

PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE 15 Sep 59	2. LOCATION Pittsburgh, Pa	12. CONCLUSIONS ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☒ Other: Hoax ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ Unknown	
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local 2400 GMT	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☒ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar		
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	6. SOURCE Civilian		
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION N/A	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS one	9. COURSE N/A	
10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING A loud explosion was heard fm the Sq. Hill area of Pittsburgh. Upon investigation an obj was found which measured 9" in diameter at the base & was 11" high. A flashing red light encased in plastic was mounted on top. The body was made of plastic, yellow in color w/three wires like antenna protruding below the red light. The weight was about 12 pounds. (OBJECT IN PHYSICAL SPECIMEN FILE)		11. COMMENTS All evidence indicated upon investigation that the obj was not airborne or flying at any time. It is the opinion of ATIC that this obj & the explosion were all part of a hoax. Happening as it did at the beginning of the school year, this was probably the prank of college students.	

FRICK PARK AREA, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
15 September 1959

On 15 September 1959 the Pittsburgh police investigated a reported explosion in the Frick Park area of the city. The explosion was reported to have occurred at 2400 on 14 September 1959. During the investigation the police discovered an unidentified object in the area of the reported explosion. The object was conically shaped, and the body was of polyethylene plastic, yellow in color. Three wires appearing like an antenna protruded from the top just below a red light. Attached to the side was a "U" bolt with two feet of 1/4" cable attached to it with 1/2" bolts. The weight of the object was twelve pounds. The object was burned around the edge of the base.

During inspection of the object attempts were made to open it without destroying it, but this proved impossible. Under the plastic coat, which averaged 1/2" in thickness, was a thin sheet of aluminum with the same general contours. Contained in the aluminum were the following items, all embedded in a glue-like substance which was used to fill the interior:

- a. Hilco Huntlite lantern battery container with switch.
- b. Steel pipe (threaded both ends) 2 1/2" long and 1 3/4" diameter.
- c. Eight Ray-O-Vac flashlight batteries (four in the battery container).
- d. Two mercury switches.
- e. Tiny atom 1/2000 horsepower electric motor (Wilson's of Cleveland).
- f. Transformer (Federal Telephone and Radio Corporation, Boonton, N. J.).

The batteries, mercury switches, electric motor, and light bulb were all wired; however, the electric motor was not connected mechanically to anything. The antenna and transformer were not a part of the circuit.

