



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

2
4-52

OTTAWA, Ontario, June 16, 1952.

PLACE

DATE

YOUR FILE

SUBJECT

OUR FILE

RESTRICTED

MEMORANDUM TO PROJECT SECOND STOREY COMMITTEE:

1. In conducting various interviews with observers who have sighted various flying objects it was apparent that a certain amount of malobservation and faulty memory was involved.
2. In order to check the general characteristics of public observational capacity it is proposed to arrange for an illuminated object to appear in the Ottawa skies for approximately 1/2 minute with its exact whereabouts and size known only to this Committee. Such an object would be seen by a number of people who could then be interviewed and their statements obtained. Comparison between their statements and the known facts should give a valuable weighting factor to be used in evaluating subsequent observations.
3. The attached sketch shows a relatively simple device for producing the desired effect. It is proposed to inflate an ordinary meteorological balloon to approximately 6 feet in diameter and suspend beneath it at a safe distance, say ten or fifteen feet, a thin aluminum cone in which is mounted a 35 second standard white magnesium flare. The flare could be ignited by an appropriate length of blasting fuse, the rate of burning of which is known, so that the device could be timed to fire at a predetermined altitude. The intense light from the magnesium flare should not be visible to observers on the ground but the rubber balloon should be brilliantly illuminated and should provide a suitable object for observation.
4. The undersigned is prepared to undertake this experiment within the Department of Transport establishment but assistance of the Committee will be required in obtaining release of a suitable flare from the Department of National Defence.

(W.B. Smith)
Senior Radio Engineer