PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE

04 Feb 59

2. LOCATION

Pennsylvania & Ohio

3. DATE-TIME GROUP

Local _____

GMT 25/0045Z

4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION

☒ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar

☒ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar

5. PHOTOS

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. SOURCE

Civil Airlines [redacted]

7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION

45 min

8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS

3

9. COURSE

12. CONCLUSIONS

- ☐ Was Balloon
- ☐ Probably Balloon
- ☐ Possibly Balloon
- ☒ Was Aircraft Refueling Opr
- ☐ Probably Aircraft
- ☐ Possibly Aircraft
- ☐ Was Astronomical
- ☐ Probably Astronomical
- ☐ Possibly Astronomical
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation
- ☐ Unknown

10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING

Capt [redacted] American Airlines pilot, Two United Airlines Pilots, Control tower operators at Pittsburg airport, and ground observers near Akron, Ohio. Capt [redacted] on UAL flight near Youngstown, Ohio also witness the refueling.

11. COMMENTS

Verified as refueling operation. 3 B-47's being refueled by KC-97.

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

24 February 1959 - Over Pennsylvania:

This sighting first came to the attention of the ATIC through a UPI press release. The American Airlines office at Romulus, Michigan was contacted to determine if a report was made to the airlines officials. Captain [redacted], the observer, had not made a report. The airlines official contacted he would obtain a report from Captain [redacted] and forward it to the ATIC.

A United airlines pilot, Captain [redacted] was also reported to have seen the objects. A call was put through to the United airlines offict at Akron-Canton airport, Ohio. The following is a summary of the information given ~~to~~ to the United Airlines office by Captain [redacted]:

"When observed ~~was~~ 70 mile East of Youngstown, Ohio, 3 lights in almost a straight line formation were observed. As observer watched, the middle light appeared to vary in its distance to the others. The lights had a slight variation in intensity. As observer got past Youngstown, the lights ~~would~~ disappear and reappear. As observer was approximately halfway between Youngstown and Cleveland, the lights moved off and disappeared. They were observed for approximately 20 minute.

A call was placed to the Base operations at Greater Pittsburgh airport, who was requested to investigate. Their reply was received on 6 March 57. The tower operators who were reported to have seen the three lights on 24 February 57 was contacted and the following information was received: the tower operators saw the lights and immediately checked with [redacted]. It was disclosed that there were three (3) B-47's in the area at the time on a night refueling ~~station~~ mission.

On 9 March 19-1, the report from Captain [redacted] was received by the ATIC. His description is essentialy the same as the one given by Captain [redacted].

It might be noted that Captain [redacted] states in his report that he has never witnessed a night refueling operation. Yet

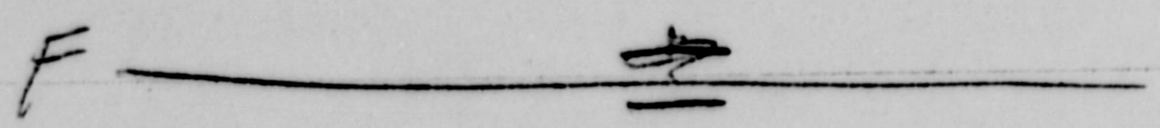
front of A/C to right

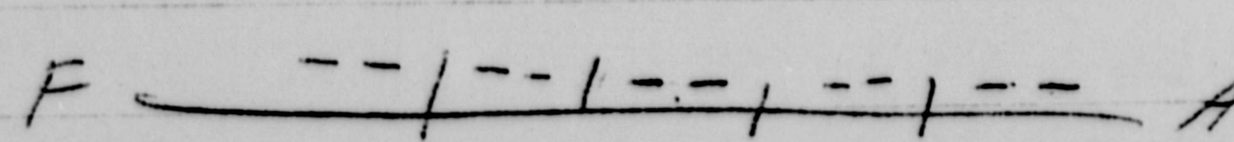
2 rows of light 35000' 13 > @ .8 > 500 KN.
one for ~~B~~ elev. 17000' 97 @ 200 KN. 1 Ind.
red, or, gr 230 KN. 6 T

Background lights
arranged right behind nose wheel to
leading edge of wing.









Tr. edge of wing is silhouted in
lights.

Apparently right by 24 Feb - comparison

United Air Lines - Akron-Canton Airport

Pilot paid
Flight disappeared
on letdown @
a/c

Pilot gave report to 2040
FL. Supervisor

FAA at Akron-Canton Airport
has tape recording of pilots
talk with tower.

Canton Pa Cedar St
(Mrs. ~~Downer~~) Murray
saw nothing unusual

25 Feb 59

[redacted]

Query from [redacted]
Detroit Times

American airlines pilot says he was chased yesterday by three yellowish balls from eastern Penna to ~~Lock~~ Lake Erie.

Claims stewardesses, pax, and other pilots saw 'em too.

How says the Air Force????

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

3 lights in straight line from
50 miles E. of Youngstown
as watched, the one in middle
varied its distance. Lite would
light vary in intensity. As obs.
got East W. the lite
would disappear and re
appear. As obs. were approx
halfway between, took
off and disappeared.
seen approx 20 minutes in all.

---

2 United airlines pilots saw it
as well as American airlines.
The American airlines is apparently
Capt. [redacted]

Called Mr. [redacted] American Airlines, Romulus, Mich. Phone No. [redacted] Mr. [redacted], Airline pilot, had not made a written report to this office. He stated the newspaper blew up the oral report given. Capt. [redacted] is in New York at this time. Mr. [redacted] stated he would obtain a report and forward it to this office as soon as possible.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Romulus, Mich.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Miss Observers were 50 miles
East of Youngstown, Ohio, 3 lights
in almost a straight line formation
were observed. As observers watched,
the middle light appeared to vary
in its distance to the others. The
lights would have a slight variation
in intensity. As observer got
past Youngstown, the lights would
disappear and reappear. The observer
was approx halfway between
Youngstown and Cleveland, lights
took off and disappeared. They were
observed approx. 20 minutes
altogether.

Called [redacted]

[redacted]

Capt [redacted]

Pilots. Lower saw it
crash Flt 321.
Also 8 other individuals
reported to [redacted]
Capt [redacted] talked to pilot
on flt. 321 over radio
about the object

MEMO ROUTING SLIP

NEVER USE FOR APPROVALS, DISAPPROVALS, CONCURRENCES, OR SIMILAR ACTIONS

1 NAME OR TITLE Major L. J. Tacker	INITIALS		CIRCULATE
ORGANIZATION AND LOCATION SAFIS-3 OSAF	DATE		COORDINATION
2			FILE
			INFORMATION
3			NECESSARY ACTION
			NOTE AND RETURN
4			SEE ME
	Bob Barry		SIGNATURE
	Olean, N.Y.		

REMARKS

Larry- In line with what Major Friend told you today (11 March), it appears from preliminary reports that the Pennsylvania sightings of 24 February were caused by refueling operations of 3 B-47 aircraft. I believe Major Friend is dispatching to you today a report on that. With respect to his other questions- we have no report of a sighting in the Olean area on 25 February. On the 5:30 sighting over Michigan on 24 February, it appears to have been a meteor and some press reports so indicated.

With reference to the North Carolina case, we know nothing of it, and the statement that the TV engineer was quizzed by ATIC personnel is totally false. I suppose the rest of his information is just about as credible. It might be a good idea to ask him to furnish the names of those who did the quizzing.

FROM NAME OR TITLE Ted Hieatt	DATE 11 March 59
ORGANIZATION AND LOCATION AFCIN-4K3	TELEPHONE 55266

DD FORM 1 FEB 50 95 Replaces DA AGO Form 895, 1 Apr 48, and AFHQ Form 12, 10 Nov 47, which may be used.

c43--16--74067-1 GPO

E X T R A C T

Headquarters
AIR DEFENSE COMMAND
United States Air Force
Ent Air Force Base
Colorado Springs, Colorado

GENERAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 8)

2 February 1959

RESCISSION OF GENERAL ORDER. I
ASSIGNMENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF COMMANDS. II

* * * *

II. ASSIGNMENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF COMMANDS--1. Assignment is made of the geographical boundaries of commands indicated, effective 1 January 1959. The verbal orders of the Commander on 1 January 1959 are confirmed.

a. 26th Air Division (SAGE). That geographical area inclosed by a line beginning at 33 degrees 30 minutes north, 70 degrees 00 minutes west; thence northwest to 37 degrees 00 minutes north, 81 degrees 00 minutes west; thence northeast to 39 degrees 15 minutes north, 79 degrees 47 minutes west; thence northwest to 39 degrees 45 minutes north, 80 degrees 30 minutes west; thence north to the United States-Canada international boundary to a point on the boundary at 44 degrees 56 minutes north, 67 degrees 00 minutes west; thence along the United States-Canada international boundary to 44 degrees 30 minutes north, 67 degrees 07 minutes west; thence east to 44 degrees 30 minutes north, 66 degrees 45 minutes west; thence southeast to 43 degrees 30 minutes north, 67 degrees 00 minutes west; thence east to 43 degrees 30 minutes north, 63 degrees 00 minutes west and including that area eastward to the limit of radar surveillance and control of fighter interceptor capability adjacent to the Eastern seaboard.

* * * *

Headquarters
OFFICIAL
Air Defense Command

JARRED V CRABB
Major General, USAF
Chief of Staff

EDMUND B COLUMBA
Captain, USAF
Assistant Director of
Administrative Services

DISTRIBUTION:
"3"

This is a certified true copy

DALE H JENSEN, LT.COL., USAF DIRECTOR OF INTELL
Hq 26th Air Division (SAGE) Syr AFS N.Y.

HEADQUARTERS
26TH AIR DIVISION (SAGE)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
SYRACUSE AIR FORCE STATION
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

OIN

8 APR 1959

SUBJECT: Unidentified Flying Objects Reports.

TO: Commander
Air Technical Intelligence Center
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

1. Reference is made to a recent Associated Press news story concerning the 24 February UFOB sighting over Pennsylvania by an American Airlines crew and passengers. According to the press item, the Air Force announced that this sighting had been evaluated as the lights of a B-47/KC97 refueling operation. It is requested that copies of original and follow-up reports, and ATIC evaluation of this sighting, be forwarded to this headquarters. This report is desired for the purpose of completing UFOB files, and determining why the original reporting agency did not send a copy of the report to this headquarters in accordance with paragraph 14a(2), AFR 200-2.

2. It is further requested that a copy of any UFOB report of a sighting within or close to the boundaries of this command be sent to this headquarters, if the report does not show this headquarters as an addressee as required by paragraph 14a(2) AFR 200-2.

3. This headquarters requests a copy of ATIC preliminary and final evaluations of each UFOB related to the geographical area mentioned above.

4. Boundaries of the 26th Air Division are enclosed for information (Inclosure 1).

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Everitt W. Howe

EVERITT W. HOWE
Lt.Col., USAF
Director of Administrative Services

1 Incl:
1. Extract of Sec II, Hq ADC,
General Odr #8 dated 2 Feb 59

COVER SHEET

SUSPENSE

ORIGIN OF BASIC

DATE

ASSIGNED BY

DATE | TYPE | NO.

SUBJECT

Pennsylvania UFO Sighting (Airlines)

ROUTING

Initial "IN" column to denote review prior to action. Initial "OUT" column to denote review of completed action. (X for action; ✓ for coordination.)

IN	OFFICE	OUT	IN	OFFICE	OUT	IN	OFFICE	OUT	IN	OFFICE	OUT	IN	OFFICE	OUT
	OIN-1			OIN-2			OIN-3			OIN-4			AFOIN	
	OIN-1X			OIN-2X			OIN-3X			OIN-4X			AFOIN-X	
													AFOIN-X	
													AFOIN-X1	
													AFOIN-X2	
													AFOIN-X3	
													AFOIN-X4	
													AFOIN-X5	
													AFOIN-Z	
													CABLES	
												M&R	FILE	
													DISPATCH	

TO: SAFIS-3, ATTN; Maj. Tacker

DATE: 13 March 1959

FROM: AFCIN-4E

COMMENT NO.: 1

COMMENTS *(Use reverse, if necessary)*

4E4/Maj Friend/ac/6-9216/Bldg 828

1. This is the same sighting reported by Capt [redacted] of American Airlines. The ATIC conclusion that the lights probably resulted from a B-47 refueling operation was forwarded to your office on 11 March 1959.

2. Capt. [redacted] reported that he sighted the objects approximately 50 miles east of Youngstown, Ohio at 2040 hours. Mr. [redacted] reports witnesses sighting objects over Akron, Ohio at approximately 2115 hours. The tankers had a ground speed of approximately 200-210 knots and the distance from the point of Capt. [redacted] sighting to Akron is approximately 110-120 miles. This could account for the lights being over Akron at 2115.

3. Unfortunately a Mr. [redacted], who is a member of the Unidentified Flying Objects Research Committee, interviewed Capt. [redacted] of United Airlines and has probably distorted some of the facts of this sighting. You probably remember the experience we had with this organization in connection with the [redacted] Lake case.

H/K Gilbert

H. K. GILBERT
Colonel, USAF
AFCIN-4E

1 Incl:
Ltr dtd 6 Mar 59
fr [redacted]

19 March 1959

Dear Mr. [redacted].

This is to acknowledge your letter of 6 March 1959 concerning the American Airlines pilot's sighting of 24 February near Bradford, Pennsylvania. In addition, two United Airlines pilots saw unidentified flying objects in the same general geographical area.

The geographical area concerned is bordered on the north along the New York-Pennsylvania border (near Bradford, Pennsylvania and Olean, New York) on the route of American Airlines Flight No. 139 departing Newark, New Jersey, at 7:10 p.m. and arriving Detroit, Michigan, at 10:52 p.m. On the south, this geographical area is bordered by the Pittsburg, Pennsylvania-Akron-Youngstown, Ohio, locale over-flown by the United Airlines flights reporting this sighting.

The American Airlines pilot said "sometimes the interval of the three lights were identical to the Belt in the constellation Orion." This was initially mentioned as a possible solution by the Air Force with the qualifying statement that the report as submitted had not yet been analyzed and that the findings of ATIC would be based upon a complete analysis and evaluation of the written report to be submitted. The pilot's report also suggested the possibility that he had witnessed a night aerial refueling operation.

Upon analysis and evaluation, this sighting turned out to be B-47 type aircraft accomplishing night refueling from KC-97 tankers. The American Airlines pilot's report of the sighting confirmed this and Air Force records show that three B-47 type aircraft were in the geographical area mentioned above on a night refueling operation. The tanker has several groups of lights which at a distance would appear to be one or more lights. The time duration of a refueling operation varies, can last well over an hour, depending on the type of operation. The KC-97 refueling a B-47 will fly at an altitude of approximately 17,000 feet at around 230 knots true air speed (ground speed 210 knots). This would account for the

lights being approximately 30 degrees above the American Airlines pilot's horizon and his seeing them for 40 minutes. This coincides with the pilot's report of low speed and configuration of objects.

Your letter also supports this conclusion. The tankers had a ground speed of approximately 210 knots and the United Airlines pilots' reported sighting it at 8:45 p.m., 50 miles east of Youngstown, Ohio, approximately 120 miles from Akron, Ohio. This would account for the tanker aircrafts lights being sighted over Akron at 9:15 p.m. by ground observers.

These findings were made available to all media representatives through the Department of Defense press desk in Washington, D. C., on 16 March 1959. The Air Force is well aware of its obligation to keep the public adequately informed on this subject and press releases are made periodically through the Department of Defense.

For your information, I am inclosing the latest Department of Defense press release on unidentified flying objects.

Sincerely,

Incl

LAWRENCE J. TACKER
Major, USAF
Executive Officer
Public Information Division
Office of Information Services

Mr. [redacted]
[redacted]
Akron 13, Ohio

NOATIC for
Copies for
reply

The Unidentified Flying Objects Research Committee

March 6, 1959

Major Lawrence J. Tacker
Executive Officer
Public Information Division
Office of Information Services
Department of the Air Force
Washington, D.C.

Dear Major Tacker:

On the evening of 24 February 1959 an American Airlines DC 6 was followed for many miles across northern Ohio and finally to Detroit by three unidentified flying objects. All the crew members and also all the passengers saw the UFOs. The reported objects were star-like, three in number, and kept changing position relative to each other. The Captain of the American DC 6 stated that the UFOs definitely were not the belt stars in the constellation Orion.

I mention a few details in this sighting because a few Akron radio stations have announced that the Air Force has explained the objects seen as the belt stars in the constellation Orion. Is this true? Has the Air Force released a definite explanation for this sighting?

Our committee has on file the facts that two other commercial aircraft in the Akron area also saw the three lights. These were both United Airlines flights, and both aircraft were in radio communication with each other concerning the sighting. We also have on file a number of credible observers on the ground in the Akron area that saw the three lights pass over flying west at 9:15 P.M. This time coincides perfectly with the sighting of the three lights by the commercial airlines.

If the Air Force has explained these sightings as the belt stars in the constellation Orion, I ask you for an explanation of how this is possible. Because of the facts mentioned above, which have been verified, the three lights could not have been stars. If the Air Force insists that the objects were stars and will not release there reasons for these conclusions, we will be forced to contact the proper authorties to see that the Air Force explanation is investigated.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
UFO Research Committee

HEADQUARTERS
2253D AIR BASE GROUP
United States Air Force
Greater Pittsburgh Airport
Coraopolis, Pennsylvania

5 MAR 1959

BO

SUBJECT: Unidentified Flying Objects

TO: Commander
Air Technical Intelligence Center
Wright Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio

1. In reference to telephone call received from Sgt Bolieu, your headquarters, at 0820 hours, 2 March 1959, concerning three unidentified lights sighted by the tower operators here at Greater Pittsburgh Airport at approximately 0140Z, 25 February 1959, the following information is submitted.

771st ACW Sq.
Claysburg, PA.

2. The tower operators on duty at the time of the sighting reported that three lights were observed. An immediate check with [redacted] disclosed there were three B-47s in the area at the time on a night refueling mission. The tower operators made no report due to the fact there was nothing unusual to report. Furthermore, no statements were made to the newspapers.

