

FANTASTIC UNIVERSE

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shapes
in
the
sky

by . . . *Civilian
Saucer Intelligence*

If UFO are hallucinations
—what is the explanation
for the times when ma-
chines are affected by them?

IN *Fantastic Universe* for May we described five of the bizarre UFO reports of the extraordinary sighting wave in early November, 1957: the five cases which the Air Force had "explained." Far more interesting is the fact that of these five reports four involved what the French author Aimé Michel calls "hallucinated machines." That is, not only did the observers see something, but the UFO apparently had some kind of electrical effect on whatever kind of mechanical contrivance the observer was using.

At Levelland, Texas, at Orogrande, New Mexico, and at Kearney, Nebraska, the witnesses said their automobile engines failed when the unknown object was in the vicinity. (True, the Kearney report of "spacemen" has all the earmarks of the hoax that the Air Force labeled it; but at the moment, all we are saying is that the witness's automobile *was reported* stalled.) In the Gulf of Mexico the Coast Guard cutter *Sebago* tracked an object for 27 minutes by radar. (The object seen visually, presumably Sputnik II, does not appear to have any connection with the radar returns.)

Civilian Saucer Intelligence of New York, authors of the above discussion on "hallucinated machines"—someone has suggested they could also be called "pixillated"—is a N. Y. research group which holds occasional public meetings, publishes a newsletter, and has a large file of material on UFOlogy.

We have already discussed the effects of UFOs on radar (F.U., February and March). But what about these other "hallucinated machines"? We know that in France, during the wave of sightings in the Fall of 1954, there were many cases where car motors and headlights were affected by saucers; but what about the more recent reports in this country?

The stalled-motor reports from Texas and New Mexico on November 3 and 4 brought to light several earlier cases of the same sort. In Covington, Indiana, Mrs. Robert Moudy said that around midday on October 15, nearly three weeks earlier, her husband, a 42-year-old farmer, had sighted a flat, "dish-shaped" (sic) object hovering 1500 feet over his farm at nearby Foster (on the Illinois border). An estimated 20 feet in diameter, it was described as a "glowing, silver flying object" with a "red flame shooting out of the middle of it." Moudy was driving a combine in his bean field when he noticed the object. "It gave off a piercing, screaming noise like a screeching tire and then suddenly shot off into space at a 22-degree angle until it disappeared high in the sky in a few seconds." The motor of the combine had inexplicably stopped as the object hovered overhead; and Moudy said that two cars were stalled at the same time on a nearby road. Moudy reported the incident to local civilian defense officials (this was before his

wife's statements to the newspapers). (*Indianapolis Star*, 11/5.)

Another delayed report came from Casper, Wyoming. On October 30 two Casper residents, Hugh Pulju and Shirley Moyer, had encountered a round shiny object which "appeared" before them in the road as they were driving some ten miles north of town. "It was as big as a house, and had two pointed peaks on it," said Miss Moyer, and "it glowed about halfway up. I've been scared before, but this thing had me petrified." Pulju, a member of a seismographic crew, said that the object was not a derrick, a trailer house, or a tank: "it was something that shouldn't have been there." He tried to turn his car around, but the engine kept stalling. Once he had succeeded in turning around and had reached the highway, the trouble stopped. (*Casper Tribune-Herald*, 11/5; *Cheyenne Wyoming Eagle*, 11/6.)

On the night of November 3—nearly 24 hours after the Levelland reports of "eggs" and stalled motors—Dorothy L. Stevens, of Springfield, Illinois, was driving near Virden, about seven miles south of Springfield, when she saw "a bright light in the south." Her car lights "dimmed like the old model T's used to do, and the motor stopped." After the light had departed the car again functioned properly. (*Springfield Illinois State Journal*, 11/6.)

On that same evening a similar incident occurred in Alberta, Can-

ada. The *Calgary Herald* (11/6) provides a detailed account. Miss Edna Ireland, a 28-year-old Calgary resident, accompanied by two friends, was driving back to Calgary from Saskatchewan on highway #9, and was approximately 15 minutes west of the Saskatchewan border, in Alberta, when all three women suddenly saw a blinking light "about 15 times the visual size of a star" appear in the sky, coming into view from directly over their car. The object was headed in a northwesterly direction. "I thought it was a plane at first," reported Miss Ireland, "but it had no wing lights as a plane would have. It looked like the blinking beacon at the airport, up in the sky. It was moving very fast in a curve which carried it toward the northwest horizon. By the time it had reached the horizon it had blinked fifteen times from when it had first been sighted."

