

#15

CIVILIAN SAUCER INTELLIGENCE OF NEW YORK

Public Meeting, May 24, 1956
Roosevelt Auditorium, 100 East 17th St.

"REPORTED INTIMIDATION OF UFO RESEARCHERS"

Speaker: Gray Barker

The meeting was opened by the Secretary-Treasurer, Lex Mebane, who briefly summarized the activities of C.S.I. of New York. Mr. Mebane then introduced Research Director Ted Bloecher, who described the film "Unidentified Flying Objects", a United Artists release produced by Russell Rouse and Clarence Greene, which had been previewed on May 9th by a group of C.S.I. members.

Mr. Bloecher said that this was the first serious film on the subject, and that the spectacular quality of the subject matter had been handled with restraint and intelligence. Most important, it included two movie sequences of unidentified flying objects certified as authentic by the Air Force itself. However, Mr. Bloecher felt that the Air Force's role in the UFO project, as depicted in the film, did not truthfully represent the paternalistic attitude that it had in reality assumed throughout its official investigation. The colored film sequences showing UFOs in flight were taken by Nick Mariana in Great Falls, Montana, on August 15, 1950; and by Chief Warrant Officer Delbert Newhouse near Tremonton, Utah, on the morning of July 2, 1952.

Mr. Mebane then introduced the speaker, Gray Barker. Mr. Barker, a successful businessman of Clarksburg, West Virginia, is well known to all students of the flying-saucer enigma as the editor and publisher of the Saucerian Bulletin and the Saucerian Review, the most impressively comprehensive and elaborate of saucer periodicals; he is also the author of the newly-published book, "They Knew Too Much About Flying Saucers" (University Books). In his new book, and in this talk, this noted investigator brings to the attention of the public an apparently serious and alarming state of affairs which has not hitherto been generally known. Although C.S.I. wishes to make it clear that it is not prepared at this time to endorse all of Mr. Barker's views, it feels that the incidents he describes deserve to be publicized, and that the issue he raises should be given careful consideration.

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Many people, said Mr. Barker, seem to think that nobody takes an interest in flying saucers unless he's seen one himself. Fortunately, not everyone is that near-sighted. Many civilian researchers, including Barker, have never seen a UFO themselves, but they have seen the vast and ever-growing amount of evidence in support of their existence. And many people seem to think that saucer sightings all stand or fall together: if any of them have been debunked, then saucers are all the bunk. Fortunately, we know better than that. If you subtract the hoaxes and the misinterpretations, what remains is all the stronger.

Barker didn't become involved in UFO research until September, 1952, when a strange and alarming incident occurred "practically in his back yard"--the landing of the "Flatwoods Monster" near Sutton, West Virginia. Mr. Barker gave a detailed account of this case, which he investigated for FATE magazine. About sunset on Sept. 12th, a group of children in the village of Flatwoods saw a "meteor" land on top of a nearby hill. Their observation came simultaneously with literally dozens

of similar observations of low-flying "meteors" in that vicinity, and hundreds of other reports coming from five states along the central Atlantic seaboard.

The boys decided to climb the hill to look for the meteorite. On the way, they stopped by the house of Mrs. Kathleen May and were joined by her and her two sons and a 17-year-old National Guardsman; in all, a party of seven made their way to the top of the hill in the gathering gloom. They found something very abnormal on the hill top.

The first thing they saw was a large globe, or sphere, down over the top of the hill. One boy said it was almost as big as a house. Another heard a hissing sound, and a third heard a throbbing sound "like someone beating on canvas." At that moment, one of the group flashed a light on a nearby tree, thinking he saw an animal's eyes in the branches. They all saw a huge figure just under the lower branch of the tree, about ten or fifteen feet tall, with a blood-red "face"; the lower part of it was in shadow, but Mrs. May thought she could see clothing-like folds. Neil Nunnelly, a very level-headed boy of 13, said that beams of "greenish-orange" light projected from the "eyes." The figure "floated" slowly toward the group, which fled hysterically back down the hillside.

