

# **FLYING SAUCER MYSTERY SOLVED?**

**WASHINGTON, August 25.**—The magazine, "Aviation Week," published a new report today on what the United States Air Force has found out about the upper atmosphere with "Moby Dick" balloons—whale-like bags which have often been mistaken for flying saucers.

Since the helium filled balloons made their appearance three years ago, the magazine said, many of the "saucer" sightings had coincided with their logged ascents and charted courses.

In an article based on the latest information from the Air Force, "Aviation Week" told why the balloons were taken for flying saucers.

The magazine gave this account of the experiments: The

shiny surface of the plastic balloons is an excellent reflector of light. Long after the sun has set, they shine brilliantly with light reflected from the sun at altitudes of from 90,000 ft to 100,000 ft, almost 20 miles up. Vapour dust or other foreign particles in

or other foreign particles in the atmosphere makes the light appear white, red, purple or green.

### **SPEED DECEPTIVE**

Because of the difficulty of judging speed at high altitudes the balloons sometimes seem to be racing at a tremendous speed, whereas they actually are moving at 60 miles an hour or less.

One evening after sunset, many units of the Strategic Air Command in Texas were kept busy trying to catch and shoot down a flying object which was actually a "Moby Dick" drifting along in a glow of dust-refracted sunlight.

B36 crews, accustomed to flying at high altitudes, gave up the chase when they were

up the chase when they were left behind. Jet fighters stalled trying to pursue the object above their ceilings.

**The Air Force started the balloon programme in 1950. Much valuable research has been accomplished and more is expected before the programme is scheduled to end early next year.**

The balloon flights have confirmed the fact that air currents travel in opposite directions at different altitude layers. The prevailing wind moves from west to east across the United States at about 50,000 ft, but about 10,000 ft higher the flow is sometimes the reverse.