As the UFO passed over their car, the motor began acting up—it coughed and the headlights flickered. "We chalked it up to loose wiring." (The blinking of the object is similar to the behavior of the "egg" at Levelland; there, motors and lights quit when the object *blinked on*, and functioned properly when the object *blinked off*. This effect was described as similar to the blinking of neon advertising signs.)

Brightly luminous UFOs again affected car motors, in Texas and in New Mexico, on November 5.

The *San Antonio Light* (11/6) reported that about 9:30 p.m. the previous evening Lon Yarbrough, a 39-year-old civilian cook at Lackland AFB, was driving along highway 81 from Devine to San Antonio. Just outside the city, he saw a bright egg-shaped object in a field "off the old Frio City Road," about 200 yards away. The color was a glaring white "like a big neon sign." First his radio faded, and his lights went out; then his car engine abruptly stopped dead.

He had watched the white object—which he estimated was 60 feet long—for approximately ten seconds when it suddenly rose vertically from the field. At a height of about 60 feet, it leveled off into horizontal flight and crossed the road ahead of him on a southeast heading. The witness said he heard a "whistling noise" as it went overhead, and felt a blast of hot air at the same time (as at Levelland and Orogrande). It disappeared from view in a few seconds. When it had vanished, his lights and radio came back on, and he had no difficulty in starting his motor again. (UP accounts stated that the witness had seen the object settle down in a ravine near the highway, and finally disappear toward San Antonio—to the northeast. These details are in conflict with the local version of the report. Either Yarbrough told two different stories, or else the reporters got the details garbled.) Yarbrough was driving a 1957 Mercury, which

was in "perfect mechanical condition."

Shortly before 11 p.m. (MST) an unidentified 21-year-old New Mexican clerk and a friend were returning to Hobbs from Carlsbad on highway 180. About 38 miles west of Hobbs, the two men noticed a "reddish colored" light north of the road. "Of course we both thought at first it was an oil-field flare that burns in that area, as it remained in sight for the next nine or ten miles," the driver told the Hobbs *Daily News-Sun*, which printed the story the following day under eight-column double banner headlines.

"Then, while we were both watching it, the light suddenly rose straight up into the sky. We could not tell how high, because we could not judge how far away from us it actually was." As they continued toward Hobbs, the object travelled parallel to them north of the highway. "I was getting pretty scared about that time and kept speeding up, trying to get away from it. I finally reached a speed of about 90 miles an hour when the light suddenly turned toward my car and passed directly overhead while we were about a mile west of the Permian Basin Pipe Line plant. At the exact moment it was over us, my car motor began acting up—coughing and missing. At the same time the lights suddenly went out. Then the motor quit altogether.

"I put the car in neutral and coasted all the way to the Monu-

ment Road on highway 180. My friend kept watching the light and he told me it had passed over us and seemed to hover over the Basin Pipe Line plant, remaining there maybe seven or eight minutes. I coasted nearly to a stop and then tried my starter. The motor caught and the lights came back on. I drove on into Hobbs." The following morning, he said his car battery was dead and the dashboard clock had stopped.

On November 7, several residents of Plattsburgh, New York, reported independently that their cars had been stopped on Lake Shore Road by a "strange object" flying overhead. The witnesses—one of them, according to the Plattsburgh radio station, a prominent local resident of highest reputation—refused to identify themselves publicly, although the radio station presumably has their names. A brief item in the *Plattsburgh Press-Republican* (11/8) said "two other persons also reported seeing the unidentified object over Lake Champlain and passing over the Lake Shore Road in the vicinity of Pray's Motel." The radio station was said to have received more than thirty calls that night.

The really insistent question about these incidents is, why does this kind of thing *not always* happen when a UFO is near an automobile? UFO history has plenty of cases where the object came just as close to a car as in the sightings we have just described, but with-

out any effect—or at least without any *reported* effect. Some do and some don't stop cars; and no suggested reason for the difference is more than a speculation. It would seem to be just one additional piece of evidence that the origins, purposes, and operating methods of the UFOs are extremely diverse—like other details in these cases the reader will notice. Noise at Foster, Indiana, and at San Antonio, Texas; silence elsewhere (so far as the reports tell us).

And it is not merely car motors, headlights, and radios that have gone crazy over UFOs. Searchlights, TV sets, indoor lighting—these have also been among the “hallucinated machines.”

At 3:12 a.m. on November 4, for example, in Elmwood Park, Illinois (suburban Chicago) two policemen and a fireman were out in a squad car when they noticed a brightly luminous red-orange object, “shaped like an egg,” hovering over Elmwood Cemetery. It appeared to be about 200 feet long, and was slowly descending as if about to land. Patrolman Clifford Schau, the driver, mistook it at first sight for the moon.

