that they did not seem to be of substance. During this period many accounts describe very solid-looking objects maneuvering with the performance that some aircraft lack today. The reports do not all involve flying wing and saucer-shaped craft. The 1947 wave encompassed a great variety of observed phenomena including cigar-shaped rocket-like objects. Other forms include luminous balls, fan blades, boomerangs, triangles, diamonds, and light phenomena.

Sightings suddenly slowed in frequency after July 11th. Several dozen notable sightings would follow to end out the year, but whatever happened took place primarily between June 24th (and in force from July 4th) to July 11th. Granted, after the 11th, the news media did seem to lose interest in the story, but this alone cannot account for the marked decrease in reported activity after that initial onslaught of sightings. Some sort of phenomenon predominated in those very critical days of late June to early July.

Many claim it to be a form of mass hysteria generated by the widely publicized Kenneth Arnold sighting. If so, why did the sightings encompass the entire globe in a matter of only days with too little time for most people in foreign countries to read news accounts of the first American saucers? Why were there sightings before Arnold's? Would Arnold's story have become so publicized if not for actual incidents immediately following his event? Why did the intensity of the phenomenon end so suddenly after the 11th? If people were indeed caught up in a worldwide craze generated by media coverage, would not large numbers of reports still come in on the 12th instead of dozens the day before and only a handful until 1948? These same questions were asked by Alfred Loedding. The facts that follow are those that became available to Loedding during the course of 1947. Many of the UFO incidents of that year will be shown to result in specific actions taken by the military to

formulate an investigation. That investigation, in large part, became the brain child of Alfred Loedding.

1. Trenton (New Jersey) Sunday Times-Advertiser, 10 October 1954.
2. Research conducted by Jan Aldrich. (Aldrich is a former United States Army meteorologist and now a noted researcher who has combed the world's archives for early UFO reports.)
3. Although a later effort, Blue Book included what records survived from the 1947 period in its files.
4. FOIA request I-NAIC-97-053, Project Sign and Grudge documents 1948-1949, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio.
5. David McCullough, Truman (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), pp. 540-550, 562-565.
6. Richard Rhodes, Dark Sun, The Making Of The Hydrogen Bomb (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), p. 326; and Paul Lashmar, Spy Flights of the Cold War (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1996), pp. 66-71.
7. FOIA request I-NAIC-97-053.

Chapter Two
Before Kenneth Arnold

The following accounts are the first reliable UFO sightings for 1947. [1] It is unknown exactly when Loedding became privy to the reports. Undoubtedly they were brought to his attention by the second week in July—being widely talked about in military circles by that point. Loedding and others in Intelligence at Wright Field saw it as proof that the disc mystery was real and not simply the result of news play on the Kenneth Arnold story.

To this day these cases are misquoted in virtually every book. They actually represent three separate incidents which took place during a six month period prior to mid-April. They were witnessed by Weather Bureau meteorologist Walter A. Minozewski at the Richmond, Virginia, weather station. In all of these curious events he described seeing a "silver disc" with distinct differences in shape and performance to that of a balloon. At some point after the events he reported the incidents to his superiors.

The last sighting occurred one April morning when Minozewski and his staff caught sight of a very bright metallic elliptical disc while they were tracking a small "Pi Ball" (or wind measuring) meteorological balloon then at 15,000 feet. He checked his observations through a theodolite telescope. (A theodolite is an optical device used for measuring horizontal and vertical angles—in this case used to track weather balloons.) The disc flew just below the balloon and remained in sight for fifteen seconds, appearing much bigger than the balloon with a flat level bottom and a dome on top. It remained on a westward heading at high speed until vanishing off into the distance. [2]

For some unexplained reason disc sightings often occurred in connection with balloon tests. It is ironic, because if it was not for the presence of highly trained balloon men in those instances, no one would believe the observations to be anything other than misidentifications of their own balloons. For that reason, and the expertise of such men, Loedding took special interest in all investigations involving balloon technicians.

As another side note, it should be mentioned that there is some mystery concerning the Minozewski sightings. In January of 1967 researcher Ted Bloecher reviewed the Minozewski case file at Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio, thanks to the assistance of Lieutenant Colonel George

P. Freeman Jr. who arranged his visit. Bloecher's associate, atmospheric physicist Dr. James McDonald of the University of Arizona, then contacted Minozewski to confirm the details of the report with him. Minozewski recounted the fine points of the case just as they appeared in Air Force files but was baffled because he said he had never reported the incidents to the military. Equally perplexing is the fact that the Minozewski sightings are not now part of the Blue Book index released to the National Archives nor does the case file appear as complete as when Bloecher reviewed it thirty-two years ago. [3] As will be demonstrated in this chapter, it is apparent that sometime during or after the close of the twenty-two year long Air Force investigation into UFOs that followed 1947, a conscious effort was made to downplay any sighting which occurred prior to the Kenneth Arnold incident. Those after Arnold's sighting were then often claimed to be the result of simple hysteria generated from his highly publicized account.

Only a few very sketchy reports can be found in May in any type of records, most without exact dates or times. Few of these came to the attention of the early investigators like Loedding, because they were not recorded until after the Kenneth Arnold sighting, and only then detailed in obscure newspaper articles. Others were not documented until private researchers started doing investigative work years later. For example, a Mrs. H.G. Olavick (later Rawlins) recalled to Dr. James McDonald in 1967 that she witnessed ten flying discs make some curious aerial maneuvers near Tucson, Arizona, on or about May 5th of 1947. One of those objects appeared larger than the other nine discs, perhaps as big as 100 feet in diameter. Viewed with her former husband, they both agreed at the time that the discs must be some sort of new high performance military aircraft. As they watched, the nine smaller craft began "playing around the cloud" in violent aerial maneuvers for about seven minutes as if making mock dogfights. Finally regrouping in a V formation behind the larger craft, they flew off with tremendous acceleration

toward the northeast. [4] FBI files document another sighting on May 5th between Ellensburg and Seattle, Washington. In that case three men sighted at 3:30 P.M. PST a silver object streaking erratically across the sky at great height and leaving a long pillar of "gas" which remained in the sky for over thirty minutes. [5]

Bloecher documents in his book a sighting by Mrs. W.C. Clark, of Memphis, Tennessee, who reported seeing two flying objects shaped like "tennis balls" pass over her yard around the first of May. [6] Another woman, Mrs. Slawuta, reported that on May 10th she saw a flying "shining elliptical object" with a gold band around it heading east over Newark, New Jersey. [7] This would be one of the first that Loedding might have taken keen interest in because of the feature of a central ring—perhaps structural in nature.

None of these early reports came to national attention until after the Kenneth Arnold sighting in June. A few were then investigated by local military intelligence officers. In the following case an Army Air Force security officer out of Tinker Field, Oklahoma, made a report and later the incident was reinvestigated by the FBI. This particular sighting impressed the military due to the reliability of the witness, Byron Savage.

A businessman and private pilot from Oklahoma City, Savage observed sometime on or about May 17th to the 21st a shiny disc-like object flying over the city. It was dusk, at the time of the sighting as Savage and his wife had just started to walk out to their car. At first he commented to his wife that a big white plane was coming over. He continued to watch the craft because it soon became evident that this thing was no ordinary aircraft. The object was as big as six B-29 bombers! It flew between 10,000 and 18,000 feet toward the northwest at a speed estimated at more than three times that of a jet, which in those days flew about 500 miles per hour. The disc reportedly made no noise except for a very faint "swishing sound." It passed over in a matter of fifteen to twenty seconds and had the appearance of a "perfectly round and flat" frosty white elliptical object. [8] Savage stated to

FBI investigators that "he was sure this object was not a meteor and in his opinion it must be radically built and powered, probably atomic." [9] This was one of the first reports that ended up in Wright Field's (later the Blue Book) records, when Loedding began gathering all the paperwork he could on the flying disc mystery.

Similar objects appeared over Manitou Springs, Colorado, on the 19th when witnessed by Pike's Peak Railway mechanics Dean A. Hauser (a navy

veteran), Ted Weigand, Marion Hisshouse, T.J. Smith, and L.D. Jamison. They were on their lunch break around 12:15 P.M. MST as the men noticed some sort of shiny metal-like craft overhead. It flew around the area for over twenty minutes making erratic aerial maneuvers that no aircraft they knew of could undertake. [10]

While the news accounts on this incident are brief, a very interesting remark in one of the stories indicates that representatives of the 15th Air Force, then part of the Army Air Force, interviewed the rail workers on June 29th and sent their findings to Washington. This would certainly be one of the first indications of military interest in a UFO sighting. In fact, those who had the opportunity to view the Air Force files before they were released to the public in 1976 speak of this as one of its cases. Today, however, the file along with a notable number of other early cases is officially "missing." The National Archives lists them in the Air Force index but do not have them in their collection of declassified files turned over to them by the military in late 1975. Loedding had obviously been privy to it once he persuaded the Pentagon to send its UFO files to Wright Field in September of 1947. Unfortunately, further details of this case are lost with many others.

A more obscure sighting that even Loedding may not have heard about occurred around the 19th when an Augusta, Georgia, physician, Dr. Golden R. Battey, spotted four discs at 11:00 A.M. EST while fishing in St. Helena Sound near Beaufort, South Carolina. Battey stressed how bright they looked and related that the craft traveled at an altitude of more than 20,000 feet in a southeasterly direction. He said they were spinning on their axes with a circular rim around their lower quarter as they silently moved by in less than twenty seconds at great speed. [11]

Two flying discs accounts are found for the first day of June but like almost all of the early sightings, were not reported until after the Kenneth Arnold incident. Yet these did later make numerous newspaper stories and were undoubtedly read by many including Alfred Loedding on or by the 6th of July. One of these came from housewife Mrs. C.W. Parks in Bakersfield, California, who saw two groups of ten flying discs each moving at high speed in a southeasterly direction on June 1st. [12] That night another housewife, Mrs. Inez Nostrant, observed numerous bright luminous plate-sized objects flying in groups of twos and fours as high as planes over Grand Rapids, Michigan. [13]

On the 2nd of June private pilot Forrest Wenyon saw a jar-shaped rocket-like object fly across the nose of his aircraft at great speed near Lewes, Delaware, heading in an easterly direction around his own altitude of 1,400

feet. Wenyon reported his observation to the CAA, Eastern Airlines, and the FBI because the object was spotted in commercial airline space. There was some speculation on his part that there could have been a connection to a crash of a C-54 from such an object just two days before. The sighting did end up in Air Force records but for whatever reason was not released to the National Archives when other UFO files were made public in 1976. Earlier researchers who had the chance to view that file indicate that the military attributed the sighting to a rocket test. History, however, bears no

documentation of rocket tests over that densely populated East Coast area. [14] This is one case in which it would be interesting to know if Alfred Loedding consulted on due to his experience in rocketry. (The Wenyon incident is detailed in recently released FBI records.)

That same day Carl Achee, Jr. and John Scales, Jr. observed one circular flying object over Shreveport, Louisiana, along the Red River. This event, like others, were not thought by the witnesses to be of significance until they read accounts of the widely publicized Arnold account. For that reason those and reports from June 10th in Douglas, Arizona, and Weiser, Idaho, on the 12th have received little attention even by modern day researchers. [15]

Other early accounts come from overseas. According to the Times of India, flying discs were seen over Bombay as early as June 7th with other saucer-like accounts coming from South America. [16] Disc reports outside the United States are very rare prior to July of 1947, but at 3:30 P.M. local time on June 10th, Hungarian citizen Gyorik Ference saw four "yellow-red platter-like objects" fly over Budapest. They were sphere-shaped and silver in color, traveling at high speeds. [17]

Although it was in the United States that pilot Richard Rankin, a veteran flyer with more than 7,000 hours in the air, had the most notable flying saucer sighting prior to Arnold's. As with other early witnesses, he did not report it until others like Arnold had admitted to seeing such strange objects. Contrary to later accounts of the Rankin Case, his observation did not happen on the 23rd, but on the 14th, and did not occur at 2:15 P.M. but at 12:00 noon PST. Nor was Rankin in flight at the time, but saw the objects while watching a boy mow the lawn outside his friend's home in Bakersfield, California.

At the time of the sighting it was a clear and sunny day when both he and the boy saw ten round objects or "saucers" fly over in a loose "V" formation with one straggling in the rear." They were heading north, but

seven of the discs then reversed direction and came back over them toward the south. Their diameters appeared to be from 30 to 35 feet, and they were traveling at an estimated speed of 350 miles per hour around 8,500 feet. At the time of the sighting Rankin thought the craft must be some sort of new Army or Navy test vehicle much like the oval-shaped XF5U-1 "flying flapjack" and even commented as much to the lad mowing the lawn. Yet, military intelligence concluded Rankin's sighting represented no known aircraft type. [18] (No XF5U-1 were airworthy at that time.) [19]

Loedding, among others, greatly valued such observations from experienced pilots. Interviews with Loedding's son in 1997 and 1998 stressed that Alfred took special interest in any sightings made by pilots. Although the Fourth Army Air Force in connection with the FBI first investigated the case, Loedding had a chance to review the Rankin file sometime by the end of that summer. Again, it is not known what he thought but like other case files he inherited from the Brown and Davidson team, Loedding was surely struck by the similarities of the incident to others. The hallmarks of these included shiny saucer or wing-like objects flying fast and silently, often in groups or in special formations. An early such sighting comes from Lansing, Michigan on the 15th at 9:30 P.M. CST which added to the notable early cases:

> **Harry Von Riper was alerted by his landlady, Mrs. Letta Loree, and watched "balls of fire" jump in and out among the clouds "like clay pigeons" for about ten minutes. He tired of watching and returned to the house and did not see them again. He saw a searchlight beam, but the searchlight was stationary and could not, he thought, cause the phenomenon.** [20]

That same day, although apparently earlier in the afternoon, housewife Mrs. H. Ackley saw a

very bright silver balloon-like object appear to the northeast of Gering, Nebraska. [21] News accounts tell of another sighting the following day over Valley City, North Dakota at 9:00 P.M. CST:

> **Hjalmer Lokken, fireman at the State Teachers College, reported "something that looked like a ball, bright red in color [that] went shooting past. It was about the height of the flag pole on the college building (approximately 65 feet.)" It traveled to the west at terrific speed.** [22]

On the 17th a strange round object was seen traveling in a straight line over Logan, West Virginia. [23] Then in Dubuque, Iowa, a very unusual sighting took place as described again by a local press account:

> **Mrs. Louis Korn, 879 Rush Street, Dubuque, Iowa, saw over the Mississippi River six objects which all looked the same. They appeared to be two feet long and one foot wide, oval shaped ("Being deeper than a saucer, more like a shallow cup, with broken handle") and somewhat vaporous, like a white cloud. They seemed to float gently through the air, visible in each case for about an hour. Mrs. Korn and her husband saw similar objects on the 4th of July.** [24]

Also on the 17th a disc story comes from Bremerton, Washington, when Mrs. Emma Shingler saw more than one plate-shaped object flying west out over the Pacific at tremendous speed. This incident is interesting because that evening at 6:00 P.M. PST three flying discs were again seen over Bremerton heading west by Mr. and Mrs. H.K. Wheeler. [25] (Reports such as those, detailing the discs heading out to sea, led Alfred Loedding and the first military investigators to wonder if the objects could have been launched from Soviet submarines.) And before the night of the 17th ended, Professor Emeritus from the University of Wisconsin, E.B. McGilvery, spotted a round luminous object heading to the northeast of Madison. [26]

The next day on the 18th a notable sighting occurred in Green Springs, Alabama, when at 4:00 P.M. CST Mrs. H. Akins with others observed a blinking disc-shaped craft fly westward. [27] Another less well-known pre-Arnold sighting occurred in Oregon that day when E.H. Sprinkler and other residents of Eugene spotted multiple "saucers" in the southwest heading northeast. Sprinkler captured a picture of them. Unfortunately, the film revealed only dots because by the time that he had gotten his camera into position, the objects were speeding out of sight at tremendous velocity. [28]

On the night of the 19th, from his back yard, R.D. Taylor spotted eight to ten discs which were lighted from within as they zoomed over Cedar Rapids, Iowa. [29] Mrs. Jerry Neels said she saw some "bright and shiny" discs south of Kelso, Washington, on the 20th. [30]

That same day Mrs Annabel Mobley and her daughter Luanne observed three triangular-shaped groups of three discs flying toward the northeast of Hot Springs, New Mexico. [31] Also on the 20th, around 11:00 P.M. PST Archie Edes and his family saw an oval flame-like craft descend at high speed near Moses Lake, Washington. [32] A Spokane woman around the 21st added to the growing list of pre Arnold sightings when she saw eight discs descending with a "dead leaf motion" near the shore of the Saint Joe River in Idaho. [33] Two other sightings were reported for the 21st but are dismissed as explainable phenomena. [34]

Edward L. de Rose had still another early sighting. At 11:30 A.M. EST on the 22nd he reported a "brilliant, round-shaped silvery-white object" moving in a northwesterly direction over Greenfield, Massachusetts. It traveled at a high rate of speed somewhere at around 1,000 feet of altitude and

streaked across the sky in a matter of only eight to ten seconds before vanishing from view. He felt certain the mysterious craft could not have been a balloon and represented something very real when later filing this report with the A-2 section of Army Intelligence of the Atlantic Division.[35] That day a very similar sighting took place in Radium Springs, Oregon. In that case a "flying pie-plate" was seen by H.E. Hammond and his son L.V.W. Hammond, the secretary manager of the Eastern Oregon Federal Savings and Loan Association.[36] Before the 22nd ended a sighting occurred in Tucson, Arizona, when Walter Laos spotted a very strange-looking flying object.[37]

On Monday the 23rd at 2:00 A.M. EST a Mississippi woman, Elizabeth H. Hall, awoke to a frightening sight. Outside her bedroom window that early morning a very bright light grew larger and then receded. She knew that it could not be a star, nor could she determine its size or shape. After this pulsating brilliance continued three times, it silently disappeared on its fourth cycle.[38] This account came from the same date as that of E.B. Parks and a dozen other witnesses who saw two illuminated discs fly at terrific speed, low over Hazel, Green, Alabama.[39] Later that day at 3:30 P.M. CST, an unusual flying object traveling about 150 miles per hour appeared over the mountains

outside of El Paso, Texas. Dr. G. Oliver Dickson, an optometrist, described how it looked like a blimp with a point at each end. Although unlike a lighter-than-air craft, it remained bright or luminous. He stressed that because "The sun's rays were not reflected on it."[40]

Ironically, that night Richard L. Bitters, the editor of a large newspaper, saw strange flying objects over Wapakoneta, Oregon, but sat on his amazing story till after he saw Arnold's account published.[41] (This despite the fact that another similar sighting occurred in Cincinnati that same night.)[42] Thus, neither of those sightings made the papers before Arnold's account, but one story was actually reported to newspapers on the 23rd. The tale came from a railroad engineer in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. As he was climbing off his engine, he observed ten shiny disc-shaped objects flying in a string-like formation, "like wild geese." The six line story it generated produced little attention at the time.[43] The public's perception of this strange new flying disc phenomenon would, however, soon change.

1. Edward J. Ruppelt's personal papers do vaguely detail two fighter intercepts on a "violently maneuvering" UFO near England on January 16-17, 1947; and an undated post-war account of "disc-shaped aircraft" near Habberbishopshiem, Germany. (Ruppelt's private papers, File R104, courtesy of Professor Michael Swords.)
2 .Edward J. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1956), p. 41; and "Air Intelligence Report No. 100-203-79, Analysis of Flying Object Incidents in the US, Air Intelligence Division Study No. 203, 10 December 1948, Directorate of Intelligence and Office of Naval Intelligence," p. 8; and United States Air Force, "Project Grudge, Final Report No. 102 AC 49/15-100," Appendix B and Appendix I, Final Report by J.A. Hynek, Project Blue Book Files, National Archives, Record Group 341, Microfilm Pub. No. T-1206, Roll No. 85, Administrative Files, Box 1, listed as incident 79 in 1947 era documents. ("Hereafter these files will be listed only as Project Blue Book Files with relevant case identification and role numbers.); and Ted Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947 (By the Author, 1967), p. I.
3. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, pp. x, xiv.
4. Correspondence of Ted R. Bloecher.
5. Documents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated 27 September 1947.
6. Ibid.; and Memphis, Tennessee, Commercial Appeal, 1 July 1947.
7. Newark, New Jersey, Star-Ledger, 1 July 1947.
8. "Fast Flying Disks Reported in West," Associated Press news service, 27 June 1947.
9. Documents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated 24 July 1947.
10. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. I.
11. The (Portland) Oregonian, 6 July 1947; and Augusta, Georgia, Chronicle, 6 July 1947.
12. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Patriot, 1 July 1947.
13. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Herald, 1 July 1947.

14. Columbus (Ohio) Citizen, 8 July 1947; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. HI-9.
15. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Inquirer, 8 July 1947.
16. Fortean Society's Doubt, 19 (Spring-Summer 1947): 91.
17. "Project Sign, Report No. F-TR-2274-IA," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 85, Administrative Files, Box 1.
18. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Case 7, listed as Incident 29 in 1947 era documents; and "Pilot Recalls Seeing Discs," The (Portland) Oregonian, 3 July 1947, p. 11; and "Pilot Vet Reports Seeing 'Flying Saucers' June 23," Denver Post, 2 July 1947; and documents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated 3 July 1947.
19. USAF Museum Files, Wright-Patterson USAFB.
20. Lansing, Michigan, State Journal, 6 July 1947, p. 1.
21. Sacramento, California, Union, 8 July 1947.
23. Logan, West Virginia, Banner, 14 July 1947.
24. Dubuque, Iowa, Telegraph-Herald, 1 July 1947.
25. Logan, West Virginia, Banner, 14 July 1947.
24. Dubuque, Iowa, Telegraph-Herald, 1 July 1947.
25. "Fast Flying Disks Reported in West," Associated Press news service, 21 June 1947; and The (Portland) Oregonian, 27 June 1947; and Seattle, Washington, Post-Intelligencer, 26, 21 June 1947. (Mrs. Shingler had a similar sighting on June 24th at 10:00 A.M. PST.)
26. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Journal, 1 July 1947.
27. Birmingham, Alabama, News & Age Herald, 9 July 1947.
28. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, Index.
29. Des Moines, Iowa, Register, 8 July 1947.
30.. "Flying Saucer Story Grows," The (Portland) Oregonian, 28 June 1947
31. Albuquerque, New Mexico, Journal, 2 July 1947.
32. Seattle, Washington, Post-Intelligencer, 26,27 June 1947.
33. Jacques Vallee, Passport To Magonia: From Folklore to Flying Saucers (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1969), p. 191.
34. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Bulletin, 9 July 1947; and Project Blue Book Files.
35. Extract from "Weekly Intelligence Summary, ATC, 30 July 1947," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, listed as Incident 46 in 1947 era documents.
36. Baker, Oregon, Democrat Herald, 27 June 1947.
37. Tucson, Arizona, Daily Citizen, 1 July 1947.
38. Letter to J. Alien Hynek, from Elizabeth H. Hall, 6 November 1980, files of the J. Alien Hynek Center For UFO Studies, (Hereafter referred to as CUFOS.)
39. Huntsville, Alabama, Times, 1 July 1947.
40. "More Flying Discs Reported," Oklahoma Norman Transcript, 4 July 1947; and Albuquerque, New Mexico, Journal, 29 June 1947. (That sighting may have occurred on the 22nd—news accounts of the case are confusing.)
41. Wapakoneta (Oregon) Daily News, 1 July 1947.
42. Cincinnati, Ohio, Times-Star, 1 July 1947.
43. Speech by Frank Edwards to Civilian Saucer Intelligence, 28 April 1956.

Chapter Three
Kenneth Arnold and The Aftermath

From Tuesday, June 24th to July 1 1th, hundreds of flying discs were seen in every corner of the globe by people of all walks of life. Most remember it beginning with a UFO sighting by private pilot Kenneth Arnold. As a result, the Kenneth Arnold Sighting officially marked the starting point of what is now called the modern UFO era. It also initiated Alfred Loedding's emergence into the drama.

The incident took place during a flight Arnold made in his small private plane from Chehalis to Yakima, Washington. Shortly into the trip at 2:59 P.M. PST he decided to take some extra time and keep an eye out for a Marine Corps transport reported down several days earlier. Soon eastward

bound at 9,000 feet and nearing the Cascade Mountains of Washington State, he hoped that he might catch sight of it. Instead, he saw something quite different. Something that he would never forget.

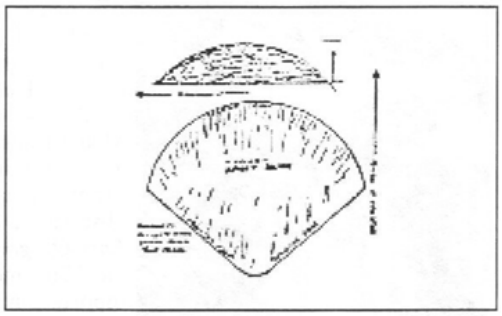
At a right angle to his aircraft nine very bright disc-shaped objects came into view. They were flying extremely fast in a reversed echelon formation north and to the left of Mount Rainier. At first he assumed they must be some form of new military jet aircraft, but in the clear mountain sky he detected no tail surfaces or wings, just round all wing-like bodies. Arnold compared eight of them to "pie-pans," somewhat cloverleaf-shaped, with surfaces so bright they reflected the sun like a mirror. The ninth object looked heel- shaped. He then picked up a cowling tool to compare them in size to a DC 4 just off to his upper left at about 1,400 feet. [1] Arnold estimated the discs to be 45 to 50 feet in length, traveling north to south 20 to 25 miles ahead of his aircraft. It was no reflection or mirage because the formation clearly could be seen to weave in and out of mountain peaks at speeds estimated at 1,700 miles per hour!

He derived this velocity by recording the time it took the objects to pass the 47 mile stretch between Mount Rainier and Mount Adams. Arnold reasoned that the disc formation was five miles in length and passed the 47 mile distance in one minute and 42 seconds. [2] The calculation was simple, but barring minor discrepancies just as equally fool proof. Prior to making his computations, Arnold felt certain he could determine what type of aircraft they were. Yet these figures defied explanation. No manned aircraft then in existence flew that fast. Even the new P-80 jets had only reached 623 miles per hour at the Muroc test range in California. Arnold knew aviation well and by then knew equally well that he had witnessed something incredible. Others would soon come to that realization too, but the primary line of thought would not be spaceships from another world, but some sort of new military test vehicle.

Arnold mentioned his sighting to the ground crew after he landed in Yakima and talked about the incident with Al Baxter, the manager of Central Aircraft. While Arnold talked with Baxter in his office they were joined by pilots Les Mills, Carl Apts, and Jacques Filliol. [3] By the time Arnold flew on to Pendleton the story had already preceded him. After detailing the sighting to newsmen Bill Bequette and Nolan Skiff at noon on the following day, newspapers soon made famous the term "flying saucer" by an off-handed remark of his—comparing the objects to "saucers skipping on the water." [4] His sighting went on to be the first to receive national media attention in more than 150 newspapers, being treated as a serious news story. This was due in part to the fact that Arnold was not only an experienced mountain flyer, but a licensed air rescue pilot, a deputy sheriff, and a respected businessman. But it is equally important to remember that the story would not have gained the fame it did unless a host of other saucer sightings had not soon followed. Many of the observers to those incidents talked about what they saw before ever hearing news of Arnold's incident. Arnold's account has thus often been mislabeled as the first flying saucer encounter merely because it became the first well-known and the first believable sighting. [5]

The Army Air Force soon became interested in Arnold's account. On July 12th intelligence officers Captain William Lee Davidson and First Lieutenant Frank Mercer Brown interviewed Arnold for six hours, taking a lengthy detailed statement from him at Boise's downtown Hotel Owyhee. Just prior to that, Brown and Davidson had tracked down a well-known

acquaintance of Arnold's, David N. Johnson. Johnson was an aviation reporter for the Boise Evening Statesman and a widely respected wartime B-29 bomber pilot. Johnson gave Arnold a good recommendation as did many others who knew him. In fact, Intelligence officers took an immediate liking to Arnold — probably due to his aviation background. Brown and Davidson came to confide details of other cases to him because he had expressed such an interest and need to prove his own story. Arnold even claimed that they had told him that some in military Intelligence had become aware of saucer stories as early as April. [6]



All but one of the objects Arnold reported seeing were shaped like the sketch above.

That first effort to look into the discs sightings by Intelligence was spearheaded by the A-2 section of the Fourth Air Force out of Hamilton Field, California with Lieutenant Colonel Donald L. Springer in command. Brown and Davidson, under Springer's supervision, would draw most of the duty, interviewing many of the early witnesses. They were considered extremely bright and talented officers. Both were young men in their twenties who first received orders to investigate the disc reports following some spectacular sightings on July 4th. That directive came down from Army Air Force Chief of Staff General Carl Spaatz who wanted Hamilton Field Intelligence to "open a file." Although he specified that they should then report their findings to Intelligence at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio. Some work on the disc mystery apparently also took place at Mitchel Field, New York, the headquarters of all air defense — once termed the Continental Defense Command and by mid 1947 referred to as the Air Defense Command. The FBI would soon enter the investigations too. Brown and Davidson were given orders to keep their reports classified and provided with ample assistance to do investigative work. This included a steno pool and two aircraft, an A-24 and a stripped-down but aging B-25. Unfortunately, both Brown and Davidson were tragically killed after that B-25 crashed on the way back from a case investigation during the early morning of August 1st.

26. Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

While investigating Arnold's story, Brown and Davidson discovered sighting was not the only such incident that day. Others approached Arnold himself, reporting similar sightings. A report came to light that was made the same day and time by a member of the Washington State forest service who had been on fire watch at a tower in Diamond Gap. At 3:00 P.M. PST on the 24th he noticed "flashes" over Mount Rainier that appeared to move in a straight line. Arnold hoped to find I other accounts supporting his observation and even hung around the East Oregonian newspaper office until the 27th, monitoring additional saucer reports on the Associated Press Teletype. [7]

Kenneth Arnold

Then a really noteworthy case emerged. It came from a Portland prospector, Fred M. Johnson, who reported a disc sighting to Army officers after returning from the same mountainous area that Arnold had flown over. Johnson made his observation the same day and time as Arnold's when he had his attention drawn skyward by a brief flash and noticed five to six shiny round objects. The craft looked to have "tails" as they silently flew by at about 1,000 feet toward the southeast. They remained in view for about 45 to 60 seconds during which time the prospector examined one of them through a hand-held telescope. With the aid of the spyglass he could tell they were definitely real objects, round and about 30 feet in diameter but "tapering sharply to a point in the head end in an oval shape." He also observed some type of object in their tail shifting from side to side.

About that time Johnson looked down at his watch which had a compass attached to it and noticed that its needle fluctuated wildly. (Alfred Loedding became one of the few to make note of such an apparent electromagnetic effect in the early cases.) [8] Johnson also confirmed the time to be around 3:00 P.M. PST, the same period in which Arnold made his sighting. Johnson concluded in his statement that they flew off faster than anything he had seen before and resembled no object he had been witness to in his 40 years of prospecting the mountains.

Ironically, while the more famous Arnold sighting was investigated in far greater detail, it would be classified as a mirage. The Portland prospector case eventually found its way into Air Force records as the first unidentified case of an eventual 587 officially given that designation. (At one time Air Force files listed 701 unidentifieds but today only 587 are noted in the declassified index.) The unidentified classification (once termed unknown) was not lightly given and placed only on files that investigators could not attribute to a known cause. Witness reliability also served as a key factor. In this instance the records of both the Army and FBI considered Mr. Johnson of high reliability and character. [9] (See Appendix I for further details.)

Lieutenant Governor Donald S. Whitehead of Idaho and Chief Justice J.M. Lampert added to the list of those who saw a strange flying object that afternoon. At 3:30 P.M. MST they viewed from Lampert's office window in downtown Boise a most unusual sight high in the western sky. Called by some "The Boise Object," it appeared to hover or "hang" stationary in the sky, resembling a "comet." [10]

That afternoon at around 2:30 P.M. PST, in Richland, Washington, Leo Bernier reported several

silvery-shaped discs high in the sky heading west by southwest. He stated they were traveling as fast as a P-38 fighter or about 400 miles per hour. Bernier was one of the first witnesses to suggest an extraterrestrial link. He was quoted in a July 3rd newspaper article, stating: "I believe it may be a visitor from another planet." [11]

Two sightings from the 24th reported nine disc-like objects just as Arnold had seen. One came from Charles Kastl as he was walking along a road ten miles east of Joliet, Illinois, at 1:50 P.M. CST. Kastl worked as a railroad engineer and described the nine discs as speeding along in a stretched out line formation at about 4,000 feet flying north to south. [12] The other incident was reported by Sidney B. Gallagher at 3:00 P.M. PST in Washington State when he saw nine shiny discs flash by to the north. [13] Then up to eight "platter-shaped" discs were seen in loose formation by Lester Swingleson and his wife and their two neighbor girls during that afternoon heading northwest from Lonejack, Missouri, toward Kansas City. [14]

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A Yakima, Washington, woman, Mrs. Ethel Wheelhouse, reported sighting several flying discs moving at fantastic speeds around the time of Arnold's observation. [15] At 4:00 P.M. PST Mrs. Dennis Howell saw a bright shiny silver object fly over Salem, Oregon. [16] Two hours later Mrs. Viola Wendt of Roseville, California, spotted one brightly reflective disc at about 10,000 feet. It came from the south, turned, then dipped, and finally flew off to the northwest on a straight course. [17] An hour later at 7:00 P.M. PST Glen E. Stewart and his wife witnessed a shiny object fly over Pendleton, Oregon. [18] At 9:00 P.M. PST William Kamp also saw a strange flying object over Oregon from his home in Portland. He noted that two reddish-white flares dropped from the mysterious craft. [19] Fifteen minutes later in Seattle, Washington, Mrs Elvira Forsyth reported to the press that she saw one disc-shaped flying object with two dark bands around it disappear into the clouds. Mrs Forsyth saw similar objects at 10:00 and 11:00 P.M. [20] Finally at 11:00 A.M. object resembling a flying plate was seen over Salem, Oregon, by Mrs. Gertrude Kirkpatrick. [21]

Wednesday 25 June

Notable incidents that were somewhat similar to Arnold's occurred the following day. At 3:00 A.M. EDT Mrs. G.E. Hart saw 13 luminous flying objects shaped like plates fly over Poplar Grove, Pennsylvania. [22] At 8:45 A.M. CST Mrs. Nels Thor of 10436 S Forest Ave. in Chicago, Illinois, observed one disc heading east over Lake Michigan. [23] Sometime after the noon hour that day W.I. Davenport, a carpenter in Kansas City, Missouri, observed nine speeding disc-like objects just as Arnold did although these made considerable noise and left vapor trails. [24]

Near Pueblo, Colorado, Lloyd Lowry and his wife observed two oval-shaped objects spinning on their axis while driving east in their car. They noted that the objects came from the east and veered south. Disc sightings involving two or less objects then came from Salem, Oregon; Alvarado,

Texas, at 5:30 P.M. CST; and Newcomb, New Mexico at 7:00 P.M. MST. [25] By 7:30 P.M. a single bright disc appeared in the skies over Utah and fifteen minutes later Homer B. Duncan and Mack McKague of Salt Lake City observed two discs moving eastward in unison. [26] At 8:05 P.M. MST Dr. R.F. Sensenbaugher and his wife and Mrs. C.B. Munroe and his sister-in-law observed one disc while riding in a car near Silver City, New Mexico. [27] Ten minutes later a ball of fire appeared over Seattle, Washington. [28] Later C.E. Holman reported seeing two "illuminated discs" which circled

each other over Oklahoma at 10:00 P.M. CST. [29] Also that night Warren County Deputy Treasurer Louis Stebbins and Mrs. J.G. Caffrey saw a reddish object trailing blue fire which traversed over the countryside near Glen Falls, New York. [30]

Thursday 26 June

Saucers were sighted back in Oregon on the following day when nine shiny craft with fins wove in and out of the clouds over La Grande. The sighting was made by high school student Larry Jones and two Catholic nuns. [31] In the Arizona Grand Canyon, Dr. Leon Oetinger and three others observed a "silver ball" too swift to be an aircraft. [32] At 7:45 P.M. MST in Cedar City, Utah, observers reported seeing one silvery colored disc fly over at about 2,000 feet with great velocity heading eastward. [33] Apparently that same object was seen by Roy Walters, a private pilot who had his sighting while airborne near Cedar City. Royce R. Knight, the airport manager at Cedar City, visually confirmed Walters' sighting. Still another man, Charles Moore, told of seeing a single unidentifiable luminous object speeding east over Cedar City at the same time. Moore was manager for Western Airlines and in his mind dismissed the incident as a "large meteor." [34]

Interestingly, far to the north of Cedar City a teacher, Glen Bunting and two other independent witnesses, observed a very similar round disc moving eastward just three minutes earlier. [35] By 8:30 P.M. CST a round large disc

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traveling at least 1,200 miles per hour flew over Oklahoma City at great altitude in an easterly direction as witnessed by Dennis E. Donovan. [36] Later that night at 10:00 P.M. a UFO report came out of Ottawa, Canada, describing an object bigger than an aircraft with a bright light on it. [37] Then in Denver, Colorado, Henry Martin and Walter Harrod observed a group of bright "coffee can tops" at about 5,000 feet traveling southwesterly. [38]

Friday 27 June

Three UFO sightings came from New Mexico on Friday starting with an observation by Captain E.B. Detchmendy who reported "flame-like objects" over the White Sands proving grounds at 9:50 A.M. MST. [39] Mr. W.C. Dodds then confirmed seeing the same event. [40] And just north of the base at 10:00 A.M., in Captain, New Mexico, Mrs. Cummins and her neighbor, Erv Dill, saw a single shiny object that "seemed to land on nearby hills." [41] In fact, at 10:00 A.M. another sighting came from San Miguel, New Mexico, by Mrs. D. Appelzoller who observed a fast moving object at low altitude who also thought it might have landed. [42] Frankly, most researchers feel all of these New Mexico sightings describe an event very characteristic of V-2 missile tests which were being conducted that year at White Sands. (Four other accounts of unusual flying objects in New Mexico that day also suggest a rocket launch or an astronomical event.) [43]

The early disc reports were not thought to be attributable to any one specific cause. In general, the stories merely focused on the fact that unusual things were being seen and a number of solutions were posed. The best commentary for the 27th comes from two articles from the San Francisco Chronicle:

> **by Howard W. Blakeslee, Associated Press Science Writer**
> **New York, June 27—The reports from five areas west of the Mississippi River about mysterious disc-like objects flashing across the sky agree roughly with the way light occasionally is reflected**

from a distant airplane.
In clear air the flash of sunlight from a plane can easily be seen at 10 miles. This flash is round, the shape of the sun. Any other reflection at a great distance also is likely to be round, coming only from a small area on the plane. Not accounted for are the speeds reported by some observers. A distant plane does not appear to be moving fast. If any jet planes were sighted, their speeds probably would be noticeable and could fit into the estimates, where sight gave the impression of something traveling 1000 miles an hour. It rarely happens that the eye can make an accurate estimate of speed through the sky. Reports of unusual objects in the sky have been numerous since the war. Atomic bomb and rocket rumors have accounted for most of them. Speculative stories about what may be seen in the future spread all over the world. With those in mind, any unusual sight in the sky is likely to appear exaggerated.

Army Colonel Thinks "Discs" May have Been Jet Planes

White Sands, N.M., June 27 (AP)—Lieutenant Colonel Harold R. Turner says "flying discs" reported seen in several Western areas Wednesday night may have been jet airplanes. The White Sands proving ground commandant said jet planes have circular exhaust pipes and that these when heated might give an illusion of discs. Reports of new "flying saucers" were received today from Silver City, in southwestern New Mexico, and Joliet, Ill. A Silver City dentist and members of his family said they saw a disc half the size of a full moon sail slowly through the sky. A Joliet train engineer reported "circular objects" going "faster than any plane I ever saw." [44]

Disc sightings that day also came from El Paso and Houston, Texas; Lowell, and Tintown, Arizona; Mountain Home, Arkansas; Seattle, Kelso and Woodland, Washington; Rutland, Vermont; and Vancouver, British Columbia. [45]

Saturday 28 June

A report as unique as Kenneth Arnold's took place this day. The Army, however, paid more attention this time. They did so because it involved one of its own Air Force pilots, First Lieutenant Eric B. Armstrong, who was flying a P-51 fighter from Brooks Field, San Antonio, to Portland, Oregon.

During that flight while 30 miles north of Lake Meade, Nevada, at 1:15 P.M. PST, Armstrong spotted five to six round white discs in a close formation. He stated that they were about 4,000 feet below him at an altitude of 6,000 feet moving smoothly at his same air speed of 285 miles per hour toward the southeast. But they must have actually been moving at a faster rate because they soon passed out of sight on an angular course to his aircraft.