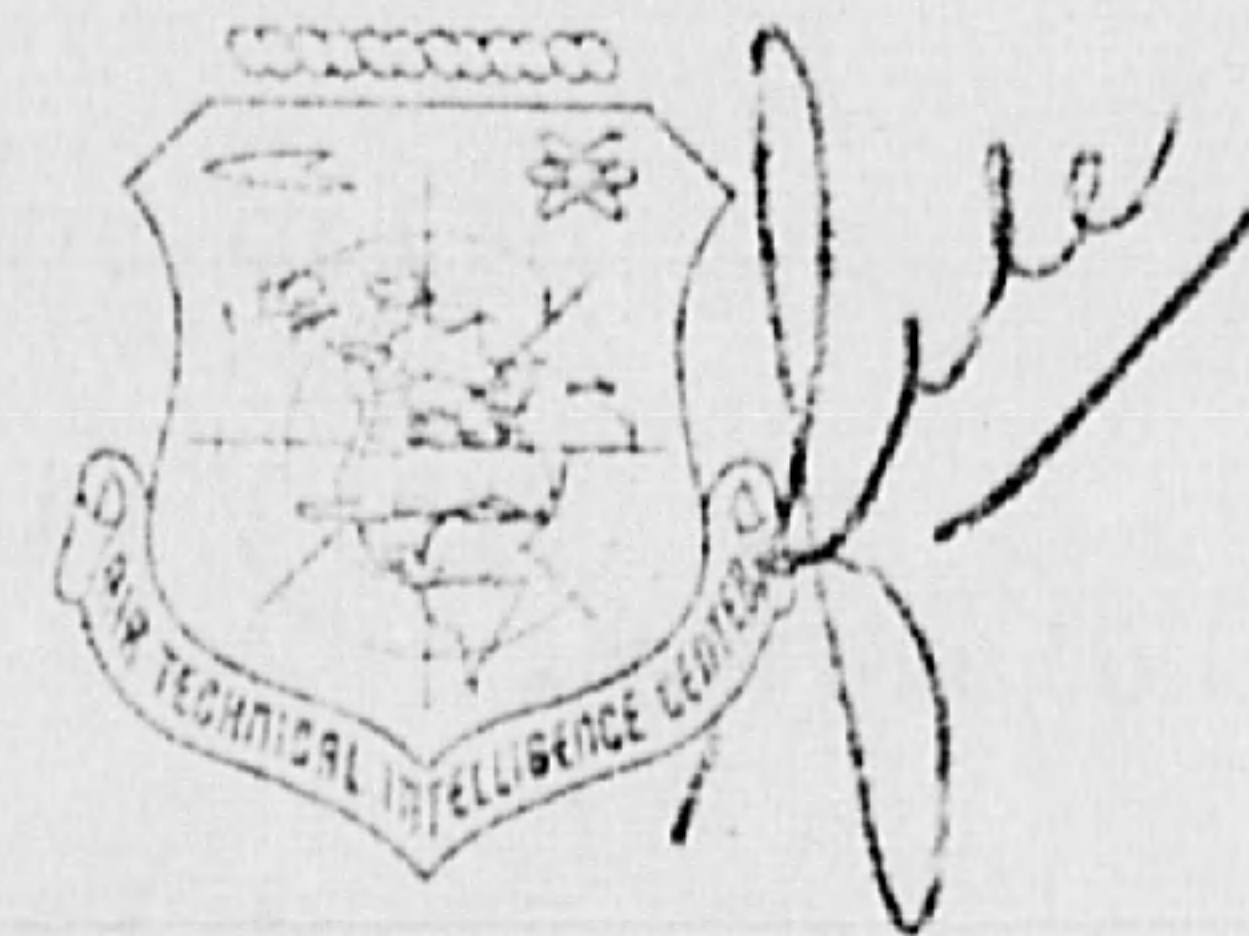
Wilson's of Cleveland, manufacturers of the tiny atom electric motor, when contacted concerning the motor indicated that their chief outlets were hobby shops.

In view of the relatively great weight, inaccessability, overall lack of any productive function, and crudness this object is ruled out as a device designed to collect atmospheric data.

All evidence indicates that this object was not airborne at any time. An object weighing twelve pounds would, upon falling to earth from any appreciable altitude, have left an impression in the ground which would have been noticed during investigation. Further indication that the object had not fallen was the fact that the light bulb and fragile plastic cover were found intact.

It is the Air Force conclusion that this object and the explosion were all part of a hoax. The red light, flashed by mercury switches, and the whirring of the little electric motor were designed to create further mystery for the finder. Since this incident happened at the beginning of the school term, this was probably a prank of college students.

AIR TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE
OHIO



REPLY TO
ATTN OF: AFCIN-4E4g

SUBJECT: UFO, Frick Park Area, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15 September 1959

TO: SAFIS-3d (Major Tacker)

1. On 15 September 1959, the Pittsburgh police investigated a reported explosion in the Frick Park area of the city. The explosion was reported to have occurred at 2400 on 14 September 1959. During the investigation the police discovered an unidentified object in the area of the reported explosion. The object had a conical shape, was made of plastic, and had a red flashing light and three antenna like extensions at the top (Attachment #1). The Pittsburgh police surrendered the object to the 18th AA Group, U. S. Army, stationed at South Park Military Reservation. Major Hatten, Intelligence Officer of the 18th AA Group, conducted a preliminary investigation. A twelve inch diameter burnt area, located in Frick Park, was speculated as the point of impact of the object (Attachment #2).
2. The Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center was notified of this UFO report by the AMC Command Post at 0300 on 15 September 1959. The AMC Command Post received the message from AFCIN Indications Center, Washington, D. C.
3. In compliance with a telephone request from ATIC, Captain Trombley, Commanding Officer of the 2253d Support Squadron, 2253d Air Base Group at the Greater Pittsburgh Airport, conducted further investigation and forwarded the object with his report to ATIC. Captain Trombley pointed out in his report that the object was probably a Rawinsonde, a balloon carried device used by the weather service to determine meteorological data (Attachment #3).
4. The object measured nine inches in diameter at the base and eleven inches in height. The body was of polyethylene plastic, yellow in color. Three wires appearing like antenna protruded from the top just below a red light. Attached to the side was a "U" bolt with two feet of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch steel cable attached to it with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch bolts. The weight of the object was twelve pounds. Around the edges of the base the object was burned.
5. Attempts were made to open the object without destroying it, but this proved impossible. Under the outer coat of plastic, which averaged $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in thickness, was a thin sheet of aluminum with the same general contours. Contained in the aluminum were the following items, all embedded in a glue like substance which was used to fill the entire interior:

