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in Page Titles

Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1997](#) -> [Nov](#) -> **Re: Kenneth Arnold's testimony**

UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Kenneth Arnold's testimony

From: **bruce maccabee** <brumac@compuserve.com>
Date: Mon, 17 Nov 1997 21:51:10 -0500
Fwd Date: Tue, 18 Nov 1997 00:11:22 -0500
Subject: Re: Kenneth Arnold's testimony

>Date: Fri, 14 Nov 1997 21:52:21 -0500
>From: James Easton <pulsar@compuserve.com>
>Subject: UFO UpDate: Re: Kenneth Arnold's testimony
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalseve.net>

<supermagnum snip>

>>Several years ago I got into a letter-writing argument with Kottmeyer
>>over the "goose hypothesis".

[...]

>>He came on strong, until I pointed out that Arnold said he turned his
>>plane and opened the (left hand side) window. At this time Arnold was
>>flying south, the same direction as the UFOS. Had they been geese
>>Arnold would have overtaken and passed them. At any rate he wouldn't
>>have been puzzled at their "high speed" even if they could fly as
>>fast as 50 mph, as Kottmeyer suggested. (Arnold's plane was probably
>>traveling 100 mph or faster but certainly much faster than 50 mph).

>Understood and noted.

>This all comes back to how reliable Arnold's overall judgement
>was during that brief encounter.

>If his calculations were perhaps out by some 50% on the length to
>width ratio, maybe by a relative 35% on the altitude of the
>objects, is it likely that his estimate of the objects' speed was
>similarly inaccurate under these difficult conditions?

Perhaps you didn't understand after all. Suppose these had been geese, say, 1/2 mile from the plane (angular size 1 mr or so). Suppose that as Arnold flew eastward the geese passed in front of him and were south of his position when he turned to the right to fly parallel to them. Suppose these are super geese that can fly at 60 mph (1 mile/minute or 88 ft/sec) and were 2000 ft south of Arnold when he turned. As soon as he completes the right hand turn he rolls down the window to get a clear view of these geese. Initially his sighting line to the geese is southward, lets say about 45 degrees to the left of dead head (plane now flying south).. At this time he is travelling at 120 mph (2 mi/min). How long does it take for him to catch up with the geese (hint: 1 mi/min differential air speed; need to cover the 2000 ft "lead" the geese have on him.) In about 23 seconds the sighting line would rotate from 45 degrees to the left to 90 degrees to the left. After that the strange objects would clearly be behind the plane.. But, more importantly, it would probably only take a few seconds after the turn for Arnold to realize that

****the sighting line to the objects was rotating to the left****...which would mean he was catching up with these strange objects, rather than rotating to the right, which would mean the objects were pulling away from him.

Of course the numbers and distances used in this "model" of the sighting are synthetic.

However, they illustrate the point.

Now I hope you understand that it would be DIFFICULT for Arnold to mistake geese for high speed objects because as soon as he started flying parallel to their path he would realize he was catching up. When Kottmeyer realized this he shut up.

>A question which Kottmeyer asks; if the objects were travelling >at the speed Arnold indicates, how can we account for the >apparent lack of a "sonic boom"?

Lots of people ask that question. As we know, the skeptic uses this "it can't be" argument against the reality of something unusual going on.

"If it were real, at that speed there would be a sonic boom." Well, Arnold may not have heard one if there was one. ON the other hand, fthe OTHER WITNESS (not considered by Kottmeyer, as I recall), Fred Johnson near Mt. Adams saw these things fly over his head, looked at them in a telescope, saw his compass wobble (lilke to see geese do that!) and heard no noise.

Incidentally there were a number of other sightings in the northwest on June 24.)

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