

HEADQUARTERS  
 373D RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON, VERY LONG RANGE WEATHER  
 APO 856 c/o PM, N. Y., N. Y.  
 (Kindley AFB, Bermuda).

373D WEA 350.05

Feb 9 1949

SUBJECT: Semi-Monthly Intelligence Report

TO: Commanding Officer  
 2108th Air Weather Group  
 Westover Air Force Base  
 Westover Field, Mass

1. In compliance with 308th Reconnaissance Group (Weather) letter, subject: "Semi-Monthly Intelligence Summary", file 308th WEA 350.05, dated 29 July 1947, the following report is submitted for the period ending 31 January 1949.

2. On 24 January 1949 crew of B-29 aircraft, number 44-57750, returning from a special search mission for BAC Tudor IV, Star Aerial, observed the following described atmospheric phenomena:

a. At 2400Z, 24 Jan 49, from position  $29^{\circ}30' N - 67^{\circ}29' W$ , on a true course of  $050^{\circ}$ , altitude 1,500 ft., Captain Marsden W. Mattatall, Aircraft Commander, first saw a red glow off the left wing which at first resembled the moon rising and which the crew later believed to be a burning ship.

b. At 0025Z the pilot turned the aircraft in direction of the light,  $350^{\circ}$  true course, and within fifteen minutes the aircraft was so close to the red light object that a sharp bank was executed in order to avoid flying into the red light mass.

c. On approaching the redlight it was observed as a dark red glow, 1 to 1-1/2 miles wide, based on the water, and resembling burning oil with a phosphorescent red light rising to 2,500 to 3,000 ft altitude. Also from heading of  $350^{\circ}$  and  $180^{\circ}$  two columns of white light, 1/4 to 1/2 mile apart, resembling search light beams and extending upward through approximately 3/4 of the red light mass. The beams were at a slight angle toward each other. Capt Mattatall estimates that if the white light beams had extended above the red light mass to an altitude of 10,000 ft. they would have intersected. It was also observed that the red light mass gave off enough light to illuminate the surface of the water and the bases of surrounding clouds with a dull red glow (see inclosure #5)

d. Aircraft position above the red light mass, 6,000 ft. altitude, at 0040Z, 25 Jan 49, was  $31^{\circ}24' N - 67^{\circ}08' W$

e. Wind at 6,000 ft was from  $025^{\circ}$  with velocity at 25 knots.

f. Clouds were present, two to four-tenths coverage, with bases at 3,000 ft. and tops to 5,000 ft. UNCLASSIFIED

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g. At time of observation the moon was not visible.

h. Communications were reported good at that time.

i. Capt Mattatall reports the aircraft as staying in the area approximately 45 minutes and completely circling and surveying the red light mass from all angles.

j. Photographer aboard special mission aircraft reported attempting to photograph the phenomena with a K-20 camera at shutter setting of 1/125 second and lens setting of 4.5. Due to fast shutter speed no results were obtained even though 15 prints were overdeveloped in an attempt to bring out detail.

k. Last observation made at 0124L, 25 Jan 49, looking down from an altitude of 6,000 ft., true course of 045°. The red mass seemed to move away from aircraft and spread out and had reached position 31° 35' N - 67° 10' W.

l. (deleted)

m. Aurora Borealis, normally not seen in this area, was very noticeable on the evening the above described light was seen (see incls 2 and 3). However, Aircraft Commander, Capt Mattatall, has just returned from 90 days TDY in Alaska and Navigator, Lt Austin, presently TDY this organization from 375th Recon Sq (VLR) Waa, state that no Northern Lights they had ever witnessed reacted in this manner as to color, shape, position, or intensity.

3. The above described phenomena was witnessed from all parts of Bermuda as a red mushroom shaped glow with two pillars of white light rising up through, but not extending above the red light mass.

4. At 2245Z, 25 Jan 49, B-29 aircraft, number 45-21790 was dispatched.\*\*\* The crew reported that on arrival at destination the red light mass could not be located \*\*\*

#### EVALUATION B-2

5. In accordance with paragraph 4.b., Air Weather Service Letter, Subj: "Semi-Monthly Intelligence Summary", dated 23 July 1947, the inclosures are evaluated as follows:

- a. Incl No. 1 - News article: "Dr Gordon Quits, Charges Slight". B-2
- b. Incl No. 2 - News article: "Northern Lights Are Seen Here". A-1
- c. Incl No. 3 - News article: "Northern Lights Are Seen Here for Second Time". A-1
- d. Incl No. 4 - News article: "Record Imports of Over 17 Million Last Year; U. S. Takes Second Place". B-2
- e. Incl No. 5 - Sketch of atmospheric phenomena witnessed by Capt Mattatall and crew. B-2

DE A. RAY, Lt Col, USAF

Commanding

Mid-Ocean News article "Northern Lights Are Seen Here" dtd 25 Jan 19

### Northern Lights Are Seen Here

For nearly six hours last night Bermudians were treated to the unusual sight of Northern Lights. Entries in the Hamilton Meteorological Station's log indicate that the Northern Lights — otherwise known as the Aurora Borealis — were visible from about 8:30 P. M. to 2 A. M. Appearing to the north-northwest, they began with a reddish hue and changed throughout the evening to a powerful white, which spread like a curtain.

The lights which are seen frequently in the far North are rarely visible this far South. When they are seen in these latitudes the weather is exceptionally fine, the Met Station said. Last night conditions here were still and fine.

John Jefferies, branch engineer for Cable and Wireless, Ltd, in Bermuda, said the service was subnormal from about 11 p. m. to 6 a. m. As expected he explained the station experienced fading on the wireless circuits.

This was the first time interference due to the aurora had been noticed in Bermuda, he said, although in some other parts of the world it is not uncommon.

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Mid-Ocean News article "Northern Lights Seen Here For Second Time" dated 26 Jan 1949

### Northern Lights Seen Here For Second Time

Northern Lights were seen last night for the second time in succession in the sky to the north and northeast.

A red-orange glow appeared to the north-northeast shortly after 9:30, but was partially obscured by low clouds. The Hamilton "Met" station reported a faint aurora borealis at one o'clock. Radio reception was hampered by the phenomenon.

Cable and wireless (West Indies) Limited reported earth currents in their cables and complete wireless failure on wireless circuits. All cables were received, the company stated, and the wireless messages received were not for public service.

Capt G. S. Fletcher of the Gascoyne was as surprised as a lot of other people when he first saw the display on Monday night. "I didn't know at first what they were," he said this morning aboard his vessel.

This was the first time, Captain Fletcher said, that he had noticed these lights so far south. In northern latitudes he had often seen them. On these occasions he said they were more spectacular, with less red but more blue and violet in their makeup.

Request for Analysis

MR E

MEMO

11 Mar 49

1.

It is requested the enclosed report be reviewed by appropriate sections within your Division for the purpose of determining, if possible, an explanation for the reported phenomenon as reported by Capt Mattsall.

1 Incl  
373- Wea Semi-Monthly Intel  
Rpt

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Lt Colonel, USAF  
Actg Chief, Tech Intelligence Div  
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