Armstrong estimated that the discs appeared about three feet in diameter and for that reason the Air Force finally concluded he must have seen a balloon cluster. [46] Yet it is known that serious discussion of this incident took place in the Pentagon and seems to have involved Alfred Loedding in some of his first liaison work between Dayton and Washington. Several years following the event Edward Ruppelt, when assuming command of UFO investigations in 1951, learned that this had been a notable sighting in the military's early consideration of the problem. [47]

At 3:45 P.M. CST that same day just north of Milwaukee over Rockfield, Wisconsin, a farmer, Marion Beuschler and his brother, observed seven to ten discs flying silently overhead toward the south. Later that afternoon identical objects were reported by radio news programs in Illinois. Dr. J.W. Abner of Atchison, Missouri, also spotted discs. He reported eight of them traveling in a

southerly direction at a high rate of speed. [48] A Colorado farmer, H.E. Soule of Appleton, told Grand Junction authorities that he observed a small disc-shaped object that day come from the northwest, which flew just 200 feet above his house without making a sound. According to him the disc then headed eastward over highway No. 6 for a mile and finally turned southeast. [49]

Later that evening a woman in Oregon, Mrs. Sidney Smith and her daughter Joanne, reported seeing an alternately shining flying saucer just before sunset at 5:05 P.M. PST-heading southeast at high speed. [50] Detroit, Michigan, claimed two independent sightings that day; Los Angeles, California, one at 11:30 A.M. PST; Dallas, Texas, had an observation at 5:00 P.M. CST and another later that night; one that evening in Hooksett, New Hampshire; one in Montgomery, Alabama at 9:20 P.M. CST; and also one in Bath, South Carolina later that night. [51]

Sunday 29 June

In the days following the Kenneth Arnold incident many disc sightings still came from the Pacific Northwest. Beginning at 11:00 A.M. PST on the 29th Mrs. Morton Elder observed seven umbrella-shaped objects south of Pendleton, Oregon, flying north and emitting a humming noise. Other independent witnesses reported a similar sighting in the area. [52] That afternoon numerous people in Moscow, Idaho, reported seeing a single "flying disc" at 1:30 P.M. PST. [53] At 1:30 P.M. Msrin Tucson, Arizona, Charles Weaver and his wife saw one of the famous formations of discs just as Kenneth Arnold did five days before. [54]

One of the most stunning reports for June 29th also comes out of the west. It involved three naval research scientists involved in guided missile development. While driving to the White Sands proving grounds in New Mexico the scientists observed something that proved to be far more interesting than the V-2 tests which they were then working on. Dr. C.J. Zohn reported their amazing observation to Army Intelligence with supporting testimony from fellow scientists Curtis C. Rockwood and John R. Kauke. This report was one of the most interesting sightings to be studied by Wright Field Intelligence and Alfred Loedding although the investigation was instigated by Lieutenant Colonel George D. Garrett of the Pentagon Intelligence Collections branch. The incident began at 1:30 P.M. MST as the scientists were all in a car headed northeast down Route 17 to examine a launching site for a July 3rd V-2 test. Just then they had their attention drawn upward by a flash. All three men, and Curtis Rockwood' s wife who was in the car, observed "a silvery disc whirling through the unclouded sky." Kauke was driving and became so overwhelmed by the site that he stopped the car. The scientists then estimated the disc's altitude between 8,000 and 10,000 feet and were especially attracted by its bright surface. They agreed its shape appeared elliptical and flat. Dr. Zohn, a well-known rocket expert, stated that the object did not look like any rocket he had ever seen and that it could not have been a balloon. [55]

Later that day at 3:00 P.M. Mr. and Mrs. James Harbor of Richland, Washington, and many local residents saw a very similar shiny disc with a type of halo around it. Most agreed that its outer edge seemed to be spinning around a stationary center section. [56]

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By 4:45 P.M. CST a bus driver, Dale Bays, traveling from Des Moines to Mason City, Iowa, observed flying discs outside Clarion. At first he saw only one oval object pass across the sky moving south-southwest at about 1,200 feet. Then four similar objects followed. Bays quickly stopped and got out for a better look. Taking in the view of the countryside, he turned around and

spotted in the opposite direction a flight of thirteen more discs. This formation was at about the same altitude as the first objects and judged to be traveling 300 miles per hour. They looked like "inverted saucers," "oval" in appearance. He guessed that they were anywhere from 175 to 250 feet in diameter and around twelve feet thick. Their color appeared a "dirty white" and he said they made a "motor or dynamo" type of noise while passing overhead. After a couple of minutes the discs were then lost from sight to the north-northwest. [57] Interestingly, a sighting came from 140 miles west of there near Sioux City, Iowa, just 30 minutes later. The witnesses, H.F. Angus and his wife, saw a silvery disc move rapidly to the south at high altitude. [58]

Around 5:30 P.M. CST motorist Mrs. E.D. Butts, her husband, and son all observed a bright object fly low over St. Joseph, Missouri. Traveling relatively slow, it headed southward. They described the event just as if they were looking at the sun peering through the overcast on a very cloudy day or like seeing a bright moon. But the day was very cloudy, too cloudy to be the moon. And because the object appeared from the north and moved continually to the south, it came nowhere near where the sun was positioned. [59] Another family, Mrs. HJ. Beckmeyer and her brother E.W. Brown, in St. Louis accounted a similar story that afternoon but in this case they saw three bright discs. [60]

At 8:05 P.M. PST Mrs. Sidney B. Smith in Seaside, Oregon, added to the growing lists of reports when she observed a round silent object pass over very high, just east of the city. [61] An hour and two minutes later Frank M. King, his wife, and their three guests, watched an oval gleaming disc fly over San Leandro, California, at great speed between 4,000 and 5,000 feet headed on a northerly course. [62] That day the Associated Press reported dozens of such flying saucer sightings from Vancouver, British Columbia, to El Paso, Texas. The stories all had similar characteristics—involving fast moving objects shaped like discs or saucers, traveling south at high rates of speed. They made little or no noise and each of the objects were said to have a surface that gave

off a blinding reflection from the sun. [63]

Monday 30 June

Occasional mention has been made in this text about Edward Ruppelt. He is of such interest because his landmark book, The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, documents not only the great UFO flap of 1952 but also gives many insights on the 1947 saucer wave. This is ironic because during the summer of 1947 Ruppelt hoped he had seen the last of the Air Force. In WWII he served a long stint as a bombardier and radar operator during the entire B-29 bombing offensive against Japan. He certainly had earned his GI bill that he was then going to school on—having survived some hard combat and winning a fist full of medals the hard way. Now he was working just as hard toward a degree in aeronautical engineering at Iowa State College—a happy civilian.

That day Ruppelt was in Yellowstone Park, enjoying the first lazy holiday in a long time. That's when he heard the new word "flying saucer." Just outside the lodge kids were sailing paper plates into the air yelling "saucer, saucer!" He soon read the news reports which filled him in on the unusual phrase, but little did he realize that three years later he would be back in the Air Force as project head of UFO investigations in Dayton. [64]

One of the first sightings Ruppelt read about came out of Idaho on Monday the 30th. It began at 2:30 P.M. MST when several observers saw a flight of eight to ten objects in a V formation near the town of Hailey flying toward Galena Summit. Witness Walter Nicholson stated that the left wing of the V formation contained five disc-shaped objects in perfect line but the ones on the right "seemed to weave." [65] Forest ranger Hunter Nelson, who was marking trees with Nicholson three miles from

Galena Summit, counted seven to nine objects in the V formation.

He stated that they were moving extremely fast and were as high as 10,000 feet heading northeast. Although both men said the objects were so high that they only looked like shiny specks in the sky, they told UFO researcher Dr. James McDonald years later that they had never seen anything like it before or since and were positive they had not seen conventional aircraft. Both men stressed that point, stating that they flew "much faster than any aircraft of that day." [66]

That evening, J.P. Grumpier, a Rogers, Arkansas, real estate dealer, watched the approach of a strong wind storm. As he stepped out onto his porch, the clouds became even more dark and ominous. Suddenly a disc appeared out of the northwest and vanished rapidly into the southwest. [67] Although it is hard to determine a definite time for this report another disc sighting was documented at 6:00 P.M. CST in Tupelo, Arkansas. In that case the postmaster, T.A. Morris with Alien Jones and Oscar Jones, observed a silver disc fly toward the northeast at a high rate of speed and great altitude. [68]

Actually there were many accounts to come out of the South that night. For example, a round bright object flashed westward over Knoxville, Tennessee, at 8:00 P.M EST. [69] Then at 9:30 P.M. C.E. Brehm, acting president of the University of Tennessee, observed with his wife a bright fiery object resembling "a long cylinder" move at terrific speed across the sky in several seconds as it left "in its wake a shower of sparks." He told authorities that "I've seen many a falling star, but never one that behaved like this thing. It was high in the sky, though much lower than the stars." [70] Local residents, Mr. and Mrs. Bellam, saw a similar spectacle. Mr. Bellam, who worked at the Oak Ridge nuclear facility, agreed with the other witnesses and refused to dismiss the sighting as an astronomical event because the altitude of the object was described as relatively low — in one case 5,000 feet or less. [71]

On the 30th disc sightings also came from Arizona, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Massachusetts, and Ohio. [72]

Tuesday 1 July

On the first day of July Robert E. Johnson, the county juvenile probation officer in Tucson, Arizona, reported seeing a disc-shaped object fly northward over the Pima Indian Reservation at 9:30 A.M. MST. Johnson stated that it appeared to be silver in color and moving at great speed at 5,000 to 10,000 feet. He described its flight characteristics as fairly smooth and direct, remaining in view for three minutes. [73] By 11:00 A.M. CST two shiny objects were seen traveling south, very high and fast over Indianapolis, Indiana. [74]

Much further west Mrs. Herbert Balliet and her husband then reported seeing two groups of flying discs at 11:45 A.M. PST fly right over their new house in Portland, Oregon. They said the second group contained ten to twelve objects and flew low over the foothills near the Columbia River. [75] At noon Mrs. R.A. Hunt of Madras, Oregon, saw six "aluminum" colored saucers circle high overhead. [76] Forty-five minutes later another Oregon woman and others in the Astoria, Fort Stevens area told of seeing a bright shiny object for 15 minutes moving toward the Columbia River in a northerly direction. A local welder saw that same object—it being so bright he noticed it through his dark welding glasses. Then other observers saw the objects and their concern led to phone calls

to the Army at Fort Stevens and the Coast Guard at Port Adams. Officials from those facilities, however, stated that they had noted no unusual activity. [77]

For some reason Oregon seemed to be a real hotbed of saucer sightings that day. An interesting report came from Mrs. Walter Clark as others in Pendleton spotted saucers in a formation of six to eight objects that afternoon. [78] At 12:45 P.M CST a Dallas, Texas, man, Tom Dean, traveling between Dallas and Fort Worth said he and his wife and daughter saw a disc-shaped object "going like blue blazes from northeast to southwest at cloud level." Dean recounted that it resembled a flattened-out balloon as it zoomed by in a matter of only fifteen seconds. [79] Further north in Canada on Prince Edward Island, Dr. and Mrs. C.K. Gunn with two friends saw a strange luminous object traveling at great speed high in the sky. [80] Also in Canada over Edmonton, Alberta, at 3:00 P.M. MST, Mrs. A. Olson reported seeing a "silver-colored" craft heading southeast at a great speed. [81] That night in Wallaceburg, Ontario, Ray Stevens spotted a disc flash by with bright luminous flames heading south at 8:45 P.M. EST. [82]

In Albuquerque, New Mexico, Chamber of Commerce official, Max Hood, reported "a disc-like bluish object following a zig-zag path in the northwestern sky." Between Wilmington and St. George, Delaware, a man observed five oval objects with two short protrusions on their trailing edges. [83] (In some of Loedding's investigations he took particular interest in any such notation of control surfaces as in this account and that of Fred Johnson's

sighting on June 24th.)

Between 8:45 and 9:58 P.M. EST three reports came out of North Carolina and one from Kentucky and one from South Carolina. In each case one luminous saucer-shaped disc was reported moving rapidly overhead on a southerly course. [84] That same night at 10:10 P.M. CST US meteorologist, E.E. Unger of Louisville, Kentucky, told of seeing a circular object flying through the air as he left a neighborhood theater. He said it moved at least 100 miles an hour and gave off an orange light as it headed toward the southeast. [85]

By July 1st Washington DC time, a radar operator at Chitoze AAB, Mokkaido Japan, detected a target traveling at a speed in excess of 600 miles per hour. This became one of the first notable radar targeted UFO events as the object could not be attributed to any natural occurring phenomenon. Alfred Loedding was later called to Washington to consult on that particular case. Pentagon Intelligence concluded during the meeting that it must have been some type of manned "aircraft" because it made four changes in heading while on the scope. The event certainly caught the eye of Pentagon brass because very few aircraft at that time could reach speeds of 600 miles per hour. In the intelligence report, however, a Major Farrier is quoted as stating that the USSR was then known to possess a jet fighter capable of speeds in that range. [86]

On this date or near it, passengers and a ship's officer on the SS Llandovery Castle had a very disturbing sighting. At 11:00 P.M local time, while in the Madagascar Straits, they observed a cigar-shaped machine fly parallel to the ship just twenty feet above the water. It shined a searchlight-like beam on the water 50 yards from the ship. After a short while the craft flew out of sight without making a noise, but emitted "fierce flames" as it accelerated away. Passengers stated that it looked to be of entirely metal construction with a blunt end and no sign of windows. Although the most remarkable facet of the account involves the size of the UFO—described as four times the length of the ship and about four times its height! [87] Descriptions of "cigar-shaped" craft, sometimes of huge size, have become the second most common feature of unidentified flying objects sightings from 1947 and continuing on to this day.

Back in the United States, disc sighting on the 1st also came from Cincinnati, Ohio; Roxbury, Massachusetts; Morrisonville, Wisconsin; Detroit, Michigan; Arkadelphia, Arkansas; Pocatello, Idaho; Phoenix, Arizona; and Salt lake City, Utah were 60 to 70 saucers were seen flying erratically overhead at great height around noontime! [88]

Wednesday 2 July

Something very unusual crashed in the desert near Roswell, New Mexico, on or near the evening of July 2nd. To date the Air Force is still covering up what really happened. Since 1947 they have released four different versions of the incident, the first stating that a "flying disc" had in fact crash landed. Then a weather balloon was blamed, but in 1994 they claimed the weather balloon had been used as a cover story for what was actually the crash of a high altitude "Mogul balloon."

Mogul balloons were part of an extremely secret project designed to scan for shockwaves in the upper atmosphere, indicating possible Soviet nuclear testing. The only problem with this scenario is that although two Mogul balloons definitely did go down near Roswell, the records of the Air Materiel Command show that these incidents occurred only on June 7th and July 5th. Aside from that, recently declassified FBI files clearly show that the Mogul project was know of (by name) even by low level intelligence units.

By the 6th of July the nearby 509th bomb group was already notified of an aircraft crash of some sort on a nearby sheep ranch. Manager of the ranch, W.W. (Mac) Brazel, had reported the incident to the sheriff's office by the 5th, stating that he found a wide area of aircraft-like debris on the morning of the 3rd following a severe storm the night before. (Other accounts state Brazel found the debris in mid June, and still others place his discovery on the 4th of July.)

Today there are many sensational stories circulating about the Roswell Incident. Most are to the effect that the propulsion unit of one or two flying saucers (perhaps after a collision) exploded and showered-down the debris found by Brazel. The main body of at least one disc is said to have then crashed, complete with four occupants, 75 miles northwest of Roswell. While there are a remarkable number of collaborating stories from many of those known to have been involved in the incident, there is no physical evidence to substantiate their claims.

40. Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

Recently the Air Force posed its fourth explanation for Roswell, stating that test dummies dropped from a high altitude aircraft accounted for the mysterious alien bodies. The problem this time is that the exercise occurred more than twelve years after the supposed incident. And it is no coincidence that the Air Force made this recent revelation on the morning of the 50th anniversary of the Kenneth Arnold sighting—completely overshadowing that historic event.

Recent discoveries of government documents confirming a saucer crash and even an autopsy film have not been authenticated. These tidbits of evidence, known as the MJ-12 papers and the Santilli film, are nevertheless very intriguing. One thing that makes them so remarkable is that, if they are fakes or hoaxes, they have been done at tremendous expense utilizing exceptionally specialized skills. Some have even speculated that the most frightening scenario of all would be if the Roswell "evidence" was a fake. If so, who or what group would have the finances and resources at their disposal to produce this kind of disinformation, and why? And contrary to popular belief, no UFO hoax has ever produced a profitable outcome for anyone.

Few believe the sensational stories, but something very real is known to have been collected from the desert by the 8th Army Air Force 509th composite bomb group based in Roswell. This is

startling for that reason alone because the 509th was the only squadron then in existence authorized to carry atomic weapons. Whatever crashed near this high security nuclear base was then flown to Carswell Army Air Force base in Fort Worth, Texas, and then to Wright Field (renamed Wright-Patterson AFB by 1948) in Dayton, Ohio.

In all likelihood the commanding officer of the 509th, Colonel William "Butch" Blanchard, who authorized the release of the "disc crash" story by July 8th did not initially realize the implications of the event. When his intelligence officer Major Jesse Marcel told him they had found the scattered debris of a flying disc, Blanchard probably first thought of a balloon crash or some such explainable event. The Arnold story was only eight days old and still being talked about. On the evening of July 2nd, local retailer Dan Wilmot even had a saucer sighting. In 1947, however, flying discs or saucers had not yet assumed the image of extraterrestrial visitors that they have taken on today. Almost everyone then took it for granted that flying saucers were research balloons or military experiments of some sort. Colonel Blanchard probably innocently thought their recovered disc would be just one more story added to the many already being reported in the news media.

If the debris did come from something terrestrial, but secret, it would make sense that General Roger M. Ramey, commander of the 8th, would have then retracted Blanchard's disc story with a weather balloon explanation. It

would make all the more sense if it was not just a low-level research experiment as Blanchard probably assumed, but a highly classified project, or a nuclear accident, or perhaps even something of Soviet origin. This would conceal the indication of any such event and thus prevent public embarrassment at a time of mounting Cold War tensions. It would also conveniently and completely defuse the situation—which it immediately did.

Leased Wire
Associated Press

Roswell Daily Record

RECORD PHONES
Business Office 2288
News Department
2287

Movies as Usual

GRAND

RAAF Captures Flying Saucer On Ranch in Roswell Region

Claims Army Is Stacking Courts Martial

Indiana Senator Lays Protest Before Patterson

House Passes Tax Slash by Large Margin

Defeat Amendment By Doman to Remove Many from Rolls

Security Council Paves Way to Talks On Arms Reductions

No Details of Flying Disk Are Revealed

Roswell Hardware Man and Wife Report Disk Seen

Ex-King Carol Weds Mme. Lupescu

Some of Soviet Satellites May Attend Paris Meeting

Roswellians Have Differing Opinions On Flying Saucers

American League Wins All-Star Game

Miners and Operators Sign Highest Wage Pact in History

Press officer Lt. Walter Haut received authorization by Col. Blanchard to release the following story.

Of course, in order to accomplish that goal some very high ranking pressure from the Pentagon had to be placed on the owner of the local radio station, warning that his federal broadcasting license would be immediately revoked if he did not cease covering the story. Coercion was also used on local civilian witnesses who were, in certain instances, threatened with violence if they did not refrain from talking about the incident. Mac Brazel, in fact, was held incommunicado by intelligence agents for over a week. He went to his grave fearing to tell even family members what he had learned.

While such events show something very important was definitely being covered up, they do not suggest a crashed spaceship. Nor do they disprove the theory. Whatever went down in the desert near Roswell on July 2nd was something that Washington, for what ever reason, seemed to know a lot about

by the 8th—the same day Blanchard innocently approved release of the story during his haste to get ready to begin his leave. To his immediate regret, he received a "blistering rebuke" from Deputy Army Air Force Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Hoyt S. Vandenberg. Maybe Vandenberg was just tired of hearing more crazy reports about flying saucers, or maybe he already knew what had happened.

Yet if a spaceship of some kind had actually crashed, especially if it was in as many pieces as witnesses first claimed, months would have transpired before anyone would have become fully aware of what they had. Even if they had recovered an intact section from a second crash sight—would there not be at least a brief period in which the military might speculate about a Soviet connection only if they theorized it may simply be a communist hoax to perpetrate disinformation or panic? How long would it take for scientists in 1947 to identify crash debris far in advance of current human technology—if indeed some was recovered?

Whatever went down near Roswell was identified by the chain of command quickly enough to stop it from becoming public knowledge. That fact is clear. Someday, perhaps soon, the story will finally come out. [89] Perhaps a spaceship did crash that stormy July night. Playing devil's advocate, it would certainly answer many questions—the most perplexing surrounding the question why discs sightings increased so dramatically by July 4th. Perhaps there was a reason for the saucers to come out that day and up through July llth. Were they, in other words, looking for a missing disc? Is that an over simplistic hypothesis?

More conventional UFO reports for this date are now being discovered by researchers. Flying disc reports, for example, came in from various parts of the Columbus, Cincinnati, and Springfield, Ohio, area. [90] (In Cincinnati that evening at 8:00 P.M. EST over a hundred spectators at a baseball game saw two disc move slowly over the field. [91]) Discs popped up in Lewiston, Idaho; Hot Springs, Arkansas; Royal Oak, Michigan; Rutland, Vermont; DeKalb and Texarkana, Texas; and Denver, Colorado. [92]

A sighting that day comes from Tehama County, California, rancher Stanley S. Teass who reported seeing a group of eight to nine strange objects flying south at high speed near Red Bluff. [93] Other sightings came from California at 2:15 P.M. PST in both San Francisco, and East Los

Angeles, and then that night in Huntington Park at 7:10 P.M. PST, and Pasadena at 8:00 P.M. EST. Still more came from Beverly Hills, Montrose, Tuyunga, and Burbank, California. [94] (The 2:15 event involved State Highway Patrol Sergeant David Menary, of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge detail and passenger Walter Castro. They reported seeing six bright metal objects "about the size of a football" whiz overhead and fall into the sea.) [95]

That same evening two reports came from Sioux City, Iowa, describing three brightly luminous saucer-like flying objects moving in close formation to the southwest. [96] One disc was then seen over Green Bay, Wisconsin, at 6:30 P.M. CST. [97] Finally at 8:00 P.M. PST, Mrs. Margaret Gill observed a "red ball of fire" fly over just south of Auburn, Washington. Two other women, Mrs. Zamora Lucas and her mother witnessed the same sight, thinking it was a burning aircraft. In fact, all three witnesses were convinced the craft was in distress because they said the object appeared to fall to earth. [98] A report in Oregon at Klamath Falls conveyed an almost identical account. [99]

Thursday 3 July

By the 3rd, flying saucer reports slowly started to increase in frequency. Beginning in Omaha, Nebraska, at 3:30 A.M. CST Mrs. Fred C. Nelson saw three objects "glowing like a full moon." [100] At dawn in Texarkana, Arkansas, a bus driver and a fireman reported seeing one disc high above them. [101] Around 9:00 to 10:00 A.M. EST that morning up to 100 fishermen saw eight disc-shaped objects maneuver wildly in the clouds over Conowingo Dam in Pennsylvania. [102]

44. Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

At 10:30 A.M. EST in Lockland, Ohio, a man saw a football-shaped silvery object heading south at high altitude. [103] By 7:45 A.M. PST a Monterey, California, housewife observed a glowing round object "flow over onto its edge" as it flew by in the course of ten to fifteen seconds. [104] In Denver, Colorado, at 8:55 A.M. MST William F. LeFevre witnessed a shiny, mirror-like disc zoom by at several thousand feet and make a forty-five degree turn before vanishing toward the southwest. [105] At noon in Cincinnati, Ohio, a housewife caught a glimpse of three discs streaking overhead on a straight course. [106]

About the same time a Staten Island man, Nicholas Kronyak, observed a ball-shaped silver colored object fly over New York just astern of an aircraft while S.M. Barker saw three discs race eastward over Keokuk, Iowa. [107] Also over the noon hour, a circular object sped over Nampa, Idaho, with an undulating motion as witnessed by Charles Hughes and Clarence Faust. [108]

One of the best for this day involved an astronomer, John F. Cole, who observed at 2:30 P.M. EST ten luminous objects above Harborside, Maine, from his location on the eastern shore of Penobscot Bay. He estimated their speed between 600 and 1,200 miles per hour as they passed by in a hazy blue sky toward the northwest. Unlike other incidents, these objects flew with a loud roar and did not appear to hold any definite formation but moved along like "a swarm of bees." Their size appeared to be from 50 to 100 feet wide although two objects in the formation looked to have dark areas that may have been wings. [109] This event comprised one of the first files to make its way to Wright Field, via the Pentagon, and received careful attention by authorities including Alfred Loedding. Intelligence never discovered a reasonable explanation for what Mr. Cole saw that day over Maine and thus marked the case unidentified.

Later that day on the other side of the country a Redding, California, couple saw a shiny "flying triangle" zooming silently over their state toward the north. [110] An even more startling report came out of California at 5:00 P.M. PST. The incident took place at the Naval Auxiliary Station at Santa Rosa and involved trained observers. The story made quite an impact in the local newspaper when

one of those witnesses gave an interview:

I noticed it first a few minutes before 5 p.m., on Thursday. From my location, it seemed to be 1,000 feet above the main north-south runway at the airfield, and I would judge that it was 15 to 20 feet in diameter. . . it was impossible to judge size and distance accurately, because there was nothing about the object that enabled me to make an accurate approximation of size.

It was the shape of a giant pocket watch, without the stem, and it was covered by silver material that looked like airplane aluminum. There were no marks of any sort on the surface. It was perfectly smooth.

The object was moving at about the speed of a glider in normal flight attitude, and indeed on my first glimpse I automatically recorded it in my mind as a glider.

But an instant later I realized that there was something strange about it and looked back. Then I noted that it had no wings, no apparent projections of any sort.

It moved smoothly in a northerly direction until it reached the north end of the runway, then turned to the east, banking slightly and headed toward Santa Rosa. I was forced to turn my attention away from it for a moment, and when I looked again it was gone.

From my observation, I would believe that the object was controlled in its flight, either directly or by gyro-control. Its only deviation from a straight path was for wind currents, and after tipping or rising with a current it would recover its level flying position.

The recovery was made in much the same manner as a glider appears to recover when a thermal current forces one wing up or down. At the same time, the return to normal was accompanied by an overcompensation effect which is typical of gyro control." [111]

During the early evening an account came out of St. Maries, Idaho, when eight luminous discs were reported by Mrs. Walter Johnson and her family while she was visiting her parents. The sighting occurred at 6:30 P.M. PST when her father Ben Beeman had alerted the whole family to "come out of the house quick!" As they all ran outdoors the family of at least nine saw eight to nine large objects flying from the south in a scattered formation. Mrs. Johnson said they approached very fast and soon became silhouetted against a nearby mountainside.

Mrs. Johnson later told the press that "suddenly they stopped in mid-air, then started again. When they reached a point over a clearing in the timber, they stopped again and settled down a few at a time until they were out of sight. The mysterious part was that we could see them flutter down into the timber, and yet we couldn't see that they did anything to the trees." She went, on stating that they looked thicker than discs—actually more like washtubs but as big as a "five room house." The most interesting part of her account described self-luminescent properties. She said they glittered like a mirror in

the sunlight, but that the sun was apparently obscured by overcast—indicating the light came from within the craft.

Because over a half dozen neighbors also witnessed this sight, the event drew a great deal of attention. Benewah County sheriffs deputies made a land search of the area and three days later the National Guard's 116th fighter group combed the area by air. Despite these efforts no landing traces were ever reported. It is odd that this case never made it into Air Force files because Mrs. Johnson reported the incident to officials at the Spokane Army Air Base when she returned to her home in Dishman Washington." [112]

Further north that day at 5:45 P.M. ADT, Brenton Clark, a Canadian farmer near Augustine Cove, Prince Edward Island, witnessed a similar (single) bright round object zooming southward at

around 10,000 feet. Before disappearing from view it dove earthward leaving a vapor trail behind it. Neighboring farmer James Harris and hired-hand Herman Linkletter, near Sherbrooke, confirmed the same sighting. They commented that the craft they saw had such a brilliant reflection that its shape was indiscernible. Another neighbor, however, near Charlottestown, Ewen McNeill, clearly described seeing a "torpedo-shaped object of tremendous speed" at the time. [113]

That afternoon two Walkerton, Indiana, housewives saw several discs maneuver in circular movements. [114] Then in Arkansas, J.L. Hampton told newsmen he saw a kite-shaped craft going at great speed." [115] That same late afternoon Robert Jackson and William Baker, retired Navy Chiefs, saw three discs make controlled changes in their flight and circle near the San Diego Naval Air Station. [116]

By 5:30 P.M. EST in Greenhills, Ohio, a man saw a silver disc shaped like a football." [117] Around that hour in Asheville, North Carolina, four people noticed a star-like object at low altitude headed west. [118] At 5:00 P.M. CST a Waukesha, Wisconsin, city council member and two others described seeing a fifteen foot long, five foot wide, silvery disc fly high overhead toward the north. [119] By 7:00 P.M. EOT a District of Columbia housewife and her daughter saw another group of three discs. In this case they described them as bright gold and moving very fast in a straight line accompanied by a "jet-like

noise." [120] At 9:30 P.M. EDT Baltimore, Maryland, residents accounted for a sighting of a round object that was bright yellow in color and larger and faster than a falling star, heading on an even course from the northwest to the east over the course of five minutes. [121]

Around 9:00 P.M. EST in Mendon, Vermont, Mrs. Clara Spieski reported that she saw a tubular, luminous, greenish craft flying over low toward the southwest. [122] At 9:30 P.M. CDT a policeman, George Mayfield, west of Springfield, Illinois, reported seeing four flat luminous discs zoom by in straight flight. [123]

Adding to the nighttime sightings of luminous discs came reports from four people in Warren, Pennsylvania. [124] Then in Crawfordsville, Indiana, Kenneth Stanford reported five luminous discs going northwesterly at great speed. [125] Claude Price may have seen those same objects at that time in Decatur, Illinois. [126] By 10:30 P.M. CST a luminous disc appeared over Sioux City, Iowa, headed east as a yellowish disc was seen in Seattle, Washington, at 9:45 P.M. psr. [127] Ending out the night, a group of luminous discs were seen traveling over Oakland, California, by Mrs. Estelle DeVaughn at great velocity going east. [128]

Up to this time the military still had not yet organized any determined investigation at Wright Field of which researchers are aware of. Such work did not seem to begin until at least July 9th. News accounts, however, do show officials were considering the issue if only to issue a few and very contradictory statements. On July 3rd, as detailed in the Introduction, Army Major Paul Gay nor stated that a preliminary investigation had been dropped for lack of evidence. Then Boise, Idaho Statesman, reporter Dave Johnson wrote that the commander of the Air Materiel Command, Lieutenant General Nathan Twining, told him that officials were indeed looking into the matter of flying discs. Twining stated that even the top secret research conducted at the famous aviation labs at Wright Field had not produced technology comparable to that being observed. Continuing, he added that a "reputable scientist" had seen one of the discs and that his report is being studied. [129]

1. The pilot of the DC-4 reported seeing nothing unusual during his flight.
2 Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Case 10, listed as Incident 17 in 1947 era documents; and "'Flying Pies' Stir Skepticism," Hartford (Connecticut) Times, 26 June 1947.
3 Research conducted by Pierre Lagrange, 13, rue de Buci, 75006 Paris, France.

4 Ibid.
5. Herbert Strentz, "An Analysis of Press Coverage of Unidentified Flying Objects, 1947-1966" (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1970), p. 2.
6 Pendleton, Oregon, East Oregonian, 17 July 1947.
7 Loren E. Gross, UFOs: A History 1947 (Fremont, CA: By the Author, 1991), p. 8.
8 Interview with Donald Loedding. (Donald, is Alfred Loedding's son.)
9 Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Case 11, listed as Incident 68 in 1947 era documents; and thanks must be given here to Jan L. Aldrich for forwarding documents on the Portland prospector case which are not in the National Archives' Blue Book collection. (See Declassified FBI files and Fourth Air Force Files, "microfilm record 33764-1036," US Air Force Historical Agency, Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, Alabama.)
10 Project Blue Book Files, Roll 1, Case 12, listed as Incident 28 in 1947 era documents; and The (Portland) Oregonian, 26 June 1947.
11 "Flying Disks Are Seen Here," Richland, Washington Villager, 3 July 1947, p. 1; Portland, Oregon, Journal, 4 July 1947.
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13 Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, Index.
14 Kansas City, Missouri, Times, 28 June 1947.
15 "Flying Saucer Story Grows," The (Portland) Oregonian, 28 June 1947.
16 Salem Oregon Statesman, 27 June 1947.
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18 Chicago (Illinois) Tribune, 25, 26 June 1947.
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26 Salt Lake City, Utah, Desert News, 30 June 1947.
27 Sante Fe New Mexican, 27 June 1947.
28 Seattle, Washington, Post-Intelligencer, 27 June 1947.
29 Cincinnati, Ohio, Enquirer, 6 July 1947.
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32 United Press news article, 28 July 1947.
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34 Randle and Schmitt, UFO Crash atRoswell, p. 18.
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36 Oklahoma City Times, 27 June 1947.
37 Toronto, Canada, Daily Tribune, 8 July 1947.
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39 Albuquerque, New Mexico, Journal, 29 June 1947.
40 Los Angeles, California, Times, 28, 29 June 1947.
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46 Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Case 16, listed as Incident 53 in 1947 era documents; and thanks again goes to Jan L. Aldrich for forwarding a document that appears to be a lost file from the National Archives' Blue Book collection.

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Chapter Four
The Onslaught

Maybe it all could just be chalked up to fireworks, but on Loedding's day off on Friday, July 4th, Independence Day, a nationwide rash of saucer sightings hit the headlines. New Jersey residents started off the long list when "balls of fire silently darting through the air at high speed" were reported between 1:00 and 3:00 A.M. EST. [1] During those same early morning hours, further west, Mrs. B.B. Connor of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, saw a group of star-like objects fly through broken cloud layers. She described them as maneuvering in an erratic manner. [2] From sun rise to mid afternoon discs sighting came from Virginia, Idaho, Colorado, Texas, California, Louisiana, and Arkansas. [3]

At 11:00 A.M. PST a carload of people driving near Portland, Oregon, spotted four disc-shaped objects streaking past Mount Jefferson. Just before that Harry Hale, production manager of the Portland Oregonian, saw a shiny disc-like object in the sky west of Beaverton while driving to work that morning. [4] (Interestingly, around that same time a private pilot flying over Idaho saw a similar disc speeding toward Oregon as a V-shaped object was spotted by ground observers in Troutland, Oregon.) [5]

These were only the first few of many Oregon reports. The next came at 1:00 P.M. from a Portland radio station employee, Frank Cooley. He and many of his co-workers saw disc-shaped objects from the windows of the International News Service office in the Journal building. [6] Don Metcalfe, an employee at the nearby Oaks Amusement Park saw the same discs. His superintendent, William LeRoy, also saw them and made a report to police. [7]

Five minutes later a Portland policeman, Kenneth McDowell, had a sighting. While feeding pigeons behind Precinct House No. 1, he became surprised to see them suddenly startled away. McDowell looked up and to his

amazement observed five large oscillating discs, two going south, three east. They were traveling at a high rate of speed and looked like nothing he had seen before.

This prompted an all-car police alert to report any aerial objects. Five minutes later the first of many responses came back into headquarters. [8] At 1:10 P.M., for example, two Portland policemen in car 82 near Oaks Amusement Park, Walter A. Lissy and Andrew Fox, who were both civilian pilots and WWII veterans, reported six or seven "flat, round discs. They were flying at terrific speed in a straight-line formation" headed south within 30 seconds of one another. Lissy said they zig-zagged and made turns so sharp that he knew they could not be aircraft. Each of the objects headed east over the park at great height estimated as high as 40,000 feet. No engine noises or vapor trails were noted, but they did see "flashes" of light. The last disc "fluttered rapidly to the side in an arc" and they all appeared white against the clear blue sky. [9] In Car 13 officer Earl Patterson, at SE 82nd and Foster Road (three miles from Lissy), saw something too. He reported an "oval whitish aluminum-colored object" coming out of the west heading southwest at terrific speed at about 30,000 feet. Patterson, who was a former Army Air Force veteran, stated that it resembled no plane he had ever seen. [10]

Then harbor patrolman, Captain K.A. Prehn, boat pilot A.T. Austad, and patrolman Kent C. Hoff reported to Portland police headquarters that they had seen three to six oscillating, flashing discs. These were described as being "shaped like chrome hubcaps" traveling very fast and high at about

10,000 feet toward the south over the Globe Mills. The men were uncertain of the exact number of objects because the flashes from the objects were so bright that they could not stand to stare at them. They did agree that the objects wobbled and oscillated as they flew with turning and weaving motions. [11]

Numerous Portland citizens also reported sightings. At 2:00 P.M. "metallic discs glinting in the sunlight" were seen across the Williamette River near the Rose Island bridge. Picnickers and a woman pilot saw silvery "spinning discs." One woman at 4:30 P.M. described viewing an object like "a new dime flipping around" over the Sandy District. Two white or silver objects flew over Portland at 4:58 P.M. heading southeast, and a third passed over at 5:30 P.M. KOIN radio station employee, Frank Cooley, a former Marine Corps observer, confirmed numerous disc sightings around Portland throughout the day. Cooley, as stated, saw a formation of twelve discs himself as high as 20,000 feet at 1:00 P.M. He declared that they were "operated and

maneuverable devices," indicating that the objects were larger than many believed. He continued: "They plainly experienced maneuvers in the sky. . . At one time a number of the discs would get into formation and fly circles around another disc. It was hard to follow their behavior exactly because of the great height, their gleaming surface and their nature." [12]

In Milwaukie, Oregon, (due south of Portland) three discs in a line formation were observed flying in a northeasterly direction by State Police Sergeant Claude Cross during that 1:00 P.M. flurry of sightings. Also across the Columbia River from Portland near Vancouver, Washington, Clark County Sheriffs Deputies John Sullivan, Clarence McKay, and Fred Krives reported up to 30 such flying objects. Their sightings (which actually involved eight deputies but not Krives) began after hearing reports of flying discs broadcast on the police radio. The deputies then went outside of the sheriffs headquarters to have a look for themselves and soon caught sight of "round" objects flying over high and fast in a straight line toward the west and south. As they passed, a low humming noise could be detected. Witnesses told the International News Service that "they were there and no mistake about that." [13] They explained that the objects appeared in the southwest over the courthouse heading southwest at about 1,000 feet. The deputies saw numerous flights of discs—the first of which had seven objects in it. The tail end of that formation split off the main line to form a separate group rising above the others. They were described as disc-shaped with speeds approximating an aircraft. [14]

To date no has been able to determine exactly what all of these Portland and Washington State sightings represented. It should be noted, however, a flight of B-29 bombers followed by group of P-80 jet fighters did fly over Portland just before 1:00 P.M. at high altitude. Later, Army Air Force investigators made an assumption that they may have dropped "chaff strips of aluminum foil which were used in exercises and during wartime to jam enemy radar. This, in fact, may not be too far-fetched of an explanation as Burl Nolisch of 6604 North Burrage Street did tell reporters that day that he saw an aircraft fly over at 1:00. He mentioned this fact only because he saw pieces of aluminum foil swirling around afterwards—assuming they may have been dropped by the aircraft. [15]

Elsewhere in the country that afternoon at 3:00 P.M. MST, 38 miles south of Great Falls, Montana, Mr. and Mrs. Curt Dennis were enjoying the holiday by fishing off a bridge. Then, as in so many other cases, they were attracted by a flash in the sky. Above them twelve silver-colored objects flew over in a

single file formation headed northwest. [16] On the Sacramento River near Broderick, California, another family was enjoying a picnic when a shiny disc appeared far above. Mrs. Clarence Henn and her son, Robert, commented at the time that whatever it was, its surface must have had a highly polished finish to reflect the sun so brightly. When the object did leave, it did not gradually move out of view, but just vanished. [17] In Pocatello, Idaho, that afternoon R.A. Seymour observed seven high-flying star-shaped or spoked discs revolving around their own axis. They moved in steady flight, about four times the speed of a conventional aircraft. [18] In Richland, Washington, Mrs. Nordman saw a similar "flying disc" zoom northeast with a "turning motion." She commented that it was only by chance that she glanced up to see it—indicating the craft emitted no noise [19]

Two separate disc sightings came at 6:20 P.M. EST from Charleston, South Carolina, then one from T.L. Huckaby in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, describing a grayish "wash tub" shaped object. Also in Arkansas, near Fayetteville, farmer Henry Seay had his livestock badly spooked by three low flying yellow discs. [20] In Santa Monica, California, at 5:00 P.M. PST pilot Dan J. Whelan and another flyer, Duncan Underbill, witnessed a "flying saucer" 40 to 50 feet in diameter "catapulting across the sky" at about 450 to 500 miles per hour toward the northwest on a steady course at 7,000 feet. [21] After a similar report from Mr. Nova Hart near St. Louis, one came from the Clark County Building Inspector of Las Vegas, Nevada, O.J. Morling. He stated that he and his wife saw up to two dozen "discs" pass over in a loose formation. They estimated the objects were traveling at about 100 miles per hour, at 500 feet of altitude heading toward the northeast.

Private pilot Raymond Harris also saw saucers over Nevada. From his 150 Voyager he and a friend observed five discs below them—so bright they were hard to look at. He turned his aircraft to give chase but could not intercept the saucers which were zipping off toward the southwest. After the incident he described the objects to his father, a deputy sheriff, as circular and brilliant. [22]

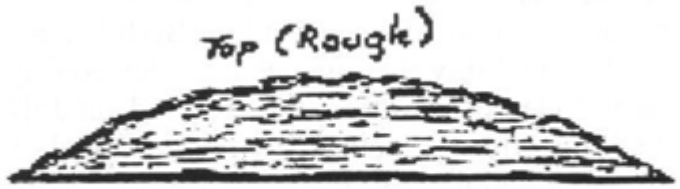
Around twilight at 5:30 P.M. PST while near his home in the Seattle

suburb of Lake City, Coast Guardsman Yeoman Frank Ryman captured a saucer on film. Initially he spotted it at a fair distance away, flying over the north end of Lake Washington. Before taking the photo he had a chance to view the disc through binoculars and estimated it to be traveling northward at about 10,000 feet - - - somewhere around 500 miles per hour. At least twenty other individuals watched with Ryman as he lowered his field glasses and replaced them with a camera. His photos were developed at the local military intelligence office but showed only a sharp point of light. The military attributed the image to a balloon, but the report, and its supporting evidence, is claimed to have been lost. [23] (Two other independent sets of observers in other parts of Seattle reported seeing multiple discs about a half an hour before Ryman took his photos.) [24]

That night an incident occurred which was second only to Arnold's sighting in terms of media coverage. Captain E.J. Smith and First Officer Ralph Stevens of United Airlines Flight 105 were the chief witnesses. Shortly after takeoff from Boise's Gowan Field at 9:04 P.M. MST, they observed from their DC-3 airliner five discs "silhouetted against the sunset in a loose formation." When Smith asked Stewardess Marty Morrow to come forward, she confirmed the observation. Ironically, before the crew boarded the plane, someone had asked them if they had seen any flying saucers—as the disc sightings were by then starting to receive more and more publicity. Smith snapped back with a smile that, "I'll believe them when I see them."

