

#13

CIVILIAN SAUCER INTELLIGENCE OF NEW YORK

Public Meeting of April 28, 1956

Pythian Temple, 135 W. 70th St., NYC

Speaker: FRANK EDWARDS

The meeting was opened by A. D. Mebane, Secretary-Treasurer. Before introducing Frank Edwards, the speaker of the evening, he described briefly the history and present status of C.S.I. of N.Y. (now two years old, it has reached a membership of 100), and directed the audience's attention to the wall display of enlarged pages from Project Blue Book Report No. 14, with critical commentary by the C.S.I. Research Section.

Frank Edwards' career in broadcasting has spanned virtually the entire history of electronic communication. An aviator in the early 1920s, he became one of the first radio announcers in 1923, and has been "on the air" ever since. From 1949 until August, 1954, as the news commentator of the American Federation of Labor on the Mutual network, he was heard by millions. His broadcasts then were closely followed by all "aficionados" of Unidentified Flying Objects, who knew he could be depended on to give a full and fair account of events that would never appear in the newspapers. At the time of his abrupt departure from the AFL program --because of his refusal to submit to censorship-- he was probably the country's best-known exponent of the reality of flying saucers. Since that time he has been appearing daily on television station WTTV in Indianapolis, where he has continued to bring to the public the facts about UFOs.

Surprisingly enough, although radio and television have brought him such renown in the field of flying-saucer investigation, his talk this evening was his first in-person public lecture on the topic.

One chapter of Frank Edwards' autobiography, My First Ten Million Sponsors, published by Ballantine, is devoted to the flying saucer story, and is one of the best short treatments of the subject that has yet appeared.

A summary of Mr. Edwards' lecture follows.

FLYING SAUCERS - IN, ON, AND OFF THE AIR

(Condensation of a talk by Frank Edwards before C.S.I. of N.Y.)

Before we get into this, I'd like to say that I don't profess to be an expert on flying saucers. I don't know any experts on flying saucers. I'm a reporter. I've dealt with this subject just as I've dealt with many others, some of which were just as complex, confusing, and aggravating. I've dealt with it from the standpoint of a reporter who has found a very interesting story.

My interest in this field goes back a good many years. Back in the early '20s, when I was just a kid, I used to fly an old Jenny 4 biplane with a 90-horsepower engine and a wooden propeller --a crate, as they called them. I was a little short then, and had to sit on a sack of oats so I could see out of the cockpit. One night I was in the office of an outfit known as the "Gates Flying Service", for which I was flying at the time, and Bert Acosta, the famous aviator, was there. He was telling about something that had happened to him in

Colorado the preceding year --that would be 1922 or 1923. Two or three things that looked like "flying manhole covers" had come up to his plane and flown around it. He said these things were about 3 or 4 feet in diameter and perhaps 6 inches thick. He couldn't see what kept them in the air, but they had no difficulty at all in circling his plane. One of them even came in behind his wing and came within about 10 feet of him before all three of them zipped away and were lost to view. He said he'd never seen anything like it in all his years of flying. Then a couple of the other pilots spoke up and said that they had seen similar things, some larger than that, and some about the same size. They finally decided that they were probably "just go-devils." I never did get around to finding out what these "go-devils" were; but I have a hunch that they were what we now call flying saucers.

A few years after that, on August 5, 1926, there was a sighting by Nicholas Roerich in the Himalayas; the expedition members watched a shiny disk-shaped object, which seemed metallic, through binoculars. And this thing, too, was apparently what we call today a flying saucer.

Of course, you folks who have delved into this subject know that these things are not of recent vintage --they have been seen over a long, long period of time. But it wasn't until June, 1947, that the big flying-saucer story broke. I was on the air out in Indiana then, and remember it well. Actually, the story ought to have broken on June 23rd. On that day, a railroad engineer in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was getting down from his engine when he noticed ten silvery disk-shaped objects flying in a string, "like wild geese", as he said. He called the newspapers and told them what he had seen; he said he had never seen anything like it in the air, and he felt certain that they were not birds or balloons (or, I suppose, hallucinations); and he estimated that they were flying at about 1000 miles an hour. But that story only got five or six lines on the news wires, because newspapers do not regard railroad engineers as authoritative witnesses on overhead phenomena.

But, the next day, the 24th, when Kenneth Arnold saw nine things flying in the same fashion, that was a different story, because there the observer was a veteran flyer - a friend of mine, incidentally, and I have a high regard for him. He knew what he was seeing --or at least he could describe it intelligently-- and he made the headlines, as you know, from coast to coast. After that, things were seen all over this country, and eventually all over the world.

