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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS
REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

UNCLASSIFIED

TITLE: Sighting of Unidentified Object Over Long Beach, California, On 23 September 1951	FILE NO. 24-129
	DATE: 30 October 1951
	REPORT MADE BY: FRED T. RAGSDALE
	REPORT MADE AT: DO #18, Maywood, California
	PERIOD: 25, 26, 30 October 1951
	OFFICE OF ORIGIN: DO #18, Maywood, California
	STATUS: CLOSED

CHARACTER: SPECIAL INQUIRY

CLASSIFICATION: TWX to Hqs OSI, dated 26 October 1951

SYNOPSIS:

The Commanding General, 27th Air Division, Norton AFB, San Bernardino, California, requested an investigation concerning the sighting of an unidentified object over Long Beach, California, on 23 September 1951. The object was sighted at 0810 hours at 50,000 feet. Four F-86's were dispatched to investigate and sighted object over Muroc, California. Attaining an altitude of 43,000 feet, the F-86's reported object to be in constant orbit in the vicinity of March AFB, California, at an altitude between 50,000 and 55,000 feet. Object appeared to be a swept wing fighter type aircraft. A check with aircraft manufacturers in the Southern California area revealed that none had scheduled test flights of experimental aircraft on the date object was seen. Weather balloons are released by three weather stations in Southern California, which rise to a height in excess of 50,000 feet. It was found that all three of these stations released a balloon on the morning of 23 September 1951. The operators of these stations said that there was a possibility that the object sighted was one of the balloons which had been released just prior to the time this object was reportedly seen.

DISTRIBUTION		ACTION COPY FORWARDED TO	FILE STAMP
CG, 27th Air Div (action copies)	2	Commanding General 27th Air Division (Defense) Norton Air Force Base San Bernardino, California	
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File	2		

APPROVED

KEEFE O'KEEFE
Colonel, USAF
District Commander

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AFHQ FORM 15 JAN 48 0-208 Replaces AFCSI Form 6, 28 Jul 48, [redacted]

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18D-24-129

DETAILS:

1. The investigation of this matter was predicated upon a letter from the Commanding General, Headquarters, 27th Air Division, Norton AFB, San Bernardino, California, dated 22 October 1951, requesting this District Office to make an investigation concerning the sighting of an unidentified object over Long Beach, California, on 23 September 1951.

2. At the time this matter was referred to this office, the 27th Air Division furnished an Intelligence Report which sets forth the following information.

"At 1610Z, 23 September 1951, an object was sighted and reported over Long Beach, California, at 50,000 feet. Four (4) F-86 were dispatched to investigate and sighted object over Muroc, California. Attaining an altitude of 43,000 feet, F-86 sighted object to be in a constant orbit in the vicinity of March Air Force Base, California, at an altitude between 50,000 feet and 55,000 feet. Object appeared to be a swept-wing, fighter-type aircraft.

"Santa Maria, San Diego and Long Beach are regularly scheduled to release weather balloons which can easily rise to 50,000 feet, may have a kite attached that can give off reflection, and can expand greatly if they are 350 gram balloons.

"The incloased report was received by Captain J. R. STEELE, Chief Controller, ADCC, from Major LEO MELZER, Operations Officer, 750th AC&W Squadron. The report was read back and verified by Major MELZER.

"Major MELZER checked Edwards AFB Flight Dispatcher and Control Tower Operator concerning aircraft from Edwards AFB in flight. No jet or conventional aircraft had taken off from Edwards AFB. The Operations Officer confirmed that no experimental aircraft to his knowledge were scheduled for flight. Edwards AFB Flight Dispatcher checked Nellis AFB, Inyokern, and George AFB Operations and reported that no flight had been airborne at the time that would approximate descriptions given.

"Major MANUSSIER, CO of the 750th AC&W Squadron, asked General BOYD, CO of Edwards AFB, whether he knew of any flight to which General BOYD replied in the negative. General BOYD suggested that North American Company at Los Angeles International Airport be checked. Major MELZER checked Bell Aircraft, N.A.C.A., Douglas, North American and Northrup, but only an MP at Northrup answered any of these calls and reported that there had been no activity all morning. Bell has been experimenting with X-1 and X-5; N.A.C.A. with the XF-92; Douglas with the D 558; and Northrup with the X-3."

