

UFO visits nothing new 'top secret' report says

By Tim Harper Toronto Star

Word is finally out.

Extra-terrestrial visitors are among us and have been ever since bobby sox were the rage and most of us were marvelling at more pedestrian earthly wonders, such as television and the new Studebaker.

It's all there in black-and-white, accompanied by the magic words "Top Secret," in a 1950 document released yesterday by UFO-watchers meeting at the Westbury Hotel on Yonge St.

Flying saucers

The document was written by a middle-level Canadian department of transport bureaucrat named Wilbur Smith, who went to his grave more than a decade ago convinced he could one day prove the existence of flying saucers, as they were then commonly known.

Smith told his superiors he had made "discreet enquiries" through the Canadian embassy in Washington and learned the U.S. administration, under President Harry Truman, firmly believed flying saucers existed, although there is no mention of proof. Smith also reported the embassy told him flying saucers are "the most highly classified subject in the United States government, rating higher even than the H-bomb; the entire matter is consid-

ered by the U.S. authorities to be of tremendous significance" and a "concentrated effort" was under way to determine the modus operandi of the otherworldly visitors.

Project Magnet

Smith, a senior radio engineer, was working on Project Magnet, a study aimed at tapping the energy from the earth's magnetic field.

The man who ferreted out the document is a Kingston clerk who has had his name legally changed to Mr. X.

"The thing about flying saucers is a nice little conclusion," he says, "but to me that's obvious. I'm more interested in the whole question of government secrecy on this matter."

The only living person mentioned in the Smith memo, Dr. Omond Solandt, then chairman of the Defence Research Board, remembers Wilbur Smith differently from his backers at the Westbury.

"He was a nice person," says Solandt, 72, who now lives in Bolton and still does consulting work, "but he was so determined that these things existed, he would never take 'no' for an answer."

Solandt says his department approached Smith's theories with an open mind.

"We found nothing significant," he said.