

Flying saucers not from another planet or Russia

A distinguished visiting scientist thinks 90 per cent. of the flying saucer reports are imaginary. "But," he said, "I'm not sure about the others."

He is Professor Otto Struve, a 55-year-old, six-foot, Russian-born scientist, head of astronomical research at the University of California, who is here to advise on developments

and research in Australia.

"These things are not from another planet, and Russia is not making them," he said.

"They might be man-made, so there might be a simple explanation. Whatever it is, I don't think there is anything sinister about their origin."

As in Melbourne at the moment, a wave of interest was sweeping the United States, as saucer reports poured in.

"The reports cannot be disregarded," he said. "Reliable scientists have seen unexplained phenomena. Deflection of light had been responsible for many reports and some prototype American planes, almost circular in shape,

almost circular in shape, were mistakenly identified."

He said possible explanations of the "wrong 90 percent." of reports were:

Objects seen at night could be meteors, the high speed ones give off a green-blue light.

Patches of fog or cloud lit by light deflected from the setting sun.

SPACEMEN

One "flying saucer" he saw himself in California proved to be sun-lit fog when seen through an observatory telescope.

Discussing other space subjects, Professor Struve said:—

Spacemen. — The nearest planet that could support life similar to that on Earth is 10,000 billion miles away, and what life there is on other planets is not intelligent. Earth has not had any visitors from space yet.

Rockets.—It will take 25 years to develop a rocket to carry man from Earth to

to carry man from Earth to the planets, although by 1964 a rocket to the moon might be possible. Inter-planetary rockets would be too costly ever to be justified.

Earth Satellites. — For about 3 million dollars, scientists could produce an artificial earth satellite — probably a rocket — to

send into space, and move indefinitely in an orbit around the earth.

Professor Struve said Australia was a perfect place to star-gaze because the Milky Way was right over us.

Australian physicists led the world in radio-astronomy—a kind of high-plane radar.

The professor will leave Sydney soon to work at the National Observatory at Canberra.