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Discs in the Sky Since Ezechiel

Star-gazing Martians probably speculated what that "unidentified flying object" was that glided over their planet last Wednesday.

The Mariner Spy-on-Mars satellite didn't send us a close-enough picture of the red planet to decide precisely if we really do have neighbors there or not.

But the report that "a mysterious glowing object" hovered near Australia's Canberra airport at the same time a nearby tracking station had difficulty getting signals from the Mariner satellite — and the report earlier this month about "strange objects" sighted in Portugal and in the Antarctic and that radios and electric clocks stopped at the same time — raise the intriguing question if star-gazing earthlings have perhaps actually seen vehicles from outer space.

One of NASA's "Mars Map" project consultants, French-born Jacques Vallee in his recently published book, "Anatomy of a Phenomenon," marshals convincing evidence that there's more than imagination in such sightings. He doesn't come to any conclusions but asks for an open mind on the subject.

"We must view with contempt and irony those who will continue to call the problem ridiculous only because they do not know the solution," he says. Either there have been objects of some still unidentified origin that have been sighted hovering, traversing and even landing on our earth or "an entirely new type of mental aberration, indeed most extraordinary, has taken an important place in the life of our civilization," Vallee claims. In either case, more than an out of hand rejection of the case is called for, he says.

What seems of particular interest is his suggestion that a "vision" by the prophet Ezechiel and the "apparitions" at Fatima may possibly fit into the "flying saucer" category.

In the sixth century before Christ, Ezechiel reports, as recorded in Scripture, that "while I was sitting by the north wall he saw an object that looked like it were a wheel within a wheel that had a firmament above it and in the midst thereof the likeness of four living creatures and the whole thing had a fire infolding it and brightness was about it." It traveled with "the noise of many waters, as it were the sound of mighty thunder."

A rash of reports from southern France in the autumn of 1954 describe objects remarkably similar to what Ezechiel saw — "a massive, oval aluminum-like object," "a circular object that looked like a plate turned upside down," "a sort of disc" and then scores of Americans claimed they saw similar objects in 1957.

Aerial discs were seen during the Middle Ages, notably over Nuremberg in 1561 and over Basel in 1566. Biographies of medieval saints frequently tell of hovering globes of light and visits by radiant visitors.

Vallee in his new book also cites the still bewildering events at Fatima in 1917 when 70,000 witnesses — including unbelieving atheists, cautious clergymen, sceptical reporters — saw "a disc . . . like a polished wheel" (some said it was the sun) which "rotated with increasing speed . . . began falling towards the earth" — the "miracle of the sun" which made Fatima a name that is familiar to virtually every Catholic around the world.

The vicar general of the bishop of nearby Leiria later described the "aeroplane of light . . . an immense globe, flying westwards, at moderate speed, which irradiated a very bright light" which he saw above the crowd at Fatima while Lucy, Francisco and Jacinta had the final vision of our lady.

Linking visions and flying saucers does not, as some might think, make one or the other category ridiculous. The significance, we think, is that whether we have a religious or scientific outlook to the world around us we must admit with increasing humility that we are indeed immersed in mystery.

It is a curious twist of events that a generation or two ago men of science ruled miracles and visions out as if only products of simple and imaginative people. Preachers both Catholic and Protestant, insisted on the "gospel truth" of the biblical reports — and Galileo is the classic example of the conflict between science and religion.

Now in this generation, religious experts have admitted that biblical episodes and events recorded in the lives of the early saints are perhaps written in a vivid, dramatic way — not necessarily to be taken absolutely literally.

But now it's the spokesmen of the world of science — so far a minority admittedly — such as this Jacques Vallee or Immanuel Velikovsky in his "Worlds in Collision" book — who indicate that scripture and hagiography may be straight reporting after all.

