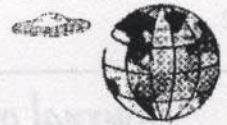


Journal of UFO History

A Publication of the Donald E. Keyhoe Archives



Vol. II, No. 3

July-August 2005

The Weather
Today—Mostly sunny and hot, high 84.
Tonight—Partly cloudy, low 68. Tomorrow—Partly sunny, high 82, low 66. Tuesday—Partly sunny, high 82, low 66. Wednesday—Partly sunny, high 82, low 66. Thursday—Partly sunny, high 82, low 66. Friday—Partly sunny, high 82, low 66. Saturday—Partly sunny, high 82, low 66. Sunday—Partly sunny, high 82, low 66.

The Washington Post

Seventy-fifth Year in the Nation's Capital

NO. 27,801 Price 15¢ MONDAY, JULY 28, 1952 WTOP AM (1500) RM (640) TV (CH 4) FIVE CENTS

FINAL

'Saucer' Outran Jet, Pilot Reveals

J.S. Protests Soviet 'Hate' in Aviation Day Posters

Air Chase Pictures Hint Admission of 3 Attacks; Envoy Shuns Big Red Stars

The United States has a right to be proud of its aviation achievements, but it has no right to be proud of its aviation day posters, a Soviet official said today. He said the posters, which show American planes being shot down, are a "hate" against the United States.

Stevenson, Eisenhower, And Truman Nixon Plan Head 'Big 4' Campaign

Barkley, Sparkman Also Will Enter Stumping Campaign; Far Party Victory

WASHINGTON, July 27 (AP)—The Democratic high command decided today to throw a "big four" stumping team, headed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Vice President Richard M. Nixon, Sen. Charles McNichols and Sen. William F. Knowland, to head the party's campaign.

Investigation On in Secret After Chase Over Capital

Radio Spots Help Like Aircraft for Nearly Six Hours; Only 1700 Feet Up

By Paul Thompson, Staff Writer

A military survey team is investigating the mysterious sighting of a flying saucer over the Washington area yesterday. The saucer, which was seen by nearly six hundred people, was reported to be only 1,700 feet up.

Shipboard Plans to Test U.S. Carriers to Make Oxygen

Breakdown Jet Plans Routine

The Navy today announced that it will test the ability of its aircraft carriers to make oxygen for the crew while at sea. The test will be conducted on the USS Enterprise (CVN-65) during its next voyage.

Party's Chair Daniel Named Texas Senator

May Be Open

The Texas Republican Party today named Daniel B. Claitor as its candidate for the U.S. Senate. Claitor, a former state legislator, will face the Democratic incumbent, Lyndon B. Johnson, in the November election.

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EDITORIAL

As of the end of July 1952, the historical record shows clearly that top Air Force officials considered UFOs to be of extraterrestrial origin. Military and commercial airline pilots both had encountered high-performance objects that also were recorded on ground and airborne radar. Yet the Air Force viewpoint did not prevail.

Although the reasons are complex and will be discussed at length in future issues, at bottom it was scientists -- not the Air Force -- who debunked the sightings as imaginary, setting the tone for decades to come of treating UFOs as nothing but a popular fantasy. □

HISTORICAL NEWS NOTES

Pilots Report Seeing Discs

A captain and co-pilot of a United Airlines plane en route from Salt Lake City to Spokane reported to UAL personnel here last night that they had seen two disc-like objects in flight near Mountain Home.

They related their story only on the condition that their names be withheld from publication.

The objects passed about 2000 feet below the plane, which was flying at 8000 feet, the pilot reported. The co-pilot clocked the flight of the objects for 15 seconds and estimated that they were traveling 900 miles per hour.

The fliers judged the discs to be "approximately five feet in diameter."

