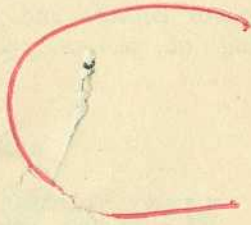




INDIAN



Five-minute exposure taken by Courier photographer Chuck Roberts shows first August 1970 sighting. Vertical line is typical of north-south trajectory of Polar orbiting satellite but curved track at top is unlike any mundane image — star, meteor, space debris or other satellite.

"Contactee Paul Solem is either a hypnotist, magician, a man with a vivid imagination — or he is telling the truth."

By Jerome Clark

I STOOD IN A backyard in Prescott with several neighbors and watched spellbound for almost a half hour Friday," wrote Joe Kraus of the *Prescott, Ariz., Courier*. "It looked like a star — almost. It rose in the sky, stopped, hovered, wavered to one side and then continued across the sky repeating the

maneuvers . . . A flying saucer? Yes, if we could believe our eyes." And if other residents of Prescott could believe their eyes as well, the city was playing host to a whole series of strange flying objects. The Rev. John Foster, a Baptist minister visiting the area from Phoenix, reported see-

AP-71

PROPHECY and the PRESCOTT UFOs

ing an erratic pulsating light moving across the sky. Others saw objects zigzagging through the air and executing incredible maneuvers. *Courier* photographer Chuck Roberts took a picture of a UFO crossing the path of the satellite Pegasus.

Perhaps the most spectacular sighting was described by Mrs. Irene Wood:

"We were on a hill on De Merse Street and at 8:15 P.M. we saw a huge brilliant mass of light looking as big as three moons coming very fast from just over Thumb Butte. It seemed almost over Prescott and went to the east. It halted and a huge mass detached itself and fell straight down behind the hills.

"We came back in the house and at 8:30 we saw another smaller object that was reddish color with a glow. No blinking lights either. It came from exactly the same position and went the same route as the first. But when it got to the place where the first mass had detached its load, it let down six small red objects. There were no breakages apparent. Just as the thing hovered the six fell and they

were spaced exactly the same distance apart. At one time we saw four of these things in the sky at one time."

In the middle of all this was a rancher from Idaho named Paul Solem whose appearance in Prescott — at the urging, he maintained, of angelic beings from the planet Venus — brought with it (coincidentally or other-

Paul Solem and Hopi delegation: Caroline Tawangyawma, Chief Dan Katchongva (seated) and Ralph Tawangyawma (right).

AN PROPHECY AND UFOs

ers and the prophecy to-
r. A further split in the
of the Traditionalists has
d to lessen their numbers.
Dan believes that this is
prophesied "third division"
will open the way for the
ation and the great "earth
ion" to follow.

November, Solem says, the
sians complained to him
he message has not spread
should have. Solem hopes to
another meeting soon.

61

"This one will be in broad day-
light," he claims, "and we'll
have reporters and cameramen
from the big networks so there
won't be any question any
longer. This time we'll try to
bring the ship to within a hun-
dred feet."

"You do understand all of this,
don't you?" Mrs. Nonnie Skid-
more, corresponding secretary
to Chief Dan, asked a journalist.
"This is the greatest event in the
entire solar system right now."

wise) the marked increase in UFO sightings. Solem himself said that the intention of the UFO beings was to draw attention to certain Hopi Indian prophecies.

In a dramatic demonstration made in the presence of reporter Kraus, whose sighting on Friday evening, August 7, 1970, was made in Solem's company, the contactee had stood off by himself gazing into the sky mentally "calling" the UFO occupants. After 15 minutes he announced, "They're here. I can't see them yet but I know they are here. One just said, 'We're here, Paul!' There are several people in the saucer. I can hear them talking."

Not more than two minutes later, Kraus reported in the lead story in the August 9 *Courier*, "a star appeared in the sky that wasn't there before." As the witnesses watched it Solem repeated words that he allegedly received through mental communication with a being aboard the ship:

"My name is Paul 2, fourth in command of all ships that enter the atmosphere of the planet called Earth. We come to lend credence and as a sign or token that the Hopi prophecy was of a divine nature. Great sorrow and fear will be coming to this planet very soon and few will escape it.

Our leader as spoken of in Hopi prophecy is already here on Earth in mortality and is known as the Apostle John, the same as in the New Testament. The white brother shall be introduced by a huge fire and the earth shall quake at his arrival. We are of the 10 lost tribes and we will return several nights unless there is contempt for us."

