1. DATE - TIME GROUP 6 Feb 53 6/0913Z	2. LOCATION Rosallia, Washington (20 Min S. Spokane)
3. SOURCE AF Pilot	10. CONCLUSION BALLOON
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One	
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 3-5 Min.	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS Round white light traveled at an est speed of 150-200 knots at approx 7000' alt. Maneuvers consisted of circling several times, flashing on & off, noticeable increase in speed, and disappearing in a S direction. Object was observed by pilot of B-36 a/c. COMMENTS: 1. Weather balloon probably in the area of sighting from Geiger Field Weather Bureau. See incident folder for explanation. 2. Weather records show balloon released from Geiger Field not Fairchild at 0900Z. Was lost in the clouds after rising to 3,000'. Could have very easily caused the sighting.
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Air-Visual	
7. COURSE SE	
8. PHOTOS ☐ Yes XX No	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes XX No	

FORM
FTD SEP 63 0-329 (TDE) Previous editions of this form may be used.

(STATES Report 10

UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

UNCLASSIFIED
R.M.A.

Rosalia, Washington

6 February 1953

I. Description of Incident

A B-36 aircraft was in flight in the vicinity of Spokane, Washington, when one round white omnidirectional light was sighted at 0913Z time. The light was at an altitude of approximately 7,000 ft. on a southeast course circling and rising as it proceeded. It was visually observed for a period of three to five minutes. The B-36 made 180° descending turn toward the light which was estimated to be moving at a speed of 150 to 200 knots. The aircraft was inbound to Spokane 15 miles out and located over Rosalia, Washington.

II. Discussion of Incident

ATIC determined that a scheduled piball balloon released at 0900Z from the U.S. Weather Bureau Station at Fairchild AFB was in the immediate area of sighting. The sighting was from Rosalia which is 12.5 nautical miles S.E. of Fairchild AFB and to place a balloon in the area of the sighting winds would have to be out of the N.E. Winds aloft at 7,000 to 10,000 ft. were from 270° to 280° at 50 knots per hour. Therefore, by computation, it would take approximately 15 minutes for the balloon to be carried to Rosalia by the existing winds. Since the unidentified object was sighted13 minutes after the balloon launch time, and the description (climbing, orbitting, balloons carry white running lights) closely parallels the maneuvers of a balloon, ATIC concludes that the object probably was the piball weather balloon. All local air fields were checked by McChord AFB and no aircraft were in the area at the time of observation other than the B-36.

III. Conclusion

Probably balloon.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

R.M.A.

[redacted]

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CONFIRMATION COPY

UNCLASSIFIED

Wilkes

McChord Flt Sv Cen
McChord AFB, Wash

061000U Feb 53 [redacted]

Priority

X

Director of Intelligence
Hq USAF
Wash, D. C.

X

Air Technical Intelligence Center
xxx ATTN: ATIAA-2c
Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

Commanding General
Ent AFB
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Commander
FS
Wash, D. C.

Commander
MATS
ATTN: Intelligence Div
Wash, D. C.

FSC 06-3-2. FLIOBRPT [redacted]

A. One round light; size unkn; white; aerodynamic features unkn, no exhaust trail, no observed propulsion system; speed 150 to 200 knots; no sound was heard; flew south bound under AF 2708 B-36 at aprx 7000 ft, circled several times turned south heading 182 degrees Magnetic. Light commenced flashing 1 to 2 second intervals with noticeable increase of speed and disappeared on southerly heading.

B. Obj sighted 0134PST, 6 Feb 53, for aprx 3 to 5 minutes.

[redacted] 1 3

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

McChord Flt Sv Cen
McChord AFB, Wash

0610000 Feb 53 [redacted]

Priority

X

X

FSC 06-B-2. FLYOBRPT - [redacted] - CONT'D

C. Manner of obs was visual from the air by a B-36, speed 150 to 200 knots at 7000 ft, visual obs only.

D. Obj sighted at 47 degrees 20 minutes North, 115 degrees 30 minutes West, vicinity of Rosalia, Wash. AF 2708, B-36 inbound on south course of Spokane Range, 10 to 15 miles from sta descending fr 10,000 ft to 7000 ft, sighted obj approaching fr the North, dir of flt AF 2807 001 degrees magnetic. Dir of flt of obj aprx 182 degrees magnetic, altitude of obj aprx 7000 ft.

E. Major Leo J Moffatt, AO 758603, 327th Bomb Sqd, Fairchild AFB, Spokane, Wash. Obs considered reliable.

F Weather: Fairchild AFB, Wash. measured 1200 ft broken, 9000 overcast, visibility 15 miles. Light drizzle, winds aloft 270 degrees, 50 knots, 10000 ft.

G. No known conditions would account for sighting.

H. Photographs: None

I. Pilot of AF 2708 made 180 degree descending toward obj after turning toward light, the light started circling then headed south commencing to blink.