In that dark cockpit Smith remembered his famous last words as they watched the mysterious sight for several minutes as four more discs joined the group just as the original five faded from sight. The second group flew in a straight line formation of three together with the fourth one off by itself. Smith said "this group seemed to be higher than our flight path," [then at 7,000 feet] "and when they did leave, they left fast!"

The sightings lasted twelve minutes and covered 45 miles as the unknown objects moved in a northwesterly direction across Idaho. At one point Smith recalled that it looked almost as if some of the discs merged together. Reaching a cruising altitude of 8,000 feet, Smith had attempted to close in for a better look as the discs neared Oregon but could not attain an airspeed much above 185 miles per hour. At that point he contacted the nearest observer he could reach—the radio tower at Ontario, Oregon. The attendant there could not see anything, yet neither could the pilots by that point. The objects had suddenly sped out of the area at tremendous speed. [25]



This sketch depicts the only details the crew could definitely give to Intelligence officers—thin oval craft "smooth on the bottom and rough on top." Smith told the International News Service that the mysterious objects "were as big as an airplane but definitely were not aircraft." This sighting ended up in Air Force files as the third of nine in 1947 records to receive the sparingly-given designation "unidentified." Known as the United Airlines Flight 105 Case, it was second in fame only to the Kenneth Arnold Sighting during 1947. This would be only the first of four cases involving United Airline flights over the following six weeks.

Captain Smith and Stewardess Marty Morrow.

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The news media was already waiting at Pendleton for a scheduled landing of the plane because many people had overheard the radio transmissions back and forth between Ontario tower and Flight 105. As a result, the story became an immediate sensation. Both Naval Intelligence and Brown and Davidson from Army Intelligence interviewed Captain Smith.

The Brown and Davidson interview occurred on July 12th just after they had finished talking with Kenneth Arnold at the Hotel Owyhee about his incident. Arnold then invited them to his home for coffee and sherbet. While at Arnold's house they heard Smith was in Boise for a layover, so they all went out to the airport to talk to Smith and were joined by Dave Johnson from the Boise Evening Statesman.

Alfred Loedding probably would not have had the fine details of the interview via the Fourth Air Force until several months later. Coordination until at least September of 1947 was very haphazard, not only between the 4th AAF but with Dayton and Washington. Yet, because he was a Pentagon liaison, Loedding probably knew more at any one given time that summer than any single group doing investigations. Edward Ruppelt later wrote about those days:

> **At first there was no co-ordinated effort to collect data on the UFO reports. Leads would come from radio reports or newspaper items. Military intelligence agencies outside of ATIC [Dayton] were hesitant to investigate on their own initiative because, as is so typical of the military, they lacked specific orders.**
>
> **When no orders were forthcoming, they took this to mean that the military had no interest in UFO's. But before long this placid attitude changed, and drastically. Classified orders came down to investigate all UFO sightings. Get every detail and send it directly to Wright Field. The order j carried no explanation as to why the information was wanted.**
>
> **This lack of an explanation and the fact the information was to be sent directly to a high-powered intelligence group within Air Force Headquarters stirred the imagination of every potential cloak-and-**

dagger man in the military intelligence system. Intelligence people in the field who had previously been free with opinions now clammed up tight. [26]

On that same night the manager of the Idaho United Press and a fifteen-year veteran reporter, John C. Corlett, had a sighting that seemed to confirm the presence of something strange near Right 105.

While relaxing at home in his garden, he and his wife with their dinner guests, famed Boise artist V.H. Selby and his wife, all had a disc sighting. It occurred around the same time as Captain Smith's encounter when the couples observed a white disc zoom across the sky in a matter of just seconds. The object came from the northwest and traveled southeast as it passed

silently overhead at an altitude of about 10,000 feet in a clear sky. [27]

Earlier that afternoon in Idaho, disc activity had been observed near the Twin Falls area. [28] Between 2:30 P.M. MST and 3:10 P.M. three groups of discs ranging from twenty to nine objects were seen by over sixty persons enjoying the 4th of July celebrations in the local park of Twin Falls. [29] At 7:00 P.M. PST as many as 200 people observed a disc at Hauser Lake, Idaho, just a few miles northeast of Spokane. George Aster described that event, stating, "I pointed it out to the others and they all stood around and followed it for about 30 minutes while it hovered at about ten degrees above the horizon." The witness saw the craft while celebrating the holiday at the lake and agreed that it must have hovered at about 20,000 feet until an aircraft came into the area and all of a sudden it shot straight up into the sky and vanished in "a fraction of a second."

Observers gave a host of physical descriptions ranging from a shiny aluminum disc-shaped craft to having the appearance of a silver dollar approximately 30 feet across. UFO researcher Dr. James McDonald tracked down George Aster in 1967 and confirmed the details of this remarkable event. He also learned from the interview that while the disc had hovered, it slightly wobbled. Aster said that this behavior completely discounted in his mind the possibility the object was an aircraft—due to these peculiar lateral oscillations. [30]

The Independence Day Sightings may have just been due to mass hysteria. Although contrary to popular belief, many people who reported "flying saucers" on the 4th had not yet heard the term. Soon, however, the phrase would become a household word as hundreds started seeing an onslaught of flying saucers.

56. Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

Saturday 5 July

UFOs proved even more persistent the day following the Independence Day Sightings. In Augusta, Maine, at 1:15 P.M. EST dozens of reports came into the Civil Aeronautical Administration describing unidentifiable flying objects over the city—all heading in a northerly direction. Dan Kelly, program director at the local radio station WRDO, personally saw twelve of the discs.

By 8:00 A.M. PST on the other side of the country in Sacramento, California, Dr. A.K. Carr had a remarkable sighting of two disc which may have been seen by others shortly afterwards. The local newspaper detailed this his sighting:

They came in from the west, Dr. Carr said, one was at about 10,000 feet, I would say and the other was traveling at about 10,000 feet, I would say and the other was traveling at tremendous speed at about 5,000

to 6,000 feet. We could see streams of vapor behind them. The lower one continued in an easterly direction, but the other, which I was observing through 12 power field glasses, banked sharply over the city and flew north. It seemed to stand on one edge as it turned. [31]

Just 30 minutes later two similar discs were seen far to the south near Dana Point, California, by Mr. and Mrs. John K. Street. Street was an insurance company executive and he and his wife were spending the weekend at the beach side town enjoying the long holiday. At the time of the incident they were sight seeing just a few miles inland at the Capistrano Mission. Mr. and Mrs. Street described the objects they saw as two "saucer-like" craft which slowly flew up the canyon from the beach in a northerly direction toward the Capistrano Mission. [32]

Then about 50 miles north northwest of Dana Point two discs were once again seen by a third independent witness over Eagle Rock, California. Donald Levine, ten years old at the time, described them as yellowish and traveling at a high rate of speed flying straight toward the north. [33] About that same time a fourth observer just a few miles north of Eagle Rock saw disc-like objects over Glendale, California. In that case, however, observer Donald Dwiggins reported seeing four discs which changed shape and flew at 8,000 to 9,000 feet. [34]

A series of sightings occurred in Washington State around Spokane and Seattle that also involved independent observations of similar flying objects

between 10:45 and 11:00 A.M. PST. [35] In Covington, Kentucky, that afternoon, two women described seeing a flying saucer with "legs." Interestingly, that same day a Chicago woman reported an identical feature on a flying disc, stating: "it had legs." [36]

In Bethesda, Maryland, Jack LaBous, a visual artist, saw a very unusual flying object. He said it looked like a dome with an antenna protruding from beneath. This is of note because a Sioux Falls man described seeing an identical sort of disc the next day — also describing some sort of pole-like appendage sticking out of the bottom of the craft. [37]

Other reports on the 5th came from St. John, New Brunswick; Sherbrooke, Quebec; Port Huron, Michigan; Anaconda, Montana; Hollywood, California; Waterloo, Iowa; Akron and Cincinnati, Ohio; Portland, Oregon; South Bend and Huntington, Indiana; New Orleans, Louisiana; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Denver, Colorado; Seattle, Washington (where a "flying football" appeared); Wisconsin, Minnesota, Maryland, Connecticut, Utah, and Chicago, Illinois. [38]

Of special interest, around 11:00 A.M. PST in San Jose, California, Sergeant Charles R. Sigala of the Army Air Force said he and three others observed a "silvery" flying disc near his home. Sigala was on leave from Hamilton Field at the time and saw the object fly by in clear view. It circled around over some nearby mountains at about 5,000 feet, dipped several times, and then headed toward the sea. Sigala estimated the object to be as large as an automobile. [39] Further north in Albany, Oregon, at 3:20 P.M. PST ex-sailor Ted Tannish and his friend Bill Lemon observed a similar circular-shaped object rapidly flying south. They then watched it slow down before heading northward — finally disappearing into a cloud bank. [40]

At 7:00 P.M. EST TWA pilot Captain John L. Dobberteen and First Officer Frank Corwin, observed a strange looking object while over Neapolis, Ohio. They were on a ferrying mission from the East Coast with an empty airliner at about 4,000 feet when the unknown object came into sight. Both pilots described it as a "whirling fan blade" about the size of a small private plane and moving at an estimated speed of 200 miles per hour. The Captain stated that it definitely resembled no plane or auto gyro he had ever seen and felt it may have resembled a flying disc if seen from the ground.

Dobberteen deviated slightly off course and followed it for a short time before correcting back to a heading for their destination in Chicago. After landing Dobberteen made a point of reporting the incident to air traffic control as the event had occurred in commercial air lane space and he feared that the mysterious object may pose a hazard. [41]

At sunset, two miles north of Fayetteville, Arkansas, Henry Seay (who had a sighting the night before) claimed he saw a ten to twelve foot wide luminous disc briefly land on his farm! Very conservative and set in his ways, Seay described the event to UFO researcher Dr. James McDonald years later.

He had been driving his cattle toward the barn for milking at the time. As he moved them up a road leading to the milking barn, a disc-like object flew over him and showered down an array of sparks. The sparks landed on Seay's bare arms but did not burn. The whole incident, however, badly frightened his cattle. For the next ten minutes Seay scurried around attempting to gather them up—being more concerned about his livestock than looking at the bothersome disc. Finally getting them rounded up to drive back toward the barn, he saw the disc again. This time it had touched down between him and the barn at a distance of 200 yards across the pasture. As he gazed at the object Seay could discern a round flattened shape that was luminous but not too blinding to look at—just too bright to clearly make out any distinct edges. Within seconds the craft silently rose up vertically to almost 40 feet and zoomed off horizontally at a speed around 50 miles an hour. As it did so, it again dropped a shower of sparks which fell to the ground but did not seem to damage his nearby oat field. Only ashes were evident from the event and Seay could not even find a mark on the ground to prove where the disc had landed. Yet, like the night before, his cattle remained badly spooked by the whole event. [42]

We know that Alfred Loedding was investigating such landing cases by at least 1948—the files of which have never been released by the Air Force. [43] But there is no indication Mr. Seay was ever contacted by anyone other than Dr. McDonald, although Seay did say his neighbors saw the disc too.

That night at 10:30 P.M. EST many Canadian residents of Wallaceburg, Ontario, observed two large formations of luminous discs traversing a wide area of the nighttime sky. [44] Back east in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, Mrs. Jessie F. Willis reported that she saw eight blue flying discs heading in a northerly direction about 7:30 P.M. EST. She then observed others in groups of

twos and threes. [45] By 9:30 P.M. MST Mrs. Shirley Hefferon and her sister Lois Mae Gadbaw of Butte, Montana, saw several strange craft pass overhead in a northerly direction. [46] At 10:00 P.M. MST lights were reported on the horizon by Evanston, Wyoming, residents but these may have been attributed to searchlight beams from the fairgrounds in Salt Lake City. [47] By 9:45 P.M. EST Mrs. Scott Jones, daughter, and children witnessed a "shooting star" turn and float toward the Phillips Packing Company in Cambridge, Maryland. It then turned again in an opposite direction. [48] Around 10:00 or 10:30 P.M. PST in Longview, Washington, Mrs. Margaret Carter told of seeing a spherical, aluminum-colored object in the southwestern skies headed northwest." The object "dipped" several times while it was in view for up to five minutes. [49]

In Norwalk, Ohio, that night two Huron County farm families saw saucers. They noted that "one disc over-lapped the other and traveled in the opposite circular directions." [50] At 12:23 A.M. EST the next morning, a sighting occurred in Paterson, New Jersey. Across the country John Neisswanger of Eugene, Oregon, was returning home on a dark and lonely road about 12:30 P.M. MST. Suddenly, he became startled by a slowly-moving aerial object. His description compared it to a child's drawing of the sun with lines around it. He then stopped the car, and he and his wife and another passenger watched the weird phenomenon until it passed. [51]

Sunday 6 July

By the end of the long three-day holiday, flying saucer incidents were still increasing in number. That Sunday morning began with one of the most unique cases for the year. Following is a complete account by the witness of a remarkable UFO encounter in Omaha, Nebraska:

> **Although I am in the greatest of hurries, being on my way to Omaha to go to the bedside of a sick relative, I must hasten to write you a few lines to describe an incident that took place only a little while ago. My boy and I have been driving steadily since we left Seattle yesterday, and came into this city only a little over an hour ago. It was just daylight, and as we drove down Main street, I happened to glance down one side, and saw a disc about the size of a farm wagon wheel float lightly to the middle of the street, and come to a stop. Instantly I put on my brakes, but I had to back up to get**

> **into the street where this thing lit. It stopped for only a few seconds, but I did get a good look at it, for it was only about 30 yards away, and almost still. It was not a saucer, but a disk. This was surrounded by a tube that had an enlarged opening at one end, like a funnel, and ended in a tapered point at the other. In the middle of the disk I could make out a bulge, as if a plate had been welded on the disk, and there were two narrow strips of metal running almost parallel to each other above and below the midsection.**
>
> **I started to get out of the car thinking that this queer object would fall over and give a chance to examine it closer, but something was holding it up. Something held it upright, and then the strangest thing took place. The disk was being subjected to a number of short jerks, moving forward each time a foot or two. The funnel part of the tube was set into the disk's rim so that the latter could roll freely, and after moving a distance of about 20 yards it rose easily and began at once to climb. I thought for that it was transparent, but no, that was due to the reflection of the light. The sun was not yet up, but this shimmering effect marked the upward climb of the disk. Once it seemed to stand still in midair, spinning rapidly, then it veered of [sic] to what I would say must have been northeast, and soon disappeared from view.**
>
> **The entire incident lasted only about forty seconds. I went over and examined the place where it had landed, but it seemed to have touched the ground so lightly that it left no mark. I am convinced beyond doubt that the disk's flight was controlled, that it gave out signals indicating its position, and also that it is harmless.** [52]

About 6:00 A.M. EST that day near Miami, Florida, multiple unidentified aircraft were seen. Observers, Fred Walsh and his wife described them as "round, silver objects which were about ten to fifteen feet across." Those UFOs first appeared out of the Everglades and headed due south. [53] At 9:30 A.M. one disc appearing larger than an airliner flew over Tampa, Florida, headed southeast. [54] Then by 10:00 A.M. CST a similar disc was seen over Alexandria, Louisiana. In that case four people tracked the unusual aerial object heading northwest. [55] Four discs were seen about that time over New Orleans by US Army private Robert G. Hellman on leave from Camp Bliss. Hellman was on his way to his hotel room that morning when he spotted the discs high above Canal Street. He described them as flashing whirling colored saucers, pink and silver in appearance—flying in a V formation on a steady course. [56] And around that time of day sightings of more than one disc came out of Texas. [57]

Further west at 8:20 A.M. PST a veteran World War I pilot, Frank Tylman and his son, saw a disc shaped object while driving two miles west of Pittsburgh, California. Tylman sated that "It was shooting toward Mount Diablo. . . It revolved in a counter-clockwise direction, as we viewed it." Tylman estimated the height of the object at about 3,000 feet and definitely moving "faster than jet planes," although he did state that it approximated the size of a P-80 jet.

The object appeared "circular" and "it had a definite thickness, being curved outward on both

upper and lower surfaces." He went on explaining that unlike an aircraft, it left no smoke or vapor nor made any sound that could have been heard above the noise of his own car and the wind. The sighting lasted only 30 seconds as the disc soon disappeared into the southern horizon. [58]

As that notable day went on, eight saucers were seen near a mountain in Washington State and Francis Howell claimed one "landed" very briefly near Tempe, Arizona. [59] The military apparently collected a file on this particular incident, but researchers found only an empty file folder when allowed to review Air Force records on UFOs in the late 1960s. By 1976 when those files had been turned over to the National Archives, no indication of any kind remained that this sighting had ever been investigated. After talking to Alfred Loedding's son Donald, it is believed this may have been one of the "landing cases" he remembers his father talking about. 60

Earlier that morning at 10:00 A.M. MST well known University of Arizona football coach Niles (Mike) Casteel had reported seeing a flying disc pass over Tucson, Arizona. This same object was reported by Wallace B. Magness of the Air Materiel Command from Davis Monthan AAFB. When describing the incident to UFO researcher James McDonald in 1967, Magness characterized the object he saw as a round light—brighter than he had ever seen before. [61] Also in Tucson the same day, a highly respected attorney, Joseph Hendron, and his wife observed three "silver colored discs" fly over at about 5:00 P.M. Three other Tucson witnesses reported discs just 30 minutes before. Among them, was Walter Laos who estimated their speed at 200 miles per hour and altitude between 5,000 to 6,000 feet. [62] (Laos had an earlier sighting on June 22nd.)

Arizona is also of note because on the evening of the 6th a series of strange sightings began in Tucson describing large discs accompanied by a

62. Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

group of smaller objects. These were seen to merge with, and later separate from, the larger "parent craft." Amazingly, these same types of observations then moved clockwise around the circumference of the United States until almost the same time the following night. Cities accounting for sightings of "companion ships" associated with larger "mother discs" included Palmdale, California; Tacoma, Washington; Cicero, Illinois; and Manchester, Maine. [63]

Jumping back into the chronology of July 6th, at 1:00 P.M. Paul R. Bates, a passenger on an airliner ten miles southeast of Boise, Idaho, witnessed a "flying saucer" flash against a mountainous background. He called a stewardess, who ran back to try to see it, but by that point the craft had disappeared to the southwest. [64]

Only forty-five minutes later, at 1:45 P.M CST, an Army Air Force B-25 crew reported a similar sight during a flight from Ogden, Utah. It became one of the few incidents where a UFO was seen from above. Their plane was 100 miles west of Kansas City, Missouri, at 10,000 feet when the pilot, Archie B. Browning, caught sight of a very bright object. He described it as "shaped like the top of a water tank"—some 30 to 35 feet in diameter. Weather conditions were clear with unlimited visibility when the disc first came into view ten miles ahead and below the left side of the B-25. The UFO may have initially been hovering because as the pilot closed to within one or two miles, the disc began to parallel their eastward bound course and speed of 210 miles per hour. Browning turned toward the strange craft, which was climbing to 11,000 feet. Yet, just at that moment, it accelerated off at great srjeed and virtually disappeared.

Although this report found its way into numerous Air Force files and was periodically commented on over the years, it did not receive an unidentified classification. Today the case has a notation on it attributing the event to a possible "reflection." Actually many such cases were earmarked with astronomical or meteorological explanations simply because Air Force consulting astrophysicist Dr. J. Alien Hynek, hired in 1948, would make comments to that effect on the case files he reviewed for the military.

In other words, remarks of his alluding to only one possible explanation were often seized on to complete the paperwork on an open case file. It is quite true that in those early years Dr. Hynek did not believe that there was much to the disc sightings. He, in fact, felt it could all be attributed to simple "post-war nerves." But his rather careless examination of the early cases was not due to any intentional debunking on his part or conspiracy on the military's behalf. Unfortunately we have no real knowledge of the interaction between Hynek and Loedding. Loedding entered the picture before Hynek but

obviously would have been used to brief him once the Air Force contracted for his consultations. Hynek's overall role during the early days of UFO investigations, in retrospect, seems minor.

Yet it must be kept in mind that many of these sightings from early July were never investigated by the military—less than three to five percent. [65] There were simply too many to ever be tracked down and studied. For example, numerous sightings were reported around different areas of the country that day which at best were only gleaned through newspaper accounts by Loedding and other investigators. This is regrettable because some, like the following, occurred around the same time of day. These may have been proved to be connected in some way if they had been investigated as a whole. The best of these sightings took place from an aircraft around 2:30 to 3:00 P.M. MST over Colorado and Kansas and is detailed by the Bartlesville, Oklahoma, Daily Enterprise:

> **John Phillips, Jr., of Phillips Petroleum aviation department and Henry Barbarick, company pilot, were flying at 10,000 to 12,000 feet. "Phillips who was piloting the plane saw the first 'flying saucer.' He yelled to Barbarick who was reading maps, but Barbarick said the 'saucer' went by so fast that he was unable to see it.**
>
> **A few minutes later Phillips saw another one of the strange flying objects which he said looked like a large 'hangar door' on the horizon but again Barbarick was unable to catch sight of it.**
>
> **A moment later another appeared in front of the plane and then shot up and over the plane, and this time Barbarick caught sight of the object.**
>
> **Phillips said that at least nine of the 'saucers' [appeared] in a space of fifteen minutes. Both men said the discs were flying at such a tremendous rate of speed that they were unable to get a good look at them. They tried unsuccessfully to clock them once when one flashed by. Phillips turned the plane to get a better look at it, but it had disappeared by the time the plane came around.**
>
> **Phillips said the discs varied in size of a small plane up to a large transport. He said they looked saucer shaped with the front tilted up. He said they were definitely made of metal, since they glistened like silver in the sun. They appeared to be revolving, he said.**
>
> **Barbarick said that it gave you a feeling "like someone was shooting flak at you."** [66]

Also in that area of the country at 2:45 P.M. MST a metallic disc moving very fast was spotted over Denver, Colorado, while one appeared at the same time over south central Wyoming. [67] Fifteen minutes later and 100 miles to the

north at 3:00 P.M. MST Casper, Wyoming, residents Mr. and Mrs. G.W. Gibson had a sighting of a single glittering disc. [68] Simultaneously, a very fast disc appeared over Santa Rosa, California. Observers Calvin McEntire and his brother Jack thought it to be the fastest thing that they had ever seen. [69] Four other sightings of a single metallic disc took place in California around that same time in Long Beach, Mill Valley, Hamilton Field, and Fairfield-Suisun ArmyAFB. [70]

The incident at the Fairfield-Suisun base involved Army Air Force Captain James H. Burniston and his wife who spotted from their back yard an object traveling three quarters of the way across

the sky in a matter of only 60 seconds. He noted an oscillating motion to the mysterious craft as it traveled in a southeasterly direction at about 10,000 feet, rolling from side to side three times, with one side strongly reflecting the sun. As it rolled it became harder to see, suggesting the object was thinner in one dimension than the other. Its j size was compared to a DC-3 and because of other aircraft noises in the j vicinity, Burniston could not ascertain if the object emitted any noticeable -j sound. This case did end up in Air Force records and became considered by j investigators like Loedding to be one of the truly unexplained cases. To this day it remains officially stamped unidentified in Air Force Files. [71]

At 3:00 P.M. EST a Clearwater, Florida, woman reported "tumbling objects that looked like pie pans traveling very high in the air and at a very fast rate of speed." As the discs passed over on a west to southeast course, "trees bowed" from a strong gust of wind assumed to be caused by their passing. [72] At 4:00 P.M. CST, twelve people in Throckmorton, Texas, saw a disc that produced a "sizzling noise." [73]

An hour and a half later in Emporia, Kansas, a silent UFO shaped like a dirigible "floated" low over a wheat field. This object approached three women working in the field from the south, but then veered off slowly toward the southwest. [74] Only half an hour later at 6:00 P.M. EST two shiny disc-shaped objects zoomed over Cincinnati, Ohio, traveling south to north [75]

Proving to be the busiest day to date, the saucers' activities even made the front page of the New York Times and would do so for the next three days. UFOs also drew the attention of the military who had Army, Navy, and

National Guard aircraft patrolling the Pacific coast regions for flying discs despite what some officials feared were low fuel reserves. [76]

At Manhattan Beach, California, A.W. McKelvey flew a P-51 fighter on patrol over Van Nuys at 35,000 feet. Five P-51s of the Oregon National Guard cruised the Cascade Mountains and a sixth over Portland—all without success. A new P-80 jet fighter at Muroc Army Air Field and six P-51s at Portland stood ready, but no sightings occurred. [77] An Air National Guard air unit at Sioux Falls, North Dakota, had a little more excitement when a report came in of a "silvery disc with a short tail." One of its pilots on patrol that afternoon received the call to intercept, but he could not locate the UFO. Back in the northwest, the Oregon Guard put eight P-51s in the air and three A-26 bombers armed with telescopic cameras. General Irving O. Schaefer of Colorado's Air National Guard told reporters that he had his fighter planes on ;; standby ready to make an intercept at a moment's notice. [78]

Military intelligence units also began to meaningfully enter the scene, making files on some sightings and even conducting a few low level investigations. [79] On that day the Army Air Force intelligence group under the Air Materiel Command in Dayton, Ohio, did feel the need to make a statement to the press, but could only say it had not collected any "reputable information." [80] (Loedding at this early date may have not even been consulted about the sightings.) Then, for some reason, Major General Curtis E. LeMay made a statement. LeMay had been the famed leader of the strategic bombing campaign of Japan but by then headed up research and development of all new technology at the Pentagon for the Army. He gave no real insight to military thinking on the phenomenon, simply stressing that the reports were nothing to worry about. [81] Thus, by July 6th, it is still too early to document Alfred Loedding as being involved in any meaningful way with the disc inquiries. However that would soon change.

Anyone involved with military matters that weekend would have been very curious about all the reports which continued coming in on the 6th. By evening a disc appeared over Beverly, Massachusetts. That night in Massachusetts two very similar discs were seen in Wenham. [82] At 5:15

P.M. EST Patrolman Frederick Schlauch of the Elizabeth, New Jersey, police department told of seeing two "shiny objects" flying toward the northeast.

He had just finished changing a tire when he caught sight of the objects. Schlauch stated that they were very shiny and moved erratically. Schlauch compared them to "chrome plates" which were "diving in a fluttery fashion." He estimated the speed of the objects close to that of a fighter plane—around 400 miles per hour but stressed they "were not planes." [83]

In Washington D.C. at 8:40 P.M. EST, former Army flying Cadet Hazen Kennedy glimpsed an "orange-colored" object flying at 1,000 to 1,500 feet moving at over 1,000 miles per hour. [84] In Rochester, New York, at 8:30 P.M. EST Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Ohley observed from their back yard a white disc "zipping" eastward. [85] A man in Glen Falls had a similar sighting but noted red and blue fire-like lights on the object that he had seen. [86] In Valley Stream, New York that evening John Heathcote, fourteen years of age, saw three "plate-like" objects flying in a V formation toward the west. [87]

The night's activities continued with a sighting in Missouri at 6:00 P.M. CST near Mound City, when a Mr. and Mrs. Dunn and their children were taking a car ride with Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Hendrix and their children. The couples spotted what they described as a flying saucer about three to four miles east of Mound City. They then pulled off the road and Mrs. Hendrix noted that it had a silver hue and seemed to be of good size as it passed slowly toward the west. But after about five minutes an aircraft came into the area from the northeast causing the saucer to suddenly change direction and head off rapidly to the north.

Thirty miles away in Industrial City Mr. and Mrs. George Painter reported seeing through field glasses an odd object traveling very quickly to the east at high altitude. It looked like a shiny light from the ground, but aided by his binoculars Mr. Painter could make out a disc surrounded by "a dark shadow-like haze." Around 7:00 P.M. W.C. Miller of St. Joseph and five other persons observed a bright flying disc very high in the sky traveling in a southwesterly direction. They had it in sight for about two and a half minutes. Around that same time the J.E. Johnson family of the 2900 block of Jule Street reported a flying saucer traveling over from the northeast to the southwest. It remained in sight for about five minutes. [88] The C.D. Frank

family and Ernest Smith and his wife also saw a silver disc while driving south of St. Joseph at 7:00 P.M. [89]

At 7:45 P.M. Dr. Walter Hoefer, with his son and daughter, reported seeing six round oval objects flying just west of St. Louis. Mr. Hoefer stated that they silently flew south at a very high altitude. He was able to run and grab his binoculars before they were out of sight. With the aid of the field glasses he noted a light spot in the center of the objects. [90]

At that same time several miles away in Shrewsbury, Mr. and Mrs. George Willson and their daughter and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Downs reported seeing two groups of three discs zooming eastward. [91] Just to the east in St. Louis, Mrs. N.P. McDonald and her daughter Nancy and Mrs. Walter Simonds at Scanlon Avenue saw an eastward bound flight of six objects in two groups of three each. [92] Another St. Louis resident, Miss Lois Bogner, confirmed the same sight from Sutherland Avenue as did Leonard Coleman and his sister from another part of town at Pershing Avenue. [93] Finally, in Ferguson, Missouri, William A. Good and his wife saw a disc at that same hour. [94]

At 8::55 P.M. CST Staff Sergeant Ira L. Livingston in Birmingham, Alabama, reported that he and his neighbor, Herman M. Sockwell, and others noticed a round object in the western sky heading south in an arched flight path. After it passed, they observed six more, one at a time, traversing the same course. Livingston, who had 250 hours as a pilot and aerial gunner, estimated that the objects were traveling 500 to 600 miles per hour at around 2,000 feet with a dim glow.

The Air Force file detailing Livingston's sighting fails to make any mention of the vast multitude of other sightings simultaneously going on around the city and in that whole area of the country like those from Missouri. In fact, hundreds of other Birmingham residents observed discs as the local radio station logged as many as 400 calls on the strange lights between 8:00 and 9:00 P.M. [95] One Birmingham witness, Marvin Pharo, said the objects steadily increased in numbers and seemed to "go over the mountain" to the south. J.H. Chatham, a state mine inspector, along with his neighbors, described seeing "egg-shaped" fluorescent discs flying "fairly low against the mountain" outside of Birmingham.

68. Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

Other city residents like Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Martin described them as "saucer-like." Miss Connie Murdock on 512 South 10th Court Street observed nine objects that she could only characterize as "like gobs of light moving around in the sky." [96] Robert Crossland of the Birmingham Age-Herald captured two photographs of the strange objects. Army Intelligence did analyze the photos and agreed with professional Birmingham photographers that it represented "an actual image of the mysterious discs." [97]

Others back in St. Louis, Missouri, may have had still more sightings up to 8:00 P.M. CST. [98] As late as 9:30 P.M. at least one more Missouri report came in 50 miles to the south of St. Joseph. Filed to newspapers by S.D. Wilson of Independence, he told of spotting a "row of saucers" flying in single file in a northerly direction over Gardner Lake. They traveled at a high rate of speed in a straight line. Each appeared to have a bright light on their undersides. [99]

Aside from the various accounts of the disc sightings, the national media via the newspapers and radio were also running stories by the 6th on possible explanations for the phenomena. Many theories were expressed including a possible link to nuclear testing and even a suggestion the sightings could represent physical manifestations of signals from Mars. Most scientists, however, chose to ignore the subject and those that would comment, suggested a connection to military testing.

Two of the country's leading astronomers were quoted by the press on that point. Dr. Gerard Kuiper, head of the University of Chicago's Yerkes Observatory at Williams Bay, Wisconsin, and Dr. Oliver Lee, head of Northwestern University's Dearborn Observatory at Evanston, stated that the curious discs were "man-made" and probably "radio-controlled." Lee said that "the Army, Navy and Air Force are working secretly on all sorts of things." [100] Ironically, many in-the military by that date were themselves starting to wonder if some other branch of the service had an experimental test vehicle undergoing secret trials. Time, however, would prove no such domestic program ever existed. Although that was one theory the early investigators, like Alfred Loedding, had to examine.

Monday 7 July

Sightings were already worldwide by Monday. In England a clergyman's wife had her attention drawn skyward by "a dark ring with clear-cut edges"

speeding across the sky. [101] In Mexico five discs were spotted over Mexicali and two over Ciudad Juarez. [102]

Back in the United States at 2:30 AM. PST in Tacoma, Washington, two police officers saw glowing, turning, discs moving overhead on an erratic course. At first the objects would glow red, then turn purple, and work into a blue-white hue before returning to a red color. They noted one "central saucer" which appeared to act as a sort of "flagship." Around it, smaller saucers were said to make repeated "sorties" to the larger disc. [103] This same type of strange phenomena was then repeated by a woman in Palmdale, California. She also described seeing a "mother saucer" with a "bunch of little saucers playing around it." [104] At Riverside, California, an even more fantastic report came to light. There, a man stated that he saw six discs the size of small plates hovering over a power line while he was outside trying to find the cause of the static on his radio. [105] By 6:21 A.M. PST yet another case comes from Colton, California, where eight silvery "egg or disc-shaped" objects were observed silently flying by in a straight line. One of the craft was described as elliptical-shaped and "flashing." [106]

About two hours later a disc was sighted in Lawton, Oklahoma, headed west. Then just five minutes later near San Carlos, California, at 10:35 A.M. PST Stanley Miramon and his mother observed 30 strange objects circle overhead at about 2,000 feet. Miramon compared them to the size of an automobile and round and silvery in appearance. [107] By that afternoon near Glenn, California, two farmers harvesting barley noticed the sun reflecting off three "rows" of discs flying overhead. They estimated that there were at least twenty-five craft flying at great speed, moving with an up and down and side to side tipping motion. Before they passed out of sight the three row formation changed into a perfect V formation. [108] Still another sighting occurred near Sacramento:

> **William Smith, a photographer for the Bee, saw a round object which appeared to be tumbling over and over, alternately showing a dark and a bright side. It was unlike any plane he had seen as a former Naval aviator. He went for his camera, but when he returned it was gone.** [109]

Another very interesting article describes a disc sighting that morning

at the Rodgers Airport in Springfield, Missouri:

> **A flying saucer was spotted over Springfield yesterday by three observers at the Rodgers airport, a city policeman reported last night.**
>
> **The officer, Frank Walker, who flies a plane in his spare time, said he took off from the Rodgers airport yesterday morning, bound on a short pleasure cruise toward Ozark and back.**
>
> **Walker said his trip was uneventful, and he didn't sight any of the shiny discs personally, but when he returned to the airport later three friends who had watched his takeoff told of seeing an object "trailing" him for some distance.**
>
> **"They said it was flat-shaped and shiny," Walker said, "and that it appeared to have some sort of fins on it" The fellow who first saw it thought I was towing a target of some kind. Altogether, three persons saw it, I believe.**
>
> **Walker said the men told him the object appeared to be rolling over steadily. He said the observers reported that the discs followed him for some distance toward the northeast and vanished as Walker's plane turned toward the southwest.** [110]

In Los Angeles, California, pilot Vernon Baird, while flying a war surplus P-38 fighter for the Fairchild Photogrammetric Engineers Company, told of a very close aerial encounter he had with a UFO. Baird and an assistant, George Suttin, were mapping the region between Helena and Yellowstone Park for the Reclamation Bureau. They were at 32,400 feet traveling at 360 miles per

hour when a flying disc appeared 100 yards behind their aircraft. It had a pearl gray color and looked to be around fifteen feet in diameter and four feet thick with a type of plexiglass canopy or dome on top. When the disc started to overtake the P-38, Baird took evasive action, causing it to be suddenly buffeted with strong air currents or propwash. Baird believed the saucer may have broken up during the maneuver because after the encounter it appeared to split into two clamshell-like sections and lose altitude over the Tobacco Root Mountains of western Montana. [111]

Although unheard of at the time, many UFO reports in later years would describe similar aerial separations. Often appearing as if an aircraft had broken-up in flight—rather, they seem to indicate some sort of complex change or maneuver. Interestingly, after this sighting made headlines, the Fairchild Company became so inundated with phone calls that a plant spokesman soon stated the incident had never really happened and was just the result of some wild talk. But it was JJ. Archer, Baird's boss, who branded it a hoax, not Baird or Suttin. [112]

That is not an infrequent problem with UFO reports. After the fact, some witnesses, or their friends, will make a similar claim simply to put an end to the nuisance of public interest. Sorting out the actual reports from the hoaxes in such a case, especially after so many years, is often impossible.

Another air-to-air sighting took place that morning seven miles north of the Shreveport Municipal Airport. The Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, states:

> **Sgt. Marvin V. Thomas, 26, of Squadron K, Barksdale Field was flying when he saw a bright silver object shaped like a saucer. Thomas said that he flew toward the object for five minutes, and then veered to the right and left, trying to determine his distance from it but without success. It looked about the size of the moon and looked thin as it turned."** [113]

Boise Evening Statesman aviation writer Dave Johnson became keenly interested in such sightings. He was friends not only with Kenneth Arnold but came to know Captain Smith of the United Airlines Flight 105 Case too. In fact, up until 1953 when unnamed military officials suggested he tone down his enthusiasm, Johnson investigated many of the more significant UFO sightings. The following article is very revealing because it documents his first efforts to learn more about this strange phenomenon:

> **Idaho Newsman-Pilot Given 'Dream Assignment'**
> **'Get Picture of Saucers Or Bring One Back Alive'**
>
> **By DAVE JOHNSON**
> **(Idaho Statesman Aviation Editor)**
>
> **Boise—July 6--AP--FIew instruments this afternoon for a couple of hours with the Idaho national guard. A lieutenant colonel sat up in front and watched for discs while I struggled with the gauges and the radio beam. We got back into Gowen field's pattern, and the control tower called to report some people in Ontario, Ore., had told the CAA they saw some saucers wheeling through the sky. Now, there's one thing about these saucers. I've never seen one, so on the way home I dropped into the Statesman office with an idea. That was to take the Early-Bird No. 3, our airplane, and be up tonight and prowl around the airways, just looking.**
>
> **Gets Expense Dough**
>
> **I broached that to the city editor and blew the foam off of it, and a you-know-what look spread over his face, just like somebody had tossed a brick into a mud puddle. He talked for a few minutes and I listened. The upshot of it was that I walked out of the office with expense dough in my pocket and a date with Kenneth Arnold, the Boise man who two weeks ago saw the discs come roaring around Mt Rainier in Washington.**

I have one of those things called a general assignment. I'm going disc hunting with Arnold in the Statesman plane.

Started In Idaho

The city editor had said:

"Dave, I was just about to give you a call and discuss this damn saucer business with you. The thing started here in Boise with Arnold and it is getting out of hand. The wire services are moving more copy on it than any single story in years except the war, and no ' one knows any more about it now than when they were doubting this fellow Arnold who first reported seeing whatever it is that is being looked at, real or imaginary."

"As I said before, this business started in Boise and it is up to us if we can do it to help get it brought down to earth. I hope you can lasso one of the damn things and bring it in for display, but on the other hand, it might be a good idea to be ready to duck if you see something skipping along."

Dream Assignment

I might interject here that the boss doesn't fly.

"Crank up your airplane," he said, "and go up around the Hanford atom plant area in Washington and stay there until you either find something or give it up. See if this fellow Arnold wants to go along (he jumped at the chance) and take the best camera equipment you can find and stay as long as you want to."

Such an assignment- stay as long as you want to- is not to be accepted lightly. "Fly around that area," said the city editor, "because my hunch is that if these things can come from any place they are coming from some project like Hanford. The army has denied this possibility but the army has been making denials a major business for years. In one case an Army man said there's nothing to get excited about, "if there were anything to the saucers the army would have notified us."

Also... Good Luck!

If you see anything that answers the description—or the hundreds of descriptions-- grab a picture and high-tail for Boise." "Oh yes," he added. "Good luck to you."

They take the insurance out of my check.I phoned Arnold. We are taking off bright and early in the morning. Arnold has a new movie camera with a telephoto lens and we're fortified for pictures. From somewhere up in eastern Washington tomorrow night you'll hear from us, providing, of course, we don't run into something that proves these reports to be the McCoy and it runs over us.

The city desk says he'll stand behind us." [114]

Saucer sightings also came from Spokane, Washington; Cambridge, Massachusetts; Osburn, Idaho; Lakeview, Oregon; Rutland, Vermont; Wisconsin; and 17 cases originated in Illinois. [115]

A very notable incident on the 7th, for example, occurred around noon near Willow Springs, Illinois, when Robert Meegan and his 14 year old son John heard a buzzing noise overhead. They were working in the fields on their farm near the Des Plains River not far from the Argonne National Laboratories. Looking up they saw "13 round objects all going east, single file in a straight line." They described the objects as round with flat bottoms estimated about as big as a house and bluish-grey in color. They stated that the craft flew on a straight and level course toward the east. [116]

By noontime that day Deputy Army Air Force Chief of Staff Hoyt Vandenberg gave up any hope of getting to regular business. His entire day proved to be dominated by phone calls on the sightings. In fact, while at Hensley Field in Dallas, Texas, that afternoon, he stated publicly that the Army Air Force was receiving thousands of queries on the disc sightings. [117]

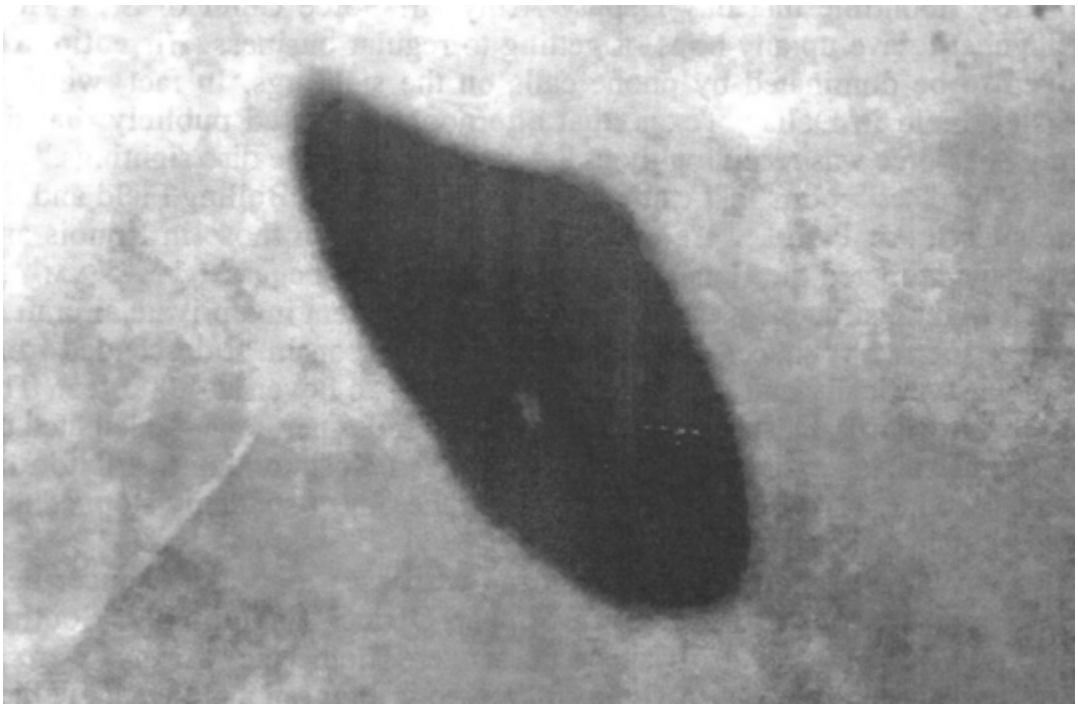
The discs reports that came out of Wisconsin, via Boiling Field and the state's Civil Air Patrol, were even more stunning than those in Illinois and must have attracted the General's attention. The first began at 11:45 A.M. CST when a flight instructor, Kenneth Jones, and his student in a private aircraft at 800 feet spotted a "saucer" near Koshkonong, Wisconsin. It descended from the clouds

vertically and edgewise until stopping to hover at 4,000 feet. The craft then took off at a speed estimated at 6,000 miles per hour—calculated by the 25 mile distance the object covered between Koshkonong to Elkhorn in fifteen seconds. At the end of its speedy run the object suddenly stopped and hovered, then disappeared in the distance.

