

TOP SECRET

For your eyes only



Paul Andrews
Presents

The UFO Report

Sightings

Areas

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Paul Andrews Presents – THE UFO REPORT

Original report written by Edward J. Ruppelt
Edited and extra content added to this book in 2011 by Paul
Andrews

Publisher Information

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Foreword By Paul Andrews

I grew up in the era of when space travel started to happen, I also grew up in the era of television and films which made the concept of life on other planets seem so real, and that it was perfectly possible and feasible that alien visitors from other planets could and in fact were already coming to earth.

As a boy I remember well buying whilst on a summer holiday, a paperback book called "The Hynck Report" a book I still own today. This book was a mine of information and theory's for a young boy.

As I grew up many people I have met and also relatives, all of which I trust have recalled to me sighting of strange craft and lights in the sky. These are people I trust with my life, so how can I doubt what they have seen, even though we cannot define easily what they have seen.

A few years ago I also witnessed lights in the sky over Bedfordshire, in the United Kingdom. I cannot confirm what the lights were but as an engineer by original trade, I know what it was not, even if I cannot identify what it was.

I will be exploring all things UFO in a series of books, both personal experiences and also third hand reports such as this book. I have edited and added to this book, and also added some relevant illustrations into the book. I hope you find it as interesting as I have.

The original author was Edward J. Ruppert, the former head of the USA Air Force Project Blue Book which was the special section set up to investigate the increasing reports of unidentified flying objects seen in the skies over the USA. He relates his time in this division, and presents to you the facts. It is then up to you to make your own mind up on the UFP phenomenon!!

THE REPORT ON UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS
BY EDWARD J. RUPPELT

Former Head of the Air Force Project Blue Book

Foreword

This is a book about unidentified flying objects—UFO's—"flying saucers." It is actually more than a book; it is a report because it is the first time that anyone, either military or civilian, has brought together in one document all the facts about this fascinating subject. With the exception of the style, this report is written exactly the way I would have written it had I been officially asked to do so while I was chief of the Air Force's project for investigating UFO reports—Project Blue Book.

In many instances I have left out the names of the people who reported seeing UFO's, or the names of certain people who were associated with the project, just as I would have done in an official report. For the same reason I have changed the locale in which some of the UFO sightings occurred. This is especially true in chapter fifteen, the story of how some of our atomic scientists detected radiation whenever UFO's were reported near their "UFO-detection stations." This policy of not identifying the "source," to borrow a term from military intelligence, is insisted on by the Air Force so that the people who have co-operated with them will not get any unwanted publicity. Names are considered to be "classified information."

But the greatest care has been taken to make sure that the omission of names and changes in locale has in no way altered the basic facts because this report is based on the facts—all of the facts—nothing of significance has been left out.

It was only after considerable deliberation that I put this report together, because it had to be told accurately, with no holds barred. I finally decided to do it for two reasons. First, there is world-wide interest in flying saucers; people want to know the facts. But more often than not these facts have been obscured by secrecy and confusion, a situation that has led to wild speculation on one end of the scale and an almost dangerously blasé attitude on the other. It is only when all of the facts are laid out that a correct evaluation

can be made.

Second, after spending two years investigating and analysing UFO reports, after talking to the people who have seen UFO's—industrialists, pilots, engineers, generals, and just the plain man-on-the-street, and after discussing the subject with many very capable scientists, I felt that I was in a position to be able to put together the complete account of the Air Force's struggle with the flying saucer.

The report has been difficult to write because it involves something that doesn't officially exist. It is well known that ever since the first flying saucer was reported in June 1947 the Air Force has officially said that there is no proof that such a thing as an interplanetary spaceship exists. But what is not well known is that this conclusion is far from being unanimous among the military and their scientific advisers because of the one word, *proof*; so the UFO investigations continue.

The hassle over the word "proof" boils down to one question: What constitutes proof? Does a UFO have to land at the River Entrance to the Pentagon, near the Joint Chiefs of Staff offices? Or is it proof when a ground radar station detects a UFO, sends a jet to intercept it, the jet pilot sees it, and locks on with his radar, only to have the UFO streak away at a phenomenal speed? Is it proof when a jet pilot fires at a UFO and sticks to his story even under the threat of court-martial? Does this constitute proof?

The at times hotly debated answer to this question may be the answer to the question, "Do the UFO's really exist?"

I'll give you the facts—all of the facts—you decide.

July 1955, E. J. RUPPELT

Chapter One

Project Blue Book and the UFO Story

In the summer of 1952 a United States Air Force F-86 jet interceptor shot at a flying saucer.

This fact, like so many others that make up the full flying saucer story, has never before been told.

I know the full story about flying saucers and I know that it has never before been told because I organized and was chief of the Air Force's Project Blue Book, the special project set up to investigate and analyse unidentified flying object, or UFO, reports. (UFO is the official term that I created to replace the words "flying saucers.")

There is a fighter base in the United States which I used to visit frequently because, during 1951, 1952, and 1953, it got more than its share of good UFO reports.

The commanding officer of the fighter group, a full colonel and command pilot, believed that UFO's were real. The colonel believed in UFO's because he had a lot of faith in his pilots—and they had chased UFO's in their F-86's. He had seen UFO's on the scopes of his radar sets, and he knew radar.

The colonel's intelligence officer, a captain, didn't exactly believe that UFO's were real, but he did think that they warranted careful investigation. The logic the intelligence officer used in investigating UFO reports—and in getting answers to many of them—made me wish many times that he worked for me on Project Blue Book.

One day the intelligence officer called me at my base in Dayton, Ohio. He wanted to know if I was planning to make a trip his way soon. When I told him I expected to be in his area in about a week, he asked me to be sure to look him up. There was no special hurry, he added, but he had something very interesting to show me.

When we got wind of a good story, Project Blue Book liked to start working on it at once, so I asked the intelligence officer to tell me what he had. But nothing doing. He didn't want to discuss it

over the phone. He even vetoed the idea of putting it into a secret wire. Such extreme caution really stopped me, because anything can be coded and put in a wire.

When I left Dayton about a week later I decided to go straight to the fighter base, planning to arrive there in mid-morning. But while I was changing airlines my reservations got fouled up, and I was faced with waiting until evening to get to the base. I called the intelligence officer and told him about the mix-up. He told me to hang on right there and he would fly over and pick me up in a T-33 jet.

