



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

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October 17, 1984

Dr. Eric M. Jones  
Los Alamos National Laboratory  
MS F665  
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545

Dear Dr. Jones:

I have only fragmentary recollections about the occasion that your letter refers to. I do have a fairly clear memory of how the discussion of extra-terrestrials got started--while Enrico, Edward, Herb York, and I were walking to lunch at Fuller Lodge.

When I joined the party I found being discussed evidence about flying saucers. That immediately brought to my mind a cartoon I had recently seen in the New Yorker, explaining why public trash cans were disappearing from the streets of New York City. The New York papers were making a fuss about that. The cartoon showed what was evidently a flying saucer sitting in the background and, streaming toward it, "little green men" (endowed with antennas) carrying the trash cans. More amusing was Fermi's comment, that it was a very reasonable theory since it accounted for two separate phenomena: the reports of flying saucers as well as the disappearance of the trash cans.

There ensued a discussion as to whether the saucers could somehow exceed the speed of light and it was after we were at the luncheon table that Fermi surprised us with the question: "But where is everybody?" It was his way of putting it that drew laughs from us. I think there were only the four of us just as Herb York remembers it.

I have absolutely no recollection of the numerical estimates that Edward mentions, except that they changed rapidly as Edward and Fermi bounced arguments off each other.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emil Konopinski".

Emil Konopinski

EK:dsm