

# AMERICA'S FIRST UFO EXPERTS

By John A. Keel

*Author's note: During my flying saucer investigations in 1967 a "silent contactee" (a person claiming to have had direct contact with UFO pilots) gave me a list of predictions allegedly passed on by the space people. This list included specific information about pending airplane crashes, power blackouts, and prophecies about my own future. Each of these predictions later came true—with unerring accuracy! The oddest item on the list seemed to be the most unlikely. It stated that the Hopi Indians would soon*

**The Hopi Indians in our Southwest saw flying saucers hundreds of years ago and their legends give remarkable insights into the role of UFOs and the future of the United States.**

*make headlines. Since America's first citizens are rarely mentioned in the press I regarded this as a very long shot, indeed.*

*I circulated copies of this list to a few selected ufologists, well in advance of the events. Later I realized that this was just another demonstration meant to prove (to me, anyway) that the alleged space people had precise foreknowledge of human events.*

*In December 1967, the Hopi Indians did, in fact, make the headlines in newspapers across the country when a severe blizzard struck the Hopi and Navaho reservations. Rescue planes had to fly food and supplies to them. At the time I thought that would be the end of it. But during 1970 and '71 a series of astonishing events took place around the Hopi reservations in New Mexico and Arizona that generated banner headlines throughout the Southwest. These events led me to research the Hopi myths and legends in depth.*

J.A.K.

On Easter Sunday, 1971, a crowd of over 1,500 people gathered in a field in

Prescott, Ariz., accompanied by two TV news crews and hordes of radio and newspaper reporters. They were expecting the arrival of a flying saucer and most of them were waiting in complete seriousness. This was to be the event of the century; an event long anticipated by the religious leaders of the Hopi tribe. To Chief Dan Katchongva this was to be the return of the "True White Brother" who was scheduled to come down from the sky just before the catastrophic Day of Purification—the Hopi version of the Second Coming.

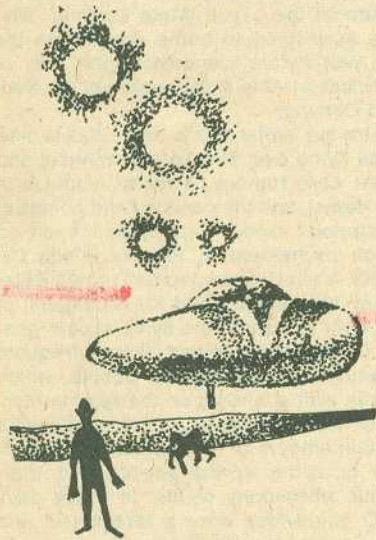
Strange aerial lights and objects had been flying over Prescott for months and there were rumors of secret landings in the desert, and the comings and goings of mysterious men. There hadn't been so much excitement in Prescott since the 1950s when UFO contactee Truman Bethurum had established his Sanctuary of Thought to spread the flying saucer gospel there. Bethurum had claimed frequent meetings with the space people, which began with a landing on the remote Mormon Mesa in Nevada. He had achieved a certain amount of fame with his stories of the amazing space people and their gentle philosophy of life. In those days UFO contactees were a rare breed and were generally ridiculed and ignored.

But in 1971, nearly 20 years after Bethurum's first supposed experience, contactees were so numerous that the ridicule had all but disappeared. In fact, the crowd in Prescott had gathered because they believed such a man—Paul R. Solem. Like the majority of contactees, Solem had shunned publicity. He finally decided to come out into the open because he believed he had knowledge of an event that would benefit all mankind. There hadn't been so much excitement since Dr. Edward U. Condon of Colorado Univ. had ordered a brass band to the Salt Flats in Utah to welcome a promised saucer in 1967. Solem was about to share Dr. Condon's earlier disappointment because the UFO would fail to keep its rendezvous. And Solem, like all the other hopeful contactees before him, would have to take

"Look, I'm not drunk, I don't smoke pot, and I've got a story that will blow your mind!" he said earnestly. For earlier that night as he drove over the mountainous Santa Susana Pass toward his home in Simi Valley, an area 40 miles northwest of Los Angeles, he was tossed headlong into the mysterious world of UFOs.

