

U.S. Ends Flying Saucer Mystery: They Are Cosmic Ray Balloons

From Our Staff Correspondent And A.A.P.

NEW YORK, Feb. 13.—America officially announced to-day that "flying saucers," which have mystified millions for three and a half years, are plastic balloons used in U.S. cosmic ray research.

The explanation was given to the "New York Times" by Dr. Uner Liddell, chief of the Nuclear Physics branch of the Naval Research Office, Washington.

Reports of "flying saucers" started in 1947.

At that time, he said, the Navy began to use the new 100ft balloon to carry electronic instruments aloft.

Dr. Liddell insisted that all reliable "flying saucer" reports, without exception, could be attributed to the Navy's balloons.

He said the Navy compiled a list of 2,000 such reports, eliminating those that seemed overwhimsical. "This left a solid base of reports from aeroplane pilots, scientific

Minister, Mr. A. W. Fadden, has announced the industries that will get priority under the reimposed capital issues control. (Report on page 6.)

observers, and reliable laymen which could not be brushed aside.

"After investigation, we find there is not a single reliable report of an observation which is not attributable to the cosmic balloons."

A check with other U.S. Government agencies confirmed that no other research or experimental project had tested anything even roughly resembling a flying disc, he added.

The Navy's balloons sometimes rose to a height of about 19 miles.

They were swept along by

● **The Acting Prime Minister, Mr. A. W.**

They were swept along by 200 m.p.h. winds.

Stronger balloons, nicknamed "skyhooks," were released at many points in the United States. They were free to travel unlimited distances.

Dusk on a summer evening, said Dr. Liddell, would be the best time to see a "saucer."

A study of reports showed that many flying "discs" were seen at this time.

"The lateral rays of the sun at dusk illuminate the base of the balloon," he explained. "There is no chance whatever of seeing the full roundness of it because you are so far below.

"You see only the illuminated cup of the bottom.

IMAGINATION

"If your imagination soars, light reflections on one side may impress you as the glow of an atomic engine.

"The wisp of the balloon's instrument-filled tail may impress you as an exhaust. The sun's rays may suffuse the plastic bag to a fiery glow."

The Navy project was kept secret in line with Government policy on research bearing, however indirectly, on atomic developments.

"Now there is no longer any need for secrecy on a scientific basis," said Dr. Liddell.

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AN EXPLANATION

"Certainly there is no longer any need to keep the public in the dark about what 'flying saucers' really are."

The Air Force pilot found dead in a crashed plane after he had radioed he was chasing a strange sky object was pursuing a "skyhook" balloon, said Dr. Liddell.

The plane reached 30,000ft, but the pilot could never have reached the altitude of the balloon.

Reports of "flying saucers"

had previously been denied by the armed forces and President Truman.

Some reports said the United States was being invaded from Mars or another planet by two-foot men in strange machines.