It was obviously true that something extraordinary had frightened these people: several of them were violently ill all the rest of the night. The local editor, Stewart, verified that. He searched the hilltop soon afterward, without finding anything, but the following day, he and others found several marks on the ground, including two parallel skid marks leading to a large circular area of flattened grass. And, close to the ground, Stewart detected a strange and irritating odor.

Mr. Barker arrived soon after this and carried out a complete investigation, which led him to the conclusion that the witnesses' story appeared to be essentially true. Shortly after this he received a letter from Albert K. Bender, of Bridgeport, Conn., the director of the "International Flying Saucer Bureau," and before long Barker was the head of I.F.S.B.'s department of investigation, a committee which included among others August Roberts, Lonzo Dove, Dominick Lucchesi, and the Reverend Barrow, of Washington, D.C.

Then, in the Fall of 1953, a tape-recorded letter from Lucchesi informed Barker that Bender had suddenly withdrawn from active saucer research. Barker attempted to get in touch with Bender to find out what had happened, and all that he and others could ascertain was that Bender said he had been visited by "three men in black suits, who told him to refrain from any further saucer activity or suffer dire consequences. Bender claimed that he had discovered the "secret of the saucers," and that the visit had been the result of this unfortunate discovery, but he refused to divulge anything more. (This incident is described and discussed at length in Mr. Barker's book.)

Barker's disquiet and perplexity at this alarming episode was not lessened when other investigators began to drop out of saucer research under mysterious circumstances. Among these others who, apparently, were also "shushed up," was Edgar Jarrold, of the Australian Flying Saucer Bureau, who ceased his operations shortly after visits from a mysterious caller,* and an investigator in Canada, whom Barker has called "Smallwood" in his book. Smallwood had come into possession of a fragment of metal that had been seen to fall from an unidentified flying object, and had sent it to a metallurgical laboratory for analysis; the visit apparently resulted from this. His visitor, who made two calls on Smallwood, became abusive

* According to the Australian Flying Saucer Research Society, Jarrold's cessation of saucer research was not a "hush-up" case. See Australian Saucer Record, 2nd quarter, 1956, pp. 12-17.

when, on the second visit, Smallwood asked for his credentials. Fearing for his family, Smallwood decided at that time not to become involved with any further saucer investigations. However, at present he is again actively engaged in saucer research, and has evidently suffered no harm. Finally, in New Zealand, in February of 1955, the Smallwood case was repeated: saucer investigators John Stuart and Doreen Wilkinson dropped all UFO work after a mysterious caller took away from them a piece of metal which had fallen from a UFO, and frightened them most effectively into silence by whatever he told them.

Barker tried his best to deduce who, or what, it was that had so scared Bender and the other investigators, but was unable to come up with a reasonable hypothesis. Neither government men, extraterrestrials, nor deliberate hoax seemed to account for all the features of Bender's experience. Finally he decided to write a book about the mysterious "hush-ups," in the hope of hearing from other people who might also have been approached by these sinister visitors.

By late May he had already received word of several similar incidents. One letter was from a French saucer researcher who was investigating a case involving an apparent intimidation by four mysterious men, followed by the disappearance of the victim. It appeared that in this case the man who "knew too much about flying saucers" was one of those who claim to have conversed with extraterrestrials. In fact, according to his story, an attractive woman saucer pilot had given him a strange "optical instrument," whose extraterrestrial origin was evident from the fact that its glass lens merged in continuous fashion into its metal case. A friend of the French investigator, an engineer, said he had himself seen and handled this instrument. The man who possessed it, after a visit by four unidentified men, had fled into hiding in southern France. At least, this was the story as the French investigator had it from his engineer friend.

In another recent case reported to Barker, an American who claimed radio-telegraphic "contacts" with flying saucers was frightened by "a strange Mr. Clark who showed credentials." Another American saucer researcher told Barker that issue # 3 (February 1956) of his research bulletin was "confiscated, but we finally forced it through to subscribers"; the trouble had arisen, according to him, because the issue contained a review of authentic UFO cases under the headline, "Something Alien to Earth is in Our Skies, Analysis Shows."

