

Flying saucer fans of America — take heart. Somebody down here believes in you.

He believes, at any rate, that reports of unidentified flying object should be taken seriously.

Jacques Vallee, French-born astronomer now a Chicagoan, believes a lack of authentic research may be at the bottom of inability to place UFOs in perspective.

#### NASA Consultant

Vallee, author of a new book, "Anatomy of a Phenomenon," published by Henry Regnery Co., is also a data analyst and consultant to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Mars mapping program. He is a former research associate at McDonald Observatory, operated jointly by the University of Chicago and the University of Texas.

His book gives a detailed and sober appraisal of UFOs from both scientific and lay sources over the past several hundred years.

He told The Sun-Times Saturday:

"The current increase in the number of UFO reports undoubtedly marks the beginning of a wave comparable to those of 1954 or 1957. Currently there is a deluge of reports all over Europe, Australia and South America.

#### Cites Close Sightings

"Some objects have been seen on the ground at close range, for example at Valensole, France, on July 3.

"Yet the American cases are still treated out of context as individual oddities rather than a part of global phenomenon. Many professional scientists are starting to think that an object



The similarity in some UFO configurations is shown by two examples from investigating agency. Photo 1 was taken at

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#### Questions Research

Vallee neither scoffs nor accepts, but does question authenticity of the total research in the field.

Medical Tribune, published in New York, made a UFO study in addition to material from Vallee's book and noted that the crane-necked set in Communist countries reported sightings, although regimes that dismiss God are not anxious to give official recognition to any mystery.

Even before the current outbreak of eagle-eyed citizenry tabulating the summer "ob-

jects," UFOs were being reported at about 500 a year in the United States.

The United States Air Force continues its Project Blue Book begun in 1948, with an admitted 7 per cent of the reports investigated as "unexplained."

Other groups insist the unexplained reach as high as 20 per cent.

Not only have numbers of sightings been on the increase, but the considered reliability of those making them has been on the upgrade.

Airline pilots, radar operators, police and security personnel, university professors and others regarded as sophisticated enough not to be fooled by a cloud formation or a weather balloon have been heard from on UFOs.

As Medical Tribune added: "Harder To Scoff At"

"What UFOs really are, of course, is anybody's guess. Serious students of them (and there are some) do not necessarily contend that these soaring phenomena represent a visit by intelligent life from other worlds.

# An Astronomer Calls Flying Saucers 'Serious Business'



Rouen, France, in 1954. Photo 2 was made at McMinnville, Ore., in 1950.

"But most of these same investigators do suggest that it should be considered a possibility. In an age when government-financed radiotelescopes and space programs are actively searching for extraterrestrial life, such suggestions about UFOs are getting harder to scoff at.

"Author Vallee, who looked into the saucer syndrome with rather an objective stare at the outset, later acknowledged that, 'although no physical evidence as yet has been found, some of us believe the contours of an amazingly complex intelligent life beyond the Earth can already be discerned.'"

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, director of Northwestern University's observatories and consultant to the Air Force on UFOs, has said that the "level of intelligence of the observers and

reporters of UFOs is certainly at least average and, in many cases, decidedly above average. In some cases, embarrassingly above average."

However the sober scientists, like the Air Force, aren't prone to believe in the actuality of "flying saucers" until they catch one.

#### Time Ripe, He Says

Nevertheless, Vallee suggested there either is being manifest "an entirely new type of mental aberration . . . or the UFO phenomenon is unique in nature and thus deserves a special investigation."

He obtained authorization to dig into certain files of the Air Force and some European agencies interested in the question. Now he is convinced the time is ripe for an investigation in which "we neither presuppose nor preclude any possible conclusion."

He feels that the Air Force

has not taken this approach, being interested primarily in security rather than scientific delving.

While the Air Force has 8,909 UFO reports since 1947, excluding the present crop; it lists 633 as unexplained, but with the contention that all of them could be accounted for in terms of known phenomena, natural or man-made, if more information were available.

Vallee, and some others, believe it is a little naive to label as "insufficient information" the phenomena being studied.

#### NICAP Largest Groups

There are several groups in this country in addition to the Air Force interested in UFO information. The largest, privately formed in 1956, is the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), which has 5,000 members.

Many researchers believe that this group is not entirely scientific in its approach. However, it has a full-time staff to investigate reports of sightings. It has been active in seeking to interest Congress in authorizing full-scale studies.

Richard Hall, acting director of NICAP in Washington, D.C., asserted early in July there still were about 1,000 sightings that have not been explained.

Among these are reports that UFO sometimes fly in formation, maneuver and react when a stimuli such as light is flashed upon them.