
In the early seventies, MUFOB's championing of the 'New Ufology,' and the writings of such authors as Keel and Vallee, along with its irreverent attitude to the contemporary ufological establishment in Britain, often led to the editors receiving irate letters from some of their readers. Few were as uncompromising as Fred O. Gardner, chairman of a local UFO group in Hertfordshire. This was published in MUFOB 4:1 (Spring 1971)

The Fred O. Gardner Letter

At first I really thought you lads were out for 'a bit of a lark,' you know, 'The UFO is Alive and Living in Fairyland,' accompanied by quite a 'way-out' drawing and all the rest of the 'hot stuff' but, on reflection I thought, surely they wouldn't go to all that trouble of expense and effort to take a rise out of people. So, on the assumption you really mean business, here goes:

Seriously, what's your point? Why are you in the UFO business at all? Your approach in my view seems too negative. Why engage in innuendo constantly, and lash out at personalities and denigrate the sincere efforts of able and qualified people, researchers like ourselves who are trying to find out what this business is all about.

You seem to treat anyone who dares to speculate or speak on his (or her) UFO experience as a sort of congenital idiot or an inveterate liar, and that's not being fair, to say the least! Of course, we know there are mistakes and also misinterpretations, far too many, but notwithstanding the misses and the misfits, there is an appreciable amount of sincerity and ability, and some do their best to relate to what they have seen and know, i.e. they try to give the facts as they know them.

Why are you so hell-bent on destroying UFO research like 'angry-young-men'? Honestly, do don't need to do it the way that you do, because the press, the authorities and the great mass of people, especially the responsible bodies, use the most effective means - they couldn't care less! I think you may have heard the phrase, 'the creeping paralysis of apathy'.

You seem so contemptuous, so sure of yourselves; and others in the work of research are made to appear credulous, ridiculous, a sort of cheap laughing stock! I don't get the point of your idea in the way you go about it, at all. Why chuck out jibes? What's so great about Merseyside? I'm a Liverpoolian born and bred, but by gum lads, I'm glad enough to live in the South and earn my bread and butter here as well.

Take my tip, avoid provincialism's and personalities, please! Otherwise you'll give

the game away and show how small you are! Go in for positive work. Present your own ideas or better still your up-to-date findings, instead of finding fault. Try to be constructive, not destructive.

I seem to remember Someone who reportedly said about 2,000 years ago: "In very truth I tell you we speak of what we do know and testify to what we have seen, and yet you all reject out testimony..." (New English Bible, John iii, II). And you know what they did to Him, because He persisted...

The problem of the UFO exists, even allowing for a surfeit of S>F>, boundless imagination, erroneous identification and human limitations or feelings when confronted by unknown or unnatural phenomena. There is no doubt about it to any normal intelligence, but the interpretation is another matter. It all depends on viewpoints, and one of these may be right, or there may be clues in most if not all the various viewpoints, and one of these may be right, or there may be clues in most if not all the various viewpoints, and so providing the bits and pieces to complete the UFO jig-saw puzzle.

Nay, lads, don't be to 'cocky'. Mix a little sincerity and gumption in your hard-line approach, and perhaps you'll get somewhere and not antagonize others. Your caption on the front cover-page of the December issue is smart, perhaps a bit too smart! In fact I wish it were true, but is it?

UFOs or whatever it is that is trying to break through to us, of one thing we can be certain, we are all standing on the edge of a precipice, and thanks to science and materialistic thinking and creative ingenuity and man's moral inability to match up with scientific and technological progress (so-called) the odds are, in the light of present trends, we shall soon be pushed over sooner than we realise.

And it's largely this, i.e. human logic, science and technology, which is the popular criterion of such things as ufology and allied phenomena, and it's my view that science alone will never solve this and similar problems in a 'month of Sundays'. That is why so many so-called 'ufologists' get so frustrated or give up in despair, then try to solve it on a materialistic basis alone. To use an old Lancashire expression: "It's like batting your head against the wall". Science will have to ally itself with something else, something it tends to despise and think of no importance. That something else is religion, not, of course, the conventional interpretations of religion as we humans know it, i.e. the R.C. Church, the Protestant Communion or any other brands of religious faith with all their paraphernalia of doctrine, liturgy and practices and, of course, priestly domination, but the religion of the spirit, i.e. true spirituality.

Unless this is seen and acknowledged and let loose and indeed allied with the best of scientific creativeness and achievement, then the outlook is dark indeed. Now

lads, I've laid my cards on the table, go ahead and have a field day. Make my spirited protest look like the ravings of a 'nut' case, if you feel you can or must. But mark my words, although the alliance of true science and pure religion or spirituality may not prove to be an acceptable concept - yet, it will most certainly come, although by then, alas, as usual in the comparatively long and bitter experience the human race may well have brought upon itself a consequence of incalculable cost, perhaps too much so.

I write not in the spirit of academic interest, and certainly not in pessimistic mood, but as a realist. I think the fact that I have three grown-up children, all with university status, the eldest holding three degrees (two engineering), including a science honours degree, and five grandchildren to date, plus a varied and active career in this country and abroad (including 12 years' work in Central Africa, teaching through three Bantu languages and also French) and I am now striding into my 63rd year and currently employed by the British Leyland Motor Corporation, the largest of its kind in Europe, may justify my claim to be realistic.

To me, UFOs or flying saucers or whatever you wish to call them, are an important matter, important in the sense that they serve to arrest attention and attract investigation. To those of us who, in the light of circumstantial evidence and personal conviction have no alternative but to accept the hard core of the phenomenon as a fact or a reasonable proposition, we are no longer particularly interested in the growing record of endless sightings or unexplainable experiences. Nor do we regard the enigma as an end in itself, but as a means to an end. It is that end or purpose we should be primarily concerned with. It is not so much the definition or what is it, or origin or from whence come they, or motivation, i.e. how do they work? But rather, assuming we accept the problem in principle, why or what it is all about?

It is because of this deeper realisation that a number of us UFO students have left organised national or local research groups in order to avoid the rut of stumbling about again and again in the well-trodden mud of the 'nuts-and-bolts' field of enquiry. That's all right to begin with and to get established, i.e. to correlate the fields, the clues, the unexplainable cases of ufo sightings despite all attempts to find a rational explanation, the gradual building up of a complex, bewildering and yet fascinating puzzle. But that stage is only a beginning, a preliminary, a groundwork, if you like, important of course, indeed vital to true research, for unless we build our edifice on a firm foundation it won't stand. Even this ancient Merseysider realises this. Of course, it takes time to negotiate this phase, for some, years, for others, never! depending upon many factors, individual intelligence, integrity, intuition, training, perseverance and painstaking research and investigation.

If one is able to negotiate this preliminary stage, i.e. establishing the basics of the

subject to one's own satisfaction, remembering always the important criterion of intellectual integrity in this as indeed in all research, then the next and obvious step is to study the subject in depth.

So let me advise the Editorial Board of the Merseyside UFO Bulletin to make their beverage a 'mild' and not a 'bitter' and then perhaps you'll present a more balanced criticism and less of an ill-disguised glee over the disappearance of UFO groups and their journals. There's something about 'It's an ill wind...' it may be your turn next, who knows!

Feel at liberty to print this if you wish, but please present nothing out of context.
Pax vobiscum!

Fred O. Gardner, Watford, Herts.

[The offending article.](#)

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