Many Mystified By Flying Object

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An unidentified object — or objects—spotted Monday in the sky had thousands of persons and numerous agencies in at least four states baffled.

The general consensus was that the object seen over much of Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Maryland was a large weather balloon. But if it was, no one was able to find out where it came from.

The Federal Aviation Agency, which generally is informed on such matters, said it had no reports of any weather balloons being launched Monday except one in Tyler, Tex. A spokesman said however, that the Tyler balloon was launched only a short time before the first unidentified object report was was made in Ohio Monday morning.

Not Weather Balloon

Late Monday night, the FAA at Columbus said to disregard its earlier information that the object was a weather balloon. It would not comment further.

A spokesman at Lockbourne Air Force Base, near Columbus, said the object spotted in the Mideastern states was a satellite. He too declined further comment.

A report that the object "definitely" was the planet Venus came from Friend Kierstead, orbit analyist for the Akron-Canton Satellite Tracking Group, which traces satellites for the government. Kierstead said the planet had become visible after moving within close range of the sun.

Jet Plane Sent Up

There was speculation by the FAA and research officials at Ohio State University, however, that the object spotted in Akron may not have been the same one seen in other areas.

Lockbourne sent up a jet plane to get a closer look at the object, reported by several sources to have been hoving at about 60,000 to 80,000 feet. The pilot reported that he was no closer to the object at 31,000 feet—the highest he went—then when he was on the ground.

Officials at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, near Dayton—home of the Air Force's UFO Center—said they did not know for sure what the object was or where it was from.

Descriptions Vary

The chief meteriologist at the Columbus Weather Bureau said it appeared as "an inverted flow-through teabag." Descriptions by others who watched the object through telescopes ranged from "tier - shaped," "cigar-shaped," "Bell - shaped" to "round." Reports on the color varied widely from white, to silver-blue to orange.

Thousands of bewildered persons who saw it telephoned news media, weather bureaus, police offices — jamming switchboards.

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