

Says "Flying Saucers" Were Used in Cosmic Ray Studies

New York, Feb. 14. (P)—A navy official confirmed yesterday that "flying saucers" really exist but actually are huge plastic balloons used in high altitude cosmic ray studies.

Dr. Urner Liddel, chief of the nuclear physics branch of the office of naval research, made this disclosure in an article in the current *Look* magazine.

Liddel, in Washington, discussed the *Look* story further when newsmen queried him.

The navy balloons, Liddel declared, were 100 feet in diameter and sometimes rose to a height of 19 miles. He added that winds might sweep them along at 200 miles an hour.

At dusk, the slanting rays of the sun lighted up the balloons' bottoms, giving them the saucer-like appearances, Liddel said.

He added that many of the disks were sighted as the sun set.

Liddel said the existence of the big balloons was kept secret because the project was connected with atomic developments.

Liddel, who was in charge of the balloon tests, said they carried instruments to record the results of collisions between cosmic rays and atoms in the earth's atmosphere.

He added that secrecy was "no longer" necessary.

The physicist said 2,000 reports of "flying saucers" were checked, and those considered "whimsical" were eliminated. Of the "reliable" reports, he said "there is not a single observation which is not attributable to the cosmic balloons."

These balloons, called skyhooks by the navy, were first used in 1947, about the time the disks were first sighted. Liddel said reports of "flying" saucers increased or decreased in proportion to the number of balloons sent aloft.

Liddel said he was convinced that a "saucer" photographed at 77,000 feet altitude over Minnesota was a skyhook.

Novelist Lloyd Douglas Dies of Heart Disease

Los Angeles, Feb. 14. (P)—Lloyd C. Douglas, 73, author of some of the most controversial and widely read religious novels of the century, died last night of heart disease.

He had suffered from arthritis since 1944 and his condition had grown steadily worse in recent months. He was admitted last Sunday to Good Samaritan hospital, where he died.

Douglas' greatest books were "The Magnificent Obsession," his first, published in 1929, and "The Robe," printed in 1942. In the period between them were numerous best sellers, including "Green Light," "White Banners" and "Disputed Passage," which were filmed.

Actor Has Pneumonia

Hollywood, Feb. 14. (P)—Actor Clifton Webb has been a-bed a week and probably has another week to go. He is ill with virus pneumonia, his doctor disclosed yesterday.



—Acme Telephoto

FLYING SAUCERS? After examining evidence, Dr. Urner Liddel of Office of Naval Research, has concluded that a "flying saucer" is the base of a huge balloon, 100 feet in diameter, called a "Skyhook." These balloons, used

in cosmic ray research, reach speeds of 200 miles per hour. In left-hand photograph one of the balloons is pictured through a telescope; at right, another partly inflated. (Look Magazine photographs from the University of Minnesota).

Scientist Lifts Secrecy

**Flying Saucers Solved!
Skyhooks in Ray Study**

By ALTON L. BLAKESLEE

New York—(AP)—Flying saucers are real—but they're only huge balloons used in cosmic ray studies, Look Magazine will say today, quoting Dr. Urner Liddel.

Dr. Liddel, chief of the nuclear physics branch of the Office of Naval Research, is in charge of the cosmic ray-balloon project.

The balloons are huge plastic bags, 100 feet in diameter, that may rise 19 miles high—about 100,000 feet. Winds may sweep them along at 200 miles an hour. At dusk, the slanting rays of the sun light up their bottoms, giving them a saucer-like appearance, the article says.

They carry instruments aloft to record what happens when cosmic rays hit atoms in the earth's atmosphere. This splitting gives clue to how atoms are put together, and how to release their energy.

"When this project first began it was kept secret," the magazine quotes Dr. Liddel. "Now there is no longer any need for secrecy on a scientific basis. And certainly, there is no longer any need to keep the public in the dark about what flying saucers are."

