

AIR FORCE ORDER ON 'SAUCERS' CITED

Pamphlet by the Inspector General Called Objects a 'Serious Business'

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 (UPI)—The Air Force has sent its commands a warning to treat sightings of unidentified flying objects as "serious business" directly related to the nation's defense, it was learned today.

An Air Force spokesman confirmed issuance of the directive after portions of it were made public by a private "flying saucer" group.

The new regulations were issued by the Air Force inspector general Dec. 24.

The regulations, revising similar ones issued in the past, outlined procedures and said that "investigations and analysis of UFO's are directly related to the Air Force's responsibility for the defense of the United States."

Committee Reveals Document

Existence of the document was revealed by the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena.

The privately financed committee accused the Air Force of deception in publicly describing reports of unidentified flying objects as delusions and hoaxes while sending the private admonition to its commands.

Vice Admiral R. H. Hillenkoetter (Ret.), a committee board member and former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, said in a statement that a copy of the inspector general's warning had been sent to the Senate Science and Astronautics Committee.

"It is time for the truth to be brought out in open Congressional hearings," he said.

The Air Force confirmed that the document had been issued.

A spokesman said it was put out by Maj. Gen. Richard E. O'Keefe, acting inspector general at the time, to call attention to revised Air Force regulations concerning unidentified flying objects.

The statement was included in an "operations and training" pamphlet circulated at intervals to bring commands up to date.

Pentagon aides said the new regulations covering seven printed pages, made no substantive change in policy but had been rewritten as a matter of course.

The Air Force has investigated 6,312 reports of flying objects since 1947, including 183 in the last six months of 1959. The latest Air Force statement, issued a month ago said "no physical or material evidence, not even a minute fragment of a so-called flying saucer, has ever been found."

Admiral Hillenkoetter said that "behind the scenes, high-ranking Air Force officers are soberly concerned about the UFO's."

"But through official secrecy and ridicule, many citizens are led to believe the unknown flying objects are nonsense," the retired admiral said. He charged that "to hide the facts, the Air Force has silenced its personnel" through the issuance of a regulation.