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October 29, 1965

SAIGON--American pilots are disturbed by a number of unidentified, clandestine aircraft ~~missions~~ flying into South Vietnam from across the Cambodian and ~~Laotian~~ borders.

One American pilot reported that a Russian-built plane, similar in configuration to the American DC-3, consistently slipped across the Cambodian border into South Vietnam, presumably to gather aerial intelligence. The pilot said the Russ Russian-built plane was equipped with electronic counter-detection devices, which permitted it to evade U. S. Air Force F-102 Delta Dagger jet interceptors carrying two lethal air-to-air missiles. He said the American F-102s, based at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport were scrambled several times a day in attempts to intercept the mysterious plane, and that American-operated radar screens consistently picked up the plane crisscrossing the Cambodian border.

Nationality of the pilots flying the mysterious planes is unknown.

No incidents have been reported.

American advisers on the ground, in Special Forces camps long along the ill-defined Cambodian-Laotian-South Vietnamese border said they recently have been picking up radio transmissions broadcast in the Russian language.

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In another instance, ^{a second} another American pilot reported that on a rainy, heavily overcast day in August, when all American aircraft had been grounded by bad weather, a mysterious, unidentified plane flew ~~near~~ at 500 feet over the Pleiku jet-length airfield, ^{and forty miles from the coast} situated 225 miles northwest of Saigon. The plane was seen by two Americans--an Army captain and an American Air Force radar specialist, who ~~said~~ claimed the plane was not American made.

~~A report~~ An intelligence report to higher headquarters about this ^{the incident}

was rejected by ~~his~~ higher headquarters, who identified the

plane as a ~~RF-100~~, ^{the} ~~Wood 99~~ ^{Voodoo 303} ~~Voodoo~~ ^{ACE 11744} ~~Voodoo~~ reconnaissance ^{DO P11 5914} reconnaissance jet which photographed the Russian missiles and

in Cuba and ~~detected~~ the Chinese push into Laos in 1961. However,

the American Air Force radar specialist, who had worked closely

with F-100s in previous years, rejected the decision of the

higher headquarters and said that the plane was not a F-100. ^{the coding}

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In another example, another American pilot claimed that unif unidentified aircraft had flown over the Danang Air Base at a very low altitude to eva avoid detection on radar screens, but this could not be confirmed. The Danang airbase, protected lies 380 miles north of Saigon and is protected by fix more than 10,000 U. S. Marine ground troops, airmen and Hawk ground-to-air mis silos.

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During the battle of Plei Me this week, one American pilot claimed he saw a "giant swept-wing bird" which did not fit the design of American aircraft. He said the plane flew into the battle area fix around Plei Me, which is situated only 20 miles from the Cambodian border Vietnamese- jungled Vietnamese-Cambodian border.

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Another American pilot said he recently reported to the a control tower about a plane flying into South Vietnam from Cambodia. "They

"The tower told me it was alright," he explained. "That it was the Pan American (commercial) flight coming in from Cambodia. Then suddenly it made a 90-degree turn and darted back across the border. We call these flights the 'Phnom Penh Special' (the capital of Cambodia."

Although Cambodia and South Vietnam broke diplomatic relations in 1963, commercial airline flights and flights for the International Control Commission have been maintained. continued.

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American navigators are also ~~and~~ ~~distrubed~~ ~~distrubed~~ at the ~~sopho~~ sophisticated equipment used to jam their radios, ~~an~~ to intercept radio transmissions and to give deliberately inaccurate ~~flyin~~ flight instructions "so we will fly into a mountain."

One American ~~ni~~ navigator explained, "We know there's a little boat outside of Danang that gives wrong flight instructions to American pilots. ~~They~~ ~~give~~ ~~us~~ ~~the~~ ~~best~~ little boat has very good equipment on it and the people operating it speak perfect English. You can't tell them from an ~~AMERICAN~~ American in a control ~~go~~ tower. They give us flight information, vector us in just like the control tower, then --pow! you've crashed into a mountain. We've had several crashes in Danang because of that. Also, on flights from South Vietnam to ~~Okina~~ Okinawa our radio transmissions are always jammed. There's a real ~~ee~~ electronic war going on here."

Last ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~morning~~ Tuesday, two U. S. Marine Corps F4b jets crashed into a mountain just off the Danang airfield. ~~Offe~~ Military sources said engine trouble was believed to have ~~caused~~ caused the crashes.

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~~No incidents have been reported with these unidentified aircraft.~~

American pilots of strike aircraft have been ordered not to fly missions closer than five kilometers without prior approval of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, ^{as} according to highly reliable sources. Vietnamese Air Force planes generally allow an aerial buffer zone by not flying too close to the Cambodia border; however, last year one Vietnamese Air Force plane was shot down in a major incident in Cambodia in a major border incident.

American pilots of unarmed liaison and transport aircraft admit however, they that they have sometimes inadvertently ~~cross~~ crossed the vague borderline between Cambodia and ~~the~~ South Vietnam.

"Sometime, it's very hairy," one American pilot explained. "Our routes to Saigon come as close as 20 miles to the Cambodian border; if there's bad weather we have to divert either to the east or to the west, and that brings us close ~~the~~ to the Cambodian territory."

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Reliable sources indicate that near the border areas inside Cambodia, there is at least one base for Russian-built MIG's, ^(B) but ~~plus~~ the nationality of the pilots is unknown. In addition, Cambodian air forces are known to include B-57 jet fighter-bombs bombers, a British-manufactured plane which the U. S. has purchased some of these and use them in Vietnam, although they are now considered obsolete. Another plane included in the Cambodian air strength is the T-37 jet-trainer.

^{T-37}
"The American government gave Cambodia when we were friendly with each other then," one American pilot explained. "Now they the Cambodians have hung rockets on them ~~so~~ so they can shoot American aircraft," he shrugged.

Small two or four-seat transport aircraft piloted by French plantation managers also are ~~or~~ reported to cause American and Vietnamese pilots.

"These French planes regularly fly into Cambodia without the proper clearances from ~~the~~ the Vietnamese government," one pilot reported. "Recently, I zoomed up on a small plane that was flying over ~~the~~ the operational area of American combat troops. I suppose he was spying on the operation. There was a Frenchman and a Vietnamese in the two front seats. I picked up my rifle and motioned them to get the hell out of there. But, of course, I couldn't shoot him down. American pilots can shoot only at fast-moving aircraft, unless the Vietnamese government orders us otherwise."