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TUCSON, Ariz., Oct. 7 (AP)- The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency has ordered the Air Force to "debunk" stories on unidentified flying objects, a University of Arizona physicist charges.

Dr. James E. McDonald, senior physicist at the US Institute of Atmospheric Physics, said the hush-hush policy has throttled any scientific investigation of the objects.

And he said there's reason to believe some of the objects may carry persons from outer space on reconnaissance missions over the earth.

He made his comments in a talk to scientists in the department of meteorology yesterday.

McDonald, also an adviser of the Navy's storm fury panel, said he reached the extraterrestrial theory reluctantly after years of research on the UFO problems.

While doing research at ~~the~~ Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, where the Air Force filed its flying saucer reports, McDonald said he discovered the CIA order -- with the notation that its role not be disclosed.

McDonald said the order was attached to a book of UFO ~~investigations~~ investigations compiled by scientists and called the Robertson Report. Completed in 1953, some of the report was declassified a short time later.

But McDonald noted that only three of its four sections were declassified and when he tried to follow up his original research by seeking photostatic copies, it was suddenly ~~declassified~~ reclassified.

He said a CIA agent named Phillip G. Strong signed the order to debunk UFO sightings. The official explanation, said McDonald, was that such reports were clogging intelligence channels.

"I don't feel it's so much a cover-up as a foul-up," said McDonald. "But the truth is that there's been no real scientific investigation of these reports."

"People who make them are exposed to ridicule and accused of seeing mirages."

But McDonald said the observers, for the most part, are too ~~not~~ reliable to be brushed off so lightly. He cited the case last April 17 where ~~a~~ sheriff's deputies from Ravenna, Ohio, pursued "a ~~large~~ luminous object" at 100 mph to Conway, Pa.

The distance was nearly 100 miles, said McDonald, and they were joined by two police officers from nearby communities after ~~they~~ they heard their radio transmissions.

"The Air Force had its explanation ready," said McDonald, "after a four minute telephone interview with the deputies which started out with the question 'now, what about that mirage you saw?'"

McDonald said there are hundreds of reports never reaching the general public because of the debunking policy. He said the silent treatment was begun after the rash of sightings in 1952 which reached a peak that summer.

International Geophysics Year scientists on an arctic expedition noted similar phenomena, he said.

The blockade to scientists and others who attempt an investigation, said McDonald, is Air Force Regulation 200-2.

This, he said, is the rule that makes it a crime punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine for any air base official to give out such information.

"It all has to go to Wright-Patterson where it's buried," said McDonald.