PRESS CONFERENCE - Gen Samford 1952

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MINUTES OF PRESS CONFERENCE HELD BY

MAJOR GENERAL JOHN A. SAMFORD

DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE, U. S. AIR FORCE

29 July 1952 - 4:00 p. m. - Room 3E-869, The Pentagon

JWS

Participating: Major General Roger M. Ramey
Director of Operations, USAF

Colonel Donald L. Bower, Technical Analysis Division, Air Technical Intelligence Center

Captain Roy L. James, Electronics Branch, Air Technical Intelligence Center

Captain Edward J. Ruppelt, Aerial Phenomenon Branch, Air Technical Intelligence Center

Mr. Burgoyne L. Griffing, Electronics Branch, Air Technical Intelligence Center

MR. SCHOOLEY: Ladies and gentlemen, let me remind the military that, while they are welcome here, this is a press conference and let's be sure that the press is all seated before the conference begins.

Let me introduce General Samford, Air Force Director of Intelligence, and General Ramey, Director of Operations. General Samford.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I think the plan is to have very brief opening remarks and then ask for such questions as you may want to put to us for discussion and answer. In so far as opening remarks is concerned, I just want to state our reason for concern about this.

The Air Force feels a very definite obligation to identify and analyze things that happen in the air that may have in them menace to the United States and, because of that feeling of obligation and our pursuit of that interest, since 1947, we have an activity that was known one time as Project Saucer and now, as part of another more stable and integrated organization, have undertaken to analyze between a thousand

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and two thousand reports dealing with this area. And out of that mass of reports that we've received we've been able to take things which were originally unidentified and dispose of them to our satisfaction in terms of bulk where we came to the conclusion that these things were either friendly aircraft erroneously recognized or reported, hoaxes, quite a few of those, electronic and meteorological phenomenona of one sort or another, light aberrations, and many other things.

However, there have remained a percentage of this total, in the order of twenty per cent of the reports, that have come from credible observers of relatively incredible things. And because of these things not being possible for us to move along and associate with the kind of things that we've found can be associated with the bulk of these reports, we keep on being concerned about them.

However, I'd like to say that the difficulty with disposing of these reports is largely based upon the lack of any standard measurement or any ability to measure these things which have been reported briefly by some, more elaborately by others, but with no measuring devices that can convert the thing or the idea or the phenomenon into something that becomes manageable as material for any kind of analysis that we know. We take some of these things and we try to get the best professional advice, if we can, from them, about them, and we're in much the same position of trying to bring to the good honest workmen of science a piece of material that has no utility because it doesn't have the kind of measurements on it that he can use. And, as a consequence, he has to reject these things and say, "Until you can bring me something more substantial than that, I can't make any progress."

So our need, really, is to get the measurement value on these and, in the interim, lacking sufficient measure of these things to make them amenable to real analysis, we have to say that our real interest in this project is not one of intellectual curiosity but is in trying to establish and appraise the possibility of a menace to the United States. And we can say, as of now, that there has been no pattern that reveals anything remotely like purpose or remotely like consistency that we can in any way associate with any menace to the United States.

Now, we do want to continue in the interests of intellectual curiosity or the contributions to be made to scientific measurements, but our main interest is going to

have to continue in the problem of seeing whether the things have possibility of hurt to the United States, and our present dilemma of lack of measurement that can be turned to analysis and a complete lack of pattern in any of these things which gives any clue to possible purpose or possible use, leaves us in some dilemma as to what we can do about this remaining twenty per cent of unidentified phenomena.

The volume of reporting is related to many things. We know that reports of this kind go back to Biblical times. There have been flurries of them in various centuries. 1846 seems to have had a time when there was quite a flurry of reporting of this kind. Our current series of reports goes back, generally, to 1946 in which things of this kind were reported in Sweden.

There are many reasons why this volume goes up and down, but we can't help but believe that, currently, one of the reasons for volume is that man is doing a great deal more. There's more man-made activity in the air now than there was, certainly, in Biblical times or in 1846. In addition to that, our opportunities to observe have been enhanced greatly.

The difficult part of it, as far as advancing the program is concerned, is that our ability to measure doesn't seem to have advanced in any way as well as our opportunity to observe and the greater recurrence of more disturbing things of this sort that are actually in existence from man-made air participation that we know about.

So our present course of action is to continue on this problem with the best of our ability, giving to it the attention that we feel it very definitely warrants in terms of identifying adequately the growing or possible or disappearing, if it turns out to be that, menace to the United States to give it adequate attention but not frantic attention.

Now, I think with those opening remarks I could invite questions. Question, yes, sir?

THE PRESS: Have there been more than one radar sighting simultaneously -- that is, blips from several stations all concentrating on the same area?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: You mean in the past?

THE PRESS: Yes, sir.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes. That is not an unusual thing to happen to this sequence at all. Phenomenon has passed from one radar to another and with a fair degree of certainty that it was the same phenomenon. To say that there have been simultaneous sightings, the same thing by different radar, I think that we could be quite sure that that has occurred simultaneously. Now, when we talk about down to the split second, I don't know, but simultaneously in time sufficient for us to argue that there've been two mechanical observations of the same thing.

THE PRESS: Enough to give you a fix so that you can be sure that it is right in a certain place?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: That is most rare.

THE PRESS: Has there been any?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Most rare. I don't recall that we have had one that gives us that kind of an effect.

THE PRESS: Could that be due to ionized clouds?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: There are thoughts that ionized clouds do have some influence on this. We do know that the thunderstorm activity is quite nicely identifiable by radar because we use the radar for the purposes of avoiding thunderstorms and we do have some that show the storm area that's coming in towards principal stations where protection is necessary in terms of high winds and thunderstorms.

THE PRESS: How much money would you say the Air Force spends a year tracking down these flying saucer reports?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, the energy that's going into it at the present time is outside of anything except the normal reporting procedures. Most of our reports come from individuals or, we might say, I think, on the order of sixty-odd per cent comes from the civilian population straight out. I think there might be something like eight per cent come from civil airlines pilots. You might find that another percentage, in the order of twenty-five, might come from military pilots. And the effort to further analyze them and profit in going after that in a big way is going to have in some way to be related to a standard measurement that makes this material for workmen to work on.

THE PRESS: General, have you talked to your Air Intelligence Officer who is over at the National Airport when they were sighting all these bandits on the CAA screen?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes, sir; I have.

THE PRESS: And have you talked to the Andrews Field people who apparently saw the same thing?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I haven't talked to them myself, but others have.

THE PRESS: Well, could you give us an account of what they did see and what explanation you might attach to it?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I could discuss possibilities. The radar screen has been picking up things for many years that, well, birds, a flock of ducks. I know there's been one instance in which a flock of ducks was picked up and was intercepted and flown through as being an unidentified phenomenon.

THE PRESS: Where was that, General?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I don't recall where it was. I think it might have been in Japan but I don't recall the location of that. That's just a recollection of where that sort of thing could happen and I do know that at Wright Field there was one of these things on the radar -- this was in 1950, I think -- maybe Captain James would reinforce that. Was that in 1950?

