

1956 April 21 David Wrightman & John Pitt
visited the Air Ministry in London
PROJECT 1947

CROSS REFERENCE/DOCUMENT SOURCE

See also these files/cases Uranus (Magazine

June 56, Dec 56 Sept/Oct 1958

INTCAT 1955

Possible Information
Also in the Holdings of:

Other References/Publications ~~1955~~

1955-10-26 UK Scotland Kirkcubright

Balmacellan CElla Brazier

Source of Document:

Condon Papers (APS) Menzel Papers (APS) Keyhoe Archives/FUFOR

Musgraves CUFOS web site NICAP

CSI (LA) CSI (NY) CSI(NZ)/Fulton/Bott

McDonald(UAriz) McDonald (Keyhoe Arch.) McDonald (CUFOS)

AFHRA (Maxwell AFB) FOIA(_____)

Archives I(Location: _____)

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Project SIGN(Microfilms) Project SIGN/Grudge (Investigative files)

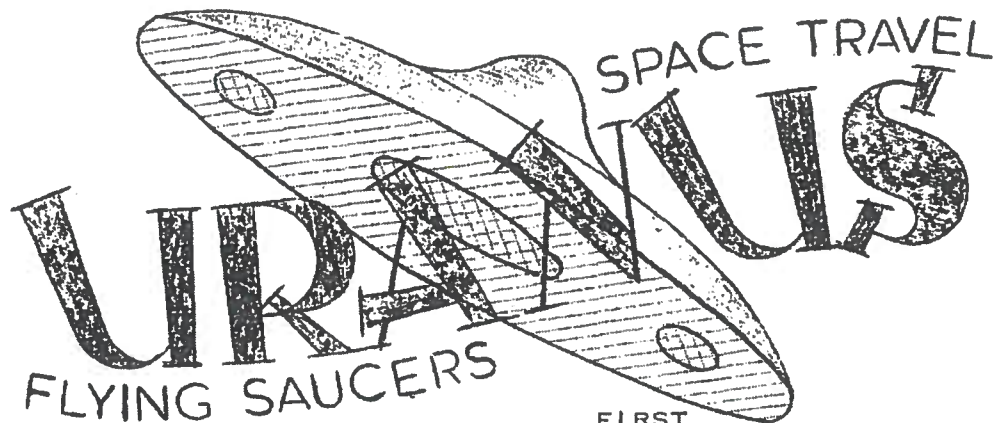
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NOTES:

Extract



EDITED BY DAVID WIGHTMAN

FIRST
EDITOR: E. BIDDLE

Vol. 2 No. 6 (12)

June, 1956

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was a short lived glory. A technically minded MP said that they were surely "all balloony" and that, was that. The A.M. has made its excuses for not making public the results of its five year long investigation into the matter. I myself have already made two attempts to obtain information from them but only received one of their stock letters: "As you probably know, we investigate all reports of such sightings and up to now 95% have proved to be natural phenomena. The other 5% we have not been able to ascertain."

To sum up: The position in this country at the present moment is one of stalemate. Apart from a few infrequent spasmodic outbursts of sightings, viz. "What blazed over Britain", the powers that be have adopted a policy of silence and have achieved a degree of success that must turn officials at the Pentagon in Washington green with envy. They have indeed managed to keep the public opinion in flying saucers at a minimum.

It is difficult to state just how many research organisations - apart from Bristol - exist in Britain. There is an active group at Wigan, and another in Liverpool. This latter one is understood to be behind the "PLAN" announced in "Destiny". No results have been announced so far the reason given being that the "Time is not yet ripe for success". We await further details with interest.

If any organisation or group feels that they have been omitted, will they please write to me giving details.

THE AIR MINISTRY TALKS ON "FLYING SAUCERS"

On the 9th of April I wrote to the Air Ministry in London requesting an interview with an officer who was conversant with the "Flying Saucer Mystery". Not so very long ago, the very idea of doing this would immediately have resulted in one being labelled "daft". But time and an awful lot of very convincing reports of "U.F.O's" (Unidentified Flying Objects, the military term for "Flying Saucers") have changed things more than somewhat. In short, my request was granted and I travelled down to

London in the (very) small hours of the morning full of optimism.

