



TIME

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Martians Over France

One morning last October, Jean Narcy, a road mender of Haute-Marne, France, was riding to work on his bicycle. In a wheat field he saw a little whiskered man just under 4 ft. tall, who wore a fur coat, an orange corset and a plush cap.

"Bonjour," said M. Narcy.

The little man muttered something like "I'll be seeing you." Then he jumped into a small (10 ft. in diameter) flying saucer, took off with a buzzing sound and disappeared into the clouds.

With Narcy's "hairy Martian" as a starting point, the French press ran wild, and a deluge of Martians has been raining down ever since. They have come in flying cigars, crowns, comets, winged mushrooms, even a flying chamber pot. Unlike Americans who have seen flying saucers, the French "sighters" paid little attention to the vehicles. They were more interested in the people from space.

The Martians were anything but standardized. One who stopped M. Roger Barault near the town of Lavoux had brilliant eyes, an enormous mustache, wore rubbers and spoke Latin. Another asked M. Pierre Lucas, a Breton baker, for a light. He was bearded and had a single eye in the middle of his forehead. M. Lucas could not remember what language he spoke.

Paralyzing Pygmies. As the Martian invasion of France proceeded, the invaders became more bizarre. A troupe of pygmies in plastic helmets gamboled down a railroad track near Quarouble and transfixed M. Marius Dewilde with "a paralyzing beam of light." Some Martians were blue, others were yellow or pink. A traveling salesman of the Côtes-du-Nord saw a wonderful sight: a deep rose flying cigar from which stepped a zebra-striped Martian. As he alighted, he changed color, chameleon-like, from yellow to green.

The Martians marched en masse into French affairs. Cartoonists welcomed them delightedly (*see cuts*). As they multiplied, they even gained respectability. *Le Figaro* reported: "Counsellor General of Alpes Maritimes greets flying saucers' first appearance on the Côte d'Azur." *France Soir* announced that "a daily flying-saucer service seems to have been established between Marais Poitevin and La Rochelle." A man from space even made the social columns of *Paris Presse*: "Mustached Martian spends weekend at Vienna." Angry deputies asked questions in Parliament. Air Force authorities (even as in the U.S.) were badgered for explanations.

Before the many-colored Martians rained down on France, famed Swiss Psychiatrist C. G. Jung was asked what he thought about the saucer epidemic.

"Something is being seen," said Jung. "What is seen may be, in the case of a single observer, a subjective vision (hallucination). In the case of several or many observers, it may be a collective vision. Such a psychic phenomenon . . . could be



"What's the matter? Can't you read?"



"And I suppose that's a Martian?"



"Those must come from Venus!"



"Come on—we'll show you our moon."

a spontaneous reaction of the subconscious to the present conscious situation: the fear of an apparently insoluble political situation in the world . . . At such times eyes turn heavenwards . . . and miraculous forebodings of a threatening or consoling nature appear from on high."

No More Dreams. Dr. Jung blames the U.S. Air Force for mishandling the saucer epidemic and for permitting irresponsible journalists to pump it for bits of sensational-sounding information.* He does not believe that the saucers are space ships. Those that are not hallucinations, he thinks, are probably misinterpretations of physical objects or effects. But he was willing to speculate about the effect on the human race of an invasion by beings from another world.

"Should the origin of the phenomenon turn out to be an extraterrestrial one," said Dr. Jung, "it would prove an intelligent interplanetary link. The impact of such a fact on humanity is unforeseeable. But, without doubt, we would be placed in the very questionable position of today's primitive societies that clash with the superior cultures of the white race. All initiative would be wrested from us. As an old witch doctor once said to me, with tears in his eyes: We would 'have no more dreams.'"

"Our sciences and technology would go to the junk pile. What such a catastrophe would mean morally we can gauge by the pitiful decline of the primitive cultures that takes place before our eyes. The capacity to manufacture [interplanetary space ships] points to a technology towering sky high over ours."

"Just as the Pax Britannica made an end to tribal warfare in Africa, so our world could roll up its Iron Curtain and use it for scrap . . . This might not be so bad. But we would have been 'discovered' and colonized."

* The most complete deflation of the flying-saucer delusion was written by Captain Edward J. Ruppelt, who was in charge of the Air Force's careful saucer investigation from 1951 to 1953. It was printed in the May issue of *True Magazine*, which had much to do with augmenting the saucer hubbub. Captain Ruppelt's conclusion: visiting space ships are theoretically possible, but there has been no evidence to support this possibility.