CAPTAIN JAMES: That's correct.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: -- in which the local radar produced the effect of the encircling phenomenon that caused quite a lot of concern and it was gone out and intercepted and found to be a certain kind of ice formation that was in the air in various parts of the atmosphere around Wright Field on that day.

Again, there are theories like the men who [se]t theory of light refraction which says that temperature inversion in the atmosphere can cause an image from somewhere else to be reflected in positions where it is not. If that is a correct theory, related to it is another oddity with respect to the ground effect that you get in radar.

We have one instance in which a night fighter with radar is reported to have locked on, as they say, to an object in flight, which, after he'd followed it beyond this curve, found that he was locked on to the ground and he had only a very few minutes to recover because the ground target had gone up and then misplaced by some phenomena, and he locked on to it in a position where he wasn't, but, following it, he eventually found himself directed toward the ground.

Now, the conditions that seem to produce these temperature inversions and possibly the same kind of thing for ground targets being misplaced in altitude -- I don't know that it is worded that they're misplaced in azimuth -- is somewhat typical of the kind of hot humid weather that we've been having here in the last three or four weeks. There's no reason to relate those phenomena to those atmospheric conditions positively, but it is a possibility.

Yes, sir?

THE PRESS: Did interceptors go up on any of the three occasions?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Here?

THE PRESS: Yes.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes, sir.

THE PRESS: What did they see on their radarscopes?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I don't recall that they saw anything. Do you remember, Roger, whether anything was sighted on their radarscopes?

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: There have been no radar sightings. One or two reported (inaudible) --

THE PRESS: There have been no airborne radar sightings, General Ramey? Is that --

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: That's correct.

THE PRESS: On what did they report sightings?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Lights.

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: In one or two instances, they reported sighting lights. In one instance, they reported locking on to an object. It is pretty clear from the discussion of the pattern of two airplanes that went out that one of them was locked on to the other one.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes.

THE PRESS: General --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes, sir?

THE PRESS: Back to the ionized cloud. .Were the blips picked up recently comparable to the ionized cloud or were they different in maneuvering or motion?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, you're talking about a thunderstorm cloud which is one that we know enough about so that we can say, "That is a thunderstorm." In the same way we can look at something else and say, "That is No. So-and-so airplane."

THE PRESS: And these recent blips were different?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: These were different.

THE PRESS: General Samford, I understand there were radar experts who saw these sightings Saturday night or early Sunday morning. What was their interpretation of what they saw on the scope?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: They said they saw good returns.

THE PRESS: Which would indicate that these were solid objects similar to aircraft?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: No, not necessarily. We get good returns from birds.

THE PRESS: Well, you wouldn't get as large a blip from a bird as --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: No; unless it was close.

THE PRESS: Did they report that these could have been birds?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: No.

THE PRESS: Can you get a good return from a reflected ground target, General?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I'll ask Captain James --

CAPTAIN JAMES: You can get a very large return from a reflected ground target.

THE PRESS: Just as good as you might get from an object actually in flight in the air?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Actually thicker. It depends on the amount of bending.

THE PRESS: And just as sharp on the scope?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Yes.

THE PRESS: Can you get a blip from the (inaudible) created by temperature inversion?

CAPTAIN JAMES: On the ground target, yes.

THE PRESS: In other words, something that's on the ground that's reflected off a refracted cloud bank would throw off a blip on the radar screen?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Yes, sir. That's true.

THE PRESS: Would a nearby radar set get that blip at exactly the same speed?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Not necessarily; no.

THE PRESS: In other words, you can have a light and something that lacks substance and material and still have a blip?

CAPTAIN JAMES: I don't quite understand that question.

THE PRESS: You can have a radar image that's created without the necessity of radar striking the solid object or a semi-solid, such as a cloud?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Well, eventually, it does have to strike an object.

THE PRESS: But you said it can be simply a reflection of something on the ground.

CAPTAIN JAMES: Well, an object on the ground is actually something back to the reflection by a curved path.

THE PRESS: I see.

THE PRESS: In other words, it doesn't have to be in the air.

CAPTAIN JAMES: That's correct.

THE PRESS: In the area covered by the sweep on the radar?

CAPTAIN JAMES: It has to be in the area covered by the radar set. It has to be within the range.

THE PRESS: But not in the air.

CAPTAIN JAMES: But not in the air.

THE PRESS: What sort of ground targets give these reflections?

CAPTAIN JAMES: It depends on the amount of temperature inversion and the size and shape of the ground objects.

THE PRESS: Would this reflection account for simultaneous radar sightings and visual sightings which appear to coincide on the basis of conversations between the radar operator and the observer outside?

CAPTAIN JAMES: There is some possibility of that due to the same effects.

THE PRESS: Why would these temperature inversions change location so rapidly or travel?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Well, actually, it can be the appearance or disappearance of different ground targets giving the appearance of something moving when, actually, the different objects are standing still.

THE PRESS: Would these pseudo-blips cause any difficulties in combat at all?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Not to people that understand what's going on. They do cause difficulty.

THE PRESS: Then the experienced operators really can tell the difference between --

CAPTAIN JAMES: That's correct.

THE PRESS: How about the CAA men?

CAPTAIN JAMES: I don't know.

THE PRESS: Would the disappearance or reappearance of these blips be accounted for by the movement of a cloud bank that reflected a ground target?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Well, actually, it's not a cloud bank. It's a temperature inversion of the atmosphere. You see, if warm air comes in over a cool area, you have a temperature inversion and the atmosphere can be perfectly clear, and still the rays will be bent.

THE PRESS: Would that account for the fact that these images disappeared and reappeared on these screens recently?

CAPTAIN JAMES: I'm not positive about that. There's a possibility.

THE PRESS: Captain, was there temperature inversion in this area last Saturday night?

CAPTAIN JAMES: There was.

THE PRESS: And the Saturday night preceding?

CAPTAIN JAMES: I'm not sure about the one preceding, but there was last Saturday night.

THE PRESS: Was there one last night?

CAPTAIN JAMES: I don't know.

THE PRESS: Captain, did any two sets in this area get a fix on these so-called saucers around here?

CAPTAIN JAMES: The information we have isn't good enough to determine that.

THE PRESS: You don't know whether Andrews Field and Washington National Airport actually got a triangulation on anything?

CAPTAIN JAMES: You see, the records made and kept aren't accurate enough to tie that in that close.

THE PRESS: What is the possibility of these being other than phenomena?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I'd like to maybe relieve Captain James just a minute. Your question is what?