I had arranged to meet a fellow "Saucerer" on the A.M. steps at 10 a.m. We met as arranged and marched boldly up the imposing looking steps and through the glass doors. We were directed to the left and came to a quite ordinary looking "enquiry desk". Our appointment was confirmed so we wended our hopeful way up an escalator, into a lift (self operated) and up another four floors. On this floor we "encountered" another desk and here we had to fill in a form. This done to the gentleman's satisfaction we were taken along more corridors until we at last arrived at the office.

Inside was an ordinary (everything was ordinary in the A.M.) desk which was occupied by three or four telephones and a handsome looking individual, dressed in "civvies". Somehow it wasn't quite what I had expected but we were invited to "pull up a couple of chairs and make ourselves comfortable."

So our interview which lasted for over two hours began. I WASN'T "tongue-tied" as I expected to be and the questions simply flowed out in orderly array. For me to recite all the questions we asked the officer would simply confuse the layman; they weren't technical questions but to anyone who hadn't made a study of saucer sightings they wouldn't mean anything at all.

My first question concerned a sighting which took place in Scotland only last October; October 28th to be exact. The object came to within twenty yards of the observer at an altitude of only 50ft. I was especially interested in this sighting for I had investigated it personally. However I was doomed to disappointment. I had sent all the details of the case I had obtained to the A.M. some time ago but in answer to my question regarding the result of their investigation I was told that the A.M. does not investigate "second hand sighting reports." I was rather surprised at this for the A.M. had actually asked me for further details. We made arrangements to have photostatic copies of letters written to me by the person concerned, these would be forwarded to the A.M; the red tape would be cut and the wheels of

investigation set in motion. I was promised that such results that COULD be released would be sent on to me. I had to be content at that.

We also had to be content with promises concerning two other sightings. We wanted the results of the A.M.'s investigation into the sighting made by young Steven Darbshire who lives near Coniston in Lancashire. This sighting you will remember was remarkable because of the photograph Steven obtained. The second sighting was that made by a "part time" R.A.F. flyer. He was Flt. Lt. Salandin. "The thing had a bun shaped top, a flange like two saucers in the middle and a bun underneath. It could not have been very far off for it more than filled my windscreen." This was part of Salandin's statement. The "man from the A.M." didn't know the answer to either of these two sightings. We did get a promise of any forthcoming information however. I was beginning to feel a little disgruntled, we were doing all the talking and getting nowhere at all. Maybe we were giving HIM information?

I decided to stick to sightings however, surely I would get an answer sometime. I asked about another "air to air" sighting. This time it involved the pilot and co-pilot of a Portugese "Skymaster" which was flying between Dunsfold and Epsom. Following is the pilot's description: "it was long, shaped like a cigar and silvery as though made from aluminium. It flashed past, just under our nose and at tremendous speed."

I DID get an answer to this one, but it nearly resulted in me falling from my chair. "Yes, that sighting was investigated, I was told, the A.M. is quite satisfied that what the pilot actually saw was one of those long toy balloons." To the layman this doesn't seem to fit: to the serious saucer student it sounds just plain "daft". I couldn't accept this and I made great haste to say so. I went at length into the details why I couldn't accept it. A restatement of the first reply was my only reward.

We tried two more sightings and the pattern changed somewhat. Answers we got all right but were told we mustn't repeat them let alone print the information we had been given. This was because the answers contained

secret material. The quotation regarding the official secrets act was duly recited and there the matter ended.

I was still on sightings and I decided to try my luck with the "Thing Which Blazed Over Britain." Many of you will remember this incident. It occurred on March 24th, 1955. It hit the headlines in many newspapers the next day. It was given various descriptions and was seen from many different parts of Britain. Quite a number of witnesses described it changing colours, "Red, turning blue or green" was the description given in the Manchester "Daily Dispatch." A certain amount of evidence tended to show that it changed direction. Arthur Constance was so convinced that he had something that he made up an 18,000 word report and presented it to the A.M. So, I popped the question. I received the answer I might have expected. It was a meteor, Greenwich observatory said so. I had no intentions of arguing with the Greenwich observatory at that moment so that too I let drop.