[redacted] 2 3

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DOD DIR 5200.10

McChord Flt Sv Cen
McChord AFB, Wash

061000U Feb 53 [redacted]

Priority

FSC 06-B-2. FLYOBRPT - [redacted] - CONT'D

J. A check with all agencies in this area indicates no other acft should have been in that vicinity.

K. Pilot of AF 2708 contacted at Fairchild AFB Operations.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

[redacted]

3 3

JOHN S BATIE, Major, USAF

FSC 5205 Distrig

[redacted]

USA-MATS IR-133-53

UNCLASSIFIED

Unidentified Flying Object Sighted Near Spokane, Washington

State of Washington, USA

Flight Service, MATS, 3800 Newark Street, N. W., Washington 25, D. C.

12 February 1953 6 February 1953 B-2

Frank M. Allen, Lt Colonel, USAF Major Leo J. Moffatt, A0758603

Teletype FLYORPT 061800Z February by McChord Flight Service Center

B-36 number AF 2708 was in flight in the vicinity of Spokane, Washington, 6 February 1953, when one round white light was sighted, approaching AF 2708 from the North. The light was at an altitude of approximately 7,000 feet, on a south bound course, when it passed AF 2708, AF 2708 made a descending 180° turn toward the light, which was moving at about 150 to 200 knots. The light circled several times, then turned to a course of approximately 182° magnetic, began to flash at one to two second intervals, its speed increased noticeably, and it disappeared on a Southerly course.

The light was sighted at 0134PST, by Major Leo J. Moffatt, A0758603, 327th Bombardment Squadron, Fairchild Air Force Base, Spokane, Washington, from aboard AF 2708, and was visually observed for approximately three to five minutes. AF 2708 was inbound, approximately 10 to 15 miles out on the South leg of the Spokane radio range (inbound course 1° magnetic), at the time of the sighting, descending from 10,000 to 7,000 feet. During sighting aircraft turned to proceed toward Rosalia, Washington (47°20'N, 117° 30'W).

Weather report for Fairchild Air Force Base at time of sighting: Ceiling measured 1,200 feet, overcast above at 9,000 feet, visibility 15 miles, light drizzle, and wind at 10,000 feet above the surface from 270° at 50 knots.

Check of all area agencies revealed no aircraft which should have been in the area. No known conditions would account for the sighting.

Wind cent change 180° within 3,000 ft. span:

0134 PST
8
0937Z

FRANK M. ALLEN
Lt Colonel, USAF
Intelligence Officer

UNCLASSIFIED

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

[redacted]

UNCLASSIFIED

Flight Service, MATS
3800 Newark Street, N. W.
Washington 25, D. C.

IR-133-53

2 3

The following teletype report was received from McChord Flight Service Center, McChord Air Force Base, Tacoma, Washington:

FSC 06-B-2. FLYOBRPT ATTN: ATIAA-2C at Wright-Patterson AFB, ATTN: Intelligence Division at Washington D. C.

A. One round light: size unknown: white: aerodynamic features unknown, no exhaust trail, no observed propulsion system: speed 150 to 200 knots: no sound was heard: flew south bound under AF 2708 B-36 at approximately 7,000 feet, circled several times, turned south heading 182° magnetic. Light commenced flashing 1 to 2 second intervals with noticeable increase of speed and disappeared on southerly heading.

B. Object sighted 0134PST, 6 February 1953, for approximately 3 to 5 minutes.

C. Manner of observation was visual from the air by a B-36, speed 150 to 200 knots at 7,000 feet, visual observation only.

D. Object sighted at 47° 20 minutes north, 115° 30 minutes west, vicinity of Rosalia, Washington. AF 2708, B-36 inbound on south course of Spokane Range, 10 to 15 miles from station descending from 10,000 feet to 7,000 feet, sighted object approaching from the north, direction of flight AF 2807 00° magnetic. Direction of flight of object approximately 182° magnetic, altitude of object approximately 7,000 feet.

E. Major Leo J. Moffatt, A0758603, 327th Bombardment Squadron, Fairchild Air Force Base, Spokane, Washington. Observation considered reliable.

F. Weather: Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington measured 1,200 feet broken, 9,000 overcast, visibility 15 miles. Light drizzle, winds aloft 270°, 50 knots, 10,000 feet.

G. No known conditions would account for sighting.

H. Photographs: None.

I. Pilot of AF 2708 made 180° descending toward object after turning toward light, the light started circling then headed south commencing to blink.

J. A check with all agencies in this area indicates no other aircraft should have been in that vicinity.

K. Pilot of AF 2708 contacted at Fairchild Air Force Base Operations.

06/1945Z Feb JWPDR

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

[redacted]

UNCLASSIFIED

Flight Service, MATS
3800 Newark Street, N. W.
Washington 25, D. C.

IR-133-53

3 3

Comments of Preparing Officer:

1. Sighting position of 47°21'N, 115°30'W indicated by paragraph D of the teletype message is apparently in error, as this position is approximately 90 statute miles from position indicated by South leg of Spokane radio range and Rosalia, Washington. This position has been resolved to 47°21'N, 117°30'W.

2. Crew position of Major Moffatt, and/or position in AF 2708 at time of sighting, was not indicated.

3. Direction, number, and size of circles by the light, and whether at constant altitude, was not indicated.

4. No variation in intensity of the light, between approach and departure, or during circling, was reported. This indicates that the light was horizontally omnidirectional, instead of focussed like a landing light or jet exhaust glow. It is also noted that although AF 2708 was apparently constantly descending during the sighting, no change in light intensity was caused by this descent. This could indicate vertical omnidirectional light qualities.

