

708. #

## THE SIGHTING

A policeman in Socorro, N.M. was a chance witness to a UFO landing on April 24, 1964 at about 5:45 p.m., when he abandoned pursuit of a speeding car heading south on South Park Street to investigate a loud ~~rae~~ roaring noise which he thought was an explosion from a dynamite storage shack.

(turned onto )  
Patrolman Lonnie Zamora radioed headquarters and proceeded along a little-used 1 1/2 mile-long dirt road that led <sup>past</sup> to the dynamite shack. A brilliant, cone-shaped blue flame accompanied the roaring sound. The flame disappeared, descending behind one of the hills, and then the roaring sound stopped and was replaced by a whining noise that rapidly decreased in pitch until it became inaudible.

Driving within 800 feet of the scene, he saw two small figures, whom he described as looking like "young boys" or "small adults," and dressed in what appeared to be mechanics' "white overalls," doing "doing something to the object." From that distance, Zamora described the object as being white, metallic, and oblong, and having two leg-like protrusions angling out from beneath it.

As Zamora drove closer to the scene, the figure farther away from him looked in his direction, apparently startled by the car's approach. At that distance, ~~Z-~~ he could not make out any details such as facial features, hands, or feet and <sup>he</sup> assumed that the figures were completely covered by their suits. Still assuming that he had driven upon a possible auto accident, he radioed Sgt. M. Samuel Chavez of the New Mexico State Police and continued up a second hill, at which time he lost sight of the object and the occupants.

At the top of the next hill, about 100 feet from the object, he heard two metallic "bangs" that sounded like doors slamming shut. He was almost opposite the UFO and looking slightly downward at it in the gully, the dynamite shack being 80 to 100 ~~feet~~ yards west of the object. A more accurate description was observed at this distance.

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Zamora described the object as being about the length of a car (12 to 15 feet long) approximately 4 feet thick, and supported by "girder-like" legs or stilts measuring from 2 1/2 feet to 4 1/2 feet in length. (Webb prefers the latter figure and considers it an average because the legs were apparently adjustable.)  
~~But-~~ But the two occupants were ~~gone~~ not in sight.

Then (or soon after) he heard a very loud roar and saw smoke and blue flame come (shoot, spurt) from the bottom of the object, kicking up a little dust around the UFO. / <sup>Thouroughly frightened and</sup> Thinking the object was going to explode, Zamora ~~became~~ ~~frightened-and-fled,~~ ~~bumping-his-leg-on-the-patrol-car-and-~~ bumping his leg on the patrol car and losing his sunglasses. He fell to the ground and shielded his eyes face with his arm. He looked up when he heard the roar diminishing and saw that the UFO had risen between 10 to 20 feet above the floor of the gully. The "indescribably brilliant blue" flame appeared again, shrank to nothing, and the roar stopped, leaving a whining sound-~~which~~ --like the one he had originally heard--which dropped rapidly from a high to a low pitch, fading out completely. Before the object silently flew away, he saw a red insignia (or design) (footnote saying: see Zamora's sketch or drawing) on ~~the~~ its side measuring about 2 1/2 feet high and described as a crescent over a horizontal line, with an inverted "V" over a vertical line in the center. ~~The-UFO~~

The UFO cleared the dynamite shack (by about three feet, according to the USAF), maintained a low altitude above the scrubland for two or three miles on a southwest course, and ascended rapidly over a perlite mine and disappeared (heading) in the direction of Black Mountain and Six-mile Canyon.

### THE INVESTIGATION

The initial investigation was made by Sgt. Chavez and patrolman Zamora, who had radiowd for assistance during the time of the sighting. Withing about three minutes after the UFO disappeared

Within about three minutes after the UFO disappeared, Sgt Chavez, New Mexico State Policeman, arrived and ~~the-initial~~ he and Zamora ~~conducted-~~ made the initial investigation of the landing site. Physical traces left by the strange object disclosed several clumps of grass and ~~greasebushes-and-the-ground~~ greasewood bushes that were still smoking and hot to the touch. And only the sides of the plants facing in toward the center of the site were burned, suggesting an intense heat ~~heat-source-emanating~~ source concentrated in the center (as if from a very hot flame or exhaust). Branches ~~were~~ also ~~bre~~ were broken on one of the bushes. (Webb states that green greasewood ~~dows~~ does not burn easily, making no prior mention that the greasewood bushes were green or what. Insert it????)

~~Additional-evidence-of-the-UFO-landing-~~

~~Following-the-arrival-of-Sgt.-Chavez~~

Following the arrival of Sgt. Chavez, deputy sheriff James Luckie, <sup>and</sup> state patrolman Ted Jordan, ~~and-cattle-inspector-Robert-White-of-Socorro-~~ confirmed examined the area. Luckie reported that the bushes and grass clumps were still hot when he arrived. ~~Whi~~ Cattle inspector Robert White of Socorro, who arrived less than a half hour later, saw four rectangular prints and two circular ones and said ~~the~~ they were fresh.

investigator, Ray Stanford,  
NICAP's inv-estigation disclosed that the four rectangular depressions, spaced in a lop-sided square pattern from 9 to 15 feet on a side, measured about 12 inches long, 6 inches wide (width figures vary in the accounts from 3-4 inches to 8 inches), 3 to 4 inches deep, and each was wedge-shaped in cross-section. From the irregular spacing of the depressions, it was theorized that the ~~legs-~~ ~~of-the~~ UFO's legs were adjustable in length (to compensate for the terrain underneath).

