

- Keyhoe, Donald E., and Gordon I. R. Lore, Jr., eds. *Strange Effects from UFOs*. Washington, DC: National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, 1969.
- Klass, Philip J. *UFOs Explained*. New York: Random House, 1974.
- . *UFOs—Identified*. New York: Random House, 1968.
- “La Paz Believes UFOs Are U.S. Military Crafts.” *Albuquerque Journal* (May 1, 1964).
- Lasco, Jack. “Has the U.S. Air Force Captured a Flying Saucer?” *Saga* (April 1967): 18-19, 67-68, 70-74.
- Lorenzen, Coral E. *Flying Saucers: The Startling Evidence of the Invasion from Outer Space*. New York: New American Library, 1966.
- . “UFO Lands in New Mexico.” *Fate* 17,8 (August 1964): 27-38.
- McDonald, James E. Letter to Richard Hall (September 5, 1968).
- Maccabee, Bruce. “Landings in the Southwest.” *Fate* 38,6 (June 1985): 72-75.
- Menzel, Donald H., and Lyle G. Boyd. Letter to J. Allen Hynek (February 19, 1965).
- Menzel, Donald H., and Ernest H. Taves. *The UFO Enigma: The Definitive Explanation of the UFO Phenomenon*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1977.
- “Mysterious Flying Object Sighted in Southwest Again.” *Humboldt [California] Times* (April 28, 1964).
- Olsen, Thomas M., ed. *The Reference for Outstanding UFO Sighting Reports*. Riderwood, MD: UFO Information Retrieval Center, 1966.
- “Physical Evidence: Landing Reports.” *The U.F.O. Investigator* 2,11 (July/August 1964): 4-6.
- Powers, William T. Letter to Philip J. Klass (January 17, 1967).
- . “The Landing at Socorro.” In Charles Bowen, ed. *The Humanoids*, 130-42. London: Futura Publications, 1974.
- Quintanilla, Hector, Jr. “The Investigation of UFOs.” *Studies in Intelligence* 10,4 (February 1966): 95-110.
- “Santa Fean Reports Seeing UFO Landed North of Espanola.” *El Defensor Chieftain* [Socorro, New Mexico] (April 28, 1964).
- Sciacca, Thomas P., Jr. Letter to Richard Hall (September 11, 1964).
- “Socorro Analysis.” *The U.F.O. Investigator* 2,12 (September/October 1964): 4.
- “Socorro, New Mexico: Revisited.” *GSW News Bulletin* (December 1981): 5-16.
- Stanford, Ray. *Socorro “Saucer” in a Pentagon Pantry*. Austin, TX: Blueapple Books, 1976.
- . “The Pentagon Pantry Is Not Bare!” *MUFON UFO Journal* Pt. I. 116 (July 1977): 13-15, 20; Pt. II. 117 (August 1977): 10-13.
- Steiger, Brad, ed. *Project Blue Book: The Top Secret UFO Findings Revealed*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1976.
- Thomas, Dick. “Flying Saucers’ in New Mexico.” *Denver Post* (May 3, 1964).
- “Two Dubuquers Spot Flying Saucer.” *Dubuque [Iowa] Telegraph-Herald* (April 29, 1964).
- “UAO Landing in New Mexico.” *A.P.R.O. Bulletin* (May 1964): 1,3-10.
- Vallee, Jacques. *Forbidden Science: Journals 1957-1969*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1992.
- Vigil, Martin E. Letter to Richard Hall (June 9, 1964).
- Webb, Walter N. *The UFO Landing at Socorro, New Mexico—April 24, 1964*. Cambridge, MA: The Author, 1964.

SOLEM CONTACT CLAIMS

Paul Solem's first UFO contact occurred in June 1948, when he, his wife, and his brother-in-law observed three round, glowing objects speeding toward them over a field at Solem's ranch in Howe, Idaho. At a distance of 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 witnesses. Impulsively Solem framed a mental question: “Who are you? Where are you from?” A voice inside his head replied, “We are from another planet. You will hear from us later.”

Four years went by before Solem heard anything further. 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. It turned out instead 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 past life, 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 people would live communally.

For Solem this would be the first of many contacts. Over the next 17 years he wandered through the Western states, spoke with Indians and contactees, gathered small groups of followers, and generally avoided the limelight in which other contactees of the period were basking.

Solem first came to 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 local newspapers. Accompanied by several Indians, Solem 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 the 130-year-old Etchata Etchana, would 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 traditional ways will survive.

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

Not long afterwards Solem left for Hotevilla, Arizona, where he said the Venusians had ordered him to go. There he met with Chief Dan Katchongva, 108, the leader of the traditionalist Sun Clan, the smallest of the five Hopi clans. Katchongva went on to preside

over a stormy gathering in which the younger members laughed at Solem’s claims. The chief defended Solem. “This is all part of our religion,” he insisted.

Among those who listened seriously to Solem was Titus Lamson. Five or six months earlier, he testified, 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 object 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 Katchongva, UFOs played an integral 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 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—back to what is now Old Oraibi, Arizona.

