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Concluding GLOBE's exciting series on Unidentified Flying Object incidents

UFOs INVADE WASHINGTON

THE PILOT of the supersonic F94 jet interceptor sighted-in on the glowing UFO and hawked down through the night sky over the nation's capital, Washington, D.C.

Lt. William Patterson, a Korean veteran, threw the switch cutting in the fighter's power-house afterburner and the sheer explosive thrust rammed him flat into the pilot's seat leaving him momentarily motionless.

"I've got one of your bogies at ten miles and I'm closing fast," radioed Patterson back to Washington Air Traffic Control.

The fighter's two massive jet engines screamed at full pitch scorching a trail towards the unidentified target.

"I'm at full power and six miles... five miles... four... three... two..... Damn! — it's gone... it's just vanished," yelled Patterson over the radio.

He checked with his on-board radar operator who also confirmed that the object had suddenly mysteriously disappeared straight off his scope.

"I didn't even see it move. It just went. If it was flying it sure moved faster than anything I've ever seen in my life," responded the radar officer.

The unexplained incident was just one of many which involved USAF jets during the freak month of July 1952 when it seemed the capital was being invaded by UFOs almost every night.

Incredibly the sightings which went on for days not only involved the air force, air traffic controllers, airline pilots, members of the public on the ground — but the President of the United States himself, Harry Truman.

Panic gripped Washington during the sweltering July evening as rash after rash of reports of UFOs began flooding police and military switchboards.

Military bigwigs were able to brush off the reports at the start of July and hid behind

As panic grips the capital, even the president asks: 'What the hell is going on out there?'

By BARRY HART

the weathermen's suggestions that they were simple mirages caused by a sudden blanket of warm moist air which had come from the Gulf of Mexico and settled over most of the eastern seaboard.

But by mid July fear had overridden the meteorological logic and Air Route Traffic Control operators had even recorded the UFOs being clocked at speeds of up to 7,000 mph and passing through strictly prohibited air space above the White House.

It was at this point that Harry Truman himself ordered his White House aides to inform the Air Force and security chiefs that he wanted to know 'What the hell is going on out there?'

After several sightings reported by pilots flying into Washington, the government's chief expert on UFOs, Captain Edward J. Ruppelt, was ordered to investigate.

Even he had to admit to reporters that he was 'baffled and mystified' by the sightings.

But it wasn't to end there. On July 19 the strange UFO phenomena really began to take off.

Shortly after midnight ARTC controllers, puzzled by unexplained 'solid' objects appearing on their screens, contacted the pilot

of a Capitol Airlines flight preparing to take off from Washington National Airport.

"Buddy, keep an eye out for anything unusual you might see up there," advised the controllers.

As the pilot began clearing the traffic pattern over Washington he abruptly but calmly radioed down: "Yep, there's one — off to the right — and ...there it goes!"

The giant solid ball of light spotted by the pilot took off at lightning speed.

Within the next fourteen minutes as the Capitol turbo prop climbed to its cruising altitude the pilot reported that he had seen six more identical lights.

On the ground air traffic controllers could see "a huge

fiery orange sphere."

The object vanished without trace within a couple of seconds. Everything had been confirmed.

The craft had shown up on three radar station screens and had actually been observed.

Over the following ten days sightings were reported by air traffic controllers and people living around air force bases near Washington.

Reports issued by the Pentagon after the entire episode completely glossed over the fact that the UFOs were anything but meteorological mirages. They were officially classified as category 'unknown.'

But Senior Controller Harry Barnes in the ARTC, who later became a top administrator in the Federal Aviation Agency, said recently:

"I don't intend to shoot down any official reports but I took the position at the time, and still do, that we were watching something out there.

"We were definitely getting a return on the radarscopes. Only a solid object can do something like that."

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