- a. Hilco Huntlite lantern battery container with switch.
- b. Steel pipe (threaded both ends) $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches diameter.
- c. Eight Ray-O-Vac flashlight batteries (four in the battery container). Batteries outside of the container were covered with electrical tape.
- d. Two mercury switches.
- e. Tiny atom, $\frac{1}{2000}$ horsepower electric motor (Wilson's of Cleveland).
- f. Transformer (Federal Telephone and Radio Corporation, Boonton, N. J.)
- g. Flashlight bulb and socket with red plastic cover.
- h. Three antenna like extensions (approximately $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long).

6. The batteries, mercury switches, electric motor, and bulb were all wired; however, the electric motor was not connected mechanically to anything. The antenna and transformer were not a part of the circuit. The only electric function of this item is the operation of the flashing red light, and running the little electric motor.

7. Wilson's of Cleveland, manufacturers of the tiny atom electric motor, was contacted by telephone. Mr. Greenwald of that company informed Major Friend that they do not have a contract to supply the U. S. Government with these motors. It was also pointed out by Mr. Greenwald that one of their chief outlets for these motors are hobby shops.

8. In view of the relatively great weight, absence of any transmitter or meteorological equipment, and the inaccessability and overall lack of an obvious productive function, this object is ruled out as a Rawinsonde or any device used by the government.

9. All evidence indicates that this object was not airborne or flying at any time. An object weighing twelve pounds would, upon falling to earth from any appreciable altitude, have left an impression that would have been worth special mention in the reports of Major Hatten and Captain Trombley. Further indication that the object had not fallen was the fact that the light bulb and its red plastic cover were found intact.

10. It is ATIC's opinion that this object and the explosion were all part of a hoax. The red light, flashed by mercury switches, was put on to help attract attention, while the whirring of the little electric motor was to create further mystery for the finder. Happening as it did, at the beginning of the school year, this was probably the prank of college students.

11. The Electronic Technology Laboratory and the Aerial Reconnaissance Laboratory of WADC assisted with the evaluation of this object.

Philip G. Evans

PHILIP G. EVANS

Colonel, USAF

Deputy for Sciences and Components

4 Atch:

1. Drawing of Obj
2. Cy Rpt by Maj Hatten
3. Cy Rpt by Capt Trombley
4. Cy Rpt of Explosion

2253D SUPPORT SQUADRON
2253D AIR BASE GROUP
United States Air Force
Greater Pittsburgh Airport
Coraopolis, Pennsylvania

