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South Carolina Area

3 March 1953

I. DESCRIPTION

At 1245 EDT, the Assistant Director of Security at the Savannah River Project observed a silver crescent-shaped object visually from the ground for a period of one hour. This object was at a very high altitude, and very little information was obtained through interrogation of the observer.

A detachment of the 127th ACW Squadron at Congaree, South Carolina, was notified as a result of the above visual sighting. They picked up an unidentified pilot on their AN/APG-5 type radar at 1257 EDT that was approximately 60 miles southwest of Congaree over the Savannah River Project. The Air National Guard was notified with the result that an F-51 type aircraft was airborne within five minutes. The aircraft attempted interrogation until 1305 EDT when the pilot failed northwest of Congaree. The F-51 returned to the base.

At 1250 EDT another detachment of the 127th ACW Squadron at Congaree, South Carolina picked up a blip on their AN/APG-5 type radar. At that time an F-51 type aircraft was ascending to attempt interception. This unidentified blip was due west of Congaree, and to be sure he had the unidentified on his scope, the operator had the F-51 do an identification turn. This proved that he did not have the F-51 on the scope. When the object was first observed, it was approximately 100 miles west of Congaree. It then reversed its direction, and was 20 miles out heading in a southeast direction, then headed east, then west, and again to the east, ending at 1315 miles and 8 degrees from Congaree. For a total of 60 minutes, during both radar sightings, aircraft attempted to intercept the unidentified with negative results. At all times, the object stayed at an estimated 20,000 feet altitude, and was doing 200-300 mph.

II. CONCLUSIONS

A check was made to determine if there were any aircraft in the vicinity with negative results. There is a time lapse between all three sightings given visually at the Savannah River Project to the Congaree sighting was 20 minutes, and from the Congaree sighting to the Dundee sighting was 21 minutes, causing some doubt as to whether the three sightings were connected with the same object. There was really not enough information contained in the report concerning the sighting at the Savannah River Project. For the observer to see an object for that long a period, it would have to be traveling at a very slow rate of speed and at a very high altitude for the object stayed constant for the entire period. The radar observers were very well qualified in their fields, and their equipment was in operating condition. The radar returns were similar to those made by conventional aircraft.

This sighting was sent to the Electronics Branch of AEC for analysis. This Branch, after carefully reviewing the report, estimated it as possibly a flying saucer.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Possibly aircraft.

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