Balloons Called Skyhooks

The balloons, called skyhooks, were first sent aloft in 1947, and, it was then that flying saucer reports began, it adds. There were more balloons in the next two years and more "saucers" seen. There were fewer balloons sent up in 1950, and fewer saucers reports.

A picture, taken by telescope of a balloon at 77,000 foot altitude over Minnesota, convinced Dr. Liddel even more, the magazine says. The photo fits descriptions of flying saucers.

At dusk on a cool Summer evening is the best time to see the balloon "saucer," it adds.

"The lateral rays of the sun at dusk illuminate the base of the balloon. There is no chance of your ever seeing the full roundness of it because you are so far below it. You see only the illuminated cup of the bottom. If your imagination soars, the light reflection 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 the exhaust. The sun's rays must suffuse the plastic bag with a fiery glow.

"Even seasoned airmen have no way of estimating the size and speed of an object they see. To peg size and speed, the mind must know the nature of the object."

Look says Dr. Liddel and associates studied 2,000 reports of flying saucers, eliminating those "seeming to be the visions of crackpots or psychopaths" or "clearly the result of inaccurate vision." One report of "little men" found in the wreckage of a saucer near Mexico City turned out to be the unsubstantiated story of a traveler, it adds.

"This left a solid base of reports from airplane pilots, scientific ob-

servers and reliable laymen which could not be brushed aside. After a thorough investigation, Dr. Liddel said: "There is not a single reliable report of an observation which is not attributable to the cosmic balloons."

It quotes Dr. Liddel as saying that Capt. Thomas F. Mantell, Air Force pilot found dead in his crashed plane after radioing that he was pursuing a strange sky object, was chasing "a balloon of the skyhook type."

There have been several reports of squadrons of flying disks, and "this is explained by Dr. Liddel as clusters of 20 to 30 balloons 10 to 15 feet in diameter, which are sometimes used in place of the huge skyhook."

Dr. Liddel checked other government agencies and "is satisfied that no other research or experimental project has utilized anything even roughly resembling a flying saucer."

Look calls Liddel's analysis "the first government disclosure of what is considered to be the real cause" of flying saucers.

New Yorker in House Asks Cage 'Fix' Quiz

Washington—(AP)—Representative Heller (D., N. Y.) asked the House yesterday to create a five-man committee to investigate the "fixing" and "attempted fixing" of college basketball games. The committee would report "as soon as practical."

Under the Heller legislation, the special committee also would investigate the illegal sales of narcotics to minors.

France Restricts Satellite Diplomats

Paris—(AP)—France imposed rigid restrictions yesterday on the movements of diplomats from three Soviet satellite countries.

The clampdown, in retaliation for similar treatment of French envoys in the Communist countries, affects envoys from Romania, Bulgaria and Albania.

Hungarian diplomats already have been limited to an area within 50 miles radius of Paris, but were forbidden in a Foreign Office ruling to visit either Versailles or Fontainebleau.

Versailles, 14 miles from the city, has been reported to be the site selected for Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's headquarters as supreme commander of European defense army. Fontainebleau, 37 miles from Paris, is the military headquarters for the five-power Brussels Pact alliance — Britain, France and the Benelux countries.

The exact limits placed on the Romanians, Bulgarians and Albanians were not disclosed but the Foreign Office policy is to make the same restrictions as are imposed on French diplomats.

The chief Bulgarian diplomat was told he could go anywhere in France because French envoys have some freedom in his country. His staff, however, must give 48-hours notice if they want to leave the city.

Official sources would not predict when restrictions might be invoked on Soviet diplomats. The Russians now limit the travel of all foreigners in Moscow to within 30 miles of the capital, except by special permits.

MALAYAN RED CHIEF SLAIN

Kuala Lumpur, Malaya—(AP)—Ng Kim Hing, 30, Communist district committee secretary of the Bakri area in Muar district of Johore state, was killed yesterday by security forces. The government had offered 14,000 Straits dollars (\$4,585 U. S.) for his capture. Five other Communists were slain in other operations of Malayan security forces.

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