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"Edwards AFB Weather Station reported that Santa Maria, San Diego and Long Beach are regularly scheduled to release weather balloons which can easily rise to 50,000 feet and can expand "like a house" if they are 350 gram balloons. Balloons released by Santa Maria usually drift over Long Beach and Riverside, the flight that was reported as sighted. A kite may be attached to the balloon as a "sounding set" and may give off reflection.

"Major MELZER also spoke to Captain HARVEY, one of the pilots who sighted the object (see inclosed statement), who stated the object appeared to be orbiting when he sighted it and not going "too fast." This was in the March AFB area."

"S T A T E M E N T

23 September 1951

"On 23 September 1951 at approximately 0810 PST a bogie was sighted about 50,000 feet over Long Beach. I, Captain James H. Harvey and my flight of four were dispatched by Kill Deer to investigate this bogie. When we sighted this bogie he appeared to be over Muroc. When we reached an altitude of 43,000 feet this object was in the vicinity of March Air Force Base.

"From 43,000 feet this bogie appeared to be between 50,000 and 55,000 feet and also appeared to be a swept-wing, fighter-type aircraft. He was also noted to be in a constant orbit.

"s/t
JAMES H. HARVEY
Captain USAF

"CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

/s/ Ethel F. Hoffman
ETHEL F. HOFFMAN
Major, USAF "

3. The Air Defense Command suggested the possibility that this object was an experimental aircraft which was being test flown for one of the aircraft manufacturing concerns located in this area.

4. From the information set forth above, it will be noted that this object was first sighted over Long Beach. The F-86's, after being dispatched to investigate, sighted the object over Muroc, California, which is some 100 miles due North of Long Beach. Captain HARVEY, the flight leader, said that when the F-86's attained an altitude of 43,000 feet, the object was sighted in the vicinity of March AFB. The March AFB is some

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125 miles South and East of Muroc. Therefore, after being first sighted, the object appeared to travel due North for some 100 miles and then South-east for approximately 125 miles.

5. Special Agent ARTHUR J. MAIKOSKI made inquiry at the following aircraft companies in an effort to determine if they were test flying any experimental aircraft on 23 September 1951.

Northrop Aircraft Company
Hawthorne, California

North American Aviation, Inc.
Inglewood, California

Douglas Aircraft Company, Inc.
El Segundo, California

Lockheed Aircraft Company
Burbank, California

Hughes Aircraft Company
Culver City, California

It was found that none of these companies was test flying experimental aircraft on the date this object was seen. The above companies are under contract to build aircraft for both the U. S. Air Forces and U. S. Navy.

6. Special Agent THOMAS J. McARDLE made inquiry at the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation, San Diego, California, and they advised that, although they were presently working on experimental aircraft, they did not have a flight scheduled for 23 September 1951.

7. Colonel C. E. JACKSON, Air Force Engineering Field Office, 5504 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, advised that he knew of no experimental aircraft which was being test flown on the date this object was seen. He stated that practically all USAF experimental aircraft are test flown at Edwards AFB, Muroc, California. In this respect, it will be noted that the 27th Air Division made inquiry at Edwards AFB and they reported that no experimental aircraft was scheduled for flight on 23 September 1951.

8. Special Agent MILFORD M. LEAKE interviewed Major KENNETH T. BROOKS, Detachment Commander, Weather Division, Long Beach AFB, Long Beach, California. He claimed that a weather balloon is released by his station approximately every six hours. He said that his records show that one was released between the hours of 0645 and 0745 on the morning of 23 September 1951 and that due to mechanical difficulties, contact with the balloon was lost at 42,900 feet. The rate of ascent of this balloon was 1000 feet per minute and was traveling in a general North Easterly and

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later Westerly direction.

9. Lt. OLIVER A. WAGGONER, Forecaster at the Long Beach Weather Station, advised that, in his opinion, the balloon could not have been more than eight miles from point of release at Long Beach at the time his office lost contact with it.

10. Major BROOKS said that this balloon at 43,000 feet would be about 20 feet in diameter and the size and shape would be determined by the wind currents and the wind speed. Twenty feet below the balloon on a cord is attached a red paper parachute which is connected to a radio transmitter encased in a small white glossy cardboard box approximately 1' x 8".