THE PRESS: What is the possibility of these sightings being other than optical or atmospheric phenomena? In other words, what is the possibility of their being guided missiles launched from some other country, for example?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, if you could select out of this mass any particular one or two and start working on them and say, "What is the possibility of them being these things?" Then you come to the point and say this one is reported to have done things which require for it to do those things either one of two conditions, absolute maximum power or no mass. If this is a thing in terms of a guided missile, it does these things that have been measured and reported. It can do those things if there is theoretically no limit to the power involved and there is theoretically no mass involved. That's one of the conditions that would say, well, if someone solved one of those problems, this could then be explained as one of those things. You find another one and it has -- it just develops into no other purpose or no other pattern that could be associated with them, a missile. Those which we might identify as being missiles will be tracked. They'll have a track to develop something that people can put a measurement to. I don't know whether that answers the question. It satisfies some of it, but maybe not all of it.

Yes?

THE PRESS: Have there been any such instances so far in which you had information that indicated that either of these two conditions were fulfilled?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Absolute, no mass?

THE PRESS: No limit to the power.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: You know, what "no mass" means is that there's nothing there! (Laughter).

THE PRESS: How about the power?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: In terms of earthly weights and earthly value.

THE PRESS: Yes.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: And unlimited power -- that means power of such fantastic higher limits that it is a theoretical unlimited -- it's not anything that we can understand. It's like my trying to understand -- I want to be careful because I was going to say a million dollars, but I can't understand a hundred! It's one of those questions of unlimited power that just gets beyond your comprehension that has to be used to meet this.

THE PRESS: General, do you have any tentative conclusion or even a trend towards a belief of what these local radar blips are? There's been talk that you did have the heat inversions those nights. Are you all inclined to believe that's what that is?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I think that we're learning progressively more and more about the radar and that these instances very likely are maybe good observations that the radar can make of something but not likely to be observations of the things that the radar was designed to observe (laughter). Now, (laughter) -- all right. Now, let's say -- we don't know much about -- and I'll be getting far afield technically -- we don't know much about the Northern Lights. We'd like to be able to measure that a little bit better. That is the kind of thought I was trying to express by saying radar was intended to observe aircraft for control of aircraft and to deal with aircraft. Now, you may have scientific advantages for observation that it wasn't intended for.

I wonder if you'd speak to my point on that, Captain James, whether I've gotten too far afield or something I don't know anything about.

CAPTAIN JAMES: Yes, sir; that's quite true. We find that sometimes the radar set will be formed in a manner not desirable and due to the fact that it doesn't happen every day everyone isn't familiar with those characteristics and it sometimes turns out to be a mystery.

THE PRESS: Well, getting back, if I may follow it up, on these local radar observations, then you come to the tentative conclusion that they're physical phenomena? Would you say that?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I think so, yes.

THE PRESS: How is it we haven't had them before?

THE PRESS: Well, that's what I was going to get to. What's the history of this thing? Radar operators in the past, when you inquire of them, have they seen similar lights in the past and because they never bothered to associate them with flying saucers they've never gotten in the newspapers?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Oh, they have associated them in the past with things that were thought desirable to intercept. I said a minute ago we've intercepted flocks of ducks and similar things. There's some history of the lack of identification of friendly aircraft which causes a lot of unnecessary interceptions in some parts of the world, being mixed up with a lot of this sort of thing too in which we've had many interceptions that went out and identified a friendly that should have been established by some other method, but mixed up with those there've been many of these attempts to identify an unknown that fizzled out in the same way that the current ones have fizzled out.

THE PRESS: In other words, it is not a rare phenomenon, this thing that happened Saturday night and the Saturday before that?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: It is not a rare phenomenon.

THE PRESS: It's not rare, and it occurs often enough so that you do have a history, and radar experts have been trying to find out what causes them; is that right?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: That is correct. Yes, sir.

THE PRESS: General Samford, has the Air Force conducted any independent research through universities or through the radar people, the Gilfillen people or whoever?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes, sir. We have a number of available consultants, some contracts that have been initiated, some of them that are being thought of, but, again,

I think I'd like to go back to the point of the profit in this thing perhaps being a measurement first, an adequate measurement that can go to science. Reports of the same kind that we've been getting except for this additional mechanical asset or opportunity called the radar have been going on since the Bible times. Now, the radar gives an additional opportunity to observe something about that, but it still doesn't measure it with the kind of precision that is needed to put it into analysis.

THE PRESS: Are you getting something to do that?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: We have some hope with a camera that has on the front of it a -- will you describe what that --

CAPTAIN JAMES: It has a de-fraction grid.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes, a de-fraction grid on the front of it that will be useful against lights because through that de-fraction you'll be able to say, from what substance was this light made? What gases were burning? Was it gas? Was it incandescence? and so forth. Now, those cameras -- the lens is about a $15 item, or this grid is, and the camera is about a $15 item. We have on order a small quantity, two hundred plus of those. We hope to be able to distribute those into the hands of people who might have opportunity. Now, with the great diversity of people who report it's not too easy to put your finger on who has the highest opportunity to report, into whose hands such a device should go, but we think we may learn who might be the most optimum reporters. A great volume of these cameras to scatter around to try through the shotgun approach to get reports doesn't look like too valuable a project but that is one way of trying to measure what these lights are.

THE PRESS: For what purpose -- they have had similar gadgets before, I mean, to measure or to determine the origin of what generates the light. Is this a new type?

CAPTAIN JAMES: The grid is.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: It's not new except that it hasn't been aimed specifically at these items or focused on these items as far as we know.

THE PRESS: General, the Captain mentioned a moment ago or had the thought that when there is temperature inversion

the men know who are observing radar. Is it all right to ask if the Air Force thinks that these objects the other night were a result of temperature inversion?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I'll answer that first, try to, and then ask Captain James for an opinion. I don't think that we are quite sure that the Menzel theory of temperature inversion or that scientists are sure that that is a good theory. It's supported by some people. Other people who have equal competence, it would appear, discredit it. So the gamble as to whether that is the cause or not is about a fifty-fifty proposition. It's appealing. It does satisfy certain concerns. Is that a fair statement or answer to that question?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Sir, the Menzel theory applies mainly to light rays.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes.

CAPTAIN JAMES: In regard to the temperature inversion effect on radar waves that is fairly well established.

THE PRESS: There's no doubt about the latter, is there?

CAPTAIN JAMES: That's right.

THE PRESS: That's been established.

THE PRESS: And it was not --

CAPTAIN JAMES: We don't have sufficient information to say definitely that that was the cause.

THE PRESS: You said an experienced radar operator could tell the difference.

CAPTAIN JAMES: I would say so.

THE PRESS: Wasn't there a naval battle during the war in which there was a great engagement fought against an inversion of radar?

CAPTAIN JAMES: I understand that happened.

