

VFW Commander Expects Word From Washington on 'Secret'

By The Associated Press

Military planes in at least two sections of the country were held in readiness today to chase "flying saucers" in an attempt to end the mystery over the speeding objects reported seen in 33 states.

A P-51 jet plane was waiting at Murco army air field in Murco, Calif., to pursue any "saucers" sighted in that area. Six P-51s were in readiness at Portland, Ore., where scores of the mystery discs have been reported in the past two weeks. Photographic equipment was being added to the P-51s.

This development followed a day in which new reports of the discs came in from coast to coast and scientists and military men said they were baffled by the phenomenon.

The army and navy said the discs were not any of their experimental planes.

David Lilienthal, chairman of the atomic energy commission and atomic energy scientist, asserted that their experiments had no connection with the saucers.

The California institute of technology denied an earlier report that one of its scientists had suggested the saucers might be experiments in "transmutation of atomic energy." Dr. C. C. Lauritsen, head of the school's nuclear physics department, said he believed the discs "have nothing to do with nuclear physics."

The earlier report, quoting an unnamed Caltech scientist, was published in the Los Angeles Evening Herald and Express. The report was called "gibberish" by Dr. Harold Urey, atom scientist at the University of Chicago.

At Columbus, Ohio, Louis E. Starr, national commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, asserted at a VFW convention that he was expecting information from Washington about "the fleets of flying saucers." "Too little is being told to the people of this country," Starr declared.

Two Chicago astronomers said the discs are probably "man-made." "The undulating, flashing objects 'couldn't be meteors," said Dr. Girard Klumper, director of the University of Chicago's Yerkes observatory at Williams Bay, Wis.

"We realize," said Dr. Oliver Lee, director of Northwestern university's Dearborn observatory, "that the army and navy are working on all sorts of things we know nothing about."

Radar to Moon Secrecy Noted

Lee said the discs might represent the same sort of thing as sending radar signals to the moon, one of the greatest technological achievements of the war and accomplished in absolute secrecy.

Col. E. J. Clark, commanding officer of the Hanford Engineering Works in the Pacific northwest where the largest saucer influx has been reported, said the saucers were not coming from the atomic plant there.

"I have been waiting for someone to tie the discs to the Hanford atomic plant," he said. "But he declared that as far as he knew no experiments were underway there which would solve the mystery. Credence in the saucers - widely laughed off at their first reported appearance June 25 - grew as hundreds of observers, many of them trained fliers, reported seeing them.

A crowd of 200 observed a disc at Hauser Lake, Idaho, on the fourth of July. A group of 60 picnickers saw them at Twin Falls, Idaho. And in Portland, Ore., so many residents witnessed them that same day that the police department sent out an all-cars broadcast.

A United Air Lines pilot of 14 years experience walked up the ramp to his plane at Boise, joking that "I'll believe in these discs when I see them." Ten minutes later he radioed, shaken, from his plane that he had spotted five of them.

Witnesses in two points of California and in Spokane - one of them an army air force sergeant - reported seeing the discs Saturday.

Near unanimity was recorded on some of the discs characteristics - terrific speed, bright reflections, round or oval in shape, flat, and by flying with a peculiar undulating motion. Six was most expressed by Capt. Smith of United Air Lines as "hard to judge" without knowing the distance from the observer to the object.

Army Admits 'We're Mystified'

An army air force spokesman in Washington on July 2 said there was not enough fact to "warrant further investigation," but the air materiel command at Wright Field, Dayton, O., said it was making a study. Saturday at Washington an army researcher admitted "We're mystified," and the navy said it had no theories.

Meanwhile Kenneth Arnold, the man who first reported them, could recall his insistence when his report was widely questioned, that "I don't believe it either - but I saw it."

Col. A. L. Dutton, commanding officer of the Oregon national guard, announced Saturday night that the guard's squadron would attempt to photograph any future apparitions of the discs. He said six P-51 fighter planes, equipped with gun and telescope cameras, would be kept ready to take off on a moment's notice.

Some thought the situation similar to that in Sweden last year, when mystery missiles were reported over that country, and Dr. A. A. Knowlton, Reed college physics professor in Portland, Ore., commented: "There is a great possibility that the flying visitors are the result of secret experiments with guided missiles, either by our own or foreign governments. Some months ago there were many reports of mysterious rockets over Sweden. Stories about these were never confirmed or officially explained."

1947 Hearst Evening Herald and Express noted Pasadena scientist AP denial Excellent Oliver Lee Moon Radar General Ingles Joseph L Myler UP Jan 1946 cross-reference plus Sweden Floyd L Parks Army Information Pentagon Oregon Statesman OR July 6

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