3. The names of the tower operators would not be given by the control tower supervisor because he did not want the personnel concerned involved in an investigation.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

William D Hostutler

WILLIAM D. HOSTUTLER
Captain, USAF
Administrative Officer

ATIC

American Airlines, Inc.

Flight 139 - February 24, 1959
Captain [redacted]

Departing Newark 1910 arriving Detroit 2252.

It was approximately 2045 I noticed these three lights off my left wing in the vicinity of Bradford, Pennsylvania. I was flying 8,500 VFR on top of broken clouds. Visibility was unlimited with no upper clouds observed. It was extremely difficult to ascertain the distance of the lights. The color of the lights were from a yellow to a light orange. The intensity of the lights also changed from dim to a bright brilliant. Sometimes the interval of the three lights were identical to the Belt in the constellation Orion. Occasionally the rear lights lagged somewhat behind. Also changed altitudes. During the 40 minutes of observation, the three lights occasionally came forward from a 9 o'clock position to a 11 o'clock position and then fell back to the original 9 o'clock position. Also occasionally the lights extinguished completely alternating from one to another, sometimes the whole three were extinguished and during this whole operation, as I mentioned before, the lights changed in intensity. This action was not only seen by myself but four crew members and passengers on board and also by two other airplanes in the area.

The only possible explanation other than flying saucers could be a jet tanker refueling operation. Never having witnessed refueling operation at night, I am not aware of the lighting of the jet tanker.

My air speed during this complete flight was 250 knots indicated. I also do not know the air speed of tankers during operation if this could be so. I contacted ATC to find out if they had any airplanes on a clearance and no three airplanes were given.

In summary, it was difficult for me to believe they were jets because of low speed and configuration. If they weren't jets I still don't know any more than I did

before, even though I watched them for 40 minutes before. Due to the dark and strong lights I was not able to ascertain any size or shape. The altitude of the objects was 30° above my horizon. Distance away is unknown.

AMERICAN AIRLINES
CABLE ADDRESS AMAIR
DETROIT METROPOLITAN AIRPORT • INKSTER, MICHIGAN

March 4, 1959

Commander Air Technical Intelligence Center
Wright Patterson Air Force Base
Ohio

Att: ADCIN 4E 4

Gentlemen:

As requested by telephone on February 25, 1959, I am attaching statement from our Capta[redacted] regarding objects sighted on his flight 139 of February 24, 1959.

Very truly yours,

AMERICAN AIRLINES, INC.

[redacted]

Manager of Operations

HEADQUARTERS
2500TH AIR BASE WING
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MITCHEL AIR FORCE BASE, NEW YORK

REPLY TO ATTN OF: OP

14 AUG 1959

SUBJECT: Unidentified Flying Object Sighting

TO: ATIC
Wright-Patterson AFB
Ohio

1. The following information is furnished in reply to your message, AFCIN-4E4G-8-1592-E, dated 5 August 1959.

a. Attached is a statement prepared by Captain [redacted] describing the incident. This statement was made shortly after the incident occurred and was obtained from the Public Relations Department of American Airlines. It was felt that this statement would be more accurate since it was prepared when the incident was fresh in Captain [redacted] mind, rather than having him prepare a completely new statement at this time.

b. The following additional information was received by telephone interview with Captain [redacted]. The flight had departed Newark and was on a VFR-direct course to Detroit. At approximately 2045 hours, at a location approximately one-half way between the Williamsport OMNI and the Bradford OMNI (Chart 18 USAF/USN Flight Information Publication Enroute-Low Altitude) Captain [redacted] sighted three (3) lights at approximately nine o'clock to his aircraft. He was flying at 8500 feet in the clear above scattered cloud tops at 5500 feet. The top of the haze layer was at approximately 5500 feet. The pilot indicated that at his altitude it was clear and unlimited. The lights stayed off his left wing moving from the nine o'clock to the eleven o'clock position and back as he proceeded Westbound on Victor 116 until he reached a position in the vicinity of the Angler Intersection (Angler Intersection located on Chart 17 of the USAF/USN Flight Information Publication Enroute-Low Altitude) where Victor 116 crosses Victor 5. In the vicinity of the Angler Intersection the lights turned toward the South and disappeared. At approximately this same time Captain [redacted] started his let down for an approach to Detroit. During the period that the lights were visible Captain [redacted] aircraft was on an approximate heading of 290 degrees. Immediately preceding the sighting Captain [redacted] was in the left seat and was having dinner.

The lights in the cockpit were turned low and he noticed the lights off the left wing by normal scanning of the area. He then turned the cockpit lights off while he continued to observe the sighting. His description of the lights was that they varied from a yellow to a light orange and each individual light was the approximate size of a quarter held at arm's length. The three (3) lights appeared to be in trail, echelon upward, at an angle of approximately thirty degrees with a distance between each individual light of about the space of ten (10) quarters held at arm's length. The number two light appeared to hold its position throughout the period of the sighting. The number three light was quite erratic and would drop back, gain altitude and then pull back into position. This occurred approximately ten times during the period of the sighting. Captain [redacted] indicated at times the number three light appeared to be dancing.

c. Captain [redacted] has been flying since approximately 1940. During the war he was a civilian flight instructor for approximately two and one-half years with the Navy. For the past fifteen and one-half years he has been flying for American Airlines. He has approximately 20,000 hours of flying time.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

R. F. WERKMEISTER
Major, USAF
Administrative Officer

1 Atch
Statement of [redacted]

JOINT MESSAGEFORM

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

SPACE BELOW RESERVED FOR COMMUNICATION CENTER

4E47 [illegible] 1016Z

TOT 05/2015Z
gr. 4E

PRECEDENCE		TYPE MSG (Check)			ACCOUNTING SYMBOL	ORIG. OR REFERS TO	CLASSIFICATION OF REFERENCE
		BOOK	MULTI	SINGLE			
ACTION	ROUTINE			X	AF	ORIG	
INFO							

FROM: ATIC W-P AFB

TO: MITCHEL AFB, N. Y. g-cy-NY 1399

/UNCLAS/FROM: AFCIN-4E4g 8-1592-E

ATTN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER, REQUEST YOUR ORGANIZATION CONTACT CAPT [redacted] AND CO-PILOT [redacted], OF AMERICAN AIRLINES, REGARDING AN UFO SIGHTING MADE BY THEM ON 24 FEB 59. REQUEST AS MUCH DETAILED INFO AS POSSIBLE BE FORWARDED TO THIS OFFICE.

COORDINATION:

AFCIN-4E4 RRShoop DATE 4 Aug 59

AFCIN-4E [illegible] DATE 8/4/59

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

DATE 30 | TIME 1525

MONTH JULY | YEAR 1959

SYMBOL: AFCIN-4E4g

TYPED NAME AND TITLE (Signature, if required): Major Robert J. Friend

PHONE 69216 | PAGE NR. 1 | NR. OF PAGES 1

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

RELEASER

SIGNATURE: L J Harrell

TYPED (or stamped) NAME AND TITLE:

LOUIS J. HARRELL
CAPTAIN, USAF
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

DD FORM 1 MAY 55 173 REPLACES DD FORM 173, 1 OCT 48, WHICH WILL BE USED UNTIL EXHAUSTED

UFO Sighting by Capt. [redacted]

AFCIN-1A1, ATTN: Capt. [redacted] 11 March 1959

AFCIN-4E 1

AFCIN-4E4/Maj Friend/ac/69216/Bldg 828

1. Reference telephone conversation between Capt [redacted] analysis of subject sighting and copy of Capt [redacted] report is submitted.

2. Upon receiving an unofficial report of Capt [redacted] sighting, the American Airlines office in Detroit was contacted. The Captain had not made a written report and upon request of this Center, the Detroit office agreed to have Capt. [redacted] submit one.

3. In the meantime, another report of two United Airlines pilots sighting of the same lights came in. The Pittsburgh Airport tower operators also were reported to have made an observation of the lights. The 2253d Air Base Group at Greater Pittsburgh Airport was requested to investigate. The tower operators said there was nothing unusual so they didn't report it. However, a check was made with the 772nd AOWRON at Claysburg, Pa. and it was determined three B-47's were in the area on a night refueling operation.

4. Capt. [redacted] description and that of the two United Airlines pilots coincide. All three observers were heading in a westerly direction and the lights were to their left.

5. A check was made with the aircraft support systems project office, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, to determine the characteristics of a night refueling

operation. The tanker has several groups of lights which at a distance would appear to be one or more lights. The time duration of a refueling operation varies, can last well over an hour, depending on the type of operation. The KC-97 refueling a B-47 will fly at an altitude of approximately 17,000 feet at around 230 knots true. This would account for the lights being approximately 30 degrees above Capt [redacted] horizon and his sighting them for 40 minutes.

6. All evidence indicates Capt [redacted] probably saw a refueling operation.

H. K. Gilbert

H. K. GILBERT
Colonel, USAF
AFCIN-4E

1 Incl:
Cy Rpt by
Cap[redacted]

[redacted] 11 March 57

ONE

UFO Sighting by Capt. [redacted]

SAFIS-3, ATTN: Maj. Tacker

AFCIN-4E

11 March 1959

1

4E4/Maj Friend/ac/6-9216/Bldg 828

1. This is a summary of the investigation and evaluation of a sighting made by Capt. [redacted], American Airlines pilot, and other individuals on the evening of 24 February 1959.

2. Capt. [redacted], as well as two United Airlines pilots and control tower operators at Pittsburgh Airport, observed three lights in the night sky. The 2253d Air Base Group at Greater Pittsburgh Airport was requested to investigate. The tower operators said there was nothing unusual so they didn't report it. However, a check was made with the 772nd ACWRON at Clayaburg, Pa., and it was determined three B-47's were in the area on a night refueling operation. All observers description substantiated the sighting of one and the same group of lights.

3. A check was made with the Aircraft Support Systems Project Office, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, to determine the characteristics of a night refueling operation. The tanker has several groups of lights which at a distance would appear to be one or more lights. The time duration of a refueling operation varies, can last well over an hour, depending on the type of operation. The KC-97 refueling a B-47 will fly at an altitude of approximately 17,000 feet at around 230 knots true. This would account for the lights being approximately 30 degrees above Capt. [redacted] horizon and his seeing them for 40 minutes.

4. All evidence indicates the observers probably saw a refueling operation.

5. It is suggested that a letter of appreciation for Capt. [redacted] be addressed to the American Airlines New York Office. This letter should also contain a summary of the above evidence.

6. A copy of Capt. [redacted] report is inclosed for your information.

H. K. Gilbert

H. K. GILBERT
Colonel, USAF
AFCIN-4E

1 Incl:
Cy Rpt
by Ca[redacted]

Robert J. Friend Major
AFCIN 4E4g 11 March 59

R. G. Lee 11 Mar 59
COCOSAC
AFCIN 4EF

JOINT MESSAGEFORM - CONTINUATION SHEET

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

FROM:

ATIC

WERE THOSE USED BY A/C DURING REFUELING OPERATIONS.

COORDINATION:

AFCIN-4E4 _____ DATE 10 MAR 59
Col Glaser

AFCIN-4E _____ DATE 3/10/59
Col Gilbert

SYMBOL	PAGE NR	NR OF PAGES	SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	INITIALS
AFCIN-4E4	2	2	UNCLASSIFIED	

DD FORM 1 MAY 55 173-1

☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1955—852256

JOINT MESSAGEFORM

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

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SPACE BELOW RESERVED FOR COMMUNICATION CENTER

MAR 10 22 20 '59

PRIORITY

PRECEDENCE		TYPE MSG (Check)			ACCOUNTING SYMBOL	ORIG. OR REFERS TO	CLASSIFICATION OF REFERENCE
		BOOK	MULTI	SINGLE			
ACTION	~~KEXXXX~~ PRIORITY			X	AF	ORIG	
INFO							

FROM: ATIC

TO: HQ., USAF, WASHINGTON, D. C., ATTN: AFCIN-1A1 RZZHQ

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

/UNCLASSIFIED/FROM: AFCIN-4E4 3-444-E

REF TELECON BETWEEN CAPT COPAS, AFCIN-1A1 AND SGT BOLIEU, AFCIN-4E4, 10 MAR 59, CONCERNING AN UFO SIGHTING BY AIRLINE PILOT CAPT [redacted]. THE FOLLOWING INFO IS SUBMITTED: CAPT [redacted] WAS REQUESTED, THROUGH AMERICAN AIRLINES OFFICE IN DETROIT, TO MAKE A WRITTEN REPORT OF HIS SIGHTING TO THIS CENTER. CY OF THIS REPORT IS BEING FORWARDED TO YOUR OFFICE. UPON INVESTIGATION BY THE 2253D AB GP AT GREATER PITTSBURGH AIRPORT, IT WAS DISCLOSED THAT THREE B-47'S WERE IN THE AREA ON A NIGHT REFUELING OPERATION. DURING REFUELING OPERATION, THE B-47 AND KC-97 ARE FLYING AT APPROX 17,000 FT AT A SPEED OF APPROX 230 KNOTS. THIS WOULD ACCOUNT FOR THE LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED AND THE ALTITUDE GIVEN BY CAPT [redacted]. THIS OFFICE IS OF THE OPINION THAT THE LIGHTS OBSERVED BY CAPT [redacted]

DATE	TIME
10	1220
MONTH	YEAR
MAR	1959

WRITER

SYMBOL: AFCIN-4E4

TYPED NAME AND TITLE: MAJOR ROBERT J. FRIEND

PHONE 6-9216 | PAGE NR. 1 | NR. OF PAGES 2

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

RELEASER

SIGNATURE

TYPED (or stamped) NAME AND TITLE

DD FORM 1 MAY 55 173

REPLACES DD FORM 173, 1 OCT 49, WHICH WILL BE USED UNTIL EXHAUSTED

TAB

A — TWX's and Letters pertaining to evaluation of Sighting

B — 2500th ABW Investigation

C — [redacted] Statement to American Airlines dtd 24 Feb 59

D — Pittsburgh Airport Tower Operations Statement dtd 5 Mar 59

E — [redacted]etter dtd 6 Mar 59 and Reply (Akron Sightings)

F — Refueling Area Boundaries

G — Investigative Data

H — UFORC Report

I — News Articles and Extracts from UFO Publications

UFO SIGHTING OVER PENNSYLVANIA
Captain [redacted]
24 February 1959

SAFC

Departing Newark 1910 arriving Detroit 2252.

It was approximately 2045 when I noticed these three lights off my left wing in the vicinity of Bradford, Pennsylvania. I was flying 8,500 VFR on top of broken clouds. Visibility was unlimited with no upper clouds observed. It was extremely difficult to ascertain the distance of the lights. The color of the lights was from a yellow to a light orange. The intensity of the lights also changed from dim to a bright brilliant. Sometimes the interval of the three lights was identical to the Belt in the constellation Orion. Occasionally the rear lights lagged somewhat behind. Also changed altitudes. During the 40 minutes of observation, the three lights occasionally came forward from a 9 o'clock position to an 11 o'clock position and then fell back to the original 9 o'clock position. Also, occasionally the lights extinguished completely alternating from one to another, sometimes the whole three were extinguished and during this whole operation, as I mentioned before, the lights changed in intensity. This action was not only seen by myself but four crew members and passengers on board and also by two other airplanes in the area.

The only possible explanation, other than flying saucers, could be a jet tanker refueling operation. Never having witnessed refueling operations at night, I am not aware of the lighting of the jet tanker.

My air speed during this complete flight was 250 knots indicated. I also do not know the air speed of tankers during operation if this could be so. I contacted ATC to find out if they had any airplanes on a clearance and no three airplanes were given.

In summary it was difficult for me to believe they were jets because of low speed and configuration. If they weren't jets I still don't know anymore than I did before, even though I watched them for 40 minutes before. Due to the dark and strong lights I was not able to ascertain any size or shape. The altitude of the objects was 30 degrees above my horizon. Distance away is unknown.

A check was made with the aircraft support systems project office, Wright-Patterson AFB, to determine the characteristics of a night refueling operation. The tanker has several groups of lights which at a distance would appear to be one or more lights. The time duration of a refueling operation varies, can last well over an hour, depending upon the type of operation. Refueling would take place at approximately 17,000 feet and approximately 230 knots true.

During the investigation the Air Force determined that there were three B-47's in the area of Capt [redacted] flight path during the hour of the sighting. These B-47's were on a night refueling mission.

All evidence indicates that Capt [redacted] probably saw a B-47 refueling operation.

UFO ANALYSIS SHEET

Location Pennsylvania

Date 24 Feb 1959 Hour (Z) 2045

WX Visibility unlimited at 8500' - on top of broken clouds

Description Three lights varying in color from yellow to orange, also changing in intensity from dim to brilliant. Lights apparently moving east to west

Direction of Motion E to W

Satellite: (AFCIN-4F3, Phone 69219) Checked - objects much too slow and uniform.

Astronomical Phenomena (Meteor, Comet, Planet, etc) Objects too slow for meteors - description doesn't fit - motion rules out planet

Radar Analysis (AFCIN-4E1) N/A

Natural Phemomena (Ball Lightning, etc) Size of object rules out "ball lightning".

Aircraft, Balloons, Airships, etc. Possibly aircraft

Other

Evaluation of Source Reliability Probably very good.

Analysis and Conclusions: Information from Pittsburgh is that a B-47 refueling operation was in progress at the time of the sighting. This operation took place in the area of the sighting. The Air Force bomber and tanker aircraft were flying from east to west. Witness indicates in his statement that he is <u>not</u> familiar with the light pattern used during refueling operation. The objects of this sighting were probably due to misinterpretation of the lights on aircraft during a refueling operation.

Friend.

