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Incident #204

UNC

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DATE OF REPORT 8 Nov 48

ATIS NO. \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION Panama

AP NO. \_\_\_\_\_

SOURCE Weather observer

REPORT NO. \_\_\_\_\_

DATE IN TO ATIS \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF REPORT \_\_\_\_\_

COLOR Like Star

TIME OF REPORTING 1640

SPEED \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_

SHAPE Spherical with tail (comet)

Medium

SIZE Larger than Venus

ALTITUDE high

Estimated

COURSE \_\_\_\_\_

LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED 40 minutes

Measured

NO. IN GROUP 1

TYPE OF OBSERVATION Ground

BOUND \_\_\_\_\_

MANEUVERS \_\_\_\_\_

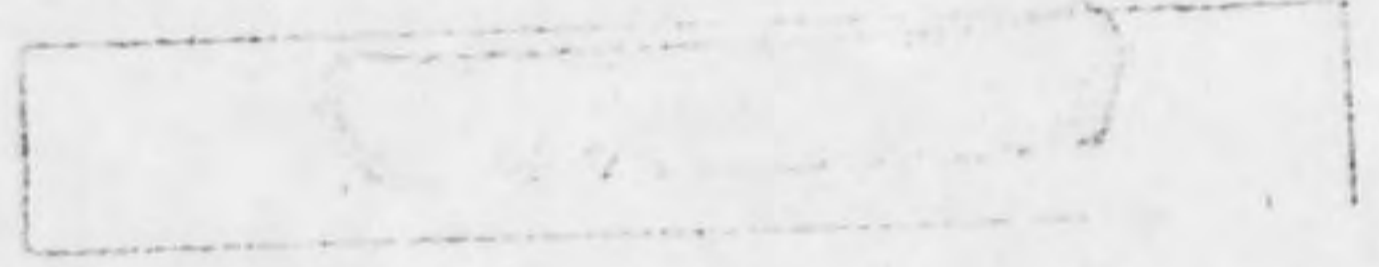
PHOTOS \_\_\_\_\_

SKETCHES \_\_\_\_\_

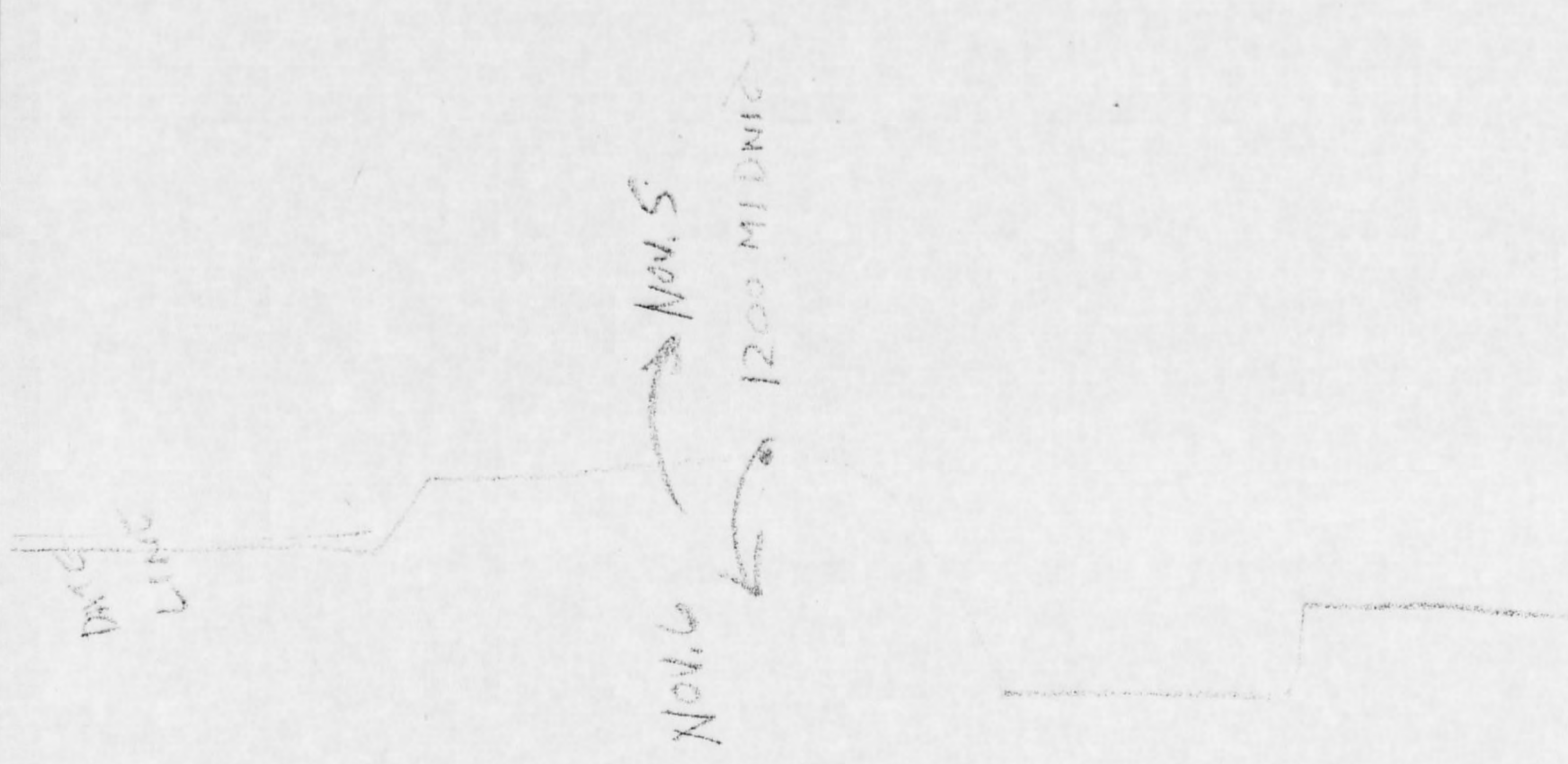
1948 L  
Comet

UNCLASSIFIED

Temporary ATIS Form 339  
(2 Jan 52)