By the summer of 1948, some friends of mine up in Alaska were writing to me to say that they were seeing some very strange things in the sky up there. I had flown in Alaska quite a bit in years gone by, and in the summer of 1948 I went up there again to talk to these people about what they had seen, and to look at some pictures they had taken. Unfortunately they turned out to be very poor pictures--really just smears, but I had some very interesting discussions with people I knew, whom I regarded as credible witnesses. I also met, of course, a lot of people whom I did not know and for whose credibility I couldn't vouch. But they all told pretty much the same story; they were all seeing the same type of objects. A couple of jet pilots from Elmendorf Air Base, whom I met accidentally, had a particularly impressive story to tell. One day in April they were flying over the Brooks Range, under a thin layer of cloud or ice crystals at about 30,000 feet, when they noticed a long shadow, "like a gigantic fish or a zeppelin", cast from above on this layer. They decided that they'd go up and take a look at it. They told me that when they came out on top of the overcast, they found themselves only about a quarter of a mile behind the thing. It looked, they said, like a B-29 fuselage with no tail and no wings; there was some flame coming out the back end of it; and it was moving at a speed of about 400 mph. They saw no windows,

they saw no apertures of any kind, they saw no antennas --in fact, they saw nothing except a cigar-shaped moving object. One of them had some fuel to spare, and he decided to follow the thing. But just as he started to take out after it, a stream of orange flame, which they estimated to be 60 to 100 feet long, shot out of the rear end of the object, and it accelerated rapidly, and ran off and left those jets as if they were tied to a stump. They estimated that the thing must have tripled its speed in a matter of about 15 seconds. As near as they could tell, it was going about 1000-1200 mph when they last saw it, and it was climbing rapidly.

They got back to base and reported what they had seen. They were immediately confined to quarters, and they were subjected to all sorts of grilling for about 5 days. In fact, they both assured me that one of them was not allowed to sleep for 72 hours. After that, they passed the word around among the other boys: "If you see anything weird up there, keep your mouth shut, and save yourself a lot of trouble."

On the day I left Alaska, two Air Force Intelligence men came to see me. They understood that I was interested in this subject (it certainly hadn't been any secret) and they just wanted to know if they could help me -- if there was anything I'd like to know. Well, I asked them the usual questions and I got the usual runaround. But then they let down their hair and told me --confidentially-- that these things were very real. They were ours --a secret development. Could I tell people that? "Of course --unofficially, of course-- you can tell them that. Don't tell them that we said this --but we had these things timed to break just before Congress took up the military appropriations last year." Well, I checked on that when I got back, and sure enough, that's just when the story did break. For quite a while, I thought those Air Force men had told me the truth. But I don't think so any more.

If the saucers are ours, we've certainly wasted billions of dollars in the nine years since 1947 building airplanes that can't come close to the things. I don't think they are ours, and I don't think they are anybody else's on this earth.

I believe that these things are real; I believe that they are very substantial; and I believe what two groups of the nation's top physicists have said to me in writing, in documents which I have in my lock box where snoopers can't get their hands on them. I believe that these things are, in the words of these physicists, "unconventional and exceedingly high-speed devices, created and operated by intelligent beings of a high order, which do not originate on this planet."

To show you just how solid the people are who made that statement, I'd like to go back to one day in October 1953, when Major Keyhoe and I were on a television program called "Author Meets The Critics", debating flying saucers with Willy Ley, the famous German writer on rockets and other scientific matters. About halfway through the show, I leaned over to Mr. Ley, who had been expressing his skepticism about the whole thing, and I said, "Mr. Ley, I would like to show you a letter that I have with me. I am not permitted to read the full contents of the letter to you, but I would like to show you the heading and the signatures, and I would like to read you two sentences from the letter."

I showed him the heading --a very important center for the government's super-secret activities-- and I showed him the signatures -- all well-known physicists-- and I read this:

"After six years of analyzing the evidence submitted to us by the U.S. government and other agencies, we have come to the unanimous conclusion that the objects known as flying saucers do not originate on this earth, and that they possess ca-

pabilities far beyond any earth-made craft. We also believe that these flying saucers, as they are called, are operated by intelligent beings of an extremely high order."

Well, that took all the wind out of Mr. Ley's sails. He spent the rest of the debate not contesting the matter at all, but asking questions of Major Keyhoe and myself in order to find out more about the subject. The lady who moderated the show kept trying to needle Mr. Ley to try and stir up a little argument, but all the argument was out of him.

I appeared on a film show with him about six months ago, in which Willy very carefully skated around the edges of the subject. I think he was afraid I still had that letter in my pocket.

Now here's an odd thing about that "Author Meets The Critics" broadcast. Although the program was on the Dumont network, it was carried by just one station, right here in New York City. The network didn't cancel the program altogether, but for some reason, which was never explained, it took the program off every other one of its stations.

