

Pictured above is a Skyhook balloon 77,000 feet over Minneapolis. This first published photo of a Skyhook at that altitude was made through a refracting telescope. To Dr. Urner Liddel, chief of the nuclear-physics branch of the Office of Naval Research, it is the first visual confirmation of his explanation for the hundreds of "flying saucers" seen soaring over the U. S. Dr. Liddel's field of nuclear research is centered on cosmic rays in the outer atmosphere, and the big helium-filled balloons carry his instruments aloft. At the right, being launched, the balloon is partially inflated. Nearing the limit of its ascent, above, it clearly resembles a "flying saucer."



# A NUCLEAR PHYSICIST EXPOSES FLYING SAUCERS

"There is no longer any need for secrecy," says Navy scientist, after finding that his own research started the "saucers"

By RICHARD WILSON Chief of LOOK Washington Bureau

THE literal-minded FBI, skeptical but determined, could not let the flying-saucer excitement go by without getting to the bottom of it. Such a profusion of strange objects littering the American skies could not be ignored. A 10-page report by the nuclear physics branch of the Office of Naval Research has given the answer:

Flying saucers were, and are, undeniably

real. They are part of a basic research program of the Federal Government which is as important, if not so dramatic, as the visitation from Mars feared by an imaginative public.

A flying saucer is the base of a huge balloon, 100 feet in diameter, called a "Skyhook." It is seen by earthlings traveling at speeds up to 200 miles per hour at heights up to 19 miles.

These balloons are carrying delicate instruments to plumb the secrets of the cosmos in the dizzy reaches of a 100,000-foot height where the atmosphere reaches the vanishing point.

The instruments on the balloons observe and measure the countless explosions of atoms in the atmosphere as they are smashed by cosmic particles hurtling in by the billions from the cold reaches of outer space.

The balloons seek to break the secret of how matter is put together by recording how it is blown apart. And, finally, of how the countless atomic explosions taking place silently, smokelessly, flamelessly but energetically at the fringe of the earth's atmosphere may be reproduced under controlled conditions.

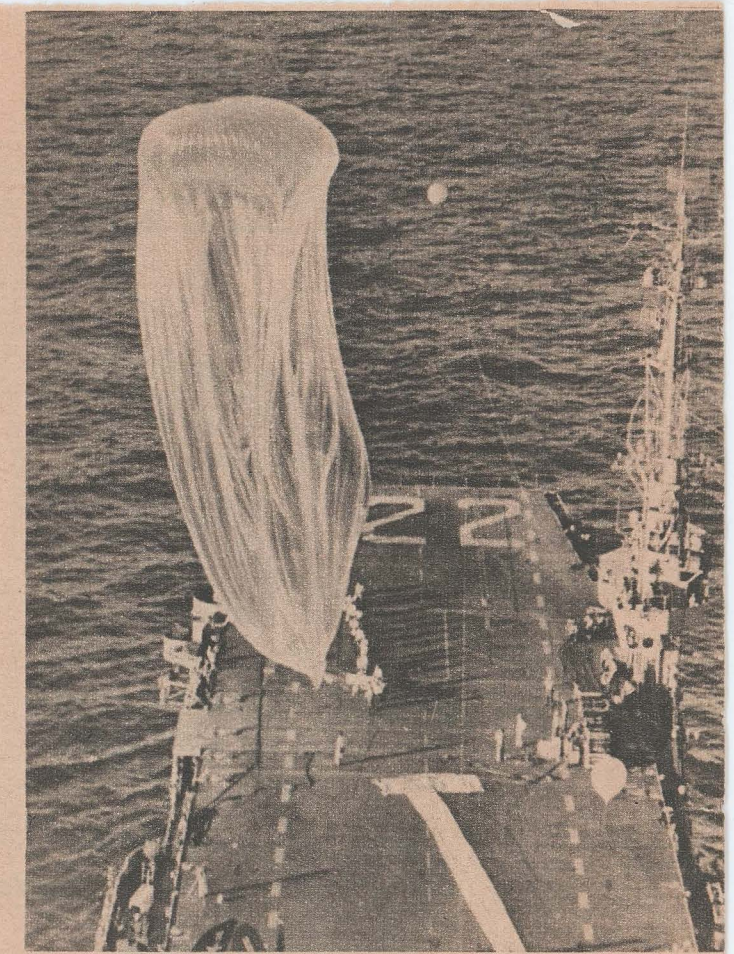
This is atomic research aimed not at producing an atomic bomb but at harnessing the energy from the decomposition of the atom. Dr. Urner Liddel, chief of the nuclear physics branch of the Office of Naval Research, is in charge of the Skyhook-Flying Saucer project.

### No "Saucers" Without ONR

"When this project first began," he said, "it was kept secret. Now, there is no longer any need for secrecy on a scientific basis. And, certainly, there is no longer any need to keep the public in the dark about what flying saucers are."

"If we are completely successful in our research with these balloons, which so many people have called flying saucers, we will find out how to break up the atom in a useful way. It is not too much to hope that some day we will learn enough to cause the atomic reaction under conditions as we want them—not as they exist today in the atomic bomb."

"Some day we may learn enough so that we can pour a cup of water into a reactor the



Many Skyhooks have been launched at Camp Ripley near Little Falls, Minn., but ascents have been made everywhere, even from aircraft carriers.

size of an average room and draw off from it in cables enough energy to heat a large city."

The Office of Naval Research, where Dr. Liddel is sponsoring the cosmic experiments, is a part of the regular naval establishment with a \$10,000,000-a-year program of basic and applied research. The Liddel report is considered to be the most authoritative scientific explanation of the flying-saucer phenomenon. As far as Dr. Liddel is concerned personally, he considers his answer incontrovertibly right.

One of the most convincing factors supporting Dr. Liddel's findings is that flying saucers or flying disks were unheard of until the ONR's experiments in the stratosphere began. There were some flights in 1947, the first year that strange objects were seen in the skies. These reports multiplied in 1948, when Skyhooks were put in the air in large numbers, and continued through 1949. Reports diminished in 1950 when the number of Skyhook balloon flights were reduced.

### Ionization Chambers in the Sky

Observers have agreed that the best time of day to see what is called a flying saucer is at dusk of a cool summer evening.

You may be standing on a plain in New Mexico or Montana. You may be flying a plane at 10,000 feet over Alabama. And there in the distance, above you but far from you, is a strange lighted disk. It may be moving or just hovering.

But there it is. You see it with your own eyes. Your companions see it. This thing is round. It appears cup-shaped. It may appear to have a strong glow on one side or to be trailing an exhaust.

What you have seen may be Flight 10, Balloon No. 3 of the Brookhaven National Laboratory at 84,300 feet carrying a 167-pound payload consisting of a cloud chamber, a beacon transmitter, a Geiger telescope, an ionization chamber and photographic equipment.

This object in the sky may appear to you to be from two to ten times the size of Venus, the evening star, which in certain months seems to fill the heavens as it rises. If you are 10,000 feet up in an airplane, the object may appear

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