It was 6:40 p.m., as Chase drove along the freeway. His thoughts were of a successful business day and getting home to his wife and their small daughter. The sun had set but the sky was still blue; he could drive safely for a while before turning on his headlights. As Chase neared the Rocky Peak exit, a dark, cigar-shaped object hovering near the top of the mountains ahead caught his eye. Thinking that it might be a blimp, he slowed down to watch it, but the object disappeared behind the crest of the ridge.

Continuing his route west and passing the mountain, Chase kept looking to his right, expecting to see the blimp silhouetted plainly in the sky on the other side of the ridge where he thought he'd get an unobstructed view of it in the valley. Surprisingly, the sky was empty.



Chase kept watching for the object as he drove several more miles. Then he noticed a small cloud of dust rising from the side of a rocky peak just behind him. He pulled over to the side of the freeway at the Kuehner Drive exit ramp, backed up a short distance and got out to take a look.

Nestled in a small canyon 100 feet below him was an elliptical-shaped craft, hovering and swaying about 10 feet off the ground. It appeared to be about 30 feet wide and at least 70 feet long, the rear end double the size of the front. Because it was nearly evening the color of the craft was difficult to discern, but Chase says the smooth finish resembled the dull gray of an automobile with a coat of paint primer. A hose-like object protruded from the bottom of the craft that was about eight feet long and a foot in diameter. This "tube" almost reached the small stream directly underneath the hovering craft. What baffled Chase most was a large insignia on the side of the craft—a huge "V" with progressively smaller "V's" inside the larger figure, in alternating dark and light colors.

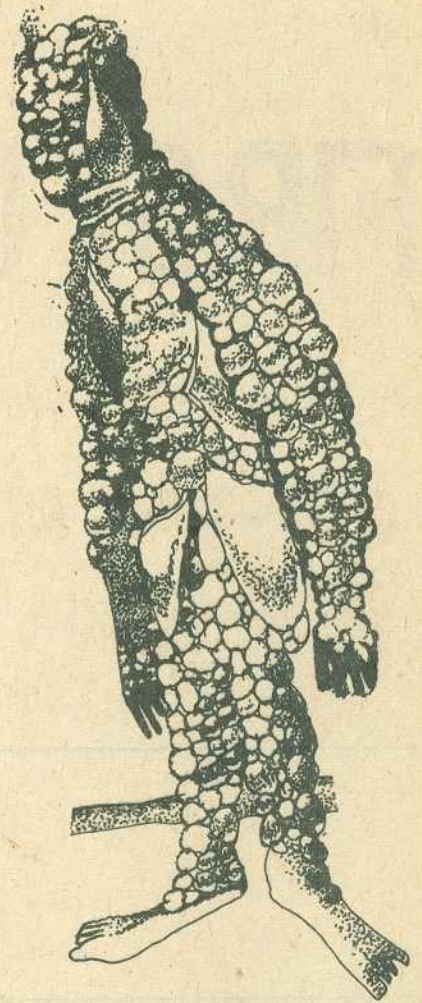
Chase stood spellbound at the edge of the freeway, hoping someone else in the early evening traffic would also see the UFO and stop, at least to inquire what he was looking at, but he was to be the only witness.

Suddenly, at the top of the gently swaying vehicle, a clear, glass-like dome about three feet in diameter appeared and opened. As Chase continued to stare in amazement, a humanoid figure appeared on the deck crawling on his hands and feet and heading toward the narrow front of the object in the direction of the hose.

According to Chase, the "being" looked like a man of normal size and was wearing a tight-fitting uniform that looked like a scuba diver's wet suit. Chase couldn't see the humanoid's facial features because the entity's face or face-plate was darker than his uniform, if, indeed, the humanoid was wearing a uniform at all.