In the winter of 1949, I was broadcasting every night over the Mutual network from Indianapolis. One night in December, a package came in for one of the other announcers. He opened it up, and it was a rough copy of True magazine, with a lead article by Major Donald Keyhoe called "The Flying Saucers Are Real." Actually, my friend got the magazine in error, because it was really supposed to have been sent to another fellow of the same name somewhere else, but after we saw what it was, I wanted to use the story right away. I had only a few hours before I went on the air, so I called Ken Purdy, the editor of True, in Connecticut, and got him out of bed. I had a hard time getting his agreement, because he'd already made arrangements with Walter Winchell, but I insisted until he said "Go ahead." I broke the story, and it made the news wires the next day all over the country.

That was the first really good article I had ever read on the flying saucers. I have a very high regard for Major Keyhoe: he has done a wonderful job of research and reporting on this subject.

In January, 1950, I came to Washington. As you will remember, there were a great many saucer sightings at that time. I covered them; no one raised any objection, because when I went with the AFL I had a specific understanding with Mr. William Green, the president of the AFL, and a very fine old gentleman. He told me, "We know how you operate, and we just want you to do the same kind of job on the network that you have done before. We want you to get the idea across that the AFL is just a cross-section of the American people. Provided you do that, we'll never interfere with you." As long as Mr. Green lived, that was the basis on which we operated. I didn't devote a great deal of time to flying saucers-- I didn't bother with observations that were just repetitions of earlier ones-- as a matter of fact, I used only about three percent of my broadcast time reporting flying saucers. But when an exceptional story came along, I was free to devote a minute or so to it, if I thought it was worth it. And apparently it was; because that was one of the things that helped us, in about two years, to take that program, which amounted to nothing when I went on it, to the point where it was one of the three top programs on nighttime radio.

In the summer of 1952 I was in Washington when flying saucers began circling the nation's capital. Now, prior to that time there had not been a great deal of official secrecy. Of course, there had been some attempts to deceive you or "con you around", and convince you that all these people who saw UFOs were a little

off their rockers, or had spots on their spectacles -- you got a good deal of that. But at the same time you could go over to the Pentagon almost whenever you liked and go in to see General Sory Smith, or Major Dewey Fournet, or some of those other fellows who were level-headed and in positions of responsibility. You could go in and ask them questions, you could request to see sighting reports that had come in, you could generally look at the photographs, and if you asked about the movies that they had, they'd probably let you see them. Of course, you might not be allowed to take them out, and they might ask you not to say anything about it just now, "because we haven't reached a decision on it". I always respected those requests, because in the long run it was a good, sensible way to operate for both parties.

But after those remarkable sightings in July 1952, when these things came in and circled the National Airport --when they circled the White House and the Washington Monument, and the Capitol, and were seen simultaneously both visually and on radar-- the tune at the Pentagon changed overnight. In my book I've itemised some of these sightings. I can't remember offhand the numbers of these things that were seen, but they were seen in quantity. Then all of a sudden there was nothing more about them in the papers. The last important sighting there in Washington that made the newspapers was the night, I think, of July 28th. On that day the Air Force ordered jet pilots to shoot these things down. I found out about this order from a friend of mine at Andrews Field, where jets were armed and ready 24 hours a day, and I put it on the air that same night. It created quite a stir. Many top scientists --I understand that Einstein and Urey and Langmuir were among them-- called the White House and the Pentagon and urged that they rescind that order immediately. Their thinking was that if these things were able to perform as reported, then the creatures that controlled and operated them were probably well able to take care of themselves, and that if we started any shooting war with them just out of curiosity, when there hadn't been any hostilities on their part, we might be starting something that we couldn't finish. And on the afternoon of the 29th the White House called off the order.

That night there was an alert all up and down the east coast. A gigantic object, about 1000 feet in diameter, had come in over the Atlantic at an altitude of at least 60,000 feet; it had gone across New Jersey, part of Pennsylvania, turned down across West Virginia, back across Delaware, and had gone back toward the ocean some distance north of Washington. The jets were ready to go at a moment's notice, but they were not sent up. It was no use sending them up, because they couldn't get up that high. This thing, whatever it was, was tracked with radar continuously from the time it came in off the ocean and started over the land. What it was I don't know, but I do know it was up there and that our jets were ready to take off if it ever got low enough for them to reach.