5. Manner of disappearance of the light was not reported (whether extinguished, or diminished by distance) but message indicates that it faded due to distance.

6. The area in which sighting occurred is in an Air Defense Identification Zone, and any aircraft or flying objects should have been under radar surveillance. Positive statement that radar sites had not observed the incident is not included.

7. Although teletype message indicates that no propulsion system was observed, the correlation between flashing of the light and its increase in speed could indicate action of a propulsive system.

SECRET TO 60 YEARS

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS.
DECLASSIFIED AFTER

This case includes one (1) 8" x 10"
photograph and two (2) 16" x 13"
photocopied charts.

STATION

SPOKANE, WASH. (GEIGER FIELD)

47° 37' N 117° 32' W

LAT. _____ LONG. _____

WB Form 1110

UNITED STATES DEPAR
WEATHE

WINDS ALOFT CO

(LAND STA
WBA

Ascension No. 1271

*Method of observation

Minute	Altitude: 100 gram balloon (meters)	Altitude: 30 gram balloon (meters)	Altitude: Other (feet) (meters)	Elevation angle °	Azimuth angle °	Distance from observation point (meters)	Slant range (FAWIN) (yards)	Wind dir. (360°=N 000°=N) °	Wind speed m.p.h.	Minute
Sfc.										Sfc.
1	550	210		49.0	244.0	170		244	3.7	1
2	670	414		47.5	242.0	165.0		247	7.4	2
3	990	612								3
4	1,285	801								4
5	1,585	990								5
6	1,880	1,170								6
7	2,170	1,350								7
8	2,455	1,530								8
9	2,740	1,710								9
10	3,020	1,890								10
11	3,300	2,070								11
12	3,580	2,250								12
13	3,855	2,430								13
14	4,130	2,610								14
15	4,405	2,790								15
16	4,675	2,970								16
17	4,945	3,150								17
18	5,215	3,330								18
19	5,485	3,510								19
20	5,755	3,690								20
21	6,025	3,870								21
22	6,295	4,050								22
23	6,565	4,230								23
24	6,835	4,410								24
25	7,105	4,590								25
26	7,375	4,770								26
27	7,645	4,950								27
28	7,915	5,130								28
29	8,185	5,310								29
30	8,455	5,490								30
31	8,730	5,670								31
32	9,005	5,850								32

MENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU
MPUTATION SHEET
ION FORM)
N-20

Release Date and Time	Year	Month	Day	Time
G.C.T.	1963	Feb	6	0900
G.C.T.	1963	Feb	6	0900

Elevation of observation point above MSL 22 ft (feet) 7 m (meters)

Minute	Altitude: 100 gram balloon (meters)	Altitude: 50 gram balloon (meters)	Altitude: Other (feet) (meters)	Elevation angle °	Azimuth angle °	Distance from observation point (yards)	Slant range RAWIN (yards)	Wind direction (true) (deg. from N) °	Wind speed (kts., m.p.h., etc.)	Minute
46	13,075	8,370								46
47	13,375	8,550								47
48	13,675	8,730								48
49	13,975	8,910								49
50	14,275	9,090								50
51	14,570	9,270								51
52	14,860	9,450								52
53	15,145	9,630								53
54	15,425	9,810								54
55	15,705	9,990								55
56	15,985	10,170								56
57	16,265	10,350								57
58	16,545	10,530								58
59	16,825	10,710								59
60	17,105	10,890								60
61	17,385	11,070								61
62	17,670	11,250								62
63	17,950	11,430								63
64	18,235	11,610								64
65	18,515	11,790								65
66	18,795	11,970								66
67	19,080	12,150								67
68	19,360	12,330								68
69	19,645	12,510								69
70	19,925	12,690								70
71	20,210	12,870								71
72	20,490	13,050								72
73	20,775	13,230								73
74	21,055	13,410								74
75	21,340	13,590								75
76	21,620	13,770								76
77	21,905	13,950								77

34	9,565	6,210									34
35	9,850	6,390									35
36	10,135	6,570									36
37	10,420	6,760									37
38	10,710	6,930									38
39	11,005	7,110									39
40	11,300	7,290									40
41	11,595	7,470									41
42	11,890	7,650									42
43	12,185	7,830									43
44	12,480	8,010									44
45	12,775	8,190									45