When Solem finished speaking the "star" disappeared.

Kraus concluded, "Paul Solem is either a hypnotist, magician, has a vivid imagination or he is telling the truth. Whatever, he is dedicated to his work."

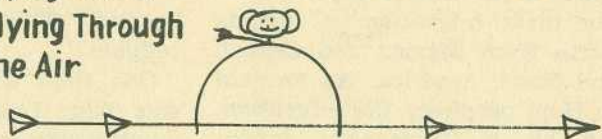
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FOR SOLEM flying saucers and Venusians are not a novelty. He says his first sighting and contact took place one day in June 1948 when he, his wife and his brother-in-law observed three round glowing objects speeding toward them over a field at his Howe, Idaho, ranch. At a distance of about 500 feet two of the UFOs veered away over Saddle Mountain in the north, leaving the other to hover in the air in front of the astonished witnesses.

Solem framed a question in his mind: "Who are you? Where are you from?" Not expecting an answer he was nonplused to hear a "voice" inside his head saying, "We are from another planet.

HOPI WOMAN : Purity

DOME SHAPE : Flying Saucer

ARROW : Flying Through
the AirSECOND MESA
PETROGLYTHS

Petroglyph drawn by Great Spirit Maasau signifies coming of Purification Day when the faithful Hopi will fly to other planets in "ships without wings."

You will hear from us later."

Over four years went by before Solem heard anything however. In the fall of 1952, seeing a multi-colored light in the sky over his ranch, he followed the UFO for three miles until it landed in the Lost River Sinks. As it came to rest on the ground the lights dimmed and went out and Solem saw a metallic disc reflected in the moonlight. Next to it was a person, whom he first took to be a woman but who turned out to be a man with long blond hair, clothed in a white uniform.

The UFO being — now speaking orally rather than telepathically — asked to be addressed as "Paul 2." He told Solem that as a Venusian he held the rank of "angel" and that Solem himself, a Venusian in a former existence, had been a spiritual teacher on that planet. In this life his task would be to work with the Indians of North and South America in preparing for the building of the City of

Zion, a postapocalyptic utopian social order in which money would be outlawed and all persons would live communally.

Solem claims this was the first of many contacts. He spent the next 17 years wandering around the western states, talking with Indians and other contactees, gathering small groups of followers and scrupulously avoiding publicity. Unlike some of the more flamboyant contactees whose exploits are familiar to UFO students, Solem did not — and does not — seem much interested in getting rich from his supposed experiences and in fact lives quite modestly.

On the other hand many of his claims, such as the allegation that all the planets of the solar system are populated, are difficult to accept.

Solem first came into public view in July 1969 when a series of campfire meetings at the edge of Fort Hall Indian Reservation in Idaho attracted the attention of

back to what is now Old Oraibi, Ariz.

The "star" was the vehicle in which the Great Spirit Maasau traveled. When Maasau landed he drew a petroglyph on Second Mesa (see illustration) which showed a maiden with the traditional butterfly hairdo in a wingless dome-shaped aerial vessel. This signified, he said, the coming of Purification Day (similar to the Christians' Day of Judgment) when the faithful would fly to other planets in "ships without wings." The Great Spirit went on to explain that other worlds are inhabited and that Hopi prayers are received there.

The issue of Solem's contacts and their relationship to the Hopi prophecy split the clan. Chief Dan viewed the matter philosophically, remarking that the division itself was fulfilling the prophecy which said there would be three divisions among the Hopi before the coming of the True White Brother. The first division, in 1906, had been between the Traditionalists and the Modernists — the former were forced to leave Oraibi and move to Hotevilla. What now was occurring was the second division.

For his part Solem left a few weeks later for Prescott to work with Indians and whites to further the message.

* * *

THIS WAS THE state of affairs when some months later — in August 1970 — the saucer deluge hit Prescott. The sightings began early in the month, shortly after Chief Dan had ordered 10,000 copies of the Hopi prophecy to be distributed to world leaders. Solem and his Hopi friends insisted this was no mere coincidence, that in fact the UFOs had come to confirm the accuracy of the prophecy.

Whatever the truth, there seems no question that residents of Prescott were reporting more than their share of unusual aerial phenomena and that Solem had a way of attracting the saucers to himself. Trailed constantly by skeptical reporters Solem seemed to have the knack of making UFOs appear at his bidding. On the night of the August 9, for example, about 100 persons watched Solem "contact" the saucers, which obligingly appeared shortly afterwards.

