

PANAMA Report Number IR-4-58

**AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT**

Subject Unidentified Flying Object Report

Area Report on Panama From: Director of Intelligence

Date Of Report: 18-march 1958 date of Information: 18-March 1956

A number of unidentified radar tracks were observed 9-10 march 1958 by search and tracking radar located in the Canal Zone. Two tracks were investigated by aircraft with negative results.

## SUPPLEMENT TO A FORM 112

CAirC - Director of Intelligence      IR-4-58

During the period 9 through 13 March, three unexplainable radar contacts have been made by equipment located in the Canal Zone. On two occasions, aircraft were vectored into the area by the radar sites, with negative results. Interrogation of scope operators has indicated that returns were strong and easily distinguishable from cloud formations. Returns were definite when associated with clouds. Generally the tracks were triangular with speed of movement very erratic. Movement appears at times to be evasive action. The incident of 9 - 10 March was tracked by gun laying radar. During period of observation, radar maintenance personnel checked out their system thoroughly. In addition, the lock was broken, however the equipment immediately picked up the target and locked on. A second tracking radar situated on Taboga Island, locked on the return. Targets generally remained in the same area halfway between radar sites, Personnel stationed at sites reported seeing red and green lights but no noise was associated with lights. Visibility was good. However, lights were visible, for only a short period. A commercial flight volunteered to investigate the target and report negative sightings. Target faded out at 0208R on 10 March.

At 10:12R on 10 March, search radar reported an unidentified target west of the canal. A T-33 from Howard Field was sent to investigate. Negative results. Aircraft was in the immediate area of the target with negative sightings. Contact with target was broken at 14:15 R

In accordance with Department of the Army Intelligence Collection Memorandum #200-72B -1, dated 6 August 1957, subject: "Unconventional Aircraft", the following information is submitted:

1. On 10 March 1958 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx. Operations Officer 764th Anti-Aircraft operation center (AAOC), Fort Clayton Canal Zone, reported information concerning the sightings of an unidentified Flying object. At 2003R, 9 March 1958, Stahlman, as Deputy Defense Commander for Anti-Aircraft Defenses, was notified at his home by the Operations Duty Officer, AAOC, that the AA.OC had received a radar report of an unidentified aircraft approaching the Pacific side of the istmus of Panama. Stahlman arrived at the AAOC at approximately 20 08 R.

During the radar tracking of the first blip which appeared on the radar screen, two additional blips were observed at 20:45 R.

The first echo was identified as Chilean Airlines Aircraft which landed at Tocumen Airport, Tocumen, Republic of Panama. The two other blips, which were not identified, indicate that the two objects were in the vicinity of Fort Kobbe, Canal Zone. A civilian aircraft in the general vicinity of the objects made a visual search of the area with negative results. The original blips were picked up by Search Radar and then transferred to the Track Radar Unit located at Flamenco Island, Fort Amador, Canal Zone. This unit was able to lock on the unidentified objects and the following information was obtained: •.-.

Number of Objects: Two, approximately one hundred yards apart.

Duration of Radar Observation: 20:03R, 9 March 1958, "to 02: 08R, 10 March 1958.

Location of Radar: Battery D, 764th AAA Bn, Flamenco Island

Location of Object: L.J 2853 .(Geo-Ref, Military Grid Reference System)

Prevailing Weather: Clear Visibility unlimited wind report

Direction of Flight: Average angle of elevation 365, Azimuth; 330 Miles

Manner of Flight: Steady, slight circular path over the vicinity of Fort Kobbe, Canal Zone.

Altitude : Varied from To ten thousand feet. Average of Seven thousand feet.

An attempt was made by members of the radar site, Flamenco Island, to observe the Objects by searchlights. When the light touched the objects, they traveled from an altitude of two thousand feet to ten thousand feet in five to ten seconds.

This was such a rapid movement, that the Track Radar, which was locked on target, broke the Track Lock and was unable to keep up with ascent of the objects. As Track the Radar can only be locked on a solid object, which was done in the case of the two unidentified flying objects, it was assumed that the objects were solid. The possibility that the sightings might have been weather balloons was discarded when the Air Force was contacted and stated that no balloons were in the air at that time .

On 10 March 1958,xxxxxxxxxxxxx made another report concerning the sighting of an unidentified flying object by Search Radar located on Taboga Island, Republic of Panama. The following information was obtained in regard to the sightings:

Number of Objects: One.

