

BRAZIL LEARNS AT LAST ABOUT A.V.B.

Gordon Creighton

AS I mentioned in the opening paragraph of my account¹ of the famous case of the Brazilian farmer Antônio Villas Boas, there was one curious and significant fact—namely that, although Brazil's leading magazine *O Cruzeiro* did publish the full story (eight years after it had happened), this occurred solely in the Spanish language edition.² This edition obviously does not circulate in Brazil at all, but in Argentina, where it is printed, and in the neighbouring republics of Spanish speech. The business of A.V.B.* has therefore remained unknown to the Brazilian public, despite the fact that Sr. João Martins, the author of the Spanish article, is one of Brazil's most distinguished journalists and an ace reporter for *O Cruzeiro*. He is indeed perhaps the Brazilian newspaperman who is best known throughout the world, having done reportages in many lands. And, be it noted, it was he himself who, with the late Dr. Olavo Fontes and an unnamed representative of the Brazilian Military Intelligence,³ actually conducted the whole enquiry into Villas Boas' story and interviewed the farmer and tested him at great length.

But now at last, no less than fourteen years after the disturbing A.V.B. event, João Martins is apparently permitted to come clean with it, and the Rio Sunday review, *Domingo Ilustrado*, for October 10, 1971, prints the story, in Portuguese, though admittedly much abridged for reasons of space.

I have checked the text of it very carefully, and find that it is a précis of the text from which I made my translation, that both bear the date February 22, 1958, and that therefore (disregarding the abridgement) they are identical. As it is an abridgement of the text translated by me early in 1966 and now available in *The Humanoids*, there is no need to

concern oneself with it here. I shall consequently confine myself to giving below, in translation, the title of João Martins' article, the gist of his introductory paragraphs and the final paragraphs in which he states his conclusions.

The article is accompanied by a number of photographs of Antônio Villas Boas, copies of some of which have been in my files for a long time past. There is also one of the five well-known UFO photographs secured by João Martins and his colleague Ed Keffel at Lovers' Island, Barra da Tijuca, near Rio de Janeiro on May 7, 1952,⁴ and one of Barauna's famous photos of the UFO seen over the Ilha da Trindade from the Brazilian warship *Almirante Saldanha*. There is also a reproduction of the writing⁵ that A.V.B. says he saw inside the landed machine into which he was taken, and a photograph of his wooden model⁶ of his small, grey-uniformed and helmeted captors. One of the photographs shows him having his blood pressure checked by Dr. Olavo Fontes.

The Title

AFTER FOURTEEN YEARS, A REVELATION OF THE FANTASTIC: SAUCER MAKES RACIAL TEST, USING A MAN AS A GUINEA-PIG

Report by João Martins

The Introduction

"The case that I am now about to relate is the most fantastic and at the same time the most convincing of all the stories of direct contact with the crews of 'flying saucers' that I have investigated personally. I have never published it in Portuguese before. There exists only a version of it in Spanish, and renderings of it, abbreviated and in some cases incorrect, in foreign books and reviews⁷ specialising in the subject.

NOTE by Editor of *Domingo Ilustrado*: "For about twenty years past João Martins has been investigating the enigma of the flying saucers. A reporter of the very top rank, he only now reveals for the first time to the Brazilian public the most impressive of his investigations in the realms of Space mystery. The whole life of the central personage in this episode was dissected and analysed through and through. Beyond any doubt whatsoever—this was proved clinically—he was a normal man. But it was also established clinically that, present in this man, were the traces left on his organism by something that our Science is unable to identify.

"The reporter is João Martins himself. In this, as in João Martins' previous pieces of reportage, he gives no final or definite conclusions. He merely presents the facts. And these facts confront us once again with the challenging enigma of the flying saucers."

"The reason why the A.V.B. case was kept unpublished for so long and withheld from the public at large is simply that I wanted to be absolutely sure that, if anyone came forward telling of a similar case, it would not be due to any conscious or unconscious suggestion caused by my Report. A number of years have now passed and, so far as I am aware, there have been no other

* EDITOR'S NOTE: News of this case first reached us via our correspondent Dr. W. Buhler, in 1962, in whose report the witness was referred to only by his initials "A.V.B." In our first published version of the case in January 1965, we gave him the name "Adhemar"—for easier reading—but no sooner had this been done than the *O Cruzeiro* articles arrived revealing his full name, Antônio Villas Boas.

identical or similar incidents. Consequently there is no longer any reason for refraining from publishing this story.⁸

“Above all however I desire to explain here once again my own personal position as regards this intriguing and controversial affair. For many years now I have been a professional hunter of ‘flying saucers’: and, as a professional, I am cool and sceptical, while still maintaining an open mind.

