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At 11:40 p.m. on Saturday, July 19, 1952, Edward Nugent, an air traffic controller at Washington National Airport, spotted seven "pips" or "blips" clustered together in a corner of the radarscope. They were moving at 100 mph over an area 15 miles south-southwest of the capital. No aircraft were known to be in that location, and the blips were not following established flight paths.

Nugent quickly alerted his superior, Harry G. Barnes, senior air traffic controller for the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA), and joked about a "fleet of flying saucers." According to Barnes:

We knew immediately that a very strange situation existed. . . . [T]heir movements were completely radical compared to those of ordinary aircraft. They followed no set course [and] were not in any formation, and we only seemed to be able to track them for about three miles at a

time. The individual pip would seem to disappear from the scope at intervals. Later I realized that if these objects had made any sudden burst of extremely high speed, that would account for them [sic] disappearing from the scope temporarily.

Two other controllers checked the radar set to make sure it was functioning properly. When they found nothing wrong, Barnes called his counterpart at Washington National's other radar, Tower Central, located a quarter-mile away. Barnes's operation concentrated on long-range (70-mile-radius) radar detection, while the other directed aircraft making a final approach. Howard Cocklin at Central told Barnes that his radar was tracking the objects. Not only that, but when he looked out the tower's big glass window, he saw one of the objects—"a bright orange light. I can't tell what's behind it."

When the objects spread all over the sector and moved over the White House and the Capitol Building, Barnes phoned Andrews Air Force Base, 10 miles to the east, and asked if it knew anything about the objects. A civilian controller there said the only aircraft of which Andrews was aware was a C-47 transport plane an hour away. But moments later an airman phoned the tower to report strange objects in the sky near the base and to urge Airman William Brady, who took the call, to look to the south. There Brady saw an "object which appeared to be like an orange ball of fire, trailing a tail[;] it appeared to be about two miles south and one-half mile from the Andrews range. It was very bright and definite, and unlike anything I had ever seen before. . . . It made kind of a circular movement."

He shouted to others in the tower to look but even as he was speaking, the orange object abruptly stopped, then "took off at an unbelievable speed," disappearing in a "split second."

"Seconds later," Brady would tell Air Force investigators, "I saw another one, same description. As the one before[,] it made an arclike pattern and then disappeared. I only saw each object for about a second." The other tower personnel saw nothing, perhaps because the events occurred so rapidly that they were over by the time the potential co-witnesses had time to turn their heads.

Minutes later Barnes called from National to say that unknowns were being tracked east and west of Andrews. Repair work on Andrews' runways was keeping its jet interceptors on the ground. A squadron would have to be dispatched from Newcastle AFB in Delaware.

A memo in the **Project Blue Book** files notes a sighting from Barnes's tower, Airway Traffic Control Central (ARTC), at around 12:30, of an "orange disk about 3,000 feet altitude at 360 degrees."

A night to remember. As he sat in the cockpit of his DC-4 waiting for permission to take off, Capital Airlines Capt. S. C. Pierman saw a fiery blue-white object flash across the horizon. He assumed—probably correctly—that it was a meteor, but a few minutes after his 1 a.m. liftoff, as he switched radio channels from Tower

Central to ARTC, he was told that radar indicated the presence of unidentified objects about nine miles from him. Soon word came that the target was now four miles away, then even nearer and at ten o'clock. Pierman first saw another DC-4, but then he spotted other things in the black sky: bright, white, tailless, fast-moving lights—a total of six in all over a 14-minute period.

Barnes related, "Each sighting coincided with a pip we could see near his plane. When he reported that the light streaked off at high speed, it disappeared on our scope." Pierman said the object had "climbed out of sight in three to five seconds," and the short-range radar at Washington Tower Control tracked another of the objects, according to Cocklin, as it took a steep descent, leveled off briefly, then ascended abruptly before vanishing off the radar beam.

