

# BLUE BOOK 02:

1947

## Chapter 1

It was mid-afternoon on June 24th, 1947.

Kenneth Arnold was flying his Call-Air A-2 over the skies of Washington State, when a report came over the radio.

A USMC C-46 Transport Airplane had crashed near Mount Rainier. There was a \$5,000 reward for discovering the crash site.

Arnold radioed that he might be late arriving in Yakima. He was going to investigate the crash.

Veering off his original flight path, Arnold would change the course of his entire life.

In the summer of 1947, the United States America was undergoing tremendous change. The awesome and terrible might of the atom bomb had set the country on a track toward an escalating arms and technology race against its rival, the Soviet Union.

The Marshall Plan had just formalized the foreign policy that would come to be known as The Cold War. The Second World War had transformed the country into an economic and cultural powerhouse, and the American people were looking to the future with fear and hope.

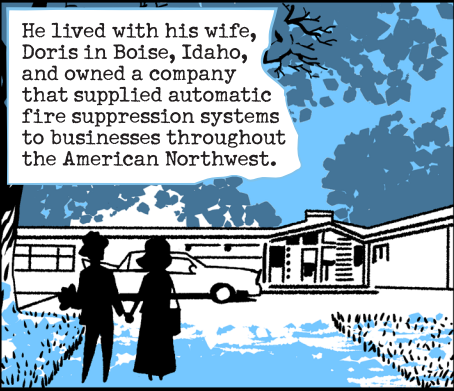
Over a few short weeks, that fear and hope would be embodied by a strange new symbol that would shape the decades that followed and forever embed itself in the cultural imagination.



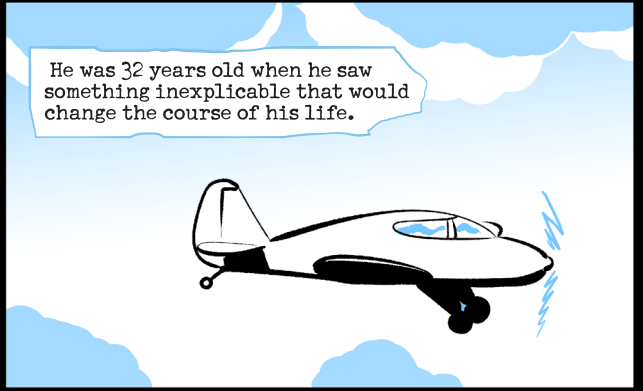
Growing up, Kenneth Arnold had been an Eagle Scout and all-state football player. He was college educated and well-respected in his community.



He lived with his wife, Doris in Boise, Idaho, and owned a company that supplied automatic fire suppression systems to businesses throughout the American Northwest.



He was 32 years old when he saw something inexplicable that would change the course of his life.

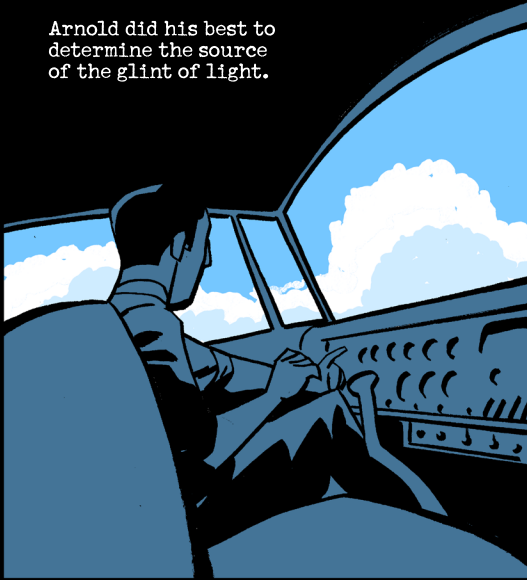


It was 3:00pm.  
The skies were clear.



Until he saw a bright FLASH of silver light.

Arnold did his best to determine the source of the glint of light.



He noticed DC-4 on his left rear.