“At present I am certain of *only one thing*: namely that, after we have rigorously filtered out all the cases of error, hoax, suggestion (of individuals or in the mass), megalomania, or mere half-witted stupidity, there still remain a considerable number of sightings that cannot be fitted into the framework of any phenomenon scientifically classified by us. And often they are sightings by highly qualified and responsible people.

“Let me recall briefly just one case among many: the sighting on October 24, 1954, by various Brazilian Air Force officers and sergeants and enlisted men of the Air Force Base at Gravataí, in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, as well as by numerous civilians of that neighbourhood. For a period of more than two hours, two objects circled around over the area, in a cloudless sky and with maximum visibility. The incident was reported in an official communication from Colonel Hardman, Commandant of the Gravataí Air Base, and a few days later Brigadier Gervásio Duncan, then Chief of Staff to the Brazilian Air Force, communicated the official reports to journalists at a press-conference. Asked to say what the two objects could have been, Brigadier Duncan confined himself to replying that *there were the facts*; that the eyewitnesses could not be refuted; but that there were no conclusions to be drawn . . .

“An account of this same Gravataí incident, reinforced by the actual personal appearance, upon the rostrum, of the eyewitness officers themselves, also figured on the agenda of a lecture given by Colonel (as he then was) João Adil de Oliveira, Chief of the Information Services in the Headquarters of the Brazilian Air Force, delivered

A.V.B.'s wooden model of one of the entities alleged to have captured him.

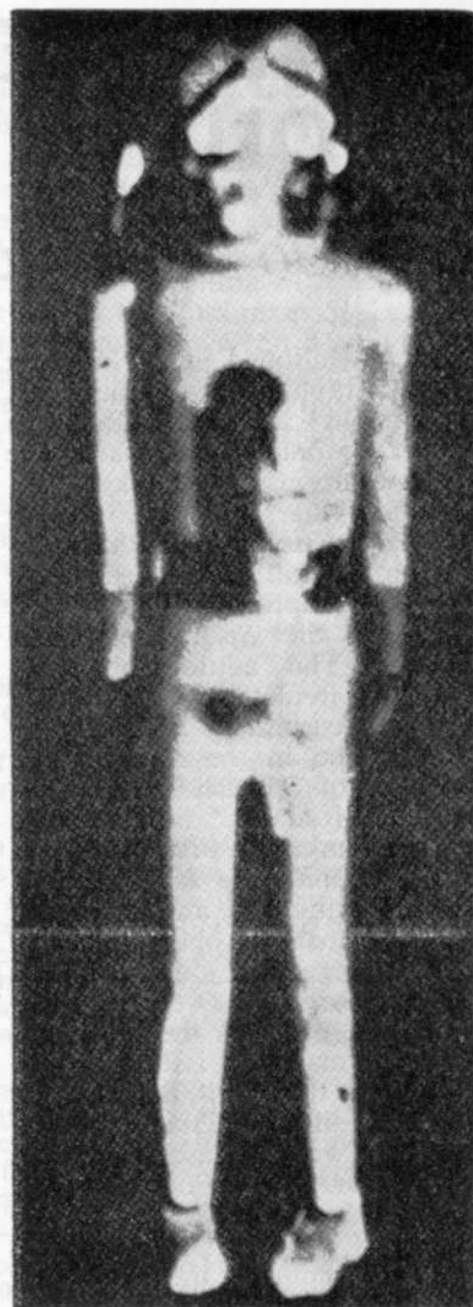
on November 2, 1954, at the Higher Military Academy (Escola Superior de Guerra) in Rio de Janeiro.⁹

“My own position is the same as the position of these military authorities whom I have just quoted: namely that a phenomenon exists—the phenomenon of what are popularly called ‘flying saucers’. Whether they are solid objects or are a type of still unknown natural phenomenon; whether they are guided or manned; whether they come from some planet of our solar system or from some other system of our Galaxy—I do not know.

