

Was it Sputnik?

THE "ball of fire" mystery, with an explosion thrown in for good measure, was still unexplained last night.

Isle of Man people saw and heard it at about 2.30 a.m., and other reports came from the West Country and the Brecon Beacons.

But weather experts said it had nothing to do with the weather, and the Air Ministry said no aircraft was missing.

One man said he saw "what seemed to be a flashing, white-hot sheet of metal with pieces coming off it, leaving a trail of sparks and flame."

It flashed over the horizon—and then came the bang.

At the Royal Observatory, Hurstmonceux (Sussex), a spokesman said they attached no importance to the reports. "We get two or three reports like that most nights," he said.