

Air Force Turns To Camera In Saucer Mystery; Radar Specialist Describes CAA Sightings

Radar Spotted 12 Objects

Editor's Note—Forty-eight hours of intensive investigation has failed to explain radar and visual observation of unidentified objects accompanied by brilliant white and colored lights on two successive week ends over Washington. The so-called "saucers" were seen on both air force and Civil Aeronautics authority radarscopes. How the CAA sightings were made is described in the following article by a civilian radar specialist.

By James M. Ritchey

Radar Specialist, Washington Air Route Traffic Control Center

WASHINGTON, (INS)—Until unidentified objects began moving onto our radarscopes, I thought people who reported "flying saucers" were just seeing things. Now I don't know what to think. I have talked to representatives of the air force, and they say they can't explain the appearance of the flying objects.

Neither can we. All we can do is tell you what we saw on our instruments, and what the air force and commercial pilots reported when they tried to investigate.

It was 9:08 p. m. (e. d. t.) Saturday when the latest unidentified objects, we called them targets, moved onto our scopes from the northwest.

These objects were about 30 miles from the airport when we first made contact with them.

Spotted 12 Objects

We spotted 12 objects, and judged that they were moving in a southeasterly direction at a speed of about 40 miles per hour. The air force sent some jet planes up to investigate, and we helped "vector" the pilots toward the objects.

I should explain here that our radarscope is about two feet in diameter. When it showed a "blip," contact with a substance in the sky, we placed a plastic marker on the spot.

The radar beam swings around in a great circle, and when it re-

turns to the same area it will take another contact with the same object. If the object has moved, we move the marker, and after a number of repetitions we can determine the object's direction and approximate speed.

When we "vector" a plane onto an object, we are in radar contact with both the object and the plane, and also in radio contact with the pilot of the plane. We tell the pilot how to turn, approach the object until he makes a sighting.

The first jet pilot to go up Saturday night reported that he sighted a steady white light that appeared to be about 10 miles distant. When he tried to draw closer, the light disappeared.

A commercial pilot got much closer to one of the objects, and reported to us that he sighted a low light that appeared to turn and then back to yellow again. He reported to us that the object appeared to be about two miles

Navy Probes "Object" Report

KEY WEST, Fla. (AP)—Navy officials said today "we're investigating thoroughly" reports of a fiery object that streaked across the sky at 8:45 p. m. Saturday.

The USS Greenwood, a destroyer escort, was sent to sea but officers would not elaborate.

Hundreds of sailors reported see-

ing the object Saturday night while watching an outdoor movie. One witness described it as a 40-foot long solid white light zooming across the sky from north to south. He said it made no sound.

"There may be something to it," said a Navy officer, "but it's so hush-hush there aren't many of us who know anything."

Death Of Sen. McMahon Leaves Atomic Group Without Chief

WASHINGTON, (INS)—The death of Senator McMahon (Dem., Conn.) Tuesday left vacant the chairmanship of the vitally important house-senate atomic committee. The committee elects its chairman.

McMahon's death opened the sometimes-controversial question of whether a senator should head a joint committee, or whether the chairmanship should alternate between the two houses, as in the case of the joint committee on internal revenue taxation.

Representative Durham (Dem., N. C.) presently is vice-chairman of the committee. A committee aide said he assumed that Durham will remain as acting chairman until the new congress convenes.

Senator Russell (Dem., Ga.) who is chairman of the armed services committee, is the ranking Democratic senator on the joint atomic group, and is followed by Senator Johnson (Dem., Colo.).

Senator Hickenlooper (Rep.,

Iowa) former atomic chairman, is the ranking minority senator, followed by Senator Millikin (Rep., Colo.).

The atomic committee of 18 members was set up in the atomic act of 1946. The law provides merely that the members elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among their own number.

McMahon was the first chairman, followed by Hickenlooper when the Republicans captured the Eightieth congress. With the return to power by the Democrats, who regained the 10-member committee majority permitted by law, McMahon resumed the chairmanship.

While the seniority rule is customary, McMahon got the chairmanship originally as author of a resolution calling for a special senate committee to write the atomic act, although others named to the joint committee had greater seniority.

The late Senator Vandenberg (Rep., Mich.), foreign relations chairman, stepped aside in favor of Hickenlooper, who, like McMahon, had taken a keen interest in atomic matters.

So far, the vice-chairman of the committee has been a house member.

Should Republicans gain control of the congress, it is expected that Hickenlooper would go back as chairman.

In case the Democrats retain the senate, as some expect, while losing the house to the Republicans, there might be a battle over the committee leadership, although partisan politics figures less in the atomic committee than in most Capitol Hill groups.

Woman Publisher Dies

HUNTINGBURG, Ind. (AP)—Mrs. Ed H. Dufendach, 83, publisher of the Huntingburg Independent since the death of her husband 33 years ago, died Monday. The funeral will be Wednesday.

Jet Pilots On 24-Hour Alert

Bulletin

WASHINGTON, (INS)—The government radar station at Washington National airport Tuesday recorded "scores" of unidentified objects traveling at speeds of 90 to 120 miles an hour and the air force sought a new way to solve the 1952 "flying saucer" mystery.

Civil aeronautics officials said the radar sightings were almost continuous from 1:30 a. m. to 5 a. m. (e. d. t.) and that as many as 12 objects showed on the screen simultaneously.

But because no visual confirmation could be obtained, jet fighters, on a 24-hour "flying saucer" alert, were not sent aloft to investigate.

The air force has scheduled a late-afternoon news conference on the "saucer" mystery.

WASHINGTON, (INS)—The air force, stumped by the inability of 600-mile-an-hour jet planes to catch "flying saucers," turned Tuesday to a new type camera to solve the five-year-old sky mystery.

Jet pilots are operating under a 24-hour nationwide "alert" to chase the mysterious objects and to "shoot them down" if they ignore orders to land.

However, the air force confessed that none of its jets have come within shooting range of the blinking, enigmatic flying discs.

Several pilots, according to the air force, have tried to shoot down the mysterious sky phantoms but the "steady bright lights" in the sky have outflown the pilots by as much as a thousand miles an hour.

An air force spokesman said a new-type camera may be able to bring the mystery to an end. He said the camera photographs "luminous phenomenon." It uses the principle employed by astronomers in determining the composition of stars. Air force scientists hope to determine the physical make-up of the phenomenon and identify its source.

Major Gen. John A. Samford, chief of air force intelligence, said the new type cameras have been ordered and will be distributed to jet plane pilots as soon as they become available.

Meanwhile, as new reports continued to pour into the Pentagon of more sightings of mysterious objects the air force summoned several "saucer" specialists from Dayton, Ohio, for a conference Tuesday.

Called to Washington were Capt. E. J. Ruppelt and several fellow officers from the air technical intelligence center at Wright-Patterson field.

The air force said it is receiving

new reports of "flying saucers" at the rate of 100 a month.

The air force contended intensive investigation of more than 1,000 "saucer" reports have convinced it that they are not sent over the United States enemy.

The air force added that investigation indicated also that they are not being controlled by a "sonic body."

An air force spokesman said special significance is attached to the fact that objects over Washington have been picked up over the past two weeks. An ionized (electrified) cloud of the many objects which caused "saucer" reports, in weather balloons, could be up on radar.