

AFU NEWSLETTER

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From the 1946 ghost rocket files (I):

Cigar sighted from B-18 bomber

[Instalment 1 of a series of translations from the official documents concerning the 1946 'ghost rocket' wave. Quotes are from original documents at The Military Archives in Stockholm. Notes in squared brackets are comments by the editor]

TO THE AIR DEFENCE DEPT. AT THE
DEFENCE STAFF, STOCKHOLM
FROM LIEUTENANT I.

Re: A flying missile

I have the honour of reporting an observation while flying on August 14, 1946, at 10.02-10.04 a.m.. I saw a flying missile of the kind that is mentioned in order nr 7:49 of June 12, 1946 from the Defence Staff. The circumstances were as follows.

I was the pilot, on a navigational training flight with a B18 A, at an altitude of 100 m, on the route F1 [Swedish Air Force base at Västerås] - Malingsbo (18km NW of Skinnskatteberg) - Krylbo - F1. Sergeant M. was the [back seat] signaller/observer [and wireless controller].

On the route Malingsbo - Krylbo we noticed, after about 2 minutes, an aircraft-shaped object, on the left front, abt 60 degrees, on a south-easterly course, slightly over the horizon. I estimated the altitude over terrain of the object to be abt 250 m. My own altitude was abt 200 m above the ground. The distance to the object was abt 2000 m. Weather conditions were as follows:

Cloud altitude	abt 800 m
Amount of clouds	6-8/10
Horizontal visibility	30-40 km

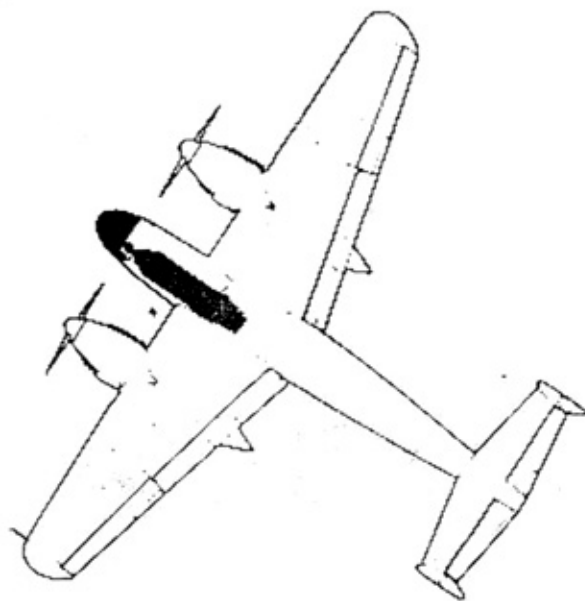
With the latest newspaper reports, regarding overflights of Swedish territory by the above-mentioned missiles, on my mind, I immediately got suspicious. Furthermore I could not identify the object as any Swedish aeroplane.

Therefore, I decided to keep eye contact with the object and attempt to overtake it at a suitable opportunity. After about 10 seconds (I had to

look down at the instruments to switch over to maximum cruising speed) the object was gone.

I suspected it had disappeared under the horizon, therefore I reduced our own cruising altitude. It appeared that both the object and I had come over a relatively low countryside, and we had both reduced the cruising altitude thus maintaining a constant altitude above the ground.

After about 20 seconds my [back seat] observer sergeant M. discovered the object again, 30 degrees to our right. We had, meanwhile, kept our own course all the time. Immediately, I made a [right] turn ending up on a parallel course with the object, and switched to maximum speed.



A SAAB B-18 bomber as seen from above. B 18 was manufactured in 245 copies 1944-1948, two-seated, twin-engined. In service by the Swedish Air Force until 1956. Note the asymmetric position of the cockpit on top of the fuselage, restricting somewhat the view to the right...?

The shortest distance between us was abt 1000 m. It immediately appeared that I would not be able to keep pace with the object, whose speed I estimated to be at least 600-700 km/h. After about 2 minutes the object had vanished in a south-easterly direction. A storm with heavy rain and a cloud height of 100-300 m lay straight

ahead of the object's course, and the object disappeared into it.

My observations in summary:

The object kept a constant cruising altitude of 250 m. Thus (on the whole) it followed the topography of the ground.

Speed was considerably higher than the speed of an aeroplane. Estimated speed of the object at least 600-700 km/h. Own speed 380 km/h.