I tried just one more sighting: that which took place at the glider championships at Lasham in Kent. It hadn't been reported to the A.M.

I changed my method of attack (if you could call it that at its best).

The following are most of the other points we covered:

1) The A.M. do NOT co-operate with other countries on the saucer problem. I listed five other countries which had official investigations in progress. There was no comment from the A.M.

2) I asked for NUMBERS of cases solved and unsolved so that some significance could be drawn from the percentages published by the A.M. Percentages by themselves, I remarked meant nothing at all. "Numbers are not available", said the A.M.

3) There is NOT a separate body within the A.M. which investigates U.F.O's.

I was mildly surprised at one statement and this was that the Ministry were most anxious to avoid the development of a similar situation to that which prevailed in the U.S.A. at the moment.

I asked, out of curiosity more than anything else if he (the official) was privately interested in the subject. He replied in the negative but added that this was probably because he was so indoctrinated with official procedure. (He had held his present post since 1946). He didn't know any other A.M. officials who were privately interested either.

He didn't think there was much chance of the report made out by the A.M. ever being made public.

Looking back on the whole interview; it was obvious that he hadn't told us all that he knew. Most of the answers came from "stock".

We were both reminded that to print anything we had been told not to could land us in serious trouble and what is more, our chances of obtaining further interviews at the A.M. would be zero. One thing is certain: The A.M. ARE SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN THE SAUCER PROBLEM, and they will continue to investigate all reports of U.F.O's.

We were shown to the door at approximately 12.40 p.m. and left after being invited to, "call again if you think we can help you." The promise of information on the three sightings we had asked about was also renewed. I am now anxiously awaiting those reports.

D. Wightman.

CATACLYSM HAS BEGUN

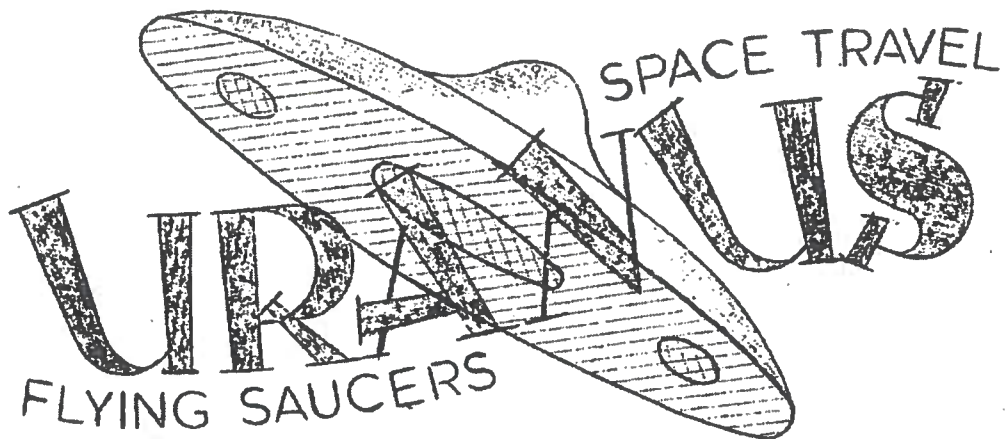
The Editor,
URANUS.

Surbiton,
12th April, 1956.

Dear Sir,

On the strength of your recently published controversy on "Cataclysm has begun" I purchased, at rather an unnecessarily high price, a copy for myself. Frankly I was disappointed. Not only was I almost convinced that the Author has jumped to an inexcusable conclusion, but I put the book down feeling that here indeed was proof that the dreary old world would continue orbiting for several million years without any major changes taking place.

Extract



FIRST EDITOR: E. BIDDLE

EDITED BY DAVID WIGHTMAN

Vol. 3, No.3

December, 1956

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surrounding the centre piece, appeared not to be attached to it, as there was a gap between them measuring about two feet."