Previous reports of disc-like objects near UAL planes in this vicinity have been made by Capt. E.J. Smith on July 4 and Capt. Charles F. Gibian on July 29. (*The Statesman*, Boise, Idaho, August 20, 1947)

Gen. Spaatz Says Flying Discs' Investigations Still in Progress

Investigations still are in progress in an effort to solve the mystery of the flying discs, Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, chief of the U.S. Air Force, informed the *Idaho Statesman* today, but he's not convinced that such objects were flying over the United States.

The Air Force chief said it "would be unfair" to discard the possibility the saucers are the results of foreign experimentations...

Spaatz told *The Statesman* investigations have been made on discs reported seen the last two months. But he said the Air Force had formed no decision on the source of the discs. He discounted the report they were developed by German engineers in Spain. And he asked that anyone observing such objects to continue reporting them to the Army. (*The Statesman*, Boise, Idaho, December 18, 1947)

THE 1952 SIGHTING WAVE, RADAR-VISUAL SIGHTINGS ESTABLISH UFOs AS A SERIOUS MYSTERY: Part 3, What's Going On?

In late July the 1952 wave hit some kind of a peak, with fantastic sightings happening one after the other. All across the United States from July 25 through early August, Air Defense Command radar detected unknown objects flying through the skies, and jet interceptors scrambled to pursue them saw unidentified luminous objects exactly where both ground and airborne radar showed them to be. These sightings had profound implications for national defense, and accordingly were treated with great urgency. A lot of the details were kept secret from the public, but the cat was out of the bag on publicity because too many highly credible people were reporting sightings and the news media were looking for answers.

Summer 1952 Sighting Chronology

July 25/26, Washington, D.C. From 9:15 p.m. to 12:10 a.m., 4 to 8 radar UFOs at a time were observed as "good sharp targets." Two F-94 interceptors were scrambled in Delaware and one pilot made contact with a UFO, commenting about its "incredible speed." Radar tracked both the F-94 and the UFO. (Air Force Inspector General Special Inquiry report, apparently with events of July 26-27 misdated. See box insert.)

July 26, California. Night. Air Defense Command radar detected a UFO, F-94 jet interceptor scrambled, locked onto the object with its radar, crew saw a yellow-orange light. As confirmed by ground and airborne radar, the UFO played tag with the F-94, alternately accelerating away when it got close, then slowing down until it caught up again. (Ruppelt, pp. 222-223.)

July 26/27, Washington, D.C. From 9:50 p.m. until the following morning, an extraordinary series of radar-visual UFO sightings. F-94 jet interceptors

scrambled in pursuit. (See story, page 6.) Between 12:15 and 4:15 a.m., numerous radar targets appeared. Maj. Dewey Fournet and USAF spokesman Al Chop were among those at National Airport who observed "seven solid radar returns" in one instance and jet interceptors again were scrambled.

July 27, Washington, D.C. At 7:30 p.m. Both Air Force personnel and National Airport employees observed a large round object reflecting sunlight as it hovered over the U.S. Capitol Building. After about one minute the object "...wavered then shot straight up -- disappearing from sight." (Air Force intelligence report.)

July 27, Manhattan Beach, Calif. At 6:35 p.m., a group of eight witnesses including pilots and engineers observed a large silvery object moving rapidly at high altitude, then making a turn. As they watched, the object separated into seven discs which then formed into groups, circled, and sped out of sight. "It appeared as if a stack of coins had
(Continued on next page)

1952 Sighting Wave, Continued

smoothly separated," the pilot told investigators. (Air Force Intelligence report.)

July 28, McGuire AFB, New Jersey. At 0600 hours Ground Control Approach detected several unidentified "clearly defined radar targets" within a 30-mile radius. At one point eight of the targets lined up in a "perfect spaced row." At 0610 hours control tower personnel using binoculars observed an oblong UFO with yellow-orange lights inbound toward the base. About 5 miles out it abruptly made a sharp turn and moved away. (Air Intelligence Information Report, Aug. 6, 1952.)

