



Geoff Johnson

Ottawa Citizen 30 Jan '74

Ah! Another believer of UFOs

It's easy to get the impression, listening to governments and some scientists, that the UFO watch has been called off; that these days no one of any consequence will lend a sympathetic ear to your story of an Unidentified Flying Object.

After all, there was the Condon Report, the scientific study carried out at the University of Colorado by Dr. Edward Condon on behalf of the United States Air Force, and supposedly the last word on UFOs.

Released in January 1969, the report—or at least, Dr. Condon's summary of it—indicated there was nothing significant to UFO sightings.

Then it was discovered that only 10 per cent of all sightings were ever reported to the Condon committee, and that only a "small fraction" of the 10 per cent were investigated. No effort was made to solicit reports of sightings.

A leading Canadian ufologist, Arthur Bray of Ottawa, also attacked the report in his brief on UFOs

submitted to the Senate science policy committee a few years ago. He asked simply: "Does this report claim to give the final answer to what all UFOs are?" The answer, he said, was no.

Nevertheless the report as good as ended the USAF's official interest in flying mysteries and it served to reinforce the Canadian attitude that since UFOs did not represent a "threat to national security" they could be safely ignored.

No one listened

Reports of sightings by credible witnesses continue to come in, but no one has really listened—until now. Horrified by Condon's superficial investigation, Dr. J. Allen Hynek, for 20 years UFO consultant to the U.S. Air Force, has set up a Centre for UFO Studies in Northfield, Illinois.

Dr. Hynek is chairman of the department of astronomy at Chicago's Northwestern University,

and director of the Lindheimer Astronomical Research Centre.

The aim of the new research centre is to determine the nature and origin of UFOs in terms we can all "understand and accept."

The centre is not financed by the U.S. government. It exists on public donations and the loan of technical facilities from private industry.

Says Dr. Hynek: "The centre will accept reports from the public but hopefully these will not consist of too many vague lights in the sky. Reports from Canada will be welcome. We hope to make this a worldwide focal point for UFO research."

The research will concentrate on laboratory analyses of plants, trees and soil that have been affected by the presence of a UFO; medical studies of witnesses who have been reported as temporarily blinded, paralyzed and subject to nausea, headaches and so on; witness credibility; statistical studies and theoretical in-

vestigations into the dynamic behavior of UFOs.

Lest anyone consider the Hynek work a little out of touch with reality, it's worth repeating the disclosure of 1967 that a decade or so earlier, the Canadian government actually made available a landing site for UFOs.

It was 1,000 square miles at Suffield, Alberta, and all aircraft were banned from flying over the area. That year there had been 20 outstanding UFO sightings in Manitoba and neighboring provinces and states, and in Ottawa a report by a University of Ottawa professor matched exactly the descriptions of those in Manitoba.

Unfortunately, not a single UFO took us up on the offer of free landing rights, and so the argument goes on.

But at least it is going on.

●The Centre for UFO Studies is at P.O. Box 11, Northfield, Illinois, 60093.