Duration of Radar Observation: 10: 12 R to 14: 12 R, 10 March 1958

Location of Radar: Taboga. Island Radar Site

Location of Object: KL 1646.(Geo-ref,Military Grid Reference System

Prevailing weather: Partly cloudy.

Maner of Flight: From an erratic to a triangular shaped Flight pattern.

Altitude: Indeterminable due to radar system used.

Speed: Variable; from hovering to approximately one thousand miles per hour

Tráck Radar indicated that the object moved away from two United States Air Force Jet aircraft that were approaching. At that time the speed of the object was calculated at approxilllately one thousand per hour. The use of Track Radar was terminated at 14:12R.

On 11 March 1958,xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Opertions Officer, 764th AAA Bn, Port Clayton, Canal Zone, reported information received from Pan american Airlines Pilot concerning an unidentified flying object. At approximately 04:00R,11 March 1958, the pilot of incoming Airircraft C-509, a Pan American Airlines DC-6, observed an unidentified flying object 12 degrees North on Fox Trot route. The object appeared larger than the Aircraft and was traveling in a Southeasterly direction.

At the same time xxxxxxx reported that an unidentified flying object was picked up by hawk radar. The object was plotted twice at approximately 05:08R heading Northwest at LK 3858. On the third plot, at 0517R, the object had moved to LK 5434 in a South westerly direction. Eleven minutes elapsed during the confirmation of the three plots. At 0528R, the object was sighted at LX 4303. Incoming aircraft C-509 was in the same area and hawk radar was asked if it was the same track that was picked up previously. The answer was negative. The object was last plotted at LJ 3254 at 06R, still traveling in a Southwesterly direction. Radar contact was lost at that time. The size, shape, or altitude of the object could not be determined by radar.

G2 USARCARIB COMMENT Mentioned above requires that :

"The Headquarter of the nearest Major Air Command should be notified of sightings which come to the attention "of. Army personnel", reference DAICM continues, "Air force Commanders have instructions from the Department of the Air Force which cover reporting on subject (AFR-200-2) Unidentified Flying objects reporting, short title UFOB This office continues to report information as developed.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE LOG AT MOVEMENT & IDENTIFICATION SECTION ADCC

09 March

19:59 Unknow aircraft flying Tango Route inbound. No known aircraft in the area but one advised by Tocumen , WBZ BLB ATC.

20:45 unidentified blip believed to be a weather balloon picked up between Albrook and Taboga. Appears to be orbiting. No air traffic in the area at all. Advised ATC of possibility of object intertering with air traffic.

20:45 Advised that a balloon had been released earlier in the evening at approximately 1830R but should be down south east of Albrook at present time.

21:40 Tower adviser P-501 (Pan American Flight) is cleared by Albrook ATC for DF instruction in order to avoid objects. Flight P501 will cross the canal over Albrook.

23:45 Distance of object from D battery (Flamingo) is 4870 yarda, height 3.5 thousand feet. At the present time a searchlight from harbor entrance control point is being used to aid in identification purposes, to be executed by one AF-Naval crash boat.

23:55 Object now at 6.0 feet moving away very rapidly to the southwest.

24:00 Radar Advises that as soon was searchlight was employed, the object became evasive. Object now at 10.000 feet, 7800 yards from site.two returns, one at 10.0 teet, other at 08.

10 March

00:44 Branif Flight 400 reports negative sighting of object during brief investigation . Radar reported the aircraft was approximately 100 yards from the object.

00:55 Radar reports two targets no approximately 100 yards apart. Branif Flight 400 landed at 0047

02:10 Radar contact lost.

10:12 Unknown aircraft at KJ1646, speed 290k No known aircraft in area. Check with Tocumen, Albrook, Howard, ATC & CAA. Blip, very practical, has reached a speed of 900K then slows to a complete stop for several minutes before moving again.

10:30 Major Davis at Howard Operation advised of UFO. He will go up and take a look.

11:20 AF 5289 (T-33) airborne to check UFO. UFO was observed to avotd Jet. As soon as jet got close, UFO appeared to move away for several miles, then stop.

12:00 Jet returned to Howard. Pilot called and advised nothing was seen. Also advised weather Build-up. Radar advised they could distinguish UFO from clouds and build-ups.

