DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

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(Classification and Control Markings)

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COUNTRY: LAOS/THAILAND

SUBJECT: (U) Unidentified Flying Objects

ISC NUMBER:

DATE OF INFORMATION: Nov-Dec 68

PLACE AND DATE OF ACQ: Vientiane, LAOS 19 December 1968

EVALUATION: SOURCE A INFORMATION 2

SOURCE: 7/13AF DI

8. REPORT NUMBER: 1 856 0138 68

9. DATE OF REPORT: 26 December 1968

10. NO. OF PAGES: 3

11. REFERENCES: DIRM 1A3e, 1Q8, 2C2
SICR U-UPF 21321

12. ORIGINATOR: OUSAIRA, Vientiane, LAOS

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RECD CO-3 15 JAN 1969

5. SUMMARY:

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1. [redacted] Quote: Subject: Unidentified Flying Objects (U). Part I. A. On 280156Z November 1968, Nakhon Phanom (NKP), RTAFB GCA reported two low/slow moving objects approximately 13NM south of NKP. Contact was lost when objects were 9NM west of base. NKP Command Post was informed they "definitely were not ghosts." Sightings were confirmed by Invert radar. At approximately 0215L, Knife 27, night Recce chopper, was asked to investigate slow movers 4NM northeast of base. As Knife 27 was not in immediate area 5-10 minute delay ensued. Knife 27 reported no sightings. Knife27 also investigated similar phenomena 10-13NM south of NKP and another return two and one-half NM northwest of base. No visual sightings were reported. Final return at 12NM south of NKP was also investigated with Invert direction Knife 27 to position directly overhead of unidentified return. Searchlight was employed but revealed nothing. No objects,

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16. DISTRIBUTION BY ORIGINATOR:
CINCPACAF
DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI

17. DOWNGRADING DATA:

[redacted]

18. ATTACHMENT DATA:

[redacted]

(Classification and Control Markings)

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DD FORM 1 SEP 62 1396

REPLACES DA FORM 1048, 1 AUG 60, OPNAV FORM 3820 (Rev 10-61), AF FORM 112, JUL 61, WHICH MAY BE

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ircraft lights or other sightings were seen. Crew of Knife 27 suspected bjects escaped by descending below radar capability. B. On 020326L Dec, GCA nd MTI radar reported Bogie 8NM southwest of NKP moving at same speed as nife 28, night Recce chopper, at 120 knots. Knife 28 dispatched to area, but CA lost Bogie when Knife 28 approached to within 2-3NM. GCA later lost Knife 8 at same spot when Knife descended below 1100 feet altitude. Knife 28 pproached target without lights, then employed searchlight, but observed othing. Moon reportedly had gone down and conditions were too dark to see well s Knife 28 returned to base, GCA picked up Bogie again 1NM southeast of where t had disappeared, heading southeast. GCA lost it after 4-5NM, still heading outheast in vicinity of VD 5891. Part II. On 6 December, 606 SOS advisor o Thai Border Patrol Police (BPP), Region IV, reported that BPP had begun peration on 28 November between NKP and Sakhon Nakhon towns in same proximity s above sighting northwest of NKP. Four to six BPP and Royal Thai Army (RTA) elicopters were involved in this operation. In addition, BPP Region IV posses ne white heuy helicopter, which is used to monitor BPP operations. Historically, hai pilots have been reluctant to fly at night, but the moon in recent days as made night flying almost as easy as daytime operations, and Thai pilots ave been known to accomplish night flights in areas where terrain is well-known o them. As in the past, chopper operations by RTA and BPP are mostly local in ature and no flight plans are filed for resupply, placement of units, or moni-oring activities unless proper pressure is brought to bear. Many BPP/RTA perations against communist terrorist are autonomous in nature, and thus entralized control is weak. As result, air defense surveillance system is often not informed of flights until later--if at all. BPP advisor is attempting o secure time so flights in support of above operation, including dates, and anding areas. Part III. Historically, November and early December have roduced large numbers of radar returns, particularly on GCA scopes, from natural or cultural phenomena in THAILAND. These include temperature inversions, balloons from fairs and religious celebrations, migratory birds, and kites. In November 1967, HQ 7/13AF DI and DO ran experiment at Udorn when GCA scopes were reporting more than 15 low/slow returns in vicinity of Udorn RTAFB. Group observers phsically sighted scores of balloons, three flocks of migratory birds, several kites, plus at least four local choppers in a span of ten minutes. At same time these sightings, even of legitimate friendly flights, failed to correlate with Brigham (Udorn RTAFB-based GCI radar) and GCA returns. On numberous occassions it was established that phenomena, which U.S. personnel in GCI site would not report as authentic traffic, was reported into AOC and air defense system by Thai operators. U.S. personnel attributed these to propagation anomalies. Further investigation attributed a number of sporadic returns to over-the-horizon signals distorted by weather conditions. [redacted] To date, there is no confirmed evidence that hostile aircraft or helicopters have penetrated Thai air space in support of insurgent or communist activities. Though it is possible that illicit ffriendly flights for purposes of private gain, pleasure, smuggling are being conducted, there is no evidence to substantiate this possibility at present time. It is suspected that Lao and Thai Air Force officers can and do employ RLAF and RTAF aircraft in private ventures or travel without filing proper flight plans for informing components of the air defense surveillance system. Part IV. Nature of recent reported sightings follows same pattern as "unknown returns" reported last year by Ubon and Udorn. In analysis of possible hostile penetration of THAILAND and in support of insurgent forces, preliminary study was conducted of technical aspects of such flights. It was found that to land in remote jungle clearings at night to airlift personnel or provide resupply was highly danger-ous and improbable, especially in absence of sophisticated navigation and landing aids, and was beyond technical capability of U.S. air crews. Further, study of Air Order of Battle of nearby communist or neutral countries indicates that available helicopter strength is such that hostile or unfriendly forces do not possess adequate numbers of low/slow aircraft to undertake such missions with accompanying risk factor, when they are unable to support their own field