EXTRACT FROM ARTICIE BY [redacted]

[redacted] A good illustration of the USAF policy on the handling of UFO sighting reports over the years is to be found in the case of the UFO incident of February 24, 1959. One of the key observers of this phenomenon was Captain [redacted], a pilot for American Airlines. His plane was on a non-stop flight from Newark, N.J. to [redacted] on the night of Feb. 24. When over Phillipsburg, Penna., at about 8:45 p.m., he observed three unidentified brightly illuminated aerial objects trailing his plane. The plane was followed for 35 or 40 minutes by these objects, which were observed not only by the crew and 35 passengers of Capt[redacted]s plane, but also by five other planes and numerous ground observers in the line of the trip. Exhaustive details with respect to this incident are given in the 22-page printed report compiled by the Unidentified Flying Objects Research Committee of Akron, Ohio. NICAP also thoroughly checked the facts of this sighting, and so we have here an incident concerning which we have the most reliable information possible. The files of the Akron Committee contain the signed statements of several ground observers. Concerning this sighting it can be reasonably concluded that the number and character of the witnesses established the validity of the incident beyond doubt.

Representatives of the Air Force made only the most superficial investigation of this incident, an investigation (if such a term could be used to dignify its semblance of effort) based on Captain [redacted]'s brief preliminary statement made at the Detroit office of American Airlines and upon a news report from the March 1 edition of the New York Herald Tribune. The Akron Committee report states: "They (the Air Force) did not interview Captain [redacted] (the pilot) nor did they question co-pilot [redacted], the stewardesses, the passengers, nor the ground observers. As far as is known, none of these people were at any time contacted by ATIC(Air Technical Intelligence Command)? Even though they had no first-hand information of this incident, the Air Force issued official explanations of the sighting on three separate successive dates, all three explanations completely contradictory. These so-called explanations are as follows: (1) On the morning of February 23 the Air Force released to the press this official opinion: "Experts of the Technical Intelligence Agency said that they believed the pilots may have sighted stars, especially the formation Orion." - (2) The March 1 edition of the New York Herald Tribune carried an official Air Force statement in direct answer to an inquiry about this sighting by six American and United Airline crews on February 24. Quoting the NICAP Bulletin, The UFO Investigator, for February-March 1959: " Some (witnesses) were sarcastically labelled as persons who can't remember anything when they sober up the next day. The rest, implied the official Air Force spokesman, either were deluded by ordinary objects or were outright liars." (3) Subsequent comments by the observers of this incident apparently disclosed to the public the errors of these judgments, and so, three weeks laterm the Air Force offered an entirely different explanation, as follows: "The American Airlines sighting of February 24, near Bradford, Penna., three weeks later turned out to be a B-47 type aircraft accomplishing night refueling from a KC-97 tanker . . . . " In a statement to the Long Island Daily Press on March 24, Capt. [redacted] said "I don't care what the Air Force says, the objects I saw could travel at 2,000 miles an hour and were definitely not conventional aircraft. If the Air Force wants to belive that," he added, (referring to the refuelling operation explanation), "it can. But I know what a B-47 looks like, and I know what a KC-97 tanker looks like; further, I know what they look like in operation at night. And that's not what I saw."

the Air Force's third explanation of his sighting, "all [redacted] claimed that this was factory." Captain [redacted] is no longer discussing his sighting of the three unknown contradictory and none satisfactory objects. After his initial comments in newspapers, exposing the obvious flaws in the Air Force's explanations, the muzzle was quickly applied. American Air Lines, through Air Force insistence, was forced to silence [redacted], their attitude being that good relations with officialdom must be maintained at all costs. Consequently, he was requested not to publicise "so controversial a subject." Captain [redacted] has commented, "I feel very deeply concerned with this loss of my own personal freedom." The first amendment to the Constitution of the United States reads in part: "Congress shall make no law . . . prohibiting the freedom of speech or of the press." . ." While the silence order was imposed on Captain [redacted], however, the same did not apply to Mrs. [redacted]. She remarked, "Although the Captain isn't talking, I can talk . . ." Mrs. [redacted] was asked if Captain [redacted] would be willing to go before the Space Committee Hearings in Washington to relate his story. Mrs. [redacted] replied: "Definitely. In fact, a Senator asked the Captain if he could come to Washington and tell his story. The Captain said 'Yes, I would go, but you would have to subpoena me. Then I could talk.'" From NICAP BULLETIN, July-August 1959: "In a recent development, the Air Force is now circulating a statement, allegedly from American Airlines, quoting Capt. [redacted] as saying that he had never seen jet refuelling operations at night and that the UFOs he saw on February 24 could have been a jet refuelling operating. The unsigned statement is in direct contradiction to the statement [redacted] made to the NICAP Director to the Long Island Daily Press and in taped interviews. In effect, [redacted]'s statements have been branded by the Air Force as lies after they apparently requested American Airlines to silence him so he could not answer back. American Airlines had deliberately arranged some of [redacted]'s early publicity before he was suddenly told to stop talking. Copies of the contradictory statements have been sent to several members of Congress."

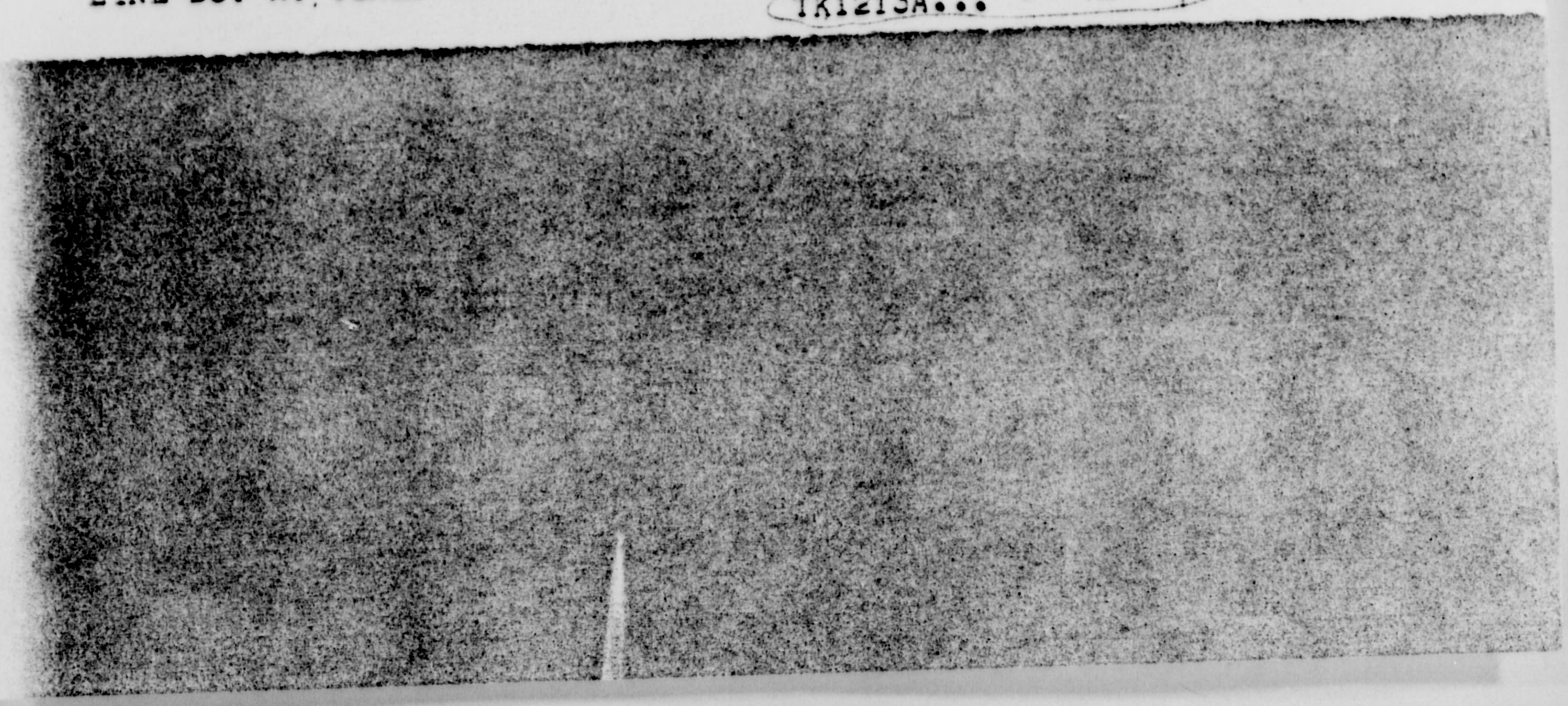
In regard to the 24 February 1957 American Air Lines pilot's sighting near Bradford, Pennsylvania, the geographical area concerned is bordered on the north along the New York-Pennsylvania border (near Bradford and Olean, New York) on the route of American Air Lines Flight No. 134. On the south, this geographical area is bordered by the Pittsburg, Pennsylvania-Akron-Youngstown, Ohio area. The American Air lines pilot, Captain [redacted], indicated in his statement submitted to the Air Force by the American Air Lines, Incorporated, that sometimes the interval of the three lights were identical to the Belt in the constellation Orion. This was initially mentioned by the Air Force as a possible solution with the qualifying statement that the report as submitted had not yet been analyzed and that the findings of ATIC would be based upon a complete analysis and evaluation of the written report as submitted. The pilot's report, a copy of which is attached, also suggested the possibility that he might have witnessed a night aerial refueling operation. Captain [redacted] has not communicated with the Air Force since his original statement to change or edit it in any way.

cc: COORD
CMBK-C
3TBK
3AFOI

Upon analysis and evaluation, this sighting turned out to be B-47 type aircraft accomplishing night refueling from KC-97 tankers. The American Air Lines pilot's report of the sighting tentatively indicated this. Air Force records showed that three B-47 type aircraft were in the geographical area mentioned above on the night refueling operation. The 722nd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron at Claysburg, Pennsylvania confirmed this fact.

DU4
DETROIT, FEB. 25--(UPI)--A REPORT OF "FLYING SAUCERS" OVER MICHIGAN TODAY FOLLOWED ON THE HEELS OF SIGHTINGS OF THREE UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS BY AN ENTIRE PLANELOAD OF PASSENGERS, PLUS THE CREW.
MRS. [redacted] OF [redacted] IN SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN SAID SHE WAS OUT IN A FIELD TRIMMING FRUIT TREES ABOUT 3 P.M. TODAY WHEN A HIRED HAND REPORTED SEEING THREE OR FOUR OBJECTS "ABOUT THE SIZE OF DINNER PLATES." SHE SAID SHE ALSO SAW THEM AND THE OBJECTS APPEARED LIGHT RED OR LIGHT PINK IN COLOR AND WERE "FLYING MUCH FASTER THAN A JET."
LAST NIGHT THREE STRANGE FLYING OBJECTS WERE FIRST SPOTTED OVER PENNSYLVANIA BY CAPT. [redacted], OF SYOSSEY, N.Y., PILOT OF AN AMERICAN AIRLINES PLANE ENROUTE TO DETROIT FROM NEW YORK.
[redacted] CHECKED WITH HIS CO-PILOT, [redacted], OF NYACK, N.Y., AND HIS ENGINEER, WHO ALSO SAW THEM. THEN [redacted] NOTIFIED THE 35 PASSENGERS ABOARD THE PLANE.
[redacted]S, 41, MANUFACTURING MANAGER OF CURTIS WRIGHT DIVISION AT UTICA, SAID HE AND THE OTHER PASSENGERS SPOTTED THE STRANGE BLUISH-WHITE LIGHTS AFTER [redacted] NOTIFIED THEM. HE ALSO PRAISED THE WAY THE PILOT TOLD THE PASSENGERS ABOUT THE LIGHTS. "IT WAS VERY CLEVER," HE SAID. "THERE WAS NO PANIC OR WORRY AMONG ANY OF THEM."
[redacted]N SAID WHEN HE FIRST SAW THE MYSTERIOUS LIGHTS, HE THOUGHT THEY WERE THE BELT OF ORION, A GROUP OF STARS IN A ROW SIMILAR TO THE LIGHTS HE SAW. BUT HE SAID HE LOOKED AGAIN AND FOUND THE BELT OF ORION TOO.
[redacted] SAID THE LIGHTS WERE NOT CLOSE TO THE PLANE, BUT APPEARED IN THE SOUTHERN SKY, A LITTLE HIGHER THAN HIS PLANE, WHICH WAS FLYING AT ABOUT 8,500 FEET. HE SAID THE LIGHTS APPEARED TO BE IN A UNIFORM LINE BUT AT TIMES CHANGED POSITION.

TK1213A... -26 Feb 59



(Copyright 1950)

DC-6 Pilot, Passengers, See Saucers

Detroit (AP) — The pilot of an American Airlines DC-6 passenger plane said yesterday three mysterious objects that looked like shining saucers appeared to accompany the plane for 45 minutes Tuesday night on its nonstop flight from Newark, N.J., to Detroit.

Capt. Peter Killian of Syosset, N.Y., who has flown passenger planes for 15 years, said, "I have never seen anything like it before."

Killian said other members of the crew and the 35 passengers also saw the flying objects.

KILLIAN AND Co-Pilot John Dee of Nyack, N.Y., said they lost the three strange objects in the haze when they started their descent for landing at Detroit's Metropolitan Airport while the plane was over Cleveland, O.

N. D. Puscas, Garden City, Mich., a passenger, said the strange objects appeared to dance in the sky. Puscas is general manufacturing manager of Curtis Wright Division at Utica.

Plane Pilot Sights 'Flying Saucers'

N.Y. Journal Am.

DETROIT, Feb. 25 (AP).—The pilot of an American Airlines DC-6 passenger plane said today three mysterious objects that looked like shining saucers appeared to accompany the plane for 45 minutes last night on its non-stop flight from Newark, N. J., to Detroit.

Capt. Peter Killian of Syosset, L. I., who has flown passenger planes for 15 years, said "I have never seen anything like it before."

Killian said other members of the crew and the 35 passengers also saw the flying objects. The plane left Newark at 7:10 p.m.

Killian and co-pilot John [illegible], of Nyack, N. Y., said they saw the three strange objects emerge from the haze when they started their descent for landing at Detroit's Metropolitan Airport. The three bright whitish objects first were sighted while the plane was flying at 8,500 feet between Philipsburg and Bradford, Pa., at 6:45 p.m.

"The objects were by no means close to the plane," Killian said, "but one would move in at intervals, fall back again and change its place in the formation while keeping abreast of the ship, which was traveling at 350 mph."

Killian said he radioed two other American airlines planes flying in the vicinity of his ship to make sure "I wasn't seeing lightning bugs in the cockpit." He said both other captains radioed back they saw the flying objects too.

PHILADELPHIA INQ.
21 March 1959

Air Force Explains

Lights in Sky Real McCoy

WASHINGTON, March 20 (AP). THE Air Force said today that mysterious lighted objects recently reported by a commercial airliner were lights of three jet bombers refueling in the air.

The lights were reported on the night of Feb. 24 over Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan. The pilot of an American Airlines plane and a number of the 35 passengers on a flight from Newark, N. J., to Detroit told about the flying objects.

Four days later the Air Force Technical Intelligence Agency at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base said the lights might have been stars glimpsed through breaks in heavy cloud formations.

The Air Force said today, however, that it now has been determined that the lights were from B-47 bombers that were being refueled by a KC-97 tanker in an operation that lasted for more than one hour. The Air Force report said that use of several lights during the refueling explained "some of the commercial airlines reports of being followed by lights."

BALTIMORE SUN
21 March 1959

HELP SOUGHT BY RICKOVER

Admiral Wants Protection From Pentagon Panels

Washington, March 20 (AP)—Vice Adm. Hyman G. Rickover told Congress today that he can foresee a future in which "we wind up with all committees and no work done."

Rickover was talking about the Defense Department and its relations with his own unconventional group of atomic planners. This group was largely responsible for the first atomic submarine and civilian power plant.

He told a House Operations subcommittee that his group is one where military men and civilians do not sit at adjoining desks duplicating each others' work.

Ability Only Basis

"We have civilians working for officers, we have officers working for civilians. We have lieutenant commanders working for ensigns. Whoever does the job best gets the job."

Rickover testified without hesitation, that "the greatest interference with our work comes from panels and committees.

"As long as there is money around, there will be lots of committees," Rickover said. He con-

REPORT on

Unidentified Flying Objects

observed Feb. 24, 1959 by

AMERICAN - UNITED

Airline Pilots

Compiled by

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS RESEARCH

COMMITTEE — AKRON, OHIO

In 1958 the Unidentified Flying Objects Research Committee (UFORC) was formed. Its birth stemmed from the realization that an alarming public ignorance surrounded the subject of Flying Saucers, or Unidentified Flying Objects.

Since its formation the Committee has been working diligently throughout the northeast ern Ohio area. It has furnished UFO information via radio, newspapers, television, and public forums, and has provided speakers on many occasions. The Akron area has come to accept the UFORC as a reliable source of information on this subject. Akron's Mayor, Mr. Leo Berg, has commended the Committee by stating, "The UFORC is an educational organization for the people, and should continue its performance."

The UFORC has gained world-wide recognition through its first publication, "The Fitzgerald Report". In this, the Committee's second UFO report, the same high standard of factual reporting has prevailed.

Many books have been written on the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects. Scores of periodicals appear monthly. These have found their way into libraries, Universities, hosp itals, churches, offices and other business, cultural and social centers, as well as into private homes everywhere. It is the sincere hope of the UFORC that this second factual document will not only further the understanding in Flying Saucers but will, perhaps, impart a sense of urgency to the reader and in that way advance the case for UFOs.

It is the aim of the Committee to place a copy of this document in the hands of the President of the United States, his cabinet, all members of Congress, newspapers, radio stations, libraries and persons, organizations and institutions where it is believed enough interest and concern will be aroused to help bring about an official, full scale UFO investigation.

For permission to use certain letters, documents and photographs and for reproductior of varied portions of privately published periodicals and for information supplied by individ uals, the Unidentified Flying Objects Research Committee wishes to acknowledge and give credit to the following:

Major Donald Keyhoe (U.S.M.C., Ret.), 1536 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.(Norbert Gariety, SPACE, 267 Alhambra Circle, Coral Gables, Florida; George Van Hecke CSI, New York, New York; John Lester, Newark Star-Ledger, Newark, New Jersey; Al Leaderman and Ed Keran, Detroit Times, Detroit, Michigan; Ralph Chapman, New York Herald Tribune, New York, New York; Gladys Fusaro, Huntington, Long Island, New York Frank Edwards, News Commentator for Mutual Broadcasting Company; Congressman Wm. Ayres (Rep.) 14th District, Ohio; Ray Palmer, Flying Saucers magazine, Amherst, Wisconsin; Curtis Fuller, Fate Magazine, Evanston, Illinois; Coral Lorenzen, APRO Bulletin, Alamogordo, New Mexico; Hugh McPherson, Radio Station WCHS, Charleston, West Virgin ia; Bob Barry, APIS, Olean, New York; Radio Station WAKR, Akron, Ohio; American Airlines, Incorporated, 100 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y.; Joseph M. Moran, Editor, Flagship News for American Airlines, Inc.; Strategic Air Command, Offut Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska; U.S. Department of Commerce, National Weather Records Center, Asheville, North Carolina. Long Island Daily Press.