—Father Henry Atwell

Stevenson's Legacy - 'Peace Begins in Human Heart'

New York — (RNS)—Among the many expressions and actions for which Adlai E. Stevenson will be long remembered, his eloquent espousal of the power of faith and religious freedom is destined to stand out prominently.

Throughout his 65-year life, which ended suddenly with a heart seizure on a London street on July 14, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations attained worldwide prominence for his untiring efforts in behalf of peace among men and nations.

In that search, the statesman maintained close contacts with church groups and leaders and his public remarks often called attention to religious belief.

One such statement was issued in 1963 when Mr. Stevenson sent congratulations to Pope Paul VI on the pontiff's election as head of the Roman Catholic Church. With the congratulations, he said, "go the hope that yours will be a long and fruitful reign in which the entire human family will learn the great lesson of peace taught by One who preached love and charity 1,963 years ago."

The son of a Unitarian father and a Presbyterian mother, Mr. Stevenson ultimately was affiliated with both religious groups.

When first reaching national prominence, as Democratic presidential candidate in 1952, he listed his religion as Unitarian. In 1955, while retaining membership in the Bloomington, Ill., Unitarian church, he also became a member of First Presbyterian church of Lake Forest, Ill.

Earlier, while governor of Illinois from 1949-53, he frequently attended a Presbyterian church in Springfield, Ill., and on various occasions he worshipped with other denominations, as in 1956 when he received Holy Communion at Ebenezer Lutheran church in Minneapolis, Minn.

Mr. Stevenson's joining of the Presbyterian Church in 1956 prompted a sermon by a Minneapolis Unitarian minister, the Rev. Carl Storm, who noted there was nothing unusual in the dual membership. A Unitarian, he said, "is perfectly free to join any non-Unitarian church he pleases if he can do so in accordance with his own conscience."

In joining the Lake Forest Presbyterian congregation, where he had had a long relationship, Mr. Stevenson was admitted with several other new members on "profession of faith." At his death he still was carried on the church rolls.

The noted government leader kept close relations with Catholics, Orthodox and Jews as well as Protestants and was the recipient of many awards from various groups.

One of the most recent of his honors was an "example of ex-

cellence" citation from the Protestant Council of New York's Society for the Family of Man, presented last October. That award hailed him "for his courageous and effective handling of delicate situations endangering the peace of the world, particularly those reflecting differences between the Western and Soviet bloc . . . and for stimulating dialogue and the free exchange of ideas between them."

On earlier occasion, Mr. Stevenson received a Patriotism Award from the University of Notre Dame's senior class, the American Liberties Medal from the American Jewish Committee, and the annual America's Democratic Legacy Award from the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

His contacts with Orthodox were seen, too, when in 1963 he presented a \$500,000 check from the U.N. for the resettlement of refugees in Greece at ceremonies attended by Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in North and South America.

Born Feb. 5, 1900 in Los Angeles, Cal., named for his grandfather, who was Vice President under Grover Cleveland, Mr. Stevenson started law practice in Chicago in 1927 and in following years held many U.S. governmental positions, including that of Assistant Secretary of the Navy, the head of economic and military missions in Europe and as a key advisor in planning of the United Nations.

Before becoming governor of Illinois, he was a U.S. delegate to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1946-7.

Mr. Stevenson's religious beliefs became the subject of considerable discussion during his first Presidential candidacy. Several groups solicited statements from both the Democratic candidate and his Republican opponent, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, as to their beliefs.

To the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Mr. Stevenson stressed the need for racial and religious understanding. He said:

"We must remove fear and prejudice. We must destroy the myths that gnaw at our vitals. We can ill afford to exhibit to the world either incompetence or injustice in dealing with the



relations of racial or religious groups."

"As ever, it is in public enlightenment and understanding that we must place our trust. An informed public opinion is the only way in which our way of life can flourish. If the relevant facts and information are supplied, the people can be trusted to create a climate of reason and order in which we can go forward to the solution of our difficulties."

