

Were "flying saucers"

really seen?

COMMITTEE SAYS "YES":

SCIENTIST SCEPTICAL

By **DESMOND ZWAR**

JUST how real are flying saucers?

They ARE real, according to the Australian Flying Saucer Investigation Committee, in a report just issued.

But a senior physicist at Melbourne University is sceptical. He thinks it strange that astronomers do not see flying saucers. He wishes that the investigating committee had included at least one scientist.

The investigation committee reports that in more than a year's careful study it questioned 55 people. It visited 25 homes and closely cross-examined "sighters" of the flying saucers.

Its finding is:—

"Flying saucers are material objects . . . they are not hallucinations or optical illusions . . . they

are not hallucinations or optical illusions . . . they are coming closer to the ground."

Fifteen months ago in Melbourne, 10 men decided to follow up newspaper reports of people claiming to have seen "strange things" in the sky.

They formed themselves into Australia's Flying Saucer Investigation Committee.

The men — a banker, journalist, four engineers,

journalist, four engineers, two clerks and two industrial engineers—said they would try to "get the facts behind these saucers."

Most of the 10 were members of the Astronomical Society. But they did not identify their committee with that body.

HERE, now, is their summing up of the 55 "sightings" over Melbourne and suburbs.

One of the "saucers" was a balloon.

Four were meteors.

One was a drifting seed or scotch thistle.

Two were jet planes.

FORTY-SEVEN cannot be explained.

These 47 "sightings" fall into four distinct classes.

CIGAR - SHAPED OBJECTS.—Regular, symmetrical shapes, seen at night emitting a phosphorescent glow. The covers of their bodies seem to be glowing. It is not a translucent effect. Their motion is smooth and regular, and they glide in the sky—they do not zig-zag. There are six of them in the 55 reports.

FLYING SAUCERS OR DISCS. — They rotate, often appearing in pairs. At daylight they look like discs; when seen low down their upper portion seems to be revolving. They have win-

volving. They have win-

dows and ball-like wheels underneath. They number 15.

SHOOTING MOONS.—At night they appear luminous like a full moon. Travelling at great speed they shoot across the sky and then hover in one place, mostly for about a minute. They appear suddenly, and just as suddenly disappear. Six have been seen.

SMALL HOVERING LIGHTS. — They hang suspended in the sky and then dart off at high speed. Often they race off at right angles. Sometimes they look like small balloons about two feet in diameter. In daylight their surfaces flash in the sunlight like highly-polished metal. There have been 20 reported.

After carefully examining all the reports the committee has said: "We are still far from deciding what these things are. It would be only guesswork to say they are actual space ships from another planet.

"But we are all fully agreed upon this—that these things are material objects. They cannot be put down to a person's hallucination or optical illusion.

"They are getting lower seemingly to land."

Three of the most startling "cases" are quoted by the committee.

In each case a committee man has gone to the home of the "sighter" and

home of the "sighter" and closely cross-examined her. He has submitted a 45-question examination to each person.

No. 1. It was a cold, clear night at Dandenong on June 9. A 16-year-old girl was waiting at a bus-stop for her friend.

Suddenly she heard a loud roaring, like a car or motor-cycle — but there was none near.

Then, from the top of a partly-built factory, a large, dark shape appeared. It whirled towards the girl. It got closer to her and she shone a torch at it. When it was about 30 ft. above her she panicked and cringed down in the grass. Her friend arrived and saw the same thing.

Hysterical, the girl ran home and told her parents. It was about 30 ft. long and 15 ft. high,

she told them. It had a canopy and window on top and a window at each end.

It issued a gleaming, bluish, silver-grey light.

A Flying Saucer investigator who interviewed the girl soon after reported:

"She was genuinely upset. The girl had obviously seen something that had scared the day-lights out of her. She was cross-examined in front of her parents by an Air Force man on one side of her and myself on the other. I regard hers as a genuine report."

genuine report.