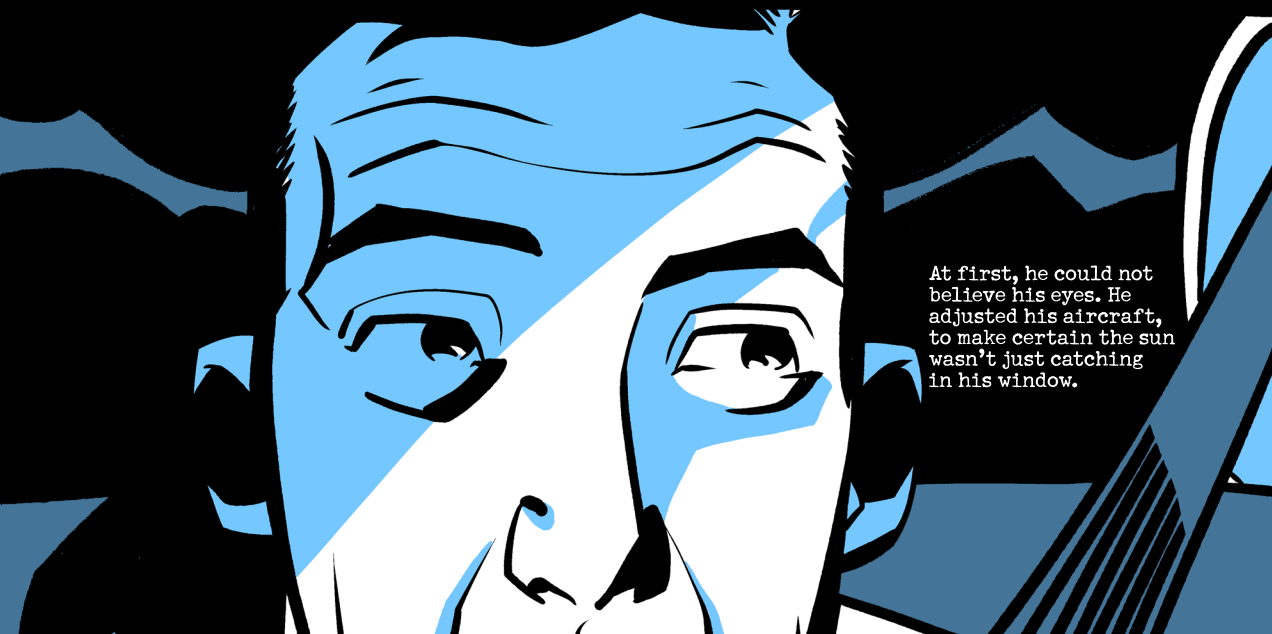
But at 15 miles away, it was much too far to have produced such a blinding light.



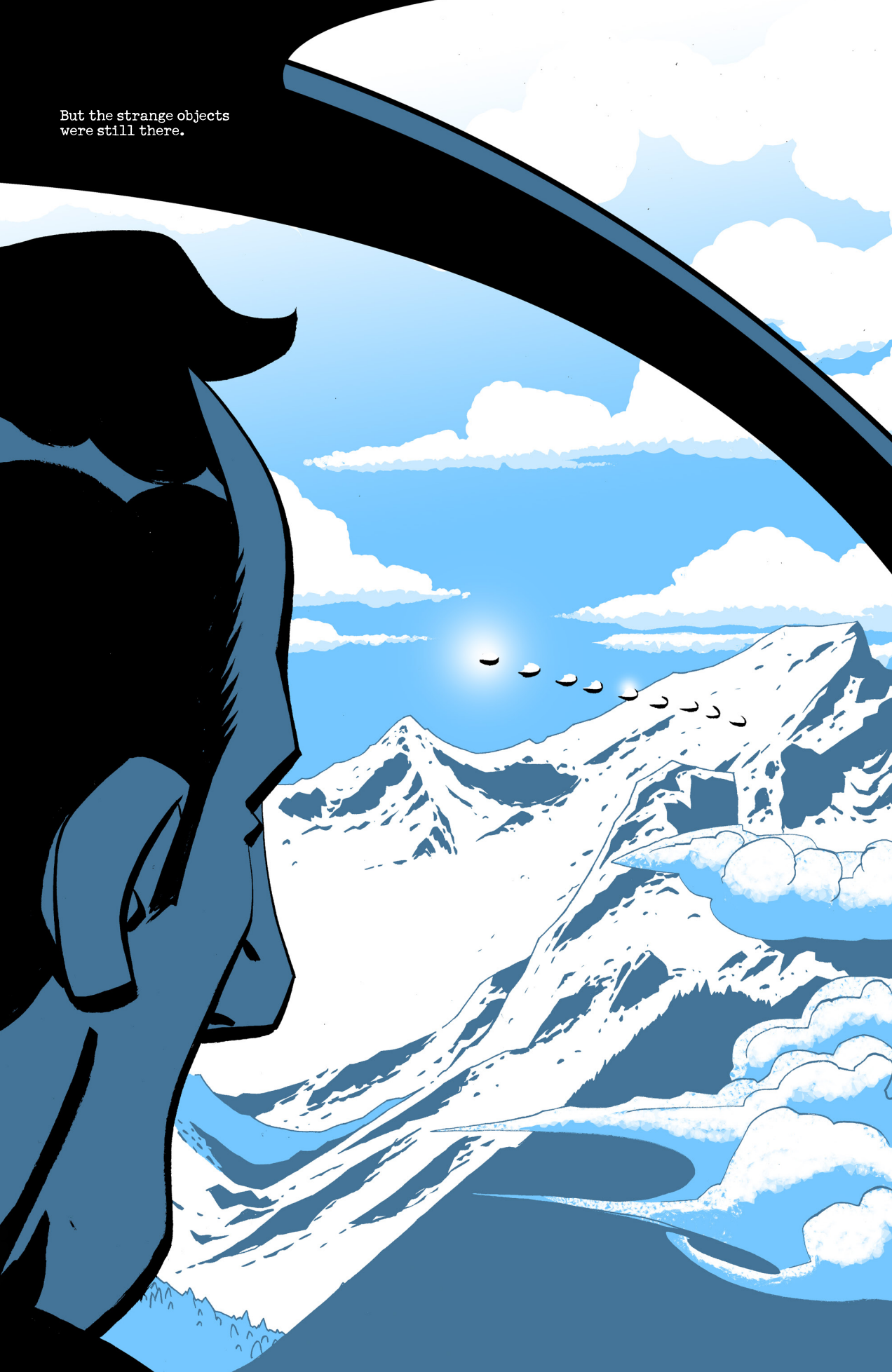
And that's when he took notice of something strange on the face of Mount Rainier.



