

HEADQUARTERS
MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT SERVICE

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
Intelligence Division

UNCLASSIFIED

24 February 1949

SUBJECT: Observed Atmospheric Phenomena

TO : Director of Intelligence, DCS/C
Headquarters, USAF
Washington 25, D. C.

ATTN: Air Intelligence Requirements Division

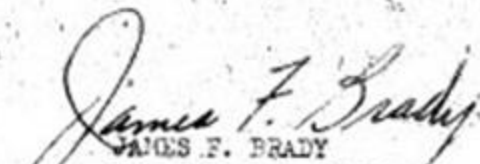
1. Forwarded herewith as Inclosure No. 1 is an intelligence report describing the observation of an unusual atmospheric phenomena at 31° 24' N, 67° 08' W. Report was submitted by the 373rd Reconnaissance Squadron (VLR) Weather, based at Kindley Air Force Base, Bermuda.

2. A sketch of the subject atmospheric phenomena, as described by witnesses, is attached hereto as Inclosure No. 2 and copies of newspaper articles which might have a bearing on the reported incident are attached hereto as Inclosures No. 3 and 4.

3. The inclosed information has not been forwarded to the Air Materiel Command.

4 Incle:

1. Ltr fr 373d Rcn Sq
350.08, 9 Feb 49.
2. Sketch of Atmospheric
Phenomena.
3. Newspaper article
dtd 25 Jan 49.
4. Newspaper article
dtd 26 Jan 49.


JAMES F. BRADY
Lt. Colonel, USAF
Chief, Intelligence
Division

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

373D WEA 350.05

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 44-87750, returning from a special search mission for BOAC Tudor IV, Star Aerial, observed the following described atmospheric phenomena:

a. At 2400Z, 24 Jan 49, from position 29°30'N - 67°29'W, on a true course of 050°, 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° 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 red light it was observed as a dark red glow, 1 to 1½ 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° and 180° two columns of white light, ¼ to ½ mile apart, resembling search light beams and extending upward through approximately ¾ 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).

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Basic: Semi-Monthly Intelligence Report, 373d Recon Sq (VLR) Waa, dtd file 350.05

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

e. Wind at 6,000 ft. was from 025° with velocity of 25 knots.

f. Clouds were present, two to four tenths coverage, with bases at 3,800 ft. and tops to 5,000 ft.

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 0124Z, 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.

1. No filtering was performed on this mission as the haste with which it was dispatched forced the crew to depart without filter paper. However, "GULL ABLE" mission passed within 30 to 40 miles of position reported above at 1100Z, 24 Jan 49, and was filtering.

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.