And immediately following these dramatic and rather alarming sightings over the nation's capital, the policy of secrecy and deception, which seems to have been adhered to continuously by the Air Force ever since, was put into effect. I didn't know myself until last year, when I came into possession of a government document, that on August 13th of that same year, just about two weeks after the sightings which made so many headlines, 68 of these things came over Washington in one night in a two-and-a-half-hour period. They followed airplanes in and around the airport; they flew in formation up and down between National Airport and Andrews Field; they flew at low altitude over the White House and around some of the other buildings. They were seen visually by quite a few people, and they were of course tracked on radar as they came in, as they maneuvered around, and as they left. Not one word of it got into the papers. It was one of the best-kept secrets of the year. I finally found the record of it in a document issued in September, 1952 by the Civil Aeronautics Authority --Technical Development Report

No. 180. This is a 28-page booklet that tries to give the impression that the sightings can all be explained away. It has numerous diagrams showing how the "blips" behaved on the radar scopes, and a double-page spread tabulating the sighting reports. The case I've just mentioned is briefly summarized in that table.

An interesting thing about that C.A.A. booklet --it points out that one of the radar sightings could be explained pretty well if there were a lot of small, sharply defined radar mirrors of some kind floating with the wind at the height of the inversion layer. Of course, what natural phenomenon would produce these radar mirrors is something they can't answer. But then they go on and list more than a dozen more sightings, and anyone who looks at these closely will discover that their theory breaks down completely. For at least half of them, there was no inversion present at all when the objects came over. But you have to spot this for yourself, because the authors keep quiet about it.

On June 1, 1954, the Air Force put out a false statement that there had been only 87 sightings reported so far that year. All the news services carried it, without making any effort to check it. To put it politely, it was an infernal lie. I knew it was a lie, because I had furnished them 127 sightings myself. (I was getting them at that time at the rate of 100 a week.) I got in touch with Len Stringfield of Cincinnati, who publishes a little magazine on this subject called Orbit, as many of you probably know. Stringfield is a very competent man, and he's done an excellent job of editing his publication. When I called him, he got in touch with Lt.-Col. John O'Mara, of the Air Force Intelligence Center at Wright-Patterson Field, in Dayton, Ohio. (Wright-Patterson has always been the center of all activity dealing with the UFOs, though they like to change the name of the project from time to time, to keep the public in the dark, I suppose. In June, 1954 they were calling it Project Blue Book.) When Col. O'Mara was asked how the sightings were coming in, he replied, "This is the biggest year we've ever had; we're getting 700 a week." At least, that's what he was reported to have said. He evidently didn't know that his bosses in Washington had put out that statement about 87 reports in five months. I used O'Mara's statement that night, and to put it mildly, it created a bit of a rumpus over at the Pentagon.

When you're vulnerable, as I was, and exposed to pressure, as I was, it does not do you any good in the long run to stir up the Air Force and some of the other departments of the government, as I found out; but I believe if I had it to do over again I'd probably do the same thing, because I'm a little hard-headed about things like that.

By this time George Meany had become the president of the AFL, and things were different from what they had been under Mr. Green. The AFL had put a censor on me. They called him an assistant, but I'd been in the news business for 32 years, and I recognized a censor when I saw one. Every month, the program's ratings were growing, but I realized that I was coming to the end of my string. Finally, on August 3, 1954, they issued an order notifying me that I must say what the censor told me to say, exactly as he told me to say it. Well, if the censor was going to write the program, they didn't need me any more. So I asked them to relieve me of my duties at the end of the contract period. Instead of that, they fired me. And Mr. Meany issued two amazing statements. In one he said, "We were deluged with flying saucer mail, and we were not particularly interested in that." The other thing he said was that I was "too pro-labor." Well, perhaps, compared to him, that was true. I'm an AFL member myself, I have been one for a great many years, and I believe in the principles of trade unionism, like my father and grandfather.

But as to his being deluged with flying saucer mail, I can only say to you that it was one of the smallest deluges in history. I asked my audience one night if they wanted me to continue reporting on flying saucer sightings, because it was becoming difficult, the wire services wouldn't carry them any more, and I thought maybe interest had lagged. I got over 5000 letters --addressed to me personally, and delivered to me at the Mutual studios, more than a mile from Mr. Meany's office. At the AFL building, in my office, all that came in was 2 letters and 12 postcards. I guess this must have been the "deluge" that Mr. Meany complained of. He said also that "we were not particularly interested in flying saucers." That's peculiar too, because, only about two months before, the AFL newspaper had run a special article on flying saucers, which I wrote at the request of Mr. George Meany, who is listed as the editor of the thing.

Well, the truth is that flying saucers really had nothing at all to do with my exit from the AFL's radio program, as those of you who have read my book will agree. They just provided a convenient peg on which Mr. Meany could hang his statement of dismissal. I'm sure that there were some other reasons why Mr. Meany was so anxious to get me out of the picture, and I have the facts on that set down in my book. It was something far more --maybe. I'd better leave the word alone-- I wanted to say reprehensible, and maybe it is reprehensible-- I'll let you read the book and decide for yourself.