Stanford said he found a fifth partial marking indicating to him that one leg had moved from one position to another at the moment of touchdown. And further examination of the markings and the mounding of the soil around them indicated that they did not appear to be made by an object striking the ground with great force, but instead by an object settling to earth slowly, (under control???) and not moving after touchdown (or touching the ground).

Additionally, two round depressions about 4 1/2 inches in diameter and 3 inches deep were also discovered at the landing site. They reminded cattle inspector White of a shoe heel and yet they did not appear to be footprints or any known animal tracks. ~~RRRRRRRRRRRR~~ <sup>overlooking</sup> Chavez, omitting no possibilities, even searched Zamora's car for anything that could have been used to make the indentations in the soil or start a fire; but he found nothing.

Metal scrapings, possibly scraped off the landing-gear footpad, were ~~were~~ examined and then ~~took-to~~ forwarded to a prominent government center for analysis. But the scrapings were <sup>subsequently</sup> identified as of granitic origin. ~~Examination~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~of-the-witnesses-character-and-reliability-as-an-observer~~ Soil samples, <sup>measurements</sup> ~~of-the-site~~ and photographs of the site ~~and-intensive-interviews~~ were obtained; and Air force men went over the area with a Geiger counter but found no above-normal traces of radiation. In addition, intensive interviews were conducted by the Air Force and NICAP. These interviews disclosed that the witness was an extremely reliable ~~one-and-that-his-character~~ observer and ~~that-his~~ <sup>chief A.F. scientific consultant,</sup> ~~character~~ regarding his character, Dr. Hynek <sup>who</sup> said: ". . .Mr. Zamora's story is simply told, certainly told without any intent to perpetrate a hoax. The story of course was told by a man who obviously was frightened by what he did see." <sup>Conventional</sup> ~~All possible~~ explanations were explored <sup>by</sup> Army Capt. Richard T. Holder ~~appraised-the-situation-~~ <sup>who</sup> attempted to determine whether White Sands Missile Range at Holloman Air Force Base had anything that might produce the conditions described. But neither White Sands Missile Range nor Holloman had an object that would compare to the object described; there was no ~~k~~ (known) firing mission in progress

at the time of the occurrence that would produce the conditions reported. And one of the most puzzling aspects of the case was expressed by Dr. Hynek, who said: "One thing bothers me about that unidentified flying object--it wasn't picked up by radar, and that area is infested with radar." He added that, ~~he found nothing~~ although this was an outstanding discrepancy, he found nothing that would discredit Zamora's story. But later, Sgt Moody of ATIC stated: "The object was at no time reported to be at an altitude of over 20 feet and would be lost in the ground clutter." / Footnote: copy of M's statement on file at NICAP /

city and state  
Although immediate investigations were conducted by ~~the~~ policemen, Capt. Holder and an FBI agent, it wasn't until April 26th, two days later, that the (team arrived.) Sgt Chavez estimated, "official" Air Force investigation began. By then, ~~it was estimated that~~ 3,000 curious people tramped through the area on Saturday and Sunday. The authorities had not roped off the landing site. Two civilian UFO investigators, Mr. and Mrs. Lorenzen of Tucson, Arizona, representing the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (APRO), arrived on the same day as the Air Force team. The Air Force officials were: ~~Maj.~~ T.Sgt. David Moody from the Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC), ~~and~~ Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, and Maj. William R. Connor from the Public Information Office at Kirtland Air Force Base / <sup>at</sup> Albuquerque.

The Air Force's investigation did little more than confirm the findings made by patrolman Zamora, Sgt Chavez, and others who made the initial investigations. But at the Air Force's request, Dr. J. Allen Hynek of Dearborn Observatory, Northwestern University, and chief scientific consultant to Project Blue Book (the USAF UFO project at ATIC), appeared in Socorro on Wednesday the 29th. He questioned Zamora, Chavez, White, and others, discussed the case with an FBI agent (in Albuquerque), and took photos and samples at the landing site.

Dr. Hynek, the highest-ranking scientist involved in the Socorro case and one of the nation's top (another <sup>leading</sup> adjective ???) astronomers, was greatly impressed by Zamora and his sighting. He said the sighting was "unique" among the UFO cases he had investigated, explaining that he was unable to ~~find~~ find any inconsistencies

in the story and had no explanation for what Zamora witnessed. In his own words, he had investigated many UFO sightings but "this is one of the clearest--no that's not the right word-- just say it is one of the soundest, best substantiated reports as far as it goes. Usually one finds many contradictions or omissions in these reports. . ."

The contradictions and omissions in this case were noted by this writer ~~in~~ throughout the Air Force report entitled: UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT REPORT SOCORRO, NEW MEXICO, 24 APRIL 1964. (Insert footnote~~s~~ referring to: the lack of heading identifying the report with the A.F.; this practice of late; the lack of distribution of this document except to the press and the public only upon ~~spec~~ special request; how it was obtained; <sup>the location of</sup> its reproduction in this paper; mention of the lack of scientific details in the report; might ~~mention~~ make comparison of previous "Fact Sheets" distributed by the Air Force.)