11. Special Agent HENRY O. CHAPPELL interviewed Mr. P. H. NELSON, General Services Meteorologist, Hancock Field, Santa Maria, California, and he advised that his station released two weather balloons on 23 September 1951. One was released at 0300Z hours (1900 hours Pacific Standard Time, 22 September 1951), and one was released at 1505Z hours (0705 Pacific Standard Time, 23 September 1951). The one which was released on 22 September 1951 attained an altitude of 78,000 feet and was contacted for 68 minutes by radio. The one which was released on 23 September 1951 remained in the air 74 minutes and attained an altitude of 100,000 feet. He said that the course of the balloons would depend upon the wind velocity and that the average winds from Santa Maria are traveling in a Southeasterly direction. He stated that it was doubtful that one of the balloons which was released at Santa Maria, which is some 175 miles North and West of Long Beach, could have traveled from Santa Maria South to Long Beach then North to Santa Maria, and then South and East to March AFB. A description of the balloon at an altitude of some 50,000 feet was the same as that furnished by Major BROOKS.

12. Special Agent THOMAS McARDLE was advised by Lt. Commander D. C. WEST, Weather Station Officer, Naval Air Station, San Diego, California, that his station released a balloon at approximately 0700 hours PST on 23 September 1951. He claimed that the balloon attained an altitude of some 60,000 feet before it burst. San Diego is approximately 150 miles South of Long Beach.

13. All of the above weather officers stated that there was a possibility that the object sighted was one of the balloons which had been released, however each stated that it was doubtful because of the course which the sighted object reportedly traveled.

14. This matter was coordinated with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Los Angeles, The Office of Naval Intelligence in Los Angeles, and San Diego, and the Counter Intelligence Corps, Fort MacArthur, California. None of these agencies had received any information relative to this matter.

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INSPECTOR GEN'S OFFICE

IN REPLY REFER TO:
APOIS-ATIAA-2c

PUBLIC INF. OFFICE

SUBJECT: [redacted] High Flying Unidentified Object

COMPTROLLER

TO: Commanding General
27th Air Division (Def)
Attention: Director of Intelligence
Norton Air Force Base
San Bernardino, California

PERSONNEL & ADM.

1. Reference is made to AF Form 112, #1, dated 5 Oct 1951, subject: "High Flying Unidentified Object", in which the incident of an unidentified object sighted over March Air Force Base on 23 Sept 1951 is reported.

RESEARCH & DEV.

2. The possibility of this object being a weather balloon released from San Diego, Long Beach, or Santa Maria or that it was an experimental aircraft has been investigated. It is highly doubtful if the object was a balloon, and it was not an experimental aircraft. Consequently, further investigation of the incident is warranted.

INTELLIGENCE

3. It is requested that the following information be obtained as soon as possible and forwarded to Chief, Air Technical Intelligence Center, Attn: ATIAA-2c, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio.

SUPPLY AND MAINT.

a. From what location was the original sighting of the object made? The report states that it was sighted over Long Beach. How was it located, visually or by radar?

b. From what base did the F-86's take off? What was the time of take-off?

PROD. & IND. MOB. PLNG.

c. The report states that the object was first sighted by the F-86's over Muroc. What was the time and location of the F-86's at the time of this sighting? How did they determine the object was over Muroc?

d. The report states that when the F-86's reached an altitude of 43,000 ft. the object was over March Air Force Base. Did the F-86's have the object in sight during its run from Muroc to March Air Force

OTHER

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COMPTROLLER

PERSONNEL & ADM.

RESEARCH & DEV.*

INTELLIGENCE

SUPPLY AND MAINT.

PROC. & IND. MOB. PLNG.*

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ATIC, AFOIN-ATIAA-2c, Subject: [redacted] High Flying Unidentified Object

Base or did they lose it and sight it again over March Air Force Base? What was the time when the object was sighted over March AFB?

e. Were any types of balloons launched from either Norton AFB on March AFB several hours prior to the time of the sighting of the object over March AFB?

4. In addition to the above specific points, it is requested that the F-86 pilots be reinterrogated and a detailed statement of their attempted interception be submitted. It would be very helpful to include with these a Sectional Chart with the flight path of the F-86's and times of significant occurrences marked.

5. It is realized that due to the time that has elapsed since the incident it may be difficult to get data but it is requested that every effort be made to obtain information that is as accurate as possible.

