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Wichita, Kansas

15 November 1952

I. Description of Incident

At 0005 GMT on 15 November 1952, an AF major with 5,000 hours flying time was engaged in watching pilots under his command about landings in a B-47. He, another rated officer, and several airman observed what appeared to be an elliptical, blue-white light with an orange or red tail. The object moved erratically at a speed greater than that associated with a B-55 or B-47. The object was first observed to the north travelling rapidly on a heading of about 45°, then it suddenly appeared to stop. When the object stopped, the orange glow appeared to be on what had been the leading edge of the object. The object moved out again on a heading of 45° to a position NNW of the airport, then stopped again for two minutes. It finally disappeared to the north. It was in view a total of five to ten minutes.

The weather was GAVU. The winds were:

10,000' - 265°/35K

20,000' - 265°/40K

30,000' - 265°/40K

39,000' - 255°/60K

II. Discussion of Incident

Two lighted weather balloons were launched at 0030 GMT. Although there is a discrepancy of 5 minutes in time between the sighting and the balloon launches, the description of the object, the described course, etc., fits that of a balloon.

It is believed that the reported object was one of the weather balloons.

III. Conclusion

Probably a balloon.

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