

Latest non-sense from the
NRC OTTAWA Dr. Ian Halliday.

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Our strange encounters aren't star wars spies, says gov't astronomer

WOODSTOCK, Ont. (CP) — Unidentified flying objects (UFOs) are here, there and everywhere but only in some people's imaginations, says a Canadian astronomer.

Saucer sighters are not nuts, Dr. Ian Halliday, senior National Research Council astronomer at the Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics in Ottawa, said here. But they are not seeing extra-terrestrial objects either.

"There is not a single, solid object proven to come from a spacecraft during the past 25 years of investigation," Halliday told the Rotary Club.

In fact, the United States 10 years ago shelved a \$10-million study of UFO sightings because there was nothing to be gained. It has not been reopened, Halliday said later in an interview.

People who claim close encounters of any kind can

be lumped into one of four categories, said Halliday.

There are those, like movie producers, lecturers and authors, who stand to make money from continuing interest in UFOs.

There are those who photograph airborne hub caps or frisbees in an effort to trick people.

"But when they end up on national news or TV, they're caught in their joke and they can't explain it's a hoax."

There are those, like pilots and radar technicians, who think they saw something strange which is later explained through investigation.

And there are those who see mysterious things flying through the night sky because they want to.

For many, Halliday says, belief in extra-terrestrial life is a substitute for organized religion and incomprehensible problems.