ASIA  
e Asia  
U.S.  
1967

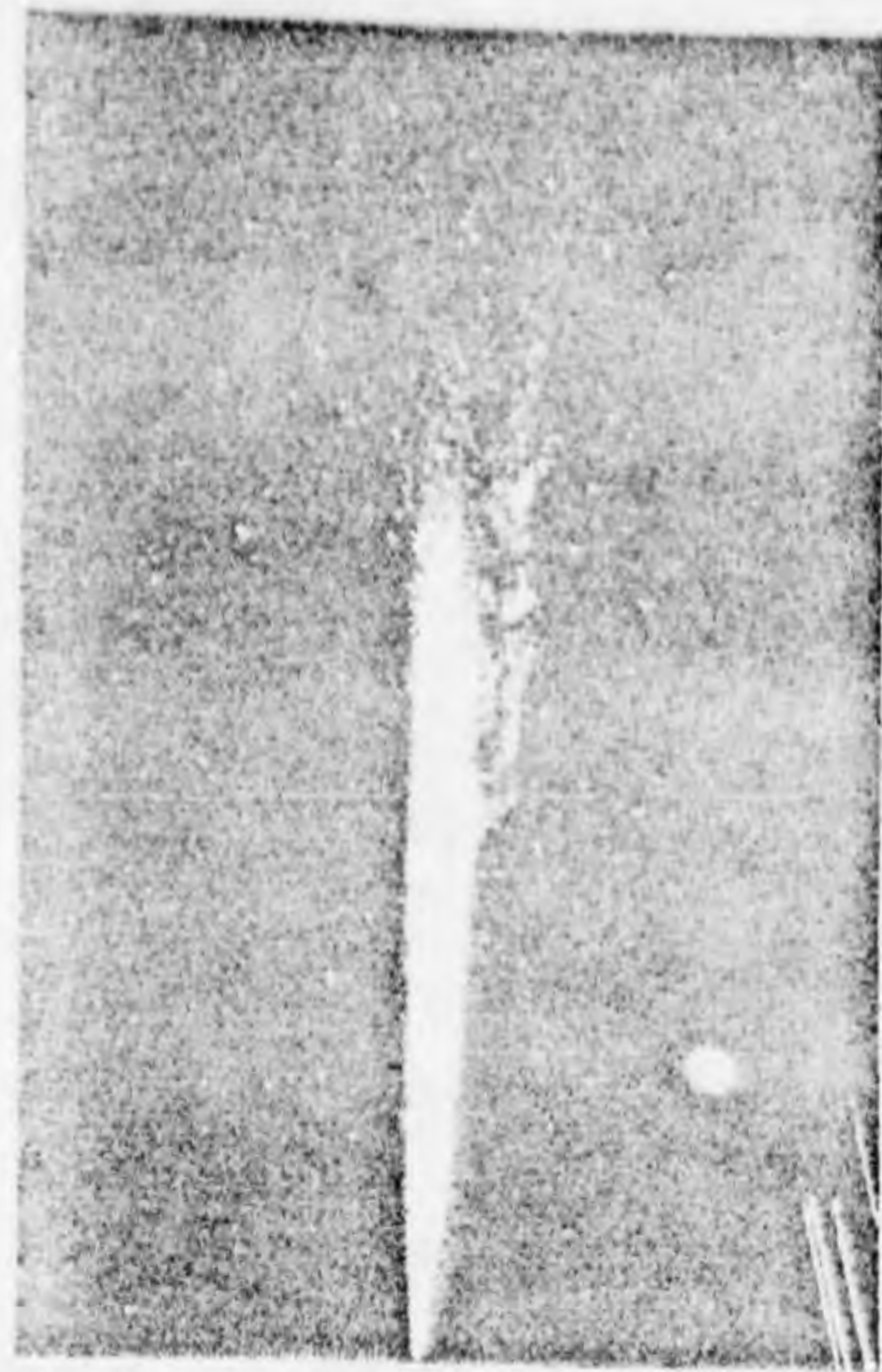


ASIA





AT DAWN the new comet is photographed with an ordinary camera from a California mountain. The comet was about 50 