6. The Air Technical Intelligence Center wishes to express its appreciation for the cooperation received by your Command and the Office of Special Investigations in regard to this incident.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

S. H. KIRKLAND, JR.
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Technical Analysis Division

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HEADQUARTERS 27th AIR DIVISION (DEFENSE)
NORTON AIR FORCE BASE
SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA

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In Reply Refer To:
2PADI1-360.1

SUBJECT: (Restricted) High Flying Unidentified Object

TO: Commanding General
Air Technical Intelligence Center
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio

1. Reference is made to your letter AFCIN-4ITAA-2, dated 26 November 1951. In compliance with your request, the following information is submitted in answer to the questions contained in paragraph (3) of your letter.

a. Original sighting of object was made visually at 0715 PST from position over Santa Monica Bay as indicated on attached map overlay.

b. Element making original sighting took off from George Air Force Base at 0700 PST.

c. Reports that object was directly over Norton and March Air Force Base were apparently in error, resulting from the difficulty of making a land fix at high altitude. (Based on later interrogation of pilots by DI of First Fighter-Interceptor Wing, when reports indicated both sightings at the same time.)

d. Paragraph 1 c above applies.

e. Norton Air Force Base and March Air Force Base were queried as to the launching of any type balloon, or any other object that might have had the appearance of the object in question, from those bases. Norton Air Force Base replied in the negative; March Air Force Base has not replied to date, and their reply will be forwarded to your headquarters immediately upon receipt. However, the orbit of the object, as compared with the prevailing winds indicated, seems to preclude the possibility of the object being a free balloon.

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27ADBI-360.1, Subject: [redacted] High Flying Unidentified Object

2. Attached are statements of reinterrogation of three pilots still available for questioning, and Sectional Chart indicating significant occurrences, as submitted by the 56th Fighter-Interceptor Wing. (A correction of Captain Reichman's statement was later made verbally to the DI of the Wing: The nature of the scramble was an Air Defense mission, not to intercept an unidentified object as originally stated.)

3. Also attached is a statement by the Commanding Officer of the 669th AC&W Squadron, which indicates that the object was never picked up by radar.

4. It is believed that this data presents as accurate a report as can be obtained. However, if further investigation is desired, this headquarters will make every effort to obtain additional information.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

E. M. Washington

3 Incls.
1. Cy 27 ADIV ltr 360.1 dtd 7 Dec 51, w/1st Ind fr CO, 669th AC&W Sq dtd 13 Dec 51.
2. Cy ATIC ltr AFOIN-ATIAA-2e dtd 28 Nov 51
3. Rpt & Interrogation, High Flying Uniden Object, quad.

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HEADQUARTERS 27th AIR DIVISION (DEFENSE)

NORTON AIR FORCE BASE

SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA

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In Reply Refer To:
27[illegible]-360.1

DEC 7

SUBJECT: (Restricted) High Flying Unidentified Object

TO: Commanding Officer
669th [illegible] Squadron
Fort MacArthur
San Pedro, California

1. This headquarters has received a request for further investigation of the unidentified object sighted on 23 September 1951, and reported upon by 2nd Lt. Lorimer [illegible] Hay-Chapman of your command.

2. It is requested that the following information be forwarded as soon as possible:

a. Original sighting: how received, time and position.

b. Time and position of later sightings, indicating whether visual or by radar.

c. Detailed report of action taken, including scramble order.

d. If feasible, a Sectional Chart showing flight paths and times of significant occurrences.

3. A detailed report of the interceptor action is also being requested through the 1st Fighter-Interceptor Wing. By correlating the two reports, it is hoped a complete history of the incident may be obtained.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL HUTCHINSON:

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E. F. WASHINGTON
2ND LT USAF
Asst Air Adj Gen

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Hq 27th AD (D&F) 360.1 Subject: High Flying Unidentified Object

669th AD Sqdn 360.1 (7 Dec 51) 1st Ind 13 Dec 51

669th [illegible], Fort MacArthur, California.

TO: Commanding General, 27th Air Division (ADC), Norton Air Force Base, San Bernardino, California

1. In reference to Par. 2a basic letter the following is submitted.

a. Original sighting: received by WOF from Swanee Brown leader at 0755 PST. The object was over San Pedro, California.

b. Time and position of later sightings: Swanee Brown leader, did not see the object near March Air Force Base, California. All sightings were visual, the object was not picked up by radar.

c. Swanee Brown flight was on an Air Defense mission when the object was sighted. Swanee Brown was unable to intercept the object because of its high altitude and speed. The GCC Controller was notified of the [illegible] and our attempt to intercept the craft.

d. It is not possible for this Headquarters to show the flight path of the object. It was under surveillance by the pilot for approximately fifteen (15) minutes. The flight path was erratic but in an easterly direction.