As soon as we were in the air, on the return trip, I called the intelligence officer on the interphone and asked him what was going on. What did he have? Why all the mystery? He tried to tell me, but the interphone wasn't working too well and I couldn't understand what he was saying. Finally he told me to wait until we returned to his office and I could read the report myself.

Report! If he had a UFO report why hadn't he sent it in to Project Blue Book as he usually did?

We landed at the fighter base, checked in our parachutes, Mae Wests, and helmets, and drove over to his office. There were several other people in the office, and they greeted me with the usual question, "What's new on the flying saucer front?" I talked with them for a while, but was getting impatient to find out what was on the intelligence officer's mind. I was just about to ask him about the mysterious report when he took me to one side and quietly asked me not to mention it until everybody had gone.

Once we were alone, the intelligence officer shut the door, went over to his safe, and dug out a big, thick report. It was the standard Air Force reporting form that is used for all intelligence reports, including UFO reports. The intelligence officer told me that this was the only existing copy. He said that he had been told to destroy all copies, but had saved one for me to read.

With great curiosity, I took the report and started to read. What *had* happened at this fighter base?

About ten o'clock in the morning, one day a few weeks before, a radar near the base had picked up an unidentified target. It was an odd target in that it came in very fast—about 700 miles per hour—and then slowed down to about 100 miles per hour. The radar showed that it was located north east of the airfield, over a sparsely settled area.

Unfortunately the radar station didn't have any height-finding equipment. The operators knew the direction of the target and its distance from the station but they didn't know its altitude. They reported the target, and two F-86's were scrambled.

The radar picked up the F-86's soon after they were airborne, and had begun to direct them into the target when the target started to fade on the radar scope. At the time several of the operators thought that this fade was caused by the target's losing altitude rapidly and getting below the radar's beam. Some of the other operators thought that it was a high-flying target and that it was fading just because it was so high.

In the debate which followed, the proponents of the high-flying theory won out, and the F-86's were told to go up to 40,000 feet. But before the aircraft could get to that altitude, the target had been completely lost on the radar scope.

The F-86's continued to search the area at 40,000 feet, but could see nothing. After a few minutes the aircraft ground controller called the F-86's and told one to come down to 20,000 feet, the other to 5,000 feet, and continue the search. The two jets made a quick let down, with one pilot stopping at 20,000 feet and the other heading for the deck.

The second pilot, who was going down to 5,000 feet, was just beginning to pull out when he noticed a flash below and ahead of him. He flattened out his dive a little and headed toward the spot where he had seen the light. As he closed on the spot he suddenly noticed what he first thought was a weather balloon. A few seconds later he realized that it couldn't be a balloon because it was staying ahead of him. Quite an achievement for a balloon, since he had built up a lot of speed in his dive and now was flying almost straight

and level at 3,000 feet and was travelling “at the Mach.”



Again the pilot pushed the nose of the F-86 down and started after the object. He closed fairly fast, until he came to within an estimated 1,000 yards. Now he could get a good look at the object. Although it had looked like a balloon from above, a closer view showed that it was definitely round and flat—saucer-shaped. The pilot described it as being “like a doughnut without a hole.”

As his rate of closure began to drop off, the pilot knew that the object was picking up speed. But he pulled in behind it and started to follow. Now he was right on the deck.

About this time the pilot began to get a little worried. What should he do? He tried to call his buddy, who was flying above him somewhere in the area at 20,000 feet. He called two or three times but could get no answer. Next he tried to call the ground controller but he was too low for his radio to carry that far. Once more he tried his buddy at 20,000 feet, but again no luck.

By now he had been following the object for about two minutes and during this time had closed the gap between them to approximately 500 yards. But this was only momentary. Suddenly the object began to pull away, slowly at first, then faster. The pilot, realizing that he couldn't catch *it*, wondered what to do next.

When the object travelled out about 1,000 yards, the pilot suddenly made up his mind—he did the only thing that he could do to stop the UFO. It was like a David about to do battle with a Goliath, but he had to take a chance. Quickly charging his guns, he started shooting. . . . A moment later the object pulled up into a climb and in a few seconds it was gone. The pilot climbed to 10,000 feet, called the other F-86, and now was able to contact his buddy. They joined up and went back to their base.

As soon as he had landed and parked, the F-86 pilot went into operations to tell his story to his squadron commander. The mere fact that he had fired his guns was enough to require a detailed report, as a matter of routine. But the circumstances under which the guns actually were fired created a major disturbance at the fighter base that day.

After the squadron commander had heard his pilot's story, he called the group commander, the colonel, and the intelligence officer. They heard the pilot's story.

For some obscure reason there was a "personality clash," the intelligence officer's term, between the pilot and the squadron commander. This was obvious, according to the report I was reading, because the squadron commander immediately began to tear the story apart and accuse the pilot of "cracking up," or of just "shooting his guns for the hell of it and using the wild story as a cover-up."

Other pilots in the squadron, friends of the accused pilot—including the intelligence officer and a flight surgeon—were called in to "testify." All of these men were aware of the fact that in certain instances a pilot can "flip" for no good reason, but none of them said that he had noticed any symptoms of mental crack-up in the unhappy pilot.

None, except the squadron commander. He kept pounding home his idea—that the pilot was "psycho"—and used a few examples of what the report called "minor incidents" to justify his stand.

Finally the pilot who had been flying with the "accused" man was called in. He said that he had been monitoring the tactical radio channel but that he hadn't heard any calls from his buddy's low-flying F-86. The squadron commander triumphantly jumped on this point, but the accused pilot tended to refute it by admitting he was so jumpy that he might not have been on the right channel. But when he was asked if he had checked or changed channels after he had lost the object and before he had finally contacted the other F-86, he couldn't remember.

So ended the pilot's story and his interrogation.

The intelligence officer wrote up his report of a UFO sighting, but at the last minute, just before sending it, he was told to hold it back. He was a little unhappy about this turn of events, so he went in to see why the group commander had decided to delay sending the report to Project Blue Book.

They talked over the possible reactions to the report. If it went out it would cause a lot of excitement, maybe unnecessarily. Yet, if the pilot actually had seen what he claimed, it was vitally important to get the report in to ATIC immediately. The group commander said that he would make his decision after a talk with his executive officer. They decided not to send the report and ordered it destroyed.