Meanwhile, at Andrews, personnel in the control tower were observing objects that some took to be UFOs but that cooler heads suspected, and at least once were able to prove, were meteors and stars. At 2 a.m., alerted by ARTC that a target was being tracked heading their way, Andrews tower personnel sought unsuccessfully to pick it up on their own screen, but one of them, Capt. Harold C. May, stepped outside, where he observed a light that he thought was changing color "from red to orange to green to red again. . . . [A]t times [it dipped] suddenly and appear[ed] to lose altitude." Later May himself concluded he had seen nothing more than a star.

A more impressive sighting was taking place at around the same time. The witness, Staff Sgt. Charles Davenport of Andrews' 1053rd Maintenance Squadron, spotted an orange-red light to the south of the base. "It would appear to stand still, then make an abrupt change of direction and altitude." This happened "several times." After Davenport notified the tower, individuals there saw the object for a few seconds as it was shooting out of sight.

ARTC was detecting targets near Bolling AFB, located between National and Andrews. Bolling was so informed. At Bolling's Mobile Control Tower Staff Sgt. Don Wilson sighted a round, amber light seven miles to the southeast. The slowly drifting object was visible for a few minutes. At 2:30 a guard going off duty observed, in the southwestern sky, an object that

looked to be the size of a golfball . . . bright orange in color. The object moved from the west to the northeast in a half circle pattern and was travelling at such speed that I knew that it could not be a jet aircraft, my estimation of it from 1000 to 2000 mph. It would be hard to judge at what altitude the object was flying because it seemed to lose and gain altitude. The object moved in this pattern several times and then disappeared into the west. From the time I saw the object and then lost it, I would say it was about 15 to 20 minutes.

At one point ARTC, National Tower, and Andrews all fixed on an object hovering over the Riverdale radio beacon. During the 30 seconds it was registering on

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the screens, the operators were able to doublecheck their readings. Suddenly the target vanished—on all three screens at the same moment.

At 3 a.m. the UFOs suddenly were gone, and soon after, two interceptors arrived belatedly from Newcastle AFB. They searched the skies until their fuel ran low, forcing them to head back to Delaware. As soon as they were gone, the UFOs were back.

To Barnes this confirmed a suspicion that the UFOs were monitoring radio traffic and behaving accordingly. He had noticed even before the jets' arrival that when he vectored Pierman's DC-4 toward a particular target, the object would dart away and so maintain its distance.

Soon after the Air Force jets' departure, Capt. Howard Dermott, at the controls of an approaching Capital Airlines flight, noticed a light take up position behind him as his plane passed over Herndon, Virginia. When he notified National, both radar sets picked up the target exactly where Dermott said it was. The radars also tracked it as it turned away four miles from the airport.

The apparent indifference of the military and official hierarchy to the ongoing drama baffled and frustrated Barnes. Not long after midnight, he had phoned Military Flight Service (MFS) and been urged to contact the nearest Air Force base intelligence officer. Later, around 3 a.m., Barnes called again and talked with two anonymous individuals who would say only that the information was being "forwarded to higher authority."

At 3:30 Sgt. Davenport saw a UFO at treetop level. Bluish silver in color, it moved erratically, rolling from side to side as it sped by. He told Air Force investigators, "Three times I saw a red object leave the silver object at a high rate of speed and move east out of sight."

Radar trackings continued into the dawn, the last of them at 5:30, when seven or eight were monitored on the ARTC screen. In the early-morning daylight a civilian radio engineer, E. W. Chambers, who did not know then of the night's events (which had not yet been publicized), got what may have been the closest view of the UFOs of the previous hours. He described them as five huge discs circling in a loose formation. They tilted upward and left on a steep ascent.

Reflecting on the night's incredible events, Barnes wrote in a widely distributed newspaper account that the UFOs seemed to

become most active around the planes we saw on the scope. . . . [T]hey acted like a bunch of small kids out playing . . . directed by some innate curiosity. At times they moved as a group or cluster, at other times as individuals over widely scattered areas. . . .

