

TIME WE

CRACKED

THOSE

SAUCERS

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TOMORROW is the 20th anniversary of the first recorded flying saucer sighting.

American businessman Kenneth Arnold started it all.

Way back in 1947 he was flying his private plane over the Rocky Mountains in Washington State when he saw ahead of him a formation of nine disc-like shapes.

They were skimming along at more than 1,000 mph. Arnold's report of what he saw touched off a controversy that is still raging — and is still unresolved.

Since then many people in many lands claim to have seen flying saucers. And almost every other shape, too, including flying cigars, lampshades, globes, discs and dustbins.

THEORIES

So many, in fact, that they are now almost universally known as UFOs—Unidentified Flying Objects.

Do they come from alien super-civilisations? Are they manned by Other Worlders or remote-controlled, like long-range puppets on invisible strings? Do they emit rays that can be physically and mentally harmful?

The arguments rage. There are many theories, few facts.

Some believe there is a conspiracy of silence at the top—and that They know the origin of the strange shapes, but keep quiet about it.

An equally held view is that those who see saucers will believe anything. This is now being shaken, mainly by reports from senior airline pilots, and from scientists, who cannot explain what they have seen.

In Britain, the R A F investigate saucer sightings for the Ministry of Defence. Not to discover their scientific authenticity, only to make sure that there is no threat to our air defences.

One thing is certain: from now on, simply because more serious-minded people are taking an interest, UFO sightings are likely to be treated with more respect.

INQUESTS

Last year, for example, of 95 reports investigated by the R A F, 90 could be explained: what people saw were either satellites, rocket debris in space, meteorological balloons planets under unusual cloud conditions, aircraft at odd angles, or trick lighting effects.

That still leaves five sightings for which there was no known explanation. This is not to say the five sightings were saucers, but that there was no simple answer.

So let's hear more from the saucer-seers. Let their reports be investigated. Let scientists of repute come forward to lend a hand with the inquests on these reports, so that the answers may be found, if at all possible.

The results of a thorough investigation could astound us all.