

his prerogative.

At least, however, he should be accusing all parties of utiliz-

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at our subscribers in... (Gazette, Aug. 3). In an interview he did not rule out the possibility of adding an English-language specialty channel, so now is the time

UFOs were sighted centuries ago

Your Aug. 17 editorial correctly observed that if one looks just right, he can see flying saucers even in the clouds.

However, people sometimes see unidentified flying objects (UFOs) not only in the clouds. And they are not only a contemporary conundrum. The *Nuremberg Broadsheet* of 1561 and the *Basel Broadsheet* of 1566, for instance, depict disks and elongated objects appearing in the sky.

In the last decades, millions of people reported UFO sightings, among them at least 62 astronauts and numerous well-known scientists. The reports came virtually from all countries of the world.

I never saw one. I do not know

whether flying saucers are imaginary objects or real physical phenomena.

Yet it is rather intriguing that in 1772, the famous chemist Lavoisier signed a memorandum stating that "the falling of stones from the sky is physically impossible." Eighteen years later, the meteorite Barbotan fell in France. Commenting on the report of its fall, witnessed also by a mayor and members of the city council, the French scientist Berhollet wrote, "How sad it is that the entire municipality enters folk tales upon an official record."

Reality often surpasses imagination. Modern physics, especially quantum mechanics, shows that existence can be more fantastic than our wildest dreams. Science may

serve also as an exciting source of inspiration even for poets and artists.

Your editorial also includes a *non sequitur*. It suggests that the hypothetical advancement of a civilization to the level of efficient control against self-destruction somehow implies that such a civilization would not be an evil one. But how do we know this? Good and evil are human value judgments. If extraterrestrials exist, their assessment of humans may be grounded on criteria very different from our conceptual and judgmental schemes.

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