FROM: OIC, ATIC

TO: Director of Intelligence
Headquarters USAF
Washington 25, D. C.

ATTN: ADJUTANT
Subject: Correlation of sightings of unidentified objects,
30 Jan 52. Reference above subject and telephone conversation between the undersigned and Col Scheman on 1 Feb, following possibilities considered: (a) exhaust
stack flame from aircraft engine running rich. Considered doubtful because no
known type of aircraft have exhaust stack arrangement that would produce this
illusion.
(b) Jet engine or afterburner exhaust. Considered doubtful because it is
thought such an exhaust would have been recognized and identified by observers.
(c) Vortex in airstream. Considered doubtful because of time of sighting, and
description of object as colored. (d) Manned helicopter. Considered doubtful
because of the unlikelihood of the presence of any such aircraft at the altitude
and in the positions given, and because of the comparatively slow forward speed
such an aircraft would possess. (e) Air-to-air weapon in the form of sheet metal
discs dropped from higher altitude. Germany was known to have had such a develop-
ment during World War II. Such a weapon might well have the disc-shape appearance
and the spinning motion described, and it might also either be illuminated or

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reflecting illumination from some other source. However, the description of the object sighted as having maintained a position parallel to the sighting airplane for some time, would seem to eliminate this possibility. It is therefore considered doubtful, although somewhat less so than other possibilities mentioned above.

(2) "Fireballs." These phenomena made their appearance over both Germany and Japan during World War II. They have never been completely explained, and there is no record of aircraft having been damaged by them. One evaluation is that they may have been flying bombs launched either from the ground or from aircraft, and that the characteristic fiery glow was the exhaust of the powered missile. Another is that they may have been ground-launched rockets containing illuminating or incendiary agents that drifted downward or paraglided. Some such weapon or a development of it is considered a fair possibility in this case. (3) Trailing bombs. This weapon was developed in 1942 by Germany, and in its original application was intended as a defense by bombers against pursuing fighters. It consisted of a bomb of 20 to 25 kg in weight attached to a wire some 100 to 250 meters long, aimed to cause

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the execution of wide swinging circles behind the bomber when the wire was paid out from the bomber's tail. It could be exploded at will by a crew member of the bomber. A variation of this weapon that may have been intended for use against bombers, was a cylindrical object trailed by wires from a Ju-88. Such a weapon would appear circular or disc-shaped, might well take on a swirling motion when trailed, might be illuminated or reflect light, and might for a time, parallel the course of an aircraft attacked; for these reasons it is considered a fair, or perhaps even a good, possibility.

FAF has been requested to supply additional details of sightings, and to alert all aircrews to watch for repetitions. The suggestion has also been made that crews attempt to measure distances, angles, etc., by a system employing Central Fire Control equipment. Signed, Air Technical Intelligence Center