

Your advertisement with regard to the activities in France led me to buy from that country the book by Jean Claude Bouret — "La Nouvelle Vague des Soucoupes Volantes." It is extremely well written and well presented — surely it must sell well after these broadcasts!

You must be very busy, but allow

me to say — "in spite of all the difficulties, all success to your efforts."

Yours truly,  
L.H. Navier  
Ormonde Avenue  
Hull, Yorks

Editor's comment:

Thank you Mr. Navier, and all those

others who, like you, have written in similar vein. We do not normally publish letters of this kind, but it is good to know that despite all the problems we faced, and the delays that accumulated, there are far more readers who are pleased with the end-product of our efforts than those who feel otherwise.

## OF UFOs AND GARUDAS — KEEL'S LATEST BOOK

*Jerome Clark*

THE UFO mystery, it has become increasingly clear, defies all reason. Far from suggesting the appearance on our planet of advanced extraterrestrials, the growing body of "evidence" reads rather like the delusions of the insane or the guileless fantasies of children. Trying to prove the presence of interplanetary visitors from all these conflicting data is as absurd as trying to map the terrain of another dimension from the study of dreams.

In a sense it is with dreams rather than with interplanetary visitors that John A. Keel's important new book, *The Mothman Prophecies* (Saturday Review/Dutton, 1975), concerns itself. Strange dreams, to be sure — dreams which leave footprints, show up on film and may be experienced by more than one percipient at a time — but dreams nonetheless.

Keel's book, to be more precise, seems to deal with nightmares. A recounting of the "Year of the Gardua,"\* it details Keel's investigations over a 13-month period (November 15, 1966, to December 15, 1967) into West Virginia's enigmatic "Mothman," actually a catch-all label which covers several different large winged beasties seen by over a hundred terrified witnesses. Accompanying Mothman on its incursion into the backwaters of America were the supposed inhabitants of the planet Lanulos from the nonexistent "galaxy of Ganymede," malevolent men in black who travelled about in black Cadillacs intimidating witnesses and ufologists, and all manner of odd flying objects, including floating blobs of light, machine-like "spacecraft" and ostensibly conventional planes and helicopters.

An amazing story, in short, and Keel tells it well, never losing his sense of humour through it all — an astonishing feat in itself. *Prophecies* will be difficult going for those who presume a relatively simple scenario for the UFO story, whether they be sceptics or extraterrestrials, and it will be misunderstood by those who take things too literally. And if there is one lesson UFO research teaches, it is that things must never be taken literally. Keel himself puts matters into perspective when he notes (p.102):

... the phenomenon is imitative. This paranormal mimicry is difficult for many to understand but I come across constant examples. Early in January 1973, for instance, a reliable witness in Ohio observed an unusual-looking helicopter which she was able to describe in detail. When she sketched it for a local UFO enthusiast he was flabbergasted. He was an aeronautical engineer specializing in helicopters and he knew the thing — she drew was a new secret helicopter that was still on the drawing board!

Even closer to home, a few days after Tad Jones's sighting on Route 64, *True* magazine hit the stands with an article of mine about flying saucers. It was illustrated with drawings of all kinds of odd-shaped objects, many of them the pure products of the artist's imagination. It included an exact replica of Jones's sphere, complete with wheeled legs and propeller. An object exactly like this had never been described in the UFO literature before...or since. The artist had produced his layout many weeks before. Somehow the phenomenon had mischievously duplicated the artist's conception for Jones's benefit.

As Jacques Vallée speculated several years ago in *Passport to Magonia*, "There exists a natural phenomenon whose manifestations border on both the physical and the mental. There is a medium in which human dreams can be implemented..." The sociopsychological sources of the Mothman/Lanulos "dreams" seem obvious enough — comic books, horror movies and science fiction stories. The MIB archetype comes out of a hybridization of Mafia gangsters and CIA/KGB secret agents.

The question of the Phenomenon's ultimate source remains open, of course. We have no way of determining whether these manifestations are "only" psychic projections (a view I lean towards currently, though not dogmatically, and argue for in a recent book) or whether they are projections from some unknown Otherworld which have entered our realm in disguise (Keel's view). Either way, something of profound significance is occurring, and we must learn to understand it — if we can.

\* In East Indian tradition the Garuda is a giant supernatural bird.