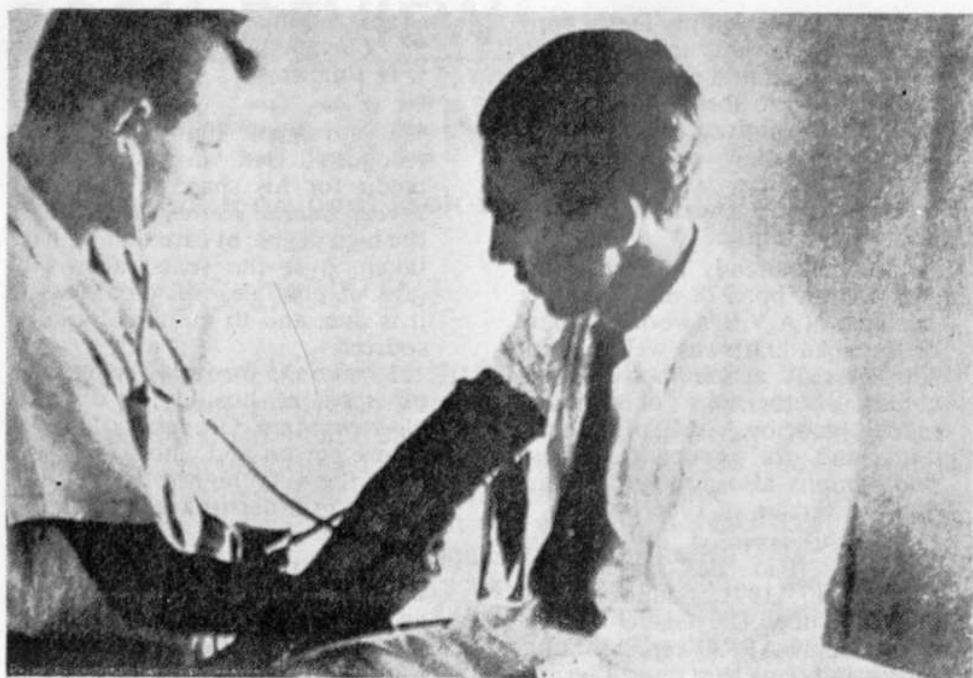
“For this reason, during the past few years, I have been interested only in the cases of alleged direct contact with these mysterious objects and their possible occupants. In my opinion, merely one single proven case of direct contact will throw light upon the enigma. And what hampers this kind of rational, objective investigation most severely are the mystics, the blind fanatics, the hysterical folk, the pseudo-scientists with all their talk and all their pompous theories, and the empty bla-bla about UFOs by the whole tribe of cranks.

“The case which I now relate was investigated directly by me, with the late Dr. Olavo Fontes (one of the most serious investigators the subject has had and, at the time in question, the representative of APRO in Brazil) *plus a third party—a military authority acting in an unofficial capacity.*¹⁰

“The witness, A.V.B., was subjected by us to the most modern and the most sophisticated methods of interrogation, without falling into any contradictions. He resisted every trap we set to test whether he was seeking notoriety or money. He was subjected to a complete medical examination, physical and psychiatric, and he revealed a state of completely normal physical and mental equilibrium. His reputation in the region where he lives was the reputation of an honest, serious, hardworking man. But the biggest



Antônio Villas Boas



Antônio Villas Boas under examination by the late Dr. Olavo T. Fontes

factor arguing for the credibility of his story resulted from the clinical medical examination of him, the findings of which I shall give at the close of this article.

"Here, meanwhile, is his fascinating statement to us, made on February 22, 1958 . . .

Here follows the original text of the deposition in which A.V.B. tells of his preliminary observation (did "they" first of all "run a rule" over him?), of the stopping of his tractor, his attempt to run away, his capture and abduction, the weird medical examination and his introduction to a female crew-member for procreative purposes. All of which will be found in translation on pages 204-224 of *The Humanoids*.