million miles away from earth. Still appears as streak because of earth's rotation during 10-minute exposure.



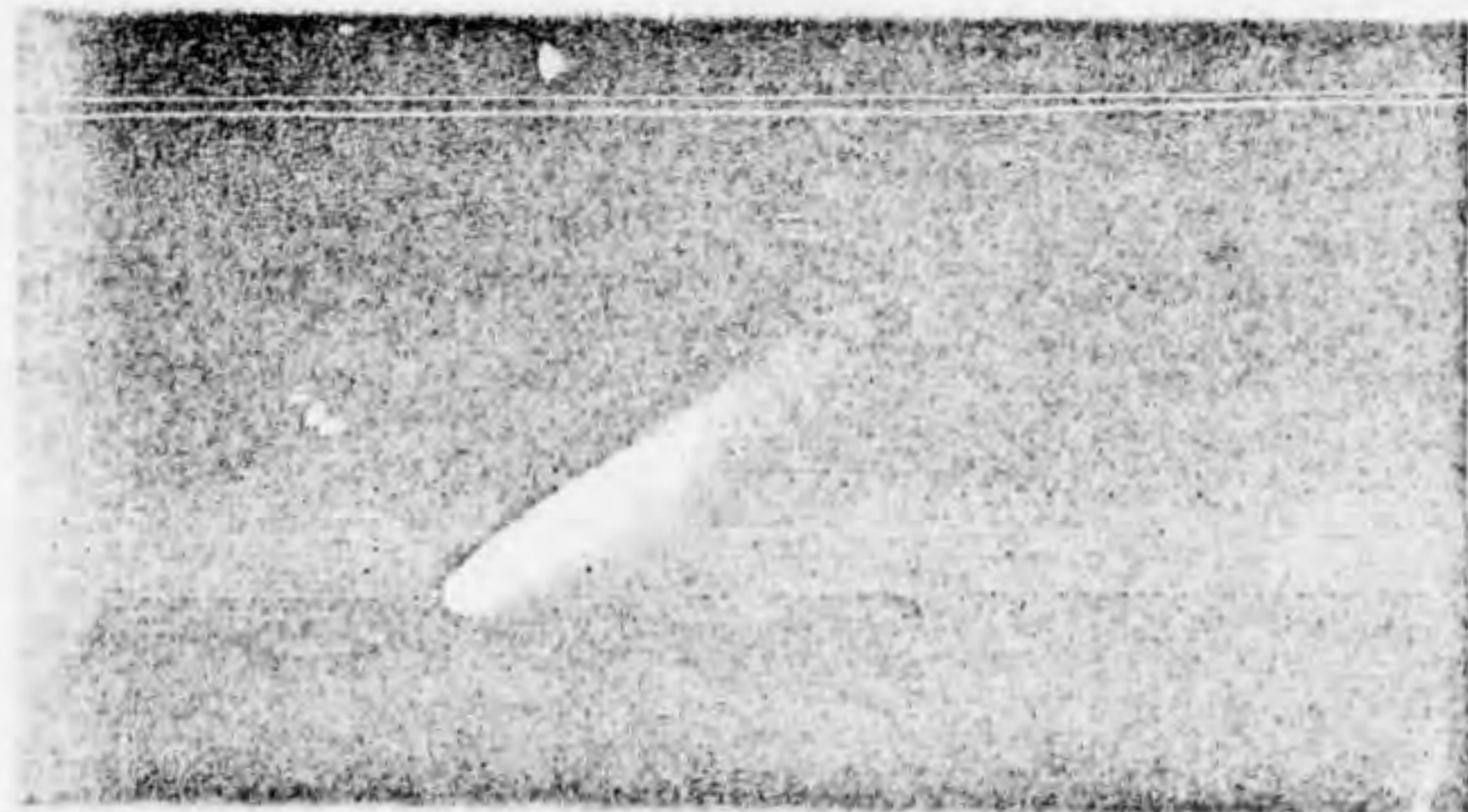
AWESOME HALLEY'S COMET LAST APPEARED IN 1910

