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Odessa, Washington

10 December 1952

I. Description of Incident

Two pilots in an F-94 made visual and radar contact with a large, round white object larger than any known type of aircraft. A dim reddish-white light came from the object as it hovered, reversed direction almost instantaneously and then disappeared. The object appeared to be level with the intercepting F-94 at 26,000 to 27,000 feet. Airborne radar and visual contact were simultaneous and lasted for 15 minutes. F-94 attempted to contact local GCA but without success. Weather was clear above 3,000 feet. Time of sighting was 1915 PST.

II. Discussion of Incident

Two additional F-94 were in the general area but at lower altitudes and thus are eliminated as possible cause for the sighting. The description of "large, round and white and extremely large" is significant: Upper air research balloons are tear-shaped and made of translucent polyethylene and at cruising altitude expand to as much as 90 feet in length. The equipment hanging below the balloon is capable of making a return to airborne radar. Although ATIC has received no record of upper air research balloon tracks for this date the description of the object allows a preliminary evaluation of "possible balloon".

III. Conclusion

Possible balloon.

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