

Wrtm 25 Oct 50

24-185/8

(Unclassified) Unconventional Aircraft at Controlled Area, ~~Cak~~ Ridge, Tenn.
SPECIAL INQUIRY

Documents & Dissemination Br, Directorate of Intelligence, DCS/O

25 OCT 1950

Counter Intelligence Div, Office of Special Investigations, The Inspector General

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Maj Detwiler/bjm/7276
AFCSI

Attached for your information is a Spot Intelligence Report concerning captioned subject, dated 20 October 1950. No further action is contemplated unless so requested by your Directorate.

1 Incl
SIR re abv subj fr
DO 3, dtd 20 Oct 50

GILBERT R. LEVI
Actg Chief, Counter Intelligence Div
Office of Special Investigations
The Inspector General

When Incl No. ___ is (are) withdrawn or not attached, the classification of this correspondence will be cancelled in accordance with par 25e, AFR 205-1.

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE DIRECTOR OF SPEC. INV.

BY HARRY H. KUNZE, Capt, USAF
Historian 4 DEC 1975
DATE

Disclosure of the nature, sources, or even the existence of such investigative information to persons mentioned in the report or to other persons not normally entitled to such information may be made only when expressly authorized by the Director of Special Investigations, SI, or higher authority.



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Arnold for G.R. Levy

AFCSI

24-185-8-14X
USAF
OFFICE
SPEC. INV. - 12-2-11-15
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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL USAF
8TH DISTRICT OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE ALABAMA

20 OCT 1950

8D 24-109

SPOT INTELLIGENCE REPORT

SUBJECT: Unconventional Aircraft at Controlled Area,
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

TO: Director of Special Investigations
Headquarters, U. S. Air Force
Washington 25, D. C.

CLASSIFICATION ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
BY AUTHORITY
AUG 11 1952, Capt, USAF
BY Historian

4 DEC 1975

1. SYNOPSIS: On 12 October 1950 eleven (11) or more unidentified objects picked up on radar at Knoxville, Tennessee. Objects appeared over Oak Ridge Control Area. Interceptor aircraft "scrambled" negative results. Ground observation made with negative results. Check made to determine if any flights in area proved negative. Conference held with Security Division AED and radar personnel from Eastern Air Defense Headquarters on 13 October 1950. No explanation was found to account for unidentified objects. Unidentified objects sighted 16 October 1950 by security guard. Excerpts from controller's report for 15 October 1950 showed recurrence of radar targets. Aircraft interceptor worked area with negative results. On 16 October 1950, Security Trooper reported another unidentified object. Aircraft "scrambled" to intercept to no avail. Unidentified noise similar to that made by jet aircraft heard by NEPA guards and Army officer on 15 and 16 October 1950.

2. DETAILS: Beginning at 2325, EST, 12 October 1950 a total of eleven (11) objects and possibly more appeared on the radar screen of the CPS-1 Air Force Radar Station at McGhee-Tyson Airport, Knoxville, Tennessee. The objects began appearing on the north edge of the Oak Ridge controlled area and proceeded south for about twenty (20) to thirty five (35) miles at the rate of 100 to 125 miles per hour, at an altitude of 1000 to 5000 feet, on a course of 170 to 230 degrees and with densities varying from that of light liaison aircraft up to that of a C-47 type aircraft. Captain W. J. Akin, controller at the radar station "scrambled" an F-82 fighter at 2330 and the fighter was airborne at 2339. Captain Akin vectored the plane on two (2) specific targets on stern approaches at distances of one (1) and eight (8) miles respectively. On each occasion the fighter appeared to intercept the target on the ground radar screen; however, on each occasion the crew of the fighter observed no target either visually or on their airborne radar screen. The aircraft returned to the airport at 0014.

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After the sighting of the unidentified targets the Oak Ridge Security Patrol was alerted and attempts at ground observations were made; however, nothing could be seen or heard from the ground. At 0100 more objects, having the same readings as previously, appeared on the screen. On this occasion no attempt at fighter interception was made. Ground observation results in the Oak Ridge area were negative.

During the above sightings Eastern Air Defense Force Headquarters was notified and checked for possible flights in the area. Checks were also made with flight service at Atlanta and Maxwell AFB. All checks proved negative.

