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# A Note To The Reader

Whether you are a physicist, a housewife, a UFO researcher or a dabbler in the occult, this book will almost certainly strain your credulity to the breaking point. One of the many things we don't like to admit about the human mind is its basic inability to accept or even to vividly imagine an "unrealistic" or deeply unpalatable truth. Though we can entertain almost any wild idea "in theory," a profoundly unsettling concept can be almost impossible to believe - to really believe - despite the weight of evidence and the pressure of logic. One historic example of our inability to comprehend and believe a chilling truth is delineated in Walter Laqueur's book *The Terrible Secret*, a work dealing with the Holocaust. Laqueur's research established that by the end of 1943, when a sizable portion of the world's population had read or been told of Hitler's systematic liquidation of the Jewish people, this ongoing horror was simply not believed. The Nazis were evil, we seemed to be saying, and truly barbaric, but that - the systematic murder of children and old people and men and women - that just couldn't be true. Obviously, in this context even eyewitness accounts were irrelevant. Laqueur describes a meeting between Ian Karski, a Polish eyewitness to the slaughter, and judge Felix Frankfurter, a man whose brilliance and intellectual resiliency cannot be doubted. Karski told Frankfurter of what he had seen and heard, but Frankfurter replied that "he did not believe him. When Karski protested, Frankfurter explained that he did not imply that Karski had in any way not told the truth, he simply meant that he could not believe him - there was a difference."

When we shift to the subject of this book a certain analogy comes to mind. (Obviously I do not mean to compare the unspeakable horrors of the Holocaust with the events reported here. An analogy exists only in the methods we use to avoid such deeply disturbing testimony.) Surely a majority of the world's scientists believe in the probability of extraterrestrial life existing somewhere in our inconceivably vast universe, and that some of these life forms are possibly more advanced than our own. Many scientists in fact maintain an active interest in SETI - the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. And yet almost none of these scientists have taken the time to look into the UFO phenomenon as it inarguably exists: a phenomenon consisting of tens of thousands of reports of apparent craft sightings, landings, photo and radar evidence and accounts of the temporary abduction and examination of human beings. Obviously the UFO phenomenon as I have described it may offer immediate evidence of extraterrestrial intelligence, right here and right now. But the scientific community has not investigated these reports and then rejected them; for the most part scientists have only the vaguest idea of the weight and the specifics of the evidence.

There is an all-too-human reason for this lack of curiosity. The idea of an extraterrestrial intelligence existing "out there" somewhere, but not as yet possessing a technology that allows travel between solar systems, is an easy, logical and comforting concept to hold. We on earth remain, according to this model, detached and unaffected, passively listening for distant, intelligent signals sent to us across the "unbridgeable vastness" of space. The possibility that extraterrestrial intelligence may already be visiting our planet, as the UFO evidence implies, and treating the human species as laboratory specimens for some elusive and perhaps unfathomable purpose - that is a truly disturbing idea. We all know, of course, a basic scientific truth: It can't happen here. Justice Frankfurter's remark is apt; despite the eyewitness descriptions and all the other categories of evidence, "I just cannot believe it."

Shortly after my book **Missing Time** was published I appeared on a radio interview program to discuss the UFO phenomenon. The talk show host proclaimed himself a skeptic. "I'm very, very skeptical of this whole UFO business," he announced proudly. "Travel from one solar system to another is simply not possible. You can't get here from there wherever there is. And even if there are extraterrestrials flying around, they'd never do what these UFO occupants are supposed to be doing." After listening to these and other items from his long, complicated list of what is and what is not possible, I told him that of the two of us I was by far the more skeptical. "I'm so skeptical," I said, "that I find it beyond me to deny the possibility of anything."

And so my request to you, the reader. Do not prejudge. Realize that if any aspect of the UFO phenomenon as reported is true, then any of the rest of the reported phenomena may be true too. Try not to put anthropomorphic limits on what may be an entirely alien intelligence and technology. The true skeptic cannot, at the beginning, accept the impossibility of anything.

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8/1/96