Termination cutting to ____

Weight of balloon ____ grams Color of balloon ____

Weight of lighting device ____ grams Type of target or transmitter ____ NOTES

Weight of target or transmitter ____ grams

Free lift ____ grams

Tool weight ____ grams

COLDEX DATA																							

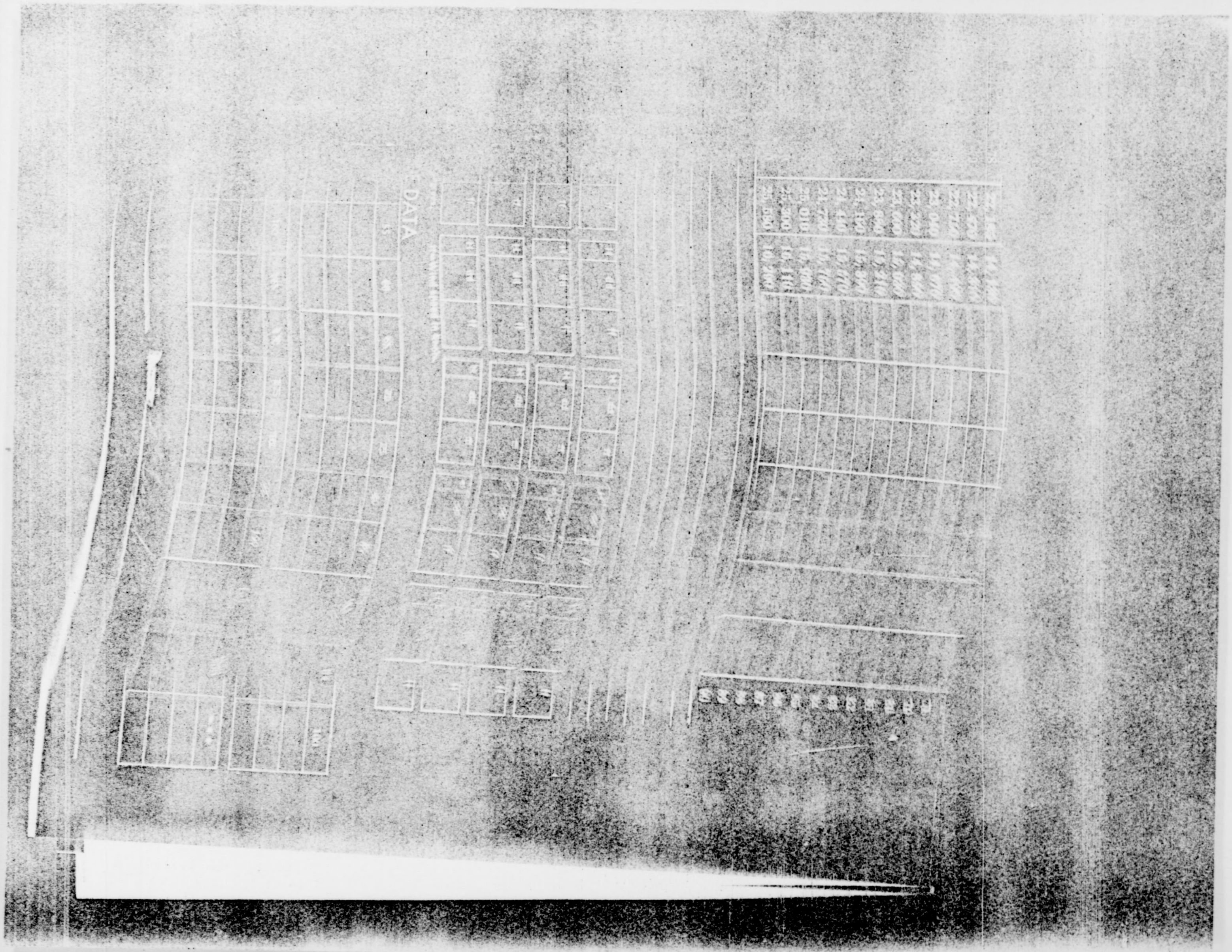