João Martins' Concluding Paragraphs

NOT JUST ANOTHER STORY

"Up to this point however this story, despite the fact that it is different from all the other alleged contacts with the crews of flying saucers, would merely be 'just another story,' devoid of any proofs that could induce in us any major degree of conviction. But in the course of the rigorous medical

check-up which A.V.B. was given, and the medical questions that were put to him *about what had happened to him after the incident*, there emerged a clear-cut picture, leading to the conclusion that *A.V.B. had been exposed to a certain amount of radiation, not fatal, but sufficient to produce in him various symptoms over a period of several months. Symptoms such as insomnia, fatigue, pains throughout the whole body, nausea, headaches, loss of appetite, ceaseless burning sensations in the eyes and watering of the eyes, cutaneous lesions at the slightest of light bruising, and even indeed with no prior bruising at all, and yellowish spots on his skin that only vanished between ten and twenty days afterwards. The lesions, which went on appearing for months, looked like small reddish nodules, harder than the skin around them and protuberant, painful when touched, each with a small central orifice yielding a yellowish thin watery discharge. The surrounding skin presented 'a hyperchromatic violet-tinged area.'* At the same time there remained visible, for many months thereafter, the 'two small hypochromatic patches, one on each side of his chin, and of more or less circular shape. The skin on the areas in

question looked smoother and thinner, as though it had been renewed, or as though it had been somewhat atrophied.'

TRUE OR FALSE: LET EVERYONE GIVE HIS VERDICT

"Supposing now that Antônio Villas Boas may have *invented* an absolutely original sort of story, and that he may have displayed a quite exceptional degree of resistance to interrogation that indeed bordered upon harsh and cruel treatment, and displayed resistance to all the methods of coercion (just short of actual violence)¹¹ that were employed to get him to admit that he was lying, and supposing too that he may have shown an exceptional degree of resistance to all the temptations to acquire fame and money, we have still got to suppose furthermore that he possessed the necessary scientific and medical education to be able to answer the medical questions in such a fashion as to be able to present a total, coherent and logical picture of symptoms. And then, finally, on top of all that, we have again to assume that he managed to arrange by some means or other to produce in himself medical lesions such as those described above.

"Because of all this, out of all the accounts of direct contact that have been given so far, Antônio Villas Boas' story is the one that seems the most convincing.

"For the cool and objective investigators (among whom I count myself) it is just possible that it still may not be totally convincing, and doubts may remain. But for those who are not so demanding, the account may be found to suffice as proof.

"If this story be true, it may well be that, somewhere out there in the Universe, there is a very strange child.¹² A child that maybe is being prepared to return here.

"Where does fantasy end?

"Where does reality begin?"¹³

* * *

With these rhetorical questions João Martins concludes his article on the A.V.B. case in the *Domingo Ilustrado*.

Notes and Comments by
Gordon Creighton

- ¹ Published first in FSR for January/February 1965 and in subsequent issues as: *The Most Amazing Case of All*. See also *Postscript to The Most Amazing Case of All* (FSR, July/August 1965) in which I hinted at what might be the true nature and origin of A.V.B.'s captors. Then, in *Even More Amazing* (FSR, July/August and September/October 1966) the case was dealt with again at length, this time with a full translation of the definitive text of February 22, 1958. Finally, as *The Amazing Case of Antônio Villas Boas*, it is now available in a more permanent form and in a hard cover, as section IX of *The Humanoids* (Neville Spearman, London, and Henry Regnery Co., Chicago).
- ² See the opening sentence of *The Amazing Case of Antônio Villas Boas* (p. 200 of *The Humanoids*). The Spanish version, entitled *La Mujer del Otro Mundo (The Woman From Another World)* formed parts 4, 5, and 6 of a series of six articles on UFOs in *O Cruzeiro Internacional* (published in Buenos Aires, Argentina), between December 1, 1964, and March 1, 1965. The author of the series—which contains some other interesting cases which are probably still unknown outside South America—was *Heitor Durville*, which was a pseudonym used by João Martins. (Did João Martins perhaps use this *nom de plume* because he had engineered this “Spanish leak” without securing prior permission from the authorities of the Brazilian Military Intelligence?)
- ³ See my hint (*The Humanoids*, p. 231) that we “knew more than we were saying” about the background of the A.V.B. case, and that the Brazilian Security or Intelligence were involved in it. Moreover, in his letter of April 25, 1966, to me (reprinted on p. 201 of *The Humanoids*) Dr. Olavo Fontes stated clearly that he was “one of the three persons in Brazil possessing the complete report” on A.V.B., although he did not say who that third person was.
- ⁴ These photographs have been reproduced widely (Lorenzen, H. T. Wilkins, Jimmy Guieu, *et al.*) but not, so far as I can see, in FSR. See my *Addendum* to Dr. W. Buhler's article *UFO On the Sea near Rio*, in FSR for May/June 1971.
- ⁵ No change from what appears in *The Humanoids* (p. 233). Our earlier version had not been quite