Actually, the fellow did me a favor. There were only three nighttime radio programs that were growing at that time --TV was murdering the rest. Due to the fact that we were doing an unusual type of program, I happened to have one of the three. But I was working 12 to 14 hours a day to get the job done; I had to cover a lot of ratholes to get the stories, and it was wearing me down; so that while I was very displeased that we had to have such a rumpus when we came to the parting of the ways, in the long run it was probably a good thing. I'm certainly a lot happier now doing my television show at WTTV. There are no strings attached to anything I say: I decide what I'm going to use, and how I'm going to use it.

Let me tell you now about a couple of the most important flying-saucer cases that have come up since I've been at WTTV.

The first is a very strange thing that happened on August 21st, last year, near Hopkinsville, Kentucky. It made headlines in the newspapers out there, and for once it was carried by the press wires --I suppose just because they thought it was ridiculous. You may remember reading the wire story about "little green men" --actually they weren't green, some rewrite man put that in because he thought they ought to be green.

In the middle of the night eleven people rushed from a farmhouse in the little village of Kelly, 8 miles north of Hopkinsville, to get police protection against goblin-like creatures from a flying saucer, who had been besieging them for three hours. Shortly after sunset, one of the men had seen a saucer come down in a field behind the house. Soon afterwards, they saw some creature coming toward the house. As it came closer, they saw it was something like a little man, about 3 feet tall, with a huge head, and enormous glowing eyes. Its long arms hung almost to the ground, and its big hands had long claws on the fingers. Its body had a metallic appearance, and glowed in the dark. When they saw this thing, the men went for their guns --a shotgun and a .22 rifle. For three hours these little creatures kept coming up to the house, and the men kept shooting at them, apparently with no effect. Some of the creatures were shot at a range of twenty feet or less, but they never seemed to be wounded; it merely discouraged them for a few minutes. Finally, about 11 o'clock, the terrified family piled into two cars and

raced to the Hopkinsville police station. The police came in force, and they searched all round the house: there was nothing to be found. No blood, no bodies, no footprints. But the family was in a state of terror, and there was certainly no evidence of drinking. The police finally left; and an hour after they had gone the little goblins were back again. Mrs. Glennie Lankford, lying in bed, at one time watched one through the window for several minutes. Before dawn, they had gone, but not until more shots had been fired. Seven of the eight adults in the house saw one or more of the little beings at one time or another.

I was in Mt. Vernon, Indiana, only about 50 miles away, when this story hit the newspapers. The Evansville Courier-Press of August 22nd printed a detailed account of it, with a drawing of one of the little men, based on the descriptions given by the witnesses -- a weird-looking little creature. Since a member of my family was dying, I couldn't leave at the time, so it was three days before I got there.

And when I did get to Hopkinsville, I walked into a practical joke, which is one of the things you have to watch out for when you're trying to investigate subjects like this. A couple of newspapermen whom I'd once played jokes on went to a good deal of trouble to revenge themselves: they arranged an interview with a phony "witness", who told me a lot of inaccurate and invented details. And he tried to sell me a plaster cast which he said had been made from a footprint of one of the creatures. If I'd bought it, their cup would have bubbled over. As it was, it took me some time to catch on.

The funny thing about this is that the hoaxers were telling an essentially true story, though I'm sure they didn't realize this themselves. Their plaster cast was a fake, but the Kelly landing really did happen. Nobody has ever been able to explain it away. 1/

Another thing that they told me was not true of the Kelly case, but it was true, as we both knew, of another outstanding saucer-landing case, that of the so-called "Flatwoods Monster" seen at Sutton, West Virginia on September 12, 1952. Two or three days after that happened, a couple of "aluminum-ware salesmen" had come around, who had stayed for about three hours not selling aluminum-ware, but questioning the witnesses about the strange experience they had had. The next day a fellow came along selling subscriptions to a magazine that is printed in Augusta, Maine, and he too worked the neighborhood over, questioning everybody who had reported anything. The few people who ordered the aluminum-ware or subscribed to the magazine got their money back a couple of weeks later with no letter of explanation at all. I leave to your imagination what agency was probably behind these shenanigans.

Well, the Kelly case had its comic aspects --and part of the joke was on me-- but there was nothing humorous about the second important case that I've had personal contact with in recent months. This one was a tragedy.

On January 8th of this year, at Bedford, Indiana, about 50 miles south of Indianapolis, the GOC spotted five flying saucers at one time, circling around. They had been reported over Lafayette, Indiana, about 90 miles to the west, just a short time before, and then they were seen south of Bedford, where they were watched by three or four hundred people. The farmers were calling each other back and

1/ For a full report on the Kelly landing case, with data obtained by on-the-spot investigation, see C.S.I. Research Report No. 1, published in August, 1956.

forth on the fence wires, and when anybody picked up the phone everybody else was listening, so they were really broadcasting everything that was going on. The objects followed the usual pattern --disk-shaped, about 25 feet in diameter, glowing and changing color from faint orange to yellow and red. They sent jets from Louisville up to chase them, but as soon as the jets got within 15 or 20 miles the objects took off, going northward, and left there at a high speed and disappeared at great altitude in a matter of seconds.