THE PRESS: You had two experts over there last Saturday night, Major Fournet and Lieutenant Holcomb, who

described themselves as radar technicians and intelligence officers. What was their opinion?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: May I try to make another answer and ask for support or negation, on the quality of the radar operator. I personally don't feel that is necessarily associated with quality of radar operators because radar operators of great quality are going to be confused by the things which now appear and may appear in a radar. The ability to use the radar for the thing it was designed for is, I believe, dependent upon the thing that they see doing a normal act. If it does a normal act, then it becomes identified as the thing that they thought it was and then it pulls itself along through this mass of indication and they say, "That one has normal processes." I think that a description of a GCA landing has some bearing on that in which to get associated with the GCA you have to make a certain number of queries and do a certain number of things and then you become identified through the fact that you obey. Other things that are in there don't obey. If you obey, then you have an identity and you can then be followed with precision. So I wouldn't like to say that this is a function of inadequate radar operations. I think it's a thing that can happen to any radar operator. If he sees something in there and says, "That one is neither behaving nor any other normal pattern." What is it? Curiosity stimulus, any other kind of stimulus can result in overemphasis at any particular time on any radarscope. These recently appear to have been much more solid returns than are ordinarily classifiable by the arguments that I have just given.

Would you address yourself to what I've just said?

THE PRESS: Yes. What do the experts think? That was the question.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: The experts?

THE PRESS: The ones that saw it last Saturday night. What did they report to you?

THE PRESS: Two of them saw it in --

THE PRESS: What did they say?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: They said they made good returns.

THE PRESS: Did they draw any conclusion as to what they were, whether they were clouds?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: They made good returns and they think that they ought to be followed up.

THE PRESS: But now you come to the general belief that it was some either heat inversions or some other phenomena without substance.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: The phrase "without substance" bothers me a little.

THE PRESS: Well, could you --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: -- say what we do think?

THE PRESS: Yes.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I think that the highest probability is that these are phenomena associated with the intellectual and scientific interests that we are on the road to learn more about but that there is nothing in them that is associated with material or vehicles or missiles that are directed against the United States.

THE PRESS: General, you said that -- can you stop that short of the United States, sir, or the menace to the United States?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I'm sorry -

THE PRESS: Can you stop that statement short of your menace to the United States?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, that was the -- I think that is the part that I believed. Now, what was it that I would have said otherwise?

THE PRESS: Well, you said were not associated with vehicles --

THE PRESS: Materials.

THE PRESS: Missiles.

THE PRESS: Period!

THE PRESS: Material, vehicles, and missiles directed against the United States.

THE PRESS: The question whether these are hostile or not makes very little difference. What we're trying to get at is are you eliminating excluding from any consideration a missile, a vehicle, or any other material object that might be flying through the air other than sound or light or some other intangible?

THE PRESS: Somebody from this planet or some other planet violating our air space. (Laughter)

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: The astronomers are our best advisers, of course, in this business of visitors from elsewhere. The astronomers photograph the sky continuously perhaps with the most adequate photography in existence and the complete absence of things which would have to be in their appearance for many days and months to come from somewhere else. It doesn't cause them to have any enthusiasm whatsoever in thinking about this other side of it.

THE PRESS: Have any astronomical laboratories reported any sightings whatsoever or any astronomers?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I don't recall. Captain Ruppelt, do you know whether we've had reports from astronomical laboratories or observatories?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: No, sir. None have ever had any real bearing.

THE PRESS: General, does that -- the kind of involved explanation you just gave us -- does that apply to the recent Washington sightings or upon your observations over the past years since 1946 based on all your experience with it?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, our reaction to the recent Washington sightings is related to the past experience in terms of -- we have dealt with radar blips before.

THE PRESS: General, if these were vehicles or materials of our own making, they wouldn't be a menace to the United States. Do you exclude that?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I'd exclude that, definitely.

THE PRESS: General, let's make it clear now you are excluding -- if you'll affirm that -- you are excluding vehicles, missiles, and other tangible objects flying through space, including the subhuman bodies from other planets.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: In my mind, yes.

THE PRESS: Anything material -- would that be a clear statement?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: When you deal with a scientific man, maybe he might quarrel with you by what is the real meaning of "material." With my limited knowledge of material I would say yes. In my own view the thing is excluded as being a material evidence.

THE PRESS: In other words, General, if you remove the EEI from that statement, it could apply to any missile, material, or object that is in the air, regardless of whether it's a menace to the United States or not?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, yes.

THE PRESS: In other words, it just isn't there.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I believe that, that there is no -- well, now, that is a little bit in error because a minute ago I said birds do these things. Now, a bird has substance, you see. I don't want to go out and say that these things are reflections of nothing. If they're reflections from the ground up in the air, they're reflections of something. That's why the thought of saying that this thing satisfies us in having no real pattern other than that of phenomena.

THE PRESS: General, you said there'd never been a simultaneous radar fix on one of these things.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I don't think I wanted to say that.

THE PRESS: You didn't mean to say it?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I meant to say that, when you talk about simultaneously, somebody will say, "Was it on 1203 hours, 24½ seconds?" and I don't know.

THE PRESS: Well, I'd like to point out this fact that the officer in charge of the radar station at Andrews

Field told me that on the morning of July 20th, which was a week from last Saturday, he picked up an object three miles north of Riverdale and he was in intercom communication with CAA and they exchanged information and CAA also had a blip three miles north of Riverdale and on both radars the same blip remained for about thirty seconds and simultaneously disappeared from both sets. Now --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, their definition of simultaneous, yes. But some people won't be satisfied that that is simultaneously.

THE PRESS: Well, it is pretty damned simultaneous (laughter) for all purposes, it is satisfied by the inversion theory, Captain.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I'm talking about the split-second people who want to say you've got to prove now that this happened at such-and-such a time and they'll say your observations are delayed by half a second; therefore, you can't say it was simultaneous.

THE PRESS: And does your inversion theory explain away that situation?

CAPTAIN JAMES: It possibly could, yes.

THE PRESS: It possibly could, but could it?

CAPTAIN JAMES: We don't have the details.

THE PRESS: Is there any reason why it couldn't

THE PRESS: General, can we get this clarified?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I believe -- I'm trying to let this gentleman ask a question. Excuse me.

THE PRESS: Isn't it true, sir, that these show a definite grouping, the sightings around atomic bomb plants or areas? Doesn't your map at Wright Field show that?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I find no more pattern in this dispersal of sightings than I do in a radar screen. You can perhaps take distribution of sightings and say that you arrange it this way and you take this group during this period and that gives you a dispersal that may have some significance in it. But I'd like to have Captain Ruppelt develop that

because he probably knows more about what has been done to try to plot these things and say, "Does that have any meaning?" I am not satisfied that any effort we've made toward a dispersal pattern has as yet developed one shred of evidence or meaning. Would you correct me or speak to that point?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: We've plotted these things out on a map and they do come out grouped around some of the atomic installations in the country. However, there's one point, you don't know, maybe the people in that area are a little more jumpy and, if they see a meteor, they'll report it in to the guards. If some farmer out in the middle of Iowa saw a meteor, he'd just forget about it. Now, that is one possibility that we can't eliminate. A lot of the sightings that occurred around these atomic installations have turned out to be balloons, etc., but it may be that the story has gone out that those are vital areas and more people are reporting. We don't know.

THE PRESS: What percentage of your unexplainable ones that you've got are around there?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: A few of them.

THE PRESS: Is it the same pattern?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: I wouldn't say that every sighting around an atomic installation is unexplained. There's really no -- I don't quite follow you.

