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Two samples of vegetation and soil from Pittsburg, Kansas, which were submitted by Miss Book for analysis, have been thoroughly studied. Examination by experts on soil and vegetation disclosed no difference between the two samples from the two areas where the specimens were obtained. Tests for radioactivity likewise showed no significant differences between the two samples of soil and vegetation. Tests were made for beta, gamma, and alpha radiation. Samples of the "Kansas" soil and the vegetation will be returned to Miss Book in the near future.

3. Consultant on Astronomy

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, of the Ohio State University, attended the Boston meeting of the Optical Society of America on 11 October 1959. The Society took cognizance this year of the many reports of unusual aerial phenomena by including three invited papers on the subject in their otherwise straightforward scientific meeting. One of the invited papers was by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, entitled "Unusual Aerial Phenomena". The other two papers were by Drs. Kennel and Liddell, of Harvard Observatory and the Atomic Energy Commission, respectively.

The papers of Kennel and Liddell, though differing somewhat in content, were identical in spirit. Both papers were characterized by the fact that numerous explanations for unexplained sightings were given without a single reference to a specific sighting in the files of the Air Technical Intelligence Center. Both papers presented a series of well-worn statements as to how jet fighters, meteors, reflections from balloons and aircraft, and optical effects, such as sundogs and mirages, could give rise to "flying saucer" reports. Since there was nothing new in either of the two papers, the trip from this standpoint was unproductive.

The paper by Dr. Hynek, in essence, was to the effect that flying saucers represented a science-public relations problem; i.e., when a sighting is made by several people, at least one of whom is an experienced observer, the mutually corroborated reports are entitled to a scientific hearing, rather than ridicule. It stressed the point that here was a subject in which the public has shown great interest. It was recommended that the relatively few well-screened reports be dealt with specifically to see whether any of the causes suggested by Drs. Liddell and Kennel are applicable, and, if so, to make this known in these specific instances. On the other hand, if the suggested explanations of Drs. Liddell and Kennel do not explain well-screened cases, this should also be made known and given further scientific study.

In conclusion, it was the opinion of Dr. Hynek that little was gained by attendance at the meeting. The results were negative in the sense that it was confirmed, as Dr. Hynek already believed, that Drs. Liddell and Kennel had not studied the literature and the evidence and, hence, were not qualified to speak with authority on the subject of recent sightings of unidentified aerial phenomena.

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