The following discrepancies were found in this Air Force report:

The report states that Mr. Zamora was travelling "north on U.S. 85," which is both the wrong direction and the wrong road. NICAP astronomer Walter Webb, who pointed this discrepancy out in his report of the sighting, states that: "Although the Air Force map mailed to me in September showed the patrol car traveling south on Park Street, which is correct, the accompanying letter (from the Pentagon UFO officer, Maj. Jacks) still insisted Zamora was 'chasing a car on U.S. 85, not Park Street.' I questioned Maj. Jacks specifically on this point."

The report continues: "he heard a roar and saw flames. . ." This report, it must be remembered, is suppose to be a full explanation of the sighting.

(MAKE SOME FOOTNOTE ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF SCIENTIFIC <sup>explanations</sup> ~~CONCLUSIONS~~ REACHED BY THE AF: OR RATHER THE UNAVAILABILITY OF IT, TRY TO FIND FROM ONE OF THEIR DOCUMENTS WHERE THEY SAY THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST, AND POINT OUT THAT THE FULL EXPLANATIONS ARE NOT GIVEN, SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT SIC SCIENTIFIC DETAILS ARE MISSING. QUOTE FROM FACT SHEET OR OTHER AF SOURCE ABOUT THEIR SCIENTIFIC AP-

PROACH AND FACILITIES THEY "MIGHT" USE). ~~Yet,~~ (TRY TO QUOTE FROM LATEST PROJECT BLUE BOOK REPORT, ALSO MENTION SOMETHING ABOUT THE NAME BLUE BOOK WHICH IS CONFUSED WITH SPECIAL REPORT NO. 14--HALL'S SUGGESTION, check further with him.) Yet, important and significant details concerning the sighting are conveniently omitted, forgotten or were not found by Air Force investigators but were found by other investigators. NICAP members Stanford and astronomer Webb say Zamora described the flame as being brilliant cone-shaped blue flame (with an orange tip, according to the AF--says Webb) measuring approximately four times as long as it was wide at its broadest point. Webb continues: "Just after the flame disappeared from view, the roaring sound stopped and a whining noise was heard which rapidly decreased in pitch to inaudibility." (LOOK FOR ANY NEWSPAPER REPORTS DETAILING

~~Furthermore,~~ THESE POINTS.) (PRIOR REFERENCE TO DIRECTION: FOOTNOTE FROM EL DEFENSO DEFENSOR-CHIEFTAN, PAGE \*8 APRIL 28, 1964.) (YOU MIGHT MENTION THAT THERE IS A MORE DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE SIGHTING IN THE EL... THAN IN THE AF REPORT.)

## SOCORRO REVISITED

1964

On Saturday August 15, I drove with Mr. Justus Dunlap, whose car I had rented for the day, to Socorro from Las Cruces, New Mexico. We left Las Cruces shortly before 7:30 in the morning, and arrived in Socorro about 10:30am.

The object of this visit was to obtain an overview of the feelings and opinions in Socorro about the Zamorra sighting of April 24th, after several months had passed, and to find out if the principals had any afterthoughts or changes which they wished to make in their story, how they were now regarded by the townfolk, and what if any was the official opinion.

The net results of the visit which involved talking once again with Zamora, Sargent Chaves, Captain Holder, the editor of the local paper, and seven other townspeople, was much the same as before. Zamora, if anything, is more reticent and withdrawn. The more articulate Sgt. Chaves still firmly believes in Zamora's story, and I found no contradictions between his partial retelling of the story and the original telling of his story in late April. Although I made a distinct attempt to find a chink in Zamora's armor, I simply couldn't find anyone, with the possible exception of a Mr. Philips who has a house fairly near the site of the original sighting, who did anything but completely uphold Zamora's character and reliability, and I again talked with people who had known him since childhood.

I revisited the site: the markings are still there, but very much obliterated, and this time I was able to take stereo photographs of the general terrain. I was impressed more than before with the illogical nature of the landing site. If an ordinary aircraft had been in trouble



it could have landed on the quite flat mesa just to the side of the gully, and no pilot, unless his craft were completely disabled, would have chosen to land in the rocky and uneven gully. If he had been that disabled, he certainly would not have been able to take off shortly thereafter.

Returning to the chronological account: when I arrived, neither Chaves or Zamora was available, having been on duty most of the night. I talked with the radio dispatcher and a "cowboy type" townsman who said that he spent much of his time in mountains around the country. Both of these men were very curious about what the Air Force had found, and both volunteered that things had quieted down very much, but that there was still a big belief in Zamora's story. Apropos of the Air Force's story, my statement throughout the day was always the same: the Air Force is still interested and working on it; they had not found as yet a specific, logical explanation, and the results of the chemical analysis (everybody was curious about that) was that the rocks were ordinary minerals unaffected by the landing, and that the charred materials showed only results of conventional combustion. Considerable surprise throughout the day was expressed that the Air Force had not made a more detailed analysis of the possible fuel or mechanism of the burning of the bushes, and also, incidentally, why the Air Force had not made compression tests of the ground in the area to see how much downward thrust would have been necessary to produce the observed markings.