July 28, Washington, D.C. Daily newspapers headlined a United Press story from Washington reporting that the Air Defense Command had ordered its pilots to pursue and, if necessary, "shoot down" UFOs sighted anywhere in the country.

July 28, Washington, D.C. President Harry Truman at a National Security Council meeting asked the CIA to look into the UFO question.

July 29, Washington, D.C. CAA radar in the early morning tracked 8 to 12 UFOs at a time traveling about 100-120 m.p.h. in a 10-mile arc around the Nation's Capital. When an Eastern Airlines pilot tried to check on the radar targets at CAA request at 3:00 a.m., he saw nothing. The targets disappeared from CAA radar screens when the airliner approached, then "came back in behind him" after he passed through the area.

On July 26, 1952, while UFOs were being tracked on radar at Washington National Airport, newsmen were asked to leave the room on the pretext of security. "The real reason for the press dismissal," said Capt. Ruppelt, "was [the belief] that this night would be the big night in UFO history—the night when a pilot would close in and get a good look at a UFO—and they didn't want the press to be in on it." (Ruppelt, p. 219.)

July 29, Washington, D.C. What was characterized as the largest Air Force press conference since the end of World War II was held, with Maj. Gen. John A. Samford, Director of Air Force Intelligence, attributing the radar-visual UFO sightings to weather effects, "temperature inversions" that caused "radar mirages."

July 29, Port Huron, Michigan. At 9:40 p.m. CST an Air Force radar station plotted an unidentified target moving at 550 knots. An F-94 in the area was asked to investigate, and its airborne radar locked onto the UFO which appeared as a bright flashing colored light. The object, showing on ground radar along with the F-94, outdistanced the interceptor.

August 1, Near Yaak, Montana. Air Defense Command radar just before dawn tracked an unidentified object, sighted visually as a dark, cigar-shaped object. (Ruppelt, p. 256.)

August 1, Bellefontaine, Ohio. Air Force radar detected an unidentified target near Wright-Patterson AFB in late morning and two F-86 fighter jets in the
(Continued on next page)

1. In light of recent wide publicity concerning the above subject, I caused a check to be made for the purpose of determining the basis of recent releases to news media.

2. We were advised by the current Intelligence Branch, Estimates Division, AFOIN, which has staff responsibility with respect to these reports, that much of the publicity of the past few days is the result of a radar sighting of unidentified aerial objects by the Civil Aeronautics Administration at National Airport at 2115 hours, 25 July 1952. These sightings continued from 2115 hours, 25 July until 0010 hours on 26 July, and were described by radar operators as "good sharp targets." They were observed in numbers from four to eight.

3. At 2320 hours, 25 July 1952, two (2) Air Force F-94s were dispatched from New Castle AFB, Delaware, for the purpose of intercepting objects which have been sighted by radar. One of the F-94s reportedly made visual contact with one of the objects and at first appeared to be gaining on it, but the object and the F-94 were observed on the radar scope and appeared to be traveling at the same approximate speed. However, when it attempted to overtake the object, the object disappeared both from the pursuing aircraft and the radar scope. The pilot of the F-94 remarked of the "incredible speed of the object."

Air Force Inspector General Office Special Inquiry on Radar-Visual UFO Sightings

1952 Sighting Wave, Continued

vicinity were vectored toward it to investigate. They made visual contact with an object more than 10,000 feet above them that appeared to be 24-40 feet in diameter. One of the pilots made a camera run and his radar gunsight received a weak "return" (target). According to the Air Force, the film later showed a fuzzy small image, but no photographic analysis report has ever been released. The possibility that the object was a balloon was considered, but the investigators ruled that out. Radar had tracked the UFO moving at 400 knots, as the two aircraft and the UFO appeared simultaneously on the radar scope.

Air Force investigators labeled the sighting an "unknown," adding the

comment: "It is obvious that all eyes and antennas were fixed on the same object."

