

UNCLASSIFIED
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Canal Zone

25-26 November 1952

I. Description of Incident

From 1800Z to 2349Z on 25 November 1952, two unidentified objects were tracked on gun-laying radar. The objects flew at an estimated speed of 275 knots and varied altitude between 1,000' and 28,000'. The area was put on a yellow alert after all known air traffic had been checked. Four aircraft were scrambled for visual search, but had no success.

At one time, 2330Z, an AF major observed a glowing yellow light traveling rapidly from east to west near France AFB. At the time of this visual sighting, the radar had the target in the France AFB area. Other reports of visual sightings were received, however, further investigation showed these to be the aircraft that had been scrambled for the attempted intercept.

Weather showed two inversion layers in the area, but the report states the possibility of weather causing the targets was checked before the yellow alert was called.

II. Discussion of Incident

Although the report on this incident is complete, there is still not enough data to make a complete analysis. The fact that inversions were noted raises the possibility of weather phenomena causing the targets.

III. Conclusion

Radar returns probably due to weather.

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SE of Prescott, Arizona

27 November 1952

I. Description of Incident

While on a flight from El Paso, Texas, to Nellis AFB, Nevada, in a B-26 aircraft, an AF lt colonel and his crew chief observed four quick bursts of black smoke in tandem, directly ahead of their aircraft and at their altitude. The time was 1210 PST. After about 2 minutes, three more bursts appeared then three more. At 1213 PST, three more puffs were seen to the left of their course and ahead, with three more appearing at 9 o'clock. At this time, the pilot made a 90° turn to the left. The puffs of smoke continued as the B-26 made several turns in the area. Once the puffs of smoke would have bracketed the a/c had it continued on course. At one time, the pilot flew close to the puffs and they appeared to be yellowish in color and about 20' in diameter. Exceedingly rough air was noted close to the smoke puffs.

The entire incident lasted 20 minutes.

II. Discussion of Incident

The description of the smoke puffs would lead one to believe that the B-26 had encountered flak. The area of the encounter was far from any target area, however, and since the a/c was only at 10,000' under VFR conditions, it is doubtful that even if it were in a practice area it would be continually fired upon.

III. Conclusion

Unknown

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