“I switched off our lights and started following it,” said Schau. “When we got close, I turned the lights back on and then it shot up about 200 feet and went off to the west. I think it would have landed if we hadn't turned our lights on. We followed it for a mile at about

65 miles an hour, but couldn't catch it.”

He added that “our motor didn't stall, but our lights flickered a couple times. I shone the big spotlight on the object, and the light (spotlight) almost went out.” His companion, Patrolman Lukasek, confirmed this, adding that the “object seemed to be folding up like a parachute” until the spotlight beam caught it, when it “puffed out” again and sped off. When they finally lost sight of it at 3:22, “it seemed to fold inward from the bottom and disappeared.”

The radio dispatcher at the police station, Sgt. DiGiovanni, stepped outside when he heard Schau report the object, and he corroborated their report. (*Chicago Daily News*, 11/4; *Tribune and Sun-Times*, 11/5.)

Are there any earlier reports involving malfunctioning searchlights? CSI has none in its newspaper files. However, a Form 112 Intelligence Report sent to ATIC in Dayton describes the following incident: On June 26, 1955, four observers at National Airport, Washington, D. C., saw a brilliant round object, like a yellow grapefruit, approach the airport with an erratic motion. The object stopped, oscillated and then moved off at high speed. It left a trail four or five times its own length, and was visible for about seven minutes. *Ceiling lights at the airport went out when the object approached, and returned to operation when it*

had passed. Searchlights trained on the object went out when the object was caught in the beam. The names of the four observers, two of them military officers, are in our records.

Two months after the Washington National Airport incident, and during the peak of a UFO wave in Ohio and neighboring states, another light failure of more localized character occurred in Bedford, Indiana. On August 25, 1955, Mrs. Lester Parsons and Mrs. Lloyd Wright had returned to Mrs. Parsons' home on Route 5 and were amazed to see a huge white object, "larger than an ordinary room," sitting on the lawn by the corner of the house. The UFO had a black stripe down its center and "seemed to contract and expand with regularity, and as it did so, the lights which had been left on inside the house appeared to dim." Frightened, the women drove off to fetch their husbands; when they returned, the object had departed. Later, they found a number of depressions in the earth, "each the shape of a half circle," and about a quarter of an inch deep. (Indianapolis *Star*, 8/27/55.)

A ten-minute power failure affecting a four-mile area between Tamaroa and Du Bois, Illinois, may have been the result of a low-flying UFO near a transformer on November 14, 1957. Mrs. John Riead, wife of the Tamaroa justice of the peace, told authorities that she heard a sputtering noise, "like someone driving into our drive-

way." Looking out, she saw above the trees bordering Route 51, a bright moon-shaped object with a tail, or ray of light, extending downward toward the ground, as it moved along. The object suddenly emitted five or six loud booms, and several brilliant flashes, when the lights suddenly went out.

H. D. Heath, district manager of the Illinois Power Co., said service was restored when workmen closed an open circuit breaker. He said the men could find no apparent cause for the break. (AP, *Centralia Sentinel*, 11/4; INS, N. Y. *Journal American*, 11/15.)

Suburban Chicago was again the scene of police vs. flying saucers on November 10. Shortly after 7 p.m., switchboards at the local police department in Hammond, Indiana, began buzzing with calls from perplexed residents about a "mysterious flying object" and interference on radios and TV sets. One unidentified woman, who said she lived near Cherry Street and Jackson Avenue, excitedly told police that the object was "fifty feet over my house." Sgt. Charles Mauder and Officer Steve Batustak hurried to the area. They saw an object, its shape indistinguishable, at an estimated altitude of 500 to 1000 feet. Although no clear outline was seen, the officers described it as having a red light at one end and a white light at the other. They heard no motor noises such as an airplane might make, but Batustak said they heard a "thumping sound" as the

object made a 120-degree turn before departing. People in the area whom the officers questioned also told of hearing the same "thumping" noise.

After the object made its turn, "banking like an airplane," and headed toward Gary, the officers noticed that the rear light of the object turned green. They immediately radioed Charles Moore, a traffic accident investigator who was investigating an accident at 175th St., and Indianapolis Blvd., that the object was headed in his direction. Scanning the sky, Moore picked out the silhouette of what he described as "an elongated basket-shaped object," with one green light. Heavy traffic on Indianapolis Blvd. prevented Moore from hearing any noise.