## BRIGHT NEW COMET

It has a tail extending for 15 million miles

At the first gray light of dawn on Nov. 6 a bright white ball with a filmy white tail appeared in the sky over Australia. Dr. Harley Wood, an astronomer in Sydney, immediately recognizing the phenomenon as a new and extraordinary comet, excitedly set up his spectroscope to study its gleaming light. Then he flashed word to other astronomers over the world that he had sighted one of the brightest and most spectacular comets yet to appear in this century.

Three days later thrilled sky users in the southern and western parts of the U.S. were able to observe the rare celestial body with the naked eye. Moving close to the sun but away from it at a speed of about 123,000 mph, the comet was visible for a brief 60 minutes before it was obscured by the sun's light. Astronomers estimated that its head had a diameter of almost 100,000 miles, about the same as the planet Jupiter, and that its gaseous tail (caused by the pressure of sunlight on the head) reached out at least 15 million miles. Because the comet was moving away from the sun, the gas atoms and molecules in its tail were pushed in front of the head by the sun's radiation instead of being pushed behind it, as would have happened if the comet had been approaching the sun. Although not so long as the 90-million-mile tail of famed Halley's comet last year, the magnitude of this new comet's tail was almost as great.



NEW COMET and its tail appear as a ball of light in this photograph made with the 16-inch telescope camera at Palomar mountain observatory. Most of comet's glow is light which is scattered from the sun and then reflected.

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Incident #204 -- Panama -- 8 November 1948

It seems entirely probable that the object sighted in this incident was the comet 1948L, which had been discovered two days earlier in Australia. The comet was suitably placed for observation near the equator and in the southern hemisphere. The time of observation also checks closely with the time of visibility. There is no single statement in the limited report that contradicts the comet hypothesis. If the observer had given the actual bearings of the object, these would have clinched the matter.

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HEADQUARTERS  
AIR WEATHER SERVICE  
Andrews Air Force Base  
Washington 25, D. C.

In Reply  
Refer To: AFS DSS

11 May 1949

SUBJECT: Unidentified Flying Objects

TO : Commanding General  
Air Materiel Command  
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base  
Dayton, Ohio  
ATTN: MC1AXO-3

1. Reference is made to letter from your headquarters, MC1AXS, dated 9 March 1949, subject "Unidentified Flying Objects," and first indorsement thereto by this headquarters, dated 31 March 1949.

