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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
AIRWAYS AND AIR COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE, ATC
DETACHMENT 733-5 AF BASE UNIT (103D AACS SQ)
Godman Field, Fort Knox, Ky

9 January 1948

STATEMENT OF LT PAUL I ORNER

Following is an account of the sighting of unknown objects from the Control Tower on 7 January 1948 at Godman Field.

On the above date at approximately 1400 CST a report came in to the Control Tower through M Sgt Cook of a report of an unidentified object flying at terrific speed in the vicinity of Maysville. This call was cancelled minutes later by the Military Police at Fort Knox who had instructions from the Kentucky State Police.

Very soon thereafter several reports of the same nature came from Flight Service saying this object was over Irvington and Owensboro, Kentucky. At the same time an object was reported by T Sgt Blackwell, Chief Control Tower operator on duty. I was in the office of the Commanding Officer checking the call from the Fort Knox Military Police at this time. When the call was cancelled I was returning to the Control Tower to see the object sighted by them. I immediately went to the Control Tower and saw a small white object in the southwest sky. This object appeared stationary. I was unable to tell if it was an object radiating its own light or giving off reflected light. Through binoculars it partially appeared as a parachute does with bright sun shining on the top of the silk but there also seemed to be some red light around the lower of it.

The Commanding Officer, Operations Officer, S-2 and Executive Officer were called immediately. Several minutes after the object was sighted a flight of four (4) P-51's came over the field from the south. I instructed T Sgt Blackwell to call flight leader and ask if they had seen any evidence of this object. The flight leader answered negative and I suggested to the Operations Officer that we ask them if they had enough gas to go look for this object. The Tower operator was instructed to call the flight leader and he answered "yes" to this question. One (1) P-51 had permission from the flight leader to break formation and continue where he landed several minutes later on their original flight plan. The flight leader and two (2) other planes flew a course of 210° and in about five (5) minutes sighted the object. At first the flight leader reported it high and about one-half his speed at "12 o'clock". Shortly thereafter the flight leader reported it at about his speed and later said he was closing in to take a good look. This was the last message from NG869, the flight leader. NG800 shortly thereafter reported NG869 disappeared. From pilots reports in the formation NG869 was high and ahead of the wing man at about 1515 CST to 1530 CST when he disappeared. NG800 said he was breaking off with other wing man to return to Standiford Field due to lack of gas. This was [illegible] 1523 CST to 1530 CST. From messages transmitted by the formation it is estimated the flight leader was at 18 to 20 thousand feet and the wing man at approximately 15 thousand feet wide formation when the flight leader NG869 disappeared. NG800 and other wing man returned to Standiford Field.

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STATEMENT OF LT PAUL F. ORNER (cont'd)

NG800 gassed up and got more oxygen and flew a second mission on the same heading of 210° to a position of about 100 miles south of Godman Field to an altitude of 33 thousand feet and did not sight the object. At about 1845 CST when NG800 reported not seeing the object I left the Control Tower.

At about 1735 CST I returned to the Control Tower and a bright light different than a star at a position of about 240° azimuth and 8° elevation from the Control Tower. This was a round object. It seemed to have a dark spot in the center and the object moved north and disappeared from the horizon at a point 250° from the Tower. The unusual fact about this object was the fact that it remained visible and glowed through the haze near the Earth when no other stars were visible and did not disappear until it went below the level of the Earth in a manner similar to the sun or moon setting. This object was viewed and tracked with the Weather Station theodolite from the hangar roof.

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DOD DIR 5200.10

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CHECK-LIST - UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

Incident # 33 a

1. Date 7 Jan 48
2. Time Shortly after 1400 CST
3. Location Godman Fld., Ft Knox, Ky.
4. Name of observer Lt Paul I. Ormer
5. Occupation of observer Detachment Commander
6. Address of observer Godman Fld., Ft Knox, Ky.
7. Place of observation Control Tower
8. Number of objects 1 See Note attached.
9. Distance of object from observer N/S
10. Time in sight N/S
11. Altitude N/S
12. Speed half speed of P-51
13. Direction of flight N/S
14. Tactics Appeared stationary
15. Sound N/S
16. Size N/S
17. Color white
18. Shape like parachute - round
19. Odor detected N/S
20. Apparent construction N/S
21. Exhaust trails Seemed to be some red light around the lower part of it.
22. Weather conditions High - scattered but clear
23. Effect on clouds None
24. Sketches or photographs None
25. Manner of disappearance N/S
26. Remarks: (over)

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Unknown object first reported by Military Police at Ft Knox, approx 1400 CST, vicinity of Hagerville. Later over Irvington & Owensboro, Ky. Sighted, Godman, by Blackwell, Chf Control Tower. Lt Orner then left office of CO, proceeding to Control Tower where he sighted a small white object in the southwest sky. It appeared stationary. Could not determine of object radiated or reflected light. Thru binocs it appeared partially as parachute with bright sun reflecting from top of the silk, however, there seemed to be some red light around the lower part of it. Three P-51s alerted to pursue object. Took a course of around 210°. Approx 5' later object sighted. 2Lt 861 (flight leader) reported it "high and traveling about 1/2 his speed at '12 o'clock'" Later he stated he was "closing in to take a good look" This was his last message. 2Lt 800 then reported 2Lt 869 had disappeared. At the time of his disappearance he was reported high and ahead of wing man at approx 18,000 to 20,000 ft and wing man at approx 15,000 ft. Wing man (2Lt 800) returned for fuel and resumed pursuit going to altitude of 33,000 ft but did not sight object. At about 1645 Lt Orner left tower.

Later, Lt Orner, returned to Control Tower (about 1735 CST) and perceived bright light at a position of about 240° azimuth and 8° elevation. It was a round object and did not resemble a star. Although there was a haze the object remained visible and did not disappear until it went below the level of the earth in a manner similar to the sun or moon setting. This object was viewed and tracked with the Weather Station theodolite from the hangar roof.

RELIABILITY: Verified by Commanding Officer, Operations Officer, S-2 and Executive Officer. However, these officers were apparently present when second sighting took place.

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