

# Shoot-downs of objects over US territory are first in history, Pentagon says

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With no public explanation, the United States Air Force has begun shooting down what it claims to be unidentified objects in US and Canadian airspace on a daily basis.

The US military said it shot down a flying object over Northern Alaska on Friday; Yukon, Canada on Saturday; and Lake Huron on Sunday.

These actions are unprecedented. At a Pentagon briefing Sunday, Associated Press reporter Tara Copp said that there was a “large and quick escalation to shooting down objects,” and asked if there was any precedent for what has occurred in recent days.

Air Force General Glen VanHerck, head of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), replied, “This is the first time within the United States of America airspace that NORAD or United States Northern command has taken kinetic action against an airborne object.”

This amounts to a massive live fire exercise over US airspace, with the population given no meaningful explanation of what the military is doing or why.

The Biden White House, for reasons that only it knows, has withheld the vast amount of photographic, radar and infrared images the advanced fighters that shot down the objects collected from their targeting pods. No photos or radar data have been released that would give the public any understanding of what is happening.

The apparent change in policy was hinted at during last week’s State of the Union address, where President Joe Biden largely avoided foreign policy, but explicitly threatened China. “If China threatens our sovereignty, we will act to protect our country,” Biden said.

Unlike other changes to US military posture, which are typically conducted under conditions of media blackout, the actions beginning Friday have taken place

against the backdrop of nonstop, wall-to-wall coverage.

The coverage is clearly aimed at inspiring feelings of fear and agitation in the public, reminiscent of the media’s role immediately following the 9/11 terror attacks.

In this super-heated atmosphere, and despite the total lack of information made available, the media and political establishment have insinuated that China, the principal target of the US military’s years-long military buildup, is responsible for the unidentified objects.

The latest round of US Air Force attacks follows the shooting down on February 4 of what China claims was a non-maneuverable research balloon that was blown off course, and what the United States claims was a spy balloon.

In that case, unlike the string of shootings that began on Friday, the US categorically asserted that the aircraft it attacked and destroyed was launched from China.

The most plausible explanation for the events of the last three days is that the US military has begun shooting down weather and research balloons, with no serious explanation to the public or to the scientific, meteorological or aviation community about the change in policy.

“In light of the People’s Republic of China balloon that we took down last Saturday, we have been more closely scrutinizing our airspace at these altitudes, including enhancing our radar, which may at least partly explain the increase in objects that we’ve detected over the past week,” said Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Hemispheric Affairs Melissa Dalton at a Pentagon briefing Sunday.

“We also know that a range of entities ... operate objects at these altitudes for purposes that are not serious threats, including legitimate research,” she added. She acknowledged that the US has “not been

able to say definitively yet what these recent objects are.”

Democratic Connecticut Representative Jim Himes, the ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee, echoed these statements in an appearance on “Meet the Press” Sunday, saying, “There is a lot of garbage up there.”

“The truth is that that most of our sensors, and most of what we were looking for, didn’t look like balloons,” he said. “Now of course we’re looking for them. So I think we’re probably finding more stuff.”

Meteorologists around the world launch hundreds of weather balloons every single day, and dozens of long-duration weather balloons have been launched by NASA in recent decades. To these can be added the thousands of unmanned aircraft and drones launched at various altitudes by commercial and recreational pilots. The vast majority of these devices would not have FAA transponders, and would thus be qualified as “unidentified flying objects.”

On Sunday’s “Meet the Press,” host Chuck Todd asked Himes, “So, do you think—are we changing our posture? It does seem as if we’d see this unusual aerial phenomena and the decision, if there was not a threat to the country, or threat to an individual, or an airline, we let it fly up there. Do you sense we’re changing our posture, that if we don’t know the origin, we’re shooting it down now?”

Himes replied, “Well, I certainly hope not. I mean, if that’s where we’re going to go, there will be an accident, you know? At some point, we’re going to shoot down something we don’t want to shoot down, whether it’s civil aviation or what have you.”

If the US military continues its present pace, it will be shooting down hundreds of objects every single year—many without being able to visually verify them—raising the possibility that it will accidentally shoot down a civilian aircraft.

A deliberate aim of the climate of hysteria being whipped up by the US military’s shooting spree is to create the conditions for a massive expansion of military spending, and the pretext for a military escalation against Russia and China.

In a strategically placed article, the *New York Times* wrote: “A senior administration official said one theory—and the person stressed that it is just a theory—is that China or Russia sent the objects to test American

intelligence-gathering capabilities. They could be sent to learn both how quickly the United States becomes aware of an intrusion and how quickly the military can respond to such an incursion, the official said.”

Such “theories” are completely without substantiation. Yet they are being used to press for a major expansion of the US military forces.

Ohio Republican Representative Mike Turner called for a major expansion of US military capabilities. “And then we need to invest. What’s become clear in the public discussion is that we don’t really have adequate radar systems. We certainly don’t have an integrated missile defense system. We’re going to have to begin to look at the United States’ airspace as one that we need to defend and that we need to have appropriate sensors to do so.”



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