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Security Information

18 December 1952

*Seen by
Stovary - 12/20/52
Channing 12/22/52
B. ... 23 Dec 52*

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: British Activity in the field of "Unidentified Flying Objects"

1. On 15 December, the recently arrived messenger from Britain reported the following. He had talked with R. V. Jones and [redacted]

2. The British have had a standing committee created about sixteen months ago on flying saucers. Presumably this is now under Dr. Jones through inheritance. The RAF are action people. The group has concluded that the observations are not enemy aircraft and that none have been over Britain.

3. The activity has been quiet and normal up to about ten to twelve days ago, at which time the Yorkshire incident took place. In some RAF field, there was some sort of demonstration to which high officials of the RAF in London had been invited. During the show, a "perfect flying saucer" was seen by these officials as well as RAF pilots. So many people saw it that many articles appeared in the public press. This is disturbing to Jones because he realizes that the creation of the correction of public opinion is a part of his responsibilities.

4. Jones reminded us of the Swedish incident (presumably he refers to the one in 1946), and reminds us of a paper on the origin of meteorites published in the French Academy of Sciences between 1760 and 1780 by Chladni.

5. The traveler told Jones of our interest at this time, mentioned the film which had been taken by the Naval non-commissioned officer (Tremonten incident). It is possible that Jones will write asking for a copy of the film or further on the same subject.

File of ...

Hmc

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While there is no indication that these objects represent a direct threat to the national defense, there are certain potential dangers which are related to these sightings. These are:

1. The difficulty and delay in positive identification which could weaken the early warning system in alerting defense in the event of commencement of hostilities.*
2. The possibility of mass hysteria which might be purposely induced by an enemy at a critical time by faked reports.
3. The possibility that the emergency communications systems to command headquarters might be seriously overloaded at a critical time by such reports.

It is believed that the problems of communications confusion and overload and the serious effects of mass hysteria must be dealt with outside the intelligence community, and it is planned to bring these matters to the attention of those agencies with whom the prime responsibility appears to rest. With respect to mass hysteria, it is believed this problem would lie with the Federal Civil Defense Administration and/or the Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security. Accordingly, it is planned to bring this to the attention of the FCDA and ICIS through established channels. With respect to emergency communications overloading, it is believed that each of the individual Military Services should examine this problem. Accordingly, we intend to introduce the subject at a meeting of the Joint Communications and Electronics Committee.

** According to Brig. Gen. Air Maxwell (RDB) ADC is "cognizant of this potential danger," and does "express concern"*