When I finished reading, the intelligence officer's first comment was, "What do you think?"

Since the evaluation of the report seemed to hinge upon conflicts between personalities I didn't know, I could venture no opinion, except that the incident made up the most fascinating UFO report I'd ever seen. So I batted the intelligence officer's question back to him.

"I know the people involved," he replied, "and I don't think the pilot was nuts. I can't give you the report, because Colonel _____ told me to destroy it. But I did think you should know about it." Later he burned the report.

The problems involved in this report are typical. There are certain definite facts that can be gleaned from it; the pilot did see something and he did shoot at something, but no matter how thoroughly you investigate the incident that something can never be positively identified. It might have been a hallucination or it might have been some vehicle from outer space; no one will ever know. It was a UFO.

The UFO story started soon after June 24, 1947, when newspapers all over the United States carried the first flying saucer report. The story told how nine very bright, disk-shaped objects were seen by Kenneth Arnold, a Boise, Idaho, businessman, while he was flying his private plane near Mount Rainier, in the state of Washington. With journalistic license, reporters converted Arnold's description of the individual motion of each of the objects—like "a saucer skipping across water"—into "flying saucer," a name for the objects themselves. In the eight years that have passed since Arnold's memorable sighting, the term has become so common that it is now in Webster's Dictionary and is known today in most languages

in the world.

For a while after the Arnold sighting the term “flying saucer” was used to describe all disk-shaped objects that were seen flashing through the sky at fantastic speeds. Before long, reports were made of objects other than disks, and these were also called flying saucers. Today the words are popularly applied to anything seen in the sky that cannot be identified as a common, everyday object.

Thus a flying saucer can be a formation of lights, a single light, a sphere, or any other shape; and it can be any colour. Performance-wise, flying saucers can hover, go fast or slow, go high or low, turn 90- degree corners, or disappear almost instantaneously.

Obviously the term “flying saucer” is misleading when applied to objects of every conceivable shape and performance. For this reason the military prefers the more general, if less colourful, name: unidentified flying objects. UFO (pronounced Yoo-foe) for short.

Officially the military uses the term “flying saucer” on only two occasions. First in an explanatory sense, as when briefing people who are unacquainted with the term “UFO”: “UFO—you know—flying saucers.” And second in a derogatory sense, for purposes of ridicule, as when it is observed, “He says he saw a flying saucer.”

This second form of usage is the exclusive property of those persons who positively know that all UFO’s are nonsense. Fortunately, for the sake of good manners if for no other reason, the ranks of this knowing category are constantly dwindling. One by one these people drop out, starting with the instant they see their first UFO.

Some weeks after the first UFO was seen on June 24, 1947, the Air Force established a project to investigate and analyse all UFO reports. The attitude toward this task varied from a state of near panic, early in the life of the project, to that of complete contempt for anyone who even mentioned the words “flying saucer.”

This contemptuous attitude toward “flying saucer nuts” prevailed from mid-1949 to mid-1950. During that interval many of the people who were, or had been, associated with the project believed that the public was suffering from “war nerves.”

Early in 1950 the project, for all practical purposes, was closed out; at least it rated only minimum effort. Those in power now reasoned that if you didn't mention the words "flying saucers" the people would forget them and the saucers would go away. But this reasoning was false, for instead of vanishing, the UFO reports got better and better.

Airline pilots, military pilots, generals, scientists, and dozens of other people were reporting UFO's, and in greater detail than in reports of the past. Radars, which were being built for air defense, began to pick up some very unusual targets, thus lending technical corroboration to the unsubstantiated claims of human observers.

As a result of the continuing accumulation of more impressive UFO reports, official interest stirred. Early in 1951 verbal orders came down from Major General Charles P. Cabell, then Director of Intelligence for Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, to make a study reviewing the UFO situation for Air Force Headquarters.

I had been back in the Air Force about six months when this happened. During the second world war I had been a B-29 bombardier and radar operator. I went to India, China, and later to the Pacific, with the original B-29 wing. I flew two DCF's, and some Air Medals' worth of missions, got out of the Air Force after the war, and went back to college. To keep my reserve status while I was in school, I flew as a navigator in an Air Force Reserve Troop Carrier Wing.

Not long after I received my degree in aeronautical engineering, the Korean War started, and I went back on active duty. I was assigned to the Air Technical Intelligence Centre at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, in Dayton, Ohio. ATIC is responsible for keeping track of all foreign aircraft and guided missiles. ATIC also had the UFO project.

I had just finished organizing a new intelligence group when General Cabell's order to review past UFO reports came down. Lieutenant Colonel Rosengarten, who received the order at ATIC, called me in and wanted to know if I'd take the job of making the review. I accepted.

When the review was finished, I went to the Pentagon and presented my findings to Major General Samford, who had replaced General Cabell as Director of Intelligence.

ATIC soon got the word to set up a completely new project for the investigation and analysis of UFO reports. Since I had made the review of past UFO reports I was the expert, and I got the new job. It was given the code name Project Blue Book, and I was in charge of it until late in 1953. During this time members of my staff and I travelled close to half a million miles. We investigated dozens of UFO reports, and read and analysed several thousand more. These included every report ever received by the Air Force.

For the size of the task involved Project Blue Book was always understaffed, even though I did have ten people on my regular staff plus many paid consultants representing every field of science. All of us on Project Blue Book had Top Secret security clearances so that security was no block in our investigations. Behind this organization was a reporting network made up of every Air Force base intelligence officer and every Air Force radar station in the world, and the Air Defence Command's Ground Observer Corps. This reporting net sent Project Blue Book reports on every conceivable type of UFO, by every conceivable type of person.

What did these people actually see when they reported that they had observed a UFO? Putting aside truly unidentifiable flying objects for the present, this question has several answers.

In many instances it has been positively proved that people have reported balloons, aeroplanes, stars, and many other common objects as UFO's. The people who make such reports don't recognize these common objects because something in their surroundings temporarily assumes an unfamiliar appearance.

Unusual lighting conditions are a common cause of such illusions. A balloon will glow like a "ball of fire" just at sunset. Or an aeroplane that is not visible to the naked eye suddenly starts to reflect the sun's rays and appears to be a "silver ball." Pilots in F- 94 jet interceptors chase Venus in the daytime and fight with balloons at night, and people in Los Angeles see weird lights.