RASON TIME ALT

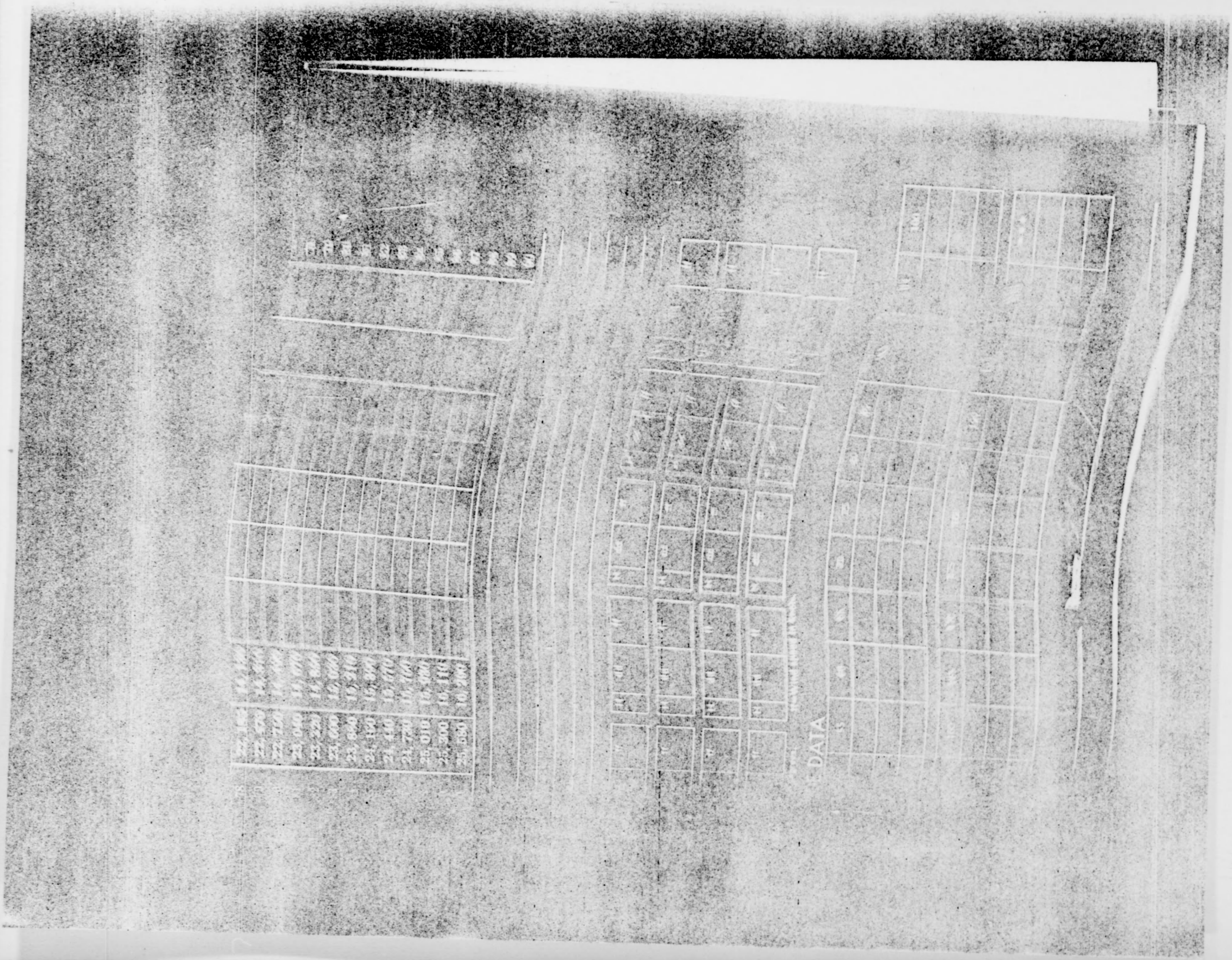
Pibal		3	10	15	20	25	30	45	60	75	90
Elevation											
Azimuth											
Wind Dir. & Vel.											
Time											

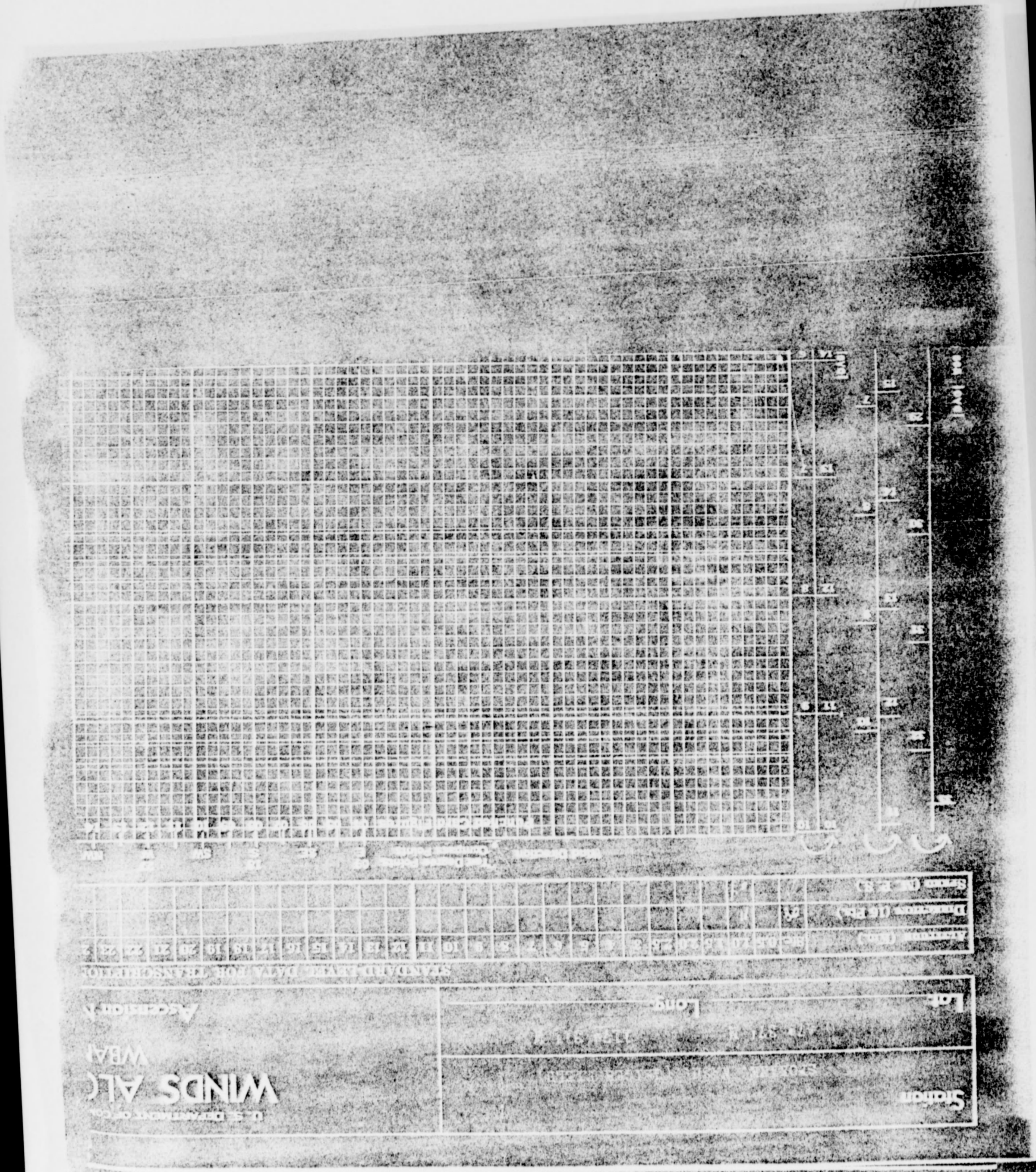
Pibal		3	10	15	20	25	30	45	60	75	90
Elevation											
Azimuth											
Wind Dir. & Vel.											
Time											