There is no other conclusion I can reach but that for six hours . . . there were at least 10 unidentifiable objects moving above Washington. They were not ordinary aircraft. I could tell that by their movement on the

scope. I can safely deduce that they performed gyrations which no known aircraft could perform. By this I mean that our scope showed that they could make right angle turns and complete reversals of flight. Nor in my opinion could any natural phenomena such as shooting stars, electrical disturbances or clouds account for these spots on our radar.

Two reports in the files of the **National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena** (NICAP) indicate that radar targets of unidentified targets continued for at least another day, into the evening of July 20. These later reports have been almost entirely ignored in treatments of the Washington events and are seldom mentioned even in passing. A rare reference appears in *Time*, which, in an account of the events of the two weekends of July 19/20 and 26/27, has this to say of what happened between these dates: "All the rest of the week, a few strange blips appeared now & then."

Around mid-evening of the twentieth, according to Betty Ann Behl, at the time an Air Force weather observer, later (when she filed her report with NICAP) a science teacher at a Milwaukee college, blips appeared on the radar screen at Andrews. Moving in an "orderly" fashion and at high speed, the objects approached the runway, then passed over it, scattering as they did so. Behl said they "performed gyrations and reversals" of an extraordinary nature, unlike anything the radar personnel had ever seen before. Their speed was in excess of 900 mph. Radar indicated that the UFOs were between 100 and 200 feet in diameter. Behl had seen temperature inversions and other meteorological effects on radar, but the blips on the screen were something else, she was certain.

A visual sighting took place at about the same time: 9:30 p.m. At Alexandria, Virginia, just southwest of Washington National Airport, an Army artillery officer, Joseph H. Gigandet, was sitting on his porch taking in the view when a red cigar-shaped object sailed slowly overhead from the west. Gigandet estimated its altitude at 10,000 feet and its size about that of a DC-6 or DC-7. Along its side the UFO had a "series of lights very closely set together." It hovered for 30 to 40 seconds before circling northward. In short order it reappeared over the house, this time slightly south of the location it had occupied the first time. Gigandet assumed it had circled the area.

Again it stopped moving for half a minute or so, and again, when it accelerated, it turned a deeper red. Now, however, it was heading eastward, to be lost to sight in the city glare. Gigandet's neighbor, an FBI agent, also saw the UFO. When Gigandet called a local newspaper to ask if anyone else had reported the phenomenon, he was told there had been numerous calls.

Blue Book shut out. Though Project Blue Book was ostensibly the Air Force's sole UFO-investigation agency, its head, Capt. **Edward J. Ruppelt**, did not learn of the Washington events until Tuesday morning, July 22—even though he and Col. Donald L. Bower, his superior officer at the Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC) at Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio, had been in Washington on UFO business

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for a full day. They had, moreover, flown into Washington National and were meeting (to seek help in the identification of ostensible UFOs caused by aircraft and weather balloons) at Andrews.

Ruppelt and Bower got their first word of the sightings when they sat down for breakfast, morning papers in hand. One glance at the headlines told them what no one had told them. Ruppelt immediately phoned Maj. Dewey Fournet, Blue Book's liaison man at the Pentagon. Fournet said his knowledge was confined to what he had read in the papers, but he was trying to find out more.

The two officers hastened to Fournet's office, where two intelligence officers briefed them. Another briefing took place at 1 p.m. Meanwhile, Ruppelt had been informed of President Truman's personal interest in the affair and his desire for a full investigation, which Ruppelt promised to make.

It was to be a promise he could not fulfill. Though he laid plans for a comprehensive inquiry, the Pentagon refused to give him—or Col. Bower—so much as a staff car. He was further informed that his orders were to return to Dayton that day. He did as he was told.

Ruppelt returned to Wright-Patterson to deal with the nationwide flood of reports that would comprise the great UFO wave of the summer of 1952. But before turning his attention to such matters, he spoke with an ATIC radar specialist, Capt. Roy James (who harbored, according to Ruppelt, a "powerful dislike for UFOs"; see **Fort Monmouth Radar/Visual Case**), and asked him what he thought. James speculated that weather conditions caused the radar targets.