On October 8, 1954, many Los Angeles newspapers and newscasters carried an item about a group of flying saucers, bright lights, flying in a V formation. The lights had been seen from many locations over Southern California. Pilots saw them while bringing their aeroplanes into Los Angeles International Airport, Air Force pilots flying out of Long Beach saw them, two CBS reporters in Hollywood gave an eyewitness account, and countless people called police and civil defence officials. All of them excitedly reported lights they could not identify. The next day the Air Force identified the UFO's; they were Air Force aeroplanes, KC-97 aerial tankers, refuelling B-47 jet bombers in flight. The reason for the weird effect that startled so many Southern Californians was that when the refuelling is taking place a floodlight on the bottom of the tanker aeroplane lights up the bomber that is being refuelled. The aeroplanes were flying high, and slowly, so no sound was heard; only the bright floodlights could be seen. Since most people, even other pilots, have never seen a night aerial refuelling operation and could not identify the odd lights they saw, the lights became UFO's.

In other instances common everyday objects look like UFO's because of some odd quirk in the human mind. A star or planet that has been in the sky every day of the observer's life suddenly "takes off at high speed on a highly erratic flight path." Or a vapour trail from a high-flying jet—seen a hundred times before by the observer—becomes a flying saucer.

Some psychologists explain such aberrations as being akin to the crowd behaviour mechanism at work in the "bobby-sox craze." Teenagers don't know why they squeal and swoon when their current fetish sways and croons. Yet everybody else is squealing, so they squeal too. Maybe that great comedian, Jimmy Durante, has the answer: "Everybody wants to get into the act." I am convinced that a certain percentage of UFO reports come from people who see flying saucers because others report seeing them.

But this "will to see" may have deeper roots, almost religious implications, for some people. Consciously or unconsciously, they want UFO's to be real and to come from outer space. These

individuals, frightened perhaps by threats of atomic destruction, or lesser fears—who knows what—act as if nothing that men can do can save the earth. Instead, they seek salvation from outer space, on the forlorn premise that flying saucer men, by their very existence, are wiser and more advanced than we. Such people may reason that a race of men capable of interplanetary travel have lived well into, or through, an atomic age. They have survived and they can tell us their secret of survival. Maybe the threat of an atomic war unified their planet and allowed them to divert their war effort to one of social and technical advancement. To such people a searchlight on a cloud or a bright star is an interplanetary spaceship.

If all the UFO reports that the Air Force has received in the past eight years could be put in this “psychological quirk” category, Project Blue Book would never have been organized. It is another class of reports that causes the Air Force to remain interested in UFO’s. This class of reports are called “Unknowns.”

In determining the identity of a UFO, the project based its method of operation on a well-known psychological premise. This premise is that to get a reaction from one of the senses there must be a stimulus. If you think you see a UFO you must have seen something. Pure hallucinations are extremely rare.

For anything flying in the air the stimulus could be anything that is normally seen in the air. Balloons, aeroplanes, and astronomical bodies are the commoner stimuli. Birds and insects are common also, but usually are seen at such close range that they are nearly always recognized. Infrequently observed things, such as sundogs, mirages, huge fireballs, and a host of other unusual flying objects, are also known stimuli.

On Project Blue Book our problem was to identify these stimuli. We had methods for checking the location, at any time, of every balloon launched anywhere in the United States. To a certain degree the same was true for aeroplanes. The UFO observer’s estimate of where the object was located in the sky helped us to identify astronomical bodies. Huge files of UFO characteristics, along with up-to-the-minute weather data, and advice from specialists,

permitted us to identify such things as sun-dogs, paper caught in updrafts, huge meteors, etc.

This determination of the stimuli that triggered UFO sightings, while not an insurmountable task, was a long, tedious process. The identification of known objects was routine, and caused no excitement. The excitement and serious interest occurred when we received UFO reports in which the observer was reliable and the stimuli could not be identified. These were the reports that challenged the project and caused me to spend hours briefing top U.S. officials. These were the reports that we called "Unknowns."

Of the several thousand UFO reports that the Air Force has received since 1947, some 15 to 20 per cent fall into this category called unknown. This means that the observer was not affected by any determinable psychological quirks and that after exhaustive investigation the object that was reported could not be identified. To be classed as an unknown, a UFO report also had to be "good," meaning that it had to come from a competent observer and had to contain a reasonable amount of data.

Reports are often seen in the newspapers that say: "Mrs. Henry Jones, of 5464 South Elm, said that 10:00A.M. she was shaking her dust mop out of the bedroom window when she saw a flying saucer"; or "Henry Armstrong was driving between Grundy Centre and Rienbeck last night when he saw a light. Henry thinks it was a flying saucer." This is not a good UFO report.

This type of UFO report, if it was received by Project Blue Book, was stamped "Insufficient Data for Evaluation" and dropped into the dead file, where it became a mere statistic.

Next to the "Insufficient Data" file was a file marked "C.P." This meant crackpot. Into this file went all reports from people who had talked with flying saucer crews, who had inspected flying saucers that had landed in the United States, who had ridden in flying saucers, or who were members of flying saucer crews. By Project Blue Book standards, these were not "good" UFO reports either.

But here is a “good” UFO report with an “unknown” conclusion:

On July 24, 1952, two Air Force colonels, flying a B-25, took off from Hamilton Air Force Base, near San Francisco, for Colorado Springs, Colorado. The day was clear, not a cloud in the sky.

The colonels had crossed the Sierra Nevada between Sacramento and Reno and were flying east at 11,000 feet on “Green 3,” the aerial highway to Salt Lake City. At 3:40P.M. they were over the Carson Sink area of Nevada, when one of the colonels noticed three objects ahead of them and a little to their right. The objects looked like three F- 86’s flying a tight V formation. If they were F-86’s they should have been lower, according to civil air regulations, but on a clear day some pilots don’t watch their altitude too closely.

In a matter of seconds the three aircraft were close enough to the B- 25 to be clearly seen. They were not F-86’s. They were three bright silver, delta wing craft with no tails and no pilot’s canopies. The only thing that broke the sharply defined, clean upper surface of the triangular wing was a definite ridge that ran from the nose to the tail.