In another statement during

the 1952 campaign, Mr. Stevenson underscored his belief, that the "Christian faith has been the most significant single element in our history and tradition."

"There is one thing of incalculable worth which this religious outlook has given us as a nation," he said. "It is our protection against the moral confusion, which is too often the moral nihilism, of this age. The blight of moral relativism upon us has not fallen destructively upon us . . ."

"Here is the ultimate foundation beneath the strength and the security of the Republic. Here, not in our wealth, not in our productive ingenuity, not in our arms, but here in the religious convictions of our people is our stability for the future."

Religious interest in the campaign was seen in the formation of groups of churchmen in support of both candidates. That year for the first time, editors of "Commonweal," national Catholic weekly edited by Lymen, announced support for a Presidential candidate, choosing Mr. Stevenson.

Again a Presidential candidate in 1956 but once more defeated, Mr. Stevenson still remained prominent on the national scene.

The statesman was an outspoken opponent of extremist groups and on many occasions, as before the American Jewish Congress last October during the Presidential campaign, he cited extremist attacks as a threat to America's stability both at home and abroad.

In the democratic process, he said, "the mood, the temper, the spirit in which accommodations are sought is more fundamental, more decisive even than the changes themselves. At no time perhaps is this temper more decisive than during the great debate of a presidential election."

"Conduct that debate in an empty, unseemingly dishonest fashion and the temper of the people at home and their reputation abroad can be scarred and weakened."

On his world travels, Mr. Stevenson met with religious as well as political leaders, including an audience with the late Pope Pius XII in 1953 and a conference with Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, supreme Patriarch of Eastern Orthodoxy, in Istanbul in 1959.

Also, during a 1958 visit to Russia, he visited the ancient Russian Orthodox theological academy at Zagorsk and preached a five-minute sermon at Moscow's only Baptist church.

In his brief talk he stressed American belief that "peace begins in the human heart . . . that spiritual life is indispensable to a full and rich national life."

Ideals Need 'Flesh and Bone' Action

San Antonio — (NC)— Principles and goals are not enough to solve the world's problems, the Summer Conference of the Lay Apostles was told here.

"Moralists may give us ideals to live by, but it is the function of the layman in society to put flesh and bones on these bare principles," Father John

F. Cronin, S.S., assistant director of the Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference, told the meeting.

THE PARADOX of Catholic social teaching, Father Cronin said, is that "all the modern popes since Leo XIII have emphasized strongly the right and duty of the Church to speak out on the moral aspects of the social problem," yet they have "clearly distinguished between the moral stance of religion and the technical problems . . . in putting these principles into practice."

On the basis of "the principles of the dignity of every man," Father Cronin explained, "we certainly must condemn racism, the exploitation of labor, totalitarian political rule, offensive war and many similar evils that have blackened world history throughout the ages."

This principle impels us, he said, to set certain goals, such as living wages, social security, and medical care for all.

"But principles and goals are not self-implementing," he added.

To see that the world is influenced by Catholic social teaching, the layman must "study and know well these teachings . . . seek to present these Christian ideals in the language of the secular world . . . (and) seek workable methods of putting ideals into practice."

This, said Father Cronin, is the challenge of the laity. "Lay participation in the Church, so ardently desired by all, does not mean clericalizing the laity or laicizing the clergy. It means that each of us should become committed to our apostolate and seek to live totally Christian lives in every phase of our lives . . ."

"In this way we can realize the hopes of modern popes and make our Christian message a source of light, a flame of love, a healing balm in this troubled world."

Ritual Pomp a Mirror

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, speaking at his regular mid-week general audience, urged Catholics to correct any impression they may have that the Church is stressing "undue exteriority" because of its ornate structures, ceremonial robes and protocol.

He said that "outward religious forms when not superstitious or an end, in themselves make divine things accessible to our conscious faculties."

The Church's "outward grandiosity, pomp, magnificence and monuments," he said, serve as "earthly attributes of God's heavenly majesty."