The return. On the evening of July 26, at 8:15, the pilot and stewardess of a National Airlines plane observed several objects—which they thought bore a resemblance to the "glow of a cigarette"—high above them and moving at about 100 mph.

Soon both Washington National and Andrews were tracking a dozen unidentified targets in all parts of the sky except the southwest. They were traveling between 90 and 100 mph. Andrews alerted Newcastle just after 9.

The objects were being observed visually as well. One witness, a master sergeant, said, "These lights did not have the characteristics of shooting stars. There was [sic] no trails and they seemed to go out rather than disappear, and traveled faster than any shooting star I have ever seen."

Between 9:15 and 9:30 ARTC directed a B-25 to check on several radar targets, but its crew saw nothing, in spite of repeated attempts. One of the pilots subsequently told Ruppelt that "each time the tower man advised us we were passing the UFO we noticed that we were over one certain section of the Potomac River, just east of Alexandria [Virginia]. Finally we were asked to visually check the terrain below for anything which might cause such an illusion. We looked and the only object we could see where the radar had a target turned out to be the Wilson Lines

steamboat trip to Mount Vernon. . . . [T]he radar was sure as hell picking up the steamboat."

As this was going on, Ruppelt was taking a phone call in Dayton. The caller, *Life* magazine reporter Bob Ginna, informed him of the new sighting outbreak in Washington and asked what the Air Force was going to do. Ruppelt replied bluntly, "I have no idea what the Air Force is doing. In all probability it's doing nothing." Ruppelt phoned the Pentagon and asked the intelligence duty officer, Capt. F. E. Smith, to get in touch with Fournet, who lived near the airport.

In turn Fournet, accompanied by a Navy electronics specialist assigned to Air Force Intelligence, went to the ARTC radar room, where they found Albert M. Chop, a civilian who dealt with the press on UFO matters through the Air Force Office of Public Information. He and tower personnel were monitoring the radar returns.

Fournet and the Navy officer, a Lt. Holcomb, did not arrive until after midnight, but by 9:30 both ARTC and Andrews were tracking more targets than they could handle. Sometimes they moved slowly, at less than 100 mph, and sometimes abruptly reversed direction and streaked across the sky at what calculations indicated was 7000 mph. At 10:46 a CAA flight instructor reported seeing five glowing, orange-white lights over Washington at 2200 feet. Six minutes later the targets all disappeared from the screens. Nonetheless, at 11 two F-94s were scrambled from Newcastle.

By the time they arrived, 30 minutes later, UFOs were back and on the ARTC scopes. Lt. William Patterson, the pilot of one of the interceptors, was vectored after fast-moving targets 10 miles away. He saw four white "glows" and chased after them. To his horror they shot toward him and clustered around his plane. He radioed in to the tower to ask what he ought to do. According to Chop, the answer was "stunned silence. . . . After a tense moment, the UFOs pulled away and left the scene."

Soon afterwards Patterson chased a bright light, but it went out. Two more vectors produced no visual sightings. The other pilot, Capt. John McHugo, followed instructions from the ground but saw nothing in spite of repeated attempts. At 12:04 a.m., for example, ARTC had a flock of targets all around him, but even after a 360-degree turn McHugo could see nothing.

Over the next hour both ARTC and Andrews tracked targets. At the former Lt. Holcomb was getting meteorological data from the Washington National Weather Station. He learned of a slight temperature inversion; in his estimation, however, it was not nearly strong enough to explain the "good and solid" returns showing up on the radar screens. When that analysis was phoned in to Newcastle, F-94s were scrambled again. On arriving they were vectored toward various targets—which the radar operators noted were weaker than the earlier ones—but only in two cases did the pilot see anything; one was a conventional aircraft, the other a hovering white light that vanished when approached. Their fuel running low, the F-94s returned to Delaware.