accurate. I have on my files a copy of the inscription, made by Dr. Fontes himself and enclosed in one of his letters to me. It agrees with what we have given and also with the version now given in João Martins' article, so that there seems to be general agreement about this writing.

- ⁶ As we had already reported (*The Humanoids*, pp. 228 and 231) the existence of A.V.B.'s wooden model of the alien craft was well known. The present article however includes photographs of wooden models made by A.V.B. of both the craft and its occupants. These photographs also appeared in the Spanish version of 1964/1965.
- ⁷ In a letter printed in *Domingo Ilustrado* (Rio de Janeiro) of October 17, 1971, Senhora Irene Granchi, now Dr. Olavo Fontes' successor as APRO representative in Brazil, seems to suggest that her own excellent translation of the A.V.B. story (published in the USA in Coral Lorenzen's Signet paperback *Flying Saucer Occupants*, July 1967) is the sole complete or the sole correct version in the English language, and Sr. João Martins likewise appears to be uninformed on this point. I therefore take this opportunity to emphasise that, while my own translation was unquestionably a little more explicit in its rendering of some of the more intimate details than perhaps Sra. Granchi, a highly refined and cultured lady, may have felt it fitting for her to give, there can be no grounds for questioning the general value of either her version or mine, though naturally the choice of phraseology is not identical, nor could it be expected to be since it is a matter of translations made by two different people.

However, as regards any possible suggestion that my version, as given in *The Humanoids*, is perhaps *incomplete* or *inaccurate*, I think I should add that I have in my files a long letter to myself from Dr. Olavo Fontes, dated December 27, 1966. In paragraph 3 of this letter, Dr. Fontes writes as follows:

“Now for the very important question of the A.V.B. incident, I think you are publishing a very close and accurate translation of my Report and of A.V.B.'s story, better than Mrs. Granchi's excellent version. This gave me great pleasure, you know—also the fact that you are giving me credit for the work I have done in the investigation of this

amazing incident.”

(Original letter from Dr. Fontes in English.)

I am glad that Dr. Fontes recognised that we gave him full credit for his share in this case. *Flying Saucer Review* is proud of the high degree of care that we have taken, over the years, always to give, if possible, full credit where it is due, and to quote names and sources.

I make the foregoing remarks in no spirit of hostility or criticism *vis-à-vis* Mme. Granchi, a lady for whose person and whose abilities I have the very highest regard, but simply in order to keep the record straight.

- ⁸ I really do not think that we can be expected to accept this statement as the whole truth. Had they merely wanted to hold up divulgation of the A.V.B. affair for a while in order to see whether any other cases of the same type might turn up, they certainly never would have let the story out in Spanish, the language of no less than *sixteen* South and Central American countries, many of them adjacent to Brazil, and in many of which UFO contact reports have been just as numerous as in Portuguese-speaking Brazil. No! I prefer to think that, if the affair is now being made known in Brazil, this is simply because somebody in authority has at last given the green light.

As regards the *uniqueness* of the A.V.B. episode, I can well believe that in 1958 Sr. João Martins thought it unique, but since then we have had the case of Barney and Betty Hill and there have been *hints* here and there of other cases. If there were it would not surprise me. I suspect that, if the nature and origin of A.V.B.'s trim little lady friend were what I think them to be, then such matings and crossings have not been rare events in the history of our species. And, although naturally the Russians do not admit this, I suspect that the reason why their UFO investigation group were all so enthusiastic to read *The Humanoids* (of which we could not give them enough copies, it seems) was that they too have come across evidence of this in the history of their own country.

- ⁹ See my *Addendum* to Dr. Buhler's article *UFO On the Sea near Rio* (in FSR for May/June 1971).
- ¹⁰ My italics. Here is the proof of the suggestion which I made years ago that the Brazilian Military and Security authorities had a strong interest in the A.V.B. case and were

BOOK REVIEW

THE SCIENTIST AND UFOs

Dr. Hynek's long cool look at the subject after twenty years of Blue Book confusion.