As the "being" neared the hose, a loud clicking sound came from the craft. Instantly, the entity turned and looked up—directly at Chase. It then quickly turned away, and scurried rapidly on hands and toes back to the rear of the craft where it first appeared.

The clear bubble on the top began to rotate and it disappeared leaving only a flush, dull gray surface. Then there was another sound; an extremely low humming that seemed like a vibration. A thick, opaque cloud-like substance began cov-



ering the object that extended about 20 feet all around the mysterious vehicle. Although this "fog" didn't reach Chase a pungently sweet odor did which he felt was caused by the mysterious substance. The witness watched the thick cloud for about 60 seconds and when it disintegrated, the craft had disappeared!

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the blame and suffer all the accusations. The previous summer, however, the UFOs had literally danced to Solem's tune. Some fantastic UFO demonstrations took place in Prescott in front of a wide variety of reliable witnesses. One of them was the skeptical, hard-bitten managing editor of the local paper, the *Prescott Courier*.

Editor Joe Kraus was a member of the group that stood in a yard on Friday, Aug. 7, 1970, watching as Paul Solem furrowed his brow and concentrated, calling mentally to unseen flying saucers overhead. Suddenly he cried out, "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."

Then, while Kraus and the others stared in amazement, a "star" appeared overhead. "It rose in the sky, stopped, hovered, wavered to one side, and then continued across the sky repeating the maneuvers," Kraus later reported. "It was a long ways off, but we thought it changed colors from a white to a reddish-orange, and then to a purplish-blue and then a reddish-white. And then it was gone."

Meanwhile, some distance away at the Prescott airport, a group of people including a photographer, were watching six unusual lights zigzagging across the sky. Photographs were taken and later

"... Ancient Hopi prophecies say that WW III will begin in the east, launched by those people that first received the 'light'—the Chinese, Egyptians, Indians or Israelis ..."

published in the *Courier*. Many other witnesses, including the Reverend John Foster and Mrs. Agnes Liljegrán (whose husband was one of the designers of the B-47), also came forward with corroborating reports. "I know what planes look like. It wasn't an airplane. I believe this was a true sighting," Mrs. Liljegrán said. "This appeared first near the North Star. Satellites go from one end of the sky to the other in a steady direction. This one didn't." (In any case, there are no man-made satellites visible to the naked eye remaining in orbit, according to a NASA spokesman.)

The rash of sightings and confirmations turned Paul Solem into a local celebrity. And the UFOs seemed to follow him around, endorsing his claims of contact. Actually, Solem is supposed to have had his first encounter with the ufonauts at his ranch in Howe, Ida., in 1948. Four years later he allegedly witnessed a landing near a place called Lost River Sinks and had a conversation with a UFO pilot with long hair, dressed in white coveralls. "At first I thought it was a woman," Solem explained. "His hair was shoulder-length and his voice was almost musical in tone . . . There is no reason to fear these people. They are like angels. They come from the planet Venus and they are here only to lend credence to prophecy, not to harm anyone."

Solem's Venusian identified himself as "Paul 2," suggesting perhaps that he was the contactee's alter ego. Such alter egos are common in psychic phenomena and they often resemble the witness physically. Some scientific observers have postulated that all such apparitions are, in fact, merely a product of the witnesses' psyche; a mirror image produced by some unknown psychological condition. In short, our minds might be able to create the good in us in "angel" form, and the bad as "demons."

Among other things, Solem claims "Paul 2" told him of our earthly future when we would be living in a Utopia where money would no longer be used. This same moneyless world has been described by innumerable other contactees, including St. John of the Bible. St. John's *Revelations* asserted that in "the last days" a number stamped on the hand would serve as a substitute for money . . . and that only people possessing such a number would be able to survive at all!

After his 1952 contact, Paul Solem spent the next 17 years wandering throughout the West, talking with other contactees and mixing with Indians. The Venusians instructed him to go to Hotevilla, Ariz., the center of the Hopi nation, in 1970. There he met 108-year-old Dan Katchongva and other leaders of the Sun Clan.