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At 3 a.m. ARTC picked up a target in the general vicinity of an Eastern Airlines Constellation. When notified, the pilot looked without success for its source. But now radar was indicating the unknown was behind the airliner. When the pilot began to turn the plane around, the target suddenly disappeared. A few minutes later a Capital airliner flying from National to Martinsburg, West Virginia, saw "odd lights" that remained visible for 12 minutes.

The night passed without further excitement. Anomalous blips continued to appear on ARTC's radar, but they were of the sort associated with temperature inversions.

In the morning Ruppelt called Fournet and asked him if he thought the UFOs could be explained as weather phenomena. Fournet said no; everyone in the radar room was convinced that the best returns were from "solid metallic objects."

The debunking and the debunking debunked. Nonetheless, responding to banner headlines and public alarm, the Air Force held a press conference in the Pentagon on the afternoon of July 29 and seemed to favor the inversion explanation. At least that was how newspapers treated what a transcript reveals were rather ambiguous remarks that uncharitable observers might characterize as doubletalk.

The Air Force was represented by Maj. Gen. John A. Samford, director of intelligence, assisted by Bower, Ruppelt, James, and Burgoyne L. Griffing of ATIC's electronics branch. Next to Samford, UFO skeptic James made the biggest impression on the reporters who packed the conference room. Though James knew little about the incidents—he had arrived in Washington only that morning and had demonstrated minimal interest in the affair when Ruppelt had tried to discuss it with him earlier—he indicated there was "some possibility" that the targets were caused by inversions (an atmospheric condition that bends radar beams so that they pick up objects on the ground). The result was a rush of headlines typified by the *Washington Post's* AIR FORCE LAYS SAUCER BLIPS HERE TO HEAT and the *Washington Daily News's* "SAUCER" ALARM DISCOUNTED BY PENTAGON; RADAR OBJECTS LAID TO COLD AIR FORMATIONS.

Ruppelt would write that Fournet and Holcomb, who rejected the inversion explanation, were "extremely conspicuous by their absence." Moreover, according to an INS press wire story that attracted far less attention than articles hailing the debunking of the Washington sightings, no less than the U.S. Weather Bureau was taking issue with the inversion hypothesis. Not a single radar operator at Washington National Airport or Andrews AFB would endorse the explanation.

The press conference had served its purpose, Ruppelt wrote; "the press got off our backs." Though reporters thought the Air Force had endorsed James's speculation, in fact it considered the Washington UFOs "unknowns." Ruppelt, who finally would be allowed to investigate, took note of an "interesting fact: hardly a night passed in June, July, and August in 1952 that there wasn't an inversion in Washington, yet the slow-moving, 'solid' radar targets appeared on only a few nights."

Eventually, however, as Blue Book became essentially a debunking operation that sought to reduce the number of unexplained sightings to negligible numbers, it declared the Washington reports to be the product of "mirage effects created by a double inversion." The visual sightings were laid to "meteors coupled with the normal excitement of witnesses."

But in 1966, when Michael Wertheimer of the Air Force-sponsored **University of Colorado UFO Project** reinterviewed witnesses, he found that they still disputed the inversion explanation and continued to be convinced the phenomena were something out of the ordinary. Yet that did not stop the project's report from concluding that weather conditions had caused bogus radar returns and "meteors and scintillating stars" were the stimuli for the visual sightings.

In the late 1960s, after conducting his own investigation that included interviews with five of the radar personnel and four pilot witnesses, University of Arizona atmospheric physicist **James E. McDonald** dismissed the official explanation as physically impossible. Barnes told him that the radar returns "were not shapeless blobs such as one gets from ground returns under anomalous propagation." Howard Cocklin, who operated Washington National's other (short-range) radar, concurred.