THE PRESS: His question is what percentage of the unexplainable percentage of the sightings are grouped around atomic energy --

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: We've never broken it down.

THE PRESS: Is it uniform to the general percentages?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: It followed the general percentages. In other words, if twenty per cent of the sightings are unexplained, twenty per cent of the sightings around Los Alamos are --

THE PRESS: Unexplained.

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: -- unexplained; right.

THE PRESS: What percentage of these have come from technical men in science at these installations?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: It varies with the type of people. In other words, at Los Alamos most of the people are fairly technical people. However, you run the guards in a place like that. Now, that may be another factor. All those installations have guards that stay out twenty-four hours a day and those people are in a better position to observe than other people.

THE PRESS: Have many of the scientists though, for instance at Los Alamos, the scientists or technical people, reported these things?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: Yes; they have. We have reports from very high technical people.

THE PRESS: If your reports, some of them, come from these technical people, what type of information would the Air Force like to have?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: The Air Force would like to have -- can I answer, sir?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Go ahead.

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: The Air Force would like to have a size, speed and altitude and what-have-you on these things.

THE PRESS: Number of men inside it? (Laughter)

THE PRESS: In view of practicalities what would an ordinary citizen do if he saw one? Would you be interested in his information? What can he do to help you?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: Actually, we are very much interested. However, there isn't much we can do with their information. It's possible that you might get a series of sightings. In other words, if you get everybody up and down the East Coast looking, you might be able to plot a ground track from it, but the information we get from the general public or from a scientist -- there's no difference. In other words, well, let's take a meteor-like object, for example. If you're out some night and see a meteor, what can you tell me about that meteor? You don't even know in which direction it was going. Actually, it looked to you maybe like it was going across the sky from east to west, but you're not sure. You're just looking at a horizontal projection of that meteor. And a scientist the same way. Just because he's a scientist doesn't mean he's got better eyes.

THE PRESS: What about a report, for example, about one week ago from an engineer who sighted six or seven who followed a definite pattern and then all turned in the same direction and went straight up at an estimated speed -- I forget what he said it was.

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: I couldn't pick that one out from the mass and size -- I'm not familiar with that one.

THE PRESS: Have you investigated these so-called saucers here in Washington?

THE PRESS: The ones we've been seeing here on radar screens.

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: We've got the data on them.

THE PRESS: Have you investigated them yourself?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: Well, what do you mean by that, now -- gone out and personally talked to all these people?

THE PRESS: Yes.

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: No; I haven't.

THE PRESS: Has anybody from the Air Force talked to Harry Barnes, who's the Senior Controller in the CAA radar?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: We have a report from the CAA Controller.

THE PRESS: But nobody's interviewed him?

CAPTAIN RUPPELT: I couldn't tell you that.

THE PRESS: General, you started to say you wanted certain means of measuring these things and you mentioned this camera. Were you going to name others or is that the only thing you have in mind as a possible way of identifying and measuring these phenomena?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Mr. Griffing is here from the Electronics Section. Would you address yourself to that, Mr. Griffing?

MR. GRIFFING: I didn't hear the question.

(Mr. Griffing is very hard of hearing, and has worn a hearing aid for years.

THE PRESS: The question was we'd ask what -- the General had said the greatest need now was to get some way of measuring these reports in terms that you can turn them over to a scientist and I asked him what was he seeking in that way, what he was getting. He mentioned this camera. I connected the question with some way of measuring the gases and lights. I asked him were there other things than that that he might mention that they're now ordering or procuring for that purpose.

MR. GRIFFING: The refraction camera should tell whether it's an incandescent source or whether it's illuminous gas. Well, that would immediately tell whether it was a meteor or reflection of a headlight, a mirage theory and it might also identify what kind of gases.

THE PRESS: What other than this camera? Are there any other tools that you're seeking now?

MR. GRIFFING: There is another proposal which also uses de-fraction grating, which is a continuously operating Schmidt telescope, and that will give a continuous record over the night.

THE PRESS: What's this?

THE PRESS: That's a telescope to photograph the entire heaven in one whole picture?

MR. GRIFFING: Yes, sir.

THE PRESS: Would you repeat that? What is this Schmidt telescope?

CAPTAIN JAMES: It's a type of telescope.

THE PRESS: What type of telescope are you talking about, Mr. Griffing?

MR. GRIFFING: The Schmidt, S-c-h-m-i-d-t, telescope is an optical system that has a wide aperture. That is, you can have a wide range or aperture, in this case, about 150 degrees, or nearer the whole hemisphere can be photographed in one plate and you can have a continual record of what happens in the sky at night, meteor trails or what-have-you and make a photographic record.

THE PRESS: Where is this being used?

MR. GRIFFING: This is a new development, this particular one, but there have been ones similar to this in use in many observatories. Palomar has a Schmidt telescope.

THE PRESS: Are you ordering a number of those for placing around the country?

MR. GRIFFING: That is a possibility.

THE PRESS: Is that a movie-camera type?

MR. GRIFFING: Not exactly. The plate is exposed for ten minutes and then is replaced with another plate and then so on through the night. That is, one can expose a photographic plate for ten minutes without overexposure, in fact, a longer time, but a continual record will be made. Any motion that can be indicated with a time exposure can be found with considerable accuracy.

THE PRESS: Does the Air Force have access to any of those right now?

MR. GRIFFING: That particular thing is not in production yet.

THE PRESS: How much does it cost?

MR. GRIFFING: Shall I go into it, General?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, go ahead.

MR. GRIFFING: The cost will be between three and five thousand dollars apiece.

THE PRESS: General, has there been any indication that any of these radar sightings have been made by electronic countermeasures being used by U. S. Strategic Air Command bombers practicing?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: No; they haven't. We've investigated that and come up negative.

THE PRESS: Is that Schmidt camera telescope the only one, astronomical telescope that's capable of being used on a project like this?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Probably not.

MR. GRIFFING: It's not the only one, but it is the most practical telescopic method. Any telescope can be used but the probability of getting a flying object is very remote. Because it has such a wide aperture it makes it more useful.

THE PRESS: Well, are you planning any other measurement tools other than this camera and telescope?

MR. GRIFFING: Well, of course, the difficulty is if we have a high-powered instrument, we can't guarantee that they'll intercept flying objects so there are other simple measurements that can be made with trained personnel. There are measurements of time. One can time the appearance and disappearance with his own watch and then check his watch. Accurate measurements of time are one thing and simple measurements of angle can be made by trained people with very crude apparatus, and they can tell whether an object is one mile or fifty miles high.

THE PRESS: Haven't we already had some trained personnel, so-called trained personnel, who timed these appearances?

MR. GRIFFING: There perhaps have -- Captain Ruppelt can answer that. The point is in any of these operations there have to be two simultaneous observers to get altitude. You can't use one observation, and it may be that two simultaneous observations have not been in the reports.

THE PRESS: General --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I think that the gentleman here has been waiting quite awhile with a question, if you don't mind.

