

Translation from "La Vanguardia" and other unspecified Spanish papers covering period 21st to 25th November 1980

(headline) UFOS OVER NORTH-EAST SPAIN

sub-headline PILOTS OBLIGED TO TAKE EVASIVE ACTION

From 7pm on the 11th November (just one year after a Super Caravelle of the airline TAE was forced to land in Manises by a UFO) no less than 5 aircraft - two from Iberia airlines, one from Transeuropa, an airtaxi and a British jet - were intercepted by a number of UFOs in the skies above Catalonia, the Balearic Islands and Valencia.

The UFOs, which caused a great commotion during some hours among passengers and aircrews, were greenish in colour and they moved at enormous speed. Sources at the Control Centre of the airport at El Prat have confirmed to "La Vanguardia" that the UFOs seen above the Mediterranean zone were in the area of control of Barcelona.

The reader will remember that on the 11th November 1979, a passenger airline was trailed by a gigantic UFO of some 200 metre in length. On that occasion, the UFO was observed by the crew of a Super Caravelle as well as by 40 other people, all of whom were employees at Valencia Airport, and finally, also by a Spanish Air Force Captain who tried to follow ~~the~~ three unidentified objects for nearly two hours, without success. It will be remembered that this event was reported around the world.

Here then, just a year after that sighting, we having the present "meeting" with other UFOs.

The surprise was enormous. The event described above occurred simultaneously to all the planes, they were all "intercepted" by UFOs. The pilots said that the UFOs moved horizontally, "at times they they were behind us, near the tail of the plane, and at others they were in front". The pilots then said that the object seemed to "burst" into five smaller objects.

(The paper states) "According to information we have obtained, one of the planes on the Asturias/Barcelona route, had to make a very sharp manoeuvre to avoid the dangerous proximity of the UFO. Shortly after the rapid descent of the Iberia aircraft above Barcelona, various witnesses at the airport saw another UFO of the same colour, making a violent "fall" above one of the runways. Just before it looked as though it was going to crash on the runway, the UFO shot off upwards at enormous speed and disappeared a few seconds later. This ^{UFO encounter} ~~incident~~ was registered by the other four aircraft, all at the same time and at different points of North East Spain.

The pilots of the respective airplanes affected by the incidents were all forced to take evasive action so suddenly and with such urgency that they did not have time to advise the control ~~tower~~ ^{centre} what was happening.

For some minutes, the Barcelona controllers, on whose radar screens there were no traces of the UFOs, did not know what was happening, because all they observed were the strange manoeuvres of the aircraft who were trying to avoid the UFOs. The pilots, at last, advised the control centre, by radio, what was happening.

While there is still no response from the Minister of Defence or the Minister of Transport about last year's UFO incident as asked by the Socialist Deputy, Enrique Mugica, Spanish pilots again have become witnesses to another incident as unwelcome as it is dangerous.

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The Spanish Parliament is the third in the world to discuss the matter of UFOs. The others are Britain and Italy.

UFO experts have stated that Sr. Mugica has a large file on the Manises UFO incident of last year. The same sources state that some months ago, coinciding with the celebration in Valencia of "Day of the Armed Forces", many UFOs were seen in the skies above Valencia a few hours after the arrival in the capital of the King Juan Carlos. It is claimed that two Mirage jets were sent up to intercept the UFOs, but without success.

PLEASE NOTE The foregoing article was published in La Vanguardia on Friday 21st November 1980. La Vanguardia is published in Barcelona and is one of Spain's most prestigious and respected and sober daily newspapers.

ON TUESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER, IN THE SAME PAPER, the following was published (I give a resumé of the article, the original Spanish is in my files)

"The UFOs seen on the 11th November in the skies that come under Barcelona's Control Centre - a fact that La Vanguardia has printed a great deal - could ~~be~~ have been military aircraft carrying out manoeuvres within the limits controlled by the Centre. As these kind of strategic exercises are not communi ated to the the civil aviation authorities, the manoeuvres, the lack of light and other characteristics explain why they were thought to be UFOs.

In spite of the fact that no explanation has been given, information collected by La Vanguardia seem to indicate that the UFOs in reality were Spanish and American fighter planes. On the 11th November, in the airspace above Zaragoza, France and the Balearic Islands (whose limits correspond to the airspace controlled by Barcelona Airport) Spanish and American airforces were conducting a strategic exercise late in the afternoon. Generally, this type of exercise is not communicated to the Civil Aviation authorities, therefore the commercial flights do not know anything about these exercises.

La Vanguardia has to state that, contrary to what was published a few days ago, no aircraft was forced to take evasive action; no pilot, officially, reported the presence of UFOs; and thirdly, that the first aircraft which was supposed to have seen a large white light and other, smaller, green lights, and which was later withdrawn, was Iberia Flight 305, that covers the Barcelona/Athens route. The explanation given is that the white lights and the small green lights proves show that it was actually a large fuelling plane that was refuelling three other amll planes. This type of operation is uaually carried out in flight, and generally the fuel plane has a very strong light to illuminate the the "hosepipe" terminal by which the fuel enters the plane to be refuelled.

What is certain is that all the airspace under the control of the Barcelona Control Centre, according to the information given to our offices, was full of military aircraft and ^{that} although they generally fly far from the commercial routes in order to avoid the sort of confusion that has arisen in the present case.

The development of these kind of military exercises and the possible danger they present for commercial aircraft was the cause of the strike by Spanish Air traffic controllers in 1976. These controllers demanded that when such exercies took place the Control Centres and the pilots should be informed in order to avoid possible scares and confusion.

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PLEASE NOTE: After the foregoing "whitewash" article, there was a final paragraph printed in heavy type, as follows:

"Faced with this hypothesis, witnesses, who by their technical knowledge know and can understand the characteristics of military aircraft from other types of manoeuvres - as for instance the manoeuvres of UFOs - have affirmed the following,

'These craft were not airplanes, not even military airplanes. Various green lights in the form of a comet appeared simultaneously to the left side of the Control Tower, higher than the tower itself (which is eleven storeys high) and they were moving at a speed of approximately 300 kms an hour. Their flight height was approx. 500 metres, and they arrived in front of the airport in a southerly direction. The sighting lasted $1\frac{1}{2}$ seconds. ~~The lights that resulted in~~ The green "burst" left by the lights disappeared little by little. It was 9.30 pm when the event occurred.'

ON THE 26TH NOVEMBER, THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS PUBLISHED (the cutting does not give the name of the paper, but I imagine it is also from La Vanguardia)

"The Council of the Chiefs of the Armed Forces have declared that the matter of the UFOs seen by various commercial planes on the 11th of this month in the airspace controlled by Barcelona Airport, was a 'Reserved Subject' as the question could affect national defence and security.

It will be recalled - see ~~earlier~~^{past} editions of La Vanguardia - that, initially, it was believed that the ~~UFO~~ objects were in fact UFOs. However, later information indicated the possibility that they were actually military aircraft engaged in strategic exercises. Yet the subject has still not been clarified satisfactorily because many expert witnesses dismiss openly that the movements and lights of the objects could have corresponded to those of military aircraft"

x (RE: "Reserved subject" means, more or less, 'classified information'

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