

Historical Records

1952

The "Washington Invasion"

- **July 13.** National Airlines plane en route to National Airport, about 60 mi. SW of the city observed a blue- white ball of light hovering to the west. Object then "came up to 11,000 ft. and then maintained a parallel course, on the same level, at the same speed, until the aircraft pilot turned on all lights. Object then departed from the vicinity at an estimated 1000 mph. Weather was excellent for observation." The crew said the object "took off up and away." No other air traffic was reported in the area at the time.
- **July 14.** Virginia, Newport News: Southbound Pan American Airways plane at 8,000 ft. nearing the Norfolk, Virginia., area observed six glowing red, circular objects approaching below the airliner; objects flipped up on edge in unison and then sped from behind and under the airliner and joined the in-line formation, which "climbed in a graceful arc above the altitude of the airliner." "Then the lights blinked out one by one, though not in sequence." Next day the crew was thoroughly interrogated and advised that they already had seven other reports of red discs moving at high speed and making sharp turns.
- **July 16.** Virginia, Hampton Roads: A Government aeronautical research engineer observed two amber-colored lights approaching from the south at about 500 mph. These slowed and made a U-turn, revolved around each other at a high rate of speed, then joined by two other objects from different directions, the four sped off to the south at about 500 mph. "They moved jerkily when moving slowly. Their ability to make tight circling turns was amazing."
- **July 18.** Washington, DC: Radio station chief engineer observed 6-7 bright orange discs moving in single file. Each in turn veered sharply upward and disappeared.
- **July 19.** Virginia, National Airport: began picking up unidentified targets on radar.
- **July 20.** Maryland, Andrews AFB: Five witnesses visually observed three reddish-orange objects moving erratically.
- **July 20.** Maryland, Andrews AFB: Air Force radar operators at Andrews AFB weather tower tracked 10 UFOs for 15-20 minutes. Objects approached runway, scattered, made sharp turns and reversals of direction.
- **July 20.** Virginia, Herndon: Capital Airlines flight from National Airport called by control tower to check on unidentified radar targets saw three objects, and three more between there and Martinsburg, West Virginia "like falling stars without tails [which] moved rapidly up, down, and horizontally. Also hovered." Chief CAA air traffic controller Harry Barnes later said in a newspaper interview: "His [the pilot's] subsequent description of the movement of the objects coincided with the position of our pips [radar targets] at all times while in our range."

- **July 20.** Virginia, National Airport: Capital Airlines flight incoming to National Airport reported that an unidentified light followed his airliner from the vicinity of Herndon, Virginia, to within about 4 miles west of the airport, confirmed on radar.
- **July 20.** Virginia, National Airport: Additional unidentified targets appear on radar.
- **July 26.** Delaware, New Castle AFB: Air Force Command Post notified of unidentified radar targets. Two F-94 jet interceptors scrambled from New Castle AFB to investigate.
- **July 26.** Maryland, Andrews AFB: Surveillance radar tracked 10-12 UFOs in Washington, D.C. area.
- **July 26.** Virginia, National Airport: Sharp UFO targets on radar at Airport. Civilian pilots saw glowing white objects on four occasions, including a United Airlines pilot near Herndon, Va., and two CAA pilots over Maryland. National Airlines pilot near Andrews AFB at 1700 ft. saw a UFO "flying directly over the airliner."
- **July 26.** Virginia, National Airport: Radar at airport tracked a UFO on radar ("big target").
- **July 26.** Virginia, National Airport: Radar at Airport tracked "solid returns" of "four targets in rough line abreast," and eight others scattered over the radarscope.
- **July 26.** Virginia, National Airport: "Good sharp targets" of 4-8 UFOs on ARTC radar.
- **July 26.** 10-12 objects on radar.
- **July 27.** Delaware, New Castle AFB: F-94 jet interceptors scrambled from New Castle AFB to investigate Washington, DC, radar - UFOs. One F-94 pilot made visual contact and appeared to be gaining on target; both F-94 and UFO were observed on radar and "appeared to be traveling at the same approximate speed." When the F-94 pilot tried to overtake the UFO, it disappeared visually and on radar. The pilot remarked about the "incredible speed of the object."
- **July 27.** Maryland, Andrews AFB: Air Force Lieutenant saw a dark disc moving slowly northeast with "oscillating rolling motion." Clouds were moving southeast. UFO entered base of clouds.
- **July 27.** Virginia, National Airport: Major Fournet, (Project Blue Book Officer in Pentagon), and Lt. Holcomb, (Navy electronics expert), arrived at National Airport Center. Observed "7 good, solid targets." Holcomb checked on temperature inversions, but they were minor and could not explain what was going on. He so advised AF Command Post, requesting interception mission. By the time the F-94 jets arrived from Delaware, no strong unidentified targets remained, and no visual contacts were made.
- **July 27.** Virginia, National Airport: Air Force personnel and others at National Airport saw a large round object reflecting sunlight, apparently hovering over the Capital Building. After about a minute, the object "wavered then shot straight up disappearing from sight."

- **July 28.** Daily papers headlined a United Press story from Washington, DC., that the Air Defense Command had ordered its jet pilots to pursue, and if necessary "shoot down" UFOs sighted anywhere in the country.
- **July 29.** Maryland, 10 miles southeast of Andrews AFB: Air Force pilot sighted three round white UFOs. Other UFOs tracked by radar during the afternoon.
- **July 29.** Washington, DC: Many unidentified targets tracked by CAA radar, 8-12 on the radarscope at a time, moving southeast in a belt 15 miles wide.
- **July 29.** Eastern Airlines pilot asked to check on radar targets, reported seeing nothing. CAA official said the targets disappeared from the radar screen when the plane was in their area, "then came back in behind him."

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