"This man speaks the truth," Chief Katchongva declared after listening to Solem. "This is all part of our religion."

Another Hopi, Titus Lamson, was even more impressed because he had seen a UFO himself. A few months earlier, he said, he had seen a rainbow colored object above Hotevilla. It had a dome on top and "there was a man inside wearing a gray uniform."

Shortly after Paul Solem's UFOs began to appear over Prescott in August 1970, Chief Dan and a contingent of Hopi religious leaders converged upon the city. A long wait began. More UFOs were seen by large numbers of people. Chief Dan nodded wisely. The "End" was near.

The Hopi have been expecting the "End," the Day of Purification, for a long time. Back in 1959, a delegation of Hopis traveled to the United Nations in New York, to formally warn the world of their ancient prophecies. Copies of those prophecies have been distributed to world leaders and can still be obtained by writing to Ralph Tawangyawma, Independent Hopi Nation, Hotevilla, Ariz. 96030.

The Hopi trek to New York was inspired by an ancient prophecy which described "a House of Glass or Mica would stand at this time, where Great Leaders from many lands would be gathered to help any people who are in trouble." They were received politely but their message had seemingly little effect until years later when, in 1967, U.N. Secretary General U Thant declared that he felt flying saucers were a subject of utmost importance.

Saucers have always been an integral part of the Hopi religion and their legends and beliefs date back long before the White Man usurped their territories. According to their ancient legends, the

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Hopis were led northward into what is now the U.S. by the Kachina people. These Kachinas resembled human beings but were from some other planet and had remarkable powers. They taught the Hopis the rudiments of agriculture, weaving, and other necessary arts. (This myth of tutelary gods is widespread and can be found in all cultures from Tibet to Egypt to remote and isolated Pacific Islands.)

Tradition states that the Hopi originated in a mysterious Red City, *Palatkwapi*, in the south—perhaps Mexico or Central America. After leading the tribe north, the Kachinas departed, saying: "The time for us to go to our far off planets and stars has not come yet. But it is time for us to leave you. We will go by our powers to a certain high mountain, which you will know, where we will await your messages of need."

The Hopis believe the Kachinas reside in the San Francisco mountains in Arizona. For some reason, mountains and high places are always regarded as the sacred havens of the gods, from Mount Olympus of the ancient Greeks to Kanchenjunga, mountain retreat of the gods of Nepal. Interestingly, the Hopis also have ancient legends about a great flood which destroyed the entire world. And they have their own version of Moses and the stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments. Even more remarkable, the Kachina who presented these tablets has

a name very similar to Moses—Maasau. The drawings and ciphers carved into these stones (and some of them still exist and have been examined by scholars) have been traditionally interpreted as being prophecies warning that a strange people would overrun the Hopi lands and "your land will be forced to be divided and shall be cut four times, each cut smaller than the other. From the South a power will rise to come and help when the time comes."

Two brothers are supposed to have carried some of these sacred tablets off in different directions and the Older Brother will return one day to save the Hopi nation. It is said that the Older Brother "after many years may change in color of skin which may become white but his hair will remain black . . . He will also have the ability to write things down and will therefore be the only one to read the Sacred Stone Tablets."

Paul Solem was given a message to relay to the Hopis. "Our leader as spoken of in Hopi prophecy is already here on Earth in mortality," Paul 2 is supposed to have told Paul 1, "and is known as the Apostle John, the same as in the New Testament."

Other contactees also claim to have been told about this mysterious "John." Noted seers like Jeanne Dixon have stated that the most important religious leader in history was born somewhere in the Middle East in the early 1960s. Could he be the new *Apostle John*?

Hopi tradition describes this True White Brother as a powerful warlord. "It is known that our True White Brother when he comes will be all powerful and he will

wear a *red cap or red cloak*," the prophecy states. "He will be large in population, belongs to no religion but his very own. He will bring with him the Sacred Stone Tablets. Great will be his coming. None will be able to stand against him. All power in this world will be placed in his hand and he will come swiftly and in one day get control of this whole continent. Hopi has been warned never to take up arms."

