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FLYING SAUCERS continued

No "little men" from afar have arrived in rocket ships

20 per cent larger than from the ground.

The lateral rays of the sun at dusk illuminate the base of the balloon. There is no chance of your ever seeing the full roundness of it because you are so far below it. You see only the illuminated cup of the bottom. If your imagination soars, the light reflection on one side may impress you as the glow of an atomic engine. The wisp of the balloon's instrument-filled tail may impress you as the exhaust. The sun's rays may suffuse the plastic bag with a fiery glow.

Experienced Observers Fooled

Even seasoned airmen have no way of estimating the size and the speed of an object they see. To peg size and speed, the mind must know the nature of the object. Experienced seamen have difficulty estimating the distance, speed and size of another ship unless they know its type. The balloon is unknown and hence eludes efforts to measure it by familiar craft aloft.

Dr. Liddel and his associates arrived at their findings on these baffling stories by studying about 2,000 reports of flying-saucer observations of every kind and description. They discarded some as seeming to be the visions of crackpots or psychopaths. Other reports were clearly the result of inaccurate vision.

One report of "little men" found in the wreckage of a flying saucer near Mexico City turned out to be the unsubstantiated story of a traveler. No one else knew anything about it.

This left a solid base of reports from airplane pilots, scientific observers and reliable laymen which could not be brushed aside. After a thorough investigation, Dr. Liddel said: "There is not a single reliable report of an observation which is not attributable to the cosmic balloons."

The Death of Captain Mantell

The most tragic report the nuclear physicists had to consider was that of an Air Force pilot in Kentucky. A circular object, metallic in appearance, was seen over a U. S. Air Force base on Jan. 7, 1948. Three fighter planes, one piloted by Capt. Thomas F. Mantell, took off in hot pursuit. From their relatively low altitudes, the balloon seemed to be traveling at the rate of 360 miles an hour. Two of the planes turned back at 18,000 feet. Captain Mantell kept going. He radioed that he would go to 25,000 feet and abandon the search if he got no closer. None of the planes was equipped with reserve oxygen supplies, and thus could not fly long at high altitudes.

Mantell was not heard from again. His plane crashed, and the instruments found in the wreckage indicated it might have risen to 30,000 feet.

"Our studies show," said Dr.

Liddel, "that Captain Mantell and the other pilots were pursuing a balloon of the Skyhook type. Captain Mantell could never have reached the height at which the balloon was traveling."

Several reports have been received of "squadrons" of flying saucers. People have seen little disks apparently flying together in the sky. This is explained by Dr. Liddel as clusters of 20 to 30 balloons, 10 to 15 feet in diameter, which are sometimes used in place of the huge Skyhook.

Under certain conditions, they might be more visible than the single plastic bag, and would certainly be unexplainable by anyone who didn't know their purpose.

Liddel Got the Facts

After Dr. Liddel had sifted all the reports which appeared to have some foundation, he used his entree as a government nuclear physicist to check other government agencies. He is satisfied that no other research or experimental project has utilized anything even roughly resembling a flying saucer. "And secondly," he said, "interplanetary travel is not possible at the present time."

This disposed of all the possibilities, according to Dr. Liddel. His analysis of the flying-saucer phenomenon as presented here is the first government disclosure of what is considered to be the real cause.

The Skyhook's distinct visual similarity to a flying-saucer description was noted strongest at the Minneapolis project of ONI, under the direction of General Mills, Inc. Telescopic photographs brought out the similarity so clearly that Dr. Liddel was elated. He could at last offer visual proof of his findings.

Tracing the "Saucers"

General Mills is the only successful manufacturer of the huge and delicate plastic bags. Most of the total of 270 flights so far made have been launched at Camp Ripley near Little Falls, Minn., and at University Airport, Minneapolis, Minn.

Enough flights have been made from other points, however, to litter the country. Balloons have ascended from Chicago, from Holloman Air Force Base and White Sands, N. M., and from aircraft carriers in both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific.

Workers at the General Mills aeronautical laboratories advised Dr. Liddel that they were able to trace lost balloons by published reports of flying saucers. The big bags are engineered to stay up eight hours. Otherwise, they would be a hazard to air navigation. But some have actually stayed up more than 30 hours.

Elaborate arrangements are made to trace the balloons, for the data the cosmic physicists want are (Continued on page 64)

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