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Two samples of vegetation and soil from Pittsburgh, Kansas, which were submitted by Blue Book for analysis, have been thoroughly studied. Examination by experts on soil and vegetation disclosed no difference between the two samples from the two areas where the specimens were obtained. Tests for radioactivity likewise showed no significant difference between the two samples of soil and vegetation. Tests were made for beta, gamma, and alpha radiation. Samples of the "Kansas" soil and the vegetation will be returned to Blue Book in the near future.

3. Consultant on Astronomy

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, of the Ohio State University, attended the Boston meeting of the Optical Society of America on 11 October 1952. The Society took cognizance this year of the many reports of unusual aerial phenomena by including three invited papers on the subject in their otherwise straightforward scientific meeting. One of the invited papers was by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, entitled "Unusual Aerial Phenomena". The other two papers were by Drs. Menzel and Liddell, of Harvard Observatory and the Atomic Energy Commission, respectively.

The papers of Menzel and Liddell, though differing somewhat in content, were identical in spirit. Both papers were characterized by the fact that numerous explanations for unexplained sightings were given without a single reference to a specific sighting in the files of the Air Technical Intelligence Center. Both papers presented a series of well-worn statements as to how jet fighters, meteors, reflections from balloons and aircraft, and optical effects, such as sundogs and mirages, could give rise to "flying saucer" reports. Since there was nothing new in either of the two papers, the trip from this standpoint was unproductive.

The paper by Dr. Hynek, in essence, was to the effect that flying saucers represented a science-public relations problem; i.e., when a sighting is made by several people, at least one of whom is an experienced observer, the mutually corroborated reports are entitled to a scientific hearing, rather than ridicule. It stressed the point that here was a subject in which the public has shown great interest. It was recommended that the relatively few well-screened reports be dealt with specifically to see whether any of the causes suggested by Drs. Liddell and Menzel are applicable, and, if so, to make this known in these specific instances. On the other hand, if the suggested explanations of Drs. Liddell and Menzel do not explain well-screened cases, this should also be made known and given further scientific study.

In conclusion, it was the opinion of Dr. Hynek that little was gained by attendance at the meeting. The results were negative in the sense that it was confirmed, as Dr. Hynek already believed, that Drs. Liddell and Menzel had not studied the literature and the evidence and, hence, were not qualified to speak with authority on the subject of recent sightings of unidentified aerial phenomena.

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An attempt to arrange a meeting by Dr. Hynek with Dr. Menzel and Dr. Liddell, after the meeting was over, was unsuccessful because Liddell and Menzel both had to leave immediately after the meeting.

4. Interrogation Forms

Five hundred copies of the "U.S. Air Force Technical Information Sheet" (Form A and Form B) were delivered to W-P AFM on 20 October 1952. This questionnaire was used in place of the "Tentative Observers Data Sheet" to record data on all sighting reports dated after 31 March 1952. It has proved to be more satisfactory than the previous form, especially from the standpoint of recording data from sighting reports in greater detail.

Additional copies of the "U.S. Air Force Technical Information Sheet" can be supplied to Blue Book as needed.

5. Future Work

Coding and evaluation of 1952 sighting reports will continue. A preliminary analysis of data on all sighting reports dated previous to 1952 will be given to Blue Book as soon as possible after evaluation is completed of the 1947 and 1948 sighting reports.

By 10 December 1952 all sighting reports dated before 15 June 1952 should be processed and evaluated ready for IBM analysis. Complete IBM analysis of all sighting reports will not be started until all reports dated previous to 1953 are processed and evaluated. Because of the nature of the work required, and the fact that the number of reports for the last three months of 1952 is not yet known, no estimate can be given as to the time final IBM analysis will begin. It is hoped, if the frequency of sighting reports follows the present decreasing trend, that complete IBM analysis for sightings dated through 1952 may be started by 1 February 1953.

II. RECENT REPORTS

The following reports are summaries of reports that were received during the month of November 1952.

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