No. 2. At Templestowe nine months ago, a woman heard a loud humming noise outside her house. It was early in the morning. Hovering over a paddock at a height of about 30 ft. was an enormous, saucer-shaped object.

It remained still for about 15 seconds and then shot off at great speed. It had a strange super-structure, but had no port-holes or windows.

The committee satisfied itself that the woman's report was genuine.

No. 3. On January 7, at Bonbeach, a woman had gone to bed about 10 p.m. when she heard a loud, humming sound. It sounded as if the noise was in a fuse-box in the hallway or in the electric wires outside.

She awakened her husband and they went outside to investigate.

They saw nothing, so they went back to bed. The humming continued. Twice the woman went outside again. She was returning to bed to forget the noise when she glanced through the bedroom window.

She saw a shining, gold-colored object circling in the sky. It was circular, with hazy edges, almost the size of the moon.

The woman hurried outside and saw it travel through the sky for another five seconds and disappear over the horizon. It had been brightly illuminated by the light

zon. It had been brightly illuminated by the light of the moon.

For another three minutes she watched. Then a cigar-shaped object shot up into the sky from the same place where the round body had disappeared.

It did three or four

loops, with a slight pause between jumps. It left a puff of white smoke behind it each time it looped. Then it, too, disappeared and the noise which had continued during the two "sightings" stopped abruptly.

This woman, again, was labelled "genuine" by the committee.

Its members conclude: "We are convinced that these things have definite objective existence. They have been seen in too many widely-separated places, at too many times by too many sound and reliable witnesses to be disputed."

They add: "No theory put forward so far as to their origin and nature is satisfactory. The solution of the whole 'flying saucer' mystery constitutes a challenge to further intensified and painstaking research."

A SENIOR physicist at Melbourne University, Mr R. Abbey, Master of Science, has read the Flying Saucer Investigation Committee's report.

Committee's report.

He comments . . .

"Flying saucers are not new. Throughout the ages men have seen visions or apparitions of one kind or another. The form of these visions varies according to the

current beliefs of the times — for example, gods, demons, angels, sea monsters.

"Today we believe we are on the verge of space travel. Books, toys, comic strips, radio plays and films are dealing more and more with the imaginative subject of interplanetary adventure.

"Consider also the world in which we live today. There are terrific demands on nervous energy in the stress of modern life, threats of new and fiendishly destructive weapons of war, widespread use of drugs for medical and other purposes.

"It is remarkable that there have been so few 'sightings,' especially when we also consider the numbers of aircraft, cosmic ray and meteorological balloons, meteors, atmospheric reflection and refraction of street lights, neon signs, searchlights and motor car headlamps

"In fact, these 'flying saucers' do exist, have been seen, but are not what people thought they saw.

"It is strange that astronomers who spend so much time scanning the heavens do not see these

heavens do not see these saucers. They are usually seen by only one or two people at one place.

"For instance, January 7 was a mid-summer's night and plenty of campers and holiday-makers were thronging Bonbeach

emphasise that there is no evidence for the idea that these saucers are from another planet. There is no evidence of life on other planets, certainly not life similar to ours. Most scientists are agreed on this."

If there really had been such objects as reported in the heavens the telephone wires to the newspapers, radio stations, and police would have run very hot indeed.

"The Investigating Committee is stated to have satisfied itself that the reports were genuine. If they have achieved a means of doing this it will be of great value to the law courts (and espionage commissions) which have to decide the truth of evidence or the reliability of witnesses.

"It is a pity that the committee did not contain at least one scientist.

"A scientist is trained in the art of observation and assessment of data obtained and would have been of great help in the task of examining the reports submitted and interviewing the 'sighters'. Many more of the 'sightings' might then have been explained away.

"The committee is to be congratulated that it did not conclude that the saucers were supernatural or even extra-terrestrial.

"In conclusion I wish to emphasise that there is



" . . . when it was about 30 ft. above her she panicked and cringed down in the grass."