CIA ponders. The Washington sightings proved to be a pivotal event in UFO history. They sparked high-level fears that UFO reports—if not UFOs themselves—might constitute a threat to national security. On the two weekends when sightings were at their most intense, intelligence channels were clogged with UFO-related communications. Air Force generals and CIA officials worried that an earthly enemy could take advantage of such a logjam by launching an attack if it so chose. Or it could use UFO reports to confuse Americans and undermine confidence in their leaders.

Immediately following the Washington sightings, the CIA's Office of Scientific Intelligence (OSI) embarked on an inquiry into the UFO issue. On September 24 OSI's assistant director, H. Marshall Chadwell, wrote in a memo to CIA director Walter B. Smith:

The flying saucer situation contains two elements of danger which, in a situation of international tension, have national security implications. . . . The public concern with the phenomena . . . indicates that a fair proportion of our population is mentally conditioned to acceptance of the incredible. In this fact lies the potential for the touching-off of mass hysteria and panic.

Moreover, Chadwell wrote, "At any moment of attack [from the Soviet Union], we are now in a position where we cannot, on an instant basis, distinguish hardware from phantom, and as tension mounts we will run the increasing risk of false alerts and the even greater danger of falsely identifying the real as phantom." Chadwell suggested that identification procedures should be improved, that the psychological-warfare aspects be studied, and that a "national policy should be established as to what should be told the public regarding the phenomena."

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All of this resulted in a CIA-sponsored meeting in January 1953, under the direction of physicist H. P. Robertson, and a recommendation that henceforth, in the interest of national security, UFO reports should be debunked and thereby reduced (see **Robertson Panel**)—a recommendation Blue Book would follow from then until its closing in 1969.

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LOOKING BACK

By Bob Gribble

April 1947 ■ Shortly after the noon hour on the 29th, Mrs. H. G. Olavick and Mrs. William Down spotted an unusual, isolated cloud in a completely cloudless sky over Tucson, Arizona. They described it as being "steamy and fleecy." In and out of the cloud moved a number of dull-white disclike objects that rose and fell in an erratic manner, occasionally disappearing into or above the cloud. Mrs. Olavick said that the objects were round in planform but were not spherical, for they frequently tipped a bit, exposing a flattened-sphere form. She estimated that they watched the objects cavorting near the cloud for perhaps five or six minutes before the entire group suddenly disappeared within the cloud or perhaps above it.

After a minute or so, a new object, perhaps three or four times as large as the little objects, came out of the cloud on its east side. After it emerged, the small objects began to emerge also, taking up a V-formation pattern behind it. The V comprised a line of four-abreast just to the rear of the large object, then a line of three-abreast behind that, and finally two-abreast in the rear. This permitted the first accurate count of small objects, nine in all. No sooner had the last pair emerged than all 10 objects shot off to the northeast, climbing out of sight in about two or three seconds. ("UFOs: What To Do," published by the Rand Corporation, 11/27/68)

April 1952 ■ Secretary of the Navy Dan Kimball was flying to Hawaii (date unknown) when two disc-shaped craft streaked in toward his Navy executive plane. "Their speed was amazing," Kimball said. "My pilots estimated it between 1500 and 2000 miles per hour. The objects circled us twice and then took off, heading east. There was another Navy plane behind us, with Admiral Arthur Radford on board. The distance was about 50 miles. I had my senior pilot radio a report on the sighting. In almost no time Radford's chief pilot called back, really excited. The UFOs were now circling their plane, having covered the 40 miles in less than two minutes. In a few seconds the pilot told us they'd left the plane and raced up out of sight." (*Aliens From Space*, by Major Donald Keyhoe)

■ A strange oval-shaped object was reported seen high in the sky over Benson, Arizona on the third. At least four men connected with Marana Air Force Base, about 20 miles northwest of Tucson, reported seeing the object. Chick Logan, a civilian flight commander, described it as five or six times as large as a B-29 Superfortress, oblong in shape, and without wings or other projections. "It was not like a disc," Logan said, "but more oblong ... I flew as high as I could to 14,000 feet and it appeared to be at least 40,000 feet higher than

that. It was real bright and shone like polished aluminum," he said. "I'll tell you, I have been flying for 25 years now, and I have never seen anything like it." (*The Examiner*, San Francisco, CA, 4/4/52)