Balloon Burst Altitude ____ Burst Combination ____

Observer


DATA





...ence Weather Bureau

...DFT GRAPH

...-20A

...121

Release Date and Time

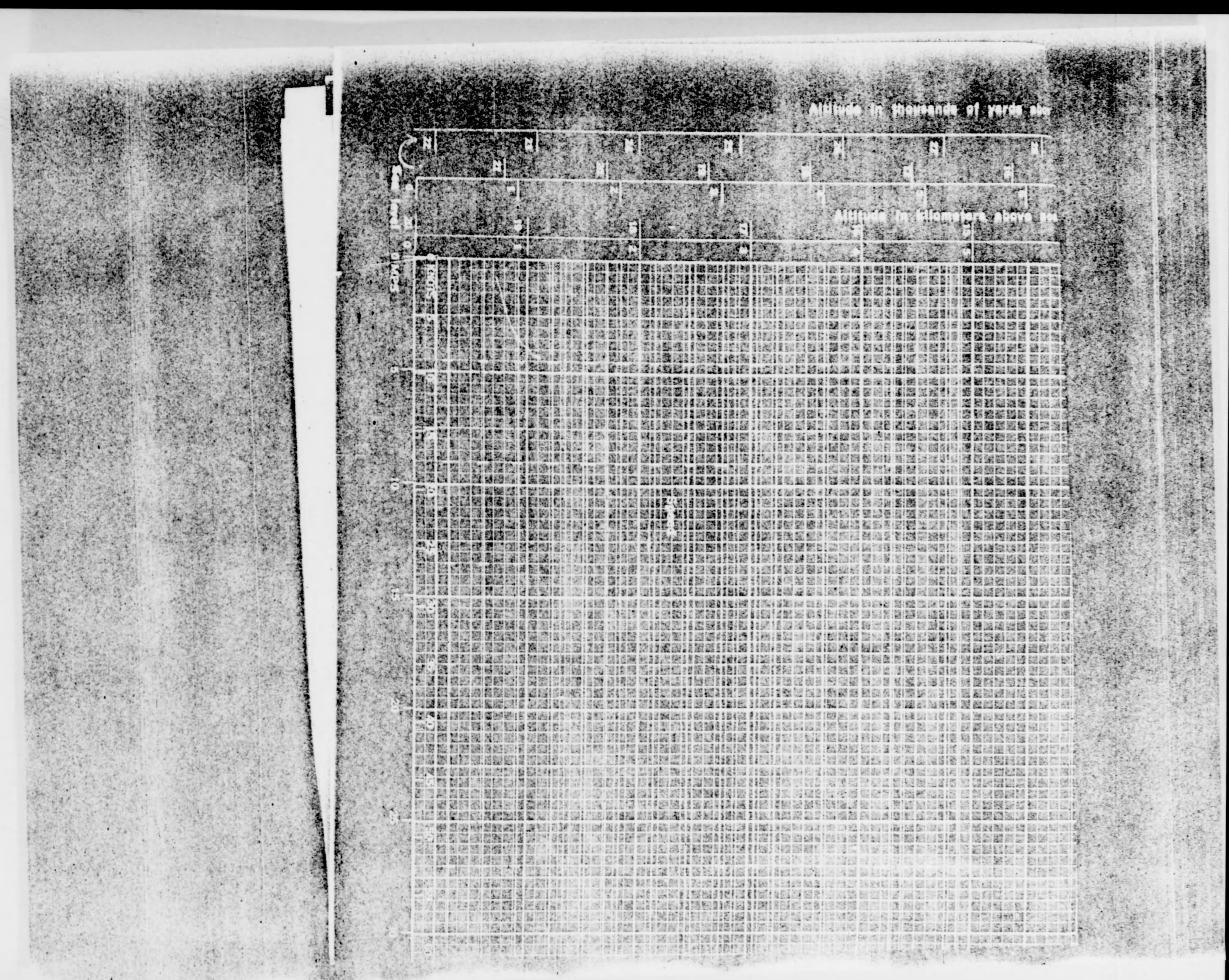
	Year	Month	Day	Time
20th Mar	19[illegible]	Feb	6	
G.C.T.	19[illegible]	Feb	6	