Appearance of the object: reminding me of the fuselage of a B18. No wings, rudder or protruding parts visible at observation distance, colour: dark.

Length estimated at approximately 15 m, cross-section abt 1 m, shaped like a cigar. No light visible. I had noticed, however, lights emitted from a missile passing over Västerås on August 11 at 8.48 p.m. [this mass sighting has probably been identified as a flying bolide, reported as it was from hundreds of places all over the south of Sweden and Norway]

Propeller-driven Swedish fighters cannot be expected to keep pace with this kind of missile.

The observation was made at 10.02 - 10.04. Air routes as per enclosed sketch.

A mix-up with fighter Vampire is out of the question, as no such plane was in the area at the time of observation as per information received from F13 [the only Swedish air force wing with Vampire jets in the summer of 1946]

Västerås August 14, 1946

/signed/ I, lieutenant

Staff sergeant M. had nothing further to add to the above report.

Västerås August 14, 1946

/signed/ M., sergeant

REPORT FROM A VISIT TO F16 ON AUG 22, 1946

The purpose of the visit was

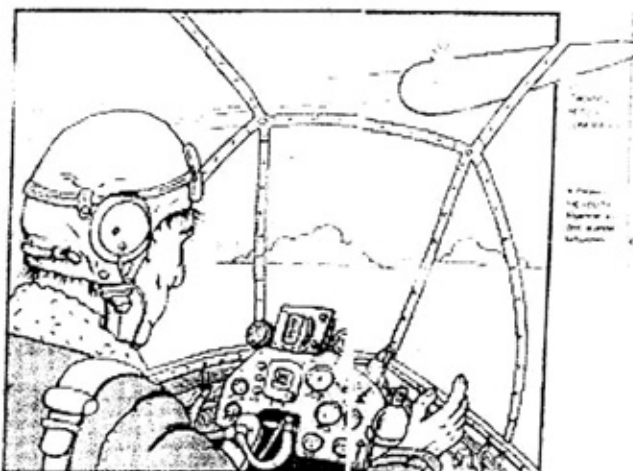
a) to compare the report of lieutenant I. dated Aug 14 with the navigational training flight carried out by a division from F16 [Uppsala wing of the Swedish air force] on Aug 14, to find out if the object that I. [the pilot] observed could have been a J 26 fighter [Swedish designation for North American P-51 Mustang].

b) to keep the aircrew of F16, who will be included in the "alert squad", informed. [Note: The Air Force was planning to have a file of planes (two

planes) on a constant alert, ready to take off after a ghost rocket].

a) Present at meeting: 7 pilots from F16 (2 people were away on assignment), lieutenant I. and sergeant M., F1.

On Aug 14, nine aeroplanes from F16 carried out navigation training flights on the [triangular] route F16 - point 156 W of Norberg - Floda church (Södermanland) [and back to F16]. Start of first plane at 09.40 a.m. (radio time) with intervals of 5 min [between each plane]. Cruising altitude min 100 m, max 300 m. Cruising speed 420-425 km/h. The estimated flying time of 15 minutes has been kept by all aircraft with the largest divergence being 1 minute. After turning point 156 no plane has essentially been to the west of a line from 156 to the church of Floda. After passing point 156 the course was 165 degrees.

