

Press Council won't rule on UFOs

By Ron Lowman Toronto Star

The Ontario Press Council wants no part in deciding whether flying saucers exist and says its role is simply to consider the fairness of a newspaper's conduct.

It also declined to rule on the validity of a Toronto tourist's tale of torture in Mexico, described as both fiction and non-fiction.

The voluntary council dismissed a complaint against The Globe and Mail by Stanton Friedman of Fredericton, N.B., over its treatment of the Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO) issue.

And it rejected a grievance by Pete Stickland against The Toronto Sun about a combined review and interview dealing with a book on Mexico titled *Vanilla Road*.

story, an editorial and his rejected letter to the editor.

The story bore the headline: *Rage In 1950s, UFO Sightings Just Faded Away*. It was based on a portion of federal material on the subject, but Friedman argued that different conclusions would have been reached if the rest of the data had been studied.

The Globe said its story was based on defence department records that had just been declassified and the text made this clear. It described its subsequent editorial on the subject as a whimsical, humorous look at a topical matter. Friedman's letter was rejected because a better one arrived criticiz-

ing the story, the newspaper said.

The council ruled that the article contained no significant inaccuracies and was fair and reasonable. It called the editorial light-hearted and justifiable comment and said the rejected letter added nothing to the debate.

In his complaint, Stickland said it should have been obvious to The Sun that *Vanilla Road* is fiction, not fact. Council's understanding is that the book was published as non-fiction, a spokesman said.

The newspaper said it offered to publish a letter from Stickland, providing he accepted a space limit and agreed to avoid defamation. He declined.

Stickland, a Canadian living in Mexico, contended the book gave a misleading impression of that nation and could harm its tourist trade. He drove to Toronto to attend the hearing.

Friedman, whose stationery describes him as a nuclear physicist-lecturer, complained about a