COPYRIGHTED BY UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS RESEARCH COMMITTEE – FEBRUARY 24, 1960

At 6:30 A. M. on Tuesday, February 24, 1959 a flaming bluish-green object streaked through the skies over Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin. The phenomenon described as being banana or cigar-shaped, was trailing sparks and flame. It was sighted by airport control tower operators and by many excited citizens. It was said to be traveling at a very high speed, and State Troopers at Bay City, Michigan described it as a bluish-green flame traveling parallel to the earth.

Between 8:00 and 8:30 P. M. on this same evening, an Akron, Ohio couple sighted a strange bright reddish-orange object with a flickering yellow light on the top. It hovered momentarily and then moved away toward the north. Its outline was sharp, except for the top which was hazy. The weather was clear, and the object was observed for about twenty minutes.

In northern Ohio the evening of February 24 was crisp and cold, the sky clear and the visibility perfect. In Akron and in nearby Cuyahoga Falls the chance observation of three starlike objects moving across the sky was made by several persons. This was a prelude to the eventual unfolding of a related series of events.

The three objects were spotted at 9:20 P. M. moving from east to west. One of the observers phoned Mrs. Roy Renner, a member of the UFORC, who, in turn, phoned Mr. George Popowitch, Director of the Committee. Before the Director could get outside, however, his phone rang again. The United Air Lines' Flight Operations Manager at Akron-Canton Airport was on the line. He introduced the pilot of United Air Lines Flight 937 (name withheld by request), who then proceeded to tell a story of three starlike objects which had paced his plane for thirty to forty minutes.

TWO UNITED AIR LINE REPORTS

"Just outside Lockhaven near Williamsport, Pennsylvania", he reported, "I observed three brightly illuminated objects off my left wing tip. The plane was at 14,000 feet and the objects were about 5 degrees above my horizon, moving parallel to the plane, east to west."

The Captain of Flight 937 had sighted the objects at 8:40and he kept them under constan observation until 9:10 P. M., a period of thirty minutes. The Co-Pilot and Flight Engineer confirmed this story with the Director of UFORC. However, the Flight Engineer stated he had sighted the objects at 8:30, ten minutes earlier.

East of Youngstown, Ohio, according to the plane's captain, Flight 937 descended to 12,000 feet preparatory to landing at the Akron-Canton Airport. While over Youngstown, th three objects appeared to move closer to the aircraft. They were then seen to fade, reappear, and resume their original brilliance, but not in unison. Near Warren, Ohio, the lights "went off" completely and then reappeared. They were described as being bluish-white and definitely larger than any star. The objects then passed the aircraft, veered to the right, crossing in front of the plane and finally disappeared to the northwest.

Meanwhile, over Pennsylvania, shortly before the above described aerial phenomena had been spotted by United Air Lines Flight 937, these objects had also been seen by the captain of United Air Lines Flight 321 enroute to Cleveland, Ohio. (This captain, too, prefers to remain anonymous.) After observing the objects for seven minutes, Flight 321 contacted Flight 937. The captain of Flight 321 also called Air Traffic Control in Cleveland anc

was informed that no aircraft was in his vicinity at that time.

The foregoing incidents related by the two United Air Lines pilots substantiated the mor detailed account reported by Captain Peter Killian, a pilot for American Airlines. Captain Killian is a native of Pottstown, Pennsylvania. He is married, has three children and is active in youth groups in Syossett, Long Island, New York. He serves as a Scoutmaster, a explorer adviser, and as an instructor for rifle and archery clubs.

CAPTAIN KILLIAN'S REPORT

"I was on a flight from Newark, New Jersey to Detroit, Michigan, non-stop, and the flight was carrying me through Phillipsburg, Bradford, and Erie, Pennsylvania and directly across Lake Erie on to Detroit. My flight was at 8500 feet, and I was flying by visual flight rules above an overcast. The overcast was roughly 5,000 feet and above the clouds,ceiling and visibility were both unlimited. Though there were broken clouds below us at 5,000 feet all the sky above that layer was absolutely clear. We had a visibility of about 100 miles. (Editor's note: U.S. Department of Commerce Weather Bureau reading at Phillipsburg stated that three-tenths of the sky was covered with scatterd clouds 5,000 feet above the ground at 8:30 P.M., February 24, 1959). Roughly about 8:45, while I was having my dinner, like all pilots do once in awhile, I noticed out of my left window to the south, three yellowish lights in a single horizontal line at 9:00 o'clock position. I almost choked on my steak when I saw them, but I just watched awhile without saying anything. These three lights maintained this relative position for 35 to 40 minutes. Their color was from a yellow to a light orange and these three lights were in a horizontal position.

"At first I thought it was the Belt of Orion but then I took a second look and saw both the belt and the foreign objects. I dismissed the theory of their being the belt of the Constellation Orion. Orion was considerably higher; also, the objects were brighter and of a different color. The objects were by no means close to the plane, but one would move in at intervals, fall back again, and change its place in the formation while keeping abreast of the ship, which was traveling at 280-300 mph. Their position was maintained. However, the third object, which was the last one in the line, occasionally dropped back somewhat, gaining altitude. But generally speaking, they maintained the same position.

"Occasionally they speeded up quite a bit and pulled ahead to approximately 11:30 o'clock to my position, and then they would slow down again and drop back to right off my wingtip. As I say, this went on for 35 to 40 minutes. It shook me up slightly when I first noticed them, but after looking at them for awhile I sort of got used to the idea." But, anyhow, the very big thing that struck me noticeably was the brilliance or luminosity of their color. It would go from a very light dim to a very bright color, and then it would go back to dim again. During this period, occasionally, the light would be extinguished completely, and I would see only two of them and maybe it would come back again and there would be three; then two lights would go out, and there would be only one. Occasionally all three would go out.

"It was impossible to tell the distance because I didn't know their size nor their altitude, although they appeared to be like the apparent size of the moon. They were definitely higher than I was. At first, I estimated that the objects were not over a mile from us This was just an impression; I believe now that they were not that close. It would be the same thing if a person would have a light in the middle of a dark field at night. It would be impossible for you to know, just looking at the light, if this light were 100 feet or 1,000 feet away from you, for if you don't know the size, you don't get the idea of distance.

"In all my period of flying, I have never in my life seen anything even remotely resembling this in fifteen years with the airlines and also about thirteen years other than that,

commercially - a total of about twenty-eight years. It couldn't have been an apparition because all the others on the plane saw them too. At times these objects emitted a whitish light of blinding brilliance. Then it was like trying to see a dime behind a powerful electri light bulb.

"I had 35 passengers. After I first noticed the objects, I drew this to the attention of my co-pilot, John Dee, and to our flight engineer. We three sat there. The two stewardesses came up, and the five of us actually sat there and watched them for quite awhile. In the meantime, I was mulling over in the back of my mind whether I should tell it to the passengers, and I finally decided to. Before I did, I also told them I had only a cup of hot tea to drink and also that there were no lightning bugs in the cockpit. I said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, American Airlines has a special treat for you tonight. If you'll look out the windows on the left side, you'll get a look at our little surprise. They aren't stars and no airplanes have colors like that. Make up your own minds what they are.'

"Everybody took it very well. As a matter of fact, it was most enjoyable to them. There was only one passenger who was slightly apprehensive. I told him if there were any danger I am sure they would have done something long ago. Several passengers wanted me to go over closer, but I had to consider their safety, even if regulations had permitted this I obviously did not have enough speed to catch up with the objects, and I thought discretion was the better part of valor and remained on course. To enable the passengers to have a better view, the stewardesses, Edna LeGate and Beverly Pingree, turned out the cabin lights and everyone watched the spectacle for the next 35 minutes.

"I suppose I'm no different than all the rest of average American individuals regarding Unidentified Flying Objects. We read about it and we wonder if the person who has sighted such objects has been sober or sane or telling the truth. Generally, though, you have another feeling like you can't discount them entirely, and that was generally my feeling. I thought - well, there must be something to it, but what, I was never sure. These things that I saw, did they belong to the Air Force? I'd like to say an airplane always has white lights. One is a flaming light which shines straight forward, and the other is a white tail-light, which you can only see if you are to the rear. So, in either case, if it were either the landing light or the tail-light, if it were really an aircraft, it would be either flying toward me or away from me, and in no event could they stay there for 30 or 40 minutes. That would in itself refute the idea of its being an aircraft.

"Their uneven speed and unusual external brilliance proves they were a type of aircraf which is totally unfamiliar to us. Their motion also was unlike an airplane. Occasionally one of them would zoom straight ahead of me. Then it would drop back into position off my wing, apparently lagging as if to let me catch up. The airplane was flying a constant cours and these movements were easily observed. Occasionally, however, the rear fellow would lag behind. He would be almost double the distance between the other two. I considered th possibility that the lights were trying to signal, but I could not discern any pattern in the light changes.

"I had considered the possibility that the lights came from jet refueling operations and suggested as much upon landing when I was interviewed by the Detroit Times. I had discarded the idea, however, for several reasons. At my then cruising speed of 280 to 300 miles per hour, I was going too slow for jets to stay off my left wing for a long time. The other factors were the changing position of the lights and their varying intensity. In addition, First Officer John Dee, after landing, had also considered the possibility of a jet refueling operation but had made a check and there had been no such flights. I also notified other planes in the vicinity. When I was over Erie, Pennsylvania I called on my company frequency and asked if there were any other planes in the vicinity, and there were two,

there was one around Toledo, Ohio, and another around Windsor, Canada. And both of them, when I brought it to their attention, had sighted the same three shining objects. And the other two admitted that the objects were higher than they were. One had been watching the lights for 10 to 15 minutes already, and a triangulation was done, and an estimate of 15 miles distance between me and the nearest object was made. The estimated size of the objects was about 300 feet. I then called Airway Traffic Control and asked them if they had a flight of any three planes on an airway traffic clearance, and there were none. I also tried to pick them up on my radar screen, but our radar is primarily for weather surveillance, and not for airplanes, so I did not get anything on my radar.

"I personally was not contacted by the United States Government in regard to the sighting. However, we have a procedure with the airlines that when there are unknown sightings of any kind, we make a report for the company, which, in turn, reports this to the Government for immediate dissemination. I immediately called my company in Detroit, and Detroit itself gave it to the Government." (Editor's note: The procedure Captain Killian is referring to is known as CIRVIS - Communication Instruction for Reporting Vital Intelligence Sighting from Aircraft.)

PASSENGER AND HOSTESSES VERIFY SIGHTING

One of Captain Killian's passengers, Mr. N. D. Puscas, 41, of 30835 Barton, Garden City, Long Island, New York and General Manufacturing Manager of Curtis Wright Aircraf Company's New York Division, had this to say to the press:

"The way he broke the news to us was very clever. No one panicked or showed any signs of worry. Everyone immediately began to show a keen interest in what was going on. He did a fine job. There wasn't a cloud in the sky when I looked out and saw the objects in precision formation. They were round-like, and every now and then one would glow brighter than the other as if it had moved nearer to the plane. I have been making that same trip a number of times because the home office is in New York, but I have never experienced anything like that before. It might have been imagination, but when the object rose I thought I could see a little tail, like an exhaust."

The plane's hostesses, Mrs. LeGate, 22, of Welton, Arizona, and Miss Beverly Pingree, 25, Oakland, California, said respectively, "I don't know what they were. I'm a terrific science-fiction fan but . . . " and "I'm not a science-fiction fan, but I know what I saw."

AFTERMATH

The day following the sighting the Detroit Times reported in banner headlines:

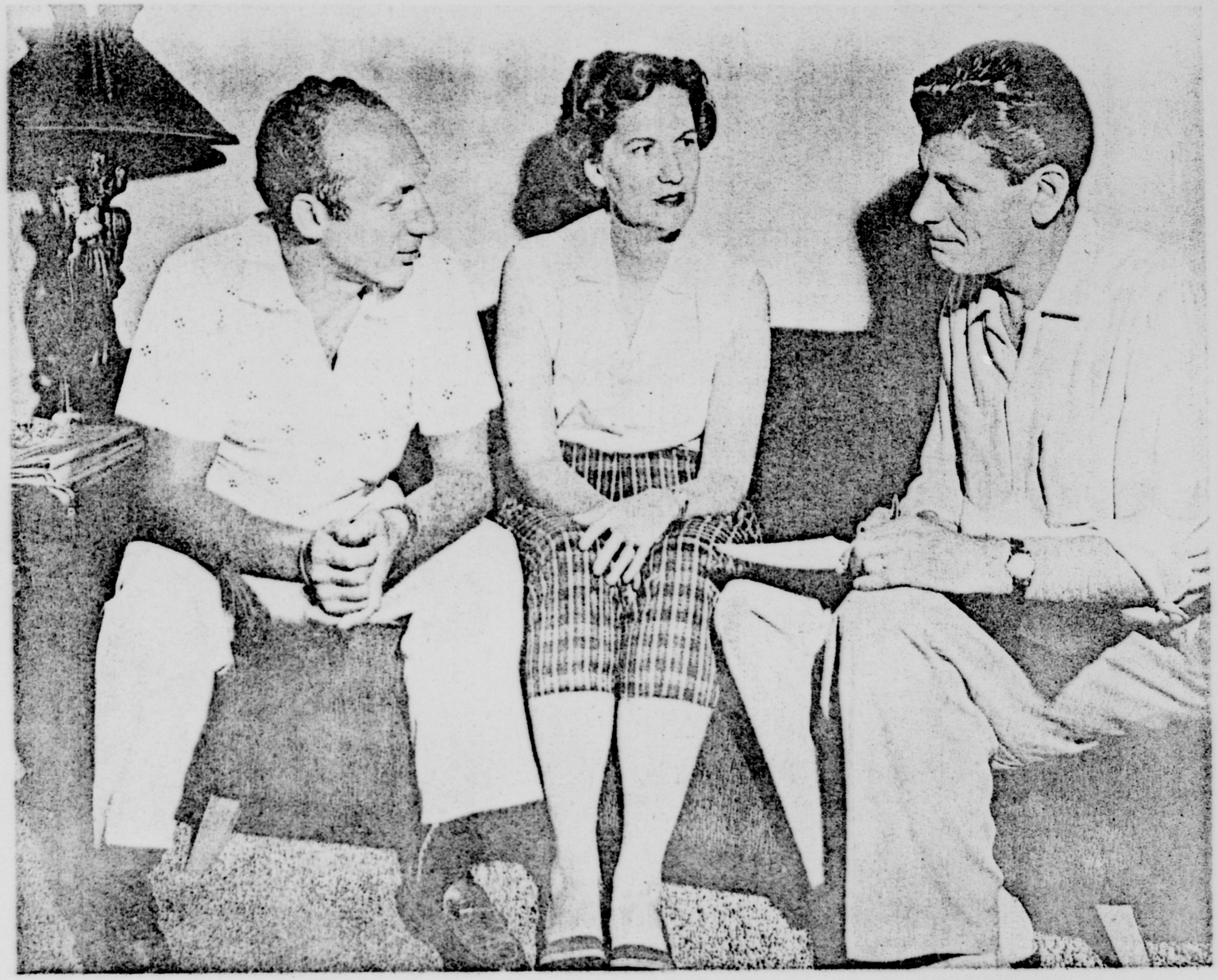
Detroit Times

59TH YEAR, No. 148 4 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1959 WOodward 3-8800 7 CENTS

MYSTERY DISCS TRAIL PLANE HERE



HOSTESS EDNA LaGATE (LEFT), 22; CAPT. KILLIAN AND HOSTESS BEVERLY PINGREE, 25, AFTER LAST NIGHT'S LANDING
These three and a plane-load of passengers watched as three mysterious objects accompanied them on a flight from Newark to Detroit
Detroit Times Photo by Ed Kenn



UFORC DIRECTOR GEORGE POPOWITCH INTERVIEWING MR. AND MRS [redacted] OF
CUYAHOGA FALLS, OHIO

PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTY RICHARDS, NCPA

American Airlines arranged for the press to interview Captain Killian in New York. Also, in their paper, Flagship News, they gave Killian front page coverage.

FLAGSHIP NEWS

Vol. 14, No. 4 — 401 Published by American Airlines — March 9, 1959

Mystery Escort Greets Flagship over Philipsburg

The DC-6 Flagship droned through the clear night toward Detroit. American Airlines Flight 139, had left Newark at 7 p.m. and was scheduled to land at Detroit Metropolitan at 9:35.

Inside the cheerfully-lighted cabin, 35 passengers were enjoying a filet mignon dinner.

The voice of Capt. Peter Killian came over the loudspeaker. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "American Airlines has a special treat for you tonight; if you'll look out the windows on the left side, you'll get a look at our little surprise."

Clearly visible off the left wing were what appeared to be three saucer-shaped orange-yellow lights moving along with the plane.

"They aren't stars," continued the captain, "and no airplanes have colors like that." He told his passengers to "make up your own minds what they are."

Capt. Killian first spotted the lights as the Flagship flew at 8,500 feet over the central Pennsylvania town of Philipsburg, a well-known airline check point. He had just started to eat his own dinner after turning the controls over to F/O John Dee.

"I almost choked on my steak when I saw them," said Capt. Killian, "but I just watched awhile without saying anything." It was a brand-new sight to the 15-year flying veteran.

He turned to copilot Dee. "What do you see out here on my left, John?"

It was no mirage. F/O Dee saw the same things.

As they watched, the end light maneuvered sharply, closing the gap between it and the other objects, then falling back. All the time, the mysterious objects remained abreast of the airplane which was flying at 350 miles an hour.