The star was the vehicle in which the Great Spirit Maasau traveled. When Maasau landed, he drew a petroglyph on Second Mesa. It showed a maiden with the traditional butterfly hairdo in a wingless dome-shaped vessel. This signified, he said, the coming of Purification Day (similar to the Christian 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. Katchongva 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—a deluge of UFO sightings hit the Prescott area. Solem and his Hopi friends believed that the space people had done this deliberately. Shortly before, Chief Dan had ordered 10,000 copies of the Hopi prophecy to be distributed to world leaders. The UFOs had come to confirm the accuracy of the prophecy.

Among the sightings was this one, witnessed on August 7 by Joe Kraus of the *Prescott Courier*: "I stood in a backyard in Prescott with several neighbors and watched spellbound for almost a half hour. . . . 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."

The UFO had appeared ostensibly in response to a mental communication from Solem, who had spent the previous 15 minutes gazing into the sky and calling the space people. Finally Solem shouted to Kraus and the others, "They're here! I can't see them yet, but I know they're 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 issue of the *Courier*, "a star appeared in the sky that wasn't there before." As the group watched it, Solem repeated words allegedly received from 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 for several nights unless there is contempt for us.

Kraus wrote that when Solem ceased speaking, the "star" blinked out.

The Rev. John Foster, a Baptist minister visiting the area from Phoenix, reported seeing an erratic pulsating light moving across the sky. Others saw objects zigzagging through the air and executing dramatic maneuvers. *Courier* photographer Chuck Roberts took a picture of a UFO crossing the path of the satellite Pegasus.

Irene Wood reported the most spectacular sighting:

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.

On the night of August 9 a hundred persons watched Solem contact the space people. Soon afterwards they saw lights which they believed to be UFOs.

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. But that night was overcast. Rain clouds stayed over Prescott for the next few days, breaking only on the last night the chief and his companions were in the city. The clouds broke around 10:30 P.M. Solem then stepped outside and a few minutes later was heard to shout, "Here they come!" A group of 15 persons waiting at the door saw a bright light sailing overhead.

According to 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 the 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 back up the report as did a white couple who had seen the light from a different vantage point.

On the other hand, not everyone was swept up in the enthusiasm. Red Cloud Mason of Williams, Arizona, wrote in response to a *Fate* article about the events surrounding Solem:

Many persons . . . do not feel Mr. Paul Solem is all he is pretending to be. . . . Many of us went out when he "called" the saucers into view and we did not see these nor [sic] anything unusual. . . . Mr. Solem claims he brought saucers into this area. People saw strange lights in different parts of this country long before Mr. Solem made such claims [Mason, 1971].

UFO sightings in Prescott ceased around the middle of the month. Solem's supporters claimed that he had predicted as much. Looking back on the flap, the *Courier's* Kraus discounted conventional explanations for the incidents and expressed puzzlement.

That fall Solem continued to live in Prescott, traveling occasionally with the chief and others to reservations where they sought to convince residents of the imminent coming of the True White Brother. In October they went to Santo Domingo Pueblo in New Mexico, where the chief spoke these words:

We have seen the flying saucers and have heard their message to us. 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 had begun to sour for Solem, Chief Dan, and their followers. A further split in the ranks of the Traditionalists lessened their already modest numbers. The chief declared this to be the

prophesied "third division" which would open the way for the migration and the great "earth eruption" to follow. In November the Venusians complained that the message had not been spread as quickly as it should have. Solem hoped to remedy this with a conclusive demonstration. "This one will be in broad daylight," he promised, "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 hundred feet." In the words of Chief Dan's secretary, Nonnie Skidmore, "This is the greatest event in the solar system right now" (Clark, 1971).

The demonstration, scheduled for Easter Sunday 1971 and announced as the first of four, proved a fiasco. The landings were to take place on a field outside Prescott, but when Solem went to the site, he found bulldozers there. He furiously demanded their immediate departure. They were moved, but the UFOs never showed up.

Afterwards Solem issued a press release which blamed the bulldozers for the Venusians' nonappearance. He cancelled the other landings, dropped out of sight, and was heard from no more.

Meanwhile the Hopi Tribal Council ousted Chief Dan from his position as leader of the Sun Clan. Council members said his association with Solem and his fantastic claims had damaged the tribe's image (Keel, 1974).

Sources:

Clark, Jerome. "Indian Prophecy and the Prescott UFOs." *Fate* 24,4 (April 1971): 54-61.

Katchongva, Chief Dan. *Hopi Prophecy*. Hotevilla, AZ: Hopi Independent Nation, 1970.

Keel, John A. "America's First UFO Experts." *Saga's UFO Report* 1,6 (Summer 1974): 42-44, 54, 56-57.

Mason, Red Cloud. "Report from the Readers: The 'Sky-Boats'." *Fate* 24,9 (September 1971): 142, 144.

Skidmore, Nonnie S. Letter to Jerome Clark (February 2, 1971).

Waters, Frank. *Book of the Hopi*. New York: The Viking Press, 1963.