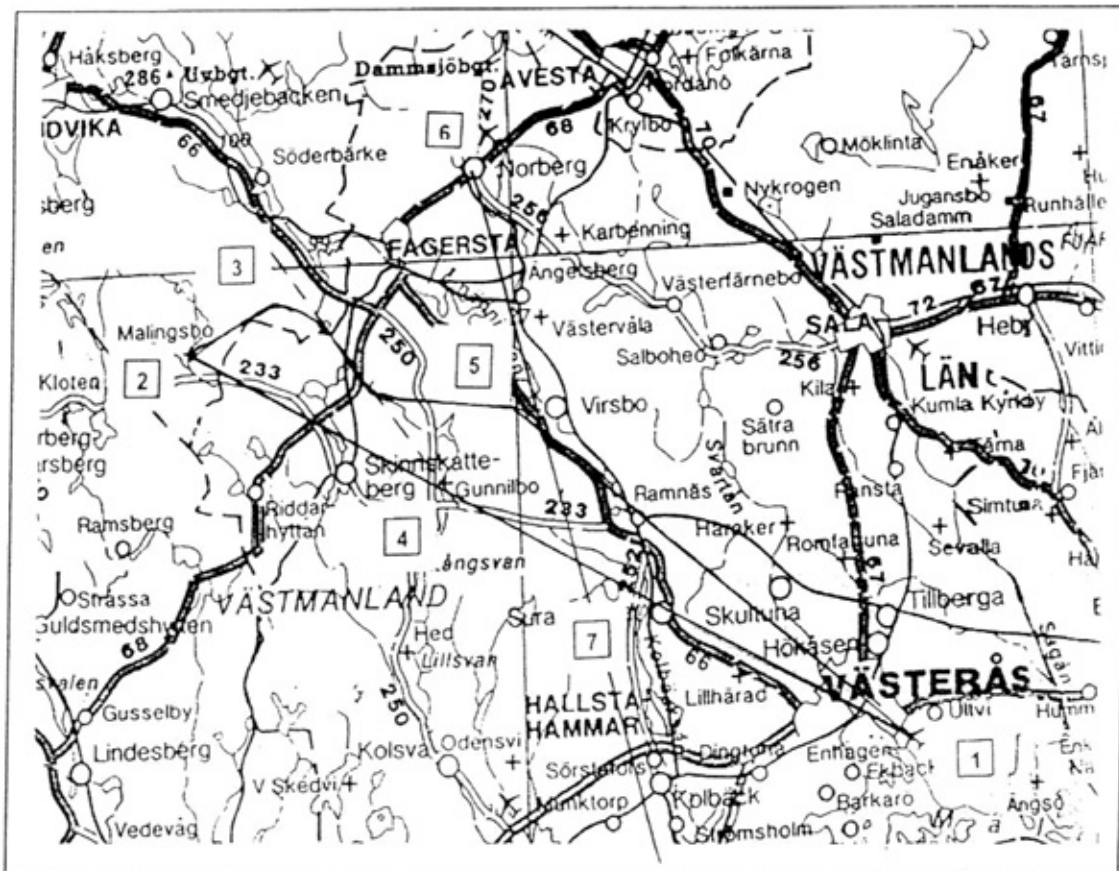


Sketch by Peter Lundberg, probably overdramatizing Lieutenant I's view of the sky on August 14, 1946. Source: Norrbottens-Kuriren, Feb. 18, 1989.

Lieutenant I. made the observation at 10.02 - 10.04 (radio time), 7 kms east north east of the Malingsbo church, the observed object having an estimated course of 138 degrees.

The only plane from F16 which, according to the time schedule, could have been at the point of observation at 10.02 - 10.04, is the one that took off at 09.45 am. This pilot insists that he never flew west of a line between point 156 and the Floda church. Instead he chose to fly east of this line due to better checkpoints [in the terrain].

Course of direction for the I. observation was Floda church 157 degrees. None of the



Map of the sighting area.

1. F1 air force base at Västerås, take off and landing for the B 18 plane.
2. Turning point for the B 18 at Malingsbo. Changing to a north-easterly course, heading for Krylbo (south of Avesta).
3. Unidentified cigar-shaped object spotted in front of the B 18. Estimated path of the unidentified is indicated by dotted line (3 → 4).
4. B 18 crew turned right, onto a south-easterly course, to take up pursuit of the unidentified object.
4. Object disappeared into a rainstorm near Gunnilbo.
5. After losing the object, B 18 crew turned towards Virsbo to avoid the rainstorm, heading southeast for the home base.
- 6 → 7. Estimated course for J 26 fighters from the F16 wing, from a point close to Norberg, heading south.

J 26 [Mustangs] pilots had observed any B 18 or any other flying object.

Lieutenant I. states that he [first] observed the object about 60 degrees to the left, his own course being 245 degrees, his own speed 380 km/h and at a distance of abt 3 km. If it had been a J 26 with a speed of 425 km/h I. [the B 18 pilot] would have been the first to reach the point of intersection. He lost it out of sight and it was rediscovered 45 degrees to the right in front of him, at a distance of abt 2 km. The speed of the object must therefore have been at least 800 km/h.

Because of the short distance, and the excellent visibility, lieutenant I. and sergeant M. maintain that the object observed could not have been

mixed up with a J 26 or any other conventional aeroplane.