In the cabin, the passengers were enjoying the show.

Capt. Killian radioed two other AA planes in the vicinity to make sure "I wasn't seeing lightning bugs in the cockpit." They reported back that they had sighted the objects, too.

For 45 minutes, the lights stayed with the Flagship. Then they were lost as the airplane dropped through a haze to make its landing at Detroit Metro.

Once on the ground, the story spread quickly. Newspapermen hounded Capt. Killian in his hotel room, keeping him up until 2 a.m., and resuming their seige before dawn.

"I was amazed at the interest the story generated," said Capt. Killian. He said he had been queried by planetarium officials and representatives of astronomical groups. Radio, press and television people called him from points as distant as South Carolina and Kentucky.

Back in his home in Syosset, L. I., his phone jangled constantly. But no one could decide, authoritatively, what the strange objects were.

A native of Pottstown, Pa., Capt. Killian is on reserve status with American. He is active in youth groups in Syosset, serving as a scoutmaster, an explorer adviser, a club leader, and as an instructor for rifle and archery clubs.

Captain Killian also appeared on radio and television in New York City. He accepted invitations to speak before the Civilian Saucer Intelligence of New York. This committee has in its possession a ten minute taped telephone conversation between Captain Killian and Hugh McPherson of Radio Station WCHS, Charleston, West Virginia in which he vividly relates his experience of that eventful night.

GROUND OBSERVERS CONFIRM AIR REPORTS

Added confirmation came from ground observers. On the evening of February 24, 1959 the neighbors of Mrs. Roy Renner, of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, saw something in the sky which they did not understand and could not identify. Knowing of Mrs. Renner's interest in celestial phenomena they called to her. The Renners came out immediately and, with their neighbors, observed three mysterious lights. According to these witnesses, the lights were the approximate size of the North Star, moving from east to west. Mrs. Renner, employing binoculars, said that the lights appeared to be circular, and were of yellow-red coloring. After observing the objects for about three minutes, Mrs. Renner made a telephone call to the Director of the UFORC. He in turn reported the sighting to Akron Radio Station WAKR, and requested that anyone having seen the lights should contact the Committee. Several persons called in with verifying reports. Their signed statements are in UFORC files.

Mr. C. was one such observer. Mr. C.'s home is ten miles from the home of the Renners, and is located in the southern section of Akron. He noted that the objects were red and somewhat on the dim side. He stated that the sighting could not have been the constellation Orion because the stars of Orion could be seen simultaneously in another part of the sky.

Some persons phoning in had seen a prop-driven plane moving in the opposite direction from the sighting, in another part of Akron. However, this plane was not observed in other parts of the city, the explanation being that the airplanes coming from Cleveland-Hopkins Airport to the Akron Canton Airport travel from Northwest to Southeast and cross only certain sections of the city.

None of the ground observers reported hearing any sound. Neither did they see the airplane piloted by Captain Killian. According to estimates through triangulation, Killian's plane was about fifteen miles north of the unidentified lights, so that it would have been out of the sight and sound of ground observers at this time. (Captain Killian lost sight of the lights when he descended through a haze preparatory to landing at Detroit, Michigan.) When the lights were spotted from the ground at 9:15 P.M., they were evidently still pacing Captain Killian's plane enroute to Detroit to the northwest. Further confirmation of the direction, and consequently, that the airline pilots as well as observers on the ground were viewing the same objects, came from United Flight 937 reports. The pilot of this flight lost sight of the lights after they had cut in front of his plane which was heading west toward the Akron Canton Airport. The objects then veered toward the northwest and disappeared.

RELEASE OF OFFICIAL EXPLANATIONS

For three days, the Air Force maintained silence concerning these reports. Then on the morning of February 28, it released to the press this official opinion of the Air Technical Intelligence Center: "Pilots may have been seeing stars instead of unidentified flying objects in a recent flurry of flying saucer reports.

The Air Force Technical Intelligence Agency at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, gave the opinion that the crew of an Air Force transport, flying between Washington, D.C., and Dayton filed a report similar to the reports given by the crews of two commercial airliners. The Air Force transport was flying under a broken cloud overcast at about 8500 feet altitude. Experts of the Technical Intelligence Agency said that they believed the pilots may have sighted stars, especially the formation Orion."

It should be noted that the Air Force statement says the Air Force transport crew also made a report "similar" to those made by the crews of two commercial airliners. The Air Force, then, in essence, admits that their own men reported seeing three lighted objects.

It should also be noted that Air Technical Intelligence Center experts formulated the opinion that stars were the objects sighted by their own men and the airline pilots.

Captain Killian's reaction to the Air Force offering was given clearly in a statement to the Long Island Press: "I certainly know Orion when I see it. It wasn't any brief look. During those 45 minutes I saw both Orion and the unknown objects repeatedly. So did other airline pilots. Maybe they (the transport crew) did see Orion through breaks in clouds. I can tell you this - no experienced airline pilot is going to be deceived like that. We've seen stars through cloud breaks many times, and those other crews have confirmed what I reported. Also, in our area, the only clouds we had were about 3500 feet below us. Above that, visibility was unlimited; the sky was absolutely clear. Those other captains would testify to that. So could everybody on our flight; the cabin lights were switched off and they were all looking out."

Deliberately the Air Force spokesmen had cast shadows upon the ability and integrity of these veteran airline pilots. That Orion was clearly visible is a coincidence providing ATIC with a convenient, though unsound, "out". But, applying such an explanation to the airlines sighting is ridiculously far-fetched and completely contrary to fact.

Dr. Orren C Mohler, assistant director at McMath-Hulbert Observatory of the University of Michigan adds his opinion to a host of others: "There is no astronomical explanation of the reported sightings. I know of nothing that occurred in the skies that night (February 24) that could account for the objects described."

It would be interesting to learn the feelings of the crew who manned the Air Force transport after being informed that they too had seen stars among broken clouds. Although privately they may possibly protest the opinion of the "experts", publicly they are in no position to refute it.

Could Killian have been deceived by cloud-covered stars? A man who has been flying since 1929 and who states he has never seen anything like this before, is not likely to be deceived by something as familiar to him as Orion. Pilots of both American and United flights have stated emphatically they saw the mysterious lights and Orion simultaneously. Killian has said the sky was crystal clear and a passenger has verified this fact. Visibility was one hundred miles. The U.S. Weather Bureau verifies this. In a call to the Killian home, Mrs. Killian said Captain Killian has studied astronomy, and that he refuses to believe that he "saw stars".

Evidently the Air Force wasn't too sure Captain Killian had seen the stars either. What they had issued to the press for release to the public was a rather simple explanation one they felt would be acceptable in most cases. However, a need for an additional interpretation must have been felt for three weeks later the Air Force offered a second, more imaginative, reason for the events of the night of February 24th.

"The American Airlines sighting of February 24 near Bradford, Pennsylvania turned out to be a B-47 type aircraft accomplishing night refueling from KC-97 tankers. The American Airlines pilot's report of the sighting confirmed this and Air Force records show that three B-47 type aircraft were in the vicinity of Bradford, Pennsylvania on a night refueling operation. The tanker has several groups of lights which, at a distance, would appear to be one or more lights. The time duration of a refueling operation varies and can last well over an hour, depending upon the type of operation. The KC-97 refueling a B-47 will fly at approximately an altitude of 17,000 feet at around 230 knots. This would account for the lights being approximately 30 degrees above the American Airlines pilot's horizon and his seeing them for 40 minutes."

One can only speculate as to why, after three weeks, ATIC experts were forced to com up with this second explanation. Perhaps it was because they realized too many people would notice a sameness in the reports filed by military and commercial pilots in flight that night along with reports coming from ground observers in Ohio and Pennsylvania. There is the possibility the "stars through broken clouds" explanation simply did not jell - and in truth, backfired.

There are several obvious holes in the jet refueling story. All witnesses have agreed that three separate lights were seen. Does this mean that there were three jets? Jets carry no such powerful lights. And, if not jets, then is it to be assumed that there were three tankers in the sky, each employing a powerful light?

In a press release, Major Lawrence J. Tacker, executive officer of the Air Force Pub lic Information at the Pentagon stated that the planes were "lit up like Coney Island". Are we to believe that three single lights can at any time resemble Coney Island? And is Coney Island limited to lights of one color? Air Force KC-97 Tankers, revealed an Air Force spokesman, use several types of signal lights during refueling operations. Doesn't it seem feasible then that while jets are refueling some of these other lights would also be seen? Yet at no time were the lights seen described as being either red or green, both required colors of lights on planes.

In a statement to the Long Island Daily Press on March 24 Captain Killian said, "I don' care what the Air Force says, the objects I saw could travel at 2,000 miles an hour and were definitely not conventional aircraft.

"If the Air Force wants to believe that," he added, "it can. But I know what a B-47 looks like and I know what a KC-97 Tanker looks like; Further, I know what they look like in operation at night. And that's not what I saw." Killian claimed this was the Air Force's third explanation of his sighting, "all contradictory and none satisfactory".

"I know that there are fourteen lights on the belly of a tanker," Killian continued, "and none are of the orange hued brilliance, nor the size of the ones I saw on the objects. And furthermore, the objects were at least triple the size of any tanker or bomber we have. And they looked like the apparent size of the moon."

Killian went on to say the objects were spotted by another airline pilot two minutes later seventy miles away. "That puts their speed at roughly 2,000 miles an hour," he said. "These explanations come from Washington, but not one of these fellows has bothered to contact me to hear my story firsthand."

Admittedly, Killian had considered the possibility of the lights being those of jets, but had ruled this out. He said the lights were too large, the wrong color, too varied in intensity of brightness, and that they changed position too erratically to be jets.

Both Killian and the pilot of United Flight 321 had checked with other pilots in the area to make sure they weren't just seeing things. The lights were seen from different angles and altitudes. The pilots and crew members of five planes, in addition to 35 passengers, watched them for approximately 40 minutes.

The fact that the pilots checked with Airway Traffic Control certainly lends credence to the incident.

ATC functions under the jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Agency, their responsibility being to regulate and police air traffic. There may exist a difference of opinion as to whether ATC knows, or is required to know, Strategic Air Command's flight plans. A letter was sent by UFORC to Strategic Air Command, Offut Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska. The inquiry was, "Were there any SAC planes in the designated area? Were any SAC flight plans filed that night with ATC?" The purpose of this inquiry was to ascertain

whether ATC would have had knowledge of high altitude operations performed by SAC. Thei reply, "All SAC flights are coordinated with the Federal Aviation Agency which you refer to as Airway Traffic Control."

The American and United Air Line pilots, upon seeing the unknown objects, acted in accordance with standard procedure. They contacted ATC, inquiring if there were any refueling operations and/or if there were any planes in the area. To the knowledge of ATC there were none. First Officer John Dee of American Airlines also checked with ATC upon landing in Detroit, and he, too, received a negative reply. Their inquiries mainly were for the purpose of establishing identity of the foreign objects. It is significant, we believe, tha the U.S. Air Force's Air Technical Intelligence Center, which is responsible for investigating UFOs, apparently did not even bother to check with ATC, and that prior to releasing their numerous explanations they did not interview Captain Killian in order to receive the details first hand. Nor did they question the other pilots, crew members, the passengers or the ground observers.

Assuming there were night refueling operations being performed secretly, what damage could result from legitimate inquiries such as those voiced by the pilots? ATC could easily have replied that a secret mission was being conducted by the Air Force. Such an explanation would have dispelled all doubt in the pilots' minds regarding the peculiar objects they had observed. By ignoring the fact that ATC is the police force of the air lanes, Air Intelligence has openly placed Air Traffic Control in a compromising position.

'Flying Saucer' Sightings Still Get Air Force Study

By Ralph Chapman

When an American Airlines pilot, flying a DC-6 non-stop from Newark to Detroit, reported Tuesday night the sighting of three mysterious objects in the sky, the Air Force didn't exactly yawn but there was none of the excitement in the Pentagon that such a report might have engendered ten years ago.

The Air Defense Command, charged with the responsibility for investigating all UFO's (Unidentified Flying Objects) or "flying saucers," has developed techniques to the point where evaluation of such sightings has become almost routine. During the last six months of last year, according to an Air Force spokesman in Washington, 296 cases of "mysterious" things seen in the sky were investigated. Only two were classified as "unknown."

This is what people on the ground or in planes actually saw: 23 weather balloons, 60 aircraft, 96 astronomical objects (meteors, etc.), 4 man-made satellites, and 50 miscellaneous (birds, etc.). In the remaining sixty-one cases, there were insufficient data to show that anything had been seen at all.

The Day After

"There are always a certain number of cases where they can't remember a thing when they sober up the next day," commented one officer drily.

He admitted, however, that most people who report actually have seen something. The trouble is that they don't have the knowledge to understand what they see.

Not too long ago there was the case of the soldiers at a Nike base in Maryland who "saw" a flying saucer land with lights full on. A UFO investigation team hurried to the base and found a quick explanation. A near-by dairy farmer had turned on flood lights at his barn during the early hours of a winter morning. During summer months, the lights were unnecessary.

The Air Force has learned also that there are cycles in sightings of flying saucers. These correspond almost exactly with the appearance of TV shows, movies, books or plays dealing with visitors from outer space.

Look More, See More

A factor governing the number of reports is what has become known as "sky awareness." In other words, more and more Americans are looking up, especially at night. As a result, they are seeing more shooting stars and other heavenly phenomena than ever before. Add cold war jitters and the recipe for flying saucer sightings is complete.

Military authorities were themselves jittery, it is now admitted, in the years immediately after World War II. The whole business began on June 24, 1947, when a man named Kenneth Arnold, of Boise, Idaho, reported that, while flying his own plane, he had seen nine disk-shaped objects speeding at an estimated 1,700 miles an hour between Mt. Rainier and Mt. Adams, Wash. He described the objects as "like a saucer skipping across water."

A rash of new sightings followed. Within days, "saucers" were seen over England, South Africa, Australia and China.

Only they weren't always saucers. Some were cigar-shaped, others were "blobs," still others looked "like a conventional aircraft." In the latter category, at least, the Air Force now insists that this is exactly what they were.

Outside the military, however, there are many who insist that interplanetary travel is a fact except for earthlings. There are some who go so far as to say that the Air Force is well aware of this but is keeping it quiet for fear of frightening people. This group has a considerable following.

"We know about these people," said the Air Force spokesman. "There is not a word of truth in what they say but they know that they can sell books and magazine articles based on that line. They are making a very good thing of it."

From an objective source outside of the United States, Dr. Carl Gustav Jung, world-famous psychologist, comes the opinion that people see flying saucers just because they want to see them. "Many people today are in need of fantasy," he said in Zurich, Switzerland, recently.

Capt. Peter Killian, the pilot who reported the appearance of the strange lights during his flight to Detroit, thinks otherwise. A veteran of fifteen years of commercial flying, he ought to know. He was careful to draw the attention of his crew, thirty-five passengers aboard the plane, and the pilots of two other aircraft to the phenomenon.

A. F. Investigation

In his Syosset, L. I., home he told the Herald Tribune that all of these witnesses confirmed his own observations. Then he said: "I am sure there are people on other planets and that they have solved the problem of space travel . . . I sincerely believe that their vehicles are coming close to the earth."

The Air Force is investigating, but has still to report on, this latest sighting of flying saucers or whatever they may be.

In the above newspaper article the Air Force attempts to confirm their explanations by discrediting reliable witnesses through the implication they are either incompetent or drunk. Captain Killian took particular exception to this statement, pointing out that the Air Force is well acquainted with rules forbidding airline pilots from drinking before flights. "It's one of our strictest rules."

HOW ROUTINE IS ROUTINE?

In this article the Air Force spokesman states also that the evaluation of UFO sighting has become almost routine. Could it be possible that the investigation of such sightings has become routine to the extent that the investigators don't even bother to investigate? Who or what was investigated in regard to the airline sighting? They did not interview Captain Killian, nor did they question Co-Pilot Dee, the stewardesses, the passengers or the ground observers. As far as is known, none of these people were at any time contacted by ATIC.

Does the allegation made by the Air Force spokesman about the untruthful non-military opportunists who are "making a good thing of it" and who insist that interplanetary travel

is a fact, include reputable individuals like Professor Hermann Oberth, world famous rocket and space travel authority, who flatly states: "I believe the flying saucers come from other worlds."

Does it include Dr. Clyde W. Tombaugh, astronomer, discoverer of the planet Pluto, and chief of the Armed Services' search for natural satellites, who says, "These things, which do appear to be directed, are unlike any other phenomena I ever observed. . . other stars in our galaxy may have hundreds of thousands of inhabitable worlds. Races on these worlds may have been able to utilize the tremendous amounts of power required to bridge the space between the stars."

Or Dr. J. C. Bartlett, Jr., noted Baltimore astronomer who has sighted both disc-shaped and rocket-shaped UFOs and has said, "It is not impossible that they come from another planet."

Or William Lear, winner of the Collier Aviation Trophy, president of Lear, Inc. (aircraft and electronics equipment) who has said; "I believe the flying saucers come from outer space, piloted by beings of superior intelligence."

Also note how carefully the writer of the Herald Tribune article avoided expressing the opinions of anyone within the military. There are scores of former military men who have, since 1947 issued public statements that UFOs are real:

VOICE OF THE MILITARY

Rear Admiral D. S. Fahrney, Ret., former Navy missile chief, "Reliable reports indicate there are objects coming into our atmosphere at very high speeds. The way they change positions would indicate that their motion is directed."

Senator Barry Goldwater, a jet flying Air Force Reserve Colonel, "Flying saucers -- UFOs -- or whatever you call them, are real."

Albert M. Chop, former Air Force official who handled UFO information, "One thing is absolutely certain. We are being watched from outer space."

Lt. Col. Lee B. James, Army missile expert at Huntsville, Alabama, "The lights seen by airlines were quite possibly from outer space. I know they're not coming from Russia. We in this civilization are not that advanced yet."

Lt. General P. A. Del Valle, U.S.M.C., Ret., "There obviously is something to the 'flying saucers' which has been withheld from American citizens. There should be a serious investigation of authentic reports, and all factual evidence and possible conclusions should be given to the public."

