

# **A Novel Explanation**

## **"Flying Saucer" Puzzle**

### **TEMPERATURE INVERSIONS**

Washington, December 10.

An official explanation of flying saucers was given to-day. The Civil Aeronautics Administration said that flying saucers were a temperature phenomenon — not visitors from space. The Department is still urging further study of the matter. It stated that its technical development and evaluation centre at Indianapolis undertook a study of "flying saucers" after a flood of reports from aircraft traffic control towers.

In July the Chief of Air Force Intelligence (Major-General John Sanford) claimed that the Air Force had checked from 1,000 to 2,000 flying saucer reports without finding anything that might menace the United States.

#### **Many Reports Investigated**

The Civil Aeronautics Administration said it had investigated scores of reports made by the control towers at Washington, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Minneapolis and New York. In checking back the reports

In checking back the reports against weather bureau records it found that a temperature inversion almost always existed when such objects appeared on the radar screens. Temperature inversions resulted when air, which had been cooling with increased altitude, suddenly started becoming warmer, creating a layer of warm atmosphere on top of a mass of cool air. This produced a refracting surface, causing reflections which travelled with the wind at or near the temperature inversion levels and ultimately ran into radar screens.

These areas, possibly atmospheric eddies created by the shearing action of dissimilar air strata, were not of sufficient density to produce direct returns (on the radar) but could bend the radar beam downward to give a ground return, it was added.