■ UFOs were reported in the area of the Nevada atomic test site on the 17th. An Air Force technical sergeant and four civilian workers at the Nellis Air Force Base, near Las Vegas, said they saw 18 circular objects flying an easterly course which carried them over or very close to the test site at 12:05 p.m. The men watched the discs for about 30 seconds and estimated that the craft were 40,000 feet up and flying at a speed of at least 1200 mph. The objects flew an irregular formation with one of them off to the right, moving with a zig-zag motion. They left no smoke or vapor. (*Examiner*, San Francisco, CA, 4/18/52)

April 1957 ■ Radar stations throughout Great Britain were alerted to look for a mysterious flying object tracked by Air Ministry observers over southwest Scotland on the fourth. Three radar operators reported independently that the object flashed across their screens traveling at 60,000 feet. The operators said the object suddenly dived to a height of 14,000 feet, made two whirls, then vanished to the south. The object was sighted by two lonely radar posts in Scotland's hilly Wigtownshire. A Royal Air Force station near Luce Bay on the southwestern tip of Scotland also caught it on radar. It was last reported headed towards the Isle of Man. Royal Air Force officials said no planes were in the area at the time. The UFO was described as too fast, too big and too maneuverable to have been a plane. (*The News*, Santa Barbara, CA, 4/7/57; *Flying Saucers Journal*, New Zealand, Second Quarter, 1957)

■ On the 14th, a metallic-like craft in the form of a big top about five feet tall, reportedly landed on a road about 300 feet from two elderly French country women at Vins sur Caramy, France. Just as it landed, a deafening rattle was heard coming from a metallic road sign some 15 to 20 feet from the landing site. The sign had been set into violent vibration. The cries of the women and the noise from the sign were heard by a man nearly 1000 feet away. Thinking that there had been an accident, he rushed over, arriving in time to see the top jump off the road to a height of about 20 feet, turn, and land a second time, this time on another road, which forked from the first.

As it turned, it flew over a second road sign, and this one likewise vibrated violently, resonating as though it had been subjected to violent shocks repeated at a rapid cadence. The UFO, however, made no sound itself. The local police and a UFO investigator reportedly placed a compass near the two signs and found a deviation of some 15 degrees. The French police adjutant in the area vouched for the integrity of the witnesses. He affirmed their good faith and said they were above any suspicion of a hoax. (*The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry*, by Dr. J. Allen Hynek)

■ At 11:52 a.m. on the 19th, the Japanese fishing boat *Kit-sukawa Maru* was enroute to Japan from the South Pacific Ocean. The bosun and four crew members spotted two metallic, very silvery craft descending from the sky and suddenly dive into the water at about 143-30 E., and 31-15 N. After the craft submerged, a violent turbulence occurred under the surface where the objects vanished. The bosun thought at first the UFOs were jet planes, but they had no wings and were approximately 10 meters long. His boat searched the area but found no wreckage. (*S.P.A.C.E.* magazine, July 1957)

April 1962 ■ About 7:30 p.m. on the 18th, something exploded over southwestern Nevada. It shook the earth. It was as brilliant as an atomic blast. Reporters for the *Las Vegas Sun* immediately launched an investigation. Was the object a meteor? The reporter who called Nellis Air Force Base evidently took them by surprise, for he was told: "There's only one thing wrong with that (the meteor theory), a meteor cannot be tracked by radar and this thing was." How much radar tracking had been done on the strange glowing object before it exploded over the Mesquite Range in Nevada? The North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) in Colorado Springs, Colorado was contacted. The spokesman there was Lieutenant Colonel Hurbert Rolph. He told newsmen that the Air Defense Command had been alerted by the fire trail of this strange object.