...TO PUNCHED CARDS

25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50

26 N	NE	09 E	SE	18 S	SW	27 W	NW	36 N	NE	09 E	SE	18 S

Pilot Time Reason



...ence Weather Bureau

...OFT GRAPH

...-20A

...121

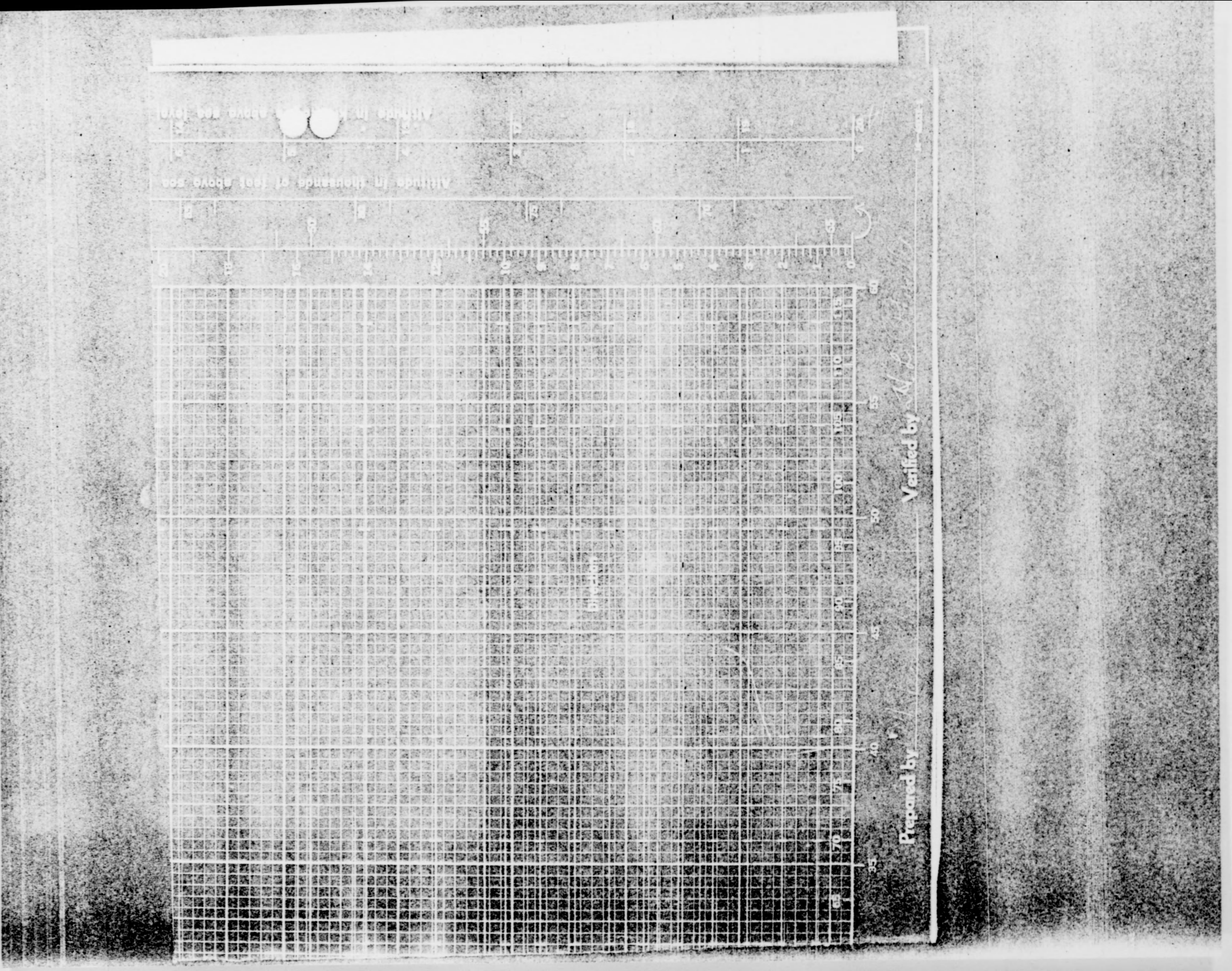
Release Date and Time				
	Year	Month	Day	Time
24h Mer	1956	Feb	6	
G.C.T.	1956	Feb	6	