At first, he could not believe his eyes. He adjusted his aircraft, to make certain the sun wasn't just catching in his window.



But the strange objects  
were still there.



For a moment he thought the objects were a flock of geese.

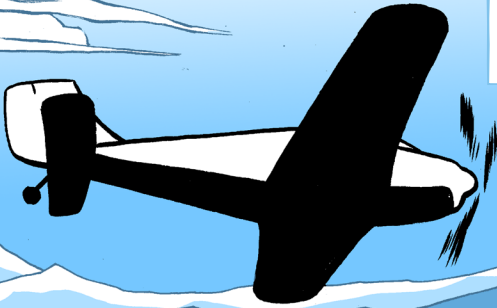
But as he realized their size and the altitude at which they were flying, he guessed they must be a new, experimental type of aircraft.

The objects moved toward his plane, crossing in front of him, as if they were examining him.

They moved strangely like a kite caught in the wind. He would later describe their movement like saucers skipping on water.

They would flip over occasionally, briefly blinding him with the same bright light he had noticed at the start.

Arnold changed course, in an attempt to keep his plane on a parallel trajectory to the strange aircraft.

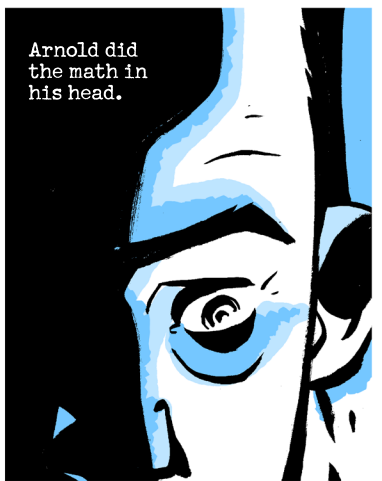


He even opened his side window, to make absolutely sure that his windows weren't interfering with his vision.

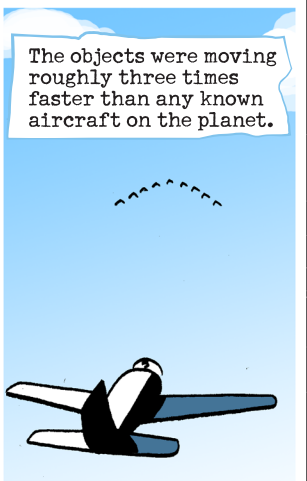


The objects moved from Mount Rainier to Mount Adams, a distance of about 50 miles, in one minute and forty-two seconds.