Another officer, Capt. Dennis Becky, also alerted by radio, joined the chase along Indianapolis Blvd. He said that in the vicinity of 169th Street, the radio in his police car emitted a loud beeping sound for about five blocks; returning later along the same route, he encountered no such interference. Becky said that the police department had received numerous phone calls about "beeps" on car radios and television, and that many TV sets were "blacking out." (Hammond *Times*, 11/11.)

Other sightings were made that same evening at 7:40 p.m. in Whiting, a few miles north on the shore of Lake Michigan. Here local police reported seeing a saucer-

shaped object with red, yellow, and blue lights, flying in a southwesterly direction; and later that night, INS reported that Mrs. Louise Wood, in Martinsville, Indiana (about 160 miles south of Hammond) saw a basket-shaped UFO fly low over her barn and disappear into the woods beyond; but UP described the object as a butterfly with six-to-ten-foot wings, so, apart from Mrs. Wood, God only knows what happened in Martinsville.

Newspaper accounts comprise the bulk of our data, and one can never be certain that a basket is *not* a butterfly; therefore, one reliable first-hand account in illustration of any specific point is evidence worth its weight in gold. The following first-hand report of a UFO emitting a radio signal (as at Hammond) is one of the most striking examples of electrical effects, presumably laid to unidentified flying objects, on record.

It took place at the crest of the November 1957 wave—November 6—at Sullivan's Hunting Lodge on Lake Baskatong, in Quebec, some 100 miles north of Ottawa. The observer was Jacques N. Jacobsen, Jr., of Staten Island, who holds a responsible position in New York City with a large railroad company. He was on vacation during the first week of November with three friends: William Munday, William Totten, and Robert Dawson. Although they had no electricity at the lodge, they did have a portable

radio of the ordinary kind and also a portable short-wave radio "of the type used in World War II landing craft." (Both Munday and Dawson are professional electronics workers, and radio hams on the side.) On this evening they were listening to the radio, which was reporting UFOs seen everywhere; reception was subject to fading, but many stations could be picked up.

At about 9 p.m., Totten went outside; he came back in exclaiming: "There's a flying saucer out here!" The others laughed and told him to bring in the little green men for coffee. (Mr. Jacobsen stressed the fact that "the whiskey had run out two nights before.") However, Totten persisted. They went out on the porch and saw, to the east of south, a "huge brilliantly-illuminated sphere," one-eighth to one-sixth the apparent diameter of the moon. It hung a few hundred feet over the summit of a hill two or three miles away. The sky had been completely overcast for several hours, and the object was beneath these clouds. A conical beam of light fanned out from both the top and bottom of the object, the lower beam lighting up the tops of the pine trees on the hill, and the upper beam illuminating the undersurface of the low clouds. The brightness of the object was dazzling—"like looking into a gas-mantle" (they had gas-mantle lamps at the camp)—but its color was a yellowish-

white, not the bluish-white of a mantle. Because of the glare, its edges were not sharply defined. It did not flicker, pulsate, or oscillate. 8 x 25 binoculars revealed no further detail. For fifteen minutes it remained in absolutely the same position.

While they watched, it was discovered that there was no reception on the portable radio. Munday tried the short-wave radio, with the same result: on none of its bands could anything be picked up—not even the government time signal, which invariably came in clearly.

But there was one exception: *at one frequency a very strong signal was received.* It was a rapidly modulated single tone, somewhat like Morse code in effect—but *not* Morse, which would have been recognized. Mr. Jacobsen could not recall the frequency, but thought it was in the vicinity of 2.5 or 25 megacycles—*not* 14.286 megacycles, where a "mystery beep" signal from something moving in the sky had been received that week all over the earth, pole to pole.

At 9:15 the object began to float slowly upwards and moved off to the south, over a trackless area of lake and forest. It had entered the clouds and its light could now only be seen intermittently; by 9:30 it was completely out of sight, and both radios were again working properly.

On their return homeward the next day, they learned that on the afternoon of the 6th numerous

silvery specks had been seen moving over Shawbridge (50 miles northwest of Montreal)—singly, in pairs and in groups of up to ten. Residents watching on the ground had seen jets repeatedly attempt to catch the UFOs, which always put on a burst of speed and outdistanced the pursuing aircraft. Among the viewers was Robert Dawson's wife, waiting in Shawbridge to meet him.

ERRATUM

Our April article on ice-falls started off with a howling error by giving the date of Kenneth Arnold's epochal saucer observation as "June 30, 1947" (should be June 24, of course!) We can't blame the printer, who set a rather complicated text with exemplary accuracy: the boner was in our manuscript. We can only presume that gremlins put it there.

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