On the afternoon of 13 October 1950 Special Agent William M. Price accompanied officials of the Security Division Atomic Energy Division and the Knoxville CIC office to the radar station where a conference was held with officers of the radar station and a team of radar experts from Eastern Air Defense Headquarters. Numerous explanations, such as flocks of migratory birds, clouds, a flight of light planes from the nearby Oliver Springs Airport, etc. were ruled out. One explanation advanced that it might have been due to atmospheric conditions. Further attempts to explain the sightings were postponed until a complete report was prepared by the radar station and until the EADF team had checked the various Air Force Commands and other services.

In an evaluation of the above sightings the following conditions should be considered:

- a. Captain Akin, the controller, is considered to be a competent and well qualified radar officer.
- b. The CPS-I radar set undergoes daily maintenance. Such maintenance was performed on 12 October at 1600. Checks were made on the equipment during and after the sightings and found to be in good operating condition.
- c. The crew of the fighter plane is considered to be one of the four (4) best in the 52nd Fighter Group.
- d. Weather conditions during the incident were excellent. The sky was cloudless, the air was practically calm and visibility was excellent. Lt. Wolfe, pilot of the F-82, reported that he had made visual sightings earlier in the same evening at a distance of ten (10) to fifteen (15) miles.

At 0830 on 16 October 1950, Mr. George Rathman, Security Division, Atomic Energy Commission, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, notified Special Agent William M. Price that visual sightings of an unidentified flying object had been made by several persons at Oak Ridge. Accompanied by W. B. Gray, SAC, Knoxville CIC, Special Agent William M. Price proceeded to Oak Ridge.

At the AEC Security Division, Oak Ridge AEC Security Patrol Trooper Edward D. Rymer was interviewed by Mr. Rathman, Mr. Gray and Special Agent William M. Price. In substance Trooper Rymer related the following: At about 1535 EST, 15 October 1950, Trooper Rymer was on duty at the Solway entrance to the Oak Ridge controlled area. He was conversing outside the guard house with Mr. John Moneymaker, attendant at the University of Tennessee Research Farm

Program, Oak Ridge. Mr. [redacted] happened to glance in the sky and called Rymer's attention to an object in the sky. The men observed that the object was starting to describe an arc in the sky. They estimated the object to be about twelve to fifteen thousand feet altitude. At this altitude, the object resembled a sky-writing plane because smoke appeared to be trailing from the object. After the object described about a quarter of an arc it began to make a controlled descent at a speed estimated at about 100 miles per hour. Trooper Rymer then noticed that the object had no wings and that it appeared to be bullet shaped. By this time the men could observe that what appeared to be smoke coming from the object was an attached tail. At this time Trooper Rymer went in the guard house and called the Captain of the Guard to report a falling object. Mr. [redacted] continued to observe the object. When Trooper Rymer came out of the guard house the object had descended to a height of about six (6) feet and was about seventy (70) yards from the two (2) men. By this time the object had assumed the shape of a two (2) by five (5) inch grayish colored card and attached to the object was a ribbon-like tail about twenty (20) feet long and an inch wide. The object had no thickness. The tail of the object, which was light gray in color, had a small black line running down through its center. The tail appeared to be waving or rippling and the latter fifteen (15) feet of the tail gave off a pulsating glow intermittently in different sections of the fifteen (15) feet. It also appeared that this section of the tail was somewhat transparent. Trooper Rymer estimated that the object was traveling about three (3) miles per hour and that the main body of the object was rocking slightly showing the corners and the under and top side. Rymer advanced on the object to within fifty (50) feet but it did not appear to get any larger. At Rymer's approach the object picked up speed slightly, proceeded across the highway, came to a nine (9) foot chain link fence, rose vertically and parallel with the fence and proceeded over the fence. After clearing the fence it dipped toward the ground for a few feet and then rose sharply to clear a thirty (30) foot willow tree and proceeded in a southeasterly direction at an increased speed to a ridge about a mile away and disappeared over the top of the ridge. The object during the flight to the ridge, changed to a pear shape but the tail continued to be present. While the object was heading for the ridge a car driven by [redacted], Employee of the Maxon Construction Company, Oak Ridge, approached the Solway gate. Trooper Rymer called [redacted] attention to the object and Hightower also saw it disappear over the ridge. Shortly after the object disappeared, the Captain of the AEC Security Patrol Joe Zarzecki arrived at the scene. Shortly thereafter another similar object appeared in the sky within sight of the men at a height of about 300 feet, traveling in the same direction as the previous object and it disappeared over the same ridge. The object was visible to the men for about thirty (30) seconds. About five (5) minutes after the second appearance another similar object was visible at an altitude of about 500 feet for about a ten (10) second interval.