JAMES H. DAVIS
Major USAF
Commanding Officer

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Incl #1

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669-874

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STATEMENT

[redacted]

11 December 1951

1. Captain Harold R. Guthrie States: On the 23rd of September I was piloting an F-86E A/C in a flight of four. I took off from George Air Force Base at 0800, 23 September, 1951 for a scramble interception of an unidentified Bogie over the Los Angeles area. At approximately 0810 I sighted an unidentified object over San Antonio PEAK California, (117degrees 40' -34 degrees, 20'N). It appeared to be at 40,000 feet altitude, moving South. This object appeared to be travelling at a slow speed. It was oval shaped with a silverish color, like aluminum. It had a level flight but orbitting right. The flight attempted to intercept; however, at 43,000 feet altitude we broke off because of low fuel. Object sighted was still above us.

2. Q. What action did you take with AC&W when you observed fuel low and had to break interception ?

A. Kill Deer was contacted and informed of our low fuel level. Our flight was released for Pancake.

Q. Did Kill Deer acknowledge your message ?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you hear any further alerts being directed by Kill Deer ?

A. No.

Q. What time was this ?

A. Approximately 0925.

Q. Did you see any other military A/C in the vicinity ?

A. None.

Q. Were you in Radio Communication with any other military A/C in the vicinity ?

A. No.

Q. Who else, in your particular flight, observed this object ?

A. Captain Harvey, Major Buchanan(transferred to Korea), and Captain Coberly(also now in Korea).

Q. What was the nature of your discussion airborn, when the object was sighted ?

[redacted]

A. We discussed its altitude, speed, and direction of flight.

A (GUTHRIE)

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Statement Cont'd. (Guthrie)

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A. Cont'd/ Kildare asked us to identify, and we found that impossible to do.

Q. Why couldn't you?

A. Object was too high and we were suffering from a fuel shortage.

Q. Direction? Did this object maintain a Southerly direction during your attempt to intercept it?

A. It had maintained Orbit to Right

Q. Your position at 0925 was where and what altitude?

A. In the vicinity of [redacted], Alt: 43,000ft.

Q. Do you know if there were any other Interceptors air borne on or about the L.A. area, when you were on intercept crossing?

A. Yes. Two others from George A.F.B.

Q. Separate flights?

A. Yes, a separate flight.

Q. Do you know if they were aware of the proximity of this object?

A. No. However, they had sighted it at Long Beach and they had sighted it before us.

Q. Can you give me the sequences of Vectors if any given you by AC/ or any other such agencies?

A. There were no Vectors given by Kildare because object was not reflected in the radar scope.

Q. Do you know if your flight was observed Kildare scope?

A. I don't know. But I presume they did.

Q. Have you ever requested a Fix from them?

A. Yes, and they have given us a position Fix.

Q. What do you think your object sighted could have been, bearing and its behaviour?

A. It is my opinion it was a free weather balloon, influenced by upper air currents.

[redacted]

HAROLD E. GUTHRIE
Captain USAF
Intelligence Officer

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HEADQUARTERS
1ST FIGHTER-INTERCEPTOR WING
NORTON AIR FORCE BASE, CALIF.

[redacted]

SUBJECT: WEATHER REPORT.

Winds Aloft -- 23 Sept 51 UNCL

The following information was extracted from record files maintained by Base Weather Station, Norton AF Base, San Bernardino, California. Major Harmon USAF, Weather Squadron Commanding Officer.

WINDS ALOFT. 23 Sept 51- 1500Z= 0700 hrs Pacific Time

200 M.B. = 40,200 ft. Los Angeles Area

Long Beach— Wind from due West 270 degrees at 20 knots.

Phoenix— " " " " 270 " " 35 " .

Las Vegas— " " " " 280 " " 20 " .

Indicating these winds were constant from West to East

(Note) a. This is at variance with Guthrie who reported object orbitting to right.(item free balloon).
b. Reichman reported "object" orbitting left would be more correct.(item free balloon)
c. Harvey's report--object over Mt. A.F.B. could not, or at least eliminates (item free balloon)

WINDS ALOFT--12 hours later. ie. 0300Z 24th or 1900 Pac Time 23 Sept 51.
Winds change to N.W. with no appreciable increase in velocity, except Tucson..winds up to 45 knots.