At 2:30 P.M another set of airborne witnesses reported a saucer near East Troy, Wisconsin. Pilot Wing Supply Officer Captain R.J. Southey (Burlington Civil Air Patrol) and a passenger, Clem Hackworthy, were at 3,500 feet when they saw a flying disc below them at 2,500 feet. It then covered the 22 mile distance between Eagle to Muskego in twenty seconds, placing its speed at 3,960 miles per hour. These two cases represent the best sightings of 1947, but are never discussed because their investigative case files are today missing from the Blue Book files released to the National Archives. Further information may never be found although the few details presented here come from a recent discovery by researcher Jan Aldrich. [118]

An early investigated case from 1947 that did survive the years, reports a sighting at 4:00 P.M. MST in Phoenix, Arizona. In this instance William A. Rhodes captured two photographs of an elliptical, flat, gray, heel-shaped object flying between 400 and 600 miles per hour.

The images reveal a dark irregularly-shaped disc that looks surprisingly like the description of a sighting made between 1:00 and 4:00 P.M. EST that same day, but on the opposite side of the country just east of Lakeland, Florida. That report came from a man who heard a swishing noise followed by the appearance of five shiny unidentifiable objects moving northeast. After the encounter, the observer made a model of one of the objects. The photo of his replica, although of very poor quality, is still in the archival files and shows a cloverleaf-shaped craft with a small vertical fin and a dome on top. [119]



Researcher Dr. James McDonald interviewed Rhodes in 1968 and expressed some concern in a letter to NICAP acting director Richard Hall over Rhodes' credibility. McDonald did, however, say the

circumstances of Rhodes' photographs, one of which is depicted above, checked out. Alfred Loedding also interviewed Rhodes in 1948, becoming impressed by his story. And prior to that, the Brown and Davidson Army Intelligence team interviewed Rhodes in late July, 1947 as did the FBI somewhat later. Brown and Davidson even talked in confidence with Kenneth Arnold and Captain Smith about the case on July 31st—showing them the photo. Arnold then responded, to their surprise, that the Rhodes' heel-shaped image looked like one of the nine disks he saw. Arnold stressed that point because only one of the "saucers" he observed on June 24th looked distinctively different—in fact it looked heel-shaped! Up until that point Arnold had confided that detail to no one because he had not even remembered it himself until hearing the description of the Rhodes' sighting from Brown and Davidson. The Rhodes photo, however, was printed by the Arizona Republic as early as July 9th. The original negatives were later turned over by Rhodes to representatives from Army Intelligence and the FBI but he was never able to get them returned. Ironically, Arnold was given a copy of the photos by an official at Hamilton Field which he later gave to UFO researcher Dr. James McDonald.

The archival photo of the model made from the Lakeland, Florida, sighting.

California produced more sightings by late afternoon: The most notable involved two teenagers. At 3:10 P.M. PST they observed a "flat glistening object" fly in from out over the ocean. It then rapidly lost altitude and dove into the water about 400 yards from shore. As it hit, a tall column of water rose up, and the unknown craft could momentarily be seen on the surface before it disappeared beneath the turning waves. [120] Another good sighting that day occurred around 4:40 P.M. MST. This report should have made it into Air Force files with an accompanying investigation but did not. Thus, all we have is a newspaper clipping. The most interesting aspect of the account tells of possible electromagnetic disturbances being generated as a result of the UFO encounter. Termed EM effects, it is a common component of later sightings but rarely documented in the earlier incidents:

Sergeant C.F. Clifton, Bergstrom Field aerial radioman reported seeing one of the flying saucers bound toward San Antonio as his plane was leaving there. Other members of the crew also saw the disc. "I think it was about 18 feet in diameter and looked as though it was made of glass," Sgt. Clifton said. "It was extremely bright and kept flashing." Sgt Clifton said that the crew figured that it must have been flying 1,440 miles an hour because it overtook and passed their plane in such a short time. It was round and was flying at a slightly tilted angle. "The disc seemed to be spinning as it flew," Sgt. Clifton reported. "It blurred radio reception slightly." Lieutenant Charles O. Anderson was piloting the plane which the disc passed about 4:30 p.m. [121]

Another interesting EM effect befell the town of Acampo, California, the night before around dawn. Citizens of that community noted a "spectacular glow in the sky" accompanied by a loud roar just before a complete area-wide power failure. Not long after that a mysterious flying object was seen at low altitude over the nearby town of Lodi. In later years very similar UFO related blackouts have occurred, but this is one of the earliest examples of such an event. [122] One curious discovery from interviews conducted with Alfred Loedding's relatives, reveal that he was one of the first officials to recognize this important facet. Other early investigators only theorized about nuclear propulsion as a possible power plant for the discs. Loedding, for whatever reason, seemed to have a very clear understanding that many of the UFOs displayed electromagnetic properties.

Around 5:20 P.M. a secretary in the Engineering Department of Dupont's Chester, Pennsylvania, division had a more common encounter when witnessing five dull gray objects fly over in a V-formation. [123] Much further south a strange encounter occurred over the Gulf of Mexico:

> **Captain Marian Ruffner of Midnight Pass was proceeding in her deep sea fishing boat when she saw something that she first thought was a dirigible heading out over the Gulf. It was heading southwest, moving fast and appeared to be round and flat. It appeared and disappeared as she watched. "It flashed in the sun and appeared to be silver in color." Mrs. Ruffner described herself as "flabbergasted" by the sight of an object that she had previously taken as a joke. She reported that she was cold sober at the tirne.** [124]

That night at 6:30 P.M. EST a Tampa, Florida, man, George Gortez, and several others saw a V formation of three "golden colored" objects slowly flying overhead. [125] Further west at 8:30 P.M. CST John W. Hawkins and Virgil Ashley reported seeing a "flying disc" pass over St. Joseph, Missouri, at a high speed heading toward the north. They noticed the craft while sitting out in the back yard of the Ashley home, one mile north of the city. The UFO appeared luminous and disc-shaped with a silver glow. Estimated to have been around 300 feet in the air, it gave off a faint buzzing sound. Then at 9:17 P.M. a phone call came into the St. Joseph Gazette, stating that a flying disc had just been spotted over the city. Reporters looked outside but did not see anything. [126] Around that same time period a single disc was seen over St. Louis, and University City, Missouri. [127]

Back east on the Atlantic coast at 9:30 P.M. EST a "flying saucer" zoomed over Wilmington, North Carolina heading north.. Witnesses noted its high rate of speed and unusual brightness with an orange tint. [128] About the same time two college kids, Albert Dugan and Charles Cross, reported seeing a large luminous object speed overhead just ten miles outside of Raleigh, North Carolina. They initially thought it to be a star, but then realized the object was an elliptical flying machine that radiated blue lights from its edges as it moved in a circular orbit. After about three minutes it vanished into the clouds which were later confirmed by the Weather Bureau to be at a ceiling of 5,500 feet. An independent observation also described a luminous object moving north over Asheville, North Carolina. [129] Before the day was out, Mexico City claimed several saucer sightings, reporting discs identical to those seen all over the United States. [130]

Tuesday 8 July

Early the next day around 7:05 A.M. CST a private pilot viewed a very strange sight from his small

aircraft while over Cook Springs, Alabama. Silhouetted against a nearby mountain, he noted a circular object with a mirror-like finish. The pilot attempted to close in, but its speed was so great, it soon flew out of sight. [131]

At 8:15 A.M. Arizona State Highway Department workers Henry Varela, R.N. Villa, and Henry Hodges observed two "flying saucers streak high over the city of Yuma." Villa and Hodges saw them first and when Varela heard his friends talking he thought they must be describing aircraft. But Varela had seen an aircraft pass over just moments earlier and what he then witnessed looked nothing like it. All three men described the objects as saucer-shaped. They stated that they were silver in color and appeared to be just alike with one flying behind the other. The one thing that so amazed the men concerned the absolute lack of sound associated with the incident despite the fact the objects were at a fairly high altitude. The actual altitude could not be estimated, but all agreed the saucers were very high and traveled extremely fast in a straight line until they disappeared out of sight to the northeast. James Gordon of the US Weather Bureau suggested that the men could have simply made a misidentification of the planet Venus despite the fact that two distinct objects were seen in the same area of sky at the same time. [132]

78. Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

Around 9:30 or 10:00 A.M. PST at Muroc Army Air Force Base, California, (today Edwards AFB) Lieutenant Joseph C. McHenry viewed with three other witnesses, two silver spherical objects traveling about 300 miles per hour in level flight. The unknown craft moved northward toward Mojave, California, against the prevailing wind at 8,000 feet when a third object appeared—heading in the same direction but making several tight circles.

McHenry told intelligence officers that no aircraft he knew of could have performed such sharp maneuvers. Yet that was not the end of the story that day at the super secret Muroc test grounds. [133] By 11:50 A.M. at nearby Rogers Dry Lake, two technicians observed another strange event. They reported seeing a luminous round object for about 90 seconds. The men had been watching two P-82 fighters and an A-26 attack plane that were preparing for a seat ejection test when the UFO came into view. At first the men thought the object might be the parachute from the test, but that occurred later. The object did, however, very much resemble a fabric-like object not quite as dense as a parachute canopy with a white aluminum color. It flew silently at a little under 20,000 feet until descending at about three times the rate of the parachute, which was visible during the ejection test. As it came lower its silhouette presented a distinctive oval shape with two projections on the upper surface which seemed to slowly oscillate. The UFO moved against the wind in a northwesterly direction toward Mount Wilson until it was lost from sight as it descended level with the tops of a nearby mountain range. [134]

Still later at 3:50 P.M., 40 miles south of Muroc, a P-51 pilot at 20,000 feet spotted a wingless, tailless "flat object of light-reflecting nature." He twice attempted an intercept but could not climb high enough. Intelligence later took great note of that incident because they determined that no military or civilian aircraft were in the area. [135]

That night at 9:20 P.M. spherical objects were again seen in the area, this time at 8,000 feet still moving against the wind at around 300 miles per hour. This was reminiscent of a sighting just the day before at 10:10 A.M. when Muroc test pilot Major J.C. Wise, while preparing his XP-84 aircraft for takeoff, observed one yellowish-white spherical object traveling at 200 to 225 miles per hour at 10,000 feet. It headed east with an oscillating motion. [136]

These disc sightings over Muroc really shook-up the Pentagon. Known collectively as the Muroc Sightings, the incidents led the Army Air Force to issue classified orders requiring reports of any "saucer-like" objects to be

given to the T-2 branch (the Technical Intelligence office—redesignated the Technical Intelligence Division or TID in August) of the Air Materiel Command at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio. A post-war version of the highly secret T-2 wartime intelligence group, the Technical Intelligence (later Division) specialized in collecting data on enemy aircraft.

T-2 at the Air Materiel Command had been "unofficially interested" in the disc reports which had filtered in via the Pentagon and various Air Force commands—namely the Fourth Air Force. [137] In fact, beginning with the July 4th Independence Day Sightings a directive came down from Army Air Force Chief of Staff General Carl Spaatz who wanted the 4th AAF Intelligence at Hamilton Field to "open a file," although he specified that they should then report their findings to the Air Materiel Command. Yet the Muroc incidents threw matters into high gear and motivated the Pentagon to ask for a maximum effort from intelligence units around the world. Orders were then sent to all US Army air bases requiring sightings near their area to be investigated and reports sent directly to Wright Field with paperwork also going to the Pentagon. Actually, research shows that most of the early casework went directly to the Pentagon, and Wright Field did not get a complete set of files until September of 1947—by which time Loedding was working in a meaningful way with the investigations and personally lobbying for the reports.

By July 8th investigators from Wright Field, along with Alfred Loedding, began to speculate the flying disc phenomenon may be advanced German Third Reich weapons and/or aircraft being designed and flown over the United States by the Soviet Union's military forces. Specifically suspect were the wartime designs of flying-wing style aircraft inspired by the Horten brothers, Reimar and Walter of-Goettingen. One of their jet propelled flying wing designs had made its way to Wright Labs after the war and was undoubtedly studied by Loedding and the T-2 office.

Shortly after July 8th Technical Intelligence at Wright Field requested that the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps-Europe, or ECIC, help in the investigation. [138] Their agents in Germany scoured the allied occupation zones for clues to the existence of any models of Horten-like aircraft but found nothing. [139] Thus, without doubt, the government already began feeling pressure to solve the saucer mystery as early as July 8th. Although, it is unknown just how much reactive concern the Truman administration placed on the Pentagon and subsequently to Intelligence. Yet, between July 8th and

July 9th, the wheels began turning very fast. Washington released the following statement:

> **Washington, July 9 (UP)—Official Washington was sure today that it knew what the flying saucers were not-but it hadn't the faintest idea what they were. The Army Air Forces said they had the matter under investigation. Preliminary study has disclosed that the flying discs are not:**
>
> **1. Secret bacteriological weapons designed by some foreign**
> **2. New-type Army rockets.**
> **3. Spaceships.** [140]

In reaction, Army Air Force Requirements Intelligence branch chief, Brigadier General George F. Schulgen, called on the FBI to give additional assistance. Schulgen also brought in one of the Muroc pilots to the Pentagon to be interrogated by a host of generals, scientists, and even psychologists. Despite a thorough grilling, the pilot remained convinced that he had seen a "flying disk." [141] (See Appendix II.)

Schulgen also worked on the flying disc phenomenon with Pentagon Intelligence Collections branch executive Colonel Robert Taylor and his right-hand man, Lieutenant Colonel George D.

Garrett. It was Garrett and the Collection branch that Loedding would coordinate with in his liaison work. But, documents do show Loedding had meetings in person with Schulgen as well. Taylor and Garrett were also the military connection to the FBI. They utilized FBI Special Agent S.W. Reynolds for the first inquiries into the by-then nation-wide rash of disc sightings.

In late July, Colonel Garrett, perhaps after networking with Loedding, decided to write up a report and send it to both the FBI and the upper echelons of the Pentagon. His memo basically served as a preliminary estimate of the current UFO situation. The intention in compiling the paper may have also been to bring the issue to a head.

In other words, this report hoped to establish a position on the phenomenon. Garrett, and certainly Loedding, first of all wanted to know if the discs represented a secret American project. (See Appendix III.) After that their more overwhelming fears centered around something of foreign—namely Soviet origin. All of these men, however, quickly became frustrated with the higher echelons of the military in their attempts to crack the mystery. Distinguished UFO researcher Professor Michael Swords writes in reference to this:

> **As July wore on into August, Garrett, Schulgen, and Reynolds became confused by a void of interest or pressure emanating from the high echelons of the Pentagon. They had gone through an investigative furor, which they considered to be similar to the flying disks, the previous year when hundreds of "ghost rocket" reports were made in Sweden and other European countries. In the 1946 experience, though, the top brass had exerted continuous pressure to find an answer. But here, the brass had gone completely quiet. This puzzling void has been termed "the Silence from Topside." It was very peculiar to Garrett and the FBI. Their mutual suspicion was that the very highest brass knew what this phenomenon was already.** 142

The Silence from Topside refers to a connection to the Roswell Incident. Some researchers feel that physical evidence was recovered during that event, proving the flying discs to represent a real technology. The assumption is of course that the "technology" was of extraterrestrial origin and that the "top brass" were involved in a cover up of evidence. Others feel that if there was a suspicion that the high brass "knew the real answer," it involved the idea of a secret insight into captured Nazi technology. The FBI simply wanted to know up front if the phenomenon was something that actually required their expertise as the Bureau's manpower was limited. In other words, as Loren Gross wrote in his book on the 1947 wave: "If the saucers were not due to Communist agents making false reports, there wasn't much to keep the FBI busy." 143 (See Appendix IV for example of FBI memos expressing concern.) Yet, the military was truly concerned about a Soviet link. Even as late as 1952, some Pentagon officials would be speculating about a German/Soviet connection to the disc mystery. Following is an intriguing letter which came into Air Force Intelligence in 1952. It would seem to support such an assertion if it is indeed a genuine account:

> **Rudolf Goy**
> **Menehek-Power**
> **P.O. Box 2000**
> **Mont Joli, P. Q,Canada 5 September 1952**
> **Vice-Chief of Staff of U.S. Air Force**
> **Gentlemen:**
> **I'm sorry if I send this letter to you, but I have something to tall (sic) you about the "Flying Saucers." I am a German, and my trade is Aeronautical Engineer. Please dont(sic) think I look for a job in this trade. No, I just wont (sic) tall (sic) you, was happend (sic) about this plane before all is over. I am sorry if I writh (sic) in the German laguage (sic) below, my english grammar is too bad to tall (sic) you right."**
> **[Translator's note: these first three paragraphs are**

in English in the original text and I have copied them verbatim.] I would like to stress once more that by writing you this letter, I am not looking for a position nor do I want to make my name famous in an easy way. To start with, I would refuse this. Since there is so much clamor going on, I think it is time for me to tell you something about it and for this reason I am writing you a few lines. All this noise about these flying apparatus is known to you, but I would like to tell you not to believe in the visits from other planets or in the meteorological phenomena, because I believe that all this is a big mistake. In 1944 I worked with a small group of scientists and technicians on flying apparatus which resembled exactly this "Flying Saucer." Due to the air raids our group was sent to Silesia in order to work undisturbed. The experiments were only model tests and they were supposed to be realized in great haste since, according to Teich Marshal Goring's directive, this was Hitler's "Mystery Weapon." We were subordinate directly to him (Goring) and cut off from every outside communication. Even the letters which I wrote to my wife had to be addressed via Berlin where they were subject to censorship. The end came in 1945. We wanted to save at least something, so we separated and tried to reach the west individually. As I found out, not everyone succeeded because three of our group were captured and with them a part of the test results as well as some technical drawings. This was reported to me by a colleague who succeeded in escaping at the last moment. This is what I have to say on this point. Now, let's go to the apparatus itself. After the wind-tunnel tests, an experimental model was built of 3.6 m (in diameter). The driving motor was the same as " the one used for the experimental rockets. The steering gear was remotely controlled and similar to the FX-Bombs, which I know you are familiar with. From the aerotechnical standpoint, the results were amazing and they surpassed all expectations. However, it would take too long to give you all the details. You have a staff of scientists and technicians and I can only advise you to work a full steam so that the technique will not be 10 years ahead in a certain part of the world, while you believe yourselves to be in the first place. I am thinking of the jets in Korea. But please, do not think that I, as a small man, would like to propose something. I don't. But do not be misled about things which do exist. Perhaps you will say: "Who does he think he is, this German guy, he can't teach us, Americans, etc. ..." Please, gentlemen, the question now is not "who invented this thing," the only thing that matters now is not to be the last one and, at a decisive moment, find oneself confronted with the facts. By then, of course, it would be too late. Just look at 1939-1945, and I believe we learned enough. I hope that you do not misunderstand me. Even though my duty is not to gossip about these things, nevertheless, the existence of these things released me from the secrecy-oath given at that time to the constructor. I wish you every success in this work and I remain Sincerely, Rudolf Goy

P.S. I am reported the same to the Vice-Chief of Staff of the Royal Canadian Air Force. 144

In late July Colonel Garrett finished his preliminary estimate of the current UFO situation:

From detailed study of reports selected for their impression of veracity and reliability, several conclusions have been formed:
(a) This "flying saucer" situation is not all imaginary or seeing too much in some natural phenomenon. Something is really flying around.
(b) Lack of topside inquiries, when compared to the prompt and demanding inquires that have originated topside upon former events, give more ordinary weight to the possibility that this is a domestic project, about which the President, etc. know.
(c) Whatever the objects are, this much can be said of their physical appearance:
1. The surface of these objects is metallic, indicating a metallic skin, at least.
2. When a trail is observed, it is lightly colored, a Blue-Brown haze, that is similar to a rocket engine's exhaust. Contrary to a rocket of the solid type, one observation indicates that the fuel may be throttled which would indicate a liquid rocket engine.
3. As to shape, all observations state that the object is circular or at least elliptical, flat on the bottom and slightly domed on the top. The size estimates place it somewhere near the size of a C-54 or a Constellation.
4. Some reports described two tabs, located at the rear and symmetrical about the axis of flight motion.

5. Flights have been reported, from three to nine of them, flying good formation on each other, with speeds always above 300 knots.
6. The discs oscillate laterally while flying along, which could be snaking. [145]

The report did force the Pentagon to start eliminating possibilities. The Chief of Research and Development, General Curtis E. LeMay, dispelled the first assumption. He stated, that "the Army Air Force has no project with the characteristics similar to those which have been associated with the Flying Discs." [146] Nevertheless, something from somewhere was definitely flying over US air space that July. The people concerned, like Loedding, had but one other possibility to eliminate—a Soviet connection.

On that watershed day of the 8th of July, UFO activity proved active elsewhere in the country. At 1:00 P.M. PST in Avalon, California, several hundred witnesses on Santa Catalina Island off Long Beach observed a formation of "saucers." Most observers agreed that there were six disc-shaped objects in the formation which passed over the island. Among those were Army Air Corps veterans Bob Jung, Kenneth Johnson, and Alvio Russo. Jung

actually got a photo of the objects as did Alvio Russo. Russo, who had piloted 35 combat missions over Europe, estimated their speed at 850 miles per hour. Jung clarified the details by stating that they were flying in two elements of three each about as fast as a Navy Tiny Tim rocket. He said the formation came in from the northeast and disappeared over the hills to the south of AvalonBay. [147]

By 3:30 P.M. PST in Seattle, Washington, a "very shiny" oval-shaped disc with a "glass dome on top" flew in a northwest direction over the city. [148] In St. Joseph, Missouri, at 4:20 P.M. CST Mrs. La Verla McCord and neighbor Mrs. Frances Illines reported a white luminous round object traveling slowly to the northeast. The craft seemed to be high, but the women were surprised that it made no noise. Many tried to convince them that they had seen a balloon despite the fact that the wind at that time was from the east. Weather Bureau observer Arthur Van Cleave confirmed this although admitted winds above 8,000 feet were from the northwest, but did not think they could have been capable of blowing a balloon northeast. Then, just as the excitement over the first sighting died down, another disc report came at 6:00 P.M. from St. Joseph. [149]

One of the most credible accounts of the early sightings came out of an incident over Alton, New Hampshire, at 4:26 P.M. EST. The report was made by private pilot Thomas Dale, the son of noted Governor Charles M. Dale and a highly respected pilot during WWII. For that reason the press took great interest in his story and undoubtedly accounts of the incident were monitored by Loedding and others in Dayton as well as the Pentagon. Furthermore, Dale was not alone at the time. His friend Jere Stetson was in the aircraft with him and both told an identical account.

They stated that while flying southwest over Alton at an altitude of 2,800 feet, a strange object appeared two miles to the east and some 1,500 feet below their plane. It then approached them at "excessive speed" in a matter of 15 to 18 seconds as it veered north over Alton Bay and Lake Winnipesaukee, toward Moultenboro. Both men were careful not to assume anything. Dale, in fact, stated that "I'm not saying it was a 'flying saucer,' or disc." But the men did agree that it did not "in any way, shape or manner" resemble any type of known aircraft. They then went on to stress that it was definitely of metal construction, about 20 feet long, and "not exactly round in shape." When they first spotted the object it was observed in profile against the trees below. They said the sight left them "flabbergasted." [150]

That evening numerous sightings came from Philadelphia and southern New Jersey. Although only a few reports were printed by area newspapers, hundreds of witnesses in the city and area suburbs saw a huge flying cone-shaped object that was colored gray. [151] Researchers, however, are always hesitant when reading accounts of cone shaped objects simply because that is a prime characteristic of the large research balloons—just starting to come into use at that time.

Around 9:50 P.M. PST a huge formation of luminous "flying saucers" were spotted over Fraser Valley, British Columbia, heading west at great speed. [152] Finally at 11:05 P.M. PST, UFOs appeared over Chino, California which topped a list of dozens of sightings in the state that day which involved hundreds of witnesses. [153]

Other headlines from the 8th came from all over North America, but exact times for the sightings are hard to pin down. Saucer reports, for example, came from parts of Ohio, but no times were recorded. [154] Similarly, a very good sighting came from Corapeak, North Carolina, that day. Many valuable details were provided by a news article—all but the time of sighting:

> **A Farmer saw an object shaped like an enormous pancake, something like a flounder with its tail cut off. It appeared to be about 20-30 feet in diameter and moving about 800 miles per hour at about 2,000 feet. The object had two window-shaped openings. The body seemed to be of stainless steel or aluminum with a glow. The witness heard an almost inaudible sound as the object passed out of his sight in three or four seconds. It had several protruding pipe-shaped extensions which emitted vapor.** [155]

A report from Norfolk, Virginia, places other strange aerial phenomena over the East Coast:

> **Lt. Cmdr. L.D. Patterson of the Naval Station reported five yellowish discs like the moon, flying in formation over the Air Station from the West. Patterson said the formation was surrounded by a mist, and the bodies each left trails.**
>
> **Walter Hurst who telephoned the Ledger-Dispatch for Patterson, said that Patterson, a pilot of considerable time in the air, was unable to establish the altitude having no point for calculation.** [156]

86. Alfred Loedding and The Great Flying Saucer Wave of 1947

Even far distant American bases experienced UFO incidents during the summer wave. It was on the 8th at 5:33 P.M. HST that one hundred Navy men at Pearl Harbor witnessed a mysterious "silvery colored" object with no wings or tail sail over Honolulu at rapid speed in a zig-zagging flight heading east. Five of the observers familiar with weather balloons commented that it just could not have been any type of balloon. Yeoman 1st Class Douglas Kahcerle of New Bedford, Massachusetts, stated: "It moved extremely fast for a short period, seemed to slow down, then disappeared high in the air." [157]

On the other side of the world in Australia, "flying saucers" were reported over Sydney on the 7th and 8th. The sightings occurred at night over the suburb of Kensington when two "white shiny discs" traveled quickly to the west toward Parramatta at about 10,000 feet. "Flying saucers" moving in a V formation were also reported over South Africa by Johannesburg residents. [158]

1. International News Service reports, 5 July 1947.
2. Bartlesville, Oklahoma, Daily Enterprise, 1 July 1947, p. 1.
3. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, Index.
4. The (Portland) Oregonian,5 July 1947.
5. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Sentinel, 6 July 1947; and Chicago, Illinois, News, 5 July 1947.
6. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. II-9; and Los Angeles, California, Herald-Express, 5 July 1947.
7. The (Portland) Oregonian, 5 July 1947.
8. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. 111-15.

9. Detroit, Michigan, Free Press, 5 July 1947; and Cleveland, Ohio, Press, 5 July 1947; and The (Portland) Oregonian, 5 July 1947.
10. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Cases 28-32, listed as Incidents 5-16 in 1947 era documents.
11. Portland, Oregon, Journal, 5 July 1947.
12. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. II-9; and Los Angeles, Herald-Express, 5 July 1947.
13. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Cases 28-32, listed as Incidents 5-16 in 1947 era documents.
14. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. ffl-15.
15. Ibid., p. 111-16; and Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, p. 36.
16. Helena, Montana, Independent-Record, 5 My 1947.
17. Sacramento, California, Bee, 5 July 1947.
18. Pocatello, Idaho, Tribune, 6 July 1947; and Salt Lake City, Utah, Tribune, 1 July 1947.
19. Richland, Washington, Villager, 10 July 1947, p. 1.
20. Little Rock, Arkansas, Gazette, 6, 7 July 1947; and Little Rock Arkansas Democrat, 1 July 1947; New Orleans, Louisiana, Times Picayune, 1 July 1947; and Spokane, Washington, Spokesman-Review, 1 July 1947; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. IV-1.
21. The Yuma Sun & Arizona Sentinel, 5 July 1947, p. 1; and Hollywood, California, Citizen-News, 5 July 1947.
22. Sacramento (California) Evening Bee, 5 July 1947; and Boulder City (Nevada) Daily News, 1 July 1947, p.1; and Elko, Nevada, Daily Free Press, 1 July, 1947.
23. "Coast Guardsman Snaps Photo of Flying Saucer," St. Joseph (Missouri) Gazette, 5 July 1947, p. 5.
24. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. IV-4.
25. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Case 34, listed as Incident 10 in 1947 era documents; and The New YorkTimes, 6July 1947, pp. 1,36.
26. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, p. 23
27. John Corlett, "Newsman and Wife See Idaho Discs," United Press news story, 5 July 1947; and The (Portland) Oregonian, 5 July 1947; and Boise, Idaho, Daily Statesman, 5 July 1947; and San Francisco, California, News, 5 July 1947; and Detroit, Michigan, Free Press, 5 July 1947; and Cincinnati, Ohio, Post, 5 July 1947; and Boston, Massachusetts, Traveler, 5 July 1947; and Windsor, Ontario, Daily Star, 5 July 1947.
28. In his book on the 1947 wave, Bloecher tells of another sighting of a V formation of discs in Auburn, California, just an hour earlier to the Twin Falls case. Bloecher wrote: "Kjell Qvale, an automobile salesman in Alameda and a former Navy pilot for five years, reported that he and a group of 50 other witnesses had watched a triangular formation of disc-like objects near Auburn at 2:30 P.M. PST, flying south. Qvale said that the discs, seen first directly overhead, 'appeared to be made of metal and looked like bright silver,' He added that their round outline was clearly distinguishable. The objects were in view 'for three or four minutes,' he said. 'I have seen a lot of airplanes, and these were not airplanes. The only clue I could get as to their height, size and speed was the fact that they disappeared one at a time, high in the sky, and not over the horizon. This effect would be caused if they were very, very large and very high, and flying at a terrific speed—1,000 miles an hour,' he said." Bloecher also sites a sighting of a V formation of discs that night in Denver, Colorado as well as two sightings of similar V formations over New Orleans on July 6th.
29. Seattle Post Intelligencer, 5 July 1947; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. II-7.
30. Spokane, Washington, Daily Chronicle, 5 July 1947.
31. Ibid.
32. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. III-l.
33. Ibid., Index.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibld.
36. Ibid., p. 11-15.
37. Sioux Falls, Idaho, Daily Argus Leader, 1 July 1947; and Pierre, South Dakota, Daily Capital-Journal, 1 July 1947; and Denver, Colorado, Post, 1 July 1947; and St. Paul, Minnesota, Dispatch, 1 July 1947; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. 11-15. OH-JJ
38. The New York Times, 6 July 1947, pp. 1, 36; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of J 947, Index.
39. The (Portland) Oregonian, 6 July 1947.
40. Albany, Oregon, Democrat Herald, 1 July 1947.
41. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of1947, p. 11-17.
42. Ibid., p. IV-1.
43. Interview with Donald Loedding by the authors. (Donald stated that his father spoke many times of the landing cases he had investigated.)
44. Associated Press news service report, 7 July 1947.
45. Aldrich, Project 1947: A Preliminary Report On The 1947 UFO Sighting Wave, p. 80.
46. Helena, Montana, Independent-Record, 6 July 1947.
47. Wyoming, Unita County Herald, 11 July 1947, p. 1.

48. Cambridge, Maryland, Daily Banner, 1 July 1947.
49. Longview, Washington, Daily News, 8 July 1947.
50. Sandusky, Ohio, Register-Star-News, 8 July 1947.
51. Corvallis, Oregon, Benton County Herald, 10 July 1947.
52. Pocatello, Idaho, Tribune, 1 July 1947.
53. Miami, Florida, Herald, 1 July 1947, p. IB.
54. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, Index.
55. Lake Charles, Louisiana, American Press, 1 July 1947.
56. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. II-5.
57. Ibid
58. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. Ill-17.
59. St. Joseph (Missouri) News-Press, 1 July 1947; and Boulder City (Nevada) Daily News, 1 July 1947, p. 1; and The (Portland) Oregonian, 1 July 1947.
60. Interview with Donald Loedding, 22 August 1998.
61. "Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. II-7.
62. "Six Tucsonians Say They've Seen Flying Saucers," The Yuma Sun & Arizona Sentinel, 9 July 1947, p. 1.
63. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. I-11
64. Aldrich, Project 1947: A Preliminary Report On The 1947 UFO Sighting, p. 83.
65. Research conducted by Jan L. Aldrich.
66. Bartlesville, Oklahoma, Daily Enterprise, 1 July 1947, p. 1.
67. Denver, Colorado, Post, 1 July 1947; and Denver, Colorado, Rocky Mountain News, 1 July 1947; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. 111-17.
68. Casper, Wyoming, Tribune-Herald, 1 July 1947.
69. Sacramento, California, Bee, 1 July 1947.
70. Los Angeles, California, Examiner, 1 July 1947; and San Francisco, Chronicle, 1, 8 July 1947; and Salt Lake City, Utah, Tribune, 6, 7 July 1947; and San Francisco News, 1 July 1947.
71. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Cases 39 and 36, listed as Incidents 89 and 47 in 1947 era documents.
72. Bradenton, Florida, Herald, 8 July 1947; and Clearwater, Florida, Sun, 1 July 1947, p. 1.
73. Lake Charles, Louisiana, American Press, 10 July 1947.
74. "Emporia Women See Flying Saucer Floating Slowly Over Flint Hills," Emporia, Kansas, Gazette, 7 July 1947, p. 1.
75. Cincinnati, Ohio, Enquirer, 1 July 1947.
76. Actually the National Guard units had ample fuel surpluses but the Army Air Force had a perceived need to conserve aviation gasoline for upcoming demonstrations dedicating Air Force Day.
77. "Sky Disc Hunted By Coast Planes," The New York Times, 1 July 1947, pp. 1,3.
78. Robert W. Fenwick, "Fast Buckley Plane Waiting to Chase Disk With Camera," The Denver (Colorado) Post, 1 July 1947.
79. Associated Press news service, 6 July 1947.
80. Chicago (Illinois) Tribune, 1 July 1947, p. 8.
81. Ibid.
82. Salem (Massachusetts)Evening News, 1 July 1947, p. 1.
83. Newark, New Jersey, Star-Ledger, 7 July 1947; and Newark, Evening News, 7 July 1947; and Trenton, New Jersey, Evening News, 1 July 1947; and The New York Times, 1 July 1947; and New York Sun, 1 July 1947; and New York World-Telegram, 1 July 1947.
84. Washington, DC, Post, 1 July 1947; and Baltimore, Ohio, Sun, 7 July 1947; and Chicago (Illinois) Tribune, 1 July 1947; and Atlanta, Georgia, Constitution, 1 July 1947.
85. Rochester, New York, Democrat-Chronicle, 1 July 1947; and Albany, New York, Knickerbocker News, 1 July 1947; and New York World-Telegram, 1 July 1947.
86. The New York Times, 1 July 1947, pp. 1, 5.
87. New York World-Telegram, 1 July 1947; and Windsor, Ontario, Daily Star, 1 July 1947.
88. "Flying Disc Is Seen Near Here," St. Joseph (Missouri) Gazette, 1 July 1947, p. 1; and "Flying Saucers Seen by Three Groups," St. Joseph (Missouri) News-Press, 1 July 1947, p. 1.
89. Kansas City, Missouri, Times, 1 July 1947.
90. St, Louis, Missouri, Globe-Democrat, 1 July 1947; and St. Louis, Missouri, Post-Dispatch, 7 July 1947; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. III-8-9.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. The (Portland) Oregonian, 7 July 1947.

96. Birmingham, Alabama, News & Age-Herald, 1 July 1947; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. III-4.
97. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Case 40, listed as Incident 56 in 1947 era documents.
98. "More St. Louisans See Discs In Air, Like Flying Piepans," St. Louis (Missouri) Star-Times, 1 July 1947.
99. "Big Little Stories Picked Up In a Day's News Run," Independence (Missouri) Examiner, 9 July 1947, p. 3.
100. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. MO.
101. The New York Times, 9 July 1947, p. 10.
102. Panama City, Panama, StarHerald, 8 July 1947.
103. Ted Morello, "Tacoma Police Sight Soaring Discs," Tacoma (Washington)Times, 1 July 1947, p. 1.
104. Palmdale, California, South Antelope Valley Press, 10 July 1947, p. 1.
105. Riverside, California, The Riverside Daily Press, 8 July 1947, p. 1.
106. Redlands, California, Daily Fact, 1 July 1947.
107. Sacramento, California, Bee, Associated Press news story, 7 July 1947.
108. Willows, California, The Willows Journal, 9 July 1947, p. 1.
109. Ibid.
110. "Flying Saucer Seen Near City," Springfield, Missouri, Daily News, 8 July 1947.
111. "Pilot Says He Knocked Down Disc," St. Joseph (Missouri) News-Press, 1 July 1947, p. 1; and The New York Times, 8 July 1947, pp. 1, 46.
112. Captain Kevin D. Randle, The UFO Casebook (New York: Warner Books, 1989), p. 220.
113. Shreveport, Louisiana, Times, 8 July 1947.
114. Lewiston, Idaho, Daily Tribune, 1 July 1947.
115. "Who Has The Saucer? 40 States Join Game," Associated Press news story, 8 July 1947; and St. Louis (Missouri) Post Dispatch, 8 July 1947.
116. Chicago (Illinois) Times, 1 July 1947.
117. Austin, Texas, Statesman, 1 July 1947, p. 1.
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Chapter Five
A Very Serious Business

The Muroc Sightings were the pivotal event which activated the United States military into concerted action on the saucer mystery. After that point, as Edward Ruppelt recalls, it was indeed a very serious business. In the middle of this was poised Alfred Loedding.

Dayton started to receive firsthand UFO reports by Wednesday, July 9th. One of these came from Idaho when Boise Evening Statesman writer Dave Johnson, who after three days of trying, finally caught a glimpse of a UFO. Flying out of Go wan Field in an AT-6 from his National Guard unit, he observed at 12:17 P.M. MST a strange looking dark object. Johnson tried to make sense of the weird sight as it became silhouetted against the clouds. The UFO then made a half-roll and entered a stair-step climb. Johnson at first thought it might be a balloon. (Many of the early meteorological balloons were made from neoprene which would turn smoky gray or black in the sunlight.) [1] No apparent balloon launches, however, could account for the incident. [2] Later, Johnson learned that three ground observers at Gowan Field who were National Guard pilots had also reported a similar object. [3] Like Johnson, they too were mystified as to what it was they had seen that day.

Another sighting came in from the 1380th Army Air Force Base in Fort Pepperell, Newfoundland. It related a story near Grand Falls, when a police constable's wife and mother-in-law observed four "egg-shaped phosphorus colored discs." Each disc passed over in a side-by-side formation around 11:30 P.M. ADT. Ten minutes later a similar object, which the constable saw himself, darted across the sky with a "jellyfish-like flash." [4]

A report that never reached Dayton, but is of interest came from two men flying over Glacier Park, Montana, at 3:53 P.M. MST. They spotted seven flying saucers heading in a northwesterly direction. The two men, Ed Johnson and Joe Dimio, noted that the craft were only visible for a short period—indicating they traveled at a fairly fast rate. [5]

Less than three to five percent of UFO incidents were reported to Air Force Intelligence. [6] For example, another very good sighting that was only documented by the newspapers came at 5:45 P.M. CST from the nationally known News-Press editor, Helen Culver Gettys. She witnessed a flying saucer pass over her car near the St. Joseph (Missouri) Country Club. Mrs. Gettys had just left the club with her mother and Mrs. Charles Culver when a flash in the sky caught her eye. All of the ladies were then quite startled to look up and see one of the famous saucers. As it flew northward at about 1,000 feet, they commented on how the sun reflected off its shiny metal surface. The disc appeared in full view for a matter of seconds, indicating it traversed the area at a high rate of speed. All three women possessed solid reputations and Mrs. Gettys stressed in her own article about the incident that prior to the sighting they had consumed only "one bottle apiece of a local bottler's very soft drink." [7]

At 8:00 P.M. CST a Liano, Texas, man, T.A. Smith, reported a disc going southeast. Smith described it as a whirling wash tub throwing off sparks. [8] Finally, that night a West Virginia man decided to do something about the unsettling wave of saucer sightings. When discs appeared over Johnny Johnson's Bluefield home, he fired upon them with his shotgun! The irate West Virginian failed to do any visible damage to the saucers. But if this account is accurate, the UFOs in this case had to have been flying at a very low altitude in order to come into gun range. [9]

Thursday 10 July

Saucer sightings were reported by newspapers on the following morning from Ontario, Canada; Westminster, Colorado; Douglas, Arizona; Burien and Seattle, Washington; and Niwot and Aurora, Colorado. [10] That afternoon George Dey and Roy Wilson reported to newsmen that they had seen at 1:20 P.M. MST, seven "flying saucers" over the Joel Hart ranch west of Buhl, Idaho. They said at first the objects were shiny and flying in formation, but then they broke up and sped out of sight. [11] At 4:30 P.M. EST a Logan, West Virginia, man, George Vance, observed a "round-shaped object with a sort of a turtle back" glistening intensely as it flew in a straight line. [12]

As the sightings continued one of the top US astronomers from the Department of Meteoritics at the University of New Mexico, Dr. Lincoln La Paz, his wife, and two teenaged daughters, reported seeing an elliptical object very high among the clouds. The incident occurred at 4:47 P.M. MST while they were driving from Clovis to Clines Corner, New Mexico.

