

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET
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FILE NO.	

SUBJECT: Reports of "Rocket" Sightings over the Scandinavian Countries

TO: AC/AS-2

DATE 22 Jul 46

FROM: Deputy Commander, AAF

COMMENT No. 1

ICE/mw/3373

Noted by General Spaatz and the undersigned with interest.

JCE

I.C.E.

Incl-

Memo for CG, AAF, from AC/AS-2
(w/incl) dtd 19 Jul 46

IRA C. BAKER,
Lt. Gen., U. S. Army,
Deputy Commander, Army Air Forces.

*CG files
e.g. Dowd
Lt Col. A.C.
8/17/46*

X 471.94 Sweden

471.94 Products

#FBIN-4A
*Col Dowd
for MKA*

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HEADQUARTERS, ARMY AIR FORCES By Authority of
The Commanding General
WASHINGTON Army Air Forces

19 JUL 1946

19 Jul 46
Date

AWC
Initials

REFER TO:

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDING GENERAL, ARMY AIR FORCES

SUBJECT: Reports of "Rocket" Sightings over the Scandinavian Countries.

1. For your information, the following reports of rockets or missiles in the Scandinavian area have been received in cables from Military Attaches and State Department representatives in foreign countries and in news dispatches:

a. News items concerning "rockets" over the Scandinavian peninsula have appeared sporadically since early June 1946. The chronological sequence of reports is as follows:

- (1) 10 June 1946 - Helsinki, Finland. A light-emitting "ghost rocket" was observed flying at an altitude of 900-1200 feet. The missile left a trail of smoke in the sky.
- (2) 12 June 1946 - Helsinki, Finland. The Finnish News Agency, quoting the Helsinki Astronomical Institution, said the "ghost rocket" was a meteor.
- (3) 10 July 1946 - Stockholm, Sweden. "Shining missiles" had been observed traveling at great altitude and high speed and had caused speculation by the newspaper, Aftonbladt, that the Russians were conducting rocket experiments on Baltic bases. One missile was alleged to have fallen and exploded Tuesday, 9 July, near the town of Sundsvall, which lies on the west coast of the Gulf of Bothnia approximately 390 miles west of the nearest Russian territory.
- (4) 15 July 1946 - London, England. The London Daily Mail quotes a dispatch from Geneva which stated that a strange object sighted over the Rhone Valley touched off conjecture that the Russians are testing flying bombs over the Alps. It stated further that rocket missiles, which have fallen recently in Sweden, are V-weapons from Peenemunde (former German center for guided missile research now under Russian jurisdiction). In closing the article stated that all sailors on the Baltic run had been warned, under the penalty of death, not to talk about any phenomena observed. Russia is reported to be closing a huge area in the Baltic to all traffic.

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- (5) 15 July 1946 - Oslo, Norway. A "big fire-ball" followed by a trail of smoke was observed moving through the sky over the Norwegian village of Moss on Oslo Bay. The altitude of the missile was estimated to be 4000 feet.

b. Military Attache reports and State Department cables which focus attention of "rockets" in the Scandinavian area began to arrive during the latter part of April 1946. Extracts from these communications are given here in chronological order.

- (1) 25 April 1946 - Military Attache, Denmark reports earth tremors on the islands of Bornholm and Ystad, Sweden. The tremors were thought to be the result of Russian naval maneuvers. It was noted that Danish Intelligence reports no Russian naval maneuvers at this time.
- (2) 13 May 1946 - Military Attache, Finland quotes a B-1 source which reported a "rocket" observed traveling in a south-westerly direction over Helsinki at an altitude of 1000 feet. It was alleged to have moved at a supersonic speed, emitting a magnesium-like light and a trail of smoke.
- (3) 24 May 1946 - Military Attache in Sweden and Denmark quote an observer who reported V-bombs flying southwest over Landskrona, Sweden. Altitude of the missiles was 1000 feet.
- (4) 14 June 1946 - Military Attache, Finland quotes a B-3 source who stated that Russian experimental stations in Latvia and Estonia were launching rockets.
- (5) 17 June 1946 - Military Attache, Finland states that there was "no evidence whatsoever of Finland's developing guided missiles".
- (6) 24 June 1946 - Military Air Attache, Stockholm, Sweden, reports no explanations can be given for the 25 April earth tremors but that the Swedish Army does not connect them with V-bomb sightings. Approximately ten apparently patternless V-bomb sightings have been reported between 23 May and 8 June, the missiles reported traveling from northeast to southwest over southern Sweden. These missiles were reported as being cigar-shaped, about the size of a small airplane. They were flying at an altitude of 100 to 1,000 meters and were accompanied by a continuous ball of fire with intermittent

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flashes of fire about every ten seconds. Swedish astronomers dismiss the meteor theory but the Swedish Army is at a loss to account for them officially or otherwise and have alerted the military districts to observe and report promptly any further sightings.

- (7) 12 July 1946 - State Department Cable, Stockholm, Sweden states in part, "On Tuesday afternoon, 9 July, a member of the Legation saw a rocket-like missile. It seemed to be falling rapidly toward the earth and no sound of explosion was heard. On the same afternoon another landed on the beach near Stockholm. No damage was caused. The press reports that military authorities are now studying fragments. According to a local scientist, the first inspection indicated that the fragments contained an organic substance which looked like carbide. The press announced that a missile fell at 1430 11 July in a suburb of Stockholm.

"The Swedes claim that they do not know the purpose, character, or origin of the missiles, but they definitely state that the missiles did not originate in Sweden. According to eyewitnesses, the missiles were heading in a northwest direction.

"If the missiles are of Russian origin, as believed generally, (according to some reports they come from Estonia), their purpose might be of a political nature to intimidate the Swedes in connection with Russian pressure on Sweden for current loan negotiations or possibly to offset the supposed increase in US military prestige in Sweden".

2. An American civil engineer, returning from Russia, reports that hundreds of Russian "tourists" are arriving and settling in the Aland Islands. These islands lie in the mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia between Finland and Sweden.

3. A report from Finland, dated 26 June 1946, bearing an F-3 evaluation, states that a V-bomb was observed recently over Helsinki. The bomb was believed to have been launched from the Porkkala area which is located 20 miles southwest of Helsinki on the Baltic seacoast. Recent maps indicate that this area is territory which belongs to Russia although it is a portion of the Finnish mainland.

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4. Due to the lack of conclusive evidence and the variety of reports, it is difficult at this time to reach any definite conclusion as to the origin of these reported missiles but the following are significant:

a. The statement of the Helsinki Astronomical Institution disclaiming the possibility of the object sighted 10 June 1946 being a rocket appeared with such promptness as to incite suspicion that Russian influence on the press was making itself evident.

b. The possibility that the objects may have been a meteor is lessened by a report from the United States Naval Observatory stating that no meteor showers were predicted for the Scandinavian area between 4 May and 28 June 1946.

c. The Russians may be launching rockets from sites in Estonia or Latvia.

d. The presence of Russian "tourists" in the Aland Islands has not yet been explained but it is conceivable that the Russians intend to establish an area similar to Peenemunde on the islands.

e. The additional possibility that the Russians intend to impress the outside world with their potentialities by deliberately firing missiles over the Scandinavian area must not be overlooked.

5. Until more complete reports covering the Scandinavian rocket situation are available, conclusive statements pertaining to their origin, appearance, characteristics and purpose cannot be made.

1 Incl
Map of
Scandinavian
countries

George C. McDonald

GEORGE C. McDONALD
Major General, U. S. Army
Assistant Chief of Air Staff - 2

cc: General Lciday
General Partridge

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