THE PRESS: General, you mentioned that eight per cent of the reports come from airline pilots. Some of these men have as much as twenty years' flying time, twenty years' experience in flying. What's the reaction of the Air Force to creditable observers like that who give you a detailed description?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: It's very high. We react to them as saying this is an important item.

THE PRESS: Do you classify that, some of those things, as phenomena?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, what else can we call it? His terms of the statement about it are not placeable in anything else as phenomena. I have one that a friend of mine who is an Air Force officer reported from the Middle East. He said, "I thought that my mental processes were adequate to avoid seeing these things, but I did see something that didn't belong there." He was no more able to put a precise measurement on it although he had competent witnesses. He's a creditable observer. We're not trying to discredit the observers. That's the reason that I said that we have many reports from creditable observers of incredible things. They also say they're incredible.

THE PRESS: Are these phenomena capable of change of direction and speed such as has been reported?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: There is nothing else known in the world that can do those things except phenomena! (Laughter)

THE PRESS: General, while we're in this mass of areas for a minute, suppose some superintelligent creature had come up with a solution to the theoretical problem of levitation, would that not be massless in our observations either by radar or by sight? No gravity.

THE PRESS: A balloon has no gravity but its rate of movement is distinctly limited.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I don't know whether I can give any answer to that, sir, that makes any sense because I'm not a metaphysician. I think, probably, just to return to saying that -- we believe most of this can be understood gradually by the human mind.

THE PRESS: So far as we know, have any of these manifestations been reported over Russia or any of the satellites?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, we don't know if there have been any reported over there, no.

THE PRESS: General Samford or perhaps General Ramey, you have described fighters over the District here in the last few weeks. Is there any kind of a policy as far as the rest of the country of the Air Defense Command on such sightings?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I would like General Ramey to speak to that, if he will, please.

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: There's no special policy as a result of these reports. We have a standard operating procedure that would call for an investigation of reports that can be tracked on a reasonable assurance of some sort of intercept or some direction to (inaudible). Those instructions are standard, however, and are not especially caused by this.

THE PRESS: General, is it true that there was a two-hour delay between the sighting of these objects last Saturday night and the dispatch of the jets from New Castle?

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: Yes; that is true because there was never a track established. As soon as a track was established to tell the airplane the direction to go in and the authenticity of the thing was established, then the pilots got off. As long as there's a sporadic report with no identification, no track established, there's no use in sending a very short-range short-field-duration interceptor in the air because he wouldn't know where to go or what to do.

THE PRESS: In other words, it was the decision of the operations officer that occasioned the delay and not any error in transmission of the alert.

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: That's correct; yes, sir.

THE PRESS: General, it's been rumored that the Air Force has been picking up blips of this sort for quite awhile but waited until civilian radar picked it up. Is that true?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I think I mentioned earlier our past experience in dealing with these things in many areas where we have had, oh, hundreds of fruitless intercept efforts in response to radar blips. It's not new with us at all.

THE PRESS: But of the same caliber as recently as the past couple of weeks, I mean, the same caliber blips. I think we've all heard about this blip, but is that the thing that you sighted before in the past by the Air Force? That's what I wanted to ask.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I can only say that I feel fairly sure that they were the same or reasonably the same. No two blips on a radar are alike.

THE PRESS: Have these been better, clearer, bigger?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I wouldn't say better or clearer. These are good returns. Other people have said, "These are good returns."

THE PRESS: General Samford, to clear that point up, I think Captain James indicated earlier in this reference to temperature inversion you now say that these are good returns. Can you get good returns on this temperature inversion reflection?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes.

THE PRESS: Can you get a return that's as sharp as the ones you get off of an aircraft?

THE PRESS: That moves.

THE PRESS: Captain James said they were sharper, larger, awhile ago.

CAPTAIN JAMES: I said it depended upon the target.

THE PRESS: I'm referring to those seen Saturday night. Were those good returns? Could the good returns have been caused by this reflection against this heat (inaudible)?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: We think so. We think that that is probable.

THE PRESS: General, do you think that's probably what they were?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: My own mind is satisfied with that, but my obligation to learn more is not. My own mind is satisfied with that explanation.

THE PRESS: General, if after six years of studying these things you're now convinced that they do not constitute a threat to the safety of the country, is the Air Force thinking about turning this over to some other scientific investigating body or something?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I think that we would want to move into it with them rather than to say turn it over.

THE PRESS: Is there any thought of that, bringing in other governmental scientific bodies perhaps?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes.

THE PRESS: Have you any program along that line? You spoke in the beginning that you wanted the methods of measuring things. You mentioned two or three little things like the possibility of buying some cameras and telescopes. Is there a program being set up to go about this scientifically, and what other organization are you thinking of bringing in on it?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I believe that Colonel Bower of the Technical Analysis Division at Dayton is here. Are you here, Bower?

COLONEL BOWER: Yes, sir.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Would you address yourself to that point, please?

COLONEL BOWER: Our idea on that is to implement our present study with instruments wherever possible, as Mr. Griffing mentioned, the refraction grid camera and other pickups that we might get.

THE PRESS: How many of these telescopes have been ordered, the Schmidt telescope?

COLONEL BOWER: The Schmidt telescopes are not on order by us. The refraction grid camera is an item which we are --

THE PRESS: Is the Schmidt telescope project an Air Force project or --

MR. GRIFFING: Yes. Yes, sir.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I think the point that the gentleman over here wanted to have answered is can you explain from memory the kind of structure that I know that you have in ATIC for, well, I've seen it somewhere in my memory that you have this step and this step and this step.

COLONEL BOWER: We have several steps in analyses and that might explain to you one reason why we cannot give you an instantaneous answer. I mean this requires a study just like any technical problem. First of all, we need technical data. Our first step is to collect the data and check it against other identified objects such as balloons, if aircraft or missiles or such things as meteors are following that, and it comes back and we make an analysis of it within our own groups. We have specialists in our own organizations, people on electrodynamics, physics, geophysics, and various

other specialties that would fit into this. Following that, if it is necessary, we will send it to consultants or specialists in the field. Your mention of a contractor -- we are considering that with the idea, if we can't come out with an answer, of giving it to a contractor to study it. That won't be a short-time job.

THE PRESS: Are you taking a new approach in this whole thing?

COLONEL BOWER: I would say implementing the past approach.

THE PRESS: Going at it more systematically.

COLONEL BOWER: Yes. I think that's the thing to stress. In a lot of these things you can't get technical data and without technical data you can't get a technical answer very well.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Maybe I have a thought that might help in answering that problem. When we started to say this is an obligation we must learn more about, we thought initially that we could learn something from volume of reports. We say we want all the reports we can get and then see that through that volume maybe we can make a pattern. I think we're beginning to believe now that the things which we can sense from volume are not necessarily the things which we value. In other words, volume can come from many different things. It can come from external stimulus. It can come from an unusual opportunity. It can come from such a variety of meaningless things so that the volume of reports is not going to be our answer. We have thought we'd get thousands and thousands of reports and out of these we will develop something that has pattern. We're now becoming convinced that only through <u>better</u> reports with equipment or with a trained reporter specifically attempting to report the valuable things about these items are we likely to produce material that is suitable grist for a scientific analysis. The stuff we have now hasn't enough meat on its bones to interest scientific people.