La Paz estimated, with the aid of a pencil held at arm's length, that the object was 20 to 30 miles from his position, ellipsoidal and rigid, 160 feet long and 65 feet thick, traveling 120 to 180 miles per hour horizontally and 600 to 900 miles per hour vertically. It appeared silent and "self-luminous" against the dark clouds with a sort of "wobbling motion" and no exhaust or vapor trail could be observed. The object had "a sharp and firm regular outline, namely one of a smooth elliptical character much harder and sharper than the edges of the clouds." It remained in view for at least 30 seconds and " then ascended upward and disappeared for five seconds behind a cloud until it **'" reappeared at a two degree elevation and about a five degree elevation north of true west. Finally, it vanished into the clouds for good. La Paz stated that , the ascent he saw the object make "thoroughly convinced me that we were ^ dealing with an absolutely novel airborne device." [13]

There is a possibility this sighting could have represented a balloon. Large polyethylene envelopes were just then coming into use for research balloons and could easily reflect the sun's rays, yet would never travel that fast if his calculations were correct. [14] Despite this, interest in the sighting continued for many years. The case was first made public by Life magazine in 1952 but withheld La Paz's name. The sighting was examined by the Air Force and a file compiled, but all

evidence of the paperwork was removed before release of UFO files to the National Archive's in late 1975. Today the case is not even listed in the Blue Book Index which is now also a part of the National Archives' collection.

More sightings came from the West that day. In Cheyenne, Wyoming, two silver discs shaped like saucers with a dome on top slowly passed over in a clear sky. [15] In Temple, Texas, a former Army Air Corps colonel, Smith Tarrant, observed two flying "discs" from the door of a local welding shop. He estimated they were at 1,500 feet, flying against the wind, heading along a straight course at about 200 to 250 miles per hour. They headed out of sight over the course of three minutes to the south with no indication of sound or smoke or means of propulsion. [16]

That same day numerous individuals observed discs fly through the skies of Missouri, although few of these sightings sound like balloons either.

It all began with 60 eyewitnesses at an ice cream social on the John Cox farm six miles northeast of Mercer. They witnessed groups of saucers in twos and threes pass over north to south. Some did fly by themselves, but most were in formation.

A mile south of Princeton, Missouri, (fourteen miles south of Mercer) those same flights of discs were observed by Mr. and Mrs. Dykes and Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Buren and their families while driving down US Highway 65. The sight so startled them that they pulled off the road only to be joined by other motorists. Among those were Mr. and Mrs. W.S. Thompson with their friend, J.M. Beets. Other observers included Mr. and Mrs. Rit Thompson and Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Nell. All gave a similar account to the one that happened at the Cox farm, stating that the saucers came over singularly and in groups for almost a half hour. In fact, on a farm one mile east of Princeton, Mr. and Mrs. Parvin Woodward and their guest, Perry Coon, confirmed this same "saucer show." [17]

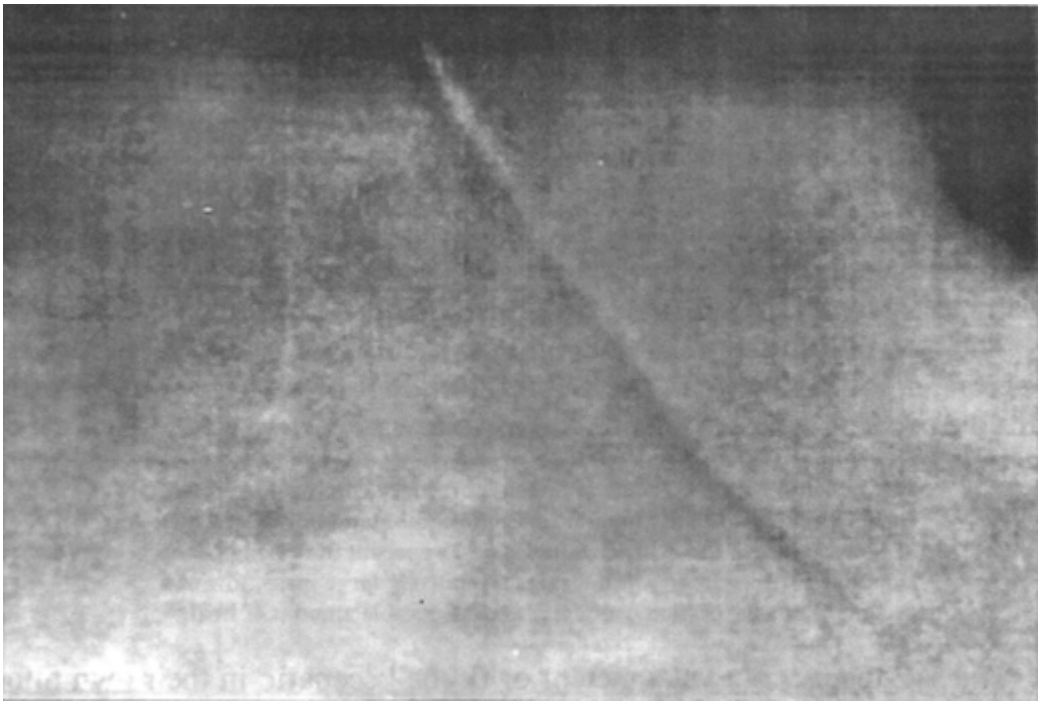
At 7:00 P.M. MST near Brockton, Montana, Ray Carpenter and his wife observed a shiny object illuminated against a dark cloud bank. A former manager of the Wolf Point airport, Carpenter judged it to be about the same size as a private aircraft traveling very quickly. [18] Then at 8:00 P.M. a pilot for the Lee Geophysical Company, saw a shiny craft zooming southward near Tulsa, Oklahoma. [19] At that same time another Tulsa man, J.C. Penman, reported seeing a "circular fluorescent lamp" move in a northeasterly direction. Penman was a former Army Air Force crew chief and had never seen anything like it before. [20] A half hour later one more disc appeared over a mountainous area northeast of Salt Lake City, Utah. Described as an "aluminum type of thing," it remained in view for two minutes as it moved with a fast but "funny" motion. [21] Then in Indianapolis, Indiana, Mrs. Bernie Hollingsworth had a sighting at 9:30 P.M. CST. She described a "flying saucer" pass near her home headed east, stating that it looked like a "shining piece of oblong steel." [22] By 11:55 P.M. EST a flying saucer was seen southeast of Dover, Delaware. Mrs. Hilda Dinsmore characterized the object she saw as a round dull colored object "sailing across the sky." [23]

Another report came from Newfoundland on the 10th from two Pan-American Airways mechanics near Harmon Field, AAFB, Stephenville Cross. At 5:30 P.M. ADT they (and a third man) were driving up a mountain road six

miles south-southwest of the base when all three of them, J.N. Mehrman, A.R. Leidy, and I.E. Woodruff, observed a silver circular disc at about 10,000 feet. It passed in horizontal flight along a great curved course. The disc's size, they stated, approximated the wingspan of a C-54 transport aircraft and looked to be cutting a bluish-black trail about fifteen miles long as it literally parted a

path through the clouds over Harmon.

The trail passed over the base and out toward the north-northeast—being compared to the afterglow of a powerful searchlight when suddenly switched off. Weather records confirmed scattered clouds between 8,000 to 10,000 feet which supported the original altitude estimate.



Some personnel of the 1388th at Harmon Field also saw this great cut made in the clouds and acquired two Kodachrome pictures taken by one of the mechanics who first witnessed the event. Today copies of these images are in the Blue Book files and although very poor reproductions, they show the spectacular aerial trail. Above is the best of those two photos. [24]

Known as the Harmon Field Case, this incident received the first intensive investigation by Army Air Force Intelligence. The sighting became especially relevant to Intelligence officials both at Wright Field and the Pentagon because of the concern of a Soviet connection to the saucer mystery. The reasoning basically followed the assumption that if the USSR was flying spy flights over the United States, the missions would logically have to pass

over some area of Canada or the far north. For that reason the sighting just twelve hours earlier in Newfoundland coupled with this one, and a disc report out of Alaska the very next day, stirred up a lot of excitement. [25]

The initial report was filed by base intelligence officers on the 16th, but by the 21st a more detailed report was forwarded to the Pentagon. General Schulgen then ordered intelligence at Wright Field in Dayton to send a top-level assessment team to Harmon Field "immediately." [26]

The T-2 chief, Colonel Howard M. McCoy, dispatched a team by the 30th that may have included T-3 (engineer section) specialist Alfred Loedding. McCoy's team was also asked by Schulgen to report directly to the Pentagon following their investigation. Interestingly, at that time, Schulgen also asked McCoy what the T-2 analysis and the T-3 engineering sections had "prepared" to date on the disc phenomenon. McCoy's notes do not tell us if Analysis Division Chief Colonel

William R. Clingerman had any answers or if the T-3 section at Wright Labs had compiled any analysis. McCoy himself was working on the German/Soviet technology angle. He, in fact, had even interviewed the famous successor to Count Zeppelin's dirigible empire, Hugo Eckener. Eckener was then in America consulting with the Goodyear company to try to revive the era of the great airships following WWII. [27]

The T-2 investigation of the Harmon Field Case really shook up their own aeronautical engineers in the T-3 section. Part of the report had the ring of Alfred Loedding's expertise and read as follows:

> **The bluish-black trail seems to indicate ordinary combustion from a turbo-jet engine, athodyd motor, or some combination of these types of power plants. The absence of noise and apparent dissolving of the clouds to form a clear path indicates a relatively large mass flow of a rectangular cross section containing a considerable amount of heat. [28]**

The T-2 team excluded a meteor or fireball scenario in their own minds despite the fact that an astronomical event became the official conclusion on the case file. Behind the scenes, T-2 and Washington were still focused on a Soviet connection. Wright Field investigators spoke with the commander of Harmon Field and others to make sure that no British or Canadian aircraft had been in the area at the time. And since they knew no American aircraft were to blame, they privately concluded something of "foreign origin" made that curious split in the clouds over Newfoundland.

Although, by 1948, "foreign origin" would become a catch word in Dayton to refer to extraterrestrial space craft, these men where only talking about a Russian threat at that time. Their concern grew, In fact, because Newfoundland seemed to be especially attractive to the discs. Early the next morning at 2:20 A.M. Codroy residents reported seeing a "flying saucer" with a cone-shaped tail. Two men saw the object when they were standing outside a local store and had their attention drawn to the sky by a very bright disc streaking across with a yellowish cone-shaped after-glow. They described it as a luminous object traveling at great speed from the northwest and heading east at about 6,000 feet. [29] Both men felt certain they could not have mistaken it for a plane or falling star. A third man then saw the same aerial phenomenon. He had served in the civilian Air Detection Corps during the war and possessed great experience with identifying aircraft. He also became convinced the disc was "not a plane, but definitely some flying object."30 Overseas in Norway, European papers were talking about "flying saucers":

> **A "flying saucer" was observed Thursday evening near Skotfoss. At about 19:30 my wife told me that she had seen an object in the sky, says one of the three persons who observed "the saucer." It moved in between the clouds at an undetermined altitude, blinking like a star or like a mirror when the sun is reflected in it. As it entered the shadow it became dark and round or oval. It is completely out of the question that it was an airplane. There was no sound from the saucer, which was about the size of an airplane. The object was in view for four minutes and then disappeared towards the southeast. [31]**

Before the day was out discs were also seen in Amsterdam, and Leyden, Netherlands; Birmingham, England; Santiago, Chile; Kagoshima Bay, Japan; and then back in North America over New York, California, and Ripley, Ontario. [32]

Friday 11 July

UFO activity started early in the morning of the llth at 2:30 A.M. MST when Mrs. Anna Potts of Yuma, Arizona, rose from bed frustrated by her barking dog. She got up and went outside to quiet

him when suddenly, and to her great amazement, she saw a disc-shaped object go over at high speed with a spinning or rotating motion. The craft passed without a sound in a matter of

just five seconds. This suggested that the craft must have been at a relatively low altitude as it became lost from view after crossing the tops of nearby homes. Mrs. Potts reported the event to the Daily Sun, absolutely convinced she had seen a flying saucer. [33] Perhaps the same object flashed in front of Mr. Ernest Tiffany's bedroom window one hour later in Tulsa, Oklahoma. [34]

In Longview, Washington, at 6:30 P.M. PST two groups of a dozen or more shiny objects were observed flying with bright flashes as they turned and caught the sun's reflection. [35] By 7:20 P.M. EST a report came out of High Point, North Carolina, when pilots flying at 1,000 feet saw a "ball of fire." It appeared as a huge object, round on top with a black band through the center. "The bottom part of the object was revolving, and periodically bursts of fire came from underneath, as if some sort of exhaust." [36]

Later that day around 10:00 A.M. GMT while ferrying a Viking transport aircraft to Argentina, Captain Norman E. Waugh of London's Airwork Ltd. had a very interesting UFO sighting over the Bay of Biscay. Waugh was near 8,000 feet when he spotted ahead, and above him, an elongated oval or "tadpole" shaped craft flying at about 16,000 feet. First Officer Peter Roberts and Radio Officer Stuart Chinneck both agreed with Captain Waugh that the object looked grayish in color and of unusual design. At one point they came within five to six miles of the UFO. It then passed the starboard side of their aircraft at lightning speed, leaving a long vapor trail. During that time the flight crew estimated the object to be traveling about 600 miles per hour at 7,000 feet above their aircraft. Waugh, a former Bomber Command and Transport Command pilot with sixteen years flying experience, and Roberts, a former wartime Squadron Leader, knew no aircraft outside the US proving grounds at Muroc had that kind of performance. They later told reporters that neither of them had seen anything like it before. [37]

On that same side of the world during a small country fair, a "flying saucer" appeared over the Irish town of Cahirciveen. It approached from the northwest at about 1,000 feet at great speed and appeared to be revolving as if it were on an invisible axis. The craft had a kind of white halo and passed over without making a sound. Many observers were from outside the area, only being in town for the fair. Three names that were recorded as witnesses were Michael J. O'Sullivan, J. Coffey, and Patrick O'Shea, all from Cahirciveen. The total time of the sighting approximated eleven seconds. [38]

Then, in Italy at 10:30 P.M. local time, multiple "luminous discs" were seen above Garsenda. They flew from north to south as many local citizens watched the spectacle. [39] Interesting, cases also came from South America in Paramaribo, Surinam, on the llth. [40] Yet, unexplainably, after this day widespread UFO activity suddenly slowed. Just like turning off a switch, people stopped seeing a phenomenon that had spanned the world and accounted for hundreds of reports. In comparison to the onslaught of sightings from the 4th to llth, less than two dozen good incidents would be reported during the rest of the year. Did the news media simply stop covering the sightings or did the phenomenon actually change in character?

Only a few UFO reports, for example, can be found for the 12th. One comes from Spring Coulee, Alberta, Canada, but sounds suspiciously like a balloon sighting. [41] Then a man reported a "silver ball" flying with a purring noise over Silver Lake, Washington, at noon. [42] Again in this case, it could be attributed to an IFO or identified flying object — very possibly a distant jet.

Five incidents were reported in the American West on the 13th. Three came from Grand Forks, North Dakota, in the afternoon. All describe bright revolving objects traversing the sky. Then at 5:15 P.M. CST a Milwaukee Railroad signal crew in Mussellshell, Montana, observed an irregularly moving round white object. [43] At 7:00 P.M. PST over Baker Valley, near Wingville, Oregon, a round object flying with a "dipping motion" was seen by many witnesses and several aircraft pilots who tried in vain to pursue it. [44]

On the 14th two reports came from Idaho only ten minutes apart. The first sighting occurred at 7:20 P.M. MST south of Idaho Falls. In this case a man described seeing a turning and twisting craft fly by on an irregular westward course. Ten minutes later, and to the west, in Nampa, Idaho, a dozen "flying discs" were seen by Mr. and Mrs. O.B. Warnock. [45]

Two unrelated reports came from the 15th, although both describe a strange "fiery object." Distantly separated, however, the first incident occurred in Indonesia and the second in Utah. [46] On the 16th a sketchy report came from South America and one from Rugby, North Dakota. In the latter case, a luminous revolving object was seen at 1:00 A.M. CST only 200 feet off the ground. [47]

Just one account is evident for the 17th, but it is a very unique sighting. In that instance multiple objects appeared at various levels above Helena, Montana, from 2:45 to 3:00 P.M. MST. Although, those accounts do liken them to simple balloon clusters known to be in use at the time by the military. [48] On the 18th, however, two very notable daylight disc sightings can be found. They begin with Mr. and Mrs. Roger Morin of Arlee, Montana, who spotted two discs at 10:00 P.M. MST heading west. By 11:30 P.M. CST in Joplin, Missouri, one disc zoomed to the southeast looking like a "silver meat platter." [49] No reports have surfaced for the 19th and only one for the 20th which occurred in Texas at 10:35 P.M. and very likely describes a rocket test. [50] The 21st has just one sighting in Boise, Idaho, describing a fast moving oval object. [51] Only one report is of note for the 22nd. That case involves a sighting of a green fireball above Fort McPherson, Georgia. That is of interest because one year later, green fireball sightings would be a widely reported phenomena above many military bases in the West. [52] Actually, the next day another green fireball did appear "under the clouds" over Belgium around midnight. It is the only reliable UFO report for the 23rd. [53] On the 24th, nighttime disc sightings came ^ from Arvada, Wyoming, and Wolf Point, Montana. [54] Then on the 25th another evening sighting of a "luminous saucer" once again appeared over Montana near Whitetail. [55] That day a saucer sighting came from the other side of the Atlantic. In that case numerous witnesses spotted a flat disc-shaped object travel over Odensala, Sweden, flying at about 400 meters altitude in an easterly direction around 5:00 P.M. [56]

26 July

In Washington D.C. at noon President Truman waited on board the presidential aircraft Sacred Cow to sign some important documents before hurrying back to Missouri and his dying mother. Soon a courier arrived at National Airport carrying what proved to be far reaching legislation. With the signing of the National Security Act of 1947 and Executive Order 9877, the Army, Navy, and now the Air Force were coordinated as one military establishment under a single Secretary of Defense, James Forrestal.

This allowed the Army Air Force to become a separate branch of the armed services under a new

name, the United States Air Force, or USAF. Stuart Symington served as the first Secretary of the Air Force. (The three departments were separately presided over by a civilian Secretary, each of which became members of the new National Security Council.) On September 26th General Carl Spaatz became the first Chief of Staff of the new USAF. (Each service's chief of staff would become members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.) General Hoyt Vandenberg then became Vice Chief of Staff on October 1st. Symington, Spaatz, and Vandenberg seldom spoke publicly on UFOs, and what they did say seemed to indicate that the sightings posed no defense concerns. Whether they actually believed that may never be known, but the new Air Force via men like Alfred Loedding is known to have had a very real interest by this date in the curious flying disc reports.

28 July

A sighting very similar to the United Airlines Flight 105 Case occurred on this date on the same run as that noted July 4th incident. Captain Charles F. Gibian and First Officer Jack Harvey of this July 28th Flight 105 trip were preparing for a landing into Boise, Idaho, at 8:34 P.M. MST. As they lost altitude over Mountain Home (45 miles out from Boise), Harvey spotted a strange craft far ahead of their DC-3. Just as Captain Smith described twenty-four days earlier, Harvey characterized the bizarre object as silhouetted against a bright western sky. Captain Gibian then noticed the object and accounted that it appeared to be at 9,000 feet as their aircraft began descending from that same height to 8,000 feet. He described it as weaving as if "it was going through choppy air." Gibian also stated that it was "going like hell when it disappeared" toward the northwest. Both pilots agreed the object to be about the size of their own aircraft and about 40 miles distant. They also felt certain what they saw that day could not have been an aircraft. Each stressed that they had never seen such a thing before and publicly expressed concern that possible military experiments were being carried out in commercial air lanes. [57]

29 July

A sighting at Hamilton Field, California, at the end of July represented one of those few truly exceptional cases that finished out the year. It definitely contributed to Loedding's mounting interest in flying discs and determination to investigate deeper.

Known as the Hamilton Field Incident, it began at 2:50 P.M. PST when Lieutenant Ward L. Stewart in the 415th reserve training unit landed in an AT-6 from a routine training flight and parked his aircraft near hangar 59. The Assistant Operations Officer, Captain William H. Ryherd, then called his attention to an odd object flying above the hangar. It headed right over a P-80 jet fighter coming in on a preliminary landing approach at around 6,000 feet.

The P-80 flew in excess of 250 miles per hour as the unknowns proceeded to pass by the jet "as if it was standing still." A second object then appeared, flying a left to right "protective" maneuver over the first craft until they each passed southward toward Oakland and then out over the ocean. Both the captain and the lieutenant agreed the objects were 15 to 25 feet in diameter, shiny white in color, and circular-shaped. The total duration of their sighting lasted about fifteen seconds as the craft sped by in a clear sky. No noise could be detected, but the observers felt they could not fairly judge that they were completely silent because of the background roar of the P-80.

Lieutenant Stewart piloted B-29 bombers during the war and had considerable experience as a flyer. He conveyed authority to Intelligence officers when questioned, stating that the objects were

"unlike any conventional type of aircraft he had ever seen." Captain Ryherd also conveyed a highly impressive evaluation of the sighting with an extreme degree of sincerity throughout his testimony. [58] Given the opportunity, investigators should scan some of the Oakland papers to see if any other UFO reports were made in connection with the Hamilton Field Incident. Many cases listed in this book have been discovered in just such a way. Uncovered in newspapers from areas near documented sightings, these secondary sources make it all the more evident something truly amazing took place in 1947.

One other good sighting for the 29th is found in the files of the FBI. It is of interest because it also describes an object not too dissimilar than the two objects seen over Hamilton Field that day. Note the similarities in the report:

At or about 12:05 p.m., July 29, 1947, a sedan, driven by Steve Berrmann and carrying R.J. (Bob) Madden in the front seat and Karl Herman in the rear seat, was proceeding northwesterly along the road leading from Canyon Ferry to York, both in Montana some 25 miles N.E. of Helena.

When at a point approximately 1/4 mile N.W. of Canyon Ferry, (as shown on Forest Service Map to be in the NE1/4 of NE1/4 of Sec. 10 TION R1W) Karl suddenly shouted "See it! See it! There's a flying saucer!" Steve immediately slowed down and gradually brought the sedan to a stop, he and Bob meanwhile scanning the sky i in the direction pointed by Karl in an effort to see the "flying saucer," but without success.

Approximately ten seconds elapsed between the time Karl

reported seeing the "saucer," coming over the horizon at high speed from the southwest, (Karl first thought it a meteor) and traveling northeasterly, and the bringing of the car to a stop.

As the car came to a stop, Steve, Karl and Bob, simultaneously, saw the following:

Directly ahead, (N.W.) 2 to 3 miles distant and approximately 3000 ft. above the ground, a bright disc hovering and fluttering in the air. Descending and rising through a vertical distance of fifty or a hundred feet for a period of about five seconds then, while at the top of an ascent, the "disc" suddenly swooped to the Northeast at tremendous speed and disappeared into the clear air within a distance of 200 ft. That is to say it did not pass beyond an obstruction to further visibility but "melted into thin air" as if because of tremendous speed.

This disc was, from the viewpoint of the observers, apparently 3 ft. diameter, circular and of no great thickness — approximately 3 or 4 inches.

The sky was blue with scattered small clouds, the sun was shining brightly and the disc gleamed and shimmered in the bright sunlight as if covered with highly polished nickel.

After the "disc" disappeared from view, the sedan and its occupants proceeded northwesterly along the road, but could discern no evidence of the presence of the "disc" along or adjacent to that thoroughfare.

It is to be remembered that the dimensions as stated above were as they appeared to the observers some 2 or 3 miles from the "disc" and the true dimensions must be considerably greater. [59]

/s/R.J. Madden

R.J. MADDEN
Division Plant Engr.
ThePac.Tel.&Tel.Co.

30 July

Ending out the last UFO report for the phenomenal month of July, this particular account deserves to be quoted in full. Although sightings dramatically fell off by this point, the case is extremely note worthy as evidence that very good encounters did occasionally occur during the rest of the year. The

witness involved was returning to his home in Estevan, Saskatchewan, from the Canadian town of Torquay:

> **A motorist driving close to daybreak with his headlights on was watching storm clouds in the northeast. As he watched, something swept out of the clouds and passed overhead moving in a southeasterly direction. It glided down near the ground and then rose again and disappeared at a rapid rate of speed. The unidentified**

> **object did not seem to be very high in the air. "At first it looked like an aircraft wing that was on fire at both ends but when it passed overhead I could see that it was circular in shape. It looked to be about the size of a tractor wheel and about four foot thick. It was revolving and appeared to have flames or fire at the outside edges."**
>
> **I have laughed at the stories of these things, but not any more; I was scared. The object was real. I kept looking around for someone else to witness it but there was nobody else in sight at the time."**
>
> **The motorist said the object was silent and remained visible for about 20 seconds.** [60]

The Hoaxes, 1 August

Hoaxes have always existed in connection with any type of mysterious phenomenon. It is regrettable, but that's human nature. Often UFO reports, legitimate or not, tell us more about the observer than the observation they make. Fortunately, because so many dedicated researchers over the years have become interested in UFO activity, most hoaxes are eventually exposed. The serious approach taken by military intelligence in the early years also helped weed out and expose pranksters.

Those investigators were very leery about hoaxes and feared the public, and especially the Pentagon's reaction, if they were found to have been taken in by such a ruse. In typical military fashion intelligence officers did not "fool around," and routinely relied on the FBI for background checks. Alfred Loedding, in particular, was careful to only concentrate on cases involving highly credible observers such as pilots. He also had that scientific knack for looking at data as a whole and not making conclusions based on any one particular event.

Undoubtedly, however, witnesses who produced photos or physical evidence received the most attention by investigators. There are actually a good number of cases in the 1947 files of people claiming to have discovered pieces of "flying saucers" that had supposedly crashed or exploded somewhere near them. Equally surprising is that few of these were attempts to perpetrate a hoax. In almost all of those cases, Intelligence and/or the FBI determined the witnesses were genuinely fooled by objects that were indeed mysterious, but only in the manner in which they were discovered.

There is even reference in both Air Force and FBI files to the Mogul balloon project. This concerned one of those physical evidence cases and referred to several inquiries made by an Intelligence officer, and later FBI field agents, as to whether a particular fragment could have been a piece of

debris from a "Mogul." [61] (This obviously proves the Mogul project was not as secretive an operation as present-day Air Force officials claim when debunking the Roswell Incident.) [62]

The first well-documented UFO hoax in the early files concerns two individuals by the name of

Harold A. Dahl and Fred Lee Crisman. They had made the claim that six low-flying UFOs hovered over their boat on June 21st while they were looking for floating lumber off Maury Island near Tacoma, Washington. Subsequently it became known as the Maury Island Incident when they confessed under FBI interrogation to a hoax. This occurred after the Brown and Davidson Army Intelligence team was tragically killed returning from Tacoma after interviewing Dahl and Crisman. Attributed simply to an unfortunate plane crash, their accident had no real connection to the case.

It is also unfortunate that Kenneth Arnold became a victim of these hoaxers. Although he did not lose his life as the result of their ignorant deeds, he did lose something he considered just as valuable, his reputation. This concern for his reputation had made Arnold desperate to learn more about the curious flying saucers following his own sighting in June and a second one on July29th. [63]

Arnold sought any proof he could and became interested in the Maury Island case after the editor of Amazing Stories magazine, Ray Palmer, agreed to put up $200 to help him investigate their claim. Arnold, however, could not have been kept away from such a story. It was outwardly such a good sighting because the witnesses were actually claiming to have pieces of "slag" expelled by one of the saucers after it had supposedly encountered mechanical problems. They also purportedly captured the saucers on film which captivated Arnold more than anything else. Even Captain E.J. Smith of the United Airlines Flight 105 Case became taken by the hoaxers out of that same need—the need for proof.

Seeking to substantiate any possible proof that did exist, Arnold had personally convinced Lieutenant Brown, who had worked on his case, to travel to Tacoma. Brown and Davidson both took advantage of the offer and flew up to Tacoma to meet with Dahl and Chrisman while they were being interviewed by Arnold and Smith in a hotel room at the Winthrop.

Once on the scene the more experienced Brown and Davidson saw the story as an obvious hoax, but because the officers held such a high degree of respect for both Arnold and Smith, they did not indicate to them their feelings and subsequently allowed themselves to be talked into taking some of the alleged fragments back for study.

Flying back to Hamilton Field to take part in the Air Force Day ceremonies, an engine caught fire and the wing came off of their B-25 near Kelso, Washington, killing both Brown and Davidson. The fragments were recovered from the wreckage, and after careful analysis proved to be simple slag from a local Tacoma steel mill. The military threatened to prosecute Dahl and Chrisman but never carried through with it. But because they hesitated to disclose the case as a hoax while considering prosecution, many thought the sighting to represent a true event.

The press made a lot out of it at the time and for some reason even erroneously stated that the Air Force had ceased disc investigations altogether. When the real story came out months later, buried on the back pages, people missed the explanation. As a result, some still naively detail the Maury Island Incident, alluding that it may not have been a hoax. [64]

Because of that mistaken perception, so pervasive at the time, the first step had been taken which, over the years, would make the military more and more defensive in regard to the media. Even Arnold, held in high regard by early investigators, is treated only with ridicule following the whole tragic event. Afterward, when an article came out critical of the Arnold sighting, TID clerks automatically added it to his file. Intelligence officers around the country felt they had learned a valuable lesson from the incident—caution.

4 August

Every researcher has their own favorite cases for certain periods. The following sighting from

Alaska is a particularly attractive story for two reasons. First, this incident received detailed documentation in the military files which usually was not the case with a sighting in such a distant location. Secondly, the incident is typical of a lot of air-to-air sightings of the early days, not only in the manner in which it occurred, but the description of the object seen. In fact, when compared to the United Airlines Flight 105 Case of July 4th, the similarities are striking. Also comparable is the time of day in which both sightings took place. Surprisingly, this account is seldom mentioned in the popular literature.

The incident began northwest of Bethel, Alaska, when DC-3 Captain Jack Peck and copilot Vince Daly of Al Jones Flying Service were on a

routine cargo run. At dusk they suddenly sighted a black saucer-shaped object cross their flight path. It had come in at a right angle to their aircraft and Peck instinctively made a precautionary climb from 1,000 to 1,200 feet to avoid any chance of collision. He then swung in behind the disc and chased the peculiar looking craft as it became silhouetted against a brilliant evening sky. Peck pursued at 170 miles per hour until losing sight of it four minutes later.

During the incident they noted that the disc had a smooth streamlined surface with no visible means of propulsion. The speed of the object was subsequently computed at 510 miles per hour, based on the assumption that the UFO traveled 34 miles in four minutes while the DC-3 moved eleven miles in the same period. If correct, this would also infer that the craft was more than twenty miles distant when last seen. To be able to see an object at that distance, it would indicate a diameter of at least 50 feet and suggests a length of about 500 feet.

Aside from such startling figures, the Bethel Alaska Case drew attention within Intelligence among men like Loedding because of the quality of observers. The airline also considered Captain Peck as a man with an "excellent reputation." A letter in the Air Force files speaks to his character, stating "no one here doubts in the least but that he actually saw this object." [65]

6 August

By the fall of 1947 the FBI had become very active in UFO investigations. The following FBI memorandum was drafted by the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, field office and addressed to FBI Director J. Edgar Hover. It demonstrates that although Intelligence in Dayton would soon begin a twenty-two year investigations into UFOs, other organizations like the FBI did substantial work as well in these early years.

This memo did make it into Intelligence files at Wright Field but not all of the FBI paperwork seems to have been shared with them. Correspondence from August even indicates Loedding urging the T-2 Analysis Division (which he was working for on the disc sighting) to give direction to A-2 Intelligence, Fourth Air Force at Hamilton Field, and via them direction to the FBI. Was this a show of frustration that Wright Field may not have been receiving the cooperation that they should have as directed by Washington following the Muroc Sightings? This memo does shows a sincere and worthy effort by Special Agents to conduct an investigation into this particular sighting:

_____Philadelphia, who is employed by the _____, Philadelphia, advised as follows:

Between 10:30 and 10:45 p.m. on August 6, 1947, she was sitting on the steps of her home with _____. She was facing north and observed a large white object traveling at a very fast rate of speed to the south. There was a buzzing sound, not too loud but plainly audible, just after this object passed through the air. This white object left in its trail a thin streak of smoke, which was grayish in color.

Miss _____, Philadelphia, who is employed by the _____, INC., _____ Philadelphia, stated she was sitting on the steps of _____ home on the evening of August 6, 1947, around 10:45 p.m. engaging in conversation with _____ when _____ abruptly stopped in the middle of her conversation and appeared to be frightened. _____ at that time was sitting in a position in which she was facing south. She did not see any object in the sky after noting _____ change of expression, but she did hear a slight buzzing sound.

_____ Philadelphia, an insurance agent, who was a former pilot of B-24's in the Army Air Corps, advised as follows:

He was sitting on the steps of his home around 10:45 p.m. on August 6, 1947, with his wife; and his neighbors, the _____ family, were sitting on their steps next door to the residence of _____. All of the above parties were facing east. _____ noticed at this time an object, emitting a bluish white flame, passing quickly through the air. The object was traveling from northeast to southwest. Using his experience in the Army Air Corps as a guide, _____ estimated the above object was between 1000 and 3000 feet in the air and traveling at a rate of between 400 to 500 miles an hour. This object did not lose elevation as it passed through the air and left either smoke or a condensation trail in its former path, which lasted for about two seconds. A hissing sound accompanied the passing of this object. This sound was moderate and not nearly as loud as the noise accompanying the passage of a rocket ship.

_____ who is a retired police officer of the Philadelphia Police Department, advised as follows:

Around 10:45 p.m. on August 6, 1947, he and his wife were sitting on the steps of their home, when _____ noticed an object, resembling to him a giant firecracker, pass quickly through the air. _____heard no noise, but the object had completely passed from view in a southern direction within a split second. It left a fiery trail for 100 feet. August 6, 1947, was a clear night, and no storm was brewing. _____ was sure the object he saw was no falling star, and he noticed the above object did not seem to be falling but maintained the same altitude.

The wives of ____ and _____ verified the accounts of their husbands as to the above-mentioned object.

It is to be noted the _____ and the _____ live in Northeast Philadelphia near Oxford Circle, which is about ten miles removed from the residence of _____ . _____ residence is located in the western part of Philadelphia. The _____ and _____ are not known to the above mentioned _____ and _____ . It is further noted the observation of Miss _____ the _____ and the _____roughly correspond. All the above persons seem reliable and not the type to seek publicity or to spread rumors.

_____ called the "Inquirer." Philadelphia newspaper, and inquired if it could offer any explanation as to what they had seen. A representative of that paper had advised _____ that the object they saw may have been some product of an oil refinery or chemical company in their neighborhood.

Both the Offices of Naval Intelligence and Army Intelligence in Philadelphia were requested by the Philadelphia Office to ascertain if either the Army or the Navy was doing any experimental work on new types of planes or equipment, in the vicinity of Philadelphia. Such was done with negative results. The Office of Naval Intelligence indicated that an explosion had occurred at the Charles Lennig Chemical Company on August 6, 1947.

_____, Safety Department of the Charles Lennig Chemical Company. Inc., 5000 Richmond Street, Philadelphia, advised as follows:

The above company is a manufacturer and distributor of chemicals- A fire had occurred on a dump of the company on August 6, 1947, but was quickly gotten under control. Such fire was confined to the company's premises and could not have been observed from outside the plant.

The Charles Lennig Company is about two and one-half miles southeast from Oxford Circle. The account of the fire does not seem to fit into the general pattern of the above-mentioned flying object, for it

is noted that the flying object was allegedly traveling from a position northeast of Oxford Circle to a southwesterly direction in Philadelphia. _____ pointed out that, to the best of his knowledge, there are no oil refineries and chemical companies located around Oxford Circle or north of such, but that all of the companies of this type are several miles south of Oxford Circle.

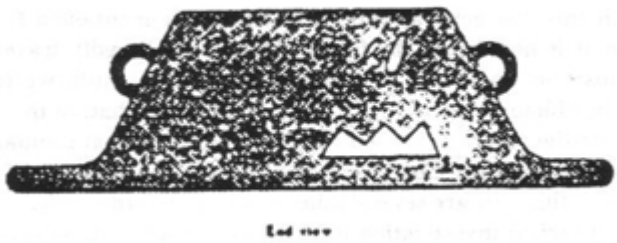
All logical investigation having been conducted, no further action will be taken on the instant matter unless advised to the contrary by the Bureau.

FFB/ctg

98-1762 66

13 August

One of the most interesting features of the 1947 period is the sheer number of disc sightings. This is not to say there was not a diversity of phenomena reported, but many of these "disc or saucer accounts" are extremely noteworthy because few other periods had such high percentages of observations describing true "nuts and bolts" type objects. For example, an above average daylight disc sighting of late 1947 comes from the Smoke River Canyon near Twin Falls, Idaho. On this date at 1:00 P.M. MST a blue disc-shaped object actually flew beneath the walls of that canyon river valley! On its flight, the strange craft sped above a well respected area trout farmer, A.C. Urie. His two sons, Keith and Billy, also witnessed the event as they were coming across the river to meet their father with a boat. All three witnesses then watched it pass about 75 feet over a stand of Mormon Poplars, causing the tree tops to bend and sway as if caught in a vacuum. By that point the craft, which had descended as much as 300 feet below the 400 feet high canyon rim, became silhouetted against its steep walls, resembling an "inverted pie-plate." Urie estimated it to be about twenty feet wide by ten feet thick with a horizontal pipe or pole sticking out which emitted bright flames. 67 The former county sheriff and a county commissioner, L.W. Hawkins, also reported a similar disc sighting at 9:30 A.M. that day about twenty miles southwest of Twin Falls near the Salmon Dam. Eventually FBI investigators checked all of the witnesses and gave them and Urie a very good recommendation. 68



This Air Force sketch was inspired by a very similar rendition in the Twin Falls Times News which was taken from several drawings A.C. Urie made depicting a washtub-shaped object. Urie made no references to jet exhaust in his account, although, both the Times News and Air Force sketch added this detail—apparently as an explanation for the buffs of smoke observers saw coming from the object.