General George C. Kenney, former chief of the Strategic Air Command, "We're completely mystified. We have nothing remotely like the machines described. I wish we did."

Commander R. W. Percy, U.S.N.R., Ret., electronics engineer for the Federal Communications Commission, "I personally believe UFOs are space ships from other, advanced planets."

Needless to say, the Tribune article author is quite aware of the prestige in the name, Carl Jung, and has used it to a convincing advantage. However, in complete fairness to the UFOs, it should also be stated that from this same man came the words, "I do not possess sufficient evidence (ref. UFOs) which would enable me to draw definite conclusions."

The Herald Tribune article should have also printed Dr. Jungs' other statements, such as "I do not possess sufficient evidence which would enable me to draw definite conclusions. The evidence available, however, is convincing enough to arouse a continuous and fervent interest. If it is true the Air Force witholds facts, then one can only say this is the most stupid policy one could invent. . . The public ought to be told the truth."

Donald Keyhoe, Director of NICAP, declared that the Air Force spokesman's statement appearing in the New York Herald Tribune was plainly meant to serve three purposes:

1. To offset the airline crew's reports.
2. To warn all airline pilots that they too would be officially ridiculed if they publicly reported UFO sightings.
3. To reduce the growing support of Capitol Hill for open UFO hearings.

In an interview with the Newark Star-Ledger (December 22, 1958) a group of more than fifty commercial airline pilots blasted Air Force procedures and conclusions concerning UFOs. Here in full is the article:

Pilots ridicule AF secrecy on saucers

By JOHN LESTER
Staff Writer

A group of more than 50 top commercial airline pilots, all veterans of more than 15 years with major companies, yesterday blasted as "bordering on the absolute ridiculous" the Air Force policy of tight censorship, brush-off and denial in regard to unidentified flying objects—flying saucers.

One termed the Air Force policy "a lesson in lying, intrigue and the 'Big Brother' attitude carried to the ultimate extreme."

Each of the pilots has sighted at least one UFO, the majority several.

All have been interrogated by the Air Force and most expressed disgust and frustration at Air Force methods and conclusions.

"We are ordered to report all UFO sightings," one said, "but when we do we are usually treated like incompetents and told to keep quiet.

"This is no fun, especially after many hours of questioning — sometimes all night long. You're tired. You've just come in from a grueling flight, anxious to get home to the wife and kids. But you make your report anyhow and the Air Force tells you that the thing that paced your plane for 15 minutes was a mirage or a bolt of lighting.

"Nuts to that. Who needs it?"

Another said he was certain many pilots "forget" to report UFO sightings rather than undergo Air Force quizzing and ridicule. He said he is sure much valuable information is lost as a result.

Although the pilots expressed themselves freely, they asked that their names be withheld because in most instances employers had directed them, at Air Force insistance, to say nothing for publication.

The Star-Ledger has their names, however, and it was agreed that they could be released if and when the "strict silence" ban is lifted.

One of the pilots was refused permission by his company to appear on a recent nationwide telecast.

Another was ordered to "cease and desist" after he'd appeared on two recent network telecasts with his company's expressed approval.

In referring to the UFO tracking by Civil Aeronautics Authority radar men stationed around the country, as reported in this newspaper last Friday, one of the pilots explained "the Air Force can't afford to admit radar is correct without also admitting its own attitude has been incorrect from the beginning."

This pilot also pointed to a Joint Chiefs of Staff order giving top radio priority to UFO reports anywhere in the world, and specifying that any pilot who fails to maintain absolute secrecy afterwards is subject to a maximum of 10 years in prison and a fine of $10,000.

"If the whole UFO business is to be taken so lightly, as the official Air Force policy suggests, then why are the Joint Chiefs so serious and obviously so concerned about it, and why are they going to all that trouble?"

In respect to the Joint Chiefs' order, none of the pilots were asked to reveal details of any of their sightings or questioned about them in any way.

Since the appearance of the above article Mr Lester has informed this Committee that 400 more pilots have joined the list of the original 50.

THE INEVITABLE SILENCING

As of this writing, Captain Killian is no longer discussing his sighting of the three unknown objects. After his initial comments in newspapers, exposing the obvious flaws in the Air Force's explanations, the muzzle was quickly applied. American Airlines, through Air Force insistence, was forced to silence Killian, their attitude being that good relations with officialdom must be maintained at all costs. Consequently, he was requested not to publicize "so controversial a subject". (It would certainly seem that the Air Force Public Information subordinates at the Pentagon in Washington, D. C., have contributed their share to the "controversy" by persistently manipulating UFO facts in a manner that could breed nothing else but confusion.)

When Killian, in a private telephone conversation, was asked to comment on this, he said, "Let's put it this way; my company doesn't want me to talk about it any more." And later he added, "I feel very deeply concerned with this loss of my own personal freedom."

To illustrate how the subject reached controversial proportions, the following is presented:

July 5, 1947

Air Corps Spokesman at the Pentagon: "No investigation is needed. The saucers are only hallucinations."

July 7, 1947

Air Corps Public Relations Officer at the Pentagon: "We can't ignore this. Too many reliable pilots are telling the same story - flat, round objects, able to out-maneuver ordinary planes and faster than anything we have. Too many stories tally. We have a jet at Muroc and fighters at Portland standing by."

July 7, 1947

An Air Force Spokesman at the Pentagon: "The flying saucers may be one of three things - solar reflections small meteors or icing conditions."

July 7 1947

Pentagon statement to all press services: "Army Air Intelligence officers since July 2 have been investigating reports of unidentified objects flying at very high speeds in various sections of the country. No such phenomena can be explained by any experiments being conducted by the Army or Air Force, and the statements of witnesses are being correlated in an effort to identify the reported objects."

September 23, 1947

Official analysis report from ATIC to General Hoyt Vandenberg, Commanding General, Army Air Corps: "The reported phenomena are real."

July 24, 1948

General George C. Kenney, then chief of the Strategic Air Command, after the so-called "space ship" sighting by the pilots and a passenger of an Eastern Air Line plane: "We're completely mystified. We have nothing remotely like the machine described. I wish we did."

August (date withheld)

Top secret estimate of the situation by ATIC later declassified but never released, stating that the flying saucers were interplanetary space ships.

January 8, 1949

Air Corps statement to press after death of Captain Thomas Mantell, Jr., World War II ace, "Captain Mantell was killed while in pursuit of a flying saucer."

December 27, 1949

Air Force Press Release: "The Air Force has discontinued its special project of investigating and evaluating reported flying saucers. The reports are the result of misinterpretation of various conventional objects, a mild form of mass hysteria, and hoaxes, and continuance of the project is unwarranted."

December 29, 1949

Declassified Air Force secret summaries of Intelligence investigations of UFOs: "It will never be possible to say with certainty that any individual did not see a space ship, an enemy missile, or some other object." Discussing the motives of possible visitors from space, the Intelligence report also stated: "Such a civilization might observe that on earth we now have atomic bombs and are fast developing rockets. In view of the past history of mankind, they should be alarmed. We should therefore expect at this time above all to behold such visitations."

February 22, 1950

Air Force Headquarters statement after a Navy visual and radar tracking report of two UFOs at Key West Naval Air Station: "There is absolutely no evidence that flying saucers exist."

March 22, 1950

Air Force statement after the published flying saucer report by Commander (now Captain) R. B. McLaughlin, U.S.N., then officer in charge of Navy guided missile tests at White Sands Proving Grounds. This report, cleared by Security and Review at the Pentagon, described several UFO sightings at White Sands, including the report of an elliptical object over 100 feet long tracked at 18,000 miles per hour at an altitude of 56 miles. Air Force comment when queried about this Navy report: We have no evidence that the flying saucers are other than hallucinations, hoaxes, and errors in identification.

January and February, 1951

Air Force statements: "We have no evidence that such objects exist; in general, such reports are hallucinations, mistakes, hoaxes or natural phenomena."

June 24, 1951

Air Force statement given to Look magazine by an ATIC colonel: "These reports come from sincere people; they are not crackpots. They are seeing something; we have to find out what."

From this date on the Air Force has consistently clouded pertinent UFO information to such an extent that legislative bodies as well as the public in general are still confused.

It is easily seen how the Air Force has obscured the real UFO issue by throwing first hot and then cold water on the subject. Is it any wonder the public is now faced with a "controversial subject"?

It is either a case of deliberately confusing the public or that the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing The Air Force found itself struggling with the problem of what to tell the public after the tremendous surge in sightings by highly trained observers. It could either reveal its evidence that the UFO's were real, and probably interplanetary, or it could brush off the reports as being worthless. The latter policy was chosen and it remains in force to this day. Why?

In twelve years the Air Force has been attacked and charged many times with "cover up", "misleading statements", "censorship", and "criminal negligence" in dealing with UFO"s. Isn't it time this situation came to a focus?

Has American Airlines been intimidated also? Have they been forced to be an accom plice to this canny censorship? Apparently so, for they have lowered the boom on Killian. Is this considered an infringement on his "personal freedom"? Is this possible in a democr

In April, Representative S. N. Friedel (Dem. Md.) after a conference in Washington with NICAP Director Major Donald Keyhoe USMC Ret., and Advisor Lou Corbin, promised a thorough investigation . He would request an Air Force explanation of Captain Killian's treatment. Doesn't it seem strange, after the world wide publicity this incident received, that it should terminate by Air Force pressure?

Why after 12 years, hasn't the Airlines Pilots Association stepped forward demanding a "cease and desist" of the ridicule campaign? Every pilot that ever reported observing a UFO received the usual standard procedure of insults. If an end is desired, the members of the Association can rest assured, of support from the thousands of people in the UFO field. Contact should be made with the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, 1536 Conneticut Ave., Washington, D.C. They are in co-operation with hundreds of other UFO organizations in the country, willing to co-operate with the pilots . It is strongly urged that the Association and members give this their unequivical consideration.

Doesn't it seem logical, that after 12 years of this reported phenomena, the Congress of the United States should have acted in behalf of the people they represent? Without a shadow of a doubt, every Congressman sent to Washington has received some type of in - quiry about UFO's. They have been petitioned again and again by sincere citizens to have UFO data held by the Air Force, released.

Some Congressman have tried to get the Air Force to yield all UFO data. These men, who represent the American people, receive in reply to their efforts, a well worded "form letter" which always amounts to the same polite brush - off. This "fact sheet" is like a broke record . It has been issued every six months to the news media with the same watered dow versions of UFO information.

Many of our congressman have apathetically accepted this well worded and concise form letter. Still others, like Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona (Rep.), are helping to bring the UFO "controversy" to a head in the form of a public hearing.

Isn't it true that informed people are free people? Is it true that the public is not being fully informed about UFO's? So, are we a free people? What secrets are being held by a few? Who is basically responsible for the witholding of this information from the public? The Air Force? Or could there be some other agency shepherding the Air Force?

While the silence order was imposed on Captain Killian however the same did not apply to Mrs. Killian. She remarked, "Although the Captain isn't talking, I can talk." Mrs. Killian was asked if American Airlines had been approached by the Air Force and she re- plied, "The company was approached, requesting the silence, and of course they had to comply. The company at no time before this requested the Captain not to talk about this sighting. And in fact the company had newsmen and photographers at LaGuardia Airport to meet the Captain when he landed back in New York from his trip after the sighting."

Mrs Killian was then asked if Captain Killian would be willing to go before the Space Committee hearings in Washington to relate his story. Mrs. Killian replied, "Definitely. In fact, a senator asked the Captain if he could come to Washington and tell his story. The Captain said 'Yes, I would go, but you would have to subpoena me. Then I could talk.'"

The following letter with its enclosure was received from Major Lawrence J. Tacker, U. S. A. F. Executive Officer, Public Information Division, Office of Information Services of Washington, D. C.:

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

24 June 1959

Dear Miss [redacted]

This is to acknowledge your letter of 19 June 1959 concerning the American Airlines sighting of 24 February 1959 and various newspaper articles concerning this sighting.

The New York Herald Tribune article of 1 March 1959 concerning this sighting was factual and this office considered it accurate and objective. Your interpretation of this article involving adverse insinuations leveled against anyone sighting an unidentified flying object seem unfounded as statistics and basic observations made in the article came from official Department of Defense releases on this subject. Copies of the last three releases are enclosed for your background. Information concerning specualtion on the part of the reporter and personal opinions of other individuals will have to be obtained from the New York Herald Tribune.

Answering your other questions the following information is given:

The Air Force received Capt. [redacted] statement from the Detriot office of American Air Lines on 26 February 1959. Requests are made by telephone as in this case or personal interviews are obtained. Cap[redacted] flew back on the return trip to Newark almost immediately and was unavailable for interview. He submitted his statement through the Company to the Air Force.

The statement you received was compiled during May 1959.

The evaluation is based upon all the facts gathered for the specific times and geographical area concerned with the sighting and included Capt. [redacted]'s statement.

This office has no knowledge of subsequent statements by Capt[redacted] concerning this case nor has Capt[redacted] contacted the USAF to qualify or revise his original statement in any way.

24 June 1959

There is only one official explanation or evaluation for this sighting. It is the fact that Capt. [redacted] actually viewed a Strategic Air Force aerial refueling operation.

I trust this is the information you desire.

Sincerely,

LAWRENCE J. TACKER
Major, USAF
Executive Officer
Public Information Division
Office of Information Services

[redacted]
Akron 7, Ohio

COPY OF ENCLOSURE -

"Departing Newark 1910 arriving Detroit 2252.

"It was approximately 2045 I noticed these three lights off my left wing in the vicinity of Bradford, Pennsylvania. I was flying 8,500 VFR on top of broken clouds. Visibility was unlimited with no upper clouds observed. It was extremely difficult to ascertain the distance of the lights. The color of the lights were from a yellow to a light orange. The intensity of the lights also changed from dim to a bright brilliant. Sometimes the interva of the three lights were identical to the Belt in the constellation Orion. Occasionally the rear lights lagged somewhat behind. Also changed altitudes. During the 40 minutes of observation, the three lights occasionally came forward from a 9 o'clock position to a 11 o'clock position and then fell back to the original 9 o'clock position. Also occasionally the lights extinguished completely alternating from one to another, sometimes the whole three were extinguished and during this whole operation, as I mentioned before, the lights changed in intensity. This action was not only seen by myself but four crew members and passengers on board and also by two other airplanes in the area.

"The only possible explanation other than flying saucers could be a jet tanker refueling operation. Never having witnessed refueling operation at night, I am not aware of the lighting of the jet tanker.

"My air speed during this complete flight was 250 knots indicated. I also do not know the air speed of tankers during operation if this could be so. I contacted ATC to find out if they had any airplanes on a clearance and no three airplanes were given.

"In summary, it was difficult for me to believe they were jets because of low speed and configuration. If they weren't jets I still don't know anymore than I did before even though I watched them for 40 minutes before. Due to the dark and strong lights I was not

able to ascertain any size or shape. The altitude of the objects was 30 degrees above my horizon. Distance away is unknown.

"During the investigation the Air Force determined that there were three B-47's in the area of Capt. Killian's flight path during the hour of the sighting. These B-47's were on a night refueling mission.

"A check was made with the aircraft support systems project office, Wright-Patterson AFB, to determine the characteristics of a night refueling operation. The tanker has several groups of lights which at a distance would appear to be one or more lights. The time duration of a refueling operation varies, can last well over an hour, depending upon the type of operation. Refueling would take place at approximately 17,000 feet and approximately 230 knots true.

"All evidence indicates that Captain Killian probably saw a B-47 refueling operation."

This letter purports to contain a complete and exact statement from Captain Killian. Unfortunately, there is no indication of when or where these alleged statements were made. There are no quotation marks; nor is the statement signed.

Paragraphs three and four would definitely lead one to believe that Captain Killian was not familiar with a jet refueling operation. Compare this with Captain Killian's statements made to the Long Island Daily Press on March 24, 1959. (See Page 10) Obviously, the two are in direct contradiction.

Paragraph five of the above report states that Killian, while viewing the objects was not able to discern any positive size or shape. However, Civilian Saucer Intelligence of New York City, in an interview with Captain Killian, quotes him as saying, "They appeared to be like the apparent size of the moon."

The Air Force, in Paragraph six, indicates a night refueling operation was in progress in the area of the Killian flight. Again, refer to (Page 5) of this report where it will be noted that ATC (the supreme regulatory body for air traffic, both civilian and military) had no knowledge of any flight of three planes in the area of Killian's airplane.

The complete text of this Air Force report bears the well-known earmarks of Air Force distortion. Note that the Air Force office issuing the report (presumably Washington, D.C. made a "check" with Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton before issuing their statement. Was the check made to determine the true characteristics of a jet refueling operation, or was it simply made to add authoritative embellishments to an otherwise unstable explanation?

UNANSWERED 'WHY'S'

WHY has the Air Force concealed an official intelligence report, dated September 23, 1947, stating that flying saucers are real? This report was signed by the Chief of the Air Technical Intelligence Center, approved by all members of ATIC, and submitted via Director of Air Force Intelligence to the Commanding General, Army Air Force.

WHY has the Air Force kept from the press the official ATIC "estimate of the situation" drawn up in the summer of 1948, which stated that flying saucers were interplanetary space ships?

WHY, in the face of the above two documents, did the Air Force, in December 1949, tell the press that flying saucers were hoaxes, mirages, hallucinations and mistakes by pilots?

WHY did the Air Force deliberately reject the serious reports and opinions of hundreds of veteran Service and airline pilots, airport tower controllers, radar experts and other trained observers who insisted the saucers were unknown machines under intelligent control?

WHY has the Air Force concealed the 1952 Air Force Intelligence analysis of the flying saucers' "controlled motion" and its specific conclusion that UFOs were interplanetary space ships?

WHY has the Air Force kept secret the recommendations of a panel of top scientists and aviation leaders, arrived at in January, 1953, that the UFO investigation be greatly enlarged and that the American people be given all information on saucers in Air Force possession, including the official conclusions?

WHY has the Air Force hidden UFO reports from the public since 1953 -- even those it had previously released?