In another second the three deltas made a slight left bank and shot by the B-25 at terrific speed. The colonels estimated that the speed was at least three times that of an F-86. They got a good look at the three deltas as the unusual craft passed within 400 to 800 yards of the B-25.

When they landed at Colorado Springs, the two colonels called the intelligence people at Air Defence Command Headquarters to make a UFO report. The suggestion was offered that they might have seen three F- 86’s. The colonels promptly replied that if the objects had been F- 86’s they would have easily been recognized as such. The colonels knew what F-86’s looked like.

Air Defence Command relayed the report to Project Blue Book. An investigation was started at once.

Flight Service, which clears all military aircraft flights, was contacted and asked about the location of aircraft near the Carson Sink area at 3:40P.M. They had no record of the presence of aircraft in that area.

Since the colonels had mentioned delta wing aircraft, and both the Air Force and the Navy had a few of this type, we double-checked. The Navy's deltas were all on the east coast, at least all of the silver ones were. A few deltas painted the traditional navy blue were on the west coast, but not near Carson Sink. The Air Force's one delta was temporarily grounded.

Since balloons once in a while can appear to have an odd shape, all balloon flights were checked for both standard weather balloons and the big 100-foot-diameter research balloons. Nothing was found.

A quick check on the two colonels revealed that both of them were command pilots and that each had several thousand hours of flying time. They were stationed at the Pentagon. Their highly classified assignments were such that they would be in a position to recognize *anything* that the United States knows to be flying anywhere in the world.

Both men had friends who had "seen flying saucers" at some time, but both had openly voiced their scepticism. Now, from what the colonels said when they were interviewed after landing at Colorado Springs, they had changed their opinions.

Nobody knows what the two colonels saw over Carson Sink. However, it is always possible to speculate. Maybe they just thought they were close enough to the three objects to see them plainly. The objects might have been three F-86's: maybe Flight Service lost the records. It could be that the three F-86's had taken off to fly in the local area of their base but had decided to do some illegal sight-seeing. Flight Service would have no record of a flight like this. Maybe both of the colonels had hallucinations.

There is a certain mathematical probability that any one of the above speculative answers is correct—correct for this one case. If you try this type of speculation on hundreds of sightings with "unknown" answers, the probability that the speculative answers are correct rapidly approaches zero.

Maybe the colonels actually did see what they thought they did, a type of craft completely foreign to them.

Another good UFO report provides an incident in which there is hardly room for any speculation of this type. The conclusion is more simply, "Unknown," period.

On January 20, 1952, at seven-twenty in the evening, two master sergeants, both intelligence specialists, were walking down a street on the Fairchild Air Force Base, close to Spokane, Washington.

Suddenly both men noticed a large, bluish-white, spherical-shaped object approaching from the east. They stopped and watched the object carefully, because several of these UFO's had been reported by pilots from the air base over the past few months. The sergeants had written up the reports on these earlier sightings.

The object was travelling at a moderately fast speed on a horizontal path. As it passed to the north of their position and disappeared in the west, the sergeants noted that it had a long blue tail. At no time did they hear any sound. They noted certain landmarks that the object had crossed and estimated the time taken in passing these landmarks. The next day they went out and measured the angles between these landmarks in order to include them in their report.

When we got the report at ATIC, our first reaction was that the master sergeants had seen a large meteor. From the evidence I had written off, as meteors, all previous similar UFO reports from this air base.

The sergeants' report, however, contained one bit of information that completely changed the previous picture. At the time of the sighting there had been a solid 6,000-foot-thick overcast at 4,700 feet. And meteors don't go that low.

A few quick calculations gave a rather fantastic answer. If the object was just at the base of the clouds it would have been 10,000 feet from the two observers and travelling 1,400 miles per hour.

But regardless of the speed, the story was still fantastic. The object was no jet aeroplane because there was no sound. It was not a searchlight because there were none on the air base. It was not an auto mobile spotlight because a spotlight will not produce the type of light the sergeants described. As a double check, however, both

men were questioned on this point. They stated firmly that they had seen hundreds of searchlights and spotlights playing on clouds, and that this was not what they saw.

Beyond these limited possibilities the sergeants' UFO discourages fruitful speculation. The object remains unidentified.

The UFO reports made by the two colonels and the two master sergeants are typical of hundreds of other good UFO reports which carry the verdict, "Conclusion unknown."

Some of these UFO reports have been publicized, but many have not. Very little information pertaining to UFO's was withheld from the press—if the press knew of the occurrence of specific sightings. Our policy on releasing information was to answer only direct questions from the press. If the press didn't know about a given UFO incident, they naturally couldn't ask questions about it. Consequently such stories were never released. In other instances, when the particulars of a UFO sighting were released, they were only the bare facts about what was reported. Any additional information that might have been developed during later investigations and analyses was not released.

There is a great deal of interest in UFO's and the interest shows no signs of diminishing. Since the first flying saucer skipped across the sky in the summer of 1947, thousands of words on this subject have appeared in every newspaper and most magazines in the United States. During a six-month period in 1952 alone 148 of the nation's leading newspapers carried a total of over 16,000 items about flying saucers.

During July 1952 reports of flying saucers sighted over Washington, D.C., cheated the Democratic National Convention out of precious headline space.

The subject of flying saucers, which has generated more unscientific behaviour than any other topic of modern times, has been debated at the meetings of professional scientific societies, causing scientific tempers to flare where unemotional objectivity is supposed to reign supreme.

Yet these thousands of written words and millions of spoken words— all attesting to the general interest—have generated more heat than light. Out of this avalanche of print and talk, the full, factual, true story of UFO's has emerged only on rare occasions. The general public, for its interest in UFO's, has been paid off in misinformation.

Many civilian groups must have sensed this, for while I was chief of Project Blue Book I had dozens of requests to speak on the subject of UFO's. These civilian requests had to be turned down because of security regulations.

I did give many official briefings, however, behind closed doors, to certain groups associated with the government—all of them upon request.

The subject of UFO's was added to a regular series of intelligence briefings given to students at the Air Force's Command and Staff School, and to classes at the Air Force's Intelligence School.