Once again coming to the chronological story: I armed myself with about a dollar's worth of dimes and started to make telephone calls, but

first Mr. Dunlap and I visited the office of the local newspaper, the Chieftan Defensor. Both the owner, Mr. Reddell and the editor, Mr. Raynor (the chap who had interviewed me on my previous visit) were there, and we looked up the back numbers of papers around that time, and especially what was said after I had left. The editor remarked that there had been several UFO officials who had come to visit them, and that one had remarked, "What sort of line of bull has Hynek and the Air Force been handing you?" He also stated that they had received many letters, one from as far away as Spain. Naturally, he wanted a statement from me for his local paper, and I gave my standard statement mentioned above. The editor made one statement to the effect that they could still give full credence to Zamora's story, despite the fact that there had been some opinion in town that it shouldn't be taken seriously. But, both the owner and editor said that they would continue to believe the story unless it were proved otherwise. Of course, it is to their advantage to give full credence to the story, since it sells more papers.

After a full hour of chatting with the editors, during which time we also gave them a story on our new observatory in New Mexico (my story was that I was passing through, going from Boulder to Las Cruces, and that since I was passing through, I stopped to say hello and to see if there had been any recent developments). At lunchtime I lined up a number of interviews by phone for the afternoon. The results will follow:

We first talked to Mrs. Davis Meriwether who is the grandmother of Frank Pickard, the latter of whom was a student in my astronomy class this spring. He chose as his term paper topic "The Socorro Flying Saucer," and it was his grandmother, Mrs. Davis Meriwether, who browsed around the town and picked up a lot of additional information. She had a long talk with

Mrs. Zamora and Mrs. Meriwether told us again yesterday afternoon that Mrs. Zamora firmly believed that Lonnie had been very thoroughly frightened and that he had seen something supernatural. Visiting at the Meriwether home (the Meriwether-Pickard family is apparently one of the recognized and older families in town, and they live in quite a hacienda), a local parish priest was also visiting at the time, and from him in the course of conversation, we got perhaps one of the best bits of character reference on Zamora. The Father stated that in all his experience, he had not come across one person who cast any aspersion on Zamora which, he remarked, was very unusual for Socorro. Mrs. Meriwether herself is obviously a very level-headed, established woman in the society of Socorro, and when she went about investigating the Zamora case, it appeared that she had immediate access to anyone she wished. Various members of the faculty of the New Mexico School of Mines, for instance, came to her immediate assistance in answering various questions, as did Sgt. Chaves and various townspeople. One thing that she mentioned which bears on the character reference of Zamora should be noted: the baggage master at the station, a man in his sixties who apparently acts as a depository of character references for all people in town, stated that he had known Zamora for all of Zamora's life and that he was one of the most dependable people whom he'd ever known. In short, if I had any hopes of finding some chinks in Zamora's character armor, I was certainly unable to do so.

After we left the Meriwethers, we then went to talk to Chaves who was then on duty, and I talked to him privately for five or ten minutes after which time, by prearrangement, Justus Dunlap came in. Chaves was just about the same as he was originally, still quite articulate about the thing,

and when we stated that one of the main points that continued to impress us about the whole situation was the consummate fright that Zamora had experienced (which everybody continued to tell us about), Chaves admitted that Zamora had been frightened, but indicated that perhaps part of that was prudence on Zamora's part - after all, if you think that something is going to explode, it is only expedient to make yourself scarce.

After a lengthy conversation which really added very little new to the original story, he radioed for Zamora to come in from his rounds and, in a few minutes, Zamora was with us. He seemed much more reticent than previously and never actually completed a full sentence. I think that there are at least two possible interpretations here, one being that, deep in his own mind, he may have realized that he overstated the case originally, or perhaps has even solved it, but, in view of the ingrained fear of possible ridicule, etc., he is keeping it to himself, or, I feel more probably, he is simply tired of the whole thing and rather wishes that it had never come up in the first place. At least nothing that he said would indicate that he does not continue to believe that something really unusual happened.

By this time the sun was over the yardarm, and we retired to a nearby bar, where we found the editor of the Chieftan Defensor. We had a long discussion with Mr. Reddell there who stated again his basic faith in the story and in Zamora's character, although he did say that, for a while there, Zamora did seem to be enjoying some of the publicity. This, however, is contrary to most of the other evidence about Zamora's reaction to the publicity.

Mr. Reddell offered to go with us to see Mr. Opel Grinder, the operator of the Whiting Gas Station, and we heard the story of the itinerant

tourist from Grinder himself. The time was shortly before 6 o'clock, because Grinder said that he was hurrying to get to the bank before it closed at 6pm on that Friday. He stated that this was one of the reasons why he did not pay more attention to the tourist's story. However, he said that the tourist said something to this effect: "Your planes fly awfully low here - one of them liked to knock me off the road just about when I was passing your Whiting sign coming into town." The Whiting gas sign is almost in line with the gully where the craft landed, and the logical direction from which it would have come, considering markings, etc. The tourist said that he thought that it might be a craft in trouble, and figured this was so because he saw a police car going out toward where it had landed. This would have placed the time of the craft over the tourist's car at approximately 5:35 or 5:40pm. This coincides, as well as we can see, with the time that Zamora was chasing a speeder. It indicates that the craft did not remain in the gully very long, and therefore could not have been disabled to any major extent. Opel Grinder said then to the tourist that there are a lot of helicopters flying around the place, to which the tourist answered that, if this was a helicopter, it certainly was a strange one. Grinder promised to keep his eyes open for the tourist, but the chances of this is small.