WHY are Service pilots, radar men and other trained observers officially silenced? Official orders are JANAP 146 (Joint-Army-Navy-Air Publication), AFR 200-2 (Air Force Regulation 200-2), the current regulation prohibiting the release of UFO data to news media and the public. Official instructions to personnel of the Civil Aeronautics Administration are based on JANAP 146.

WHY, if the flying saucers are imaginary, do armed Air Defense Command jets upon the standing order of ADC continue to chase UFOs?

WHY does the Air Force continue to spend the taxpayers' money in a global investigation of flying saucers that involves hundreds of Intelligence officers, the 460-2nd Air Intelligence Service Squadron, and many top-ranking scientists and consultants under secret Air Force contract?

WHY did past Secretary of the Air Force, Donald A. Quarles and certain Air Force officers state in the Project Blue Book, Special Report 14 (Project Blue Book is the Air Force investigating body for the acquisition and analyses of UFO data (that no pattern to UFOs had been found, that there had been no indication of intelligent maneuvers, and that there was not enough data to build a working model of a UFO when, in December 1949, ATIC Project Grudge (the USAC center for UFO research which preceded Project Blue Book and succeeded Project Sign) stated that the majority of reports had described UFOs as being disc-shaped objects about one-tenth as thick as its diameter? Why did this Special Report 14, dated October 25, 1955, list several of its weakest sighting reports as being the cream of the crop when actually the Intelligence files contained hundreds of reliably witnessed reports by experienced pilots, guided missiles trackers, and other trained observers?

WHY has no official appraisal ever been made of General Douglas MacArthur's statement, published in the New York Times, October 8, 1955, that the world nations will have

to unite against attack by people from other planets?

(The existence of official documents mentioned above has been confirmed publicly by Edward Ruppelt, former head of the Air Force Project Blue Book in his book, "The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects".)

The aforementioned questions should not remain unanswered by the elected representatives who are obligated to 175 million Americans. These men are the voice of the people They, and no other government body, are in a position to eliminate the secrecy clouding the UFO issue.

You may ask yourself, when will all the UFO information be released to the public? This is a difficult question to answer. A solution as to how the release can be achieved may be much simpler. It is a fact the Air Force is sitting on classified UFO records. All UFO organizations should unite. This nationwide UFO unit would then urge a Congressional Investigation of the UFO situation. Only through open hearings in Congress can the public be fully apprised of developments in this'UFO controversy" the greatest enigma of modern times.

In summing up the airline case we must conclude that this particular witnessing of strange objects would under most circumstances be substantial evidence in a court of law. Normally, if it were an occurrence in everyday life, no one would question such evidence. But this is not a common, everyday event, nor is there evidence that may be presented in court of law. Rather, this has to do with a subject shaped by the "authorities" into something controversial, a subject which they, themselves, have labored to stifle. ridicule, and preempt. Regardless of the overwhelming evidence, they, in their weighted official capacity, and with the cooperation of the "free press", explain away all sightings as being weather balloons, birds, search lights, mirages, hallucinations, temperature inversions, etc., etc., authenticated by false affidavits, fake photography, misinterpreted radar readings, etc., etc.

If the evidence as presented in this, and similar UFO reports, cannot be accepted, then of course there is need to doubt and consequently dismiss the validity of human evidence in all phases of human experience. If we do this then we might as well abolish witnesses, judges and juries. All scientific endeavor, research and progress, in the ultimate analysis, depend upon human faculties. Should we therefore abolish human evidence in these fields? If the answer is no, then there is no reason to disregard human evidence in the field of Unidentified Flying objects and the double standard now being utilized should be quickly destroyed.

The people of this, and every country, deserve to know all the facts. If an adjustment has to be made, it will be done, as it has been so many times in the past. Had this not been so, our existence on earth would have been brief, indeed.

The struggle for truth must continue everywhere - and in all things.

ADDITIONAL SIGHTINGS ADD WORLD WIDE CREDENCE TO REPORTS

On the evening of February 24th two Scandinavian Airline pilots flying over Denmark, reported independently that they had seen UFO's.

At 6:45 AM February 25, 1959 a strange sighting was made. While driving to work, a Massillon, Ohio chemist saw a large, dark, cigar-shaped object. He described it as being the size of a dirigible. The object appeared solid and seemed to be moving about 30 miles per hour. The object passed in front of the car and then traveled along horizontally beside the car, about 1,000 yards away and approximately 500 feet high. It had a red light on the top, and a blinking orange light on the bottom. This man had been a civilian pilot for five years, and he said that he had never seen anything like it before. He observed this object for about 45 minutes, while outside the car. The object appeared to change shape. He described it as coming apart in the middle and opening in what he described as a bellows effect. (As some may remember, this corresponds to the thermostate shaped sightings in Newfoundland). Upon reaching Brecksville, Ohio he boarded a bus with another man and they both viewed the object together. It was by this time quite some distance away. When they saw it move behind a distant hill and was lost from sight.

On this same day at 8:45 AM, an engineering firm employee at Hobbs, New Mexico saw a glowing egg-shaped object and at the same time heard signals on his car radio. The object was moving from West to East at a high rate of speed. The interference on his radio stopped when the object disapeared. The interference was a steady succession of two dots and a dash. He said he had no idea of the object's size nor of the distance it was from him.

Thursday, February 26th two days later than the Airlines sighting, between 7:25 and 7:45 PM a yellow disc was reported by officials to be hovering over a London, England airport. The RAF Fighter Command Headquarters described the light as "a bright yellow light that varied in intensity, some two hundred feet fron the ground. It stayed in one position for about twenty minutes, then climbed away at a high speed." (Here again we find the same description of the variations in intensity of the light as was stated by Captain Killian.) Police, Air Traffic Controllers, and others apparently had it in view and examined it through glasses. Radar operators, however, reported that the light did not appear on their screens. The Air Ministry issued two explanations. While the light was hovering, it was undoubtedly the planet Venus, they said. When it climbed away, the light was the nose cone light of a civilian aircraft. These poor explanations have been so worn to shreds that there is no doubt that the light was neither of the two things the Ministry said it was. Just what it was remains a mystery.



MAJOR GENERAL W. P. FISHER
DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE LIAISON



MAJOR LAWRENCE J. TACKER
EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION,
OFFICE OF INFORMATION SERVICES

FA

Aug.

Saucers trail AIRLINER

By Curtis Fuller

This amazing performance was witnessed by 39 persons on the plane for 45 minutes and 260 miles.

AT 7:10 p.m. on Wednesday, February 25, an American Airlines DC-6 airliner took off from Newark, N.J., nonstop for Detroit, Mich. Aboard were 35 passengers. At the controls were Capt. Peter Killian of Syosset, N.Y., an airline veteran of 15 years, and co-pilot John Dee of Nyack, N.Y. Stewardesses were Edna La Gate and Beverly Pingree.

After about an hour and a half in the air, the plane was cruising at 8,500 feet altitude between Philipsburg and Bradford, Pa. At 8:45 p.m. Killian looked off to the south where he saw three bright whitish lights in a single horizontal line overhead.

"At first I thought it was the Belt of Orion (a group of stars in a constellation) but then I took a second look and saw both the Belt and the foreign objects," Killian later reported.

"When Dee caught the expression on my face he asked me if my eyes were tired. I then pointed in the direction of the 'things' and asked him if there were any lightning bugs in the cockpit.

"The objects were by no means close to the plane, but one would move in at intervals, fall back again, and change its place in the formation while keeping abreast of the ship."

Killian decided to let the pas-

sengers see the objects. So as not to alarm them he started off jokingly by telling them that they shouldn't feel that he was losing his mind but that he thought there were some 'flying saucers' trailing the plane.

The stewardesses turned out the cabin lights so the passengers could get a better view and every one of the persons in the passenger compartment saw the objects. Speculation in the cabin was rife. One man became alarmed but Killian told him that UFO's had not been known to harm anyone and that if there was danger it would have become evident long before. Nevertheless, although some passengers wanted him to veer closer to the objects he did not change his course.

The objects were visible for 45 minutes, during which time the airliner covered about 260 miles. Then, as they were crossing Lake Erie, the airliner began its gradual descent and the three objects were lost in the haze.

One man aboard the plane was N.D. Puscas, general manager of Curtiss-Wright's Utica, Mich., division. He described the objects as "dancing in the sky." His report agreed with that made by Captain Killian, and he said: "I don't want to be quoted alone. People might get the idea that I'm the little boy in the corner with a dunce cap on his head."

As things stood, Mr. Puscas need not have worried. Both pilot and co-pilot and 34 other passengers confirmed the story.

"The way Captain Killian broke the news to us was very clever," Puscas said. "No one panicked or showed any signs of worry. Everyone immediately began to show a keen interest in what was going on. He did a fine job.

"There wasn't a cloud in the sky when I looked out and saw the objects in precision formation. They were round-like and every now and then one would glow brighter than the others as if it had moved nearer to the plane.

"I have been making that same trip a number of times because the home office is in New York but I have never experienced anything like that before."

WHEN Killian first sighted the objects the sky was absolutely clear. Visibility was about 100 miles. There were broken clouds below his airliner at about 5,000 feet but the sky above was clear.

"At first I estimated that the objects were not over a mile above us," he said. "But since I didn't know their size this was just an impression. Later on I concluded that they weren't that close. However, at intervals one would move in closer then fall back into formation."

SAUCERS TRAIL AIRLINER

At one time Killian thought he was witnessing a high altitude jet refueling operation but the varying intensity of the lights and the changing position of the objects "made me toss out that theory."

In addition, Killian kept watch on his radar screen but saw nothing on it.

When his plane was over Erie, Pa., Killian called on his radio and asked if any other airline crews in the area could see the object. Two other American Airlines captains answered. One, a little north of Killian's plane, said he had been watching the objects for 10 to 15 minutes. The other was near Toledo and said that he had looked out after Killian's call and seen the UFO's.

Meanwhile, although Killian did not know it at the time, three United Airlines crews along a similar route had also seen the lights. Capt. A.D. Yates and his Flight Engineer L.E. Baney observed them for 30 minutes between Lockhaven, Pa., and Youngstown, Ohio. United Flights 937 and 321 also observed the objects and their crews discussed them over the radio on flights out of Newark. The Akron UFO Research Group also reported receiving reports.

There was general agreement that the lights were on separate "vehicles" holding to a formation.

After he had begun his descent over Lake Erie, Cap. radioed a report to the Airlines communications Ce. Detroit Airport. American Ai. did not notify newspapers but passenger on the plane did call a Detroit newspaper after they had landed. Local American Airlines press officers then okayed release of Killian's report.

When newspapermen interviewed Captain Killian they found a mature man, greying at the temples. Killian is 47 years old and has been flying for 28 years of which 15 have been on the airlines. He has some 20,000 hours to his credit. He was able to give them some additional information.

He told one reporter that he and one other plane took a bearing on the lights and figured roughly that they were 20 to 25 miles distant.

"Occasionally, however, the rear fellow would lag behind," Killian said. "He would be almost double the distance between the other two."

He said he was through being skeptical of UFO's. "Their uneven speed and unusual external brilliance proves they were a type of aircraft which is totally unfamiliar to us. At times these objects emitted a whitish light of blinding brilliance. Then it was like trying to see a dime behind a powerful electric light bulb."

The color of the lights changed

"1. To offset the airline crew's reports.

"2. As a warning to all airline pilots that they too would be officially ridiculed if they publicly reported UFO sightings.

"3. To reduce the growing support on Capitol Hill for open UFO hearings."

On March 20 in Washington, nearly a month later, the Air Force came up with still a third explanation of the Killian sighting. It announced that the lights had come from three B-47 bombers being refuled by a KC-97 tanker. The Air Force report said that the use of several lights during the refueling operation explained some of the airline reports of being followed by lights.

COMMENT. No one who has followed this story, along with the Air Force's twisting and turnings in seeking to explain the sighting, can help but have some doubts about this overly simple explanation.

Why did the Air Force wait nearly a full month before offering a third explanation after having already said that the sightings were due to the pilots seeing the Belt of Orion, and that drunks, deluded people or liars were responsible for many sightings?

Killian himself had considered the possibility that the lights came from jet refueling operations and suggested as much when he was interviewed nearly a month before. He had discarded the idea, however, for several reasons. At his then cruising speed of 280 to 300 m.p.h., he said he was going "too slow for jets to stay off my left wing for a long time." Other factors were the changing position of the lights and their varying intensity.

In addition, First Officer Dee declared that after landing he too had considered the possibility of a jet-refueling operation but had made a check and there had been no such flights.

But there is still a further reason for discarding the Air Force explanation. The alleged jets did not show up on Captain Killian's radar screen although he tried repeatedly to get such a showing.

At this point it is definitely anticlimactic (which is the reason we are reporting this at all) to add that Dr. William Liller, assistant professor of astronomy at the University of Michigan offered *his* explanation of the sighting. He said it was "temperature inversion."

A complicating factor in the whole affair was a flaming blue-green object, probably a "bright meteor" that streaked across the Great Lakes skies early on Tuesday morning, the same day of the Killian sighting. However, the meteor sightings took place from 5:30 a.m. to 5:45 a.m., which was

about 15 hours before the sightings of the UFO's reported here.

The color of the meteor at first appeared as orange, changing to blue, green and white, and then apparently the object exploded. It came from the northeast, moving west, and disappeared in the northwest. It was visible in Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois and Minnesota. Except for the fairly long time it was in sight—some observers believed they watched it for 15 to 30 seconds and had time to stop their cars and get out before the object disappeared—there seems no reason to doubt that this was a meteor.

It was not, obviously, a temperature inversion.

THE HUMAN MIND is a strange instrument. It seeks constantly to explain the inexplicable in terms of the familiar. It rejects the unfamiliar almost automatically, and it forgets facts that do not square with its own remembered patterns.

So it was that Mr. Puscas, a month after he had enthusiastically endorsed the descriptions of Captain Killian, was relieved to accept the Air Force explanation of jet tanker refueling operations.

He told the Detroit *Times*, "I never attached any importance to the fact that they may have been flying saucers—but I'm surprised that it's something as easily recognizable as jet planes. Anyway, I'm glad to hear what it was because I knew darned well I saw something."

Other persons were not that easily impressed. Killian himself declared, "I am sure there are people on other planets who have solved the problem of space travel. I sincerely believe their vehicles are coming close to the earth."

American Airlines itself, in commenting on sighting locations, declared that its pilots had had a considerable number of sightings in the Midwest, where this encounter occurred.

Lieut. Col. Lee B. James, an Army missile expert from the Huntsville, Ala., group directed by Wernher von Braun, spoke before the Michigan Society of Professional Engineers the day after the Killian sighting and declared it was quite possible that the UFO's sighted the night of February 24 were from outer space.

"I know they are not from here and they are not coming from Russia," Colonel James declared. "We in this civilization are not that advanced yet."

If Killian and the other airline crews and passengers really saw what they reported the UFO's would have to come from a civilization in outer space far more advanced than ours, declared Colonel James.

The fact that the objects did not

om yellow to bluish white, with heir intensity varying from extreme brilliance to temporary fadeouts. Killian considered the possibility that the lights were trying to signal but could discern no pattern in the light changes.

"Their motion also was unlike an airplane. Occasionally one of them would zoom straight ahead of me. Then it would drop back into position off my wing, apparently lagging as if to let me catch up. The airplane was flying a constant course and these movements were easily observed."

Killian called his encounter "awe-inspiring" and said he had never seen anything like that in the air before.

AT FIRST there was no comment from the Air Force on Captain Killian's report. Then three days later, on February 28, the Air Force released a statement through the Air Technical Intelligence Center.

The report stated that the airline crews had all been misled by the Belt of Orion. Glimpsed through broken clouds, said the AF report; "Orion's stars created an illusion of fast-moving objects, deceiving the airline pilots."

In support of this judgment, the Air Force declared that one of its transport planes flying from Washington to Dayton that same night had seen Orion through the broken clouds at 8,500 feet and could vouch for the illusion.

COMMENT: Captain Killian pointed out, as did other observers at the same time, that the airplane was above the clouds and had about 100 miles visibility. In addition, it was frequently possible for the observers to see both the Belt of Orion and the UFO's at the same time. It seems unlikely that six airplane crews and all their passengers were befuddled.

Killian later declared that "no experienced pilot is going to be deceived like that. We all see stars through cloud breaks thousands of times. In addition, the only clouds we had that night were 3,500 feet below us."

An Air Force spokesman publicly ridiculed all "flying saucer" witnesses and sarcastically labeled some of them as persons who "can't remember anything when they sober up next day." This statement was quoted in the New York *Herald Tribune.*

COMMENT. Captain Killian took particular exception to this statement, pointing out that the Air Force knows that airline pilots don't drink before flights—"it's one of our strictest rules."

Donald Keyhoe, director of NICAP, declared that the Air Force spokesman's statement was "plainly meant to serve three purposes:

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AIR FORCE RIGHT ON KILLIAN "SAUCER"?

By Fred A. Kirsch

The Killian affair concerns the sighting of three unidentified flying objects by several commercial airline crews and passengers while flying over Pennsylvania and Ohio on the night of February 25, 1959.

This particular UFO case has probably become the most publicized UFO case of last year. It is my belief that this was not a genuine UFO sighting. I will attempt to show what really caused this sighting.

On the night of the sighting, February 25, 1959, I received a telephone call at 9:23 P. M. We had been experimenting with a telephone net to be alerted in the event of a UFO sighting in the area. As soon as one person saw a UFO he would make several telephone calls, and it was hoped that others would be able to go outside in time to see the unidentified objects too. My caller informed me of the presence of UFO in the area and also of a call he had received from the United Flight Operations desk at Akron-Canton Airport. A United flight had just landed there and reported having witnessed three UFO. As the evening went on and in the telephone calls that followed, a more complete story emerged.

An American Airlines DC-6 piloted by Capt. Peter Killian had witnessed three UFO for over 40 minutes while flying from Newark to Detroit. In addition to Capt. Killian's flight, two other American Airlines' flights and three United Airlines' flights, including the one that landed at Akron-Canton Airport, also reported having witnessed the three UFO. There were also reports from witnesses on the ground in the Akron area that reported seeing three UFO.