I gave briefings to the technical staff at the Atomic Energy Commission's Los Alamos laboratory, where the first atomic bomb was built. The theatre where this briefing took place wouldn't hold all of the people who tried to get in, so the briefing was recorded and replayed many times. The same thing happened at AEC's Sandia Base, near Albuquerque.

Many groups in the Pentagon and the Office of Naval Research requested UFO briefings. Civilian groups, made up of some of the nation's top scientists and industrialists, and formed to study special military problems, worked in a UFO briefing. Top Air Force commanders were given periodic briefings.

Every briefing I gave was followed by a discussion that lasted anywhere from one to four hours.

In addition to these, Project Blue Book published a classified monthly report on UFO activity. Requests to be put on distribution for this report were so numerous that the distribution had to be restricted to major Air Force Command Headquarters.

This interest was not caused by any revolutionary information that was revealed in the briefings or reports. It stemmed only from a

desire to get the facts about an interesting subject.

Many aspects of the UFO problem were covered in these official briefings. I would give details of many of the better reports we received, our conclusions about them, and how those conclusions were reached. If we had identified a UFO, the audience was told how the identification was made. If we concluded that the answer to a UFO sighting was "Unknown," the audience learned why we were convinced it was unknown.

Among the better sightings that were described fully to interested government groups were: the complete story of the Lubbock Lights, including the possible sighting of the same V-shaped light formations at other locations on the same night; the story of a group of scientists who detected mysterious nuclear radiation when UFO's were sighted; and all of the facts behind such famous cases as the Mantell Incident, the Florida scoutmaster who was burned by a "flying saucer," and headline-capturing sightings at Washington, D.C.

I showed them what few photographs we had, the majority of which everyone has seen, since they have been widely published in magazines and newspapers. Our collection of photographs was always a disappointment as far as positive proof was concerned because, in a sense, if you've seen one you've seen them all. We had no clear pictures of a saucer, just an assortment of blurs, blotches, and streaks of light.

The briefings included a description of how Project Blue Book operated and a survey of the results of the many studies that were made of the mass of UFO data we had collected. Also covered were our interviews with a dozen North American astronomers, the story of the unexplained green fireballs of New Mexico, and an account of how a committee of six distinguished United States scientists spent many hours attempting to answer the question, "Are the UFO's from outer space?"

Unfortunately the general public was never able to hear these briefings. For a long time, contrary to present thinking in military circles, I have believed that the public also is entitled to know the

details of what was covered in these briefings (less, of course, the few items pertaining to radar that were classified “Secret,” and the names of certain people). But withholding these will not alter the facts in any way.

A lot has already been written on the subject of UFO’s, but none of it presents the true, complete story. Previous forays into the UFO field have been based on inadequate information and have been warped to fit the personal biases of the individual writers. Well meaning though these authors may be, the degree to which their books have misinformed the public is incalculable.

It is high time that we let the people know.

The following chapters present the true and complete UFO story, based on what I learned about UFO’s while I was chief of Project Blue Book, the Air Force’s project for the investigation and analysis of UFO reports. Here is the same information that I gave to Secretary of the Air Force, Thomas K. Finletter, to the Air Force commanders, to scientists and industrialists. This is what the Air Force knows about unidentified flying objects.

You may not agree with some of the official ideas or conclusions—neither did a lot of people I briefed—but this is the story.

Chapter Two

The Era of Confusion Begins

On September 23, 1947, the chief of the Air Technical Intelligence Centre, one of the Air Force's most highly specialized intelligence units, sent a letter to the Commanding General of the then Army Air Forces.

The letter was in answer to the Commanding General's verbal request to make a preliminary study of the reports of unidentified flying objects. The letter said that after a preliminary study of UFO reports, ATIC concluded that, to quote from the letter, "the reported phenomena were real." The letter strongly urged that a permanent project be established at ATIC to investigate and analyse future UFO reports. It requested a priority for the project, a registered code name, and an over-all security classification. ATIC's request was granted and Project Sign, the forerunner of Project Grudge and Project Blue Book, was launched. It was given a 2A priority, 1A being the highest priority an Air Force project could have. With this the Air Force dipped into the most prolonged and widespread controversy it has ever, or may ever, encounter. The Air Force grabbed the proverbial bear by the tail and to this day it hasn't been able to let loose.

The letter to the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces from the chief of ATIC had used the word "phenomena." History has shown that this was not a too well-chosen word. But on September 23, 1947, when the letter was written, ATIC's intelligence specialists were confident that within a few months or a year they would have the answer to the question, "What are UFO's?" The question, "Do UFO's exist?" was never mentioned. The only problem that confronted the people at ATIC was, "Were the UFO's of Russian or interplanetary origin?" Either case called for a serious, secrecy-shrouded project. Only top people at ATIC

were assigned to Project Sign.

Although a formal project for UFO investigation wasn't set up until September 1947, the Air Force had been vitally interested in UFO reports ever since June 24, 1947, the day Kenneth Arnold made the original UFO report.

As Arnold's story of what he saw that day has been handed down by the bards of saucerism, the true facts have been warped, twisted, and changed. Even some points in Arnold's own account of his sighting as published in his book, *The Coming of the Saucers*, do not jibe with what the official files say he told the Air Force in 1947. Since this incident was the original UFO sighting, I used to get many inquiries about it from the press and at briefings. To get the true and accurate story of what did happen to Kenneth Arnold on June 24, 1947, I had to go back through old newspaper files, official reports, and talk to people who had worked on Project Sign. By cross-checking these data and talking to people who had heard Arnold tell about his UFO sighting soon after it happened, I finally came up with what I believe is the accurate story.

Arnold had taken off from Chehalis, Washington, intending to fly to Yakima, Washington. About 3:00P.M. he arrived in the vicinity of Mount Rainier. There was a Marine Corps C-46 transport plane lost in the Mount Rainier area, so Arnold decided to fly around awhile and look for it. He was looking down at the ground when suddenly he noticed a series of bright flashes off to his left. He looked for the source of the flashes and saw a string of nine very bright disk- shaped objects, which he estimated to be 45 to 50 feet in length. They were travelling from north to south across the nose of his aeroplane. They were flying in a reversed echelon (i.e., lead object high with the rest stepped down), and as they flew along they weaved in and out between the mountain peaks, once passing behind one of the peaks. Each individual object had a skipping motion described by Arnold as a "saucer skipping across water."

