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UpDate: UFO Question Pulls Politics Back To Earth

From: Stig Agermose <stig.agermose@post.cybercity.dk>
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Stig

Desiree Cooper: UFO question pulls politics back to Earth

August 4, 2000

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IT'S A SHAME that our interest in the presidential race centers more on what damage each candidate can do rather than on how they can move the country forward.

"What will happen to Roe vs. Wade?" some ask of a George W. Bush presidency.

"What will happen to business under a president who's a nut about the environment?" others ask of Al Gore.

"What will happen to the supposedly classified documents about UFOs?" others ask of both.

Huh?

That's the burning question Peter Robbins, a 53-year-old UFOlogist, former art instructor and theater manager is asking of the presidential candidates. To date, none has dignified his question, save a short acknowledgement from the Libertarian candidate for president and a terse letter from the now-defunct Bill Bradley campaign.

Undaunted, Robbins followed up his Dec. 8 communication with more letters to the Gore campaign this spring, challenging him to declassify government documents relating to UFOs should he become president.

You're wondering whether Robbins is serious. It turns out, he's serious as a Mars attack.

UFOs and eroding democracy

Robbins claims there are classified papers verifying military encounters with mysterious flying objects. He's documented one such encounter in "Left at East Gate" (Marlowe & Co., \$15.95), a book that details an alleged government cover-up (including U.S.

intelligence) of a UFO incident in rural England. That kind of secrecy, Robbins said, is destructive to democracy -- an issue that extends beyond the question of UFOs.

"But," I protested, "do you really expect the presidential candidates to address UFOs instead of education and health insurance?"

"This isn't just about UFOs," Robbins explained. "People are sick of being told that their feelings, their experiences are not valid -- or that information regarding what they intuitively know to be true is 'classified.' "

Robbins said that UFOs are a metaphor for things most politicians won't talk about, from sex to death. And it's a metaphor for less tangible, but widely held, beliefs in things like near-death experiences.

According to a report from the National Science Foundation, about half of all Americans believe in extrasensory perception, up to one-half believe in UFOs and 20 percent to 50 percent believe in ghosts. But politicians separate themselves from life as everyday people experience it, Robbins said. And that, coupled with excessive secrecy and hypocrisy, erodes the electorate's faith in democracy.

Close encounters with truth

Hmm ...If politicians were willing to get to the bottom of the existence of UFOs, what other issues would they be willing to entertain? Could they explore why so many Americans still feel nervous about their economic futures in this era of unprecedented prosperity? Why Congress is battling over the estate tax when most parents can't afford to give their kids a college education? Why more American children and teens were killed by gunfire in the last 20 years than the total number of American soldiers killed in Vietnam? Why many voters could not care less about cyberspace, because in their virtual reality they have no transportation, affordable housing, health care or a job making a living wage?

Perhaps if politicians could stifle their giggles long enough to answer Robbins' questions, they might find the time to answer mine, too.

And wouldn't that be out of this world?

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