Of all the aircraft involved, the most detailed account of the sighting came from Capt. Killian's flight. Capt. Killian had first sighted three bright whitish lights in a single horizontal line to the south and above him at 8:45 P. M. He was flying at 5500 feet altitude and was between Phillipsburg and Bradford, Pennsylvania on route to Detroit. Capt. Killian first pointed out the objects to his co-pilot, John Doe, and then he informed the 35 passengers of their presence. For the next 45 minutes they all watched the three lights. During this time the lights changed color from yellow to bluish white and their intensity varied from extreme brilliance to temporary indecets. The lights did not change formation, however, they did vary in position relative to each other. The lights were described as being "round-like and every now and then one would glow brighter than the others as if it had moved nearer to the plane." Capt. Killian said, "Occasionally the rear fellow would lag behind. He would so almost double the distance between the other two." At one time Capt. Killian estimated that the lights were 20 to 25 miles distant. The three lights were finally lost in the lower-altitude haze as the plane began to descend for its landing.

Commenting as to what the ob-

fects might have been, Capt. Killian had first thought they were the three stars in the belt of Orion, but he disproved this by noticing that he could see both the UFO and the Belt of Orion at the same time.

Capt. Killian also thought that he might have witnessed a high altitude jet refueling operation, but the varying intensity of the lights and the changing positions of the objects led him to believe that it was not a refueling operation.

Immediately this case became a red hot UFO sighting. Most newspapers carried accounts of it. This case is still the subject of conversation of many a believer in the UFO.

But was this a real, genuine UFO sighting or is there some valid, natural explanation for the whole thing?

All the UFO people have hopped on the UFO bandwagon, which is only natural, claiming that this is another good UFO case. The only other explanations suggested were the stars in the belt of Orion and the aerial refueling operation. The belt of Orion explanation is obviously wrong so let us look at the aerial refueling operation explanation in more detail.

To my knowledge the following are all the reasons that have been suggested to disprove the aerial refueling explanation. Capt. Killian said that the varying intensity of the lights and their changing position "made me toss out that theory." Capt. Killian also said that he was going too slow for jets to stay off his left wing for that long a time. Also his copilot, John Dee, made a check to find if there had been a jet refueling operation and had come up with nothing. It also has been brought up that the alleged jets did not show up on Killian's radar screen

The question was also asked, "Why did the Air Force wait nearly a full month before offering a third explanation after having already said that the sightings were due to the pilots seeing the belt of Orion, and that drunks, deluded people or liars were responsible for many sightings?"

At this point it seems that civilian UFO research stuck its head in the sand. They were so sure that this was a genuine UFO sighting that nobody bothered to do any checking.

However, I did do some checking and received the following letter from the Air Force:

19 March 1959

Dear Mr. Kirsch:

This is to acknowledge your letter of 6 March 1959 concerning the American Airlines pilot's sighting of 24 February near Bradford, Pennsylvania. In addition, two United Airlines pilots saw unidentified flying objects in the same general geographical area.

The geographical area concerned is bordered on the north along the New York-Pennsylvania border (near Bradford, Pennsylvania and Olean, New York) on the route of American Airlines Flight No. 139 departing Newark, New Jersey, at 7:10 p. m. and arriving Detroit, Michigan, at 10:52 p. m. On the south, this geographical area is bordered by the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania - Akron-Youngstown, Ohio, locale over-flown by the United Airlines flights reporting this sighting.

The American Airline pilot said "sometimes the interval of the three lights were identical to the Belt in the constellation Orion." This was initially mentioned as a possible solution by the Air Force with the qualifying statement that the report as submitted had not yet been analyzed and that the findings of ATIC would be based upon a complete

analysis and evaluation of the written report to be submitted. The pilot's report also suggested the possibility that he had witnessed a night aerial refueling operation.

Upon analysis and evaluation, this sighting turned out to be B-47 type aircraft accomplishing night refueling from KC-97 tankers. The American Airlines pilot's report of the sighting confirmed this and Air Force records show that three B-47 type aircraft were in the geographical area mentioned above on a night refueling operation. The tanker has several groups of lights which at a distance would appear to be one or more lights. The time duration of a refueling operation varies, can last well over an hour, depending on the type of operation. The KC-97 refueling a B-47 will fly at an altitude of approximately 17,-000 feet at around 230 knots true air speed (ground speed 210 knots). This would account for the lights being approximately 20 degrees above the American Airlines pilot's horizon and his seeing them for 40 minutes. This coincides with the pilot's report of low speed and configuration of objects.

Your letter also supports this conclusion. The tankers had a ground speed of approximately 210 knots and the United Airlines pilots' reported sighting it at 8:45 p. m., 50 miles east of Youngstown, Ohio, approximately 130 miles from Akron, Ohio. This would account for the tanker aircrafts lights being sighted over Akron at 9:15 p. m. by ground observers.

These findings were made available to all media representatives through the Department of Defense press desk in Washington, D. C., on 16 March 1959. The Air Force is well aware of its obligation to keep the public adequately informed on this subject and press releases are made periodically through the Department of Defense.

Sincerely,
LAWRENCE J. TACKER
Major, USAF
Executive Officer
Public Information Division
Office of Information Services

This letter was quite interesting, however it still left several questions unanswered. I wrote to the Air Force again and received the following letter:

2 September 1959

Dear Mr. Kirsch:

This is to acknowledge your letter of 9 August 1959 concerning the American Air Line sighting of 24 February 1959 near Bradford, Pennsylvania.

The Air Force did not release an incorrect explanation for this sighting. However, since the American Air Lines pilot stated that the intervals of the three lights were identical to the belt in the constellation Orion, this was merely initially mentioned as a possibility with the statement that the final conclusion would be based upon a complete evaluation by the Air Technical Intelligence Center.

It did not take months for the Air Force to identify its own planes. The Air Technical Intelligence Center identified this fact quickly in the course of their investigation and the findings, after a complete analysis, were released to all newspapers through the Department of Defense press desk in Washington, D. C., on 16 March 1959, only twenty days after the sighting.

I cannot answer your query concerning the radar equipment aboard airlines planes. I would suggest you ask this question of the airline involved. Most radar in commercial aircraft are located in the nose and only scan directly in front of the

[illegible]. Possibly this could be the answer.

Sincerely,
LAWRENCE J. TACKER

As suggested in this last letter I wrote to American Airlines inquiring about the radar equipment aboard Capt. Killian's aircraft. I received the following letter:

November 9, 1959

Dear Mr. Kirsch:

The radar that we carry on our DC-6's as well as the DC-7's, 707's and the Electra's is a C-Band weather radar with iso-echo circuitry and is used entirely for the avoidance of turbulence and hail. It is able, under certain conditions, to detect the presence of other aircraft but its value in this regard is negligible. I have used it myself to detect other aircraft in flight when I could see the other aircraft and have found that in most collision situations it was difficult to establish the presence of the 'blip' even when the position of the traffic was known. I do not believe, from practical observation, that this equipment has any real utility in collision warning even if it were to be manned continuously by a special radar operator due to its limits on range and revolving power.

Yours very truly,
Franklin W. Kolk
Director, Equipment Research
American Airlines, Inc.

I won't make a long analysis of these letters but will let them stand by themselves. In view of this information it is my opinion that this sighting was actually caused by an aerial refueling operation, that the Air Force explanation for this case is correct, and that civilian UFO research is guilty of failing to look far enough to find the truth.

The first letter from the Air Force proves that Capt. Killian was wrong about the three objects being too slow to be jets.

The letter from American Airlines explains why the objects did not show up on Capt. Killian's radar set.

It is clear that whomever co-pilot John Dee checked with simply did not know of the refueling operation.

As for the varying intensity and position of the lights, an aerial refueling operation can also account for this. The lights would change relative position as the jet aircraft involved would move closer or further away from each other. Their intensity could vary because of haze or the angle of observation.

show on Captain Killian's radar screen might be explained by an advanced technology using a special coating or materials that they knew would not show on radar, Colonel James said.

A few days later, on March 11, Navy Rear Admiral George Dufek, who headed the U.S. Antarctic research and exploration program, did his bit to keep the controversy wide open.

He advised the American public not to discount the possibility of UFO's. It is not beyond possibility that some of the supposed meteors exploding in the earth's atmosphere actually "were saucers driven from Venus or other planets in our galaxy by intelligent creatures.

"I think it's very stupid for human beings to believe that no one else in the universe is as intelligent as we are," Admiral Dufek declared.

The dilemma of conflicting reports and counter-reports which has continued in recent months was dramatized by a statement made before a Congressional committee by Maj. Gen. William Dick, Jr. General Dick was asked if he had any information to substantiate flying saucer reports.

"No, I do not," he declared. "But I answer that question with fear and trepidation because my wife believes in flying saucers."

utes, all the way to Detroit, and the pilot lost sight of them only when he began to let down through the haze for a landing.

Reporters and photographers were waiting to interview him, and next day's Detroit *Times* carried a banner headline, "Mystery Discs Trail Plane Here," over a picture of Captain Killian flanked by the plane's two pretty hostesses, all three smiling as they held up to the camera three ordinary kitchen saucers [9]. After checking with the Detroit ATC, who did not know of any scheduled refueling operation, the pilot reported his experience to officials of American Airlines, and next day returned to New York where again he was besieged by reporters and photographers. Meanwhile, following standard CIRVIS procedure (Communication Instruction for Reporting Vital Intelligence Sighting from Aircraft), the Manager of Operations of American Airlines reported the incident to ATC at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

In New York the day after the sighting Captain Killian gave a telephone interview to Radio Station WCHC, Charleston, West Virginia, describing his experience. Following the customary procedure, intelligence officer from Mitchell Air Force Base questioned him and filled out the usual report form [2]. In the radio interview and in the talk with intelligence officers Captain Killian made the same statements he had made to American Airlines officials: he didn't know what the lights were, and he couldn't tell how far away they were because he didn't know their size or their altitude [10].

Not for months had such a good flying-saucer story appeared, and the newspapers made the most of it. Among the first to assert that the unknown lights had been flying saucers was the UFO Research Committee of Akron, Ohio (see *Chapter* XIII). Members of the committee had received the news by telephone, even before Captain Killian's plane landed at Detroit, from the pilot of a United Airlines plane who had watched the lights on his flight to Akron. During the days following, Captain Killian's copilot gave an interview on Long John Nebel's after-midnight radio program in New York. Captain Killian himself described the UFOs to members of a New York UFO organization, Civilian Saucer Intelligence (CSI), and appeared on several radio and TV programs. Both saucer addicts and newsmen besieged Air Force representatives, demanding an immediate explanation of the sighting. Finally, on February 28, only two days after receiving the report from American Airlines, ATIC yielded to public pressure and produced a tentative theory: it was possible that the pilots might have sighted the stars of Orion, as Captain Killian had first suggested. However, the release added no definite conclusion could be reached until all the facts had been studied.

Promptly rejecting the possiiblity that he might have been looking at Orion, Captain Killian stated in an interview with the New York *Herald Tribune*, "I am sure there are people on other planets and that they have solved the problem of space travel. . . . I sincerely believe that their vehicles are coming close to earth."

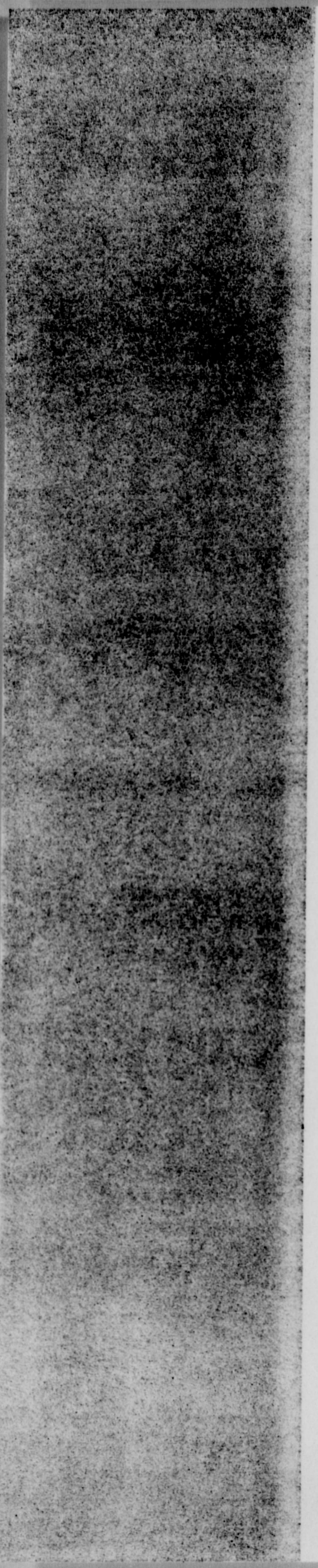
Island *Daily Press* he stated that the things he saw could not have been tankers; that he knew what B-47 bombers and KC-97 tankers looked like, and how they looked in operation at night. (Original statement to American Airlines: "Never having witnessed refueling operations at night, I am not aware of the lighting of jet tankers.") Also, he told the *Daily Press*, the objects he saw were at least triple the size of any known tanker or bomber. (Original statement to American Airlines: "Due to the dark and strong lights I was not able to ascertain any size or shape.") Furthermore, he asserted, the unknowns had been far too fast for a tanker, and had moved at a speed of about 2000 miles an hour. (Original statement to American Airlines: ". . . it was difficult for me to believe they were jets because of low speed.)

In rejecting the Air Force explanation of this incident, flying-saucer addicts ignored several embarrassing questions: If Captain Killian actually saw interplanetary craft, how did he fail to see the earthly aircraft operating at the same time and place? If the unknowns moved at a speed of 2000 miles an hour, how did Captain Killian and the crews of several other planes, flying at less than 300 miles an hour, keep the unknowns in sight for forty minutes? In that length of time the UFOs should have covered most of the distance to the Pacific.

Few persons, given the facts by responsible officials, would persist in denying the reality of the tankers and conjuring up a fleet of flying saucers to occupy the relevant cubic area of space. To the true enthusiast, however, these refueling planes remain incontrovertible proof that spacecraft are among us.

The most famous UFO sighting of this type is the Killian case. On the evening of February 24, 1959, an American Airlines plane was flying from Newark to Detroit. At about 8:45 P.M., when the plane was near Bradford, Pennsylvania, the pilot Captain Killian, noticed some puzzling lights above and to the left of his plane. There seemed to be three, their colors changing from yellow to light orange, dimming and brightening in intensity and shifting their relative positions. At first he supposed he was looking at the constellation Orion, for the lights had the same configuration as the stars in Orion's "belt," but when the lights changed position and he could see Orion itself in addition to the lights, he discarded his first theory. He considered the possibility of a jet tanker refueling operation, but decided the lights were moving too slowly. He couldn't think of any ordinary explanation—but he had long wondered what truth there was in the idea of flying saucers and had thought "there must be something to it."

Over the loud speaker he remarked to the passengers that American Airlines had a special treat for them which they could see by looking out of the left windows. He continued to watch the lights as he flew west toward Detroit, and radioed two other American Airlines planes in the area. Learning that their pilots were also watching the unusual spectacle, he notified Air Traffic Control (ATC) in Detroit. The lights remained in view for about forty min-



ATIC had been collecting facts and trying to analyze them. The basic piece of evidence was Captain Killian's own report to American Airlines, made a few hours after the incident took place. After describing the circumstances of the sighting, the appearance and behavior of the lights, the statement continues:

"The only possible explanation other than flying saucers could be a jet-tanker refueling operation. Never having witnessed refueling operations at night, I am not aware of the lighting of the jet tanker.

"My air speed during this complete flight was 250 knots indicated. I also do not know the air speed of tankers during operation if this could be so. I contacted ATC to find out if they had any airplanes on a clearance and no three airplanes were given.

"In summary, it was difficult for me to believe they were jets because of low speed and configuration. If they weren't jets I still don't know any more than I did before even though I watched them for forty minutes before. Due to the dark and strong lights I was not able to ascertain any size or shape. The altitude of the objects was 30 degrees above my horizon. Distance away is unknown." [2]

Almost equally important was the evidence of other witnesses. During the forty-minute period of observation, the crews of five other planes, all flying west in the Pennsylvania-Ohio region, had watched the lights for varying lengths of time. Several persons on the ground in and near Akron had seen them between 9:15 and 9:30.

Air Force investigators methodically gathered the facts and made their analysis and on March 16, only twenty days after the sighting, they released a summary to the press. The mysterious lights belonged to normal terrestrial aricraft. Although ATC at Detroit had apparently not had the information when first asked, three B-47 bombers of the Strategic Air Command had been carrying out a night refueling operation from KC-97 tankers at the time and place reported. The tanker has several groups of lights which, from a distance, can seem to be one or more lights, and would have looked very much like the three objects described by Captain Killian. Such a refueling operation takes from about forty minutes to more than an hour.

Captain Killian had been flying at an altitude of 8500 feet, and he had given the location of the unknowns as 30 degrees above his horizon; this agreed with the position of the tankers, which were operating at an altitude of 17,000 feet. Captain Killian had been flying west at an indicated air speed of 250 knots; the refueling tankers had also been flying west at a true air speed of 230 knots (ca. 270 mph). Since the courses of plane and tankers were roughly parallel, the tankers had remained in view and would have arrived over Akron at about 9:15, the time that ground observers reported the lights.

Everything checked. Every detail of the incident was accounted for [11]. Nevertheless the solution caused an explosion in the camps of the saucer enthusiasts, who called it, among other things, "imaginative." Forgetting that the "Orion" theory suggested immediately after the sighting had been only tentative, UFO addicts ridiculed it and asked why the experts had been "forced to come up with this second explanation"—which they greeted with equal ridicule [12].

Captain Killian, too, had apparently forgotten his first report. On March 24, a month after the sighting, in an interview by the Long

Chapter II — The Killian Case.
The fully detailed inside story of the AF silencing of Capt. Peter Killian, American Airlines, in March 1959. This followed the Feb. 24 sighting of a three-UFO formation by Killian, his co-pilot, and crews of five other airliners, while Killian was piloting a DC-6 from Newark to Detroit. After Capt. Killian gave the story to the press, by American Airlines orders, the AF attempted to [illegible] with [illegible] ridiculing Killian. When this failed, Capt. Killian was muzzled.