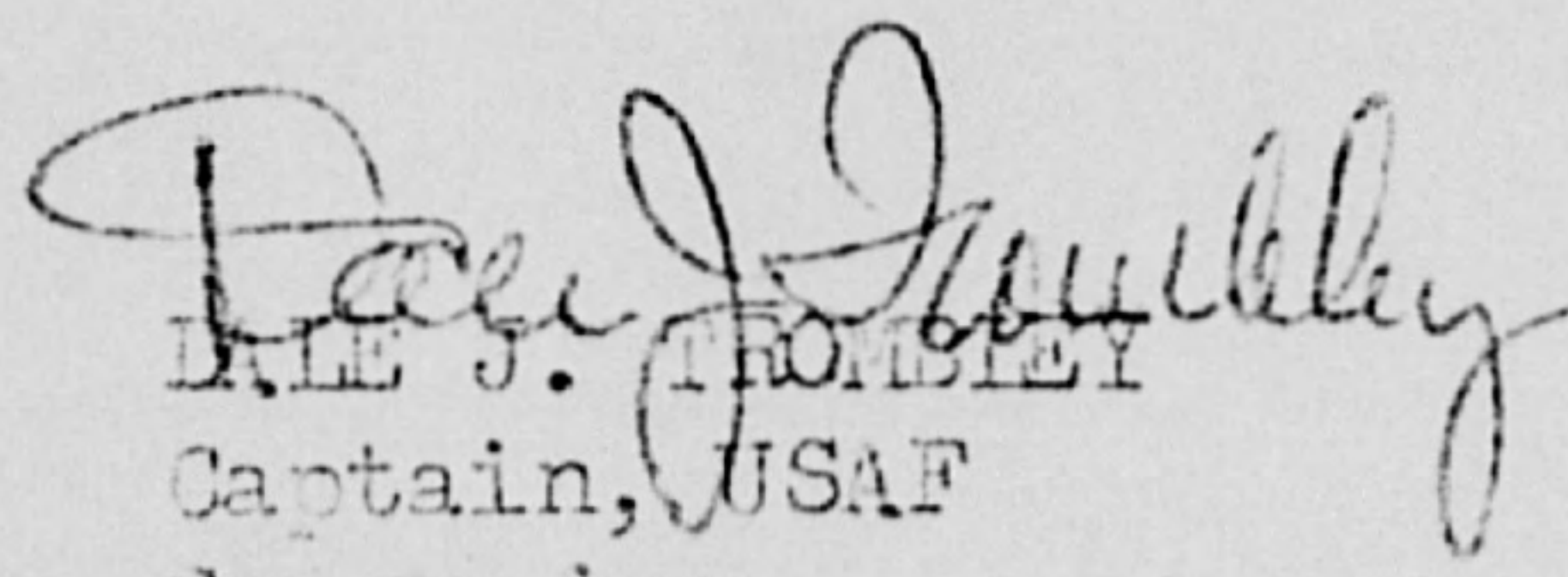
REPLY TO
ATTN OF: CMDR (SUPRON)

30 September 1959

SUBJECT: Finding of an Alleged Unidentified Object, 15 Sep 59, Frick
Park Area of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

TO: Commander
Air Technical Intelligence Center
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio

1. Enclosed as attachment 1, is a true copy of the report, subject: Report of an Explosion, dated 15 Sept 1959, which was made by the Pittsburgh City Police who found the object. Enclosed as attachment 2 is a statement to the undersigned by Major John H. Hatten, Artillery, USA stationed at South Park Military Reservation with the 18th AA Group. Major Hatten received the object and a copy of the Police report from the Pittsburgh City Police.
2. The undersigned, upon receiving a call from Sgt. Bolieu of your office, proceeded to South Park, and picked up the object. Upon return to the base it was suggested that the object was possibly a part of a weather balloon radio transmitter. A call was made to the weather office at Olmsted Flight Service and the object was described to them. Before a complete description was given, the weather man furnished an accurate description of the object to me. Shortly after the phone call was completed, a transient pilot who was at Base Operations, saw the object and identified it as a Rawinsonde Transmitter. The pilot stated he he had been stationed with a weather squadron at one time and had seen instruments such as this.
3. Upon investigation by the Pittsburgh Police and Major Hatten, no evidence of an explosion or reason for an explosion could be determined. It is felt by the undersigned that the finding of the object was coincidental to the explosion and had nothing to do with it.


