



Drawing by Alan Dunn; © 1950, 1978
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Teller remembers: "My recollection of the event involving Fermi . . . is clear, but only partial. To begin with, I was there at the incident. I believe it occurred shortly after the end of the war on a visit of Fermi to the Laboratory, which quite possibly might have been during a summer.

"I remember having walked over with Fermi and others to the Fuller Lodge for lunch. While we walked over, there was a conversation which I believe to have been quite brief and superficial on a subject only vaguely connected with space travel. I have a vague recollection, which may not be accurate, that we talked about flying saucers and the obvious statement that the flying saucers are not real. I also remember that Fermi explicitly raised the question, and I think he directed it at me, 'Edward, what do you think? How probable is it that within the next ten years we shall have clear evidence of a material object moving faster than light?' I remember that my answer was ' 10^{-6} .' Fermi said, 'This is much too low. The probability is more like ten percent' (the well known figure for a Fermi miracle.)"

Konopinski says that he does not recall the numerical values, "except that they changed rapidly as Edward and Fermi bounced arguments off each other."

Teller continues: "The conversation, according to my memory, was only vaguely connected with astronautics partly on account of flying saucers might be due to extraterrestrial people (here I believe the remarks were purely negative), partly because exceeding light velocity would make interstellar travel one degree more real.

"We then talked about other things which I do not remember and maybe approximately eight of us sat down together for lunch." Konopinski and York are quite certain that there were only four of them.