After a discussion of the incident Mr. [redacted], Trooper Rymer and Special Agent William M. Price proceeded to Solway Gate, scene of the observation. A check was made to Trooper Rymer's estimate of distances and they were found to be substantially accurate. The immediate area around the gate is fairly level with wooded hills and ridges rising around the area. There were no obstructions or hindrances to visibility noticeable. At the direction of Mr. [redacted] Mr. [redacted] was brought to the scene. He gave substantially the same account as did Trooper Rymer except to add that while Rymer was phoning the object had descended to about 1500 feet and appeared to be pear shaped. Another pear shaped object appeared on one side of the object. As it came lower the object assumed the 2" x 5" card shape.

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Mr. Rathman related to Mr. Gray and Special Agent William E. Price that he had checked the AEC file on [redacted] and that he has an excellent record. He has never been cited for any infraction of the AEC rules, has a "Q" clearance, 20/20 vision and is well liked and respected by his co-workers. Captain Zarzacki also has an excellent record. Very little is known of Moneymaker and Hightower at the present.

At 1400 hours on 16 October Mr. [redacted] and Special Agent William M. Price proceeded to the Air Force Radar Station at McGhee-Tyson Airport, Knoxville, Tennessee. Major R. C. Care, Defense Area Commander stated that the radar screen had picked up indistinct, unidentified objects during the afternoon of 15 October. Major Care produced the incident report of Captain W. J. Akin, controller. Excerpts from Akin's report are as follows:

"Prior to this report [redacted]), we had a recurrence of targets like Thursday night. We had sent one scramble out and made several good passes at one target which painted very well. It was on a heading of 180 degrees and approximately 4 miles inside the eastern boundary of the area. Our fighter worked from 2500 to 5000 feet, but saw nothing. The speed of these targets varied from 40 to 100 miles per hour. Every characteristic was the same as before except that the speed was slower.

"There was nothing on the scope at the location of this strange object.

"The strange visitor was reported to Captain Cole at Nobody, who carried through to EADF. Their orders were to put a patrol over the area, which was done.

"Lt. Guthrie operating under my control, and later Captain Duffy, saw nothing in the area except one large flock of birds, which we were painting. He estimated their number between 200 and 300. This was at 7000 feet. His patrol up until 1730 EST when I left duty, ranged from a low level pass over the gates to 7000 feet.

"He was vectored after several well painted targets, but saw nothing."

At about 1520 EST 16 October, while Special Agent William E. Price was present, a report came from the AEC Patrol to the radar station relating that a Trooper Isabell and four civilian employees at Oak Ridge had observed a "silver disc" hovering over the K-25 Plant in the controlled area. The radar screen was able to pick up an indistinct target about every three (3) or four (4) sweeps of the indicator. An F-82 fighter plane was sent to attempt an intercept of the object. The airborne radar of the fighter picked up a target which later proved to be a light aircraft. The ground observers reported that the F-82 passed under the "silver disc" while it was in pursuit of the light plane. The crew of the fighter observed nothing unusual. Nothing further was learned of the sightings.

On 16 October 1950 at 1430 hours another unidentified object was sighted by John L. Isabell, Trooper, Oak Ridge Patrol Force and at 1455 hours the object reappeared. At this time Isabell was joined by Trooper Lendelle Clark and Hank N. Briggs who submitted reports on the incident which are quoted as follows:

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[REDACTED]

"At approximately 1:30 P. M., October 16, 1950, while working at Blair Gate, I saw an object in the air over X-25 traveling in a northeast direction from the southwest. It was traveling in a straight line and going very fast. The object was white or silvery in color and round like a ball and was about the size of a baseball as seen at the distance it was from me. It seemed to be very high.

