

SCIENTISTS DOUBT 'SAUCER' THEORY

WASHINGTON, Thursday (AAP-Reuters). — A top-level group of American scientists challenged today theories that "flying saucers" were spaceships flown from distant planets by little green men.

A report commissioned by the US Air Force at a cost of \$US500,000 (about \$A428,600) declared that

a two-year investigation had uncovered no evidence that "flying saucers", or UFOs (unidentified flying objects), came from beyond earth.

The 1,450-page report was endorsed by the National Academy of Sciences, which said there seemed no reason to doubt its conclusions.

But the report is certain to set off a new furore from groups which claim the Air Force suppressed

information suggesting that UFOs might be real and a threat to US security.

One body, the National

Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, a private organisation gathering reports on UFO sightings, has called a press conference for tomorrow to discuss the report.

Last year the committee charged that the two-year scientific study, led by Dr

Edward Condon of the University of Colorado, which supervised the project, lacked impartiality.

The Colorado scientists decided that there was no scientific evidence proving that flying saucers came from another civilisation in outer space.

The scientists said that about 90 per cent of all UFO reports proved to be plausibly related to ordinary phenomena misinterpreted by observers.

They said little, if anything, had come from the study of UFOs in the past 21 years that had added to scientific knowledge.

Further extensive study of UFO sightings was not justified, the report disclosed. Nor was there evidence that UFO sightings

gence that UFO sightings represented a defence hazard or threat to the US.

Of the unexplained UFO sightings reported over the years, the report said there were so many reas-

onable and possible directions in which answers might eventually be found that there seemed no reason to attribute them to extra - terrestrial sources.

The report added, "The subject of UFOs has been widely misrepresented to the public by a small number of individuals who have given sensationalised presentations in writings and public lectures.

"So far as we can judge

not many people have been misled by such irresponsible behaviour, but whatever effect there has been has been bad".

The investigation was the most exhaustive ever undertaken in the flying saucers controversy.

The report took issue with what it called sensational journalists' statements that UFOs showed a marked tendency to be seen more often near military installations.