2. The incident summaries 173 through 233 have been checked against routine weather-balloon ascents made by the Air Force, Navy and Weather Bureau. Comments based on this review are inclosed.

3. It is recommended that the "Guide To Investigation Of Unidentified Aerial Objects" be changed as follows: Item 13, "Direction of Flight of Object," should be clarified so that vertical and horizontal motions are distinguished if possible, and so that motion is specified as the direction towards which the object appears to move. "Relative to Radar Settings" should include a statement of the type of radar set used.

FOR THE CHIEF, AIR WEATHER SERVICE

2 Incls:  
1 - Incident Summaries  
2 - Comments 173 thru 233

/s/ W. A. West  
W. A. WEST  
Lt. Col., USAF  
Adjutant General

8 Nov

No. 204; Venus.

Incident # 204

At 1640, Nov. 8, 1948 Operator [REDACTED] when making a GCT weather report saw what ~~XX~~ appeared to be a comet in the southeast quadrant of the sky. It had a long cone of light which ended in a star larger than Venus. It remained visible to the naked eye for approximately 40 minutes until beginning of sunlight dimmed the brilliance of the phenomena and full sunrise obliterated it. Appeared to have about four grades of intensity in the tail.

Incident # 204

- 2. Time of Observation . . . 1640 . Sunrise
- 3. Where was Object(s) Sighted . . Panama . . . . .
- 4. Observer's Position . ~~Weather observer~~ Ground . - Panama . . . . .  
(i.e. ground, air, control tower, etc.)
- 5. Name and Address of Observer .  . . . . .
- 6. Occupation and/or Hobbies . Weather observer . . . . .
- 7. Attention Attracted to Object (s) By N/S . . . . .
- 8. Number of Object(s) Sighted . . . . . 1 . . . . .
- 9. Size of Object(s) . . Larger than planet Venus . . . . .
- 10. Color of Object(s) . . like star . . . . .
- 11. Shape (Sketch if Possible) . . that of a comet . . . . .
- 12. Nature of Luminosity . . that of comet . . . . .
- 13. Estimated Distance of Object from Observer . . . N/S . . . . .
- 14. Speed of Object(s) . N/S = . . . . .
- 15. Time in Sight . 40 minutes . . . . .
- 16. Tactics . . N/S . . . . .
- 17. Sound Made by Object(s) . N/S . . . . .
- 18. Direction of Flight of Object(s) . N/S . . . . .
- 19. Apparent Construction (Of What Material or Substance) . N/S . . . . .
- 20. Effect of Objects on Clouds and/or Exhaust Trail . long cone of light . . . . .
- 21. Weather Conditions Existing at the Time . sunrise . . . . .
- 22. Peculiarities Noted . N/S . . . . .
- 23. Summary of Incident . (over) . . . . .

(Attach a Separate Sheet if Additional Space is Needed)



Dr HYNEK'S EVALUATIONS EXTRACTED FROM PROJECT GRUDGE REPORT.

INCIDENT INDEX

1. Astronomical

a. High probability:

#26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 48, 49, 59, 60, 66, 69, 70, 94,  
95, 96, 97, 98, 101, 102, 103, 104, 116, 119, 132, 136, 140,  
147, 148, 158, 174, 184, 185, 187, 197, 203, 204, 208, 216,  
219, 238.

b. Fair or low probability:

#19, 20, 23, 24, 28, 35, 35, 46, 50, 63, 67, 80, 82, 93, 100,  
112, 120, 121, 129, 130, 144, 153, 165, 166, 167, 175, 192,  
199, 202, 205, 220, 230, 240.