August 1, Albuquerque, N.M. At 9:50 p.m. a Scripps-Howard reporter saw a cluster of glowing white objects overhead. The objects shifted around into various patterns, including a perfect V at one point. "Their shifts in position were incredibly swift and fantastically violent," he said. "They made a flying saucer believer out of me." (*New York World-Telegram*, Aug. 2, 1952.)

Ruppelt, Edward J. *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects* (New York: Doubleday, 1956).

(Next Issue, Part 3: The Aftermath.)

WASHINGTON INVASION, JULY 26/27, 1952: UFOs ELUDE JETS

When unexplained "solid returns" began showing up on Air Route Traffic Control radar and at the Washington National Airport control tower about 9:30 p.m., Air Force investigators were called to the scene.

Among those who responded and observed the evening's events were Al Chop, Maj. Dewey Fournet, Pentagon Monitor of the UFO project, and Navy Lieutenant Holcomb, an electronics expert on assignment to Air Force intelligence. All three saw the radar targets and listened to the radio communications as jet fighters tried to intercept the UFOs.

Maj. Fournet and Lt. Holcomb wrote a report of their personal observations and information obtained via interviews for an Air Force general, excerpts from which follow:

This incident involved u/i [unidentified] targets observed on the radar scopes at the Air Route Traffic Control Center and the tower, both at Washington National Airport, and the Approach Control Radar at Andrews AFB. In addition, visual observations were reported to Andrews and Bolling AFB and to ARTC Center, the latter by pilots of commercial a/c [aircraft] and one CAA a/c... This report covers the facts obtained from Washington National A/P personnel, the USAF Command Post and the AFOIN [Air Force Office of Intelligence] Duty Officer log....

Varying numbers (up to 12 simultaneously) of u/i targets on ARTC radar scope. Termed by CAA personnel as "generally, solid returns," similar to a/c return except slower. No definable pattern of maneuver except at very beginning about 2150 EDT, 4 targets in rough line abreast with about 1-1/2 mile spacing moved slowly together [estimated less than 100 m.p.h.] on

a heading of 110. At the same time 8 other targets were scattered throughout the scope.

ARTC checked Andrews Approach Control by telephone at 2200 EDT and ascertained that they were also picking up u/i targets ... intermittently for another 3+ hours ARTC Center controllers also report that a CAA flight inspector, Mr. Bill Schreve, flying a/c #NC-12 reported at 2246 EDT that he had visually spotted 5 objects giving off a light glow ranging from orange to white; his altitude at time was 2200 ft. Some commercial pilots reported visuals ranging from "cigarette glow" (red-yellow) to "a light."

At 2238 EDT the USAF Command Post was notified of ARTC targets. Command Post notified ADC [Air Defense Command] and EADF [Eastern Air Defense Command] at 2245, and 2 F-94s were scrambled from Newcastle [AFB, Delaware] at 2300 EDT. ARTC controlled F-94s after arrival in area and vectored them to targets with generally negative results.... However, one pilot mentioned seeing 4 lights at one time and a second time as seeing a single light ahead but unable to close whereupon light "went out."

[Fournet and Holcomb arrived on the scene at 12:15 a.m.] Lt. Holcomb observed scopes and reported "7 good, solid targets." He made a quick check with airport Weather Station and determined that there was a slight temperature inversion (about 1 degree) from the surface to about 1000 ft. However, he felt that the scope targets at that time were not the result of this inversion and so advised the Command Post with the suggestion that a second intercept flight be requested.

The second flight of F-94s was sent, but no strong radar targets remained when they arrived and no further events of significance occurred that morning. In a section labeled "Remarks," Fournet and Holcomb added:

Some [ARTC radar crew members] commented that the returns appeared to be

(Continued on next page)

Washington Invasion, Continued

from objects "capable of dropping out of the pattern at will." Also that returns had "creeping appearance." One member of crew commented that one object to which F-94 was vectored just "disappeared from scope" shortly after F-94 started pursuing. All crew members emphatic that most u/i [unidentified] returns were "solid."