THE PRESS: Well, General, would you say a qualified observer would be the pilot from New Castle -- I believe his name was Lieutenant Patterson -- who got within what he estimated was two miles of this object last Saturday? Have you questioned him?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: He has no measurement that you can put in scientific hands.

THE PRESS: Well, other than his eye as a pilot.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: He says -- if the quality of the observer is that of seeing something, he was a qualified observer. If the quality is measuring something, he is not a qualified observer.

THE PRESS: Well, the reason I'd implied that he'd be qualified is he was probably concentrating with all of his intensity upon this object that he was pursuing. He must have been thinking about it pretty intensely; therefore, can probably give you some pretty good information. Have you questioned him about it?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes. He had motive; he had direction; he had interest; he had opportunity. But he had no measuring devices to measure this thing, or these things that need to have measurement before it can become anything other than a sighting.

THE PRESS: Well, do you explain his sighting on the basis of this heat inversion theory too, now?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Not necessarily. That very likely is one that sits apart and says insufficient measurement, insufficient association with other things, insufficient insufficient association with other probabilities for it to do any more than to join that group of sighting that we still hold in front of us as saying no.

THE PRESS: Hasn't he admitted that that might have been a ground light that he was looking at?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I don't recall that I --

THE PRESS: Well, have you formed any conclusion as a result of interrogating this pilot?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: None other than that this is another one of the thousand or two thousand sightings.

THE PRESS: General, this fellow that almost flew into the ground, did he go around a corner as if on a bent return? What were the circumstances of that flight?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Did I get the information of the ground lock-on from you, James?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Yes, sir; you did.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Would you answer the question?

CAPTAIN JAMES: I'm sorry. I didn't hear it.

THE PRESS: Did he lock on a reflected image, go around the corner, and go down to the ground? Was that the pattern?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Yes; that's true. That was the pattern, and he did that three times and each time it led him to the same point on the ground.

THE PRESS: Captain, what about the man who saw four lights, Saturday night?

CAPTAIN JAMES: Well, I'll have to ask Captain Ruppelt to explain the lights.

THE PRESS: General --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: There's this difficulty. May I make this statement? I was trying to -- let's take any one of these reports and pull it out and say, "Well, what is the meaning of that one report?" None of these things in the period of our entire experience with them has had any validity on its own. The only thing that we hope for is to find enough similarity in sequence of these things so that you can begin to pull something out. There is no validity in them as individual sightings to mean any particular thing.

THE PRESS: General, did you notice in all of your, say, twenty per cent of the inexplainable reports a consistency as to color, size, or speed, estimated speed?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: None whatsoever.

THE PRESS: None whatsoever?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: No.

THE PRESS: Have you ever tracked the speed by radar of any particular object that you can explain?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: There have been many radar reports giving speed.

THE PRESS: What did they range from, sir?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: They run from zero to fantastic speeds.

THE PRESS: General, how do you explain this case, now? The CAA, as I understand the story, after picking up these objects on the radar, also got this Capital Airlines pilot named Pierman on their radar as he was going out west and, as the Senior Controller told me, he said whenever a blip, one of the unidentified blips, appeared anywhere near Pierman's plane, he would call Pierman on the radio and say, "You have traffic at two o'clock about three miles," and Pierman, in return, would look to the given range and bearing and say, "I see it. I see the light!"

THE PRESS: Happy New Year! (Laughter)

THE PRESS: Pierman described it as a light that was zooming and all such things and this was done not once but Barnes told me he instructed him on that target three times and then, Saturday night, this past Saturday night, when they all saw all these blips, Barnes vectored at least a half dozen airline pilots and planes into these things and they all reported seeing lights.

THE PRESS: Many of them didn't see them, according to Barnes.

THE PRESS: Yes. Many of them didn't see them, but then some did.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I can't explain that.

THE PRESS: Well, how do you explain this directing? Is that autosuggestion or --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I can't explain it at all. I think maybe --

THE PRESS: Have you investigated that phase of this thing, this vectoring the planes into that?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: You can investigate, but the technique of investigating a process of mind-reading,

for example, or the technique of investigating the process of mesmerism. You can say will you investigate those things? I think probably we know no more about mind-reading than the technique of investigating that or the technique of investigating evidences of spiritualism than we do about these fields but for many years the field of spiritualism had these same things in it in which completely competent creditable observers reported incredible things. I don't mean to say that this is that sort of thing, but it's an explanation of an inability to explain and that is with us.

THE PRESS: General, I understand that the wavelength of the radar has something to do with what it can pick up in the way of phenomena. Were these relatively low or relatively high wavelength radar?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I couldn't say and I don't know whether Captain James can or not, but I'd like to have him have the opportunity.

CAPTAIN JAMES: These were relatively high frequency or short wavelength. However, the same effect can be observed on long wavelength equipment with differing degrees.

THE PRESS: You say very short wavelength?

CAPTAIN JAMES: In this case, yes.

THE PRESS: They were designed for different purposes?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Yes, sir.

THE PRESS: General, why has the Air Force refused to disclose the substance of Captain Mantell's air-ground conversations before he died? Do you remember that case?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I don't know enough about it to say what was said or what some reasons were.

THE PRESS: Well, a popular book made quite a point of that, that the Air Force was holding back on that because it told the true nature of the saucer, that he had approached it, and --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, I wish that that were true, that he did say something that had enough substance in it for use. I haven't the slightest idea what he said.

THE PRESS: Are you withholding any information about these so-called --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Are we now?

THE PRESS: Yes. Is anything --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: There is one thing that we have asked that our -- some of our informers have asked -- I don't like the word "informer" either -- reporters had asked --

THE PRESS: We don't like that word either.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I like the word. Reporter is all right. But many people are reticent about reporting these things if their names are mentioned because they are frequently looked on by others as being publicity seekers or maybe people will avoid them and go on the other side of the street for awhile (laughter), so they ask us to not say who made this report and sometimes information is received that deals with the credibility of a reporter saying he's drunk all the time or he never did do anything but lie. (Laughter). Well, those things we get are not revealed, but in so far as the statement of what they saw, when and where they saw it, the measurements that they took, such as they were, we are not withholding any of that data.

THE PRESS: How about your interpretation of what they reported?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Well, we're trying to say as much as we can on that today and admit that the barrier of understanding on all of this is not one that we break.

THE PRESS: General, have you ever said flatly that these are not machines that the United States has made or is developing?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: What was that?

THE PRESS: Have you said this afternoon that these are not machines or weapons that the United States is developing?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I would say that these that we have been speaking about in this locality are definitely not. However, many reports that we have received and we've been able to correlate and put in their place we have been able to do so

through association with an activity we had somewhere, a jet aircraft line, a missile, certain balloons. We could say, well, the report probably was associated with this thing which we've done, but in so far as what you are thinking about in this locality --

THE PRESS: These are not missiles or rockets?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: -- there is nothing.