"I must say we were very much surprised at the sight of these objects, and officers and men crowded the deck staring as if they were hypnotized. As the "whole show" took only 80 seconds it was impossible to form a sober judgment. Their origin seems to be a puzzle; technically they seemed far above anything we knew. We all thought immediately that they were Flying Saucers. I intended to give an order to go at them full ahead and if possible get alongside them but the buzzing sound became higher and more urgent until the pitch was so high that it could not be heard any longer. The two discs mounted horizontally, turned sideways at about 300 ft and disappeared in twenty seconds at a speed which I estimate to be at about 2,000 m.p.h. At the same time a reddish glow surrounded the objects. The Admiralty declared that the sighting was to be treated seriously and the evaluation of it would take some time."

OFFICIALDOM - COMPLACENCY!

On 21st April of this year your editor accompanied by Mr. John Pitt visited the Air Ministry in London, an appointment having previously been obtained. The object of the visit was to obtain official information concerning sightings of U.F.O's - reports, which having been made by experienced observers or having been seen under such circumstances as to render them unexplainable by the usual "stock answers". As has been evidenced in a previous issue of URANUS (June - Vol. 2, No. 6) little or no satisfaction was gained from a discussion which lasted over two hours - "long toy balloons" and "meteors" were the order of the day. The report which did appear in this magazine was purposely "mild", a much more critical write up would have been a truer representation of both John Pitt's and your editor's reactions.

Information on a dozen or so apparently authentic sighting reports was sought - one of these was the much

published "Brazier incident" which occurred on 28th October, 1955 - another, the best known of all English sightings and as far as can be ascertained the only English sighting to produce a really good photograph, the "Coniston Sighting". A third report was that concerning an R.A.F. fighter pilot, Flt.Lt.Salandin who, on 14th October 1954 saw a Saucer from close range. These three sightings have been extensively investigated through one channel or another, the latter two by the A.M. themselves and the "Brazier Incident" by your editor. (Details of this amazing sighting were sent to the A.M. on request). The point I want to make here is this - we were given no information at all on any of these incidents, but - the Air Ministry spokesman promised to obtain such facts as he was able and forward the information on to your editor. A considerable length of time was allowed to elapse before a letter of reminder was dispatched, (20th June). Before that date and up to the last issue of URANUS (October) not a word, which could be interpreted as an attack on the Air Ministry's attitude to the problem of Flying Saucers has been written by J. Pitt or your editor - despite this, no word at all has been received from the A.M.

One does not expect promises to be broken or letters of reminder of such promises ignored. I think it is now time, six months after the original meeting to "expose" two wrong explanations given by the A.M. spokesman regarding two further sightings about which we requested information. Several other explanations were then, and still are far from acceptable but this is not the time or place to discuss these. The two sightings we shall refer to here are first, the Portuguese Airlines "Skymaster" incident - this took place on 24th May 1955 and was fully described in "Flying Saucer News" - Summer 1955 issue. Briefly, the crew of the "Skymaster" saw and described the object as long and cigar shaped, being the colour of polished aluminium. "It flashed past under the nose of our aircraft at a terrific speed", said radio officer J.O.Almeida. The second false explanation was that in connection with "The Thing which Blazed over Britain". This much publicised affair took place on

24th March, 1955.

The "Skymaster" incident was the first sighting we asked about to which we received a direct answer - and what an answer it was. "Oh yes, we did investigate this incident", said the spokesman, "we are quite satisfied it was a long toy balloon". All the people the writer has spoken to have laughed at this "explanation", Professor Filmer, in the October URANUS said, "A man piloting a plane who would say 'a long toy balloon - flashed past at tremendous speed' would be both a fool and a liar". A student at Leeds University went further and proceeded to draw the plane and "balloon" in their respective positions as described by the observers - he went on to assume the plane's speed to be in excess of 150 knots and of course the "balloon" travelling at the velocity of the prevailing wind. He then propounded the law of triangle of velocities to show how impossible it was for the object to have been a balloon at the mercy of the air stream, no matter in what direction it was travelling.