Variations of this can be found in many unrelated prophecies. The famed 16th century visionary, Nostradamus, predicted that Oriental armies would sweep over the West in the year 1999. St. John's *Book of Revelations* offers equally gloomy prospects, asserting that Armageddon will begin in the Middle East after the Jews have resettled in their ancient homeland, and that the Chinese would somehow be involved.

Armageddon is also described in detail in the ancient Hopi prophecies. They say that WW III will begin in the East, launched by those peoples who first received "the light"—the divine wisdom. This could mean China, India, Egypt, or Palestine. The U.S. will be totally destroyed in this war, the prophecy states, but the Hopis will be saved. A mass migration of Indians from Mexico and Central America will follow the holocaust and presumably, the whole cycle will begin again with the Indians dominating the Americas as in ancient times.

Other Hopi legends seem to describe the rise and fall of fabled Atlantis, and discuss the use of aircraft in warfare. According to Frank Waters, one of the leading chroniclers of Hopi tradition, this ear-

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lier "Third World" was very materialistic and evil. "Some of them made a *patuwvota* and with their creative power made it fly through the air." Waters writes in his *Book of the Hopi*, "On this many of the people flew to a big city, attacked it, and returned so fast no one knew where they came from. Soon the people of many cities and countries were maging *patuwvotas* and flying on them to attack one another. So corruption and war came to the Third World as it had to the others."

A key figure in Hopi mythology is Sasquasohuh, a Kachina said to come from a distant blue star that is invisible but will make its appearance in the near future. (In recent years, astronomers have discovered a number of red and blue stars on the very edge of the universe, and our modern radio telescopes have located many invisible bodies in space which emit powerful radio signals.) Sasquasohuh is expected to appear and participate in a Hopi ceremony in the days to come. The main reason Indians wear grotesque masks during their ceremonies is to allow the Kachinas to join them unobserved. All Hopi ceremonialism will end on the day a Kachina rips off his mask during a dance and reveals himself.

In 1914, just before WW I, the Hopis sang a special song during their important Wuwuchim ceremony. This song predicted the spread of evil over the world. They did not sing it again until 1940, on the eve of WW II. And the last time this song was sung was in 1961—just as our country was heading into Vietnam.

A number of curious and startling symbols have long played an important part in Hopi lore. Some of these resemble the symbols of Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime. It is well-known that Hitler adopted symbols from ancient cults and that the swastika was an important symbol in the Orient for thousands of years before the Fuhrer usurped it. The Hopis believe their "true White Brother" will also use the swastika as his sign.

"With him there will be two great ones both very intelligent and powerful," the Hopi prophecy says, "one of which will have a symbol or sign of swastika which represents purity and is male. Also he will have this symbol or sign which also represents purity and is female, a producer of Life, the red lines in between the sign represent lifeblood of a woman (this symbol resembles the German Iron Cross). It is also known that he will wear a cap similar to the back of a Horned Toad. The Third One or the Second One of the two helpers to our True White Brother will have a sign of a symbol of sun . . ."

This trio "will shake the earth first for a short period of time in preparation for the final day of Purification." It would seem that this Hopi prophecy was fulfilled over 30 years ago when Hitler allied himself with Japan (whose symbol was the rising sun). But the Hopis believe history is going to repeat itself and a new dictator is due to "come like a big storm." He will be unmerciful and command great numbers of people. "When he comes he will cover the land like ants," they say. "The Hopi people have been warned not to get up on housetops to watch as he will come to punish all the people. We do not yet know

who this man is from the West, only that he will have a very large population."

Near Old Oraibi, Ariz., there is a stone with a petroglyph carved deeply into it. This depicts a horizontal line with a half-circle in the center. The head and arms of a human rest on top of the circle. The Hopis claim this carving was the work of Maasau.

