

CIVILIAN SAUCER INTELLIGENCE OF NEW YORK

Meeting Friday, March 25, 1955

"LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS ?"

If you believe that the UFO's come from other planets, you should know what those planets are like and what kind of life, if any, is possible there.

This absorbing question will be discussed at the March meeting of CSI, on the basis of the most up-to-date information, by Mrs. Mary Warren Schiffmann of the Amateur Astronomers Association of New York City. Mrs. Schiffmann is Chairman of the AAA seminar discussion class, "Recent Advances in Astronomy."

She will describe the planets of our own solar system and their moons, and will discuss why astronomers think there may be planets around other, more distant, stars.

Friday, March 25, 1955 - 8:30 p.m. - PLEASE BE PROMPT

Steinway Hall, 113 West 57 Street, 6th floor

Admission: CSI members - 25 cents

Non-members - \$1.00 plus tax

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A summary of Mr. Victor's talk of February 28 is attached for all CSI members. Non-members who wish to obtain a copy may do so by mailing ten cents to:

Marty Meyerson, Secretary-Treasurer  
67-90 Groton Street  
Forest Hills, Long Island

## CIVILIAN SAUCER INTELLIGENCE OF NEW YORK

Summary of Meeting February 28, 1955

The meeting was called to order at 9 p.m. by Yeaman Condict, Manhattan representative of CSI. Marty Meyerson, Secretary-Treasurer, then introduced the speaker of the evening, Mr. Richard Victor, Field Service Representative, Electronics Division of CurtissWright Corporation. Mr. Victor emphasized that the views, opinions, and theories to be expressed in his talk were entirely his own, and did not reflect in any way the opinions of Curtiss Wright.

Mr. Victor's background includes, besides work in radar and other electronic fields, eight and one-half years of flying experience as crewman in large bombers, dive bombers, and pursuit planes. He answered a number of questions about the "foo fighters" observed both in the European and the Japanese war theatres, and fully confirmed their behavior as reported in a number of books and articles on UFO's. He described them as "little silvery balls that seemed to have bubbles in them." In Europe they were sighted, between 1943 and 1945, on almost every London-Germany flight, and "they gave the pilots quite a lot of trouble" - flying around our planes, around the wings, in front of the props. Fliers tried frequently to outspeed them, even putting their planes into dives, but without success; the ff's constantly outmaneuvered the planes. Only one pilot is reported to have shaken off a ff; he headed into a cloud, followed by the ff, then reversed direction quickly and flew out of the cloud along the same course by which he had entered it; the ff failed to come out after him.

In answer to a suggestion from the audience that the foo fighters might have been St. Elmo's fire, which frequently accompanies ships, Mr. Victor said he doubted this. Although planes do accumulate static electricity, St. Elmo's fire has not been mentioned on aircraft so far as he knows. Furthermore, the ff's seemed to be intelligently controlled. They would just "wink out" and disappear; and they did not simply "accompany" the plane, going with it-they came at it and flew around it. He cited one observation by the wingman of a 3-plane formation, who was watching the lead plane closely and continuously (this was always done in formation flying because of the danger of collision), and who saw a ff approach the leading plane at 1000 mph and stop, instantaneously, within a few inches of its tail.

In the European theatre the Germans thought the foo fighters were Allied devices, American or Russian, while we thought they were German. In Japan, (where ff's were met at all altitudes but especially by the B-29's, which flew higher than other planes), Japanese pilots thought they were our devices, and we thought they were theirs. Air Intelligence, briefing fliers, used to tell them: "Now if you meet any of these things, don't get rattled--the enemy's just trying to confuse you with them, shake you up, get you nervous."

Mr. Victor expressed his personal opinion that the saucers are controlled and powered by some sort of magnetic force (the cigar-shaped objects by a combination of magnetic power and recoil power). The gravitational field of the earth is also involved in some manner. All our recent aircraft engines of enormous thrust are designed for just one purpose: to overcome gravity. If we could overcome it, or oppose it, or make use of it in some way, the resultant flight would be quiet, efficient, and fast. In fact, even at present we can use magnetism to nullify gravity to a slight extent: we can raise a frying-pan in the air in a magnetic field, and heat it hot enough to fry eggs on it. If we could construct a more powerful field of the same kind, who knows what we could do with it?

A field strong enough to suspend a "saucer" in the air would also affect the air molecules surrounding and ahead of the saucer. Since skin friction is proportional to the density of the air encountered, and to the speed at which an aircraft encounters it, the force field - reversing the gravitational effect on the air molecules - would also take care of the problem of skin friction at the high speeds reported for UFO's - speeds that greatly exceed the speeds at which the thermal barrier exists for conventional aircraft. Skin friction would also be eliminated if we could create a vacuum ahead of the flying object. Of course, we don't know what materials the "saucers" are made of; perhaps metals far superior to ours, much more resistant to heat than the densest material we know - diamond. And even diamond vaporizes at 10 Mach (ten times the speed of sound).

For the same reason the instruments in the saucers, and the occupants (if any), would not be affected by the extreme accelerations reported, because they too would be within the force field. Mr. Victor agreed with a suggestion from the audience that a force field might also be created by the counterbalancing effect of contrary gyroscopic action; he said he had a few theories along this line but so far had not been able to fit them in very well with any of his other ideas.