TEMPERATURES--aloft were MINUS 55 degrees generally in both cases.

CHAS. F. CASEY
Major USAF
Intelligence Officer
1st. Ftr-Intcp. Wing.

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HEADQUARTERS
94TH FIGHTER-INTERCEPTOR SQUADRON UNCLASSIFIED
George Air Force Base, California

11 December 1951

SUBJECT: Investigation of High Flying Unidentified Object.

TO : Commanding General
1st Fighter-Interceptor Wing
Norton Air Force Base,
San Bernardino, California

1. Reference letter 77 [illegible]-368.1. The attached reports are submitted herewith.

a. Statement of pilots making observation

b. Map

c. Overlays

d. Weather Rept. Winds Aloft., extract Records 23 Sept 51 C.F.C.

2. Pilots were interrogated by Major Charles F. [illegible] Intelligence Officer of the 1st Fighter-Interceptor Wing.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

Harold E. Guthrie
HAROLD E. GUTHRIE
Captain USAF
Intelligence Officer

Incls:
A. Statements by:

Capt. James H. Harvey
Capt. Harold E. Guthrie
Capt. Omer J. Reichman

B. Map

C. Overlays

D. Weather Rept. Winds Aloft. Extract records 23 Sept 51 C.F.C.

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[redacted] STATEMENT

11 December 1951

1. On 23 September 1951 at approximately 0810 a bogie was sighted about 50,000 feet over Long Beach. I, Captain James E. Harvey and my flight of four were dispatched by Hill Beer to investigate this bogie. When we climbed this bogie he appeared to be over Norco. When we reached an altitude of 43,000 feet this object was in the vicinity of Beach and Ball Road.

From 43,000 feet this bogie appeared to be between 50,000 and 55,000 feet and also appeared to be a supersonic, fighter-type aircraft. He was also noted to be in a constant orbit.

Q. When you were vectored by the Long Beach GCA, were you able to fix your position?

A. Yes, at approximately 117° 30 — 30 20 N.

Q. Did you see this object?

A. Yes.

Q. What position was it, in relation to you?

A. 12 and very high.

Q. What was your heading at that time?

A. 340 Compass Heading.

Q. Did you alert the rest of your flight?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. By what method?

A. Radio.

Q. Were you on the same comm. channel as Hill Beer?

A. Yes.

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A (HARVEY)

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Q. Did your flight Roger your information?

A. Yes they did.

Q. Were you sure Bill Deer read you also?

A. Right, because Bill Deer knew of object.

Q. Did you question Bill Deer if they could read object on the scope?

A. I did not, but Captain Atchison did.

Q. Were you ever lower at any time?

A. Negative.

Q. Did you attempt to intercept?

A. Yes I did with my three companions.

Q. What happened. Were you able to intercept?

A. No—because we had external tanks, and 43,000 feet was the highest we could get. Plus fuel shortages. If we had dropped our tanks, I believe we could have attained higher altitude.

Q. Did you ask permission to drop tanks?

A. No.

Q. Did Control instruct you to do so?

A. No.

Q. Did you lose sight of object at any time?

A. No.

Q. How long did you remain in area with object?

A. I don't know exactly, but at least 10 to 15 minutes. Not being able to climb higher, we broke off the intercept, because of the fuel shortage, and returned to Base.

Q. Did Bill Deer release you, or what comm did you have with Control?

A. Yes, when informed of our position.

Q. Did Bill Deer inform you a new interception was in progress?

A. No.

[redacted]

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Statement Cont'd. (Hawley)

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[redacted]

Q. Were you at any time over or near March Base?

A. Yes, within 10 miles, altitude 43,000ft.

Q. Did you see this object then?

A. Yes, it appeared, from angle we were at, to be directly over March AF. Base.

Q. Any noticeable maneuvers?

A. No, just an orbit---varied between left and right.

Q. Would you say it was a controlled orbit?

A. Yes, it appeared so; the turn was held in. ft., controlled.

Q. Did you hear March Tower talk at any time?

A. No. I was on a different frequency.

Q. Can you describe the object?

A. It appeared to be a swept back wing, bright silver color. In size prospection, it could fit within the radii of a gun sight.