Three weeks later, on January 31st, just before I went on the air, I got a call from our Bloomington studio. They said, "We've got a picture for you of the wreckage of a National Guard plane that crashed down here this afternoon between Bloomington and Bedford. The pilot was killed." It turned out that the pilot was a fellow whom I happened to know, Col. Lee Merkel, a veteran flyer and a wonderful guy.

The following day I discovered, through a friend of mine in Louisville, that the jets had been up again after unidentified objects south of Bloomington, just as on the 8th, and again the jets had lost them. But Col. Merkel, who was in charge of the National Guard air base down at Louisville, had taken off in a P-51 Mustang, a propeller-driven job. He had oxygen tanks, and the plane was in excellent condition. He had gone up because he could fly longer than the jets, and the jets were trying to vector him in on the UFOs. Finally he reported back to the tower at Louisville, by radio, that he could see an object moving along the edge of a cloud some distance ahead of him and above him, and he took after it. According to the reports he made to the tower, it was climbing, but he was following it. He gave no description of it, other than to say that he could see it glowing and blinking. When he got to about 30,000 feet, he said he thought he was gaining a little on it, and it was then below him, and he was going to move in on it. Then they heard no more from him. A few minutes later, his plane exploded at low altitude --apparently at about 500 feet-- right above a farmhouse, and the plane was scattered all over the fields for a quarter of a mile. It was a terrific blast. I find it hard to believe that the explosion of the plane's gasoline, in those thin aluminum tanks, could possibly have had that much power.

I'm inclined to think that we have here a repetition of the tragedy of Capt. Thomas Mantell, who was killed at Fort Knox, Kentucky, in January, 1948, while he was chasing one of these unidentified objects --one of the celebrated cases, as those of you who are familiar with this subject know. I think that after eight years, just a bit north of the original spot, we've had another incident of the same kind.

It never made the papers. On November 11, 1954, an unknown object had appeared in the very same area, and Col. Merkel had chased it then --unsuccessfully. That made front-page headlines in Louisville. But when Merkel died, fourteen months later, on a similar mission, not a paper mentioned that he had been chasing something when his plane mysteriously crashed.

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Mr. Edwards' talk was followed by a discussion period, in which he answered questions from the audience. Nearly all of these questions and answers, in a somewhat condensed form, are given below.

Q - Is there any evidence that any of these objects have crashed?

A - I'm not too sure that some of them haven't. Way back in 1947, at Roswell,

New Mexico, a farmer reported that he saw something strike a mountainside and crash. According to what I was told, they threw troops in a circle all around that place, and would let nobody in for five days. Finally they came up with a picture of a man holding a little crumpled kite with aluminum foil on it-- a radar target-- and they said this was it-- believe it or not. There have been many other rumors since then of saucers having crashed. I don't know whether there's any truth in them.

Q - Why don't they crash more often, since they are seen so frequently?

A - Dr. Hermann Oberth, the father of the German Rocket Society, and certainly one of the world's great rocket scientists, said, one day last year: "I am confident that these are interplanetary devices, and I feel reasonably certain that they operate by distorting the gravitational field." Nine days later Dr. Oberth was brought to this country and sent to the Redstone Arsenal at Huntsville, Alabama, to work for the U. S. Government; he hasn't made any more public statements. But I've had other physicists tell me the same thing-- that they think these things operate by counteracting the gravitational field. If that proves to be correct, then it would be impossible for them to fall, because they would not be subject to the law of gravity. Of course, they might still collide with something. I have a feeling that that has probably happened sometimes, but it's one of those things you certainly wouldn't find out if there was any way for the government to keep you from finding out.

Q - Why doesn't the government want people to know about this?

A - I suspect they're afraid of hysteria. There was an example of that, you know, in that 1938 broadcast of Orson Welles. I'll have to admit that I was one of those who were panicked by that thing. I was sound asleep and my wife came dashing in and waked me, and she said, "For God's sake listen to this --something is invading New Jersey and St. Louis, and everything else." I jumped up and listened, and I couldn't believe that a network would fake a news show, so I grabbed the phone and called WHAS, and fortunately I got hold of an engineer there whom I knew, and he said, "Oh, take it easy, this is just a dramatization of Wells's "War Of The Worlds", and we're catching you know what about it!"

Q - How is the government able to keep saucer sightings quiet?