"At exactly 2:55 P. M. October 16, 1950, this object reappeared from the northeast at a considerably lower altitude and was traveling a lot slower than before. I stopped a car that was coming in the gate in order to have witnesses to what I saw. The occupants of the car were Troopers Lendelle Clark and Hank N. Briggs going in to work. I pointed out the object to Troopers Clark and Briggs and we watched the object for several minutes. This object was slowly circling in a wide circle and spinning very fast, that is, the object itself was spinning around and around. The object drifted toward the southwest and in just a few minutes it reappeared at a very high altitude going back into the northeast and going very fast. We watched the object disappear into the northeast.

"This information was phoned in to Headquarters immediately by Special Agent William M. Price. About fifteen minutes after the object disappeared into the northeast, an F-82 fighter plane showed up in the area where the object was last seen but appeared to be thousands of feet lower than the object which Troopers Clark and Briggs and Special Agent William M. Price saw and reported.

/s/ John L. Isabell, Trooper
Oak Ridge Patrol Force"

"On October 16, 1950, at approximately 2:55 P. M., Trooper Isabell stopped us at this installation and showed us an object in the north that was traveling toward the northwest. It looked to be about 2000 feet in the air and a white-silverish looking color, rotating in a counter clockwise manner. It was round in shape and going in a rather fast motion. This object was at a high altitude and seemed to come in sight and then disappear. It looked about the size of a ball and round at every angle we looked at it.

/s/ [REDACTED]
/s/ [REDACTED] N. Briggs

(True copies of the above quoted reports are included herewith).

On 17 October 1950, Mr. Gene Goedjen, NEPA Division, Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation reported that NEPA Guards Herron, S. R. Brown and Davis, while on guard duty, heard an unusual noise at approximately 2000 hours, 16 October 1950. The noise was similar to that made by a jet aircraft and lasted for about four (4) seconds. The last three (3) seconds of the period the sound seemed to be increasing and sounded as if the object causing the noise was ascending. Nothing was seen in the air or on the ground that might have caused the sound.

[REDACTED]

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Major Louis Ronniger, Army ORC Instructor at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, reported that on 15 October 1950 he was on the AEC Patrol Rifle Range. Ronniger stated that at about 1400 he heard a noise similar to that made by two (2) jet aircraft. The sound seemed to increase and decrease and the noise seemed to be ascending. Ronniger stated he could see no aircraft and that the sound lasted for approximately four (4) seconds. (Evaluation: F-6)

3. ACTION: Continued liaison with FBI, Security Division Atomic Energy Division and CIC is being maintained, and further reports will be furnished as they become available.

2 Incls:

- 1 cy AEC Patrol Rpt No. 1424-50
- 1 cy AEC Patrol Rpt No. 1424-50

P. W. Hayes
PATRICK W. HAYES
Lt. Colonel, USAF
District Commander



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File & Review

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C A U T I O N

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Closed _____
Date _____
By _____
W.R. _____
N.R. _____

Supplement
Incident Report No. 1424-50
Date 10-16-50
Time 2:55 P. M.

CLASSIFICATION	TROOPER	LOCATION
Flying Object	John L. Isabell	Blair Gate
PERSON INVOLVED	ADDRESS	BADGE NO. COMPANY
Trooper Lendelle Clark		212
PERSON INVOLVED	ADDRESS	BADGE NO. COMPANY
Trooper Hank N. Briggs		156

REMARKS:

On October 16, 1950, at approximately 2:55 P. M., Trooper Isabell stopped us at this installation and showed us an object in the north that was traveling toward the northwest. It looked to be about 2,000 feet in the air and a white-silverish looking color, rotating in a counter clockwise manner. It was round in shape and going in a rather fast motion. This object was at a high altitude and seemed to come in sight and then disappear. It looked about the size of a ball and round at every angle we looked at it.

/s/ Lendelle Clark
/s/ Hank N. Briggs

Distribution:

- 1 - Callaghan
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- 3 - Mail & Rec. File

OFFICE	SURNAME	DATE

AEC, Oak Ridge, Tenn., 4-12-50--5000-AL7622

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

William M. Price

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