Barker did not have permission to reveal the names of those concerned in these three episodes. If they could be taken at face value, they would indicate that such threatening "visits" may be experienced by those who find evidence that flying saucers come from outside the earth. However, Barker is not at all sure that the evidence justifies this deduction, and in any case it still remains a mystery who is attempting this suppression and why.

Mr. Barker concluded by saying that his chief purpose now in saucer research is to clear up this baffling problem of "hush-ups," since a solution to this would presumably bring with it the solution of the whole saucer mystery - a solution which, it appears, is known to some, but has hitherto been successfully concealed.

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In the question period that followed Mr. Barker's lecture, several interesting points were raised. One listener asked why, if the theory of "silenced researchers" is true, have such key figures in UFO research as Leonard Stringfield, Donald Keyhoe, Edward Ruppelt, and Mr. Barker himself, not been silenced? Mr. Barker agreed that this was an important point; he had certainly expected some kind of suppres-

sion after his book was published. Apparently, the saucer researchers who are still allowed to operate have not yet hit on the right answer to the UFO mystery. So far as Mr. Barker knows, Kenneth Arnold has not been "visited"; his book, however, describes some curious events encountered when he was investigating the Maury Island affair. (See The Coming of the Saucers, by Kenneth Arnold and Ray Palmer.)

Although Bender has been silenced, there are other international organizations, though none of them call themselves international. All the major saucer publications publish some material from correspondents abroad, and circulate to some extent in foreign countries. A listener asked why the government had not been called on to help trace the mysterious "men in dark suits" reported in Mr. Barker's book; Barker pointed out that the government itself might be involved in these cases, and we wouldn't want them investigating themselves.

Asked about the possibility that the saucers come from Russia, Mr. Barker said he thought that no technology on earth is capable of creating anything like what we have been seeing in our skies. However, since he has not been silenced, he added, he evidently does not know all there is to know about saucers, and his opinion could not be called authoritative. He had not heard of any further work on anti-gravitational projects done by Professor Oberth; however, a New York newspaper recently reported that some very interesting work on anti-gravity is being done. Apparently it is possible to create anti-gravity if they can just apply the right technology; they are working on that now.

Asked whether some inventions - such as the Hendershot motor, which was supposed to run without any power - have been suppressed because they come too close to the secret of the saucers, Barker said that the problem of whether Hendershot had created a genuine fuelless motor or a hoax has never been solved, so far as he knew. His book mentions one man's speculative opinion that if the power sources of the saucers were learned, it might shatter our whole economy.

Questioned about the theory advanced by the BSRA of California, that saucers operate in another dimension and are able to "cross over" to us through different dimensions, Mr. Barker said that he does not entirely discount this very interesting idea, and referred to the chapter in his book on this subject. Another listener asked about the bridge on the moon referred to by Keyhoe: has anyone else seen it, and is it in existence now? Mr. Barker said he understood that a number of amateur astronomers had seen it, but it is difficult to observe unless the light strikes it in exactly the right way. Percy Wilkins says, in Our Moon, that the 12-mile bridge reported by O'Neill does not seem to be there; but Wilkins sees a 2-mile bridge, which has been confirmed by others.

Referring to a story in Fate about Fred Regan of Atlanta, Georgia, who said he had been taken on board a saucer and cured of brain cancer by spacemen, and whose brain was reported (after an autopsy, when Regan died in the Atlanta Insane Asylum) to have shrunk to the size of a walnut, Mr. Barker said that one of his correspondents had checked the story; the newspaper said to have published the story had never printed it at all, according to Mr. Barker's informant, who went to the paper.

At this point in the question period, an interruption was caused by a member of the audience who wanted to describe his past and future "contacts" with flying saucers. Since part of the audience indicated loudly that they were eager for him to talk, he was given the floor. He spoke at considerable length and in a rambling and incoherent manner. After this unscheduled contribution had been terminated, the meeting was adjourned.