The explanation we were given to account for the "Thing....etc" was however "a clangor howler of the first magnitude", to quote a well known saucer book author. Even allowing for the fact that Arthur Constances' resume of the evidence he had collected (see F.S.N. - Autumn, 1955) was a little tainted with over-elaboration and somewhat hasty conclusions, it is very evident that a meteor, which is what the Air Ministry say it was, possesses very few of the characteristics attributed to the object seen that 24th March by hundreds of people. BUT here is the real clangor - to back up their statement about it being a meteor, the A.M. claim that Greenwich Observatory said so. Greenwich Observatory said nothing of the kind. How do we know? - simple, your editor has a letter from the Royal Greenwich Observatory dated 25th May 1956 which says, "We had some enquiries at the time concerning an apparition in March of last year, but we were not able to comment or confirm as no observations of the object were made here". (underlined by editor).

So it seems the A.M. is caught out in a misstatement

and if it can happen once it can happen again - maybe it has already happened. The authorities here have benefited greatly from official's mistakes in America and have clamped down very firmly on the subject. They didn't clamp down soon enough however and the best made "joint" can spring a "leak" or maybe it leaks in an unexpected place. No one expected Captain Ruppelt to write his book "The Report on the U.F.O." - but he did and contained in it is a juicy little sentence which catches the A.M. in this country out once again. At the interview last May, J. Pitt and your Editor were told that there is no liaison between them (the A.M.) and other countries. There is evidence against this contained in Ruppelt's book for in one chapter it is clearly stated that two R.A.F. officers visited the Pentagon and had with them six single spaced typewritten sheets of questions about Flying Saucers which they required answering. Does this suggest liaison or not? We think definitely yes.

Thus we come to the end of the first half of the title of this article - "Officialdom", now for "Complacency". So much for the "Ostriches" - now for the too complacent saucer fans. "Saucerology" is fast earning the insidious title of a "cult" and in an alarming number of cases the title is dangerously near the truth. The attitude of the average saucer fan in this country is one of complacency and has been for a long time, far too long. With the change of editorship of "Flying Saucer Review" comes a change of tone, a bit of "life" appears in the September-October issue, let us hope this policy is continued. However, why, oh why, is it that editors of magazines should be "voices in the wilderness"? You - the readers of this magazine, must wake up. It is taken for granted that you talk about Flying Saucers, in your homes - in your clubs - and on the street corner, why not try putting down on paper what you talk about, even if it is only a few sentences? Your editor was always "as keen as mustard" but this doesn't mean to say you should be just as "hot". Here you have an opportunity to show other readers of this magazine that you do think and talk about Saucers; we know that you do so, for

you send us your contributions when they become due, we want you to continue doing so. You may have a theory of your own or you may have a different "slant" on an old theory, let us have your views and if it is a complaint then there is all the more reason why you should write. URANUS has a wide circulation, it goes to South Africa, Ceylon, New Zealand, Australia, America, etc. etc. We haven't had any complaints so far (sorry, one on the last issue) and if your editor doesn't get any, then there is a danger of him becoming a victim of complacency too.

Oh to see more letters like the one I received only the other day. I quote, "The authorities fall over backwards trying to talk out of both sides of their collective mouth, proving nothing but the fact that they are as much in the dark as we are. They have the advantage over us inasmuch they have a hell of a lot of data to work on sent in by fools like us who go to the trouble of dealing with them in a sane manner. Why - they cannot even answer a plain letter, strikes me they know just about as much as any "new boy" who has just read "What Arnold saw". I am really burnt up on this topic, and have a good mind to write a stinging blast on this angle".

The authorities in this country are being given an easy time and the task of wakening up the newspapers to the fact that intelligently controlled craft, not the results of engineering processes on this planet are occasionally present within the Earth's atmosphere is far and away too big for a handful of super enthusiastic researchers. There is no need to tell you that reports no longer appear in the national dailies and receive only a brief mention in the local press. Thus it is left to the all too few genuine researchers to spend a small fortune on postage stamps, enclosing stamped addressed envelopes to newspaper offices. The letters are forwarded alright but one rarely receives a reply from the original observer. (The other day your editor sent off three and at the time of writing hasn't received one answer). However some reports are received by this expensive means and out of the individual reports significant points are noted and if it seems worth it a comprehensive report is written up and sent to a newspaper - the excuse for not

printing it is always the same, "too much pressure on space, sorry".

