

Telescopes might clear up mystery of saucers

Mail New York Office

The US Air Force was considering locating photographic telescopes round the country as an extra check on the sky.

That didn't mean it was worried about flying saucers.

It was hoping to check up on the sources of any new lights in the sky.

Jet fighters might even be equipped with a new camera "to photograph luminous phenomena."

The Air Force was cracking down on the new flying saucer scare touched off by several appearances of groups of unidentified objects on Washington radar screens.

The public dithered excitedly after the Air Force announced it had sent jet fighters aloft to see what they could find.

They found nothing.

Then the Air Force admitted the fighters didn't take off until two hours after the first group of objects were detected.

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The Air Force explained lamely the report had been wrongly routed.

The mystery made big news for the remainder of the week, produced new theories, several editorials, and hundreds more sightings in all parts of the country, two reward offers, and one photo of an alleged saucer in flight.

Finally the Air Force called a special press conference to assure the nation the authorities were still certain no one and nothing was preparing to blast the US to smithereens.

The Air Force earlier revealed:—

● It was getting an average of 100 reports a month, of which 20 per cent. could not be explained.

● It had set up a special unit called "Operation Blueback" at Wright

cial unit called "Operation Bluebook" at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, to investigate all reports.

● Jet fighters were operating a 24-hour alert to pursue all unidentified objects.

Washington columnist Drew Pearson claimed the Government had established flying saucer observation posts on its New Mexico guided missile test site.

All this showed that flying saucers were more substantial than the figments of somebody's imagination.

But Dr. I. -M. Levitt, director of a planetarium in Philadelphia, and Harvard scientist Dr. D. H. Menzel, said radar television could be duped by mirages, like human eyes.

The Director of Air Force Intelligence (Major-Gen. John Samford), at a press conference, supported Dr Levitt's view that unexplained "blips" on radar screens resulted from temperature inversion.

Dr. Levitt had another theory. He said: "We are now a leading Power. Could it be that we are moving at a higher psy-

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chological pitch because of our world position—that we have more to lose and nothing to gain—and that we are reading fearful implications into phenomenon which normally wouldn't be noticed?"

Wealthy Temus Bright, of Ohio, offered \$5,000 (£A2,232) reward "for evidence corroborating the existence of flying saucers."

The Amarillo Daily News offered \$500 (£A223) for information leading to a photo of a genuine flying saucer.