THE PRESS: Well, General, could you turn that over a little bit? A lot of people keep saying that all this talk is a cover-up and that saucers are really the result of some experiments the United States, either the Air Force or Atomic Energy, is carrying on. Can you make a flat statement and say that these unexplained flying saucer manifestations are not the result of any American weapon or other experimentation or test?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: I'd say that those that we categorize as unexplained or unidentified have gone through the process of trying to associate them with something we were doing and when we fail to associate them with something we're doing, we say that is one other clue that ran to nothing. Now, to say that sightings everywhere are -- none of them could possibly be associated with what the United States is doing, isn't quite true because we know that a particular jet fighter has been flying in a certain area; somebody has reported thus and thus and thus, and we get those two things together and we say something that we were doing caused that report. As General Ramey said a minute ago, there is a fair degree of probability that two fighters locked on each other and saw and received senses. That was certainly something we were doing that caused those two reports.

THE PRESS: What I was aiming at was this popular feeling --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: Of mystery?

THE PRESS: -- of mystery, of something, that it's some very highly secret new weapon that we're working on that's causing all this.

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: We have nothing that has no mass and unlimited power! (Laughter)

THE PRESS: General, somebody asked you before how much money you'd spent on this investigation since the start. How much have you spent on it?

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: It's very slight. I don't know.

THE PRESS: General, in connection with withholding information, I'd like to ask General Ramey a question. That is, how many times have fighter planes been brought down over the Washington area in the last couple of weeks to investigate reports of flying objects?

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: That's a matter of record -- three, I believe. I think two flights one night and one flight Saturday night. I don't remember the night the other two were up. I think there have been six sorties.

THE PRESS: One flight the first Saturday night and two flights --

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: In this immediate area, yes. We have airplanes that investigate various reports all over the country or places where we have these fighters, but --

THE PRESS: I thought the Air Force had said that it couldn't send any fighters up because it didn't have them.

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: No. I don't believe it said that.

THE PRESS: The first night.

THE PRESS: How about last night, General?

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: No; there were no fighters up last night.

THE PRESS: Were there fighters sent in here from New Castle on both those Saturday nights in question?

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: That's right; yes.

THE PRESS: Last night, was that because of lack of a track?

MAJOR GENERAL RAMEY: Lack of a track.

THE PRESS: General, are sightings from military personnel made public generally, or are they --

MAJOR GENERAL SAMFORD: There's no reason why they shouldn't be.

THE PRESS: Thank you, General. Thank you.

. . . The conference was concluded at 5:20 p. m. . .

* * *

(#377-Hedges)

X1

CONFIDENTIAL

COVER SHEET

SUSPENSE

ORIGIN OF BASIC

UNCLASSIFIED

DATE

ASSIGNED BY

DATE | TYPE

SUBJECT

AFCIN Request for Transcript, General Samford's Press Conference July 1952 and Other Data

RETURN TO:
Aerospace Studies Inst
ATTN: Archives Branch
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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: AFCIN-X1

DATE 9 OCT 1957

FROM: AFCIN-4

COMMENT NO. 1

COMMENTS *(Use reverse, if necessary)*

4E4/Capt G.T. Gregory/wm/69216

1. In accordance with telephone conversation between your office and Captain Gregory, AFCIN-4E4, attached are the following requested items:

a. Transcript of subject press-TV conference.

b. Copy, teletype UFO Report, and conclusions - UFO sighting, FEAF, 17 December 1956.

c. Six (6) copies, standard UFO questionnaire, Forms 164 and 164A.

d. Copy, letter regarding action taken on Hopkinsville "Little Green Men" case with sketch.

2. Reference your request that this Center consider declassifying the "Special UFO Briefing for General Lewis" given last October, to permit its release to the general public. Action has been initiated to review and revise the briefing in this regard.

3. Specific reference is made to the FEAF UFO case, par. 1c. above. This incident has just hit the press and news services (copy attached) through the efforts of NICAP.

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

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Copy 1 of 4 copies
Page 1 of 2 pages

T57-27184

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RECEIVED
15 OCT 1957
ACS/INT
HQ USAF

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AFHQ O-86, Subj: AFCIN Request for Transcript, General Samford's Press Conference, July 1952 and Other Data

In our opinion, this case was properly evaluated, considering the fact that state side type of detailed UFO investigations cannot be performed at some locale half way around the world. What is of concern is the fact that the report of this incident, as may be noted, is classified.

4. The question arises how did Keyhoe obtain the report? If USAF personnel involved in the sightings are indiscreetly providing this organization with classified information, then the matter takes a serious turn. As an agitator, Keyhoe's "method of operation" is now well known: through the press, a demand to the Air Force for an explanation of some controversial UFO incident; the press' statement that the Air Force had "no immediate comment," as in this case; and the twisting of the Air Force's comment to NICAPs advantage.

5. It is not necessary to state that time is generally required for press queries to move through military channels for data upon which to base a reply, a fact that NICAP is undoubtedly aware.

4 Incls
1. Cy, memo, 8-1-52, re briefing w/1 incl (U)
2. Cmt #2, DF, undtd, Subj: Radar & Visual UFO Reported by FEAF (C) (T56-29475-A-2) (1-3p) w/3 incls Incls 1 & 3 uncl, Incl 2, Cy incoming TT FFIRQ-A-9605, 18 Dec 56 (T56-29475-3) (1-5p) (C)
3. ATIC Fms 164 & 164A (sex)
4. Cy ltr, 29 Aug 57, Subj: Req for Info - Hopkinsville Incident (Uncl)
5. 1st Ind. 1 Oct 57 w/6 incls

CHESTER H. LONG
Lt Colonel, USAF
Executive

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Page 2 of 2 pages

T57-27184

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

AFOIN 1 August 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: ALL DIRECTORS OF INTELLIGENCE, MAJOR AIR COMMANDS
ALL AIR ATTACHES
COMMANDING OFFICER, 1142D SPECIAL ACTIVITIES SQUADRON

SUBJECT: Protection Against Public Release of Sensitive Subject Matter

1. Reference is made to:

a. Directorate of Intelligence Policy Letter No. 205-1, dated 17 July 1952.

b. Directorate of Intelligence Policy Letter No. 205-2, dated 22 July 1952.

2. On 29 and 30 July personnel of various Air Force intelligence activities participated in public press conferences and radio broadcasts to answer questions relative to unidentified aerial phenomena.

3. This participation, contrary to stated AFOIN policy, was directed by competent authority, for competent reasons. It does not indicate any change in the policy stated in references a and b above.

BY COMMAND OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF:

JOHN A. SAMFORD
Major General, USAF
Director of Intelligence

COPY FOR: INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, AIR MATERIEL COMMAND

For Capt Gregory's Files
AFOIN-UG4
(Permanent retention)