Summary

The object observed by lieutenant I. and sergeant M.

could have been a plane J 26 from F16 with regard to

- the time of observation
- the cruising altitude
- changes in altitude relative to the ground
- the estimated length of fuselage

could not have been a J26, considering

- the statement that the line of flight the J 26 was abt 15 km to the east of the point of observation
- the course
- the cruising speed
- the general appearance of the object, and
- the fact that no J 26 pilot saw a B 18.

With reference to the above I do not consider it as probable that the object observed was a J 26 or any other Swedish aeroplane.

b) CF 16 [the chief of wing F16] and the aircrews were given general information on observations received so far, characteristics of objects, and

specific details that are most important to look for.

Stockholm August 23, 1946
/signed/ Eric Malmberg
Fli [acronym for air engineer]

Interviews with I. in 1986

In April and May 1986 *Clas Svahn* had several telephone interviews with Lieutenant Colonel I. I. prefers to remain anonymous, although his name is given in the Military Archives documents. He confirmed the details given in his written report and to Air Force investigator *Eric Malmberg* in 1946. I. was even called to come to Stockholm to make an oral statement before the eyes of Air Director *Bertil Westergård*.

I. stated that the object lacked the usual silhouette of an aeroplane, such as a tail fin.
"What I saw could have been a disc seen from the side, or a cigar. It was close enough for me to be able to judge whether it was a conventional aircraft or not. The object was torpedo-shaped. It was pointed both at the front and at the stern. Like a big and fat cigar. There were no contours or nuances of colour. It was dark greyish."

No exhaust or smoke was seen. The sighting duration was about 2-3 minutes. *"I can say that it was not a Mustang, if so I would not have made such a fuss about this whole thing."*

Malingsbo has the co-ordinates Latitude 59° 55' 60N, Longitude 15° 25' 60E.

Biographical notes on I.:

Lieutenant I was, at the time of the sighting, the head of a B 18 division at the F1 wing. In December 1946 he took part in flying a group of new *Vampire* jets from England to the F13 wing in Norrköping. He later became the head of the Air Force's experimental station, working on flight tests of new Swedish aircraft and missiles. In 1961 he was promoted Lieutenant Colonel and finally left active duty in 1979.

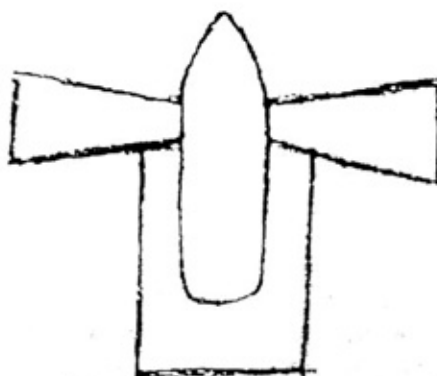
Eleven minutes later in Södertälje

[Quoted from a letter in the Military Archives]

To the Defence Staff, Stockholm
Wednesday, August 14, [1946] about 10.15 a.m.
an object was observed having a small, spool-shaped body and small wings plus a stay at the back, about as shown in the enclosed sketch. The object passed in a north-easterly direction at an altitude of about 200 meters and emitted a sound reminding me of an aeroplane but more hissing.

Place of observation: the western outskirts of Södertälje.

Signe Lundström
Villagatan 41
Södertälje



[The witness sent her short, unsigned, letter and sketch to the Staff. The Staff must have talked to the witness, since there are some additional notes in the Staff's daily summary tables of sightings: "[Speed:] *"Not very big."* [Trajectory:] *"Horizontal"*. [Description:] *"...no propeller, no smoke nor fire"* [Comments:] *"sighted by two ladies from a garden. Disappeared behind another house."*

In 1986, Clas Svahn attempted to reach the witness, but discovered that she, as well as her husband, both had died in 1982. Svahn managed to trace one of their two daughters, living in Uddevalla.

"My mother was a true realist and never fantasised. If she has reported such a thing she must have seen such an object. She never made anything up. I have never heard that she should have seen such an object, however. She never told me, and I haven't seen anything about it in her papers."

Södertälje is situated at Lat. 59° 12' 0N Long. 17° 37' 0E. Distance from Malingsbo down to Södertälje, *as the crow would fly*, is roughly 150 kilometres. This means an object would have to speed at abt 900 km/h to reach there in 10 minutes. Södertälje is right at the extension of the course of the object noted by the two Air Force men.]

A web site, in Swedish, detailing the Defence Staff investigations in 1946:

<http://hem.passagen.se/gjsson/sr46/>