...TO PUNCHED CARDS

25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50

26 NW 09 NE 18 E 27 SE 36 S 09 SW 18 W NW N NE E SE S

Release Date
Time
Region




Colbert
Peone
MEAD
Nine Mile Falls
Dam
Mead
Foothill
Sawmill
Rathdrum
COEUR D'ALENE
Golf course
Hayden
SPOKANE
DALKENA
Factories
Roundhouse
GEIGER
NAVIGATIONAL LOC SYSTEM
RELTS
Airport directory
Factories
Newman Lake
Millwood
Post Falls
Dalton Gardens
Deepcreek
Opportunity
Liberty Lake
SPOKANE VALLEY
LEMEN
Chester
Reservoir
FAIRCHILD AFB
GCA SYSTEM
245 126.18
Elevator
Eleanor
Hayford
Hospital
Four Lakes
Medical Lake
Marshall
MARIO
Kiernan
Sharon
Mica Mine
Freeman
Valleyford
SPOKANE RADIO
115.5 GEG
Waukon
Elevator
School
Edwall
SAVAGE
Cheney
Abd RT
Carlin Bay
Rockford Bay
Coeur d'Alene
RR over
Springston
Harrison
Tyler
N P
Elevator
Spangle
Mount Hope
Rockford
3 elevators
Fairfield
Worley
SPANGLE
Amber
Trestle
Waverly
Elevator
WASH
IDAHO
Plummer
Trestles
RR under
Station
Rodna
BLUE
LATAH
Latah
ROSALIA
RRs over
Rosalia
Malden
Rock L
Rine City
Elevator
Benewah
WILLARD
Tekoa
RR yds & roundhouse
Tensed
Desmet
Swimming pool
Oakesdale
2 elevators
Sunset
Thornton
Ewan
St John
BLACKS RANCH
Belmont
Farmington
Sanders
Revere
Watertank
Lancaster
Elevators
Steptoe
Garfield
South Fork
Race track
Winona
Endicott
Elberton
RR yds & roundhouse
Potlatch
Princeton
Lumber mill
Harvard
Station & warehouses
Diamond
Colfax
Elevator
Cemetery
Palouse
Union Flat Cr
WHITMAN CO
Dusty
Wilcox
Fallon
Elevator & warehouse
Albion
Viola
Lacrosse
PULLMAN-MOSCOW
College & experimental farm
Pullman
Elevator
MOSCOW
University
Bigs
RR over
Lumber mill
Ferdinand
Lumber mill
Kendrick
Penawawa
Elevator
Ferry
Asmota
N P
Bigs
May
Ferd-Wawawai
OView
Johnson
RR over

6 February 1953 - Rosalia, Washington B-36 Sighting Analysis:

Piball balloon released at 0900Z from U.S. weather bureau station at ~~Fairchild AFB~~ Geiger Field. Track of balloon ESE.

Sighting was from over Rosalia 12.5 nautical miles SE of Fairchild. Wind at 10,000' was from approximately 270° to 280° blowing SE at 50 knots per hour.

$$\frac{60 \text{ minutes}}{50 \text{ nautical miles}} = \frac{X \text{ min}}{12.5 \text{ N.M.}} = 15$$

or the balloon would have covered the 12.5 nautical miles in 15 minutes.

Which means that the piball released at ~~Fairchild AFB~~ Geiger Field would have taken approximately 15 minutes to drift to the area of sighting; since the unknown object was sighted at 0913Z and by taking into account the winds aloft, it can be deduced that the object sighted by the B-36 and the piball balloon are probably the same object.

The time difference of 2 minutes can be ignored in that intangible factors such as different wind speeds at various altitudes could cause the differences.

R. Olson 1/Lt.

Note:

Ascension rate of a 30 gram Standard 30 inch diameter piball is 500 to 600 ft per minute; (use 550 ft)

thus
550 ft
15 minutes
2750
550
8250 ft.

the piball would be at the approximate level (7,500 ft) of the sighting B-36 at 0913 Z.

In the early years of the saucer era balloons accounted for some 25 percent of the unidentified flying objects reported to ATIC. The pattern of these sightings is unmistakable, and the identity of balloon and UFO is often certain—as certain as any evidence can be. Nevertheless many such identifications are resolutely rejected by the saucer enthusiasts. It would be pointless to discuss all the UFO reports of this class, but we can summarize a few of the most famous. Major Keyhoe, a leading proponent of the interplanetary hypothesis, describes such a sighting:

"On February 6, near Rosalia, Washington, a saucer had circled a B-36 bomber. During this maneuver the pilot saw a white light blink at two-second intervals. Before he had time to blink his own light in answer, the machine swiftly turned south and disappeared." [5, p. 240]

No evidence exists that the light was either a "saucer" or a "machine"; a great deal of evidence exists that it was a balloon. Investigators from ATIC determined the following facts:

At 1:13 A.M. on February 6, 1953, the pilot of a B-36 plane bound for Spokane, Washington, was near Rosalia when he sighted a round white light below him, circling and rising at a speed estimated at 150 to 200 knots as it proceeded on a southeast course. The B-36 made an 18-degree descending turn toward the light, which was in view for a period of three to five minutes, but the pilot could not identify it.

At 1 A.M., thirteen minutes before the sighting, the United States Weather Bureau station at Fairchild Air Force Base had released a pibal balloon. Winds aloft at altitudes of 7000 to 10,000 feet were from the northwest with a speed of about fifty knots. Computations showed that the existing winds would have carried the balloon to the southeast, and it would have been over Rosalia, which is 12.5 nautical miles southeast of Fairchild Air Force Base, in about fifteen minutes. The plane sighted the unknown near Rosalia thirteen minutes after the launching. The baloon carried white running lights which accounted for the "blinking" described, and the circling climb of the UFO is typical of a balloon's course. Thus all the evidence supports ATIC's conclusion that the UFO was a weather balloon. [2]

