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WASHINGTON TALK

Briefing

35 Years of U.F.O.'s

Thirty-five years ago tomorrow, an era opened. On that fateful day in 1947, a businessman flying his private plane over Mount Ranier, in Washington State, sighted an unconventional formation of what were later described as "flying saucers," the first of many such sightings of unidentified flying objects.

No special observance is planned to commemorate that magic moment, but Fred Whiting of the private, non-profit Fund for U.F.O. Research thought it was a good time for stock-taking. Over the years, he said, 9 out of 10 initially unexplained sightings have turned out to be known natural or man-made objects. The tenth, however, is still unidentified.

"There is considerable evidence to support the theory that some of these unidentified flying objects are extra-terrestrial spacecraft, but there isn't any proof of it," Mr. Whiting said.

In four years, the fund has raised and spent about \$15,000 on research. "You could call us the National Science Foundation for U.F.O. research, on a small scale," Mr. Whiting said. The organization has also sued and obtained the release of 3,000 pages of Government documents by the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency, but so far no proof.

Phil Gailey

Warren Weaver Jr.