Maj. Fournet called Capt. Edward J. Ruppelt at 5:00 a.m., July 27, to brief him on what had transpired overnight. "The reporters and photographers were asked to leave the radar room on the pretext that classified radio frequencies and procedures were being used in vectoring the interceptors," Ruppelt later reported. "All civilian air traffic was cleared out of the area and the jets moved in." But he knew that pretext was absurd.

"The real reason for the press dismissal, I learned, was that not a few people in the radar room were positive that this night would be the big night in UFO history -- the night when a pilot would close in and get a good look at a UFO -- and they didn't want the press to be in on it."

Just as the two F-94s arrived in the area, the radar targets all disappeared. At the same time unidentified radar targets appeared in the vicinity of Langley AFB near Newport News, Virginia, and unidentified bright lights were observed "rotating and giving off alternating colors." (Editorial note: The UFOs also were observed over the Eastern Shore of Maryland shortly after they disappeared from the Washington, D.C., area, as reported in Eastern Shore newspapers.)

"I saw several bright lights. I was at my maximum speed, but even then I had no closing speed....Later I chased a single bright light which I estimated about 10 miles away. I lost visual contact with it [at] about 2 miles." -- Lt. William Patterson, F-94 pilot who chased UFOs over Washington, D.C.

An F-94 pilot in the vicinity of Newport News was vectored toward a UFO, saw a light and got a radar lock-on, but it was broken in a few seconds. He obtained two more brief radar lock-ons before giving up the pursuit.

Ruppelt continued: "A few minutes after the F-94s left the Washington area, the unidentified targets were back on the radarscopes in that same area. ... A few minutes after the F-94 over Newport News had the last lock-on broken, the targets came back on the scopes at Washington National."

When Maj. Fournet completed his briefing, Ruppelt said his first question was whether the radar targets could have been caused by the weather. "Dewey said that everybody in the radar room was convinced that the targets were very probably caused by solid metallic objects. There had been weather targets on the scope too, he said, but those were common to the Washington area and the controllers were paying no attention to them." (Ruppelt, pp. 217-222)

These sightings were, in a very real sense, the last straw. President Harry Truman wanted to know what was going on. Newsmen and the public were clamoring for the facts, and the Air Force was forced to hold a major press conference to explain the reports. □

EAST GERMANY 1950 LANDING CASE, HUMANOID PILOTS SEEN

The 1952 sighting wave chronology in the previous issue included an entry dated "July (1st week)" for the sighting of a landed UFO and two humanoid beings in the Soviet zone of Berlin. Ted Bloecher submitted a detailed report on the case, including the correct date: June 17, 1950. Herr Oskar Linke had fled to the west from East Berlin in 1951, and found reason in 1952 (probably due to UFO sightings then in the news) to file a report on his 1950 sighting.

Bloecher's 1980 report summarizes the 1952 news coverage of Herr Linke's sworn report and quotes from first-hand information obtained from the witness by Dr. Leon Davidson. Following are some paraphrases and quotes from the report.

At the time of the sighting Herr Linke was the 49-year-old mayor of Gleimershausen, a small village in southern Thuringia, near the West German frontier. On June 17, 1950, he and his daughter, Gabrielle, 11, were traveling to Haselbach on a motorcycle with sidecar about 2:30 a.m. when a tire blew out, so they continued on foot pushing the machine.

Gabrielle spotted what she thought were two deer in a meadow, and the pair worked their way through the brush to have a look. When they had come within about 80 meters, Herr Linke realized that the "deer" were two human-like figures dressed in heavy garments made of "a shimmering, metallic substance." The figures, that he assumed were Russians, bent over "as if studying something on the ground."