"We have seen the flying saucers and have heard their message to us," Chief Dan Katchongva said in 1970. "We know they are real, as their pictures were drawn upon stone for all to see . . . Also Hopi Indians know that other planets and worlds have people, and they are watching us."

Scholars and historians have conducted numerous comparative studies and produced a mountain of literature demonstrating that man's earliest myths and legends were tied to the appearances of strange objects in the sky and encounters with their occupants who were often regarded as gods by the primitive peoples. Cave paintings found in France and dating back thousands of years clearly depict UFOs, complete with tripod legs or landing gear, and ladders dangling from their hatches. Similar carvings and paintings have been found in Caves in China

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and Africa.

The ancient lore of every culture describes how the UFO entities passed along helpful and accurate prophecies and assisted people in other ways. Most UFO enthusiasts today believe that flying saucers are benign and are coming from some distant planet to help mankind through some impending crisis.

The heaviest sightings in the U.S. occur year after year over the Midwest and the so-called Bible Belt. This is because *belief* is an all-important ingredient in the phenomenon. In Prescott, Ariz., the belief was already there. Prescott has gone through many UFO incidents during the past 20 years and has served as a center for Bethuram and other contactees. Also, the area is steeped in Indian lore and the ancient UFO-related religious beliefs of the Hopi.

In January 1970, Paul R. Solem was released from the Idaho State Mental Hospital where he had been since September 1967, according to a report later compiled by the Prescott sheriff's office. Upon his release he traveled through Idaho and Utah, visiting Indian tribes and producing saucer sightings (which can be docu-

mented with newspaper reports).

After visiting Chief Dan Katchongva and the Hopi leaders in Hotevilla, and, incidentally, producing UFOs to back his claims, Solem traveled to Prescott and checked into a boarding house.

The stage was set for the grand finale. Solem's Venusians informed him that they would hold four major demonstrations in Prescott, beginning on Easter Sunday, 1971. The site they chose was a field on the outskirts of town. But when Solem visited the field he was furious to find bulldozers had been working there. The owner agreed to pull the bulldozers out of sight and the town band tuned up.

Following the disappointment on Easter, Paul Solem issued a press release denouncing the bulldozers, threatening to sue the owner, and canceling the other UFO landings. That week he left Prescott.

Soon afterwards Chief Dan was ousted as leader of the Sun Clan by the Hopi Tribal Council because his relationship with Paul Solem had hurt the image of the Hopis.

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

It is easy now to dismiss the whole Prescott episode as the work of a possible crank. But that does not explain the innumerable sightings of strange aerial objects which have always accompanied Paul Solem. Nor are his claims unique. Other contactees, such as West Virginia's Woodrow Derenberger, have also stood in open fields listening to bodiless voices in the night while glowing spheres danced overhead in front of scores of open-mouthed witnesses.

No. For some reason the UFO phenomenon seems to attach itself to certain people, leading them into a twilight world with prophecies of doom and hope for believers only. Perhaps it has always been so. Perhaps all of man's philosophies, aspirations, and fears are the product of this unknown force. Once men took these entities very seriously and their belief led mankind into the grim Dark Ages. Perhaps we are on the edge of such a new era today. The coming of the UFOs, and their mischievous and sometimes even vicious actions may be a part of some larger pattern which will, in time, give us a new, more honest view of the cosmos and of ourselves.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek has frequently said that he believes there is "scientific paydirt" in the UFO phenomenon. Dr. Edward U. Condo disagrees. Scientists all over the world are now beginning to take a serious look at these matters. In England, a well-funded scientific study into the "religious experience" is underway. In the Soviet Union, hundreds of top scientists are busily investigating mental telepathy and psychic phenomena.

Since the days of Enoch, men have been viewing these apparitions and listening to their messages. Their prophecies have provided the scenario for all major human events. Paul Solem is but one of many. Nor is he the last. There will be other Prescotts in the headlines in the years ahead. Judging from the past record of the phenomenon, none of these events will supply the "scientific pay dirt"