DALE J. TROMBLEY
Captain, USAF
Commander

2 Atch

1. Report of Explosion
2. Statement by Major Hatten

AIR TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE
OHIO



REPLY TO
ATTN OF: AFCIN-4X2a/Captain McNeill/59117

SUBJECT: Extract from ATIC Duty Officers Report

15 September 1959

TO: AFCIN-4E4g

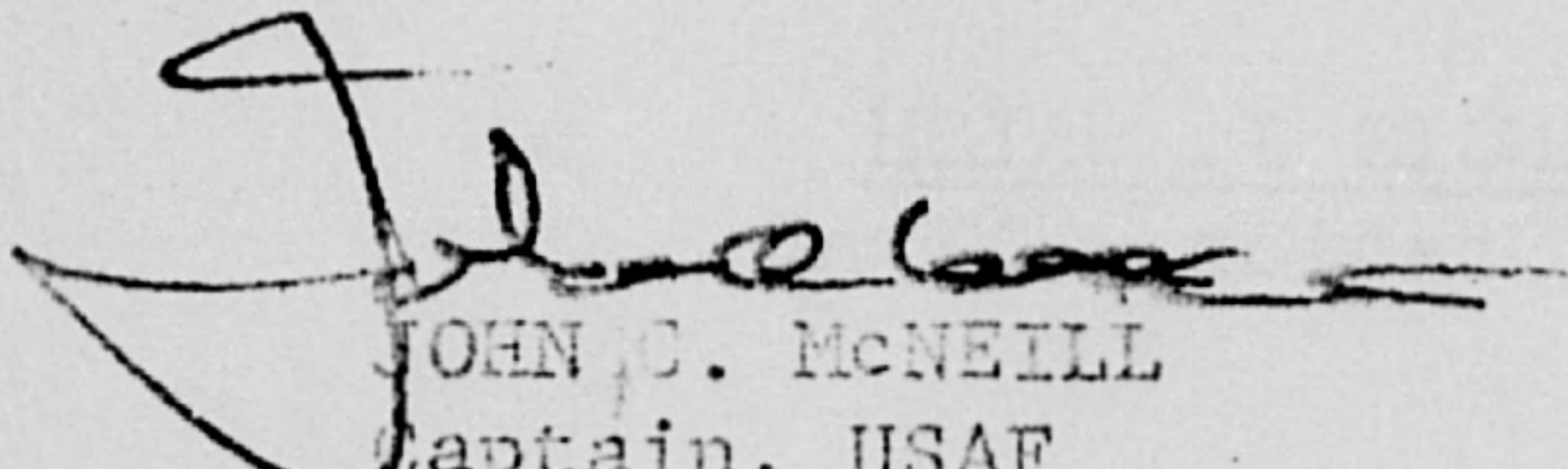
Following is an extract from ATIC Duty Officers Report dtd 14-15 September 59 for your information.

0300 - The following message was received by telephone from L/Col Rhodes at AMC Command Post. He stated that this message was passed to him from AFCIN Indications Center, Washington D.C. by a Major Carson. Message follows:

"At 0600Z, 15 Sep 59, a small cone shaped object with cable attached fell in the Squirrel Hill district of Pittsburgh causing a small explosion when it struck the ground. Object is cone shaped eight inches across the bottom, ten inches in height with 3 antennas surrounding a blinking light. The light blinks when the object sits on base but does not burn or blink when object laid on side. Has yellow plastic antennas molded into plastic. Bottom or base of object is scorched and has two foot cable attached by belt. Object is in possession of Squirrel Hill police."

0500 - AMC Command Post called and reported receipt of following message from AFCIN Indications Center. "Air Force Command Post tells AFCIN that Squirrel Hill Police dismantled unidentified object reported earlier and report nothing to identify it with military. Squirrel Hill police inclined to believe incident a hoax."

Did not call Major Friend again because of short time remaining before duty hours. He should be notified however as he plans to take some positive action this morning.


JOHN C. McNEILL
Captain, USAF
AFCIN-4X2a

CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Supt

Department Bureau of Police

Insp.

Department Third Police District

Sept. 15th, 1959.

SUBJECT: Report of an Explosion

At about 12 midnight, Emergency Ambulance 11-A (H. Scanlon & F. Soukup) were cruising in the 6500 block of Beacon St. and heard a very loud explosion coming from the Sq. Hill Area. Upon investigation, the location of the explosion was placed in Frick Park about 100 yards in off Beechwood Blvd. and 75 yards East of the dirt road leading to the Park Barn. An Object was found at this location that resembled the front end of a Projectile measuring 9" in diameter at the base and 11" high. A flashing red light incased in plastic is mounted on the top of the cone shaped thing. The body is made of Polyethylene Plastic - Yellow in color. 3 wires appearing like antenna protude from the nose below the red light and a "U" bolt with a two foot $\frac{1}{4}$ " steel cable is attached to the side with $\frac{1}{2}$ " bolts. The weight of the thing is about 12 pounds.

The object after being held at #11 Police Station and not being identified was turned over to 2d Lt. Richard P. Davis of the 18th Artillery Group of the Air Defense based at South Park. The Ordinance Department of this outfit is to make an effort to identify.