That morning another interesting sighting occurred over Redmond, Washington, at 9:00 A.M. PST. The resulting FBI report is quoted here to illustrate that when a UFO report appeared in a news article, there definitely were officials taking notice:

FBI SEATTLE 8-14-47 5-21PM FB
DIRECTOR FBI URGENT
L.R. BRUMMETT. SID DECKER. FLYING DISCS. INTERNAL SECURITY ___. AUGUST FOURTEEN NINETEEN FORTYSEVEN SEATTLE POST INTELLIGENCER PUBLISHED ARTICLE TO EFFECT THAT L.R. BRUMMETT, BOX TWO FIVE FOUR REDMOND, WASH, AND SIDNEY DECKER BOX TWO NINE SIX REDMOND, WASHINGTON HAD SIGHTED TWO DISCS AT APPROXIMATELY NINE AM AUGUST THIRTEEN NINETEEN FORTYSEVEN. UPON INTERVIEW DECKER STATED THAT TWO VERY BRIGHT OBJECTS TRAVELING AT AN EXTREME RATE OF SPEED WERE NOTICED BY HIM AS HE WAS STANDING NEAR THE REDMOND POST OFFICE. DECKER DESCRIBED THE OBJECTS AS HAVING NO WINGS, NO TAIL, AND BOTH ENDS WERE TAPERED. DECKER ADDED THAT THE OBJECTS RESEMBLED A BELLY TANK AND THAT THEY WERE NOISELESS. THE OBJECTS WERE VERY BRIGHT AND TRAVELING IN A NORTHEASTERLY DIRECTION OVER REDMOND, WASHINGTON. ONE A BIT BEHIND AND A LITTLE ABOVE THE OTHER MAINTAINING EQUAL RATES OF SPEED FOR APPROXIMATELY EIGHT SECONDS AT WHICH TIME THEY DISAPPEARED FROM VIEW. DECKER ADDED THAT THEY WERE HIGHER THAN A PLANE GENERALLY TRAVELS. BRUMMETT ADVISED THAT HE NOTICED THE OBJECTS AND CALLED DECKERS ATTENTION TO THEM AND ALSO POINTED THEM OUT TO A MRS MAMIE ENGLISH. BRUMMETT STATED THAT HE SAW TWO OBJECTS FLYING AT A FORTY FIVE DEGREE ANGLE NORTHEASTERLY OVER REDMOND AND TRAVELING AT LEAST THREE TIMES FASTER THAN A PLANE. BRUMMETT ADDED THAT HE WATCHED THE OBJECTS FROM FIVE TO EIGHT SECONDS AT WHICH TIME THEY DISAPPEARED FROM SIGHT. ACCORDING TO BRUMMETT THE OBJECTS WERE DESCRIBED AS BEING NOISELESS, HAVING NO WINGS OR TAIL, LIGHTER THAN ALUMINUM, TAPERED AT BOTH ENDS AND ONE STAYED A LITTLE BEHIND AND A BIT ABOVE THE OTHER AND BOTH MAINTAINED EQUAL RATES OF SPEED. FROM BRUMMETTS OBSERVATION HE WAS UNABLE TO DECIDE WHETHER THE OBJECTS WERE FLAT OR ROUND. MRS MAMIE ENGLISH STATED THAT WHEN BRUMMETT CALLED HER ATTENTION TO THE OBJECTS SHE TOOK A PASSING GLANCE AT THE SKY AND COULD OFFER NO DESCRIPTION OTHER THAN THEY LOOKED LIKE TWO SILVER BALLS TRAVELING AT A FAST RATE OF SPEED
WILCOX
9-28 PM OK FBI WASH DC GAR [69]

14 August

On the Pacific island of Guam, American enlisted men reported seeing crescent-shaped objects flying past the US military base there. They stated that they flew on a zig-zag course at least twice as fast as a conventional airplane. [70] These authors could not track down the primary source for this account but the incident is listed in an index of sightings in the Fourth Air Force files, although no case analysis is evident. [71]

17 August

In the Mt. Josephine, Skagit County forest of Washington State, a ranger observed a flying disc similar to the object seen in Twin Falls, Idaho. That UFO descended rapidly from the northeast and flew with a slight angular pitch, but righted itself as it came lower. Finally the unusual machine flew off to the southeast at great speed. [72]

Also that day two army officers at Fort Richardson, Alaska, stated that they saw an unusual object flying above them at a tremendous rate of speed below the cloud layer then at 10,000 feet. The records state that the officers described the craft as sphere shaped—not saucer-like. They noted, however, that unlike a balloon it definitely moved against the wind and had a metallic appearance. [73]

19 August

Another sighting comes from Twin Falls, Idaho, at 9:39 P.M. MST when numerous people sighted multiple groups of flying objects in the night sky. These formations resembled a "glow in the air" the color of electric lights. The "lights" traveled at "terrific speed" and flew in triangular formations. At one point three of them peeled-off of a larger group of ten and sped away in a different direction. Due to an overcast, the observers felt that they were not astronomical anomalies. [74]

Apparently many agencies were looking into this sighting including the FBI. On August 22nd the following memo was composed by the FBI:

> **In accordance with your request, this matter was checked with Army Air Forces. Lieutenant Colonel Garrett advised Special Agent _____ that extensive inquiries within the Army Air Forces revealed that no research or experiments were being conducted by the AAF in the vicinity of Twin Falls, Idaho on or about August 19, 1947. Colonel Garrett stated that he had no information which would throw any light on the matter reported in the teletype.** [75]

If, on the other hand, the Idaho UFOs could have been explained away as aircraft or meteors, it would have surprised few. By August the Gallup poll revealed over 90 percent of adult Americans had heard of flying saucers, but that people continued to feel they represented secret military craft or natural phenomena. [76] Thus, even after the summer wave of 1947, the public still looked upon human achievements in science and engineering with the same sense of wonder they had since the beginning of the modern technological revolution around the time of the 1897 UFO wave. Our present-day mind set associating "flying saucers" with extraterrestrial visitors simply had not yet taken hold. It is interesting to note that even research scientist at the Holloman AFB, who worked around the latest technologies, made no conclusions when they had discs sightings themselves that month. The events are detailed by an official statement drawn up by Operations and Projects Group, Electronic and Atmosphere Division personnel which Alfred Loedding spoke to a year later—actually while investigating an entirely different case:

> **During the latter part of August, 1947, this organization was carrying on several test runs with a modified SCR-270 at this base. I had released a corner reflector and two balloons and was watching them in their flight as they drifted to the southeast from this base. While watching the balloons through a pair of ten power binoculars, a white object, appearing to be round, came into my field of vision, I followed the objects as far as possible but lost it within seconds after picking it up. The object was traveling at an unprecedented rate of speed and appeared to be several thousand feet over the top of the Sacramento mountain range, traveling in horizontal flight south to north ... it was definitely not a balloon and apparently not manned judging from the violent maneuvers which were performed at a high rate of speed.** [77]

3 September

On this day at 12:15 P.M. PST twelve to fifteen circular-shaped objects appeared high above Oswego, Oregon. Each of the strange craft were described as

"very silvery in the afternoon sun." While such a report sounds like it might simply be a misidentification of aircraft or meteors, Intelligence officers could find no such solution. They became sufficiently impressed with the observation to list it as unidentified in the Air Force's record system of sightings started by 1948. As stated before, that classification was never lightly given and even exceptional cases such as the DC-3 encounter over Bethel, Alaska, did not receive such a discriminating designation. [78]

12 September

Although most UFO reports in 1947 do describe saucer-shaped objects, nighttime lights again appeared on this date. This strange incident involved a Pan American flight eastbound from Midway Island to Cahu. Just after passing Necher Island at 1:00 A.M. local time, the crew spotted an intense incandescent white light off the starboard side of their aircraft. At first the pilot thought it might be the navigation lights of another plane, but it was far too bright for that. The flight crew tracked the unknown object and determined it held a true course of 350 degrees while holding at a steady altitude of 9,500 feet.

The captain estimated its distance from their aircraft at five miles. But just as he took the plane off automatic pilot, the light approached within one mile. After that the UFO quickly veered off to a course of 190 degrees at which time the light split into two parts. The two separate orbs then changed to a less bright reddish hue and flew in a side-to-side formation until zooming out of sight at tremendous speed, estimated at over 1,000 miles per hour.

Investigators calculated the total duration of the observation at only six seconds, but as any pilot will attest to, that is a long time when an unknown object is near your aircraft. Despite the brevity of the sighting, Naval Intelligence took a great deal of interest in the case. The pilots were interviewed by Naval officers who tried to find an astronomical solution to their unprecedented encounter but realized the pilots had good familiarity with meteor phenomena. The pilots told Navy officers that they were certain they had not seen a meteor because it consistently held a steady altitude. The captain of the flight had ten years flying experience with Pan American with 7,000 hours in the air, much of it over the Atlantic and Pacific air routes. His second officer had 1,700 hours and eleven years of flying experience—four years of which were spent in B-24s flying East Coast training duty and combat missions in the South Pacific. Both pilots impressed intelligence officers as keen observers. [79]

1. The Roswell Report, Fact Versus Fiction in the New Mexico Desert.
2. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Case 53, listed as Incident 83 in 1947 era documents.
3. Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. 111-13.
4. Extract from "Weekly Intelligence Summary, ATC, 16 July 1947," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2.
5. "Kalispell Pilots Sight 'Flying Saucers,'" Flathead, Montana, Monitor, 10 July 1947, p. 1.
6. Research conducted by Jan L. Aldrich.
7. "Saucer Seen by Society Writer Near Country Club," St. Joseph (Missouri) News-Press, 10 July 1947, p. 1.
8. Austin, Texas, American, 11 July 1947.
9. "Learns Shots Can't Ground Flying Discs," Bluefield, West Virginia, Sunset News, 12 July 1947, p. 1. -Vi
10. Denver, Colorado, Rocky Mountain News, 10 July 1947; and Seattle, Washington, Post-Intelligencer, 11 July 1947.
11. Buhl, Idaho, Herald, 17 July 1947.
12. Logan, West Virginia, Banner, 11 July 1947.
13. H.B. Darrach, Jr. and Bob Ginna, "Have We Visitors From Space?" Life, 7 April 1952, p. 83.
14. The Roswell Report, Fact Versus Fiction in the New Mexico Desert.

15. Skylook #27, February 1970, MUFON.
16. Waco, Texas, Times Herald, 15 July 1947, p. 1.
17. "Saucers Put on Show at Princeton," St. Joseph (Missouri) News-Press, 1 1 July 1947, p. 1.
18. Wolf Point, Montana, Herald-News, 17 July 1947, p. 1.
19. Tulsa, Oklahoma, DailyWorld, 11 July 1947.
20. Ibid.
21. Salt Lake City, Utah, Tribune, 1 1 July 1947.
22. "Flying Saucer Is Back Again-Or Something," The Indianapolis (Indiana) Star, 11 July 1947, p. 19.
23. Dover, Delaware, Index, 13 July 1947.
24. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1, Case 59, listed as Incidents 26-21 in 1947 era documents.
25. Gross, UFOs: A History 1947, pp. 44-45; and Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 63, listed as Incident 41 in 1947 era documents.
26. Michael D. Swords, "Project Sign and The Estimate of the Situation." first draft of unpublished article written for 1998 issue of Journal Of UFO Studies.
27. Ibid.
28. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 60, listed as Incident 27a in 1947 era documents.
29."Statement of Mr. ___, Codroy, Newfoundland," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 60, listed as Incident 27b in 1947 era documents.
30. "Army Air Force Intelligence Report," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2.
31. Smalands, Norway, Dagblad, 11 July 1947.
32. The New York Times, 11,12 July 1947, pp. 1,2; and Leyden (Holland) Naval Radio Service, 10 July 1947.
33. "Yuman Says She Saw Saucer Friday," The Yuma Sun & Arizona Sentinel, 12 July 1947, p. 3.
34. Tulsa, Oklahoma, Daily World, 12 July 1947.
35. McMinnville, Oregon, Telephone Register, 24 July 1947.
36. Associated Press report, 12 July 1947.
37. "Saucer Flew Past Our Plane," London (England) Times, 12 July 1947; and "Man Who Saw a Flying Saucer," (Buenos Aires) Herald, 22 August 1947.
38. "Flying Saucer Seen in Co. Kerry," (Dublin) Irish Times, 12 July 1947, p. 1.
39. "Flying Saucers Above Garsenda," Milan, Italy, IlNuovo Corriere Delia Sera, 12 July 1947.
40. Paramaribo, Surinam, De West, 11 July 1947.
41. Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Times-Herald, 14 July 1947.
42. Longview, Washington, Daily News, 12 July 1947.
43. Montana Record-Tribune, 17 July 1947, p. 1.
44. Baker, Oregon,Record-Courier, 17 July 1947.
45. "Nampans Report 12 Flying Discs," Nampa, Idaho, Free-Press, 15 July 1947; and Idaho Falls, Idaho, Commoner, 18 July 1947.
46. Paramaribo, Surinam, De West, ISJuly 1947; and Ogden, Utah, Standard Examiner, 15 July 1947.
47. Paramaribo, Surinam, De West, 16 July 1947; and Rugby, North Dakota, News, 17 July 1947, p. 1.
48. Helena, Montana, Independent Record, 18 July 1947. '
49. Missoula, Montana, Daily Missoulian, 22 July 1947; and Joplin, Missouri, Sunday Globe, 20 July 1947.
50. Laredo, Texas, Times, 22 July 1947.
51. Boise, Idaho, Daily Statesman, 22 July 1947.
52. Atlanta, Georgia, Constitution, 22 July 1947.
53. Letter to Loren Gross from Belang van Linburg, 1 August 1954, GESAG Files.
54. Sheridan, Wyoming, Press, 27 July 1947; and Wolf Point, Herald-News, 1 August 1947, p. 1.
55. Daniel, Montana, Scobey County Leader, 31 July 1947, p. 1.
56. Stockholm, Sweden, Tidningen, 25 July 1947.
57. Boise, Idaho, Daily Statesman, 30 July 1947; and Bloecher, Report on the UFO Wave of 1947, p. 111-13-14.
58. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 69, listed as Incident 52 in 1947 era documents.
59. Documents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated September 1947.
60. Canduff, Saskatchewan, Canada, Gazette-Post-News, 14 August 1947, p. 1; and Estevan, Saskatchewan, Canada, Mercury, 31 July 1947, p. 1.
61. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2.
62. See Appendix V.
63. Few people have heard the story of Kenneth Arnold's second UFO sighting. It occurred at 6:55 A.M. when Arnold was flying over Union, Oregon. On this occasion he saw 20 to 25 discs which were rough appearing on top and lighter on the bottom. As these objects flew, Arnold estimated them to be 24 to 30 inches in diameter and flying at speeds faster than 200 miles per hour. He also commented that the discs fluttered and flipped on edge as they headed north. Surprisingly, this second sighting by Arnold received almost no news play.
64. Randle, The UFO Casebook, pp. 11-15.

65. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 75, listed as Incident 58 in 1947 era documents.
66. Documentation from the FBI, dated 18 September 1947.
67. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 80, listed as Incident 75 in 1947 era documents.
68. Research conducted by Jan L. Aldrich. (Interestingly, Guy Bannister, a famed suspect in Jim Garrison's Kennedy assassination trial, was one of the FBI players in the Twin Falls investigation.)
69.Documents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated 14 September 1947.
70. Gross, UFOs: A History 1947, p. 58.
71. Founh Air Force Files, "microfilm record 33764-1036," US Air Force Historical Agency, Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, Alabama.
72. Jan L. Aldrich, "Filling In The Gaps," Mutual UFO Network UFO Journal 336 (April 1996): 14; and Gross, UFOs: A History 1947, p. 61.
73. Documents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated 19 September 1947.
74. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 83, listed as Incident 64 in 1947 era documents.
75. Documents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated 22 August 1947.
76. George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1948 (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 666.
77. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2; and Gross, UFOs: A History 1947, pp. 62-63.
78. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 85, listed as Incident # 51 in 1947 era documents.
79. Ibid., Case 87, listed as Incident 59 in 1947 era documents.

Chapter Six
The Birth of Project Sign

The Air Materiel Command's Technical Intelligence Division (hereafter referred to as AMC and TID) developed a growing interest in such diverse reports as those from the Pacific. Since the Muroc Sightings, TID officers had compiled information which formed the basis of later case files. Most of the paperwork, however, was first generated by Air Force or Naval Intelligence officers from military bases nearest to a sighting or from the headquarters of the 4th Air Force at Hamilton Field. Recent releases of federal records indicate that the FBI was also engaged in extensive field work and interrogation of witnesses. At times military intelligence officers even "warned" some witnesses not to talk about their reports.[1] By September, growing demands for an answer to the incidents led to increasing pressure on the newly formed USAF. On September 23, 1947, AMC commander, Lieutenant General Nathan F. Twining, replied to a verbal request from Brigadier General Schulgen of Pentagon Intelligence for TID's analysis to date. Now known as the Twining Memo, it made some interesting conclusions:

> **1. As requested by AC/AS-2 there is presented below the considered opinion of this command concerning the so-called "Flying Discs." This opinion is based on interrogation report data furnished by AC/AS-2 and preliminary studies by personnel of T-2 and Aircraft Laboratory, Engineering Division T-3. This opinion was arrived at in a conference between personnel from the Air Institute of Technology, Intelligence T-2, Office, Chief of Engineering Division, and the Aircraft, Power Plant and Propeller Laboratories of Engineering Division T-3.**
>
> **2. It is the opinion that:**
> **a. The phenomenon is something real and not visionary or fictitious.**
> **b. There are objects probably approximating the shape of a disc, of such appreciable size as to appear to be as large as man-made aircraft**
> **c. There is a possibility that some of the incidents may be caused by natural phenomena, such as meteors.**
> **d. The reported operating characteristics such as extreme rates of _____climb, maneuverability (particularly in roll), and motion which must 1**

be considered evasive when sighted or contacted by friendly aircraft and radar, lend belief to the possibility that some of the objects are controlled either manually, automatically or remotely.

e. The apparent common description is as follows:
(1) Metallic or light reflecting surface.
(2) Absence of trail, except in a few instances where the object apparently was operating under high performance conditions.
(3) Circular or elliptical in shape, flat on bottom and domed on top.
(4) Several reports of well kept formation flights varying from three to nine objects.
(5) Normally no associated sound, except in three instances a substantial rumbling roar was noted.
(6) Level flight speeds normally above 300 knots are estimated.

f. It is possible within the present U.S. knowledge—provided extensive detailed development is undertaken—to construct a piloted aircraft which has the general description of the object in subparagraph (e) above which would be capable of an approximate range of 7000 miles at subsonic speeds.
g. Any development in this country along the lines indicated would be extremely expensive, time consuming and at the considerable expense of current projects and therefore, if directed, should be set up independently of existing projects.
h. Due consideration must be given the following:
(1) The possibility that these objects are of domestic origin—the product of some high security project not known to AC/AS-2 or this Command.
(2) The lack of physical evidence in the shape of crash recovered exhibits which would undeniably prove the existence of these subjects.
(3) The possibility that some foreign nation has a form of propulsion possibly nuclear, which is outside of our domestic knowledge.

3. It is recommended that:-
a. Headquarters, Army Air Forces issue a directive assigning a priority, security classification and Code name for a detailed study of this matter to include the preparation of complete sets of all available and pertinent data which will then be made available to the Army, Navy, Atomic Energy Commission, JRDB, the Air Force Scientific Advisory Group, NACA, and the RAND and NEPA projects for comments and recommendations, with a preliminary report to be forwarded within 15 days of receipt of the data and a detailed report thereafter every 30 days as the investigation develops. A complete interchange of data should be affected.

4. Awaiting a specific directive AMC will continue the investigation within its current resources in order to more closely define the nature of the phenomenon. Detailed Essential Elements of Information will be formulated immediately for transmittal through channels. [2]

The Twining Memo strongly urged that a permanent project be established to investigate and analyze future UFO reports. On December 30, Major General Laurence C. Craigie, Director of Research and Development, Headquarters, USAF, issued an order approving a group "to collect, collate, evaluate and distribute to interested government agencies and contractors all information concerning sightings and phenomena in the atmosphere which can be construed to be of concern to the national security."

This led to the establishment at the Air Materiel Command of Project HT-304, code name "Project Sign," under Air Force Technical Instruction No. TI-2185. Quarterly progress reports were ordered to be submitted beginning July 1, 1948, although only one of those reports have been found in the records from the time.

Much of the same thinking from earlier that summer which linked UFOs to German/Soviet technology lay at the heart of the Twining Memo and the creation of Sign. For that reason most researchers believe TID commander Colonel Howard M. McCoy actually drafted the document—as it was worded from the perspective of his wartime experience in T-2 Intelligence.

McCoy had been a key figure in the recovery of German technology during the war. Although he did not work directly on Operation PaperClip to recruit German scientists, he did value the expertise they could provide. Many of these groups mentioned in the Twining Memo like the Rand Think Tank and the Air Force Scientific Advisory Group (NASA's predecessor) utilized German scientific breakthroughs in their own work.

The Twining Memo called for an Essential Elements of Information or EEI document—which also referenced the military's wartime experience with evaluating technology. The EEI served as a check list of important details to note about a sighting—for example shape of object, trajectory, time of event, etc. Alfred Loedding and Pentagon consultant Dr Charles Carroll drew up the EEI. It was then sent to all Army Air Force commands to serve as a basis for investigating a UFO incident.

In late 1947 the EEI, combined with a detailed Collection Memorandum from General Schulgen, was hand-distributed within the European Command by Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm Seashore (a former chief of T-2 Analysis section).

It is apparent from reading the memo that Intelligence still wanted European commands to be on the lookout for a possible German/Soviet link to the discs. Frequent mention of the Horten brother's flying wing designs in this document is the most striking example of this concern. Many of its points clearly stress Alfred Loedding's input from an aeronautical engineering perspective:

AIR INTELLIGENCE GUIDE
For
ALLEGED "FLYING SAUCER TYPE AIRCRAFT"
An alleged "Flying Saucer" Type aircraft or object in flight!' approximating the shape of a disc has been reported by many observers from widely scattered places, such as the United States,, Alaska, Canada, Hungary, the Island of Guam, Japan, etc. This object has been reported by many competent observers. Sightings have been made from the ground as well as from the air.

Commonly reported features that are very significant and which may aid in the investigation are as follows:
a. Relatively flat bottom with extremely light reflecting ability.
b. Absence of sound except for an occasional roar when operating under super performance conditions.
c. Extreme maneuverability and apparent ability to almost hover.
d. A plan form approximating that of an oval or disc with a dome shape on the top surface.
e. The absence of an exhaust trail except in a few instances when it was reported to have bluish color like a Diesel exhaust which persisted for approximately one hour. Other reports indicated a brownish smoke trail that could be the results of a special catalyst or chemical agent for extra power.
f. The ability to quickly disappear by high speed or by complete disintegration.
g. The ability to suddenly appear without warning as if from an extremely high altitude.
h. The size most reported approximated that of a C-54 or Constellation aircraft
i. The ability to group together very quickly in a tight formation when more than one aircraft were together.
j. Evasive action ability indicates possibility of being manually operated, or possibly by electronic or remote control devices.
k. Under certain conditions, the craft seems to have the ability to cut a clear path through clouds—width estimated to be approximately one-half mile. Only one incident indicated this phenomenon.

The first sightings in the U.S. were reported around the middle of May. The last reported sighting took place in Toronto, Canada, 14 September 1947. The greatest activity in the U.S. was during the last week of June and the first week of July.

This strange object or phenomenon may be considered, in view of certain observations, as a long-range aircraft capable of a high rate of climb, high cruising speed (possibly subsonic at all times) and highly maneuverable and capable of being low in very tight formation. For the purpose of analysis and evaluation of the so-called "Flying Saucer" phenomenon, the object sighted is being assumed to be a manned aircraft, of Russian origin, and based on the perspective thinking and actual accomplishments of the German. There is also the possibility that the Horten Brothers perspective thinking may

have inspired this type of aircraft and particularly the "Parabola" which has a crescent plan form. Records show that a glider version only was built of this type aircraft. It is reported to have been built in Heilengenberg, Germany, but was destroyed by fire before having ever flown. The Horten Brothers latest trend of perspective thinking was definitely toward aircraft configurations of low aspect ratio. The younger brother, Reimar, stated that the "Parabola" configuration would have the least induced drag which is a very significant statement. The theory supporting this statement should be obtained.

The German High Command indicated a definite interest in the Horten type of flying wing and were about to embark on a rigorous campaign to develop such aircraft toward the end of the war. A Horten design known as the IX which was designated as the Go-8-229 and Go-P-60 (night fighter) was to be manufactured by the Gotha Plant. It is reported that a contract of fifty such aircraft was planned but only three or four were built. This plant is in the hands of the Russians. A recent report indicates that the Russians are now planning to build a fleet of 1800 Horten VIII (six engine pusher) type flying wing aircraft The wing span is about 131 feet The sweep-back angle is 30 degrees. The Russian version is reported to be jet propelled. Answers to the following questions, therefore, are requested:

a. What German scientist had a better than average knowledge of the Horten Brothers work and perspective thinking; where are these scientists now located, and what is their present activity? Contact and interrogate them.
b. What Russian factories are building the Horten VIII design?
c. Why are the Russians building 1800 of the Horten VIII design?
d. What is their contemplated tactical purpose?
e. What is the present activity of the Horten Brothers, Walter and Reimar?
f. What is known of the whereabouts of the entire Horten family, particularly the sister? All should be contacted and interrogated
regarding any contemplated plans or perspective thinking the Horten Brothers and any interest shown by the Russians to develop their aircraft.
g. Are any efforts being made to develop the Horten "Parabola" or modify this configuration to approximate an oval or disc?
h. What is the Horten perspective thinking on internal controls or controls that are effective mainly by streams of air or gas originating from within the aircraft to supplant conventional external surface controls?

For any aircraft approximating that of an oval, disc or saucer, information regarding the following items is requested.
a. Boundary layer control method by suction, blowing or a combination of both.
b. Special controls for effective maneuverability at very slow speeds or extremely high altitudes.
c. Openings either in the leading edge top and bottom surfaces that

are employed chiefly to accomplish boundary layer control or for the purpose of reducing the induced drag. Any openings in the leading edge should be reported and described as to shape, size, etc. This investigation is significant to justify a disc shape configuration for long-range application.
d. Approximate airfoil shape in the center and near the tips.
e. Front view and rear view shape.

Items of Construction

a. Material whether metal, ferrous, non-ferrous, or non-metallic.
b. Composite or sandwich construction utilizing various combinations of metals, plastics, and perhaps balsa wood.
c. Unusual fabrication methods to achieve extreme light weight and structural stability particularly in connection with great capacity for fuel storage.

Items of Arrangement
a. Special provisions such as retractable domes to provide unusual observation for the pilot or crew members.
b. Crew number and accommodation facilities.
c. Pressurized cabin equipment
d. High altitude or high speed escarpment methods.
e. Methods of pressurization or supercharging from auxiliary units or from the prime power plant
f. Provisions for towing especially with short fixed bar and for refueling in flight.
g. Provisions for assisted take off applications.
h. Bombay provisions, such as dimensions, approximate location, and unusual features regarding the opening and closing of the doors.

Landing Gear
a. Indicate type of landing gear whether conventional, tricycle, multiple wheel, etc.
b. Retractable and jettison features for hand gear.
c. Provisions for take-off from ice, snow, or water.
d. Skid arrangements for either take-off or landing.

Power Plant Item
a. Information is needed regarding the propulsion system used in the aircraft Possible types of engines that could be employed include:
(1) Reciprocating (piston type) engine or gas turbine. Either or both of these could be used to drive propellers of conventional or special design, rotating vanes, ducked fans or compressors.
(2) Jet propulsion engines including turbo jets, rockets, ramjets, pulse jets or a combination of all four.
(3) Nuclear propulsion (atomic energy). Atomic energy engines would probably be unlike any familiar type of engine, although atomic energy might be employed in combination with any of the above types. Aircraft would be characterized by lack of fuel storage space. The power plant would likely be an integral part of the aircraft and could possibly not be distinguished as an item separated from the

aircraft.

If jet propulsion is used, large air handling capacity characterized by a large air inlet area and large exhaust nozzle should be evident. The size of entrance and exit areas would be of interest.

It is possible that the propulsive jet is governed or influenced for control of the aircraft. The presence of vanes or control surfaces in the exhaust or methods of changing the direction of the jet should be observed.

Information desired on the propulsion systems pertains to the following items:
a. Type of power plant or power plants.
b. General description.
c. Rating (thrust, horsepower, or air flow).
d. Type of fuel.
e. Catalytic agents for super-performance or normal cruising power. 3

Officially Sign began on Feb. 11, 1948, although work under that code name had already commenced on January 26th. When General Craigie gave tentative approval to the project back on December 30th, he appointed Sign a "2A priority," the second highest, and a security classification

of "restricted," the lowest rating. Sign and later Grudge code names were kept secret, but their existence became widely known and referred to in the press as "Project Saucer." Sign worked through a system of channels. Air Force Intelligence officers stationed at the nearest air base to a sighting, or in some cases Naval Intelligence, usually conducted the first investigations. After that, cases went to AMC and from there down to TID's Sign officers within the Analysis division. A Sign investigator or extra staff person from somewhere within TID or even AMC would then sometimes be dispatched to a sighting location if further investigation was warranted. At times the FBI did the initial interrogation of witnesses and their reports were literary cut and pasted together to form many of the Sign case files. Other files were completed by the Sign team and/or by other intelligence personnel closer to a given UFO event. These were filed not just in Dayton, but with any government agency which could be of assistance, including some original paperwork going directly to Air Force Headquarters in the Pentagon. Some of the initial investigative paperwork, in fact, apparently never went through the Sign project at all, but straight to Washington. By early 1948 Air Force Headquarters ordered TID to make copies of all their UFO files and forward them to the Office of Naval Intelligence and other government agencies that could be of assistance. By that point many of the Sign files began to be

microfilmed but were of poor quality, indicating that they were meant only for inter-service use.

Some investigative work may have been conducted by military units eventually designated ATIC Detachment 1, 2, and 3. These were classified units which had been established during World War II to recover Japanese Fugo balloons. Fugos, loaded with incendiary bombs, were launched into the jet stream as a desperate attempt by the Japanese to strike back at the United States. When the Japanese started to seriously consider arming the balloons with biological weapons, the Western Defense Command surrounded the recovery units with secrecy. After the war many of the teams were apparently kept in place in the event other countries might try to threaten North America with similar balloon warfare. Air Force Colonel Robert Friend later stated that these units were used to conduct UFO investigations up through 1953. They, however, reported to an intermediate level in Virginia and their reports did not go directly to Sign or the later Grudge and Blue Book projects. [4]

Captain Robert R. Sneider technically headed up the Sign team (referred to as MCIAXO-3) while serving under TID Chief, Colonel McCoy, and TID Analysis division Chief, Colonel William R. Clingerman. Sneider, however, seems to have merely been the military administrator with Loedding initially assuming the role of a working director of the team. A few notable members on the Sneider/Loedding staff were, Lawrence H. Truettner (missile specialist), Nicholas Post, John H. Zell, George W. Towles, John "Red" Honnacker, Lieutenant Colonel Miles Goll (who may have technically supervised engineering specialists like Loedding while at Intelligence), Major Raymond A. Llewellyn, and Lieutenant Howard W. Smith. Major Melvin W. Faulk also lent assistance until transferred in June of 1948. By early 1948 Albert Bonnelle Deyarmond (a reserve Army Air Force colonel) also became a key team member. Most of these individuals were highly trained technical intelligence engineers who had worked on UFO related casework as early as July while serving in or assisting TID's Analysis division.

Alfred Loedding, as stated, had come to Wright Labs back in 1938 where he won a reputation as a brilliant technical innovator in the T-3 Engineering section. Loedding consulted on early UFO investigations not only because he was a leading authority on flying wing aircraft design, but he was also recognized as one of the few in the United States who had personal experience in rocketry. He had, in fact, become chief of the first Jet Propulsion Laboratory at Wright Field in 1940. In Loedding's resume he stated that while there, "I pioneered the work in rocket type engines ... I

initiated and monitored all work that finally resulted in a modern and complete Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 1943." [5] After that Loedding went to work at the Armament Laboratory on the development of another project of his, the hydrobomb. The hydrobomb was a type of underwater rocket-propelled torpedo that was to be carried by aircraft for anti-ship warfare. While in this project Loedding served as the chief liaison with private contractors but apparently ran against military procedure in his work. As a result of that he resigned from the project in disgust with the wasteful management of time and resources that the military bureaucracy exhibited in its own efforts to develop weapons systems.

After that Loedding realized weapons production must be entrusted with private industry. Nevertheless, Wright Field continued to use him as a military liaison and trouble shooter with other industries involved in 1 ^ government war production contracts. This included work on the B-29 project and its successor, the B-50. During this time Loedding personally contributed to the solving of the engine fires that plagued so many B-29s coming out of the first production runs. He was then sent to coordinate on the first stages of development of the huge nuclear B-36 bomber. While on the B-36 project he assisted with the shaping and forming of magnesium alloy sheet metal at the B-36 plant in Fort Worth, Texas. After the war he briefly worked full time at Patterson Field for the T-2 intelligence section. We do not know what he worked on at the time, but soon Alfred was back to work in the T-3 Engineering section. Apparently by then he worked mainly in research and development projects and was still used as a corporate liaison and technical assistant. He wrote that at that time, "I visited major aircraft companies and manufacturing concerns, such as the Aluminum Company of America and their sub-contractors to solve manufacturing difficulties and tooling problems. I also visited various other plants throughout the country and was solely responsible for examination of their manufacturing ability and then recommending the awarding of contracts to Procurement Division." By February 17, 1946 Loedding returned to T-2. He wrote that at that time:

> **I joined the Analysis Division . . . and took a leading part in organizing the Aircraft Section. I created the Supersonic Unit and became Chief for approximately two months. I was then advanced to Civilian Chief, Aircraft Section, and supervised the Section jointly with the Military Chief, which was the policy at that time. I held that position from April until June, and was then loaned to the Office of the Technical Assistant in order to replace Major Ryan, who was scheduled to leave in July; I took complete charge of the Office of the Technical Assistant on 1 August 1946, after Major Ryan resigned in July.** [6]

From August 1946 to May 1949 Loedding officially worked as the "Technical Assistant to the Chief of the Technical Analysis Division of MCI A." (MCIA was TID's WWII era predecessor which was called the Materiel Command Intelligence or MCI of | the Air Technical Service Command—forerunner to AMC. In this case Intelligence Analysis was called MCIA—A for Analysis.) During this time, aside from what would become an active job in UFO investigations, Loedding also supervised the offices of Guided Missiles and Foreign Industrial Facilities. It is unclear why, but although Loedding was technically employed by T-2 Intelligence then based at Patterson Field, he retained his office at Wright Field and may have still worked in some capacity for T-3 Engineering. In Loedding's resume he characterized his duties at this time as follows:

Alfred Loedding

I was authorized to sign all routine correspondence under the jurisdiction of the Technical Assistant's Office when on a Division level. I was responsible for approving all outgoing correspondence and technical reports from my office and the offices of Guided Missiles and Foreign Industrial Facilities. My principle duties consisted of 1) advising the Chief and his Deputies regarding technical matters of an engineering nature, a technical intelligence nature, and broad plans for accomplishing the overall intelligence mission, 2) acting as the Chief's representative on important conferences that would effect the entire Division, 3) acting as an engineering consultant for all the sections of the Division, 4) monitoring continuous projects, such as the Air Force College Thesis Program and Foreign Aeronautical Trends Report, etc., 5) approved all technical reports including those of the German scientists, for technical or engineering correctness, as well as the technical intelligence aspects, 6) review and recommend security classification of important documents as requested by the Chief, 7) present talks to various governmental and outside agencies regarding highly technical subjects pertinent to the mission of the Division, 8) other routine and special duties befitting that of a Technical Assistant as requested by both the Chief of the Division and the Chief of the Intelligence Department, such as initiating and monitoring Project "Sign" (Flying Saucers). [7]

On September 5th of 1947 he served as TID's Intelligence as well as

Engineering liaison with the Pentagon on the UFO subject. This involved a meeting with General Schulgen and Dr. Charles Carroll who was a mathematics and missile expert. They met initially to discuss a radar sighting in Fukuoka, Japan, but Loedding attended other meetings as well on the disc sightings. Loedding also worked with Lieutenant Colonel Garrett from the Air Force Intelligence, Collections Division in the Pentagon. As already examined, Loedding may have assisted Garrett on his preliminary estimate of the current UFO situation back in July. (See page 83.)

Loedding initially concentrated on a German/Soviet answer to the disc sightings as many did. Perhaps this was because at the time he was working with many of the former Nazi rocket scientists who were then being utilized by Wright Labs. But Loedding, along with Garrett, would by the end of 1947 become supporters of an extraterrestrial hypothesis for the origin of the flying disc phenomenon. Loedding's excitement over the disc sightings, in fact, stimulated a movement to have many of the Pentagon's UFO files transferred to Wright Field in September of 1947. Beyond that no one will ever know the full influence of Alfred Loedding, but his personal papers do characterize him as the "initiator of Project Sign." Certainly it is fair to speculate that he may have been a key figure pushing for the establishment of such an investigation because he was the man being used as a

liaison between Washington and Dayton. Having talked to Loedding's brother and son, it is the belief of these authors that Alfred Loedding may have suggested the code name of Sign.[8]

Albert Deyarmond also did important liaison work with the Pentagon. In fact, research conducted by researcher Wendy Connors indicates Deyarmond may have been the main Pentagon contact, but not until mid 1948. This could have been a result of the fact that Deyarmond had been a very close friend and wartime companion of Colonel McCoy. During the war Deyarmond and McCoy along with Colonel Harold Watson were all key figures in the operation to recover secret German technology. After the war Deyarmond assisted Colonel McCoy in building a technical data base at Wright Field from German documents.

Albert B. Deyarmond

Deyarmond, like all the Sign staff, was well versed in many disciplines. Deyarmond did not officially join the Sign team until May of 1948 because he had taken a job at the Ryan Aeronautical Company in San Diego from December 1946 to April 1948. He had left active service at the end of 1946 due to minor health problems but retained his rank as a reserve officer. It is believed McCoy requested Deyarmond's return to active duty to help with the saucer investigation as early as July 1947, but his health prevented it. McCoy, however, finally got Deyarmond on the team by 1948 as a civilian employee. His influence in the project's later work is very evident. Like Loedding, he was a gifted engineer and also had an aptitude for missile aerodynamics. Yet, Deyarmond was not as outwardly vocal on the possibility of an extraterrestrial connection to UFOs as Loedding.

That belief in an extraterrestrial connection seems to have become a very touchy subject. Surprisingly, it was not because of the fantastic nature of such a theory but the politics within the Air Force itself. It is important to keep in mind that there were many different people within Air Force Intelligence who affected military policy on UFOs. Individuals gravitated to groups which formed factions, not just within the Pentagon but Dayton too. Many of these names can not all be detailed here, but the reader should keep the following passage in mind as the complicated history of Air Force involvement unfolds.

First the Pentagon. In 1947 Carl Spaatz as Chief of Staff was the top authority figure. However, Spaatz figures very little into the UFO story because his junior executive, General Hoyt Vandenberg, would soon replace him. Under both Spaatz and Vandenberg was the office of Intelligence known as The Directorate of Intelligence, eventually referred to as AFOIN. General George McDonald served

as Chief of Air Force Intelligence in 1947. But, like Spaatz, he figures very little into the UFO picture because it would be his executive officer, Brigadier George Schulgen, who would affect policy. We have already seen how Schulgen mobilized the first efforts to look into the UFO sightings after the July 8th Muroc Sightings. He also inspired the Twining Memo later that year which led to the formation of Project Sign by 1948. But following in McDonald's and Schulgen's shoes in 1948 was Major General Charles Pearre Cabell. Cabell would end up having significant influence on Air Force policy concerning UFOs, setting the stage for Project Blue Book in late 1951.

Pentagon Intelligence had its own divisions. Under AFOIN were the Air Force Office of Intelligence Requirements branch or AFOIR and the Air Force Office of Air Intelligence or AFOAI. The former (AFOIR) included the Collections branch known as AFOIR-CO. It was in this office we find Colonel Garrett working under his executive officer Colonel Robert Taylor.

As we have seen, Garrett was the one who worked with the FBI and soon Alfred Loedding from Dayton. He also became personally sympathetic with the developing viewpoint that many of the flying disc reports represent "real technological objects." Like Loedding, this at first meant German technology but their belief changed to an extraterrestrial hypothesis by the beginning of 1948.

Not only were Garrett, and soon Taylor, among this pro-UFO Pentagon faction, but also Colonel Frank Dunn, who worked in the main office. (Dunn would later be head of Intelligence at Dayton from September 1951 to August 1952 during the heyday of Project Blue Book.) Major William A. Adams of the Documents and Dissemination Office was also an open-minded individual working in Pentagon Intelligence. Adams, like Dunn, would be very influential in the UFO picture by 1952. [9]

On the other side of the Pentagon spectrum were officers from AFOAI. These men served as an "analysis" division. Under that heading could be found those who were "non sympathetic" to the UFO phenomenon. Such individuals worked in the AFOAI's Defense Air branch (AFOAI-DA) and the Air Estimates branch (AFOAI-AE). All of these men became known as "violently anti-UFO." Researchers can grasp a clear insight into why some people became "pro-UFO," or on the other hand how someone may choose to discount the sightings. But no one can explain the motivation behind that Pentagon faction which chose to debunk the phenomenon at all costs. Officers like Colonel Harold Watson, (a key man on McDonald's staff) went so far as to criticize the character of pilots who saw UFOs. He even did this publicly and went out of his way to talk to reporters about the silliness of UFOs and those who claimed to have seen them. Yet all who were associated with Watson knew him to be the first to defend Air Force pilots in any other matter. He was an outstanding officer—no one ever said anything to the contrary. In his early days he had also been a highly respected test pilot at Wright Field. During the war he distinguished himself as head of Operation Lusty—an endeavor to recover German aircraft technology. The small group of men he lead around Europe during that mission became known as Watson's Wizards and they all had great admiration for their commander.

Watson would replace McCoy in mid 1949 as head of Intelligence in Dayton. His arrival, in fact, came just after the end of Project Sign and the creation of a very ineffective successor project called Grudge. He served that post until the creation of a reorganized UFO investigation in September of 1951 when Colonel Frank Dunn replaced him. During Watson's tenure at Dayton he, in association with James Rodgers, used Project Grudge to debunk UFO sightings. Ironically, Watson would return to head up Intelligence in

Dayton in 1953 just as the heyday of Project Blue Book, under the very objective administration of Captain Edward Ruppelt, came to an end.

Other "saucer killers" were Pentagon assistants to the Director of Estimate, Major Aaron Jerry Boggs and Colonel JJ. Porter. Both Boggs and Porter (Porter soon became Director of Estimates) and especially Watson would affect UFO policy up through 1951, with Porter staying on the crusade through 1952. Yet these were not poor officers nor men who lent themselves to anything other than objectivity. They were some of the best minds in their field, but they held more senior positions than the pro-UFO faction. Thus, many researchers have wondered if there is a secret, yet unknown, reason for their unexplainable aggressive hatred of the UFO phenomenon. Some researchers feel they may have had first-hand knowledge and involvement in a cover-up of physical evidence stemming from the Roswell Incident, although this idea has not been documented and remains only speculative conjecture at this point in time.

As the Air Materiel Command at the newly renamed Wright-Patterson AFB complex in Dayton became involved in UFO research, factions formed there as well. The head of the AMC at this time was Lieutenant General Nathan F. Twining. Under his office came five basic operations. The most well known were the Air Force's Technical Research and Development engineering operation or T-3, and the Technical Intelligence group or T-2—which became the Technical Intelligence Division (TID) in August. T-3 was based at Wright Field, comprising the aviation laboratories and headed up by Major General Alden Crawford with General P.O. Carroll serving as director of research and development (often termed R&D). That is where Loedding first worked (in building 11A Room 252) until assisting almost full time at T-2 by 1947. The T-2 offices, however, were located at Patterson Field—five miles away from the older Wright Field. (The other divisions of AMC were T-l—personnel, T-4—supply, and T-5—plans.)

Colonel Howard McCoy served as the director of AMC's T-2/TID group. It had four subdivisions: Collection, Intelligence Analysis, Air Documents, and Photographic. Known as Mac, Colonel McCoy was an outstanding engineer in his own right. He had initially moved from a T-3 engineering division during the war into intelligence work when men with his experience were needed to recover Germany's advanced aviation technology. McCoy then got into the role of analyzing German technical documents which led his division into a general enemy air power analysis mission. That is how the Intelligence Analysis division formed under TID's WWII era predecessor which was called the Material Command Intelligence or MCI of the Air Technical Service Command—forerunner to AMC.