Arnold did the math in his head.

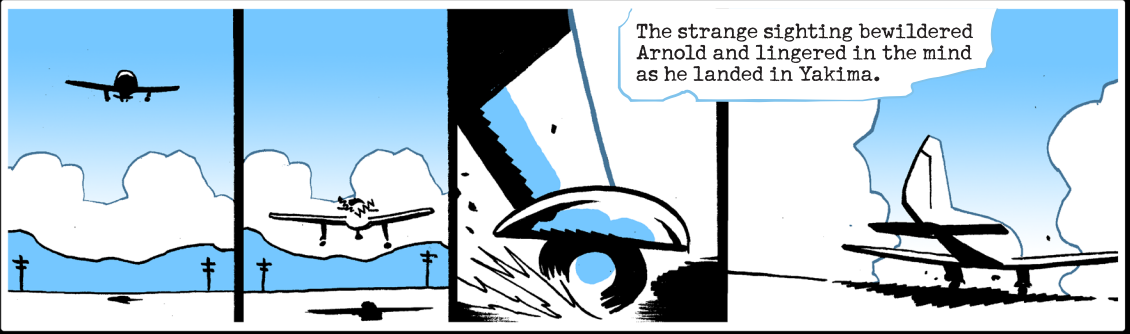


The objects were moving roughly three times faster than any known aircraft on the planet.

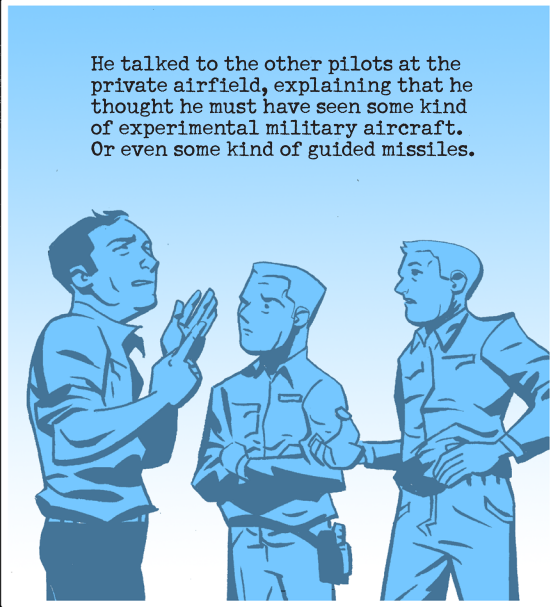


Arnold watched them until they faded from view, far off in the distance.





The strange sighting bewildered Arnold and lingered in the mind as he landed in Yakima.



He talked to the other pilots at the private airfield, explaining that he thought he must have seen some kind of experimental military aircraft. Or even some kind of guided missiles.



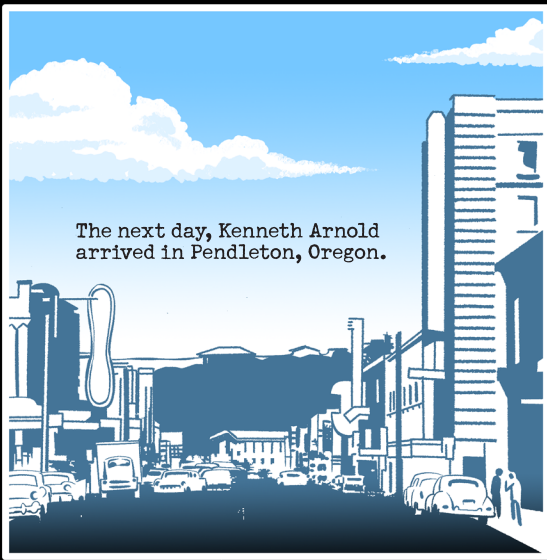
The other pilots were unnerved by Arnold's story.



But they agreed that he shouldn't keep it to himself.







The next day, Kenneth Arnold  
arrived in Pendleton, Oregon.



And went directly to  
the local newspaper.



The reporters were wary of  
Arnold's strange account.



But he bore all the signs  
of a reliable witness.



And so, they decided to publish.

It would be the Chicago Sun that gave the country a new turn of phrase to discuss these strange objects and create an image that would ignite the imagination of the country.

“Flying Saucers.”

## Idaho Man's Sighting Started It All

The man who started the worldwide UFO controversy, 75 years ago, says he is more convinced than ever that he saw something real.