After visiting Mr. Grinder, Justus Dunlap and I went to the original site at approximately the same time of day that the original sighting occurred, and we went over the remaining marks and took some photographs, etc. We also photographed the apparent size of a man seen from the point along the road where Zamora first stated that he had sighted the object which he thought was an overturned car. We also took photographs of how a large

car would look from that direction. Mr. Dunlap was particularly impressed with the fact that the marks remained even after three and a half months of weathering, and it was he who wondered whether compaction tests had been made of the soil.

We then returned to have coffee with Captain Holder, the uprange commanding officer for White Sands to see whether he had anything to add after this many months had passed. Captain Holder is still quite enthusiastic and really fairly enamoured of the idea of strange crafts. It was Captain Holder, you will remember, who, with Mr. Burns of the FBI, made the original measures between the markings, and we call recall that although the figure was drawn poorly, when it was redrawn according to dimensions given, it was found that the diagonals of the quadrilateral intersected at exact right angles. Mr. Powers pointed out that there is a well known theorem which states that if the diagonals of any quadrilateral intersect at right angles, then the points lie on a circle, the center of which is called the mean center of the figure. Mr. Powers also pointed out that one of the burned marks was directly at this mean center.

Captain Holder was particularly interested in what the Air Force had found out from the samples which he had carefully gathered within two hours of the sighting, and which I submitted to MTD. I hope that this material has not been destroyed after preliminary analysis.

We next visited Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas. Mrs. Nicholas is a flier who has flown in 41 states, and is also an instructor in flying. She comes into the picture only because, in the course of discussions with her, she turned up a UFO story of June 2, 1960 which was duly reported to the Air Force and should be in our files. I append as Exhibit A her rather interesting and extensive write-up in the Defensor Chieftan. Both

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas are "true believers" after their sighting which, however, I feel must have been an optical phenomenon in view of the projectory and acceleration.

Before we left, we called Dr. Wartmen, the retiring president of the New Mexico School of Mines, who had nothing further to offer. Before our visit with Captain Holder, on coming back from the site, we visited a Mr. Philips who lives fairly close to the site of the alleged landing. Mr. Philips had been in his back yard just over the hill from the sighting place, and maintains that he heard no loud roar and has remained skeptical about the whole thing. He claimed that if there had been an explosion such as Zamora claims to have heard, he (Philips) certainly would have heard it. However, this does not necessarily follow, because Zamora was directly down wind from the gully, there was a very strong southwest wind blowing, and the gully is on the opposite side of the hill from where Mr. Philips was listening. This, of course, can make a tremendous difference in ability to hear. Further, there are trucks passing along the highway quite close to Mr. Philip's house, and he undoubtedly is used to hearing backfires, and truck roars of one sort or another. He was the only person whom we talked to, however, who tended to disbelieve Zamora's veracity, indicating that it probably was a hoax. This solution is not acceptable to the present writer, because there are just too many bits of evidence that militate against this hypothesis.

Mr. Dunlap and I arrived back in Las Cruces at 12:30am on Sunday morning, August 16th.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

TUCSON, ARIZONA 85721

INSTITUTE OF ATMOSPHERIC PHYSICS

10-3-66



Dear Dick:

This is for insertion in your file on the April 24, 1964, Socorro case. I made phone calls to both Sgt. Sam Chavez and Lonnie Zamora, to query them on certain details of the case.

One point of particular concern was raised by John Lear's article in the Sept. 3, 1966, Saturday Review. On p. 49, col. 3, he leaves the reader with the impression that there is a cloud over Zamora's testimony, since Lear states that at the time Chavez arrived, "the burned vegetation in the gully was cold to the touch."

Upon checking my copy of the current Bluebook "fact sheet" on the Socorro incident (given me by Q on 7/22/66 and hence up to date), I found that this could have been the source of Lear's remark for it contains the statement (re Chavez' arrival), "The brush was cold to the touch."


On the other hand, <sup>m</sup>the Lorenzen's account in the APRO Bulletin, one reads that the ground was still smoking when Chavez arrived, and that Sheriff's Deputy Jas. Luckie also "testified to the smoking condition of the ground and the indentations" at time of his arrival just a few minutes after Chavez. And the April 28, 1964, issue of the Socorro El Defensor Chieftain, on p. 8 states "Chavez and Luckie said the burned clumps of green grass and the greasewood were still hot when they arrived."