Analysis is where Colonel Clingerman comes into the picture. He

served as executive officer of MCI—Analysis by 1947. It was his office that Alfred Loedding assisted with at almost every level but concentrating on supervising the offices of Guided Missiles and Foreign Industrial Facilities. Loedding worked well with Patterson Field Intelligence legends McCoy and Clingerman—who were both engineers at heart. But interestingly, Loedding seems to have kept his Wright Field office in building 11A throughout 1947 and part of 1948 even though his title changed to Analysis Division Technical Assistant of the TID intelligence department as early as 1946. Although the WWII era prefix MCIA was still used for a long time for TID's Analysis division, it was composed of two sections. One became known as the Operations Section or MCIAO and the other as Technical Analysis Section or MCIAT.

MCIAT had a number of branches like Special Analysis—MCIAXB, where Nicholas Post worked. Another was Special Projects—MCIAXO, headed by Major Raymond Llewellyn. A third was Foreign Liaison—MCIAXL. Then Aircraft and Guided Missiles \ Analysis—MCIAXA, where John Zell and Lawrence Truettner resided.

Special Projects or MCIAXO actually became the birth cradle of Sign because that is where innovative ad hoc committees formed. Alfred Loedding, in fact, may have lobbied for such a special (UFO) project out of the Special Projects group before authorization even came down from the Pentagon. But, because all these offices were very fluid, one can now see why the Sign team all formed from different areas within the vast TID organization.

It is still the personal opinion of these authors that Loedding inspired the project name of SIGN. After all, Edward Ruppelt once stated that each project name had a meaning behind it, and Loedding did come to believe that the discs could be of extraterrestrial origin.[10] As stated, Alfred Loedding, who worked in all the offices at one time or another—sometimes simultaneously, had a particular enthusiasm for the phenomenon. This may have been generated by his own sighting during October of 1932. Primarily, however, his experiences during 1947 proved to Loedding that something very significant was taking place.

Fortunately, the authors recently tracked down a son and the brother of Sign civilian team leader Alfred C. Loedding. In two different interviews with a follow-up intensive interview of son Donald Loedding by Wendy Connors and then a third session with both Hall and Connors present, these gentlemen detailed facts never before known about Alfred C. Loedding or the Sign project. Aside from the relevant UFO-related stories, the authors learned that Alfred Loedding had indeed been an extremely gifted aeronautical engineer.

This is a very critical point because UFO debunkers have always downplayed the Sign project by continually focusing on one point—the inexperience of the team members. Research conducted by the authors finally dispels this myth.[11]

The best information from Loedding's Project Sign days comes from his son Donald. Donald was in the transition from grade school to high school in those years and recalls numerous impressions from the time. One of the most stunning is a clear memory of his father talking about "landing cases," yet today the Project Sign documents released through the Blue Book Files by the National Archives do not include any investigative paperwork on true unexplained landing incidents. Donald, however, recalls not one but numerous trips his father made to investigate such events including incidents in which UFOs interfered with the electrical systems of automobiles. Such cases of electrical magnetic effects were not officially documented by Air Force investigations until 1957. Could this be why Alfred was the first to examine an electromagnetic connection to the phenomena while others only concentrated on ram jet or nuclear propulsion theories? He also recalls his father being especially interested in UFO reports filed by airline pilots. The Sign files do speak of such cases but detail far fewer incidents than are remembered to have attracted Alfred Loedding's attention.

On the other hand, unlike many of the sensational stories currently in print on the Roswell Incident, Donald Loeding emphatically states that his father (who had a "Secret"—later "Top Secret"—security clearance) never spoke of any such event and is certain that his father would have known about a crash of a UFO if it had occurred. His brother Fred confirmed that. In Fred's mind, Alfred had no knowledge of a UFO crash at Roswell. Fred Loedding does, however, tell a now rather familiar story about a hanger that was off bounds when visiting his brother at Wright Field around 1947 or 1948. Alfred could not tell Fred what was in that hanger because he himself had no access, but the implication was that is was UFO related.[12]

Loedding, like all the Sign members were the highest valued experts employed by the Air Force. By the end of 1948 the Sneider/Loedding team looked into 243 sightings with a high degree of care.[13] Unlike later Air Force investigations, participating intelligence officers and Pentagon brass alike took this project very seriously. FBI agents continued to be utilized to research the

backgrounds of witnesses. Ohio State University, under contract with the AMC, also served as a resource. That's how the late Dr. J. Alien Hynek came to work as a consultant. In 1947 he taught astronomy at Ohio State. He was the only astronomer near Dayton and in later years described his long association with the Air Force as an accident of geography. Members

of the Scientific Advisory Board to the Chief of Staff of the USAF like Dr. George E. Valley supplied their services as well in a consulting capacity.[14] Although no one knew what they might find, their interest primarily centered around fears that the Soviets might be responsible for the disc mystery.[15]

14 October

UFO activity in the fall of 1947 remained very spotty although interesting reports continued to be documented. One such case marked unidentified, occurred eleven miles north of Cave Creek, Arizona, when two Phoenix mine operators saw a black flying-wing shaped UFO around noon that day. It zoomed over them at about 8,000 to 10,000 feet, moving around 350 miles per hour. Both men had experience with military aircraft, one with five years service as a fighter pilot and the other with two years training as an Army Air Force gunner and a pilot himself—yet neither could even make a guess as to what it was that they had seen.[16]

On that same day Captain Charles E. Yeager broke the sound barrier and reached 760.5 miles per hour in the Bell XS-1. Until then only captured V-2 missiles flew at such speeds. Conventional jets could seldom exceed 600 miles per hour, and the German rocket designs only flew in restricted test areas of the American West and regions of Soviet Siberia. The next generation of rockets like Sputnik, that were capable of intercontinental flight or orbiting the Earth, were still a decade away.

12 November

Boise, Idaho Statesman, reporter Dave Johnson continued to express great interest in UFOs. Whenever a good case came along he conscientiously sought to gather the facts. This excerpt details a notable sighting from this date that took place off the American West Coast. Observations of unidentified aircraft at sea always attracted the attention of Intelligence officials due to the possibility that they could originate from Soviet submarines. For that reason a clipping of this article ended up in the files of the 4th Air Force: (Alfred Loedding indicated in an interview in 1954 that Wright Field was keeping a similar file of correspondence and clippings in the late 40s, but unfortunately this material was apparently later disposed of.) [17]

Talks About Aviation
by Dave Johnson

One of the greatest aeronautical mysteries of all time—that of the flying discs—has come to life again. Objects which where reported seen by thousands of persons on the ground and by scores of pilots in the air, have been sighted off the Pacific coast.

The oceanic appearance of flying discs was the subject of a message transmitted to naval intelligence in San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle. The report also was relayed to the U.S. hydrographic office in ."."

San Francisco. It originated with the second officer of the tanker S.S. Ticonderoga.

The tanker was at a position 300 miles north of San Francisco, and 25 miles off the coast on Nov. 12 when the officer reported that he saw two flying discs.

This is the report: "Two flying discs were sighted flying southwest at f high speed. They appeared about 36 feet in diameter and were 20 feet apart. They emitted a very bright glow and left a streak about 50 feet behind them.

They were first sighted bearing north and disappeared bearing west at 0620 Greenwich central time. The fix (position of the vessel) was latitude 43 degrees 15 minutes north and 124 degrees 54 minutes west"

After receiving a report that the discs had been sighted at sea, we telephoned an intelligence officer assigned to one of the air forces in the United States. This air force had received "orders from the top" to expand every effort in tracking down the possible source of flying discs. We cannot give this officer's name. But he said he is now convinced that something has been flying over the United States, and the source of that something, as far as he understands, is not known either to the Army or the Navy.

We have also learned that the Army has asked what it considers its most creditable witnesses of flying discs to draw pictures of what they saw. These drawings have all been generally the same. These sketches are of an object with a rounded nose and a tail with a sharp point, much like a tadpole. The officer with whom we talked appeared extremely interested in the blue light which glared over a 250-mile area of southern Idaho and eastern Oregon a few weeks ago. He said he was not convinced it was a meteoric display. Three men, two United Airlines pilots and a CAA air center inspector riding with them, observed this light from a point near Baker, Ore. They said that after the light expired there was a trail of luminescent particles in the air which slowly assumed an arch of 180 degrees and vanished. [18]

15 November

It is hard to find detailed information on UFO sightings in foreign countries during 1947. Many of the accounts we do have are very vague. But whatever

it was that this report represented—47,000 people at a baseball game in Managua, Nicaragua, saw it. Most of the stories described two silver oscillating "platillos valadores" that slowly flew down over the stadium and briefly hovered before zooming off at terrific speed. Spanish for flying saucers, platillos valadores or "flying plates" could only be so characterized by people throughout the world because they resembled no known aircraft.[19]

18 November

By November there were efforts by the Air Force to plot the trajectory of UFO activity in North America based on the sightings that they had then collected—which only amounted to about three to five percent of known incidents. Alfred Loedding and Pentagon consultant Dr. Charles Carroll seem to have coordinated on this but only one record speaks to this effort.[20] Because the files from this time are so sparse, only bits and pieces of the types of discussions going on at Wright Field can be ascertained in regard to UFOs. One curious topic we know of did center around Spain. Colonel McCoy remained very interested in any possible link to German technology that could account for the saucer sightings and continued to leave no stone unturned. One theory centered around the possibility that some German scientists had escaped to Spain at the end of the war and were developing radical aircraft designs. Today we know the Spanish were producing aircraft based on German designs, but these all dated back to pre-war or WWII models. In fact one of these many aircraft built in Spanish aircraft plants, a virtual copy of a German JU-52 transport, is today on display at the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio. Yet, it is curious to note that at the end of 1947 Colonel McCoy sent a memorandum asking that all references to aircraft development in Spain be upgraded to "Secret." No files on this subject postdating that memo have been declassified.[21] (This

notion of Spain serving as a point of origin for flying saucers gained public attention after a syndicated newspaper story, written by Lionel Shapiro, detailing weapons development in Spain.)

Added to the mysteries of this time is a story out of Greece where numerous flying disc reports originated at the end of 1947. The Greek government became very concerned over the incidents because of recent Soviet attempts to promote political instability as well as coerce democratic

movements in the region. Greek authorities thus decided to conduct an investigation. They assigned their top physicist, Paul Santorini, to the case. Santorini was a brilliant scientist and a close friend of Dr. Albert Einstein. Santorini looked into the possibility that the sightings could be the result of Russian missiles or aircraft. It was common knowledge that the Soviets were seeking to influence the political situation in Greece, and this stood as a perfectly logical conclusion. Santorini, however, established that the reports were not attributed to known mechanical devices.

Logically one would think that the American military would have been very interested in any such studies so near the Soviet border dealing with even the possibility of Russian missile activity. For that reason it is very odd that the Pentagon instructed the Greek government to terminate Santorini's studies when they received word of his conclusions. A team of American scientists then flew to Greece to interview Santorini, but no records have been uncovered to shed any more light on this unique series of developments.[22] It is interesting to speculate weather Alfred Loedding and missile expert Lawrence Truettner might have been on that trip to Greece. It certainly would have dovetailed with their duties as members of the Analysis division.

UFO activity overseas must have been rather significant that late fall and winter. As stated, less than five percent of sightings were reported to the US military in 1947, and only a percentage made news stories after the summer onslaught. So the sightings we do know of from Europe and the Middle East at that time suggest more than may be presently recorded. These include disc sightings in the Persian Gulf on November 5th, Oslo, Norway, on December 12th, the Antarctic around the very end of 1947 or early 1948, and reports in Finland by the first of 1948.[23]

Colonel McCoy was not the only one still trying to link disc sightings to European or Soviet matters. By December the public was just as anxious to find out if there could somehow be a Soviet connection to the saucer mystery. Oregon Congressman Harris Ellsworth even made the statement that, "he had received information concerning the development of high-velocity missiles by Soviet scientists."[24] The implication expressed by Ellsworth's statement attempted to address fears over the hundreds of unexplained sightings of discs that had occurred in his state since early summer.

Scientists were also serious about the subject even though most did not speak out on the topic. Dr. D.C Wylie of the University of Iowa stood out as an exception. At the annual winter meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Wylie addressed a session attended by astronomers, urging that a nationwide "sky-patrol" be established to

investigate the flying disc phenomena. He, like other scientists, felt that the disc mystery may involve matters of national security. His concern therefore stemmed from a sense for national preparedness and not necessarily matters of scientific curiosity. This is an important point because it demonstrates that even by late 1947 the public in large part perceived flying saucers as earth-born phenomena. In later years scientists would become interested in UFOs because of the implication to extraterrestrial visitation. By then, however, those same scientists would remain hesitant to speak out on the subject. This time it was not for reasons of indifference but fear of ridicule. Over the course of

the years following 1947, the concept of spaceships from another world would be lightheartedly addressed by the press and after 1948 even by the Air Force itself. Largely because of that treatment, by 1949, the cinema and popular literature would equate UFOs not only with spaceships but do so in a negative stereotypical fashion which promoted that very air of ridicule.

18 December

Because UFO sightings were still popping up in the news, the Air Force continued to feel public pressure for answers to the flying saucer mystery. The degree of pressure the government was then exerting on the USAF is not yet fully documented, but for some reason Air Force Chief of Staff, General Carl Spaatz, chose to comment on the issue this day. He stated that he was not convinced of the existence of such objects but then contradicted his position by stressing that the Air Force could not discard the possibility that the saucers were the result of foreign technology. Obviously, reporters took this reference to be synonymous with Soviet aircraft. But did he have a different inference in the back of his head? Others like Loedding, were just starting to seriously consider spacecraft from other worlds as a possible answer.

Although the military did important preliminary investigations in 1947, many of the files it generated were mysteriously "lost." What remain today are listed in the first cases of the United States Air Force Blue Book files. Edward J. Ruppelt, later an Air Force project leader of UFO investigations from 1951 to 1953, had the opportunity to view a more complete set of files in late 1950. Fortunately, he summarizes many of his observations in his 1956 book, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects. His personal papers, now under the capable administration of Professor Michael Swords of the Department of Science at Western Michigan University, also reveal unique insights.

Ruppelt stated that the 1947-48 correspondence of TID showed "that the UFO situation was considered to be serious, in fact, very serious." Only the best in intelligence came together to work on Sign. As a result, security became very strict concerning media investigations into the subject as the

Pentagon did not know if UFOs were Soviet secret weapons, the Navy XF-5-U-l project, or "non-earthly" in origin. He confirms many at TID began to regard UFOs as the latter. By 1948 "the Soviets were practically eliminated as a UFO source . ...those in ATIC were openly discussing the possibility of interplanetary visitors without others tapping their heads or looking smug." (When Ruppelt refers to ATIC, he means TID which in 1951 was renamed Air Technical Intelligence Center.)

Ruppelt also found a memo in the old Project Sign files which, in his words, stated, "Those who were convinced that UFOs were of Soviet origin now began to eye outer space, not because there was any evidence that UFOs did come from outer space but because they were convinced that UFOs existed and only some unknown race with a highly developed state of technology could build such vehicles." [25]

By the end of the year, 109 case reports of strange flying objects were accounted for in the Project Sign office. Nine cases still remain classified as unidentified in today's declassified (Project Blue Book) Air Force files.[26] (Earlier Air Force figures listed 12 unidentified cases for 1947, but the index released by the National Archives in 1976 reveal only 9. In addition, the Air Force's official statistics from 1969 list 122 total reports for 1947 but today only 108 cases plus an unnumbered report are present.)

Dr. James McDonald, a noted UFO researcher during the 1960s, reinvestigated many of the 1947

cases. He acquired names of witnesses from the Air Force and tracked down some of those individuals. McDonald's papers, now available to serious researchers at the University of Arizona, prove the 1947 wave was not just a "fly over" phenomenon as often suggested. Rather, the sightings from that year reflect all aspects of UFO behavior as evidenced by later waves. Other scholars in the field of UFO studies such as Ted Bloecher, Aime Michel, Richard Hall, Jan Aldrich, and Loren Gross have concurred with McDonald. At one time or another in their writings they have stated that all aspects of the phenomenon are exemplified by the 1947 sightings with the exception of abduction cases. This even includes radar cases. Recent research by Jan Aldrich indicates that the first 1947 radar case may have occurred as early as January 16th over the North Sea. The Far East Air Force had three such cases in Japan during July, August, and September. The Humble Oil Company also had an anomalous radar incident at their research facility near Houston, Texas, on September 19th. To date, Jan Aldrich is continuing his very important research into 1947 and is the most qualified to draw the final conclusions on the great UFO wave of 1947.

1. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, p. 29.
2. Edward Condon, ed., Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects (New York: Bantam Books, 1969), pp. 894-895; and Project 1947 Web Site: http://www.iufog.org/project 1947/index.html.
3. Wendy A. Connors, Anatomy of a Project (unpublished manuscript, 1998). (To date, Connors has conducted the most exhaustive study into the people and events of the first government investigations into UFOs.)
4. Research conducted by Jan L. Aldrich. (Dr. Lincoln La Paz, who worked on balloon bomb defense during WWII, stated that intelligence authorities had intercepted radio messages between Germany and Japan suggesting a biological attack would come with the next Fugo launches, but the war ended with the American use of two atomic bombs before those attacks could be made.)
5. Papers loaned to the authors by Donald Loedding.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Michael D. Swords, "Project Sign and The Estimate of the Situation," first draft of unpublished article written for 1998 issue of Journal Of UFO Studies.
9 Ibid.
10. Michael D. Hall, Origin of the UFO Phenomenon (unpublished manuscript, 1998), ch. 4; and Michael D. Hall, UFOs, A Century of Sighting* (Lakeville, MN: Galde Press, 1999), ch 2
11. See the writings of Wendy Connors and Michael Hall for further insights.
12. Great thanks goes to Donald and Fred Loedding for the time that they devoted to the authors' research.
13. Interview with Fred W. Loedding and Donald Loedding; and interview with Professor Michael Swords.
14. "Project Sign, Report No. F-TR-2274-IA," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 85, Administrative Files, Box 1; and recent release of Sign and Grudge documents via I-NAIC-97-053 request, Wright-Patterson AFB.
15. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, p. 16.
16. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 95, listed as Incident 37 in 1947 era documents.
17. "Princeton Engineer Believes Flying Saucers Real Thing," Trenton (New Jersey) Sunday Times-Advertiser, 10 October 1954.
18.Fourth Air Force Files, "microfilm record 33764-1036," US Air Force Historical Agency, Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, Alabama.
19. Letter to J. Alien Hynek from Marlene Bravo-Rongstad, 26 January 1981, CUFOS Files.
20. Letter to Chief of Staff, USAF, Washington 25, DC, Office of Director of Intelligence, Lt. Colonel Garrett, Jr., from H.M. McCoy, Colonel, Air Force Corps, Chief of Intelligence, 18 November 1947, declassified Air Force files.
21. Letter to Chief of Staff, USAF, Washington 25, DC, Office of Director of Intelligence, Lt. Colonel Garrett, Jr., from H.M. McCoy, Colonel, Air Force Corps, Chief of Intelligence, 24 November 1947, declassified Air Force files.
22. Gross, UFOs: A History 1947, pp. 74-75.
23. Ibid.; and "Index," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1.
24. "Mystery Discs Again Linked to Russia," Associated Press news story, 22 December 1947.
25. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, pp. 22, 28, 30.
26. "Index," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 1.

Conclusion
1948
The Short Heyday of Sign

The year following 1947 witnessed the formal activation of Project Sign. Unfortunately the heyday of Sign lasted but a brief period. Four specific case investigations during 1948 tell a great deal of the story of Alfred Loedding and his beloved Sign project. In fact, if ever there was a time in which a group of highly technical people sought answers to the complex UFO mystery, it was during that watershed period. In that year Loedding, Sneider, and other team members were literally looking for a sign to explain the events which had transpired during the past year—something to help explain the perplexing sightings of unusual aerial phenomena that were still occurring.

On January 7th, 1948, they thought they had one. On that day Kentucky Air National Guard pilot Captain Thomas F. Mantell, Jr. died when his F-51 fighter crashed southwest of Franklin, Kentucky, after intercepting a high flying UFO. Soon known as the Mantell Incident, the case is considered one of the most famous flying saucer stories of all time.

The fateful intercept began at 2:30 P.M. CST near Louisville after personnel of Fort Knox's Godman Air Field became concerned over the presence of a strange object overhead. It had been in sight since 1:45 P.M. when tower operator Sergeant Quinton Blackwell received a call alerting him to the UFO by the fort's security police. Tower commander Colonel Guy F. Hix later confirmed an unknown over the area along with Captain Gary Carter, also in the tower at the time. Carter, with the aid of 6 x 50 field glasses, described it as a round white object which appeared very high and at times seemed to hover. PFC Stanley Oliver, also in the tower, described the UFO more akin to a high altitude balloon, stating that it looked like "an ice cream cone topped with red." Others had a similar description, likening it to a "parachute with the bright sun shining on top of the silk." [1]

Hix really didn't know what to think but decided he would try to find

out. About that time just such a means came to his disposal when Mantell's flight of four F-51 fighters neared Louisville on a return ferry mission from Marietta Air Base in Georgia. Hix asked the group to pursue and identify, although, one of the planes was running low on fuel so continued on to the flight's planned destination at Standiford AFB in northern Kentucky. The remaining three F-5 Is then began climbing as Mantell took the lead. At 2:45 P.M. Mantell gained visual contact with the UFO—stating that it was "in sight above and [a]head of me, and it appears to be moving at about half my speed or approximately 180 miles per hour." Already over 10,000 feet, Mantell led his flight still higher despite the fact they had no oxygen on board. Even as they approached the danger level of 15,000 feet, where no pilot is advised to fly without oxygen, Mantell pursued the UFO. He then reported: "It appears to be a metallic object or possibly a reflection of sun from a metallic object, and it is of tremendous size." Abruptly banking right, he continued his climb.

At 16,000 feet Mantell's right wingman, 1st Lieutenant Albert Clements,' tried to match the maneuver but started to fall behind. His other wingman, 2nd Lieutenant B.A. Hammond, also fell behind, becoming very concerned about their altitude. By that point they were over Bowling Green at 20,000 feet with Clements and Hammond quite a bit behind Mantell. The two wingmen had not yet seen the object nor were they even sure of what they were looking for. Mantell then radioed to them: "Look, there it is out there at 12 o'clock!" Clements could only "discern a bright-appearing object, very small, and so far away [that I was] unable to identify it as to size, shape, color ... Its

position was slightly lower and to the left of the sun." Clements then urged his leader to level off and try to catch up with it from below. Mantell ignored the advice and radioed back that he wanted to follow it up to 25,000 feet for ten minutes and if he didn't get any closer, would then abandon the chase. Mantell then called Godman Tower around 3:15 P.M., stating: "I'm still climbing, the object is above and ahead of me moving at about my speed or faster. I'm going to close in for a better look."

Those were the last words ever heard from Mantell. The two other planes had broken off at 22,500 feet and headed for Standiford. All they could see as they left was their flight leader above them in the sun, still stubbornly climbing higher. At around 25,000 feet heading south, Mantell had pushed his luck still further but lost. He blacked out from oxygen deprivation at about 3:17 P.M. as his plane continued to climb to 30,000 feet. At that altitude the aircraft lumbered over and entered a circling descent. Soon the plane began an uncorrectable looping power dive, breaking up between 20,000 and 10,000 feet. Mantell must have regained consciousness sometime before the crash because throttle, mixture, and prop-pitch were all altered to slow the aircraft. Unfortunately that attempt only served to over-stress the aircraft and may

have caused its actual breakup. [2]

The aircraft crashed on the William J. Phillips farm outside Franklin, Kentucky, just 750 feet from the owner's house. Mantell's body was partially decapitated yet still inside the aircraft. It was not burned, radioactive, nor riddled with bullets as later sensationalized accounts claimed.[3] His watch, however, had stopped at 3:18 P.M., a minute or so before the aircraft had hit the ground. Godman Tower did not observe Mantell's crash, but kept sight of the UFO until 3:50 P.M., more than two hours since the sighting began. By that time Clements had refueled at Standiford and returned to the area but did not see anything unusual.

This now famous UFO case had actually begun earlier that day at 1:15 P.M. when state police received civilian reports of an odd flying object over Maysville, Kentucky (80 miles to the east of Louisville). Their report initially put Fort Knox police on alert which in turn placed Godman Tower on the lookout for a UFO. But unexplainably another sighting came at 1:35 P.M. west of Louisville and Godman Tower near Owensboro and Irvington. This report described a circular object about 250 to 300 feet in diameter. If correct, the UFO should have already passed the north edge of Godman field prior to their first sighting at 1:45 P.M. [4]

That night more than a dozen AFB control towers around the Midwest reported UFOs "low on the horizon." The first sighting came from the Clinton County Air Base near Wilmington, Ohio, at 7:35 P.M. EST. There, officers described seeing a light that seemed to be "dancing" up and down as it changed color from red to green. It then abruptly left to the southwest with a trailing exhaust. Then, just to the southwest of Clinton near Columbus's Lockbourne Air Base, tower operators saw a brilliant light descend as it trailed an amber-colored exhaust. Appearing perfectly spherical or orb-like, the object proceeded to make three tight circling maneuvers as it passed over the entire base. The light next streaked up at tremendous velocity to abruptly stop at a stationary position below an overcast sky. Yet, it soon rapidly descended straight back down. Coming much closer to the ground, the orb hovered for ten seconds—only to rise straight back up once again. The mysterious light returned to a spot just below the clouds before it sped off to the northwest. [5]

The Air Force publicly blamed the planet Venus as the cause for all of the series of sightings, including the daylight incident in Kentucky. In actuality, however, many of the intelligence officers in TID's Sign project were slowly becoming convinced UFOs were extraterrestrial in origin during

the course of the long accident investigation that continued through April. Loedding and Sneider got the Venus idea from Dr. Hynek who had only offhandedly suggested the planet as one possible explanation. They, however, used it as a cover or a quick fix to explain away what, at the time, became a very widely publicized incident in the midst of what was obviously going to be a long investigation. Sign team members thought they might have to suggest a far more shocking conclusion, but not before they had the time to develop the theory.

Edward Ruppelt, head of a later UFO investigation named Project Blue Book, confirmed as much in his memoirs. He stated that many at TID had adopted the "interplanetary" option by the end of the investigation because all others were exhausted. For that reason the Sign staff, in Ruppelt's opinion, looked only for evidence suggesting "spaceships" and nothing else in the Mantell case. Not finding any, they stuck to the Venus excuse to keep it under wraps. A sighting of the planet Venus would serve that purpose as well as any, but in their haste they did not even bother to check to see if Venus would have been bright enough to have been visible by Mantell or Godman Tower.

Asking that question to Dr. Hynek in 1951 when Edward Ruppelt headed a reinvestigation of the case, they discovered that Venus would have been too dim to have been seen on the afternoon of January 7th. Ruppelt then discovered evidence suggesting that some or all of the Kentucky sightings could have been caused by a 100 foot diameter Navy "skyhook" research balloon released that morning at the Clinton County AFB in Ohio. Skyhooks were used for high altitude cosmic-ray research and were very secret at the time. He also discovered that the wind currents that day were right to take a skyhook over Kentucky, yet the best evidence was still to come. In the files, he read about two observers who just hours after the Louisville incident sighted a balloon. Both individuals, one in Kentucky and the other in Tennessee, had initially had their attention drawn skyward to what appeared to be a very unusual object to the naked eye, but then they easily identified it through their telescopes as a balloon. [6] It seemed the final proof, but despite Ruppelt's discovery, the Air Force never officially backed down from its unplausible celestial explanation and has thus caused newspapers and magazines to continually sensationalize the story. To this day the case's details are so distorted that it remains not only the most talked about of the "Classic cases," but the most confusing as well.

Yet Ruppelt's theory, although quite plausible, does leave serious questions unanswered. Mantell's last radio transmission clearly indicated the UFO was out-pacing his 400 mile per hour F-51. Skyhook balloons, even when caught in the jet stream cannot travel that fast. Of course if it was

a skyhook, it could have been as high as 60,000 feet causing Mantell to only think it outperformed his fast plane when in actuality he was seeing something much higher and further away. That might explain why the object remained in view from Godman for over two hours. But Mantell did have 2,867 flying hours, 67 of them in the F-51. He was a very experienced flyer and a veteran of the Normandy Invasion—having also won a Distinguished Flying Medal. He was also then operating his own flying school. At 22,000 feet or higher could he not have recognized a high altitude balloon that should have resembled a cone-shaped object, much like ground observer PFC Oliver described?

A close friend of Mantell went on record indicating that his friend had been a very cautious pilot and could not understand what would make him exceed the dangerous limit of 15,000 feet without oxygen. Even a flying cadet has the knowledge hammered into him at an early point that no one under any circumstances endangers himself or his aircraft by going above 15,000 feet without oxygen. Mantell's fellow pilot stated: "The only thing I can think was that he was after something that he believed to be more important than his life or family." [7]

Thomas Mantell

Two other amazing but less well known cases came into TID during the long Mantell investigation that further influenced the Sign team's opinion. One concerned a "flying wing" report from the Central Philippines. Filed by 1st Lieutenant Robert W. Meyers, the sighting took place on April 1st 1948 at 9:55 A.M. local time on a clear day with unlimited visibility as the experienced aviator led a flight of three P-47s of the 67th Fighter Group. Meyers was at 1,500 feet when he noticed the unusual craft three miles east of his position. Shaped like a flying wing or "half-moon" with a "turtle back," the object resembled nothing then in the Pacific. The strange craft flew below him at about 1,000 feet and traveled around 200 miles per hour. He estimated its span to be 30 feet by 20 feet long, with an overall silver color. Meyers attempted to contact the other three aircraft in his group, but his radio went out.

Finally, curiosity got the best of him, and Meyers decided to try to get a

better look. He made a 240 degree left turn, but as he did the UFO made a 90 degree left turn and leveled out to accelerate away at great speed in a matter of only seconds. No sound, power units, landing gear, cockpit, or exhaust trails were detectable, but he did notice that the craft had a small dorsal fin. [8]

Loedding, with his knowledge and expertise of flying wing designs must have took a special interest in this case. He also had reports of Meyers reputation as a pilot. By all accounts Meyers was a "reliable, non-excitable individual who appeared quite positive about his statements." This, coupled with the fact that the Northrop Flying Wing (the XB-35 and YB-49 models) were the only aircraft anywhere in the world that met the characteristics of the craft he saw, made this a truly remarkable sighting. [9] Because those aircraft never left the United States, the Sign team knew Meyers saw something of "foreign origin." But by then even the diehards in the project were becoming doubtful that such aircraft could be of Soviet construction. Loedding and a majority of the team therefore theorized by that spring that many of the UFO incidents could possibly represent something from outside this world. [10]

A report that strengthened their position came just four days later. It involved three trained balloon observers from the Geophysics Lab Section at Holloman AFB, New Mexico. On April 5th

they and project leader J.W. Peoples, were working on a secret project connected with the Air Force's Watson Laboratory field studies. In the middle of their tests they noticed a round white object with a golden hue fly very high over the base at "tremendous speed." The third man then briefly caught sight of a second UFO. One of the men described what he saw as an irregularly rounded craft, slightly concave on top. The duration of the incident only spanned 30 seconds, but in that time the unknown made at least one vertical loop and then disappeared westward.

Although the knowledgeable balloon men said the object looked a lot like a balloon, they were certain that it was not because three facts discounted the possibility of a lighter-than-air object. First, its violent maneuvers surpassed the stress limits of any known balloon design then in use. Secondly, the high level winds up to 65,000 feet were measured that day as coming from the west at only ten to fifteen miles per hour and no balloon flies against the wind. Finally, if high velocity winds were present, and they had blown from the east, a balloon could not attain such speeds even if caught in strong winds. The only fact that likened it to a balloon was that at no time could sound be detected nor could their sensitive 400-meter atmospheric noise receiver, then in operation, record any signal. [11]

Highly trained aerial observers such as these carry a lot of weight in a UFO investigation. Alfred Loedding and an assistant from Clingerman's office, Lieutenant Colonel J.C. Beam, went out to New Mexico to investigate the case in person. Unfortunately, when they arrived Peoples and the other witnesses were away on other duty, but they were interviewed later at Watson Labs in New Jersey.

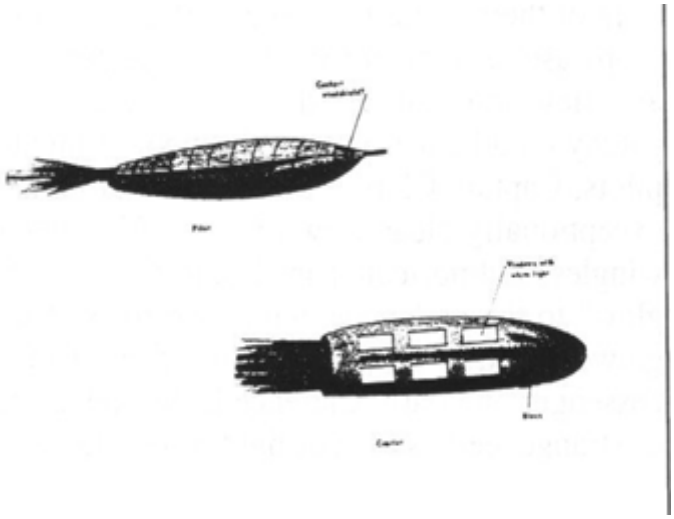
Loedding and Beam did talk to a Lieutenant Markley while at Holloman. Markley indicated that unusual radar returns had been noted at the base. He also told them of a sighting he had in August of 1947 and observations of "flat, round aeroforms"on two other occasions. (See page 109.) Loedding and Beam took advantage of their trip to investigate another older case. They traveled to Phoenix, Arizona, and interviewed William A. Rhodes who had captured a heel-shaped flying disc on film on July 7th, 1947.

After Peoples and the original observers in the Holloman incident were later interviewed at Watson Labs, investigators became personally convinced that they had seen something that flew "faster than any known object." Sign logged this case as the first of only seven unidentified sightings for 1948. Still very conservative with that designation, even incidents like the flying wing report from the Philippines did not make the unidentified list. This shows that even the biased Sign team gave out unidentified ratings very sparingly and despite modern day claims were not so obsessed by the extraterrestrial hypothesis as to have it affect their objectivity.

The fourth and most important event that shaped Sign's position came on July 24th when Eastern Airlines DC-3 Flight 576 took evasive action at 2:45 A.M. EST to avoid an air-to-air collision with a UFO! The frightened crew were at 5,000 feet and 20 miles southwest of Montgomery, Alabama, when the unknown flashed out of the northeast. It came as close as 700 feet to the right of their aircraft at a speed of at least 800 miles per hour but produced no propwash as a meteor might be expected to cause. The object then pulled up and flew into some light, broken clouds at 6,000 feet. But barring those patchy clouds, it was a bright moonlit night. In fact, it was so clear that the pilots, Captain Clarence S. Chiles and First Officer John B. Whitted, had an exceptionally clear view of the UFO. They described it as a 100 foot long, wingless cylindrical-shaped object. The craft appeared to have a "deep blue glow" to the underside, with "two rows of windows from which bright lights glowed" and a "50 foot trail of orange red flame" shooting out the back. One passenger on board, Clarence L. McKelvie, saw the object and described it as a "strange, eerie streak of light, very intense." [12]

Quickly becoming well-publicized, the now famous Chiles-Whitted Sighting remains one of the most notable of all UFO cases. In fact, right after the Eastern flight landed, the pilots reported their incident to the airline manager. Eastern then released the details of the spectacular event to newspapers that day. From there the story hit the national news, generating sensational headlines. These news accounts also reached the Pentagon and the new Intelligence Chief Major General Charles P. Cabell. Cabell had Dayton on the phone immediately, ordering Colonel McCoy to initiate a prompt investigation. By the afternoon of the 25th McCoy had Alfred Loedding, Albert Deyarmond, and Major Raymond Llewellyn on an Air Force plane headed to Atlanta. Losing no time, the Sign team quickly had Chiles and Whitted under interrogation on the 26th at the Henry Grudy Hotel. Loedding and Deyarmond questioned the pilots over and over and became impressed by the consistency of their accounts. Loedding and Deyarmond also became impressed by the military service of Chiles and Whitted and in particular Chiles' outstanding record in commercial aviation. In the meantime Llewellyn tracked down the lone passenger who had also seen the object. He had not actually been able to observe much, only commenting on the object's bright red-orange exhaust. A preliminary report was then sent to the Pentagon, and the team returned to Dayton more convinced than ever that something beyond human origin had been responsible for this and other incidents.

That is somewhat ironic because for whatever reason, the "pro-saucer" Sign staff told the pilots that the incident resulted from a rare astronomical event known as a fireball. Chiles and Whitted, however, refused to accept the explanation and both pilots went public, maintaining that they had seen a manufactured craft of some sort.



These sketches depict the UFO seen by Chiles and Whitted. It is significant to note that as the years went by the Chiles-Whitted Sighting remained an impressive case in the eyes of researchers. One of the foremost UFO investigators of all time, Dr. James McDonald, interviewed both of the pilots in the 1960s and stated that he became convinced of the fact that they saw clearly defined openings or windows on the craft that buzzed their plane that night. No one in fact ever doubted the credibility of Chiles or Whitted. Both men, for example, were described as "utterly reliable" by famed pilot and Eastern Airlines president, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker.

Edward Ruppelt states in his memoirs that regardless of what that crew saw, the Sign officers

were becoming convinced that UFOs were "interplanetary" in origin. Captain Sneider seemed to be another key advocate of that proposal. Sneider even attached a one-page report to the Chiles-Whitted file in which he argued that a wingless rocket-shaped object could be aerodynamically feasible. Sneider stated: "That this development is possibly of foreign origin would seem to be a logical premise." That seems to be the real significance of the Chiles-Whitted case because by "foreign origin," Sneider meant outer space! His influence would soon lead to the drafting of a dramatic and formal report by Sign staff that would force the Pentagon to take a stand on the subject one way or the other.[13]

Chiles and Whitted after their famous UFO sighting.

After the Chiles-Whitted Sighting, TID's Sign team sponsored, apparently under Loedding's sole authorship, a classified top secret document for inter-service distribution which traced the history of UFO investigations all the way back to the ghost rocket sightings of 1946. Like all such military evaluations involving a study up to a specific point in time, it received the term "estimate of the situation." The document has now become famous for the term. According to Ruppelt, this Estimate of the Situation reached a dramatic conclusion, stating that many of the UFO sightings investigated by Project Sign may be "interplanetary" in origin. Although the most startling part of the report advocated that the military should be put on an "alert footing" in the wake of the unexplainable sightings.[14] (That UFO alert was actually issued that fall by the Pentagon.) [15]

Needless to say the report drew considerable attention as it went up through the chain of command and passed by Air Force scientific advisors—all the way to Chief of Staff, General Hoyt Vandenberg.

Vandenberg, however, refused to have it distributed due to what he saw as a lack of any physical evidence to support their conclusion. He and other top brass were just not ready to go on record with such a fantastic position without hard proof—physical proof. And that was the one thing no Sign officer could provide no matter how hard he wished he could. Correspondence of this time shows Pentagon officials were also mindful of the panic caused by the radio broadcast The War of the Worlds on October 30, 1938. [16]

Because of the panic generated from that incident, no general would have wanted to answer to the President if an Air Force press release about UFOs had led to a similar disaster. Vandenberg, a decorated commander from WW II and a career military officer, intended to focus all of his efforts on organizing and building up the image of the new USAF. Even if UFOs were from another planet,

Estimate conceded that they could not prove a direct threat to national security, and thus the Pentagon chose a wait and see attitude. [17]

Unfortunately, Vandenberg's official lack of interest in TID's Estimate led to low morale among Project Sign staff. Despite a trip to the Pentagon by Sign team members Lawrence Truettner, Albert Deyarmond, and Alfred Loedding to lobby for Estimate, the Pentagon refused to be swayed into sanctioning the document.[18] No matter the significance of their conclusion, Sign could not share their opinions outside TID.[19]

Only a handful of the thick, black-covered, legal-sized Estimate reports were ever reproduced, and those were soon ordered burned. A few copies apparently survived up until 1951 when Ruppelt reviewed the intelligence files. He claimed that by that time the report had been declassified, but this is unlikely when one considers its conclusions and the fact that no copy of

Estimate has ever surfaced. But, Ruppelt did claim to see the document with his own eyes. If any copies of Estimate survived beyond that point, they probably were taken as souvenirs along with some other early files known to have met that fate. Today they may very well be collecting dust in someone's attic. Some researchers erroneously claim that Air Intelligence Report Number 100-203-79, "Analysis of Flying Object Incidents in the United States," a joint study by the USAF Directorate of Intelligence (DI) and the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) approved on December 10, 1948, and declassified in March 5, 1985, is a modified version of Estimate. [20] Although the Navy sent a letter to the USAF in January of 1948 desiring to assist in the analysis of UFOs, their subsequent joint study superseded Estimate which was only an estimate of the situation up to the time that Sign submitted it. [21]

Nevertheless, Air Intelligence Report Number 100-203-79 is an amazing document in its own right. It is so notable because its main conclusion suggested that a number of UFO events had a high probability of being the result of Soviet activity. In fact, a later Blue Book officer, Dewey Fournet, urged that this document be kept classified because even in 1952 he and others (although open-minded to an extraterrestrial explanation) still felt that the Soviets may be responsible for many of the incidents. [22] This is of such significance because today, with the opening-up of former Soviet records, historians now know that the USSR never flew spy missions over the United States with aircraft or guided missiles.

Dewey Fournet also made the statement that somewhere in the files awaiting declassification is a copy of Sign's Estimate. (He actually had a chance to see it as he did 100-203-79.) [23] It could be true. The National Archives has a nightmarish amount of former military files, some of which are no longer classified, but whose content has literally been lost because they are buried in virtual mountains of document clutter. Anyone who has ever waited at any one of the National Archives' facilities will attest that it can take hours just to have the material in the catalog tracked down.

Who knows what is lost in that vast government paper shuffle not to mention the material still classified? So many government documents have accumulated that some 100 million are still awaiting declassification from WWI alone. Others predating just 1960 number over a billion pages of material. Even making a brief study of these could take teams of researchers a lifetime.

Although Dr. Hynek confirmed in the 1970s that Estimate did exist as Ruppelt and Fournet claimed, Ruppelt's book is the only first hand account we have of the draft and merely teases us with a few of its points. [24] One interesting passage suggests that the Air Force had an interest in UFOs

before 1947 and that the English had actually tracked some of the "Ghost Rockets" in 1946 on radar. [25] If so, this would contradict the Air Force's consistent refusal to this very day to recognize the phenomena's existence before June 24, 1947.

