

# Sense and Speculation

By Wade Wellman

IT has seemed to me for some while that too many writers in the UFO field have a tendency to make long parades of logical possibilities—varying hypotheses which cannot be validated or confuted by any existing evidence. This in fact is a strong objection to the publication of unsubstantiated contact claims. I can see no reason to print these stories when it is impossible to pass judgment on them. Reading most of these accounts, an intelligent person can do no better than say “Maybe, maybe not,” and turn to other subjects. And indeed most of the alleged encounters make incredibly dull reading. When I read Adamski’s *Inside the Space Ships*, back in high school, it struck me as not only unconvincing but boring, and before the end I was yawning aloud with sheer ennui. One can hardly think that the real facts of the saucer mystery are as utterly insipid as most contact claimants would have us believe. And, to speak plainly, I simply won’t credit any story in which the claimant furnishes nothing distinctly extraterrestrial—even an intellectual idea would be good evidence, if it were something hitherto unknown upon the earth. Unless the corroborative testimony is overwhelming, all of these stories go into my wastebasket on principle. Let us ignore the constantly repeated and almost unvarying tales of alien beings that look and act as we do, who spend their time mouthing platitudes of terrestrial wisdom, and speak English with a perfect British or American idiom. Such stories have no use except, perhaps, to cure insomnia.

Why, after all, should we spend time trying to analyze these claims? Even if some of them are true, they lack proof and we gain nothing by speculation on them. However, this ignores the fact that contact stories of another type—the conservative, unembellished claims with less sensational appeal—have, in some cases, been supported by adequate evidence to persuade any jury. I cannot bring myself to doubt the cases reported by Major Donald E. Keyhoe in chapter 16 of his *Flying Saucer Conspiracy*. We must not suspect that a group of uneducated Venezuelan peasants, among whom there is not the slightest evidence of collusion, could ever have invented a series of reports which so clearly and consistently describe creatures from a planet of strong gravity. (To avoid repeating an already published analysis, I may be permitted to refer the readers to an article of mine

in FLYING SAUCER REVIEW for March/April, 1962.) These Venezuela stories are so consistent and so perfectly logical that on this basis alone they are entitled to belief. Moreover, some of the cases reported by Aimé Michel in his second book have good internal evidence, if not corroboration.

Accepting these stories, and on principle discounting all claims which depend on the uncorroborated testimony of the claimant and which have no persuasive internal evidence, I submit the following:

Two or more races are participating in the scrutiny of our planet. The conservative stories recounted by Keyhoe and Michel certainly demonstrate—if we accept them, as I think we must—that not all of the alien spaceships emanate from the same world. The beings reported by Michel were so different from those in the Venezuela cases that they must have evolved upon a very different sort of planet—or on several different planets. Further, with the support of virtually all scientific opinion, I contend that native intelligence on Mars or Venus is highly improbable, and may safely be counted impossible on any other planet of our Solar System (except, of course, the Earth). Which means that all of the visiting races come from outside the Solar System, and that they are studying not only the Earth but all the planets which attend this particular star. I cannot believe that their study is Earth-centred, or that man is the principal object of their terrestrial study.

For we humans, the highest race of this insignificant planet, must eventually recognize the clear fact that our galaxy teems with living civilizations, many of them so far advanced that they could only regard us as inferior animals. The effortless ease with which the UFOs have penetrated our Solar System means simply that our visitors have no more difficulty with interplanetary or interstellar flight than we have with travel between cities and towns. Human scientists often speak of the problems inherent in flight between the stars, but surely these problems are forgotten history on many other worlds. And the infinitely superior technology of the alien watchers not only points to a superior species, but also to the reason why they haven’t made contact with us. It is foolish to suggest that a race so far advanced would have any wish to communicate with humanity. Their

interest in us may best be compared to the interest men would take in the various animal species of a jungle which, for any reason, we might be studying or exploring.

Nor is it mere speculation to say that there must be innumerable races which look upon us as we look upon the beasts of the Earth. Our galaxy, itself only one galaxy (though a large one) among billions, contains perhaps 200 billion stars, assembled in such a huge aggregate that a beam of light requires about 150,000 years to cross its greatest extent. And within this galaxy the individual stars form smaller assemblages of so many varied types that classification and cataloguing are still incomplete. Our Sun, about two thirds of the way from the galactic centre, stands in relation to its closest neighbouring star as two twelve-inch globes would stand if separated by 5,500 miles. Every modern theory of star formation holds that planetary development is a normal occurrence, and biochemists agree that life develops wherever conditions are suitable. Since any planetary system should have at least one planet located so as to receive enough light and heat to sustain a biological population, we must infer that our galaxy has billions of inhabited worlds. And, since many of these worlds are much older than the Earth, life on such planets will have gone as far beyond man as we have gone beyond the earliest terrestrial mammals.

The existence of many such races is, to my mind, an incontestable fact; and the ease with which our visitors cross space must be taken to show that we are in such company. Their mechanisms, if we could capture any for examination, would probably be as incomprehensible to us as a helicopter is to a monkey. We must not expect mass contact, nor should we fear destruction when we travel to the Moon and planets (where UFO bases doubtlessly exist). If we do not annoy them, the strangers are not likely to harm us, unless perhaps they take a few specimens for closer study—and it would seem, from certain remarkable disappearances of aircraft, that some human beings have already served that purpose. The watchers from above are witness to a fascinating spectacle, that of a native race breaking away from the clutches of a planet. In a way, it is the same interest we might feel if, on another planet, we saw the first amphibians scrambling on to the land. But we must not equate our

emotions or reasoning with the reasoning and emotions of our visitors. Indeed these concepts are probably as invalid, when applied to them, as the instincts of the earliest terrestrial animals when applied to us. On the ladder of evolution, these things have their day, and disappear.

This is not conjecture, but straightforward logic. And it should settle the question posed by Antonio Ribera in the issue for November/December, 1964. *Of course* the UFOs can travel under water. Some have been seen landing on firm ground, with metallic legs projecting. If one thing is obvious, it is that the vastly superior technology of another world can turn out vehicles capable of effortless locomotion on land, under water, in the air, and in outer space. They evidently run by means of principles which we have never imagined, let alone proposed or developed. This we must take for granted: Ribera's cases prove a point which requires no proof at all. The ordinary "saucer" types should be expected to travel as easily in one medium as in another. Effectively, this planet belongs to them more than to us; they can explore it and use it however they please, which we cannot; and the only reason they have not taken it from us is that such action is not necessary for their purposes. Perhaps, indeed, they have long since "taken it over", so to speak, without our knowledge—for their doings might not attract our notice, any more than deer in a forest take notice of the occasional passing of an automobile.

Modern science has given us a tremendous knowledge of the cosmos (tremendous though incipient), and, with it, has brought us the inescapable conviction that human affairs are of no significance in the total complex of the metagalaxy. Nor is this offered as a pessimistic outlook. Nothing that we do upon this earth has ultimate meaning in the cosmic scheme, but it can still have the deepest meaning to ourselves; and what we have learned should keep us from being grieved at our failures and frustrations. Nor should we be fearful of what our visitors may do. Whatever they do with us, if indeed they do anything, will be no more than what superior life forms have done to inferior ones through all eternity. And the physical universe, in the comforting theory of Fred Hoyle, is eternal. Man has not yet entered the universe, but when he does, he will prove a worthy citizen.

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