Kenneth Arnold, now 69 and widowed, says he also is convinced that UFOs remain the most important unsolved scientific problem of the time.

“Flying saucers aren't even a customer of sorts,” said Arnold. “Most of these objects are rifle-shaped—they look something like the axes that were used to behead people back in the middle ages.”

Arnold said he saw UFOs on five occasions after the 1947 report and that he has since tried to make the UFO-

know. “I have no answers. It's a mystery. It's a mystery why the grass grows. It's a mystery how Christ walked on the water.”

“But I'm not bringing religion into this. I'm not a religious man, in the conventional sense.”

Arnold expressed optimism that a thorough investigation of his years' uncommensurate background on the subject would make him “sound like a”

“He said he preferred to write letters to writers questions.”

“I've never tried to ask subject, and I don't want to be

## Pilot Sees 'Saucer-like Objects' Flying at 1,200 m.p.h. in Oregon

Pendleton, Ore., June 25.—(AP)—Nine bright, saucer-like objects flying at “incredible” speed at 10,000 feet altitude were reported here today by Kenneth Arnold, Boise, Idaho, pilot, who said he could not hazard a guess as to what they were.

Arnold, a United States Forest Service employee, engaged in searching for a missing plane, said he sighted the mystery objects Tuesday at 3 p.m. They were seen between Mount Rainier and Adams, in Washington State, and appeared to wear a V-shaped formation. Arnold blocked them and returned to

wind-borne balloons launched from Japan during the war. One of the bomb-laden balloons fell near Lakewood, Ore., in May, 1945, killing six persons.

At Portland, Ore., Edward Leitch, senior C.A.A. Aeronautical Inspector, said he could offer no explanation of the fast-flying objects reported by Arnold.

“I actually see as do.”

“I don't know whether doubt traveling

“I saw a fire at 1,200 feet clearly were reported.”

“I saw on the 200

“I saw fires which are and to be

“I saw in Or-

“I saw as safe of concern- ment and a pop-

## Eyebrows Lifted At Pilot's Story

Boise Businessman Reports Sighting Saucer-like Objects Over Cascades

Pendleton, Ore., June 25.—(AP)—A tale of nine mysterious objects—big as airplanes—whizzing over Western Washington at 1,200 miles per hour “skepticalism” told the army and air ex-

The man who reports the sighting, Kenneth Arnold, Boise, Idaho, businessman, however, to the story of the objects, each as big as a commercial airplane, over Washington's Cascade range with a peculiar “sawtooth” shape. Arnold landed in Yakima, Wash., after his sighting

Military Intelligence Division, U.S.A. McChord Field, Washington

Gentlemen:

Following the reading of an account of the sighting by Kenneth Arnold, Boise, Idaho, as published in the Spokesman-Review of August 7, 1947, the undersigned considered the possibility that an observation of a “flying saucer” would be of interest to the

This account has not been given to any newspaper or publication as yet.

## The first to see

By THE WOODWARD The Star-Citizen

BOISE, Idaho.—Kenneth Arnold was the last man anyone would expect to report a flying saucer.

The son of a Montana farmer, Arnold was a self-made entrepreneur who owned an airplane and ran a business that was making \$10,000 a year—22 times the average Boise income in 1947.

He was a well-to-do, well-read, well-traveled local family man, a Republican, and a member of the Chamber of Commerce.

Three years ago this month, Arnold was flying his C-47 biplane over Boise from a business trip to Chubbuck, Wash.

Approaching the town, he saw nine objects flying against a clear sky. He reported them to the military intelligence division of the army.

When he landed in Yaldon, he told some pilots what he had seen. In Pendleton, he reported them to the military intelligence division.

He told them the objects flew the way a saucer would if dipped over water, causing the phrase “flying saucer.”

Within two days, Arnold's name was in every newspaper in America. His report began the UFO era as we know it. The Boicean was briefly the most famous person in the nation.

He received thousands of letters, many addressed only to “Ken Arnold, Saucer Spotter.” His three minutes over Mount Rainier made him a national celebrity, a local deity, and, in the end, an unbridled realist.

The Associated Press (AP) network made Arnold's sighting one

incident, in which an aircraft was seen near the town of Boise, Idaho, on June 24, 1947.

Arnold's sighting was the first of a series of sightings reported by other pilots in the area.

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End Chapter 1.