On 10/1, I phoned Chavez at his home, AC 505 835-0661. I first asked him if the ground was smoldering when he arrived. He said it was not, that there were ashes all over the ground and these were cool to the touch. However, he emphasized that there was smoke visible in the wash and that one of the mesquites (greasewood) was still smoldering. He said "Those bushes are hard to set afire; maybe a blowtorch would do it, but they're always green and hard to burn. He said he did not doubt Zamora's word in any way.

I discussed with Chavez his thoughts on what the Socorro object was. He was convinced it was a U.S. test vehicle and could not have been an unknown object from space. "If it was anything else they have never left the whole thing go like that. They wouldn't sluff the whole thing off as they did if we were being invaded from space."

On 10/2 I called Zamora. I first got him at the Chevron station he now manages, but customer arrivals made conversation impossible so I phoned his home later. AC 505 835-1134 is his home phone, and 835-9950 is the station. I went over various details of the sighting with him, but no startling new information was obtained, since this is already a fairly thoroughly reported case. Where Chavez was under the impression that Opal Grinder's customer hadn't seen the low-flying object for two days, Zamora stated that it was the same evening, as reported by APRO. (APRO points out Grinder did not make his report for two days, which has evidently confused Chavez.) Zamora did not share Chavez' certainty that this was "one of ours." He simply said he wished he knew. After a half-hour's discussion of the case it was clear I was only confirming old information and closed.

Sincerely

  
JEMcDonald



Everett, Washington Herald - 27 April 1964 - ARMY INVESTIGATORS REPORT/N.M.  
Claims He Saw Flying Saucer

SOCORRO, N.M. (UPI) - It's a good place for a flying saucer. Right on the edge of White Sands missile range on the wide open New Mexico desert, just 30 miles northwest of the site of the world's first atomic blast.

Socorro policeman Lonnie Zamora says he saw it, and police and military men seem inclined to believe him.

Zamora is a "very reliable witness" Army Capt. Richard T. Holder, uprange commander of White Sands' Stallion Range said. Holder, whose headquarters is near this central New Mexico town, was called in by local police after Zamora reported seeing the object Friday.

Deputy Sheriff James Luckie said he believes "it's something out of the ordinary, something very few have ever seen."

"I was scared," Zamora said. He said his experience taught him one thing: If it happens again, he will still run away like he did Friday, but he will not tell a soul about what he saw.

Zamora said he spotted an egg-shaped object on the desert about a mile south of Socorro. He denied seeing any signs of life around the object and said the machine rose and flew slowly away until it faded from sight.

He said he spotted what appeared to be a pair of white coveralls near the saucer, but could not tell if anything or anyone was in them. The object, about the height of a car but larger, appeared to be made of a shiny, aluminum-like substance, Zamora said. It flew away after he got within about 100 yards, he said.

Two investigating officers were at the scene Sunday from Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque. Major William Connor and Sgt. David Moody used a Geiger counter to check the area where the only evidence of an unusual visitor was a burned bush and four small depressions in the ground.

Zamora said the machine had been supported on the ground by four girder-like legs. The bush supposedly was burned by exhaust from the saucer.

Holder said he checked with both White Sands and nearby Holloman AFB. Neither base, he said, is using any object comparable to Zamora's machine.

Government agencies will continue the investigation, Holder said.

#####

How 'bout that????! - j1

*Have sent for the Socorro man & will advise  
if I get any further details!*

*J.*

Memo, from Capt Quintanilla, 27 April 1964

TO Colonel de Jonckheere

At 0715, 26 April, when I reported for duty as OD, I was informed by Major Sameshima, 25 April OD, that he had received a UFO report via telephone at 2130 EST, 25 April, from the 1005th Special Investigation Group, Washington, D C. The UFO report had been received by the 1005th from Lt Col King, CID, of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Lt Col King had read about the sighting in the local newspaper and had also been provided data by the FBI. The FBI was informed of the sighting by the New Mexico State Police. The New Mexico State Police arrived at the scene at approximately 1728 MST and three minutes after the object took off with a roar and disappeared to the West. The witness claims that he saw a ball shaped object approximately 15 feet long and two white objects which resembled white coveralls. When the Army at White Sands heard of the incident, they roped off the area and the FBI in Albuquerque proceeded to the area. They confirmed that "something" had been there and the army took soil samples of 4" x 5" impressions which were found where the alleged vehicle had landed. The impressions appeared to be burned and the surround area was clean.

At 0330, 26 April, Col Cole from the Air Force Command Post called to see if any follow up action had been taken. At 0430 26 April, Col Harris from the Emergency Action Group, JCS communications Center called and wanted additional details, especially names. At 0530 26 April, Col Perkins from the Air Force Command Post called and suggested we get in touch with Capt Holden from White Sands, at 0728 26 April, I placed a call to the OD at Kirkland and asked him to locate Sgt Moody for me. Sgt Moody is presently on TDY at Kirkland on Project Cloud Gap. At 0945 Sgt Moody called and I asked him to get together with the UFO reporting officer at Kirkland and investigate the sighting. At 1125 Major Connor, Kirkland UFO reporting officer, and Sgt Moody called and I suggested the manner in which they should conduct the investigation and the people whom they should contact. Major Connor and Sgt Moody left for White Sands after my phone call equipped with a Geiger Counter.