During the time that the objects were in sight, Arnold had clocked their speed. He had marked his position and their position on the map and again noted the time. When he landed he sketched

in the flight path that the objects had flown and computed their speed, almost 1,700 miles per hour. He estimated that they had been 20 to 25 miles away and had travelled 47 miles in 102 seconds.

I found that there was a lot of speculation on this report. Two factions at ATIC had joined up behind two lines of reasoning. One side said that Arnold had seen plain, everyday jet aeroplanes flying in formation. This side's argument was based on the physical limitations of the human eye, visual acuity, the eye's ability to see a small, distant object. Tests, they showed, had proved that a person with normal vision can't "see" an object that subtends an angle of less than 0.2 second of arc. For example, a basketball can't be seen at a distance of several miles but if you move the basketball closer and closer, at some point you will be able to see it. At this point the angle between the top and bottom of the ball and your eye will be about 0.2 of a second of arc. This was applied to Arnold's sighting. The "Arnold-saw-aeroplanes" faction maintained that since Arnold said that the objects were 45 to 50 feet long they would have had to be much closer than he had estimated or he couldn't even have seen them at all. Since they were much closer than he estimated, Arnold's timed speed was all wrong and instead of going 1,700 miles per hour the objects were travelling at a speed closer to 400 miles per hour, the speed of a jet. There was no reason to believe they weren't jets. The jets appeared to have a skipping motion because Arnold had looked at them through layers of warm and cold air, like heat waves coming from a hot pavement that cause an object to shimmer.

The other side didn't buy this idea at all. They based their argument on the fact that Arnold knew where the objects were when he timed them.

After all, he was an old mountain pilot and was as familiar with the area around the Cascade Mountains as he was with his own living room. To cinch this point the fact that the objects had passed *behind* a mountain peak was brought up. This positively established the distance the objects were from Arnold and confirmed his calculated 1,700-miles-per-hour speed. Besides, no aeroplane can weave in and out between mountain peaks in the short time

that Arnold was watching them. The visual acuity factor only strengthened the “Arnold-saw-a- flying-saucer” faction’s theory that what he’d seen was a spaceship. If he could see the objects 20 to 25 miles away, they must have been about 210 feet long instead of the poorly estimated 45 to 50 feet.

In 1947 this was a fantastic story, but now it is just another UFO report marked “Unknown.” It is typical in that if the facts are accurate, if Arnold actually did see the UFO’s go *behind* a mountain peak, and if he knew his exact position at the time, the UFO problem cannot be lightly sloughed off; but there are always “ifs” in UFO reports. This is the type of report that led Major General John A. Samford, Director of Intelligence for Headquarters, Air Force, to make the following comment during a press conference in July 1952: “However, there have remained a percentage of this total [of all UFO reports received by the Air Force], about 20 per cent of the reports, that have come from credible observers of relatively incredible things. We keep on being concerned about them.”

In warping, twisting, and changing the Arnold incident, the writers of saucer lore haven’t been content to confine themselves to the incident itself; they have dragged in the crashed Marine Corps’ C-46. They intimate that the same flying saucers that Arnold saw shot down the C-46, grabbed up the bodies of the passengers and crew, and now have them pickled at the University of Venus Medical School. As proof they apply the same illogical reasoning that they apply to most everything. The military never released photos of the bodies of the dead men, therefore there were no bodies. There were photographs and there were bodies. In consideration of the families of air crewmen and passengers, photos of air crashes showing dead bodies are never released.

Arnold himself seems to be the reason for a lot of the excitement that heralded flying saucers. Stories of odd incidents that occur in this world are continually being reported by newspapers, but never on the scale of the first UFO report. Occasional stories of the “Himalayan snowmen,” or the “Malayan monsters,” rate only a few inches or a column on the back pages of newspapers. Arnold’s story,

if it didn't make the headlines, at least made the front page. I had the reason for this explained to me one day when I was investigating a series of UFO reports in California in the spring of 1952.

I was making my headquarters at an air base where a fighter-bomber wing was stationed. Through a mutual friend I met one of the fighter-bomber pilots who had known Arnold. In civilian life the pilot was a newspaper reporter and had worked on the original Arnold story. He told me that when the story first broke all the newspaper editors in the area were thoroughly convinced that the incident was a hoax, and that they intended to write the story as such. The more they dug into the facts, however, and into Arnold's reputation, the more it appeared that he was telling the truth. Besides having an unquestionable character, he was an excellent mountain pilot, and mountain pilots are a breed of men who know every nook and cranny of the mountains in their area. The most fantastic part of Arnold's story had been the 1,700-miles-per-hour speed computed from Arnold's timing the objects between two landmarks. "When Arnold told us how he computed the speed," my chance acquaintance told me, "we all put a lot of faith in his story." He went on to say that when the editors found out that they were wrong about the hoax, they did a complete about-face, and were very much impressed by the story. This enthusiasm spread, and since the Air Force so quickly denied ownership of the objects, all of the facts built up into a story so unique that papers all over the world gave it front-page space.

There was an old theory that maybe Arnold had seen wind whipping snow along the mountain ridges, so I asked about this. I got a flat "Impossible." My expert on the early Arnold era said, "I've lived in the Pacific Northwest many years and have flown in the area for hundreds of hours. It's impossible to get powder snow low in the mountains in June. Personally, I believe Arnold saw some kind of aircraft and they weren't from this earth." He went on to tell me about two other very similar sightings that had happened the day after Arnold saw the nine disks. He knew the people who made these sightings and said that they weren't the kind to go off "half

cocked.” He offered to get a T-6 and fly me up to Boise to talk to them since they had never made a report to the military, but I had to return to Dayton so I declined.

Within a few days of Arnold’s sighting, others began to come in. On June 28 an Air Force pilot in an F-51 was flying near Lake Mead, Nevada, when he saw a formation of five or six circular objects off his right wing. This was about three-fifteen in the afternoon.

That night at nine-twenty, four Air Force officers, two pilots, and two intelligence officers from Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Alabama, saw a bright light travelling across the sky. It was first seen just above the horizon, and as it travelled toward the observers it “zigzagged,” with bursts of high speed. When it was directly overhead it made a sharp 90-degree turn and was lost from view as it travelled south.