A - There are only three press services, and they are all dependent on the Pentagon and other government agencies for their big stories, so it's very easy to bribe them into silence --or "enlist their co-operation". Anyone who gets out of line won't get any more scoops.

Q - Have there been sightings in Europe?

A - Yes; in fact, the sightings in Europe have been more numerous than those in this country. In October 1954, for example, the sightings in France, Italy, and Spain reached a point that almost led to mass panic. People were reporting little men by the hundreds.

Q - Are the European governments also keeping their investigations secret?

A - They definitely are; in fact, the British Government announced a year ago that it would not make any public statement on the findings of its investigation; and on the same day it issued orders to all military personnel and government personnel not to discuss the subject and not to make public any reports.

Q - Are these nations co-operating with the United States?

A - I think some of them are co-operating rather closely. I think that Great Britain, Denmark, Sweden, and Germany, and perhaps Italy and France, are working very closely with our own government. What the others are doing I don't know.

Q - Do you have any idea whether the Russians are starting to break the news to their people?

A - No, I haven't heard anything that would indicate that. But I'm inclined to think that the U.S. government may be starting to break it, because the Air Force has just now released the Tremonton, Utah film made by Warrant Officer Delbert Newhouse in 1952. They've also released one taken in Great Falls, Montana by Nick Mariana. Both of these men took their pictures of these objects on 16-mm color film, and they are obviously not faked. The Air Force admits that these films, which it is finally releasing for public scrutiny, show "unconventional objects of an unidentified type." These will be featured in a semi-documentary movie called "Unidentified Flying Objects" that's coming out soon.

Q - Could the saucers be using Antarctica as a base?

A - I think it's quite possible that part of our government's present interest in the Antarctic is due to the fact that in 1950 Commander Orrego of the Chilean Navy made thousands of feet of movies of UFOs circling around at low altitudes --much as in the Tremonton film-- down in the Antarctic. And these things are often seen travelling North and South up and down the west coast of South America. They might be going and coming from the Antarctic. You remember that on Commander Byrd's last expedition down there, he found a warm lake in the middle of the Antarctic continent, and alongside this warm-water lake, in the midst of all this vast frozen area, he saw great straight black lines that "looked like blast marks." That's in his report.

Q - Has just one type of space man been discovered so far?

A - Well, I don't know for certain that any type has been discovered; but I will say this: descriptions of these creatures by credible witnesses generally fall into one of two well-defined patterns. One is a small humanoid type, as reported, for example, from Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Kentucky, Ohio, Kansas, and Georgia. The other is a sort of vague grotesque monster like the one reported at Sutton, West Virginia and a couple of other places. Last Fall, through the ambassador of one of the South American countries, I got to see the reports which his government had furnished him on some sightings down there of some of the small humanoid creatures. They had injured some people, principally constabulary, who had interfered with them. These little fellows evidently are able to take care of themselves.

Q - Did the Hopkinsville creatures display any hostility? Did they return the humans' fire --had they any weapons, or anything like that?

A - No, they did not. They carried no weapons or other artificial implements. Of course, they had long claws, but they did not seem to use those aggressively. However, on one occasion, when one of the men put his head out of the front door, one of the creatures, sitting on the overhang above the door, reached down with its clawy hand, and grazed his hair.

Q - What do you think of George Adamski, and of his reliability as a witness?

A - I have in my possession a set of prints which Mr. Adamski sent me about three years ago, and having been a photographer for 30 years it didn't take me more than 30 seconds to see that these prints were not exactly what he claimed they were. I think Mr. Adamski is probably a very kind man, but a little misguided.

Q - Do you judge Adamski entirely by his photographs?

A - No, I've read his books. I wouldn't, as a newsman, report the things that he sets forth in his books as fact without having more evidence than he's able to supply; and I regard his pictures as being on a par with his prose.

Q - What is your opinion on the experiences of Daniel Fry, Truman Bethurum, and Orfeo Angelucci? Do you believe them?

A - I wouldn't want to stand up here and say I don't believe the gentlemen. I would say that, if true, their stories are certainly remarkable. You know, sometimes we find that something we regarded as incredible a few years earlier was actually based on fact. But at the present time I would be inclined to class their stories of having ridden in flying saucers as slightly incredible --at least from a reporter's standpoint.

Q - Why don't the saucers land openly?

A - If we were going to another planet --and I think we're much closer to doing that now than most people realize-- and we found it was inhabited by people who had some technical knowledge, I think we would do just exactly what these saucers are reported as doing here. At first we would go in at night, when they seemed to be handicapped; and if we landed, we would do it in an extremely isolated place. We would then draw them out to see how fast they could fly, and how far, and how high; and after we had got a pretty good picture of their capabilities, then we might take the next step. The thing that's happening here, according to the reports, is exactly the policy that we would pursue if we went somewhere and found similar conditions.