If only a small percentage of you reading this would write just a short letter to the Air Ministry, to the BBC asking for a programme on U.F.O's, anywhere you think it will do good. Before you think of asking your editor if he has tried, the answer is yes - to the newspapers (many times), to the A.M. and to the B.B.C. I received a letter a short while ago from a newly formed group in Plympton, their secretary has written to the B.B.C. who have promised to give the idea of a broadcast due consideration.

Come on readers, how about it???

BOOK REVIEWS

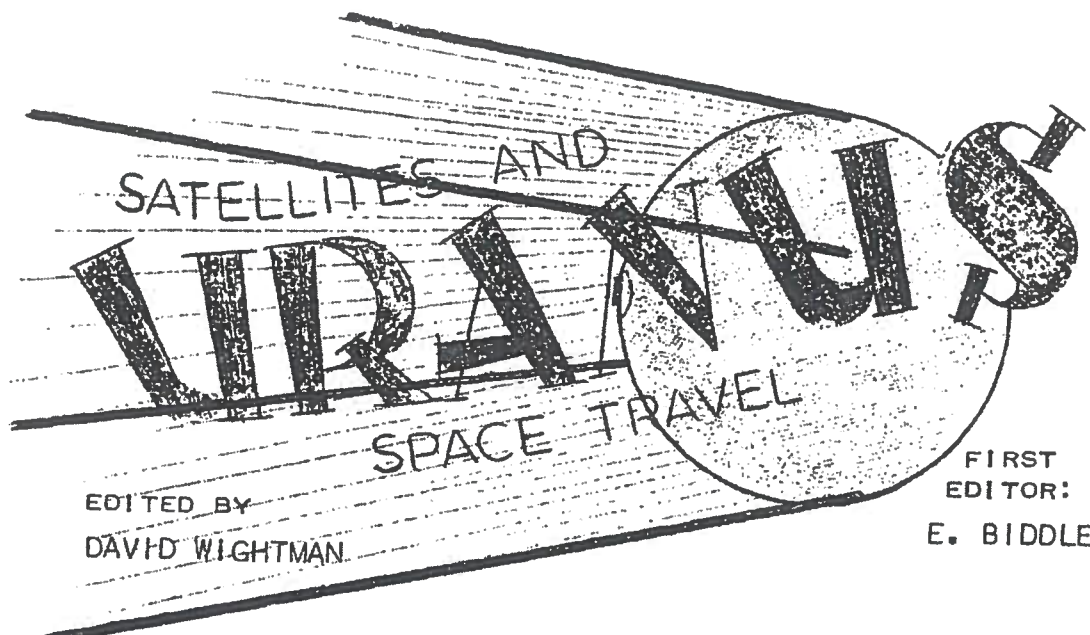
Barker, Gray. They Know Too Much About F.S. New York, 1956: post free, 29/-

With this recently published book, due for publication in Britain early in 1957, Barker has brought in a new phase of Ufology. He needs no further introduction to readers of URANUS, he is the humourist who edits the biggest Stateside 'saucerzine' the SAUCERIAN. The dust jacket shows us that he is in the film booking business among the barfcot hills of West Virginia, and that he is a big lad with nicely arranged teeth.

To date I have never read a review of a Saucer book which has mentioned any aspect of literary style. This is possibly due rather to kindness than to lack of attention. In this case I feel that Gray Barker deserves thanks for having distinguished himself in a most un-literary "school" by his extremely readable and fluid style.

To Stephen Crane's THE OPEN BOAT goes the distinction of the modern fictional opening gambit, to Edgar Allan Poe, together, perhaps, with Ambrose Bierce, we

Extract



EDITED BY
DAVID WIGHTMAN

FIRST
EDITOR:
E. BIDDLE

Vol. 5, No. 2

September/October 1958

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"Papers and records of experiments left by a noted Toronto doctor and scientists may offer an explanation to the car stopping-light-extinguishing phenomena.

The experiments were conducted from 1935 to 1952 when Dr. Cotton died. His widow, Mrs. Ruby Cotton said the doctor was conducting final experiments with a mysterious "death ray" at the time of his death. She said the rays identified by Dr. Cotton as micro-waves were produced by a complicated electrical apparatus and were powerful enough to stop car engines, extinguish lights and kill bugs and mice through foot thick brick walls.