After leaving Gabrielle behind he approached cautiously to within about 15 yards and peered over a small ridge at them. At this point he saw a large object about 40-50 feet in diameter shaped "like an oval warming pan or flask...about eight feet high....There were two rows of holes along the sides, about a foot in diameter....Out of the top of the metallic object rose a black, cylindrical 'conning tower' about ten feet high."

Herr Linke watched the two men and the machine at close range for about 25 minutes. The two figures apparently communicated with each other, making a lot of gestures, but he heard no voices. One of them had a small box-like device on his chest with a light that blinked on and off at intervals.

Finally, Gabrielle called out to her father. "The sound must have reached the two figures," Linke reported, "for they rushed back to the object, clambered rapidly up the side to the 'conning tower,' and disappeared inside." He noticed that their manner of locomotion "was a glide, similar to that of bears."

The outer edge of the craft began to glow, and a humming sound was heard. The glow and sound intensified as the object began rising off the ground, the "conning tower" retracted into the top and then emerged from the bottom. Exhaust-like flames were emitted from around the edge.

"From the swirling effect of the glowing 'exhaust'," he said, "I got the impression the whole object was spinning like a top." It rose off the ground, a blast of air flattening the

(Continued on next page)

East Germany Sighting, Continued

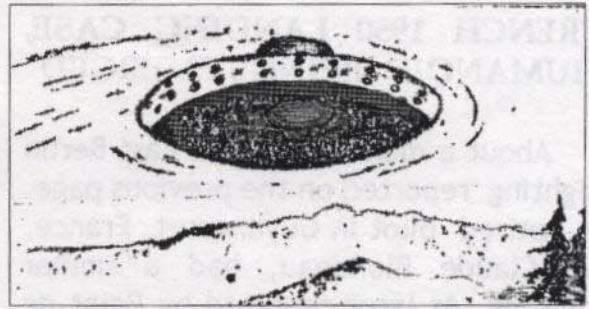
grain in the adjacent field, and hovered briefly at about 100 feet. Then it accelerated upward emitting a whistling sound similar to that of a falling bomb. Gabrielle, who had been watching from a distance, later said: "I heard a very loud noise coming from the meadow and I saw a burning [luminous?] disc fly up into the air.

Her father said that the machine rose and flew off horizontally in an ascending path "gaining height over the hills and forest toward Stockheim," a town 10 kilometers south-southwest of Haselbach in West Germany.

Herr Linke and Gabrielle proceeded to examine the landing site and found "a circular depression, evidently freshly made, where the earth had been driven down. [It was] exactly the shape of the 'conning tower.'" Several local people later reported independently that they had seen a comet-like flying object at that time.

Believing that he had seen a secret Russian craft and its pilots, Herr Linke said little about the experience. But as word of it began to spread he became fearful of reprisals and eventually he fled with his family to the West. He had never heard of "flying saucers" until after he resettled in West Berlin.

Starting in 1958, Dr. Leon Davidson (who believed that UFOs were secret U.S. devices) contacted Herr Linke, verified his credentials, and asked him a series of questions in an exchange of letters over the next year. The salient features of his answers have been incorporated into the report.



Sketch adapted from 1952 newspaper story

Regrettably, Davidson (assuming that Linke had seen a secret earthly craft) asked no questions about what the beings looked like other than whether they appeared "human" or "humanoid." In answer to this, Linke mentioned their unusual form of locomotion.

Some questions that, in hindsight, would have been important are: "Were their faces visible or were they wearing headgear or clothing that concealed their faces?" "Did you see their hands or fingers, or feet?" "Were their heads and limbs proportional to those of normal human beings?"

Linke had said that their locomotion was like that of bears, a sort of gliding motion. But when they hastily climbed onto the "conning tower" of the craft just before departure, how did they use their arms and legs? Did their heads turn and look around?

Although his questions resulted in some information that we otherwise would not have known, Davidson's approach also provides a cautionary example of how investigator biases sometimes can cause the loss of potentially important information.