Donald Loedding clearly remembers the controversy surrounding the rejection of his father's "Estimate of the Situation" draft to General Vandenberg and the resulting deep disappointment by his father. Donald had the impression that Alfred Loedding, who had been a rising star at Wright Field, officially fell from favor as a result of his personal belief that many of the flying disc sightings could represent craft of extraterrestrial origin. When he personally authored that carefully reached conclusion in the "Estimate" draft, Loedding severely hurt his career.

Researchers know that with the end of 1948 a drastic change took place in Project Sign. The great sense of importance that the Pentagon had previously bestowed on the project suddenly ceased. Dropped almost overnight, it happened in the midst of one of the most unsettling series of UFO sightings over American military bases then to date. By mid-1949 the leaders of the project like Sneider and Loedding would be ousted and, barring a period in the early 1950s, the AMC staff would never again openly talk about the origin of UFOs. Perhaps the extreme conclusions of the Estimate draft and the summary of the Project Sign final report (drawn up in late 1948 by Truettner and Deyarmond, and finished in February 1949) became just too much for the Pentagon to handle. Titled Unidentified Aerial Objects—Project Sign, a great deal can be interpreted by reading between the lines of the passages of that final report.

Even the introductory passages are important because they use some very interesting phrases. In the Foreword, for example, the Rand study is mentioned along with the intent to explore the possibility that some observed

objects may represent "spaceships" or "satellite vehicles." (On July 21st the Pentagon had ordered a study to be made by the Rand Corporation to evaluate that possibility.) [26] This is stunning terminology regarding the Rand study because everyone who would have then read that report knew full well that not only did the United States not possess anything that could attain earth orbit, neither did the Soviets. In fact, it would be nine years before such an event occurred with Sputnik—considered much ahead of its time then.

The Introduction of the Sign final report has another intriguing passage. In the second paragraph it clearly states that this report is not a final estimate of the situation. This may very well have been a way of stating that the Sign report was not able to draw the conclusions it did in Loedding's Estimate of the situation.

Another sentence in the final report also seems to draw something from the earlier Estimate report when it speaks of assessing the possibility of a threat to national security presented by "such large numbers of unidentified flying objects." In the original Estimate report, Dr. Hynek confirmed that the Sign team called for an official UFO alert to be proclaimed—somewhat as was actually issued late that fall. Therefore, although the Pentagon always outwardly ignored the UFO situation by stating that no threat was presented to national security—the fear was clearly there.

Aside from that, the sentence is also of note because for the first time the term unidentified flying object is used. The summary again uses that phrase and speaks of The Books of Charles Fort, which was one of the first works detailing unusual aerial phenomena in earlier times. This is significant because officially the Air Force has always refused to recognize the UFO phenomenon before June of 1947. One wonders how much discussion of this was present in the Estimate draft.

Many more pages follow the introductory pages, including an appendix by James E. Lipp of the Rand Corporation that contained the conclusions of their contracted study. It actually considered the possibility that UFOs could originate from either Venus or Mars. (Prior to NASA's planetary probes

in the 1960s and '70s even reputable scientists openly considered without ridicule the possibility that civilizations could exist in our own solar system.) Travel from other star systems, however, was considered improbable even then because Lipp's report stated that "the actions attributed to the 'flying objects' reported during 1947 and 1948 seem inconsistent with space travel [because of the vast distances between stars]."

The report was released only to specific government and military offices as the ominous end of Sign came when the Air Force changed the

name of Project Sign to Project Grudge at the request of the Director of Research and Development. Officially indexed as the "Detailed Study of Flying Discs," Grudge marked a sudden attitude change in UFO investigations. That revised project began in 1949 by building a public relations campaign to downplay UFO sightings. [27]

At the same time the elite of the TID intelligence officers, almost all of which had gravitated to Project Sign, were on their way out. Ruppelt wrote that many in intelligence "drastically and hurriedly changed their minds about UFOs when they thought the Pentagon was no longer sympathetic to the UFO cause." He stated that others who had not changed their minds were "purged." Other officers who had even briefly considered the extraterrestrial hypothesis eventually found themselves replaced by new personnel. The Pentagon used Grudge to "put an end to UFO reports" by explaining every sighting and telling the public just how the Air Force used expert investigation methods to reach their conclusions. This sudden change in policy was so pronounced that Ruppelt wondered if there was not some hidden reason behind it. He wrote of an underlying feeling he had when taking over UFO investigations in 1951:

> **This period of mind changing bothered me. Here were people deciding that there was nothing to this UFO business right at a time when the reports seemed to be getting better—maybe I was just playing the front man to a big cover-up. I didn't like it because if somebody above me knew that UFOs were really spacecraft, I could make a big fool out of myself if the truth came out" [28]**

Dr. Hynek also spoke of that period in his writings. He described this change at TID as occurring virtually overnight. Donald Loedding confirms that Alfred Loedding was "fired" from Project Sign by 1949 as a result of his position. Although he did remain in Dayton doing work for the Air Force until 1951, the pressure continued.

Donald feels that officials at AMC attempted to "phase his father out" as is often done in the corporate world. Records do show, in fact, that Alfred Loedding's efficiency rating reports went from excellent in 1948 to lower and lower grades until he resigned on February 16th, 1951. At that time Loedding secured a job as director of jet research at Unexcelled Chemical Corporation in Cranbury, New Jersey. After Vandenberg's death in 1954, Alfred Loedding once again found the Air Force interested in his skills. In 1955 Loedding returned to Dayton and Wright-Patterson AFB. By 1960 he was working out of Langley AFB in Virginia as the Air Force's liaison officer to NASA. The records indicate that he served only as a civilian consultant in that role, but the

implication posed by his family is that there may have been a connection with CIA headquarters at Langley. But from 1951 until his death in 1963, Loedding, according to Donald, never again worked on or talked about UFOs—so deep was his disappointment and disgust with being "fired" from Project Sign for his views.

Alfred C. Loedding was of strong German descent, ingrained with a high moral work ethic and dedication to family and country—the United States of America. When Loedding helped draft the Sign position on the extraterrestrial thesis, he did so with great thought and devotion. Vandenberg's rebuff severely hurt Loedding's pride. Also professionally injured at the time by his views, Loedding never again became involved in UFO research. Another man may have compromised his stand, especially when it clearly affected his career for the worse. But Loedding was too dedicated and true to himself to be a "yes man." Thus, the worst that can be said about Alfred Loedding is that he was not a diplomat as later Blue Book notables Edward Ruppelt and Robert Friend were. As a result, Loedding's time in ufology was brief but very notable.29

1. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 136, listed as Incident 33a-f in 1948 era documents; and "Statements by PFC Stanley Oliver," Case 136.
2. Philip J. Klass, UFOs Explained (New York: Random House, 1974), pp. 34-37.
3. "Mantell Accident Report," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 136.
4. Case 136.
5. Loren E. Gross, UFOs: A History 1948 (Fremont, CA: By the Author, 1992), p. 6.
6. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, p. 38.
7. Ibid.,p.37.
8. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 122, no Incident # listed in 1948 era documents for this case.
9. USAF Museum Files, Wright-Patterson US AFB.
10. Opinion of the authors.
11. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 139, listed as Incident 122 in 1948 era documents.
12. "Supplement to Trip Report to Atlanta 25-28 July Inclusive and Statement of Clarence S. Chiles and John B. Whitted," Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 2, Case 179, listed as Incident 144 in 1948 era documents.
13. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, pp. 40-41.
14.]. Alien Hynek, The UFO Report (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1997), p. 4.
15. FOIA request I-NAIC-97-053, Project Sign and Grudge documents 1948-1949, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, states: "This Headquarters has instructed all major Air Commands, both in the ZI and Overseas, to be particularly alerted at this time for sightings of unidentified aerial objects and to generally comply with the requests contained in subject TWX. This Headquarters has also requested the cooperation of the Departments of the Army and the Navy, and the Coast Guard, in instructing their installations along the same lines."
16. It is interesting to note that at the height of the UFO wave in the summer of 1947, Welles made a very amusing statement to the press:

> Orson Welles said today he'd bet 10 to one that the "flying saucers" will fizzle into fancy just like his "invasion from Mars" broadcast that fooled the nation in 1938.
>
> "I want everybody to know that I didn't have anything to do with this saucer hoax," though. He added, "I scared the shirts off Americans once. That was enough."
>
> The actor-producer-director-writer, currently filming 'Macbeth,' pointed out that during his famed radio dramatization many Americans reported seeing space ships landing. Others claimed they saw armies of Martians.
>
> "People are imaginative and gullible," said Welles. "Nine years ago they believed they saw Martians and now they see strange objects in the sky and think they're flying saucers."
>
> "But in case they do turn out to be from Mars," he grinned, "I've been predicting that sort of thing for a long time."—Toronto, Canada, Daily Tribune, 8 July 1947.

17. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, pp. 41-46; and Jacobs, The UFO Controversy In America (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975), pp. 57, 95, 103, 212.
18. Correspondence with Professor Michael Swords.
19. Interview with Professor Michael Swords.
20. "Air Intelligence Report No. 100-203-79, Analysis of Flying Object Incidents in the US, Air Intelligence Division Study No. 203, 10 December 1948, Directorate of Intelligence and Office of Naval Intelligence," USAF Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Files: Top Secret Control #2-7341, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland.
21. Thanks here goes to Jan L. Aldrich's expertise in the analysis of declassified documents. He convincingly suggests that because the USAF Directorate of Intelligence is superior in authority to TID and Sign, that their jointly sponsored

study with the Navy simply superseded Estimate. Thus Air Intelligence Report No. 100-203-79, is not a "ghost version of Estimate" as suggested by other researchers but a uniquely different document.
22. Bruce Maccabee, "Notes on Air Intelligence Report 100-203-79:10 December 48, Top Secret, Declassified 5 March 1955 by Mr. Thompson (1), head of declassification," (Silver Springs, Maryland: Privately published, 26 March 85), p. 1.
23. Letters to Jim Melesciuc from Dewey Fournet, 23 May, 27 July, 1992, CUFOS files.
24. This author has had the opportunity to view Ruppelt's unedited manuscript of Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, and it does list additional cases discussed in Estimate, but gives no further information on the document.
25. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, p. 40.
27. David Michael Jacobs, The UFO Controversy In America (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 50.
28. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, pp. 58-60.
29. Great thanks goes to Donald and Fred Loedding for the time that they devoted to the authors' research.

Final Word

There are a number of other very interesting sightings that shed more light on the aftermath of the great UFO wave of 1947 and Alfred Loedding's influence on Project Sign. Two very intriguing reports from July 29th and 31st 1948 seem to support Loedding's dramatic findings expressed in the Estimate draft. They come from Indianapolis, Indiana, and remain listed unidentified in Air Force files. The first sighting took place at 9:55 A.M. CST on the 29th when James Toney and Robert Huggins were driving near the wooded area of Fall Creek. Just after crossing the creek via a cantilever bridge, they neared the intersection of East 56th Street and Fall Creek Boulevard. At that point Toney and Huggins observed a strange looking flying machine pass about 200 feet from them. It appeared to be of shiny aluminum construction moving at a slow speed of not more than 30 miles per hour as it flew about 30 feet above the tree tops. The craft did not resemble anything the men had ever seen in the skies before, looking like a "broad short propeller" or boomerang with "cups" on its upper sides. The object had a three to one ratio, approximately six to eight feet long by about two feet high. The strange machine made no noise as it then passed out of sight over the tree line.

Sign extensively investigated the case with the initial field work being supervised by Colonel James A. Ronin, commander of the 331st AFB reserve training unit at Stout Field near Indianapolis. They quickly determined it could not have been a glider or aircraft. TID officers even wrote to the General Electric Company in Schenectady, New York, in the belief it might have been the result of their roto-chute experimental vehicle, but found that it had never flown in that area of the country.

When a very similar sighting took place in the city two days later, intelligence officers became even more interested. Mr. & Mrs. Vernon Swigert in the south central part of town witnessed this second event. The object they saw flew over at 8:25 A.M.. on the 31st. It appeared white and had the same general three to one proportional shape as in the earlier sighting. Yet that object looked much more like the traditional flying saucer. This unknown craft resembled a "cymbal," and moved silently by at very great speed. The two observers felt it may have traveled as fast as 1,800 miles per hour at a height of 2,000 feet. At no time did it deviate from a level flight path and left

no exhaust trail. [1]

Because no other aircraft or balloons of any sort could be found to explain the Indianapolis Sightings, they were both marked unidentified. [2] Already self-conscious about having no proof to back up their Estimate conclusions, Sign officials like Loedding went to great lengths to continue to run a very tight and professional investigation throughout the rest of the year. Unidentified listings were therefore still sparingly given.

By August UFO incidents in the US, like those from Indianapolis, seemed to have peaked for the year just as rumors of disc sightings started to filter out of Eastern Block countries and the far reaches of Asia. Most were strikingly similar to the disc reports in North America during 1947. Many of these, in fact, came from areas of the globe where the term "flying saucer" had never been heard. [3]

Few of those foreign reports were evaluated by Sign, but an interesting sighting from August 3, 1948, reached AMC's TID from, of all places, Moscow. This fact is significant because although a rash of UFO incidents occurred over Russia that year, it was also the high point of the Berlin Airlift. Tensions between East and West were so strong that many expected a third world war might soon break out. Reports on UFO activity behind the Iron Curtain were therefore few and far between—accounts of which are only now becoming known.

Thus somewhat of a curiosity among early intelligence personnel, primarily for its Cold War era location, this case is known as the Moscow Report. The file did not really represent an especially good account, being compiled only from the recollection of an undisclosed American newspaper reporter. His sighting took place about twenty miles northwest of the city at sunset when he and a Russian friend viewed a long narrow cigar-shaped object proceeding at a high but not excessive speed toward the northeast. No wings or stabilizers were visible likening it to an aircraft or rocket, although the sunlight reflecting off its surface did suggest that the craft had a metal skin. The reporter and his acquaintance both watched the spectacle as it passed by without making a sound. They agreed that the object looked like a rigid airship, so familiar to anyone who had lived through the great age of the large dirigibles in the 1920s and 1930s. Yet both also said it moved far too fast for a lighter-than-air craft. Neither had any idea what the strange object could have been, "it might have been anything the reporter himself

concludes." [4] Because the Air Force had no way to investigate such a sighting, this is the type of report often filed under the handy category: "insufficient data."

Another type of classification used in the Air Force files reads "unreliable." Unreliable became the conclusion of case number 198 because its witnesses were children. Case 198 is however a notable mystery in the Sign files. Not only is it one of very few reports describing a UFO landing, but also the size of the file seems unwarranted when taking into account that the unreliable designation was given early on in the investigation. Experience will tell any researcher that when so many pages are found on an Air Force UFO case, strong attention was given to it by someone.

The incident involves two children ages ten and eight. They were playing in their backyard on a Hamel, Minnesota, farm on August 11, 1948, when they had their attention drawn skyward. Above them in the noontime sky the children noticed a dull gray metallic craft descending downward. Each of them described it as two inverted plates stuck together which, in their words, then gently touched down with a "clanking noise." It soon started making a whistling noise and rose up to twenty feet, stopped and hovered, and then maneuvered over the tree tops and telephone lines before flying off.

The first investigator on the scene was from the AMC and his immediate conclusion stated: "This apparent bit of fantasy is hardly worth further consideration." [5] Such a designation, especially after funds were expended for travel out of Dayton, always killed further investigation then and there. But despite that early conclusion, a large amount of attention was soon displayed on the case as evidenced from the correspondence. Soil samples were collected and photos taken documenting the landing sight. Numerous government agencies including the FBI then requested access to the samples. Usually only lieutenants and maybe a captain are involved in such an investigation, but correspondence in the files shows a Lieutenant Colonel Allison initiating a "resurvey" of the landing sight. This would seem to indicate that at some point the initial investigation was overruled and a

more detailed study ordered. Who decided such a sighting with only children as observers warranted so much attention? Why did the FBI end up analyzing the soil samples and not Wright-Patterson labs? Why does the FBI correspondence show J. Edgar Hoover personally involved in the administration of the soil analysis? [6] Case 198 has plenty of questions to go around.

A sighting from September 23rd that year from San Pablo, California,

stumped Air Force investigators sufficiently to label the case "unidentified." It involved two highly respected witnesses, Sylvester Bentham and retired US Army Colonel Horace Eakins, who spotted a very odd-looking flying object around noon. Initially it attracted their attention not because of its amoeba-like shape, but speed—described once again as faster than that of any known aircraft. For over three minutes the attentive observers watched it traverse due east in a straight line at a constant speed. They estimated that the object had to have been at least a mile above a low flying bomber then in view. The men, in fact, could not agree on the exact shape or dimension because it was so high. They did note that unlike the early jets of the time, it made no noise and left no exhaust. The Air Force ruled out an astronomical cause. They could only find a west-bound United Airlines plane as a possible solution yet felt this was highly unlikely because it would have been moving in the opposite direction. [7]

A much more well-known case became the third of the UFO Classics when North Dakota Air National Guard F-51 pilot George F. German had a very strange encounter while he attempted a nighttime landing into the Fargo airport at 9:00 P.M. CST, October 1, 1948. German had just completed a crosscountry flight when on final approach his fighter passed within 1,000 yards of a sharply outlined orb. Described as a "blinking light" just inches in diameter and making "remarkable revolutions," the experienced flyer had no idea what to make of it. German pursued the light repeatedly in order to identify, but after 27 minutes the object climbed out of sight.

Because of a hair-raising series of intricate maneuvers made during that intercept, this case has often been referred to as the German Dogfight. It's an apt title because during each of his persistent passes toward the light, the object rushed straight at the F-51. And each time German tried to turn around and pursue, he found it necessary to make an extensive series of turns, only to end up repeating the same scenario all over again. During the ordeal the light appeared to travel in excess of his own speed which ranged from 300 to 400 miles per hour yet produced no exhaust trail nor sound. [8]

Four other observers, including two pilots in a Piper Cub flying just below him, corroborated Gorman's story. The chief of the control tower also followed the event with binoculars. In fact, it was because the extraordinary encounter had so many good witnesses that the Air Force followed up with an extensive investigation. Sign/TID investigators Lawrence Truettner and Major Paul Lmbela flew to Fargo and headed up the case. Eyewitness accounts were checked and rechecked, and the plane itself was thoroughly gone over. Surprisingly, the aircraft's metal skin revealed radioactive exposure. To make sure, four separate Geigers were used to confirm the readings.

It did sound like an exceptional incident at the time, but the facts soon pointed to some rather obvious solutions. The evidence suggested that the mysterious nocturnal orb might have merely been a small lighted weather balloon. Following other such incidents over the Caribbean, Intelligence found that when an aircraft approaches a lighted balloon at night, even an experienced pilot can have his perspective distorted. The balloon, in other words, appears to rush toward the plane when actually it is the plane rushing toward the balloon. Because the balloon is moving so slowly, it is the

aircraft that then makes the evasive action. When the aircraft attempts another pass, it has to make a complete 180 degree turn only to find itself rushing once again by the balloon so fast that the pilot can not identify it. Another lesson bestowed on general aviation from this would-be UFO case concerned the mysterious radiation. After further study, TID investigators discovered that any aircraft flying at high altitudes in the thin upper atmosphere is prone to absorb cosmic radioactivity. [9]

This incident is now a standard in UFO lore. This is puzzling because correspondence of the time shows Alfred Loedding, the most open minded to an extraterrestrial hypothesis, writing a memo expressing caution in regard to over emphasizing the Gorman incident. Such insights were not, however, made public and over the years much speculation has circulated in regard to this sighting.

This is unfortunate because debunkers often seize on these sensationalized stories. When discussing the early history of UFO phenomena, they almost exclusively focus on classics like the Gorman Dogfight or the Mantel Incident. That's natural because those are the easy ones to explain. Most debunkers never even bother to research, let alone discuss, the other sightings of the time. As a result, people are lead to believe that all of the early cases have equally reasonable conclusions.

When putting the event into historical perspective one understands this mind set. It must be remembered that even by this date the Air Force had not yet released any kind of official report on UFOs and as a whole still hesitated to take a position. Most of their investigations, even of such publicized incidents, were stamped "RESTRICTED" or "SECRET" and could not be disseminated to the general public until declassified. When the Blue Book Files were finally made public in 1976, few people bothered to research other cases from these early years—being so infatuated with the legends like the Gorman incident.

While the Gorman Case has been discussed in almost every book published on UFOs, a much better sighting twelve days later has never been dealt with. It took place in South Bend, Indiana, on a clear and cloudless day

at 11:45 A.M. CST when two office workers standing at a window of the Studebaker Corporation observed a silvery flat disc-shaped object speed silently through the sky at around 1,500 feet. The UFO appeared just a little smaller than a DC-3, although it moved about three times as fast.

Both witnesses were uncertain if the craft was spinning. They used the description "flashing" because the sun's rays reflected from it just as brightly as it would a chrome surface, thus at least giving the appearance of a rotating machine. During the brief eight to ten second sighting, the object came from the northwest on a straight southeasterly heading. It flew with no visible means of propulsion, wings or rudders. Neither observer had any idea of what they saw, but felt certain it could not have been a balloon or aircraft. Both office workers held important positions in the company's engineering department and were described by Studebaker management as being of "a high type of caliber," and highly reliable. [10]

It is the mass of this and many other obscure cases rather than just the three famous Classics that led Sign to its developing belief in extraterrestrial visitation. Loedding, Sneider, Truettner, and even Deyarmond had to have been impressed by the repeated similarities of reported details among these many cases—especially when most of them were not known to the general public. [11]

The single best sighting of 1948 and perhaps the best case then to date is also overlooked, or perhaps overshadowed, by the so-called Classics. It was the first truly notable incident in which radar data combined with trained visual observation to produce a stunning UFO case. The initial report came into TID from Japan and involved a twin engine F-61 Black Widow night fighter from the 68th Fighter Squadron. While on patrol the night of October 15, 1948, its crew had a very curious encounter at 11:05 P.M. local time.

The incident occurred over the Fukuoka area between the islands of Shigamo Shima and Fusae Shima on a clear and moonlit night when the F-61's radar detected an unknown object five miles away and below them at 2,305 feet. At the time of detection, radar clocked the UFO at a speed of 200 miles per hour. Curious as to what could be flying over a then occupied Japan, the pilot increased his speed to 220 miles per hour, deciding to close in for a visual confirmation. He guessed it would probably turn out to be an F-51 Mustang fighter from another squadron but decided they could use the practice anyhow. He nosed down and approached within 12,000 feet of the would-be fighter but the unknown target then surprised him. It suddenly dived down under his F-61 in a "split S" maneuver, making a 180 degree turn and increasing its speed to over 1,200 miles per hour (almost three times their own

speed). The UFO's burst of power appeared only temporary because the object soon slowed to its original velocity. By that point, however, both the pilot and his radar operator knew that their target could not possibly be an F-51, but they decided to try to find out just what it was that they were chasing.

Attempting another intercept, the pilot again closed to a relatively close distance merely to have the UFO go down and off at tremendous speed, slowing only after putting about nine miles distance from their aircraft. Four more times the same scenario took place as if the strange machine was playing a game with them. Ground radar could not confirm the presence of the UFO, although it tracked the F-61. Operators did say that because the incident occurred at such a relatively low altitude, ground clutter interfered with surface-to-air tracking.

Similar UFO intercepts would follow, yet this case stands out because the crew twice gained visual confirmation, thus excluding any possibility of a radar malfunction. The aircraft's radar operator, 2nd Lieutenant Barton Halter, had 300 hours logged in his position and became convinced they had encountered some new type of experimental aircraft. The pilot, 1st Lieutenant Oliver Hemphill, had 900 hours flying time with 350 of those in combat in a B-17 over Europe. He stated that the UFO behaved much like the ME-163 German rocket planes did when attacking our bomber formations. But Hemphill stressed it did not look like a ME-163 nor any aircraft he had ever seen.

In the Sign files there are pages and pages of reports and even a drawing of the object as seen by the pilot. The general description likened it to a "rifle bullet," about 20 to 30 feet long with no discernible exhaust trail, flames, power plant, wings, stabilizers, fins, or crew canopy. Yet the UFO must have been real because Hemphill noted at one point that its silhouette was projected on the clouds by the full moon. In the investigation that followed, it was firmly established that there were no other aircraft then in the area. Intelligence officers also learned that the weather conditions were good with five to six miles visibility, but that even with the moon there would not have been enough light for visual sightings at any great distance.

Everyone at TID very much wanted to know what the F-61 crew saw that night in the dark skies over Japan, but no clues could be found. The case went down as the first unidentified in a special category called "radar-visual." [12] A few Intelligence personnel, however, felt the October 15th incident over Japan could have represented an attempted intercept of a Soviet spy plane. It has only recently been discovered that Britain would soon fly nighttime reconnaissance missions over Russia, and America had overflights of Siberia as early as 1946 by way of the North Pole. The USAF also made

incursions into the eastern borders of the USSR throughout 1949. By 1956 the CIA would direct hundreds of deep penetration missions into Soviet territory with the famous U-2 spy plane. Some thought all along that the flying saucer reports were attributable to the Soviets conducting the same type of surveillance that we were doing to them, but only a few Project Sign cases seem to substantiate the claim. Following is a good example of a report from November 4, 1948, that obviously represents a foreign spy plane:

> **Unidentified aircraft observed at 1043 14 Nov [sic] 1948 over Army Observation Post #1 at 37O 57'N-125O 31'E, in South Korea, flying east to west at an altitude of 5000 feet. The same aircraft was sighted by army observation post #2 37O 51' N-125O 17' E, 4, 37O 57' N-125O 26' E and 5, 37O 56' N-125O 29'. Subject aircraft circled observation post number 2, then headed north. Aircraft was twin engine bomber type, and is believed definitely to have been Soviet.** [13]

A second good radar-visual report followed the October 15th case. This time it occurred on the other side of the world in Germany and involved an experienced F-80 jet pilot of the 23rd Fighter Squadron stationed at the Furstenfeldbruck AFB. While out walking on the night of November 23rd, the Air Force captain observed from his base a reddish starlike object as it was simultaneously detected by ground radar. The crew in the radar station judged it to be at 27,000 feet traveling between 200-500 miles per hour. It then climbed to 40,000 feet and circled 40 miles south of Munich. [14]

Those are the basic facts present today in the Sign files, but when Edward Ruppelt described this incident in his 1956 book, he stated that radar had tracked the object at speeds up to 900 miles per hour and that they detected it climbing 23,000 feet in a matter of seconds! Those figures are not in the documents released by the National Archives in 1976. Though anyone who has read Ruppelt and has checked his facts with other files, knows that he was a stickler for details. This could not have been a simple mistake. What reports did he see that are no longer detailed in the declassified files? [15] If his facts are correct, it is a stunning admission because no man-made aircraft in 1948 could match that performance.

Another mysterious nocturnal phenomenon known as Green Fireballs appeared in the New Mexico night skies during that November and December—seen by hundreds of witnesses up through 1949. After investigations by Project Sign and noted scientists like Dr. Edward Teller and meteorite expert Dr. Lincoln La Paz, (who himself had observed these lights) no conclusions were reached. La Paz, who had a UFO sighting in 1947,

became convinced they were not identifiable as a known astronomical activity. [16]

The more La Paz studied the phenomenon the more he could be certain that they were not meteors. Unlike meteors, the fireballs flew nearly horizontal at about 40,000 to 60,000 feet. And whereas almost all meteor impacts can be discovered from projecting their observed trajectory, no green fireball could ever be found to have hit the earth.

La Paz even concluded that the green fireballs were surely artificial objects and perhaps represented radio-controlled missiles. If true, they were not of domestic origin because the United States military didn't have a clue when the fireballs began to fly over the super-secret Sandia lab at Kirtland AFB in New Mexico where America's atomic weapons were being built. Then the Hanford nuclear facility in Washington State had a sighting as well as the Los Alamos, New Mexico, nuclear research laboratory. Since these were the three most vital facilities to nuclear weapons production in the country, their administrators became frantic for answers and the Air Force was the organization expected to provide them. [17]

The USAF subsequently created a special study called Project Twinkle to investigate this new

spin on the UFO phenomenon. It finally became a research project under the Geophysics Research Division of the Air Force and ! the Cambridge Research Laboratory in February of 1950, more than a year after the largest number of sightings had taken place. Dr. Louis Elterman served as a central figure in the project. He contracted with the Land Air Co. to provide technical personnel during a scheduled period from April 1 to October 1, 1950, and from October 1, 1950, to March 31, 1951. But with the start of war in Korea on June 25, 1950, the project wound down. In the summer of 1951 Major Edward A. Doty took control, and by December Twinkle had closed down. [18]

Ruppelt claims that Twinkle was administratively formed earlier, in the late summer of 1949, when the green fireballs were still frequently being reported. [19] Twinkle then decided its best chance to document the phenomena would be through the use of three special cinetheodolite (Askania) cameras. A cinetheodolite was basically a theodolite range finder with a movie camera attached. The trick with such a device is to get at least two or more cinetheodolites triangulated on the same object in order to determine altitude, speed and size. The Air Force, of course, with typical military bureaucracy initially allocated only one cinetheodolite to Twinkle and frequently moved it

so often to where sightings had already just occurred that no one area was consistently scanned.

Dr. Elterman's final report on Twinkle in November 1951 stated in scientific terms what Ruppelt had said about the study: "Project Twinkle was a bust." [20] No triangulation was ever achieved, although on April 27, 1950, four objects 30 feet in diameter were recorded by a Twinkle team at 150,000 feet over Holloman AFB traveling at high speed. [21]

The real question, however, is why did Project Sign not come into the investigation of the new UFO phenomena in a more meaningful way. In fact, some of the most spectacular reports of that or any other year would occur in the very last quarter of 1948. Yet right in the middle of this unsettling rash of events, Sign found itself increasingly ignored and underutilized by the Pentagon. Green fireballs were actually but a small offshoot of this new and larger phenomena which involved varying types of nocturnal lights appearing over a whole host of military installations. Not all of the cases seem to be in the files, but it is apparent from the available records that a great deal of concern arose with no guesses as to what could be causing the events.

A typical sighting not unlike the November 23rd incident in West Germany, took place December 3rd at 8:15 P.M. PST on a clear night at the Fairfield-Suisun AFB, in California. As in the case from Germany, a bright light came into view at about 20,000 feet, although this report differed dramatically in that the object had first made a low level pass over the airfield at only 500 feet! Control tower operators described it as a round white light that silently passed between the tower and the airfreight terminal at a speed in excess of 400 miles per hour. Close views through 8-power binoculars revealed no definite form, just a bright light one to two feet in diameter and moving with an undulating or bouncing motion. Then all of a sudden observers witnessed it vertically rise to 3,000 feet and level off—soon thereafter reaching an altitude of 20,000 feet and heading south-southeast. Seen from another nearby control tower, all of the various witnesses were certain that the strange object behaved like no aircraft, balloon, or any type of navigation lights. [22]

Sign did thoroughly investigate this case but uncovered no clues to the mystery. Few times before had highly trained observers been at such a loss to identify an aerial object. While little could be done other than take statements, the records of the time do convey a sense of desperation. The Pentagon wanted to know what could so effortlessly violate the airspace of a US military installation, but Sign could no longer suggest what they had formally concluded.

As a result, team members became increasingly frustrated—Loedding in particular. The top brass wanted answers, yet would not accept nor even care to listen to what some of the best in Air Force Intelligence were trying to tell them. An interesting letter found in a recent release of Sign documents does dramatize how seriously the UFO situation was then taken despite official denials. In short, it signified a UFO alert by the Pentagon:

> **This Headquarters has instructed all major Air Commands, both in the ZI and Overseas, to be particularly alerted at this time for sightings of unidentified aerial objects and to generally comply with the requests contained in subject TWX.**
>
> **This Headquarters has also requested the cooperation of the Departments of the Army and the Navy, and the Coast Guard, in instructing their installations along the same lines.** 23

Recently there have been some documents come to light that shed a little more light on the late 1948 time period, but they also raise new questions as well. These involve numerous Project Sign and Grudge records released from the Wright-Patterson Air Intelligence Agency via the National Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri. For years researchers questioned the presence of such files but were always pacified with the statement that these former intelligence records were destroyed in an accidental fire in the St. Louis depository in 1973. Due however to the unending pursuit of truth by legitimate investigators, the lost files finally surfaced. While many of these include duplicate information present in the National Archives' Blue Book collection, new information is revealed. A few of the "missing cases," for example, are finally detailed. The incidents are very amazing but hold no new secrets to the UFO phenomenon. Therefore, we now know that some of the "missing cases" were in large part just that—missing—or misplaced.

Yet the most amazing discoveries are of cases that were never even listed in the vast Air Force index of sightings. Some of the incidents are rather startling for the extremely impressive character of the witnesses involved and the nature of their sightings. In addition, correspondence has also come to light which sheds more light on administrative matters. Combined with other microfilm rolls of Sign and Grudge files held in private hands, (which duplicate some but not all of the National Archives' Blue Book records) much cross-checking needs to be done to fill in the gaps in the historical record. Years of work are ahead for researchers.

Two of the most startling documents discovered in the Sign and Grudge papers are detailed here. We begin with a letter written by Air Force Intelligence Chief Major General Cabell to the AMC. Cabell states quite

plainly in that correspondence that the reported incidents of UFO activity are clearly of a real and concerning nature. He then inquires about Project Sign's views on the matter. This is somewhat puzzling considering Cabell must assuredly have been privy to the July Estimate draft. Yet five days later Colonel McCoy then responds with an even more straightforward answer. He states a percentage of the phenomenon are admittedly unexplainable and must represent craft of "foreign origin." Foreign origin in this case is again used to imply extraterrestrial visitation, although the possibility of Soviet activity is still not ruled out. Thus even by 1948 many intelligence officers were forced to either reevaluate a Soviet connection or accept a non-earthly theory. Today, following the fall of the Soviet Union, this revelation is even more startling as we now know none of those UFO sightings represented Soviet activity. And certainly no other national power had such technology then or now. Attitudes on how to handle the press are also discussed in the passages. The following

letters are therefore quoted in full to demonstrate a rare look at how Air Force officials were actually thinking in the late days of Sign. Such detailed correspondence is very rare in military records:

Actual document provided here

SECRET
C O P Y

Department of the Air Force
Headquarters, United States Air Force
Washington
3 Nov 48
Subject: Flying Object Incidents in the United States
To: Commanding General, Air Materiel Command
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio

1. By letter dated 30 December 1947 from the Director of Research and Development, Headquarters USAF, your headquarters was required to establish Project "Sign".

2. The conclusion appears inescapable that some type of flying object has been observed. Identification and the origin of these objects is not discernible to this headquarters. It is imperative, therefore, that efforts to determine whether these objects are of domestic or foreign origin must be increased until conclusive evidence is obtained. The needs of national defense require such evidence in order that appropriate countermeasures may be taken.

3. In addition to the imperative need for evidence to permit countermeasures, is the necessity of informing the public as to the status of the problem. To date there has been too little data to present to the public. The press, however, is about to take it into its own

hands and demand to be told what we do or do not know about the situation. Silence on our part will not long be acceptable.

4. Request immediate information as to your conclusions to date and your recommendations as to the information to be given to the press. Your recommendation is requested also as to whether that information should be offered to the press or withheld until it is actively sought by the press.

BY COMMAND OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF:
[Unsigned]
C.P.Cabell
Major General, USAF
Director of Intelligence, Office of
Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations

Actual three page document, click here for first page
Click here for second page
Click here for third page

SECRET

Basic 1tr fr Hq USAF, 3 Nov 48 to CG, AMC, "Flying Object Incidents in the United States"
1st INd MCIAT/ABD/amb
Hq AMC, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio. 8 Nov 48
To: Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, Washington 25, D.C., ATTN: AFOIR

1. In attempting to arrive at conclusions as to the nature of unidentified flying object incidents in the United States, this Command has made a study of approximately 180 such incidents. Data derived from initial reports have been supplemented by further information obtained from checklists submitted by mail, from interrogations of other field agencies, and by personal investigation by personnel of this Command in the case of incidents that seem to indicate the possibility of obtaining particularly significant information.

2. The objects described fall into the following general classifications groups, according to shape or physical configuration:
a. Flat disc of circular or approximately circular shape.
b. Torpedo or cigar shaped aircraft, with no wings or fins visible in flight.
c. Spherical or balloon shaped objects.
d. Balls of light with no apparent form attached.

Final word 161

3. Some of the objects sighted have definitely been identified, upon further investigation, as weather or upper air scientific balloons of some type. A great many of the round or balloon shaped objects indicated in paragraph 2c above are probably of the same nature, although in most cases, definite confirmation of that fact has been impossible to obtain.

4. Some of the objects have been identified as being astro-physical in nature. For example, in daylight sightings, the planet Venus has been reported as a round silvery object at extremely high altitude. Action is being taken to obtain the services of a prominent astro-physicist as a consultant, to study all of the incidents to determine whether some can be identified as meteors, planets or other manifestations of astral bodies.

5. Arrangements for accomplishing a study of the psychological problems involved in this project are being made in coordination with the Aero-Medical Laboratory at this Headquarters. The possibility that some of the sightings are hallucinations, optical illusions or even deliberate hoaxes has been considered.

6. Although explanation of many of the incidents can be obtained from the investigations described above, there remains a certain number of reports for which no reasonable everyday explanation is available. So far, no physical evidence of the existence of the unidentified sightings has been obtained. Prominent scientists, including Dr. Irving Langmuir of the General Electric Company, have been interviewed to determine whether they could advance any reasonable explanations for characteristics exhibited by the objects sighted. In an early interview, Dr. Langmuir indicated that these incidents could be explained, but insufficient data were available at that time on which to base definite conclusions. It is planned to have another interview with Dr. Langmuir in the near future to review all the data now available, and it is hoped that he will be able to present some opinion as to the nature of many of the unidentified objects, particularly those described as "balls of lights."

7. All information that has been made available to this headquarters indicates that the discs, the cigar shaped objects, and the "balls of light" are not of domestic origin. Engineering investigation indicates that disc or wingless aircraft could support themselves in flight by aerodynamic means. It is probable that the problems of stability and control could also be solved for such aircraft. However, according to current aerodynamic theory in this country, aircraft with such configurations would have relatively poor climb, altitude and range characteristics with power plant now in use.

8. The possibility that the reported objects are vehicles from another planet has not been ignored. However, tangible evidence to support conclusions about such a possibility are completely lacking.

The occurrence of incidents in relation to the approach to the earth of the planets Mercury, Venus and Mars have been plotted. A periodic variation in the frequency of incidents, which appears to have some relation to the planet approach curves, is noted, but it may be purely a coincidence.

9. Reference is made to "The Books of Charles Fort" with an introduction by Tiffany Thayer, published 1941, by Henry Holt & Co., New York, N.Y. It appears that similar phenomena have been noted and reported for the past century or more.

10. In view of the above, the following conclusions are drawn:
a. In the majority of cases reported, observers have actually sighted some type of flying object which they cannot classify as an aircraft within the limits of their personal experience.
b. There is as yet no conclusive proof that unidentified flying objects, other than those which are known to be balloons, are real aircraft.
c. Although it is obvious that some types of flying objects have been sighted, the exact nature of those objects cannot be established until physical evidence, such as that which would result from a crash, has been obtained.

11. It is not considered advisable to present to the press information on those objects which we cannot yet identify or about which we cannot present any reasonable conclusions. In the event that they insist on some kind of a statement, it is suggested that they be informed that many of the objects sighted have been identified as weather balloons or astral bodies, and that investigation is being .,,, pursued to determine reasonable explanations for the others.

12. A report, summarizing the results obtained from analysis of the data and a technical investigation of the engineering aspects of the objects described, is nearly complete, and a copy will be forwarded to your headquarters in the near future.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:
[Signed H.M. McCoy]
H.M.McCoy
Colonel,USAF
Chief, Intelligence Department

New discoveries continue to be made but we are still no closer to learning why Sign came to such a dramatic end. Why Alfred Loedding, one of the Air Force's most brilliant minds, was purged from UFO investigations by 1949 and from Wright-Patterson entirely by 1951. Important mysteries are still to be discovered.

1. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 3, Cases 185 and 190, listed as Incidents 151 and 152 in 1948 era documents.
2. Ibid.
3. Vallee, Anatomy of a Phenomenon: Unidentified Objects in Space—A Scientific Appraisal (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965), p. 54.
4. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 3, Case 195, listed as Incident 171 in 1948 era documents.
5. Ibid., Case 198, listed as Incident 162 in 1948 era documents.
6. The findings of the soil sample analysis showed no indication of an anomalous event at the site nor the presence of a metallic object having touched the pebbles in the soil.
7. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 3, Case 208, listed as Incident 176 in 1948 era documents.
8. Ibid., Case 284, listed as Incident 172 in 1948 era documents.
9. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, pp. 31-39.
10. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 3, Case 216, listed as Incident 180 in 1948 era documents.
11. Albert B. Deyarmond's personal papers, courtesy Project Sign Research Center.
12. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 3, Case 218, listed as Incident 183 in 1948 era documents.
13. Ibid., Case 238, listed as Incident 209 in 1948 era documents.

14. Ibid., Case 249, listed as Incident 222 in 1948 era documents.
15. Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, p. 46.
16. See Chapter 5, pp. 88-89.
17. Clark, The Emergence of a Phenomenon, pp. 184-185.
18. Bruce S. Maccabee, "Still In Default," In Walter H. Andrus, Jr., and Richard H. Hall, eds., MUFON 1986 International UFO Symposium Proceedings, 143, Seguin, TX: Mutual UFO Network, Inc.; and Clark, p. 190.
19. "Ruppelt, Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, p. 51.
20. Ibid., pp. 47-52.
21. Maccabee, "Still In Default," p. 45.
22. Project Blue Book Files, Roll No. 3, Case 257, listed as Incident 215 in 1948 era documents.
23. FOIA request I-NAIC-97-053, Project Sign and Grudge documents 1948-1949, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio.

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