

“Flying Saucer”

COULD NOT HAVE BEEN VENUS

Melbourne, May 26.—Officials at the Mt. Stromlo Observatory, Canberra, said to-day that Trans-Australia Airlines (Government) pilots could not have mistaken a light in the sky, first reported as a “flying saucer,” as the planet Venus.

Captain G. Savage, a T.A.A. senior pilot, reported a “flying saucer” near Canberra early this morning, but to-night said that he had first thought it might be a Russian plane, but was convinced that the red and white alternating lights he had seen were a phenomenon caused by the planet Venus rising on the horizon.

However, Mt. Stromlo officials said that at the time they had reported seeing the “phenomenon” Venus would just have risen on the eastern horizon. The weather in the area had been heavily overcast, they said, and there would have been little possibility of reflection from ground lights. There had been no other bright star in the area described

bright star in the area described apart from Jupiter, which could hardly have been mistaken for a bright flashing light.

Captain Savage and First Officer F. E. Hastilow, were flying a freighter from Brisbane to Melbourne and near Canberra were turning back to Sydney because Essendon was temporarily closed when they saw the lights to the east at 3.25 a.m. In an official report to his company, First Officer Hastilow said the white light had alternated at 15-second intervals to a red light. They had been flying at 3000 ft. and the lights had been above them, appearing some distance away and moving in the same northerly direction at a considerably faster speed.

Captain Savage climbed to 5000 ft. to get a better look. The object drew away and eventually disappeared, but when the freighter's navigation lights were turned off the strange lights ahead reappeared. Replying to a radio query from the freighter, Mascot control tower said that no other plane was in the vicinity. Later Mascot control tower picked up an unusual light in the east.

Asked to-night why he had turned off his navigation lights, Captain Savage said: "At that

Captain Savage said: "At that time I was quite convinced it was some foreign object in the sky. I immediately thought of a Russian plane that might be having a look around our coastline. I turned towards it and tried to chase it, but it disappeared."

The Civil Aviation Department's Acting Superintendent of Accident Studies, Mr. W. L. Milne, commented to-night: "The last time I saw a flying saucer was on my way home from an R.A.A.F. mess."