At 2135 I received a telephone call from Sgt Moody who was now back at Kirkland. Major Connor and Sgt Moody had talked with the witness Lonnie Zamora. Mr Zamora is the Socorro, New Mexico Deputy Marshall. He uses the same radio frequency as the New Mexico State Police and that is the reason the New Mexico State Police arrived at the scene as fast as they did. Mr Zamora called the New Mexico State Police over his radio when he was scared by the vehicle. At his closest observation, he was 103 feet from the object. Major Connor and Sgt Moody measured the area of alleged landing for radiation - no radiation was present. Photos of the area were taken and will be on the way 27 April.

Sgt Sam Charez of the New Mexico State Police was interviewed by Major Connor and Sgt Moody. He could add little to the investigation except that he arrived at the scene about three minutes after the incident happened and that Mr Zamora was scared.

Major Connor's formal report will be on the way on 27 April. He will include copies of Lt Col Kings report, the FBI report, and possibly the soil analysis report if he receives it in time, otherwise it will come later.

At the present time we don't know what it was, but Major Conner and Sgt Moody are still checking. They'll check out the Helicopter activity today.

When Sgt Moody called, he was getting ready to accompany Lt Col King on another alleged sighting. Everybody wants to get into the Act!

HECTOR QUINTANILLA, Jr  
Captain, USAF  
Chief, Aerial Phenomena Branch

Santa Fe New Mexican, Wednesday 4/29/64

Photo of "saucer" submitted by Gabriel Green

### Areas Trampled - Curious Citizenry Foils Investigator

Socorro (AP).--Hynek says trampling of soil means "there's nothing there to see now. But samples have been taken to determine if there are any particles in the ashes that are foreign to this area."

H. is bothered by absence of any radar reports. Radar contacts "usually lead to identification with some known aircraft." He will not have time to go to La Madra to examine Gallegos site. Zamora an entirely reliable observer; "he was, of course, frightened by whatever he saw."

Z, said object was a brilliant white, with a red marking on it like an upside-down V with three lines across the top, through the middle, and at the bottom. He said that from a distance there appeared to be two figures in white coveralls outside it. It flew off with a roar when he approached.

H. said his investigation in S. would determine whether he would visit Espanola, where State Police Capt. Martin Vigil found the ground still smouldering 20 ~~off~~ hours after a reported sighting. Authorities found scorched grass and four wedge-shaped indentations in the ground at the S. site and near E.

...More of the usual re Air Force from H.

Endorsement by APRO

Meanwhile, at Las Cruces a State Police officer and four employees of the port of entry station on Interstate 10 south of the city reported sighting a luminous object Tuesday night moving in a jerky motion and changing directions.

State Policeman Raul Arteche of Anthony answered the call from the port of entry and on his way to the station also sighted the object. He said it was moving nw. The pilot of a private airplane made a similar report about the same time, ~~about~~ between 10 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

State Police Capt. Archie White said in Las C. that there was a scattered cloud cover in the area and under these conditions satellites often appear to be moving in a jerky motion and changing direction.

While the reports have been made on a line between Las C. and Esp., there ~~was~~ was one strayed report today. Hobbs police received 2 reports, one from a group of children and another from 2 adults about ~~X~~ 12 blocks from where the children said they saw a white round object hover over the city and then move off to the ne. The adults reported the same sighting at the same time.

The Federal Aviation Agency office in Hobbs said a silver twin-engine airplane was flying over the city about the same time but was flying to the sw.

April 6, 1968

Dr. David Saunders  
1418 Mariposa Avenue  
Boulder, Colorado

Dear Dr. Saunders:

When you visited the NICAP offices on March 5, our file on the Socorro, New Mexico, sighting was lent to you. We are now in rather pressing need of it, and Mr. Lore has asked me to inquire about its return. It contains, as you know, documents of which we have no other copies.

If you have not finished with it, perhaps you would be kind enough to let us know as soon as you conveniently can, approximately when it will be coming back, so that we can plan accordingly for its use.

Sincerely yours,

Isabel Davis  
Assistant to Gordon Lore

1D:adb

*Returned  
5/10/68  
Personal visit  
to NICAP by  
Saunders*

PRESS COVERAGE OF OFFICER LONNIE ZAMORA SIGHTING, APRIL 24, 1964,  
SOCORRO, N.M. (& FOLLOW-UPS, INCLUDING OTHER SIGHTINGS)