2. Non-astronomical but suggestive of other explanations

a. Balloons or ordinary aircraft:

#3, 11, 22, 41, 42, 53, 54, 73, 81, 83, 91, 92, 113, 114, 115,  
126, 131, 138, 141, 145, 155, 156, 157, 159, 160, 161, 163,  
169, 171, 173, 178, 180, 182, 188, 190, 194, 195, 196, 198,  
200, 201, 209, 210, 217, 222, 235, 237, 239.

b. Rockets, flares or falling bodies:

#4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 25, 56, 65, 78, 106, 107,  
108, 109, 133, 170, 211, 218.

c. Miscellaneous (reflections, auroral streamers, birds, etc.):

#39, 89, 123, 124, 128, 146, 164, 181, 189, 214, 221, 231, 234.

3. Non-astronomical, with no explanation evident

a. Lack of evidence precludes explanation:

#38, 44, 45, 47, 55, 57, 72, 86, 87, 88, 90, 99, 110, 117, 118,  
125, 127, 137, 139, 149, 150, 177, 179, 191, 206, 212, 213,  
229, 232, 233.

b. Evidence offered suggests no explanation:

#1, 2, 10, 17, 21, 29, 37, 40, 51, 52, 58, 61, 62, 64, 68, 71,  
75, 76, 77, 79, 84, 105, 111, 122, 135, 151, 152, 154, 162,  
168, 172, 176, 183, 185, 193, 207, 215, 223, 224, 225, 226,  
227, 256, 241, 242, 243, 244, 134.

11-677

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HEADQUARTERS CARIBBEAN AIR COMMAND  
Office of the Director of Intelligence

D-21

Albrook Air Force Base, C. Z.  
12 November 1948

SUBJECT: Sighting of Unusual Phenomenon

TO : Commanding General  
Air Materiel Command  
Wright-Patterson AFB  
Dayton, Ohio  
Attn: MCI

1. Pursuant to letter, Headquarters United States Air Force, dated 26 February 1948, Subject: Reporting of Information on Flying Discs", the attached information is forwarded for your information.

2. Additional inquiries are being made regarding this sighting and all forthcoming information will be forwarded as it becomes available.

*William R. Forbes*  
WILLIAM R. FORBES  
Lt Col, USAF  
Director of Intelligence

1 Incl  
PAA Msgs

FILED  
204

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204

COPY

COPY

Copied fr the Original PAA messages:

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28/3 TIKS KE OFN

SJO OA CK74 082019

KMIA BLB DP OW WA OA PAA

DPMIA COPIES OWBLE WABLE OWSAL STOP RE OWB 081640 OPERATOR [REDACTED] WHEN MAKING  
1000 GGT WEA REPORT SAW WHAT APPEARED AS COMET IN SE QUADRANT OF SKY WITH VERY  
LONG CONE OF LIGHT COVERING WHILE SE...QUAD ENDING IN STAR LARGER THAN VENUS STOP  
THIS ALL VISABLE TO NAKED EYE FOR APPRX 40 MINS UNTIL BEGINNING OF SUNLITE DIMED  
BRILLIANCE AND FULL SUNRISE NI OBLITERATED PHENOMENO STOP ADVISE IF THIS WAS COMET  
OASJO 082010

2048Z

OPN BLB OW (FR CANAL ZONE, PANAMA)

SAL SJO PAA OA KMIA PAA DP

OASAL OASJO COPY DPMIA STOP FURTHER REPORTS OF COMETS COMMA REQUEST YOU ADVISE  
DPMIA COPY OWBLE WABLE COMET POSITION LENGTH TIME VISIBLE WHETHER VISIBLE NAKED EYE  
STOP OWBLE

081640

WU 11/48

WHZ 148/1 WBR GEN KMIA DPL 17 081530

(FR MIAMI TO CZ  
PANAMA)

BLB PAA OW

OWBLE STOP WREYR 081112 WRRD SASPO COMET POSITION LENGTH TIME VISIBLE WHETHER  
VISIBLE NAKED EYE DPMIA 081530

OPN KBLB OW

KMIA PAA OW OX OK

(CZ, PANAMA TO MIAMI)

OWKMIA OXKMIA OXKMIA STOP SAL AND SJO WEA OBSERVERS SIGHTED COMET AT APPROX  
1045 WITH ABOUT FOUR GRADES OF TAIL OWKBLB 081112

AZ 11/48

*2006-1040*

COPY

[REDACTED]

204