

Meanwhile, what of the situation in Canada? Back in the summer months, we felt encouraged that at long last there was a prospect of something concrete being done to solve the UFO mystery at governmental levels, both in Canada and the U.S.A. Disquietening rumours about the Colorado project had not yet reached us, our Minister of Defence, the Hon. Paul Hellyer, had released more UFO information to the public, had announced that the National Research Council was planning to set up a special committee to study the UFO problem under the Chairmanship of Dr. R.S. Rettie, Head of Space Research & Facilities Branch of NRC in Ottawa, and had declared himself "open-minded" about UFOs (progress indeed!). Furthermore, in September, Dr. G.N. Patterson, Director of the University of Toronto's Institute for Aerospace Studies, announced that a group of scientists was commencing its own Colorado-type UFO investigation, with the hope of Canadian and U.S. government participation.

Everything looked very hopeful for the future. But then, bit by bit, things began to fall apart at the seams and the whole issue became clouded with doubts, as an apparent change in governmental UFO policy emerged on both sides of the border. In the U.S., doubts were expressed about the genuineness of the Colorado project and there was some sinister talk of the pressuring and silencing of certain private UFO researchers. In Canada, the Hon. Paul Hellyer, to whom Canadian ufologists had looked with renewed hope and respect, was suddenly transferred from the Department of National Defence to become Minister of Transport. Coming so shortly after his UFO revelations, we could only wonder if there was any link. If so, it is regrettable, from our point of view. His successor, as Minister of National Defence, the Hon. Leo Cadieux, has already made it clear that he is not going to be quite so communicative about UFO matters. On Nov. 6, 1967, in reply to a question raised in the House of Commons as to whether a report arising out of a federal investigation into the case of Stephen Michalek who claimed to have been burned by a landed UFO at Falcon Lake, Manitoba, would be made public, Mr. Cadieux had this to say: "It is not the intent of the Department of National Defence to make public the report of the alleged sighting." This, freely translated, probably means that the "alleged" sighting was genuine!

Meanwhile, Dr. R.S. Rettie was making it evident that his role as Chairman of the proposed NRC Research Study on UFOs, was a somewhat reluctant one. In an article which appeared in the Nov. 1967 issue of "Maclean's Magazine" entitled "Look! There's a Flying Saucer!", the author, Jon Ruddy, states that Dr. Rettie "— may be Canada's most articulate skeptic on UFOs." It is to be hoped, therefore, that his skepticism will not prejudice an unbiased judgment of the situation. There is nothing wrong in a healthy skepticism — most of us started off this way — but it takes a particular brand of courage to admit that one has been wrong in public statements. However, we feel that the blunt and outspoken Dr. Rettie may well be possessed of this type of moral courage — if government policy permits it. We must admit that some of Dr. Rettie's remarks, as quoted in this article, would appear to have a somewhat negative approach. While he is prepared to accept that there are societies elsewhere in the universe well-advanced technologically, he says that he does not believe that they would behave so illogically as to "fool around in flying saucers — and approach people in woods with friendly offers of help." Physical contact reports he writes off as "— such activities can, I am sure, be dismissed as a prank, as charlatanism, as sensation seeking or, unfortunately, as temporary or permanent mental unbalance." Strong words and a sweeping statement from a scientist who has not yet fully investigated the UFO phenomena. On Jan. 3/68, Dr. Rettie stated in an interview that arrangements were nearly complete for the transfer of the responsibility for checking UFO sightings to his Branch which, he said, "would filter" reports of sightings. Some would be of definite scientific