STATE	PAPER	DATE	APPROX. LENGTH (inches)	SOURCE
ARIZONA	Phoenix Gazette	4/27	8	UPI
CALIFORNIA	San Jose Mercury News	4/26	6	AP
	Los Angeles Herald-Examiner	4/26	5	UPI
	San Francisco Chronicle	4/26	4	AP, UPI
	The Modesto Bee	4/26	9	AP
	Whittier Daily News	4/27	11 1/2	UPI
	Oakland Tribune	4/27	7	AP
	Daily News (Indio)	4/27	12	UP
	Los Angeles Times	4/28	6 1/2	AP
	San Jose Mercury	4/28	22 1/2	AP
	Independent Press Telegram (Long Beach)	4/29	9 3/4	AP
	San Jose Mercury	4/30	14"	AP
	News Call Bulletin (San Francisco)	4/30	25. / headl.	AP
	Los Angeles Times	4/30	8 1/4	AP
	The Daily News (Whittier)	4/30	10	AP
	Los Angeles Herald Examiner	4/30	22	AP
	San Francisco Sunday Chronicle	5/3	3"	AP
	COLORADO	Pueblo, Colo., Star Journal	4/27	8
Rocky Mt. News (Denver)		4/27	9	UPI
Rocky Mt. News		4/28	7	AP
Denver Post		4/28	4	UPI
Denver Post		4/29	8	AP
Rocky Mt. News		4/30	9	Up
Denver Post		4/30	9 1/2	AP
Rocky Mt. News		5/1	18, pic	UPI, AP
CONN.	Hartford Times			
FLORIDA	Panama City Herald	4/27	9	UPI
	Sun-Tattler (Hollywood)	4/30	6	AP
	Pensacola News	4/30	5	AP
	Pensacola Journal	5/1	4	AP

(X)

## News Coverage - 2

State	Paper	Date	Approx Length (inches)	Source
INDIANA	Palladium-Item & Sun-Telegram (Richmond)	4/27	10 1/2	UPI
Illinois	Moline Daily Dispatch	4/30	10	AP
	Chicago Tribune	5/5	17 1/2	----
Indiana	Indianapolis Star-	4/30	12	AP
Iowa	Cedar Rapids Gazette	4/29	12	AP
La.	New Orleans States-Item	4/30	7 3/4	AP
Maryland	Balto Sunday Sun	4/26	5	AP
	Balto Morning Sun	4/29	11 1/2	AP
	Balto Evening Sun	4/29	10	AP
	The News American (Bal to)	4/29	10	AP
	Balto Evening Sun	<del>XX</del> 4/30	12	AP
	Balto Morning Sun	5/1	5	AP (X)
	Balto Sun	5/5	14	---
Mass.	Boston Sunday Herald	4/26	2 1/2	---
	Boston Traveler	4/27	8, pic	UPI
Minn.	Minneapolis Tribune	4/26	4 1/2	UPI
Miss.	The Delta Democrat-Times	4/27	10	UPI
Montana	Great Falls Tribune	5/1	3, pic	---
Nebraska	Omaha World Herald	4/29	6	AP

News coverage - 3

State	Paper	Date	Approx length (inches)	Source
New Jersey	The Record ( Bergen Co.)	4/27	10	UPI
	Asbury Park Even. Press	4/29	7	AP
	Asbury Park Even. Press	4/30	4 1/2	AP
	Long Branch Daily Record	4/30	9	AP
	Long Branch Daily Record	5/1	4 1/2	AP
New Mexico	Las Cruces Sun-News	4/26	11	AP
	" " "	4/27	7	AP
	Albuquerque Journal	4/27	16 1/2, pic	UPI
	Albuquerque Journal	4/29	13	AP
	Raton Daily Range	?	9, pic	AP
Raton Daily Range	?	21, pic	AP	
New York	The Evening Press (Binghamton)	4/27	9	UPI
	Syracuse Herald Journal	4/27	10	UPI
	N.Y. Times (Western ed.)	4/28	3 1/2	UPI
	The Evening Press	4/29	5	AP
	Newsday (L.I.)	4/29	1 1/2	---
Ohio	Cleveland Press	4/27	4, pic	---
	New Phila Daily Times	4/27	pic & capt	UPI
	The Lorain Journal	4/27	5	UPI
	The Telegraph (Painesville)	4/27	6 1/2	UPI
	Columbia Evening Dispatch	4/28	7	AP
	The Telegraph	5/4	7	---
Oregon	Oregon Journal (Portland)	4/27	12	UPI
	The Oregonian	5/1	16 1/2	AP
Pennsylvania	The Evening Bulletin	4/30	10	AP

(X)



News coverage - 4

State	Paper	Date	Approx Length (inches)	Source
Tenn.	Commercial Appeal (Memphis)	4/28	4 1/2	UPI
	Memphis Press-Scimitar	4/29	4	AP
Texas	El Paso Times	4/26	7 1/2	AP
	El Paso Herald-Post	4/27	14, pic	UPI
	El Paso Times	4/27	11	AP
	San Antonio Light	<del>4/28</del> 4/29	9	AP
	Dallas Times Herald	4/29	14	AP
	El Paso Times	4/30	24	AP
" " "		5/2	8 1/2	AP
Virginia	Hope Well News	4/27	10 1/2	UPI
	Ledger-Star (Norfolk)	4/29	8	AP
	The Daily Progress (Charlottesville)	4/29	10	AP
	Richmond News Leader	4/29	11 1/2	AP
	The Progress-Index (Richmond?)	4/29	5	AP
	The Progress-Index	4/30	8	AP
	Richmond News Leader	4/30	11 1/2	AP
	Lynchburg News	4/30	14	AP
Richmond Times Dispatch	5/1	6 3/4	AP	
Washington	Spokane Daily Chronicle	4/30	13	AP
West Virginia	The Morgantown Post	3/27	12	UPI
	Wheeling News-Register	3/27	11, pic	UPI
England	London Daily Express	4/27	3	---

(X)