

## Why the Balloon Story Ballooned

February 14, 2023

“Ruling out aliens? Senior U.S. general says not ruling out anything yet,” [ran](#) the Reuters headline. This was over the weekend, “after a series of shoot-downs of unidentified objects,” Reuters explained, clarifying that for the real information, General Glen VanHerck would defer “to U.S. intelligence experts.”

You know, the people who start wars under false pretenses and hounded a sitting president with a fake dossier about bed-wetting prostitutes.

While General VanHerck simultaneously up-played and down-played extra-terrestrials, an unnamed source

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at the Pentagon denied any evidence for the crafts being anything but terrestrial. Sure. But remember the context: last week’s 200-foot-tall balloon episode.

“To be clear — The Chinese Balloon was an authentic UFO until it was identified,” [tweeted](#) Neil deGrasse Tyson. “It then became an IFO.”

I [riffed off](#) that truism when I covered the balloon story,



too. *But does that explain how quickly a balloon panic became a UFO panic?*

Ever since World War II’s [foo fighters](#) we’ve had hints that something was not completely “normal” in our skies. But the military has never before boasted of shooting down UFOs — though ufology lore is full of stories about just such events.

VanHerck offers a [possible explanation](#): after the balloon brouhaha, the radar tracking systems were reset to include things less jet-like and rocket-like than normal. So other things in the skies that seem anomalous — foo-fighter-like? — all of a sudden become serious concerns.

This was one of the reasons given for the founding of modern Pentagon tracking of “[UAP](#)”: there may be more than one type of strange “phenomena” flying/floating/darting-about in our skies, and the military should be able to distinguish one from another, especially from novel drone and other surveillance technology.

Especially in time of war.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.