Respectfully,

Lieut. FRANCIS J. WALSH
#11 Station - Night

THIS IS A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

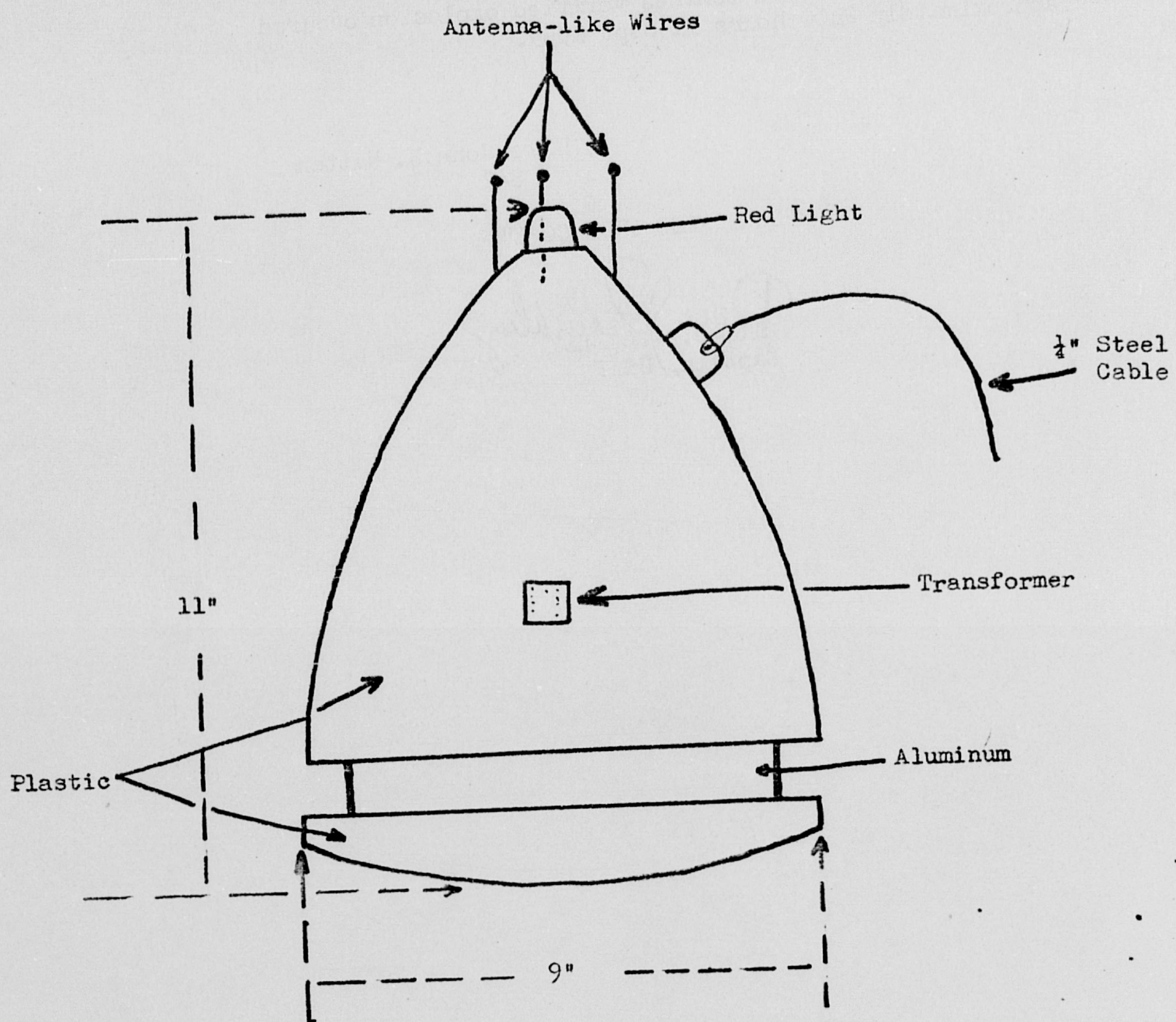
A. Pischke - D.O.

JOHN H. HATTEN
Major Arty
S2

C
O
P
Y

Atch # 4

Weight - 12 lbs



Capt Trombley

Investigation in the neighborhood at point of impact or vicinity of explosion the following information was revealed.

Circular impression in ground approximately 12" diameter burnt area, could be point of impact located in Frick Park 200 - 250 yds from Beechwood road. No other indications of any point of contract in this vicinity.

Check of neighborhood tenants verified explosion occurred approximately 2400 hours 14 Sept 1959.

s/Major John H. Hatten
S-2

"CERTIFIED TRUE COPY"

David J. Trombley
DALE J. TROMBLEY
Captain, USAF

ATTACHMENT #2