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orces, officials, or units by air. It is not likely, therefore, that they ould riks valuable aircraft and crews to support Thai insurgent, when resupply, nfiltration, and movement by other means is cheaper, safer, and less obvious. t is interesting to note that such unknown returns have been reported since 965 and yet no unidentified aircraft has ever crashed or been physically bserved so it could be identified. Friendly suppression forces have never hot down or hit these unknown intruders, whereas U.S. helicopters and aircraft n VIETNAM and LAOS have suffered many hits and losses, and as indicated in art I, friendly aircraft in area could not observe, even with aid of lights, ny other aircraft. In past, when Royal Thai Government offered 200,000 Baht eward for shooting down of unknown aircraft and helicopters, only aircraft ever it were BPP or RTA choppors and USAF aircraft on legitimate missions. As esult, Thai Government has since withdrawn reward offer since no hostile ircraft or "unknowns" were ever downed. It is also interesting to note that in 967 unidentified aircraft activity, purportedly in support of communist nsurgents, seemed to preoccupy Thai officials until U.S. resources provided awk anti-aircraft missiles. Then in speech of acceptance and thanks, General HRAPHAT, Deputy Prime Minister, said helicopter threat from outside THAILAND ad ended or come under control. Part V. This headquarters is highly nterested in such sightings and reports, and will continue to monitor such ctivity for signs of hostile intent. However, there is no evidence at present ime to indicate rash of recent "Bogies" reported near NKP RTAFB involves ostile or unfriendly activity. Unquote.

. [redacted] The following is quoted from a COMUSMACTHAI message dated 17 December 968. The message was to CINCPAC with information to 7/13AF and referenced he message quoted above. Quote. "This headquarters considers the message and xcellent assessment of unidentified helicopter reports in THAILAND. This valuation parrallels our own assessements." Unquote.

. [redacted] The most recent reported sightings occurred in South LAOS. On the nights f 14, 16 and 18 December 1968, an unidentified high wing single engine air- raft was observed over Ban Thateng (1526N-10622E), LAOS. On two occasions it as reported circling at low altitude (400 feet). On the third occasion, it as observed at 6000 feet heading west. Estimated speed 100 knots. It has not een determined if the aircraft was an unreported friendly or enemy.

OMMENTS: [redacted] AIRA concurs with the comments and assessments made and with he conclusion which are drawn. It seems highly unlikely the enemy would ake the risks involved to infiltrate personnel or supplies when, as is pointed ut, other methods are cheaper, safer and less obvious. Some of the "unknowns" ave been reported far enough into THAILAND that large helicopters would have o be used or refuelings made by small helicopters. In order to reach some f these locations, long flights would have to be made over friendly territory, oth in LAOS and THAILAND. Again this seems rather unlikely and has not been onfirmed by any sightings. There are no known enemy held staging areas or ases in LAOS from which such flights could operate within reasonable range, afety and security and yet remain such a well kept secret for such a long eriod of time. If any of these flights are, in fact, occuring it appears uch more reasonable that they might be unreported friendly activities.