Text and symbol, Seventh Sunday after Pentecost.

Monsignors Too 'Imperial'

Quebec City — (RNS) — The idea of poverty as expressed by the Second Vatican Council has moved domestic prelates of the Archdiocese of Quebec to offer to renounce the title of monsignor.

In a petition to Maurice Cardinal Roy, Archbishop of Quebec, some members of the monsignori cited the fact that the Vatican Council proposes simplification of formal and ceremonial dress of the hierarchy.

They noted that Quebec bishops and the cardinal had already modified, approved, or tolerated important changes in titles, vestments and other exterior signs of dignity.

"Many of these insignia and titles no longer are acceptable in a world that has renounced the customs of imperial courts in order to democratize itself," the monsignori said.

"They create priorities between diocesan and religious priests that can only hinder the integration of all priests into a diocesan pastoral team . . . they make more difficult the contacts that Protestant ministers are having more and more frequently with the Catholic Church."

The Poor Get Poorer, and Angrier

By GARY MacEOIN

One of the most persistent problems of the modern world is that the gap between the living levels of the rich nations and those of the poor nations grows steadily wider. We have had some success in raising the standards of living of the underdeveloped world, but the rate of advance is consistently less than that of the developed countries.

The net result is, in consequence, a mounting tension as the inequality in the distribution of the good things of life increases.

It is possible to argue that it is unreasonable for the poor nations to feel a grievance just because the others get richer. That may well be, but I think it is here, beside the point. They do feel a grievance, and it becomes greater each year.

Apart from moral and ethical reasons, the rich nations cannot in sheer self-interest be complacent. World normality is not

possible while an island of well-being is surrounded by a sea of deprivation. And that is our current condition.

The concrete form in which the problem presents itself is in the terms of trade, that is to say, the relationship between the price of what a country sells and the cost of what it buys. The underdeveloped countries sell raw materials and buy manufactured goods from the developed countries. After World War II, the price of manufactured goods rose rapidly while the price of raw materials rose slowly for a time. From 1950 to the present time, the price of manufactured goods has continued to mount steadily. The price of raw materials also rose. From 1950 until 1954, then fell substantially, rallied a little from 1960 to

materials and at another the seller of manufactured goods, the long range advantage is always to the manufacturer. A country which purchases only raw materials can therefore produce only a progressively smaller share of world production.

What has been happening recently in Latin America seems to confirm this analysis. Its losses in the past 12 years through a lowering of the prices of raw materials while imported manufactures continued to rise, have more than wiped out all of the foreign aid given by ourselves and the countries of Europe. Prices of raw materials have again slumped 6 per cent during the past year, so that a new crisis in the balance of payments of several Latin American countries can be anticipated.

An additional negative factor is the substantial transfer of United States investment capital from Latin America to Europe over the past few years. One should not blame the boards of directors

who made the decision. If higher profits at lower risks can be obtained in Europe than in Latin America, then what choice do they have?

From the viewpoint of the national interest of the United States, nevertheless, this action has a double negative effect. It is neutralizing the efforts of the Alliance for Progress to build up the economies of the countries of Latin America so as to make them less dependent on exports of raw materials. It is making economies in Western Europe where they not only do not need our aid but are hurt by foreign control of essential industries.

These things will not work themselves out by the application of the laws of supply and demand. We have long since learned that national wellbeing requires a firm direction of the money elements which make up the economy. The principle is equally valid in the international sphere. Military might alone will not win the world stability that is our goal.

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MOST REV. JAMES E. KEARNEY, D.D., President

MAIN OFFICE: 35 So. St. - 454-7050 - Rochester, N.Y. 14604
ALBANY OFFICE: 217 Robinson Bldg., Lake St. RE 2-3428 or RE 2-3423
AUBURN OFFICE: 144 E. Geneva St. AL 2-4446

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