

The object changed direction several times, describing line segments ranging from 13 to 30 km, separated by abrupt stops for 3 to 6 minutes; the speed always went from a value of zero to a value of some 950 km/h without any transition.

Visual sightings were made from the ground and confirmed the high speed and astounding accelerations. The regulation telex sent by Lakenheath concluded: "*The fact that radar and ground visual observations were made on its rapid acceleration and abrupt stop certainly lend credence to the report.*"

- After 30 to 45 minutes, the RAF sent a night fighter, a Venom two-seater, in pursuit of the object. The Lakenheath air traffic radar control center guided it in the direction of the object 10 km east of the center. The pilot acquired the target visually and on radar, then lost it. The center then directed the plane 16 km to the east of Lakenheath; the pilot again acquired the target and said, "*my machine guns are locked onto him.*" A short time afterward, he once again lost his target; but the target was followed by the radar operators at the center. They informed the pilot that the object had made a rapid movement to position itself behind him and was following him at a short distance. The pilot confirmed [this]. Watched by the radar technicians, the pilot tried every maneuver for about 10 minutes in order to move back behind the object (steep climbs, dives, sustained turns), but he didn't succeed: the UFO followed him at a constant distance according to the ground radar stations. Finally, low on fuel, he returned to base, asking that someone tell him whether the object continued to follow him. The UFO did, in fact, follow him for a short distance, then came to a standstill. The radar technicians then saw the object make several short moves, then leave in a northerly direction at about 950 km/h and disappear from radar range at 0330 hours.

- A Venom sent to replace the first had to quickly return to base due to mechanical problems before having been able to establish contact with the object.

Thayer concluded his article in the journal *Astronautics and Aeronautics* in this manner: "*taking into consideration the high credibility of information and cohesiveness and continuity of account, combined with a high degree of 'strangeness', it is also certainly one of the most disturbing UFO incidents known today.*"

2.2 The RB-47 Aircraft in the United States (July 17, 1957)

This case, which appears as "*unidentified*" in the Condon report, has been cited and studied extensively for 40 years. Physicist James MacDonald published the results of his investigation in 1971 in the journal *Astronautics and Aeronautics*. Phillip Klass, the aforementioned journalist, then endeavored in 1976 to trivialize the facts, which was highly contestable from the outset. The bulk of this interpretation was refuted at the end of 1997, upon completion of an in-depth investigation contained in a memorandum from the aerospace technology researcher Brad Sparks.

We will summarize here the important sequences of events of the case, which show a luminous unidentified flying object detected at night not only by sight and on radar, but also by pulsed microwave emissions coming from its direction:

The RB-47 was a bomber the bomb bays of which had been converted to hold three officers each equipped with means enabling emissions from ground radars to be detected and their azimuth direction, but not their distance or the nature of the signals, to be specified. In the south central region of the United States, where the aircraft was making a training flight that day, numerous radar stations were emitting signals the frequencies of which were close to 3000 MHz and the pulses of which lasted 1 microsecond and