Source: *Herr Linke and the Flying Warming Pan*, by Ted Bloecher, October 5, 1980. Copyright 1980 by Ted Bloecher.

FRENCH 1950 LANDING CASE, HUMANOID BEINGS EMERGED

About a month after the East Berlin sighting reported on the previous page, a retired pilot in Guyancourt, France, M. Claude Blondeau, had a similar sighting. As later reported by *Point de Vue* (a weekly newspaper), he stated:

At 11 p.m. on July 23, 1950, I was walking along the edge of the airfield. In the darkness I glimpsed two objects resembling two enormous hollow plates, about 5 meters in diameter. All around the edge they were fitted with rectangular portholes. The lower surface of these saucers opened, and two men emerged. They were about 170 cm [5 ft. 7 in.] tall, and wore dark blue flying suits.

(Source: CSI of New York sightings card file.)

Philip J. Klass, Aviation Editor

Aviation editor Philip J. Klass, 85, died in Cocoa, Florida, August 9, 2005. Both the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times News Service* in obituaries published August 11 and August 14, respectively, while mentioning his employment as an aviation journalist focused primarily on his claim to fame as a debunker of "flying saucers and those who claim to see them" or of "reports of visits from outer space."

These news organizations praised Klass' alleged application of "careful, reasoned analysis" to find mundane explanations for UFO sightings as natural phenomena and conventional objects.

THE ORIGINAL "FLYING SAUCERS": REVIEWING THE RECORD

Veteran pilot Kenneth Arnold's UFO sighting on June 24, 1947, gave rise to the name "flying saucers" when he told newsmen that the objects he saw flew like a saucer does when you skip it across water.

Interviewed by Associated Press, Arnold's first-hand account appeared in newspapers all across the country on June 27. Considering the skeptical attempts in recent years to explain his sighting as everything from pelicans to secret Navy aircraft, it is worth reviewing his exact words. Some excerpts quoted from his description follow.

Nine crescent-shaped objects flying at a speed that Arnold clocked at about 1,200 m.p.h. were observed moving in and out of mountain peaks near Mount Rainier.

First he saw a flash of reflected sunlight, "Then I saw them, weaving and ducking in and out [of the peaks] as they came south not more than 500 feet over the plateau. They looked like they were rocking. I looked for tails but suddenly realized they didn't have any. They were half-moon shaped, oval in front and convex in the rear...."

"I thought they might be jet planes, and I clocked them. Then when I saw they had no tails and I realized how fast they were going, I knew they were like nothing I had ever heard of before. There were no bulges or cowlings; they looked like a big flat disk [and moved back and forth] like the tail of a Chinese kite."

(*Portland Journal*, Oregon, June 27, 1947, from Associated Press.)

APRIL 1966 RAVENNA CASE REVISITED: NEW INTERVIEWS REPORTED

While investigating an abandoned automobile in the early hours of April 17, 1966, in Ravenna, Ohio, Deputy Sheriffs Dale Spaur and Barney Neff suddenly were engulfed in the light from a brightly illuminated craft that rose up from the woods and hovered overhead. They ended up chasing the object across the state and into Pennsylvania, with several other police officers from separate jurisdictions joining in.

This highly significant case recently was revisited by reporter James Renner for *Cleveland Scene*, an online news service. Renner reconstructs the case in good detail, and adds follow-up information from interviews with the family of Police Chief Gerald Buchert of Mantua, Ohio, and others.

Chief Buchert also witnessed the object, which he described as "like two table saucers put together." When it was reported that he had taken a photograph of the object, Buchert was inundated by the news media from all over the country in the following days. The Air Force glibly dismissed his photograph as a camera error, and he perceived that citizens thought he was crazy. Buchert's wife, Joan, is quoted as saying, "My husband lost 20 pounds in three days."