Other reports came in. In Milwaukee a lady saw ten go over her house “like blue blazes,” heading south. A school bus driver in Clarion, Iowa, saw an object streak across the sky. In a few seconds twelve more followed the first one. White Sands Proving Ground in New Mexico chalked up the first of the many sightings that this location would produce when several people riding in an automobile saw a pulsating light travel from horizon to horizon in thirty seconds. A Chicago housewife saw one “with legs.”

The week of July 4, 1947, set a record for reports that was not broken until 1952. The centre of activity was the Portland, Oregon, area. At 11:00A.M. a carload of people driving near Redmond saw four disk-shaped objects streaking past Mount Jefferson. At 1:05P.M. a policeman was in the parking lot behind the Portland City Police Headquarters when he noticed some pigeons suddenly began to flutter around as if they were scared. He looked up and saw five large disk-shaped objects, two going south and three going east. They were travelling at a high rate of speed and seemed to be oscillating about their lateral axis. Minutes later two other policemen, both ex-pilots, reported three of the same things flying in trail. Before long the harbour patrol called into headquarters. A crew of four patrol men had seen three to six of the disks, “shaped

like chrome hub caps,” travelling very fast. They also oscillated as they flew. Then the citizens of Portland began to see them. A man saw one going east and two going north. At four-thirty a woman called in and had just seen one that looked like “a new dime flipping around.” Another man reported two, one going south east, one north east. From Milwaukie, Oregon, three were reported going north west. In Vancouver, Washington, sheriff’s deputies saw twenty to thirty.

The first photo was taken on July 4 in Seattle. After much publicity it turned out to be a weather balloon.

That night a United Airlines crew flying near Emmett, Idaho, saw five. The pilot’s report read:

Five “somethings,” which were thin and smooth on the bottom and rough-appearing on top, were seen silhouetted against the sunset shortly after the plane took off from Boise at 8:04P.M. We saw them clearly. We followed them in a north easterly direction for about 45 miles. They finally disappeared. We were unable to tell whether they out sped us or disintegrated. We can’t say whether they were “smearlike,” oval, or anything else but whatever they were they were not aircraft, clouds or smoke.

Civilians did not have a corner on the market. On July 6 a staff sergeant in Birmingham, Alabama, saw several “dim, glowing lights” speeding across the sky and photographed one of them. Also on the sixth the crew of an Air Force B-25 saw a bright, disk-shaped object “low at nine o’clock.” This is one of the few reports of an object lower than the aircraft. At Fairfield-Suisun AFB in California a pilot saw something travel three quarters of the way across the sky in a few seconds. It, too, was oscillating on its lateral axis.

According to the old hands at ATIC, the first sighting that really made the Air Force take a deep interest in UFO’s occurred on July 8 at Muroc Air Base (now Edwards AFB), the super secret Air Force test centre in the Mojave Desert of California. At 10:10A.M. a test pilot was running up the engine of the then new XP-84 in preparation for a test flight. He happened to look up and to the north he saw what first appeared to be a weather balloon travelling

in a westerly direction. After watching it a few seconds, he changed his mind. He had been briefed on the high-altitude winds, and the object he saw was going against the wind. Had it been the size of a normal aircraft, the test pilot estimated that it would have been at 10,000 to 12,000 feet and travelling 200 to 225 miles per hour. He described the object as being spherically shaped and yellowish white in colour.

Ten minutes before this several other officers and airmen had seen three objects. They were similar except they had more of a silver colour. They were also heading in a westerly direction.

Two hours later a crew of technicians on Rogers Dry Lake, adjacent to Muroc Air Base, observed another UFO. Their report went as follows:

On the 8 July 1947 at 11:50 we were sitting in an observation truck located in Area #3, Rogers Dry Lake. We were gazing upward toward a formation of two P-82's and an A-26 aircraft flying at 20,000 feet. They were preparing to carry out a seat-ejection experiment. We observed a round object, white aluminium colour, which at first resembled a parachute canopy. Our first impression was that a premature ejection of the seat and dummy had occurred but this was not the case. The object was lower than 20,000 feet, and was falling at three times the rate observed for the test parachute, which ejected thirty seconds after we first saw the object. As the object fell it drifted slightly north of due west against the prevailing wind. The speed, horizontal motion, could not be determined, but it appeared to be slower than the maximum velocity F-80 aircraft.

As this object descended through a low enough level to permit observation of its lateral silhouette, it presented a distinct oval-shaped outline, with two projections on the upper surface which might have been thick fins or knobs. These crossed each other at intervals, suggesting either rotation or oscillation of slow type.

No smoke, flames, propeller arcs, engine noise, or other plausible or visible means of propulsion were noted. The colour was silver, resembling an aluminium-painted fabric, and did not appear as dense as a parachute canopy.

When the object dropped to a level such that it came into line of vision of the mountain tops, it was lost to the vision of the observers.

It is estimated that the object was in sight about 90 seconds. Of the five people sitting in the observation truck, four observed this object.

The following is our opinion about this object:

It was man-made, as evidenced by the outline and functional appearance.

Seeing this was not a hallucination or other fancies of sense.

Exactly four hours later the pilot of an F-51 was flying at 20,000 feet about 40 miles south of Muroc Air Base when he sighted a "flat object of a light-reflecting nature." He reported that it had no vertical fin or wings. When he first saw it, the object was above him and he tried to climb up to it, but his F-51 would not climb high enough. All air bases in the area were contacted but they had no aircraft in the area.

By the end of July 1947 the UFO security lid was down tight. The few members of the press who did inquire about what the Air Force was doing got the same treatment that you would get today if you inquired about the number of thermonuclear weapons stockpiled in the U.S.'s atomic arsenal. No one, outside of a few high-ranking officers in the Pentagon, knew what the people in the barbed-wire enclosed Quonset huts that housed the Air Technical Intelligence Centre were thinking or doing.

The memos and correspondence that Project Blue Book inherited from the old UFO projects told the story of the early flying saucer era. These memos and pieces of correspondence showed that the UFO situation was considered to be serious; in fact, very serious. The paper work of that period also indicated the confusion that surrounded the investigation; confusion almost to the point of panic. The brass wanted an answer, quickly, and people were taking off in all directions. Everyone's theory was as good as the next and each person with any weight at ATIC was plugging and investigating