Q - During the years that you have been studying flying saucer reports, have you noticed any changes in their reported appearance or behavior?

A - Yes, there's one thing I think has changed since 1947. As man develops more and faster vehicles in the air himself, they are apparently becoming increasingly cautious. As late as 1951 they were still sometimes seen at night without any lights on them, but after that, to the best of my knowledge, they have all been seen with some sort of lights or at least a glow, which enables the pilots to see them and avoid a collision. Whether that's intentional or not I don't know, but it looks like it. And another thing that has changed has been the manner in which the government has treated the subject --with increasing secrecy as the years go by.

Q - Might the frequency of sightings since 1947 have something to do with atomic explosions?

A - Yes, I feel that there may be some significance in that; perhaps somebody saw these blast flashes and came in to see what was going on. We think we've seen something similar on Mars, and we'd like to know what's going on there. We'd go there and see, if we could.

Q - Will the rockets the U.S. is testing now be the answer to space travel?

- A - Those compare to a real spaceship the way a canoe compares to the Queen Mary. We're just paddling in the shallows of space with these things. It's a beginning, but it'll take much more.
- Q - Did Dr. Slipher ever make public his last Martian investigation?
- A - Yes, he did. He said that in his opinion there can be no doubt but that there is life on Mars. He did not go so far as to say intelligent life-- but of course he couldn't go that far. His article appeared in the National Geographic last September, with three very good pictures of Mars, which they took at Bloemfontein with the telescope that was built down there by Morris Jessup, who wrote The Case for the UFO.
- Q - Can you tell us something about the bridge on the moon, said to be made of metal?
- A - Percy Wilkins' book Mysteries of Space and Time, published in England last year, is the most recent description of it that I know of; he doesn't say anything about its being metallic. And some other astronomers say that they have looked for it and didn't see it. However, one thing that has definitely been found on the moon, which is unexplained at the present time, is a number of white hemispherical objects, like halves of ping-pong balls, only they must be gigantic. The last I heard on the subject they had located about 200 of these things, which they never saw up until the last few years, I don't know why. Nobody knows what they are.
- Q - These two satellites that are known to be circling the earth surely can't be natural, because they are so close. Do you think they were put there by beings from some other planet?
- A - I think that's quite possible; and don't forget that Adler Planetarium reported last year that an astronomer to whom they gave their endorsement had located more than a score of objects which were circling the earth at an altitude of about 475 miles. So there must be more of them up there than we realize.
- Q - Has the disappearance of six planes over the Caribbean, as described in Keyhoe's Flying Saucer Conspiracy, ever been explained?
- A - No, it has not. In fact, over 200 planes have disappeared in a large oval-shaped area of the Atlantic. Although all of them were equipped with radio, not one distress signal ever came from any one of them, and no wreckage was ever found from any of them. I have no idea what happened to them.
- Q - Has there been anything more on the Kimross plane-disappearance case?
- A - No, all I know about that is what Major Keyhoe and I were able to find out about it at the time he was writing his book.
- Q - Do you have any opinion on the so-called skyquakes? The usual thing is that they're blamed on jets breaking the sound barrier, but then later it turns out that there were no jets in the air at the time. Do you think they're connected with flying saucers?
- A - I don't know what the answer is to that, but it's going on all over the world. It's some kind of a terrific concussion at high altitudes. Incidentally, even if jets were in the air, they're under strict orders not to go through the

sound barrier near any inhabited places.

Q - How long do you think it'll be before we find out definitely where the saucers come from?

A - I think that this year we may find out more about these things than we ever have before, because it is quite clear that the frequency of saucer sightings is greatest in the years when we are closest to the planet Mars. And on September 7th of this year, we're going to be closer to Mars than we have been in many years. The 90 days after that will be a very significant period.

At least 20 nations are working steadily and spending millions of dollars gathering information on these things. Eventually, if this keeps up, they'll either be able to make contact with the saucers or else duplicate them themselves. But of course it's also possible that the saucers will go away and we won't see them any more in our lifetime. There have been long periods before, for as much as forty or fifty years at a time, when there have been almost no sightings at all; perhaps they had gone away during these periods; maybe they had something better to do.

You know, they might decide that we're so stupid and so far beneath them that we're hopeless, and that we aren't worth all the trouble that we might cause them.

Q - But would they just go away and act as if we never existed?

A - I'll give you a comparable situation. Suppose you were flying a big plane over the jungle, and you saw a bunch of savages down there beating each other's brains out with clubs. You might circle around a few times to watch them do it, but you really wouldn't have any ambition to land and join in. And that may be the position we have reached in culture, as compared with some of these civilizations that send us flying saucers.

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