Q. What altitude do you estimate object was at?

A. 50-55,000 feet.

Q. Your altitude at this time was 43,000 feet.

A. Yes, it was.

Q. That would indicate approximately 12,000 feet difference between you and the object?

A. Yes.

Q. What was the weather and visibility?

A. Clear and unlimited.

Q. In your own opinion Captain, what do you deduce it(the object) could have been?

A. It could have been a free ballon.

Q. Did you discuss this object with your co-pilots.

A. Yes. We were not quite definite, but it was an unidentified object.

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Statement Cont'd. (Harvey) UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

[illegible] What time did you land?

A. At about 0845.

James D. Harvey
[illegible] D. [illegible]
Captain [illegible]

[redacted]

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STATEMENT

[redacted] [redacted] 11 December 1951

1. Captain Omer J. Reichman states: On the morning of ~~23~~ 23 September, 1951, I was one of an element of two that scrambled at approximately 0000 hours. The nature of this scramble was to intercept an unknown flight object. We were Vectored over Long Beach bay, arriving there at 0715 at approximately 30,000 feet. I was port orbit over position (11° 40' — 39° 50' N). It took me a Vector to Long Beach range at approximately 80° heading. At a period of seconds from Long Beach shore, I saw this object at 12 o/d high above me. It appeared to be in a left orbit of an undetermined speed, at above 50,000 feet altitude. It continued on a left orbit and passed directly over me, port to starboard. It appeared to have swept back wing of 45° and a very bright silver coloring—like sun reflecting on water. The prospection of the object seemed very far away.

2. Did the pilot of your element also see this object?

A. Yes. (Name: Jack G. Rico't, ~~Captain~~ Lt) Now TDY MAXWELL FLD.

Q. Did you attract his attention to the object?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Did you [redacted] yourself he saw and recognized object pointed [redacted]

A. Yes, I did.

Q. How did you accomplish this?

A. Over the radio, V.H.F.

Q. Is that on the same channel as Kill Deer?

A. Yes. I called this information into them. They Bogered but they did not have object on the radar scope.

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A (REICHMAN) [redacted]

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Statement Cont'd. (Reid man) UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

Q. Could they, or was Kill Deer tracking you?

A. Yes. [redacted]

Q. You are quite certain Kill Deer Rogered you, but it could not Roger object?

A. Right. At the time I called in my position.

Q. What was your position at the time?

A. 20 seconds from Long Beach, heading 80 degrees. [illegible]

Q. Did you notice any manuvers from this object?

A. No. It continued in a left orbit.

Q. Were you in vicinity of Furoc at any time?

A. Crossed within 20 miles going out and returning. I did not see object there.

Q. Did you try to intercept it?

A. No. The shortage of fuel and altitude of and object prevented me from doing so.

Q. Are you positive Kill Deer was aware of object, and also of your fuel shortage?

A. Yes, they were, because they had Vectored the next flight into the vicinity and released us.

Q. In your own opinion, what do you think the object could have been?

A. I am of the opinion it was an A/C of some sort, being in a state of burn.

Q. Have you discussed this object with others who also saw it, and if so, how.

A. Yes, because of curiosity and attempting to resolve it. I also reported it on landing. Capt Harvey made a written report.

Q. Did you lose sight of the object.

A. No. I left because of fuel shortage, and object was still in a port orbit, altitude approx. 50,000 ft.

[redacted]

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Statement Cont'd. (Reichman) [redacted]

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Q. What time approximately did you break off?

A. About 0810 to 0815.- Heading directly to Base at a 33° heading.

J. REICHMAN
Captain USAF

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35°

117°

GAFB

118-30

TRACK OF OBJECT

GUTHRIE OBIO - 23 SEPT. 51 FOLLOWED OBJECT ORBITING BENEATH BOGIE

GUTHRIE ORBIT TRACK CLIMBING

WINDS ALOFT 40,200 FT. TEMP. -55°

34°

10 MI

MARCH FIELD

43000

117°

REICHMAN 0715 I 32000

80° HEADING SIGHTED 12 °/c HIGH

MAP EL PASO-LOS ANGELES FC 219.

43000 FT HARVEY OBSERVES OBJECT SEEMINGLY OVER MARCH AFB

340°

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[redacted]

HARVEY OBIO 23 SEPT. 51