Charles Bowen

NEAR Winslow, Arizona, at 10.00 p.m. on January 13, 1967, the pilot of a Lear jet observed a "red light, initially at (the) ten o'clock position, that flashed on and off, and quadrupled itself in a vertical direction. The Albuquerque (control tower) radar 'painted' just one object whenever the light was on, none when it was off. The light repeated the quadrupling process a number of times, seeming to 'retract into itself the lights below the original light', then as the tower warned the jet that the object was getting closer, it seemed to play a cat-and-mouse game with the jet, involving some rapid accelerations."

After 25 minutes the object ascended rapidly at a 30° angle, and was gone inside 10 seconds, 'painted' by the Albuquerque radar until it disappeared. A National Airlines plane was in the vicinity, and its pilot overheard the tower/jet radio conversation, and saw the object.

A good example of first-class data regarding something strange and unknown that called for close scientific scrutiny? The layman might be excused for thinking so, especially if he had also learned of the even more intriguing Lakenheath/Bentwaters incident,¹ not to mention a host of other puzzling "radar-visual" cases.

The brief details of the Winslow incident are taken from a new book, **The UFO Experience: a scientific inquiry**, by the Lindheimer Astronomical Research Center astronomer and Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, professor, **Dr. J. Allen Hynek**, who served for twenty years as Civilian Scientific Consultant on UFOs to the United States Air Force investigatory

Project Blue Book until it was closed down in 1969. The book (276 pages) is published by the Henry Regnery Co., 114 West Illinois Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610, and costs \$6.95 (£2.66).*

Dr. Hynek tells how he interviewed the pilot of the Lear jet: the pilot insisted on remaining anonymous. The reaction of the pilot, and of the other witnesses, which is apparent in an excerpt from the 3-way radio conversations, is revealing. Here are the closing sentences (A is Albuquerque tower, N is National Airlines pilot, L is Lear jet pilot):

A to N: Did you hear conversation with Lear jet?

N to A: Yes, we have the object now—we've been watching it.

A to N: What does object appear to be doing?

N to A: Exactly what Lear jet said.

A to N: Do you want to report a UFO?

N to A: No.

A to L: Do you want to report a UFO??

L to A: No. We don't want to report.

The reactions and attitudes of these witnesses will not surprise anyone who reads this book, for it seems the pilots knew only too well the kind of ridicule that had been heaped on the heads of others who had made reports: ridicule, that is, that followed ludicrous official explanations.

* Postage and packing would have to be added, so a remittance of £3.00 is recommended.

(Continued from page 12)

responsible for the failure to publish it in Brazil until now.

¹¹ Remember that an official of the State Security was present. So they could have used quite tough methods on A.V.B.

¹² I do not see why we should assume that there is only one child. Even with the modern techniques of artificial insemination that are available to our own species, it would be quite possible for millions of women to have been made pregnant from this one contact.

¹³ A.V.B.'s fetching little filly, with her triangular face and her blue eyes "slanted" in the Chinese style, may have hailed from either Outer or Inner Space. She certainly was not

of our world.

I have some knowledge of the Chinese and Mongolian type of face and eyes. I once had a Russian girl-friend in Manchuria (now gone hence, alas, peace be to her) half-Russian, half-Tartar. The lady was very white of skin and a Siberian, with the high Slav or Mongol cheekbones and "slit" Chinese eyes. She was indeed the only person I have ever seen with a white skin and such eyes. But the colour of her eyes was grey, not deep blue, and her face was not triangular, nor was she short in stature. Moreover, I will take the stand and swear on oath that she did not grunt or bark.

As for A.V.B.'s lady, she was, as I say, quite definitely *not from here*. She may of course have been from Outer Space, as many would like to think. Extraterrestrials *might* be arriving here, just as the common porker, *Sus Sus*, *might* become airborne any day now. It is only that we have no proof of it, yet.

My own view still is that, if A.V.B.'s little radioactive piece was from Outer Space, then I'm a paid-up member of the Vietcong. I think that she came from somewhere much nearer than that and yet in a certain sense just as far away. And that she belonged to something of which we are genetically already a part.