"I watched him many times put bugs in glass tubes, turn the machine on in the next room and kill the bugs by directing the ray through the brick wall. It was a type of radar and he had it all harnessed up with underground tubing so that it wouldn't interfere with neighbors' cars".

Papers left by Dr. Cotton which he intended to publish in book form describe in detail the medical uses of the ray. Details of the equipment were registered with the U.S. patent office in Washington and Mrs. Cotton feels that someone - possibly scientists connected with the U.S. armed services may have studied the patents and continued with the Doctor's experiments. Shortly before the war a number of German scientists visited Doctor Cotton and tried to persuade him to take his experiments over to Germany but he refused".

We are also advised that in 1937/39 a German scientist living near Breslau (Silesia) was reported to have stopped motor vehicles at a distance of a kilometer or more.

Perhaps some reader will make suggestions?

FLYING SAUCERS ON RADAR - MYSTERY SOLVED?

Saucer tomes and saucerzines contain many references to radar trackings of UFO's and there can be no doubt that in some cases the trackings were of solid objects. This is easily confirmed by looking up accounts

of radar trackings followed by a Jet-UFO chase, always (to us) disappointing and sometimes with perplexing results. But in a different category are the numerous instances in which "blips" have appeared on civilian and military radar screens and no object has been detected visually either from the ground or a/c "scrambled" to intercept. The earliest incident of this kind in contemporary ufology is related by Keyhoe in his third book, "The Flying Saucer Conspiracy". Known as the "Nansei-shoto riddle", the incident took place in an archipelago south of Okinawa. During the last year of the war an American naval task force was engaged in the final stages of crushing Japan, the force's strike a/c from two carriers had been dispatched on a mission leaving only twelve planes to defend against possible attack. A flight of 200 - 300 "bogeys" appeared on the radar screens - they were heading towards the task force, flying at 12,000 ft the unknowns made rapid progress and within a short time they should have been visible from the planes sent up to intercept them, no visual contact was made either by the interceptor pilots or by the task force personnel as the "bogeys" passed directly over the ships. There could be no question of temperature inversions or other phenomena, the sets definitely indicated a large flight of a/c flying in formation. All possible checks were made but the mystery remained unsolved. England has had "invisible saucers" also, they appeared for seven consecutive days during Sept' 1954, as in the Nansei-shoto case the objects flew in formation but were never sighted visually.

April this year brought reoccurrences of this extraordinary phenomena in England and over the Arctic continent. On April 20th the Sunday Express reported that five UFO's were tracked on radar screens at the Atom bomber base, Lakenheath, Suffolk - the objects were tracked almost to the base and some 80 miles from London. No other aircraft were flying in the area and eventually a statement was made to effect that "bad weather conditions" were the cause. Several reports from the U.S.A. state that UFO's have been

frequently tracked on their "Dewline" radar-scopes but that despite rapid scrambles by jet fighters the objects have not been identified. One release by Reuter mentioned "Interference by high frequency transmitters creating artificial blips....".

Readers of URANUS will recall that your ed visited the Air Ministry in London on April 21st, 1956 - one of many questions he asked was that concerning the appearance on seven consecutive days of blips on many radar screens in the South of England. An answer to this question was given but your ed was warned not to repeat it and to do so was to contravene the defence regulations. Well now it seems the secret is out anyway; the answer received from the A.M. spokesman was that the radar returns were caused by experiments being conducted to "effect false returns" on radar screens.

And so it seems the existence of another "secret weapon" can be revealed - the Russians have it, the Americans have it and we have it. Is it going to be just one more convenient excuse for authority to shrug off radar reports of Flying Saucers? There now occurs the thought however that the latest statement from America that, "the evidence presented.... shows no indication that these phenomena constitute a direct physical threat to national security", is a contradiction of actual fact, false radar returns could play havoc with the control of civilian and military flight plans, there is apparently no method other than by attempted interception to establish the physical nature of the "unknowns".

This latest development however does nothing to lessen the certainty of the existence of solid UFO's or to affect the strength of the evidence for that fact that many of them are extra-terrestrial space craft.

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