Some kind of magnetic field effect may also be indicated by the fact that there are reports of compasses being affected during a saucer sighting - the Fred Johnson case, for example (June 24, 1947), and times when airplane instruments have gone haywire near a saucer. Further, there is the known phenomenon that light rays are bent by a strong gravitational field (presumably also other waves of the electromagnetic spectrum, such as radar waves); this is observed during solar eclipses. In answer to a question from the audience, "But is gravity definitely magnetic in its nature?" Mr. Victor pointed out that in some ways magnetism and gravity seem to work alike. However, there are important differences also; a magnetic field both attracts and repels objects, while gravity seems only to attract them. Gravitational attraction affects all substances, while magnetic attraction affects some substances more than others; it seems to be proportional to the density of the substance. If we had the answer to this variation in magnetism, we would probably be much closer to knowing how to control gravity.

He said he thought it is entirely possible that magnetically-powered aircraft will be built on earth. Even the top physicists still know relatively little about magnetism, and progress in the aircraft field is fast and unpredictable. All our present means of propulsion are crude, and can never be perfected to drive aircraft faster than a few thousand miles per hour.

Mr. Victor was asked to comment on two special types of radar "sightings" of saucers: where the UFO is picked up on a radar screen, but cannot be observed visually, and the reverse, where the object is seen visually but not on the radar. With reference to the first situation, he suggested two possibilities. Perhaps these objects simply move so fast at times that our eyes - the retina being limited as to the number of impressions per second that it can record - cannot follow their movement. Alternatively, we may "see around them" because the light rays that reach our eyes may have been bent by the force field that powers the object. We may not even know how many are in the sky; there may be some that we never see at all - they are concealed by light itself, and are invisible both from the ground and from the air. Answering another audience question - could the appearing-disappearing act of some UFO's be accounted for by their traveling in time? - Mr. Victor mentioned the Doppler effect in sound waves and light waves; some strange effects would certainly result if we could travel either at the exact speed of light, or faster.

The "visual only" sightings are easily explained. The radar pulse "bounces off" the object it hits, and its tracking ability depends on the pulse frequency and on the shape and speed of the object. Radar sometimes has trouble picking up jets, which travel fast, are cylindrical, and offer little surface at any one spot for the radar pulse to strike. Asked about radar "errors," he said that clouds and storms - especially electric storms - do indeed show on the screen, but they are fuzzy and irregular images, and "you can call them every time." Individual birds are too small to be picked up on radar so far as flocks of birds are concerned, he had never picked up any himself - though he did once take seaweed for a submarine.

He also described two or three UFO sightings of his own. Driving across Wyoming at night, he and Mrs. Victor watched a blinking light for about 30 miles, eliminating one by one the possibilities that it was a reflection of the car headlights, a meteor, a fireball, or a plane. Later the same night, another light seemed to be blinking on and off above the car for several miles. In the summer of 1954, in Yorkers, he watched jet planes for 15 minutes while they chased a whitish light. The light seemed to be dimmer when it hovered, brighter when it moved. It would move horizontally, then vertically, making a sharp right-angle turn with no change of speed. The pursuing jets could not match this turn, but had to make a wide circular sweep to change direction in following the light. Mr. Victor said he doubted that this was a light on one of the new vertically-rising helicopter-planes; the "Pogo," although it can take off straight up because of its great thrust, cannot change direction abruptly while in the air any more than a conventional plane. (In this connection, he pointed out that in foreign countries UFO's seem to come closer to the ground than in the U.S. - perhaps because abroad they are less apt to be investigated by inquisitive jet planes.)

In answer to an audience question about the distance from which an airborne object can be seen, he said he thought a plane of 100-foot wingspread might be seen 50-60 miles away. There was disagreement on this point from another member of the audience, who thought that a plane that size would be invisible 3 miles away. Mr. Victor said it would depend on the light (in the East, where the air is hazier, 20 miles might be the maximum), on the angular distance, on the experience of the observer, and on whether the observer himself was in the air or on the ground. As for the audibility of aircraft, a jet cannot be heard very far horizontally; when above, it is easily heard at 7 to 10,000 feet; beyond that, the vapor trail is seen but no sound can be heard.

Mr. Victor's comments on several other points are summarized briefly as follows. Asked what the Air Force "really thinks" about UFO's, he said they must have some views on the subject, after all the saucer sightings they have collected. If they are hiding any information, this is because they are afraid people will panic. But they are working against themselves, because there is no reason for alarm. Any trouble with UFO's is our own fault; Mantell went too close to his "object." Perhaps "they" in the saucers have as much trouble figuring out our intentions as we have in trying to solve the riddles of "their" behavior. In discussing other cases that seem to have involved danger from UFO's, he mentioned the truck hit by an object (Ostrom case, July 30, 1947), the Maury Island story, the curious affair of the wrecked plane for which Arnold was looking when he first saw "saucers," the South American plane that vanished with the cryptic word "Stendac!", and the Salmon River Bridge burning. He thought that the steel of the bridge heated first and the wood caught fire from that, for no wood fire would reach the 2000 degrees needed to melt steel; however, we have no idea whether "they" did this for a purpose or by accident.

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Mr. Meyerson expressed the thanks of the organization to Mr. Victor for his very interesting discussion, and the meeting was adjourned at 11 p.m.