The first report had come from Oneida, New York, where watchers had detected a glowing red object moving deeper into the United States and apparently at great altitude. As the intruder penetrated deeper into the Midwest, NORAD admittedly alerted its bases (including Nellis Air Force Base), and jet interceptors had been scrambled from Phoenix, Arizona to intercept the aerial intruder. Radar tracking had determined that it was neither plane, missile, satellite, nor meteor. It was therefore listed as a UFO and tracked as far west as Gridley, Kansas. It turned northwest and descended until it was lost from the radar screens.

A few minutes later a UFO landed near an electric power substation at Eureka, Utah. The Air Force spokesman at Stead Air Force Base in Reno admitted that the object had landed and that the power substation had not been in operation during the 42 minutes the object was on the ground near it. He also told newsmen that the presence of this object had not been admitted until the power station was in operation again, after the object had left. The nature of the object which landed was not revealed, because the UFO did not remain there. Jets were pursuing it over southwestern Nevada, after the Eureka incident, when the object exploded in a blinding flash which resembled an atomic explosion.

All these things happened on the night of April 18, 1962, and were confirmed by official spokesmen for the U.S. Air Force. The incident received no national news coverage. Fortunately, The *Las Vegas Sun* checked the story and gave it the front page banner headlines it deserved. (*Strange World and Flying Saucers — Serious Business* by Frank Edwards)

April 1967 ■ John H. Demler, a Justice of the Peace, was driving about half a mile from his home in Jonestown Pennsylvania at 7:45 p.m. on the fifth when his car engine missed three times. "It then stopped and the car lights went out," Demler said. "At the same time I saw an object coming toward the car about 20 feet above the street." The slow moving UFO was approximately 30 feet across and looked like it had light in back of a painted black glass. It flew over the car as Demler lowered his window and noticed a smell of sulphur and oil. It also emitted a sound like an electric motor running. The object came to a stop alongside the car, tilted, started off slowly, then put on such a terrific burst of speed that Demler and his car seemed to be pulled to it. The witness said the car settled down so fast that he was moved all the way across the front seat. "My condition was all nerves the next day," Demler said. "I was wet with perspiration until about 4 p.m. The skin peeled off my hands and feet." (*Strange Effects From UFOs*, a NICAP Special Report)

■ Scores of Ohio River valley residents reported seeing a huge object flying up the river on the 17th. Lewis Summers of New Haven, West Virginia spotted and pursued the UFO in his car about 8:45 p.m. Estimated to be as big as a C-47 aircraft at an altitude of 500 feet, the object emitted two shafts of light from its underside. At one point, Summers stopped his car and flashed the headlights off and on several times. The shafts of light from the craft also were turned off and on several times. Three miles north of New Raven, a young boy in a pony-drawn wagon broke his glasses when the animal bucked upon seeing the UFO, wrecking the wagon. The youngster's father did not believe his story until the horse was found on the ground with its feet sticking straight up. The animal reportedly suffered no lasting ill effect. (*Strange Effects From UFOs*, a NICAP Special Report)

■ A school principal and his companions (in another car) were driving near Jefferson City, Missouri about 9 p.m. on the 17th, when they spotted an object shaped something like a WW I helmet coming over the top of a cliff. The object estimated to be 300 feet in diameter, passed directly overhead on its flight path towards the airport. The top of the car seemed to have no effect in holding out the brilliant light radiating from the UFO. When the driver looked at his hands, it looked like he was looking at X-ray plates of his hands. As the object passed over the airport it was observed by several witnesses on the ground and the crew of an Ozark Airlines plane approaching the airport for a landing. (*The UFO Experience*, by Dr. J. Allen Hynek)

April 1977 ■ In one of the strangest UFO sightings on record, a Chilean soldier who disappeared in an eerie violet glow, apparently lost five days and 15 minutes from his life. The soldier, a corporal, went to investigate a powerful, violet, oval-shaped light that suddenly appeared one night hovering near his unit's post. All of the members of the unit saw and stood, startled, in combat readiness. When the corporal