But a number of people, including a local Catholic priest, told the Buchert's privately that they had also seen the UFO and the testimony of so many police officers was considered to be very convincing.

When the Air Force claimed, in a statement by Major Hector Quintanilla, that the officers had been chasing the

Planet Venus distorted by atmospheric conditions, they were all made to look foolish. Buchert's son, Harry, who is now police chief in Mantua, says his father almost resigned as a result of the ridicule, but instead kept a detailed scrapbook of all the evidence.

The *Cleveland Scene* reporter also conducted interviews with Hector Quintanilla's son, Karl; Dr. J. Allen Hynek's son, Paul (Quintanilla had not consulted Dr. Hynek on this case); and other surviving family members of key people involved. Dale Spaur's life was ruined by the event, and he never recovered from the resulting personal trauma and ridicule, quitting his job and leaving his wife. As of 2002 he was reported to be living in isolation in West Virginia.

About 6 months after the sighting, Barney Neff refused to be interviewed by a newspaper, but his wife said: "I hope I never see him like he was after the chase. He was real white, almost in a state of shock. It was awful."

The *Cleveland Scene* article also reports that Maj. Hector Quintanilla was focusing on golf after retirement from the Air Force, until a golf-cart accident resulted in head injuries from which he never completely recovered, and he died in 1997. He lived long enough to see his son become a UFO "believer" who worked as a staff member on the production of several television UFO documentaries.

Source: "Strangers in the Night," by James Renner, March 31, 2004 (www.clevescene.com).

UNITED NATIONS INTEREST IN UFOs, 1950s - 1970s

On at least three occasions between October 1959 and December 1978, the subject of UFOs was broached before the United Nations (UN).

A United Press International story datelined New York City, October 28, 1959, quoted Dr. Vasco Viera Garin, Portuguese delegate to the UN, as suggesting to the General Assembly Political Committee during a debate on proposed disarmament, that it could leave us vulnerable to attack from some other planet.

He stated that although it might seem far-fetched, it was not absurd to imagine the possibility of "a sudden invasion of our earth by aggressive warriors from another celestial body. [We] would cut a poor figure against Martians ... if we had, figuratively speaking, only kitchen knives and pocket slings to defend ourselves."

Early in 1966, Colman Von Keviczky, a Hungarian-born employee of the UN Office of Public Information, made headlines with an Associated Press story when he proposed to Secretary-General U Thant that the UN establish a network to observe UFOs.

Von Keviczky had the reputation of being a somewhat wild-eyed UFO believer; however, UFO sightings were beginning to pick up again and making the news. Then in March 1966 a major wave of sightings began, generating widespread publicity.

On February 20 Lucien L. Lemieux, secretary to U Thant, contacted NICAP and requested information. Richard Hall

replied on March 7, supplying the requested information, offering help and guidance, and full support for "any scientific study or reappraisal of the entire matter."

Mr. Lemieux responded on March 9:

Dear Mr. Hall,

I have received your letter of March 7 and I wish to thank you for its informative contents.

I have shown your letter to the Secretary-General and he has asked me to inform you that at the moment he is looking into the matter of Unidentified Flying Objects and he will let you know, at an early date, the steps he proposes to take in this connexion.

Yours sincerely, Lucien L. Lemieux
Secretary to the Secretary-General

In September 1966 the UN *Secretariat News* (staff newsletter), Vol. XXI, No. 16, included a 2-1/2 page article by Donald K. Estrella, "What Are They? Where Do They Come From? What Are They Doing Here?" The article described NICAP and cited information at length taken from our publications.

In 1967 U Thant arranged for Dr. James E. McDonald to address the UN Outer Space Affairs group, which he did eloquently on June 7. McDonald urged immediate UN attention to UFOs as a clear-cut international problem.

The most extensive UN discussion of UFOs took place in 1978 when a group of scientists and UFO witnesses presented their case before the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. (To be continued in next issue.)