The next day Chief Dan, his counselor Ralph Tawangyawma and interpreter Caroline Tawangyawma arrived in Prescott to see the UFOs for themselves. Solem told them the "spaceships" would show up if the sky cleared.

It did not do so until the last night Chief Dan and his companions were in Prescott. At 10:30 P.M., when the rain clouds broke, Solem went outside to at-

local newspapers. Solem, accompanied by several Indians, spoke to the crowds about a coming mass migration of Indians north from Mexico and Central and South America. As foretold in Hopi prophecy the migration, led by a 130-year-old Indian named Etchata Etchana, will come in the wake of a huge fire and explosion which will herald the coming of the "True White Brother." The True White Brother will be carrying a set of stone tablets to match those given the Hopi 4500 years ago by the great spirit Maasau. On this, the Day of Purification, only those who have remained true to the old ways will survive.

In a meeting attended by Barbara Boren of the *Idaho State Journal* on the evening of July 12, Solem "called" the UFO beings who replied, "Paul, you are doing the best you can to get the message across." The skeptical reporter admits that she saw two "star-like moving lights" high in the air.

Not long afterwards Solem left for Hotevilla, Ariz., where he says the Venusians ordered him to go. There he met with the Chief of the Traditionalist Sun Clan, 108-year-old Dan Kat-chongva, who went on to preside over a stormy gathering in which the younger members laughed at Solem's claims. Chief

Dan himself, however, defended the contactee.

"This man speaks the truth," he said. "This is all part of our religion."

One Hopi who did not laugh was Titus Lamson. Five or six months previously he had seen a brilliantly-lighted object sail over Hotevilla moving in a westerly direction. A saucer-shaped construction with a dome and aerial on top, it became transparent as he watched it. Inside he could see the back of someone dressed in a gray "ski-jump outfit." The man, who wore blond hair reaching to his shoulders, was facing an instrument panel.

The craft descended slowly until it nearly touched the ground and then disappeared over a ridge. Lamson set out to search for it with a flashlight but could not find it.

To Traditionalist Hopi like Lamson and Chief Dan UFOs play an important role in the lore of their people. Thousands of years ago, according to Hopi belief, survivors of a vast flood which had decimated the tribe split and migrated in four different directions: north, south, east and west. Only one group managed to complete the migration which led them all the way to the North Pole and — under the guidance of a brilliant "star"—

tempt contact and in a short while those still inside heard him yell, "Here they come!" A group of 15 persons waiting at the door saw a bright object come sailing by.

In the words of witness Nonnie Skidmore, "The craft came in a rolling motion like a moon and was about 500 to 800 feet off the ground. It came from north to south, then turned by the side of the house due west. It climbed and turned off its light like a light bulb."

Two young Indians — Alvis Smith, an Apache, and Joe Manuel, a Pima — who had been talking with Chief Dan, came forth publicly to confirm the account as did a white couple, Mr. and Mrs. Morry, who had made their own sighting separately.

On the 17th, Solem announced that he no longer would contact UFOs in the Prescott area and that as a consequence sightings would diminish. They did.

Several days later the *Courier*, looking back on the flap, reported that a hoax had been responsible for sightings on the previous Sunday night: someone had dropped lighted plastic bags from an airplane.

"It should be noted, however," Joe Kraus went on, "that Paul Solem . . . did not make any attempt to contact (UFOs) that evening as members of the *Cou-*

rier staff were with him . . . The changing colors, the zigzags, the contacts which Paul Solem claimed he made and which were observed by several hundred witnesses including *Courier* staff members did not seem to us to appear as a satellite or a plastic balloon. There may be other explanations. If there are we have yet to find anyone to come forward with this information."

* * *

SINCE THEN Solem has continued to live in Prescott traveling occasionally with Chief Dan and others to Indian reservations to try to convince them of the imminent coming of the True White Brother. In October they went to Santo Domingo Pueblo in New Mexico where the Chief repeated the message once again:

"We have seen the flying saucers and have heard their message to us," he said. "We know they are real as their pictures were drawn upon stone for all to see near Old Oraibi in the very beginning.

"We know the faithful are to be gathered to escape Purification Day. We give you our testimony and all that we tell you is true so you have no excuse that you were not told."

Nevertheless things have not gone well for Solem, Chief Dan and those who have linked the