

In his own statements Ivan implies that the SCCF, his group, and their correspondents (like myself) are going to play a great role in the future. He invites all of us to become connected and share "our information." What information?

Beyond the common attitudes, the common belief in transcendence, each group has its own particular set of scriptures, its own method of "channeling," and its own technical jargon. The most complex I have encountered is the language of the *Urantia* sect, which is widely developed in North America and the rest of the world.

Dr. Jacques Vallée: "MESSENGERS OF DECEPTION. UFO CONTACTS AND CULTS". (And/Or Press, Berkeley, California, 1979, 243 pages).

Seven

Seraphic Transports and Benevolent Programmers

The world's greatest frauds, fakers, and impostors have operated largely along psychic lines In every age the common people have been deceived not only by these out-and-out frauds and fakes, but also by various other psychic fads.

William Sadler, *Physiology of Faith and Fear*

Among today's most ardent believers in flying saucers and their occupants are the followers of a religious philosophy expressed in the *Book of Urantia*, a thick volume that was mysteriously received in Chicago and printed for the first time in 1955 by a subsequently formed "*Urantia* Foundation." *Urantia* is the cosmic name of the Earth. According to this system, it is "the six hundred sixth inhabited world in the local system of Satania, situated in the constellation of Norlatiadek, one of the 100 constellations of the local universe of Nebadon."

To an unbeliever, the amazing word structure of the *Book of Urantia* appears to have all the earmarks of paranoia: the consistency of its statements, the richness of its material, and the fondness it displays for neologism make it a monument to the unchecked imagination of man. It defines, for example, three orders of Paradise sonship, including one which is of Trinity origin and "does not register in a local universe." If you are lost in this peculiar cosmology, take heart, for the unknown author adds (in Paper 35),

I estimate there are in Nebadon between fifteen and twenty thousand Trinity Teacher Sons exclusive of 9,642 creature-Trinitized assistants of record. These Paradise Daynals are neither magistrates nor administrators.

The author goes on like this for 2,097 pages. I hasten to add that I do not intend to quote much from it, or even to summarize its philosophy. I am concerned only with the cosmic hierarchy it describes.

Urantia has much to say about UFOs and Melchizedek: "In the universe of Nebadon the Father Melchizedek acts as the first executive associate of the Bright and Morning Star."* This impressive figure who rules over an entire universe sends his sons to work closely with the Angels, who find in them sympathetic friends. The Melchizedeks are said to be a self-governing order, and they can be absolutely trusted: "not once throughout all the super-universe of Orvonton have they ever betrayed their trust." There are few human beings, indeed, about whom the same thing could be said.

These Melchizedeks live on their own world close to universe headquarters in Salvington. They have a number of spheres forming a University. You and I may meet there some day:

All evolutionary mortals who graduate from their constellation training are destined to land on Melchizedek And never will you forget your reactions to the first day of your life on this unique world, not even after you have reached your Paradise destination.

This is no wonder, for you will have the choice of many educational programs that are lacking from the curriculum of Harvard or UCLA, such as "Universe Administration" and "Comparative Creature Existence." (The University also teaches more classical disciplines, such as Energy, Matter, Organization, Communication, Records, and Ethics.)

The *Book of Urantia* devotes a section to the Special Work of the Melchizedeks, which has to do with the supervision of the "progressive morontia career of the ascending mortals," meaning you and me:

While the Melchizedek orders are chiefly devoted to the vast educational system and experimental training regime of the local uni-

* The Morning Star, in a traditional sense, is the lightbearer, Lucifer.

verse, they also function in unique assignments and in unusual circumstances

In a planetary crisis these Melchizedek Sons serve in many unique [sic] capacities. It is easily possible for such a son to make himself visible to mortal beings, and sometimes one of this order has even incarnated in the likeness of mortal flesh.

According to the unknown author of *Urantia*, the biblical Melchizedek had volunteered to incarnate because he was afraid that the light of consciousness would become extinguished if he did not step in to initiate Abraham.

All these intelligences use an advanced technology to travel through the universe. They have developed *seraphic transports* which depart at regular intervals from a base on Jerusem:

Numerous mechanical developments are used in providing initial energy for escaping the planetary gravity and overcoming the air resistance. A seraphic transport departs every three seconds of *Urantia* time and, sometimes, far into the recession. The transporters take off at about 25 standard miles per second of *Urantia* time and do not attain standard velocity until they are over 2,000 miles away from Jerusem. Transports arrive on the crystal field, the so-called sea of glass.

Are these our UFOs? According to the *Urantia* system, the development of all the world religions is due to Melchizedek messengers. For instance, the Salem missionaries penetrated Italy during the sixth century B.C., it is claimed, paving the way for the development of the Christian religion! The *Book of Urantia* contains a surprisingly clear and readable section on religious history, and many inspired passages on morality and ethics. These sections are in striking contrast to the childish descriptions of the Spheres of the Beyond, which the imagination of the author has populated with beings that would not survive in the pages of the most grotesque piece of science fiction. Such is the dilemma of human faith, and the challenge posed to us by the belief in the curious powers of the Order of Melchizedek.

A Meeting of Urantians

In my search for a solution to the continuing puzzle, I attended a Sunday afternoon meeting of Urantians in San Francisco. There

were ten of us in the small classroom, facing a tall, strong woman in her late fifties, dressed in purple and mauve. Next to the blackboard was a complicated chart showing Nebadon, Urantia, and the Isle of Paradise. Several participants were regular students, advanced in the knowledge of Seraphic Planetary Government and other abstruse concepts.

The subject of that afternoon's lecture was the function of the Thought Adjusters. In the extremely complex cosmology of Urantia, they come from other worlds to live within our brains. They influence our actions by subtle sabotage of our physical and chemical functions!

A typical part of the discussion dealt with the "Higher Masters":

Student: I wonder how they got on our plane.

Instructor: They were received here, channeled . . .

Girl: I thought I heard that the channel was a taxi driver in Chicago. Is that true?

Instructor: That's one more story! We don't get told very much about the origins, but I can tell you what I think. Dr. William Sadler, who was a very fine surgeon, became interested in mediumship, and he has written a book in which you find that most mediums are only victims of suggestion, but that he found two exceptions, a man and a woman. In their case he feels that *the data was definitely coming from a superhuman source!* He had many hundreds of sessions with these people.

Vallee: In what year was the Book received?

Instructor: In 1934.* It wasn't published until 1955. The woman who typed the original manuscript is still living. She is a very dynamic woman. She typed it three times! She was a Federal bank examiner.

The Puzzlement of Doctor Sadler

I came away from the meeting with a precarious sense of accomplishment. Not only had I verified that a number of real people truly believed in Melchizedek and his cosmic role, but I had

* We shall see later that the actual beginning date must have been closer to 1910 or 1911.

found a reference to a man, apparently a serious scientist, who had known the founder of the Urantia sect and, after serious examination, had pronounced its revelations genuine!

I looked up Sadler's name in the index of the Stanford Library and quickly found that he was a writer of talent and considerable scholarship. His book, *The Physiology of Faith and Fear*, published in Chicago in 1920, lists his titles as Professor of Physiologic Therapy at the University of Chicago Medical School and Director of the Chicago Institute of Physiologic Therapeutics. In 1929 he was also Senior Attending Surgeon at Columbus Hospital.

In the preface to *The Physiology of Faith and Fear*, he offers a statement of his own interests when he observes:

We are now passing through a period of popular reaction against the scientific materialism of the last century. The common people are awakening to the fact that the mental state has much to do with bodily health and disease. The bookmakers, in their efforts to satisfy the universal demand for teaching on various phases of mental healing, have flooded us with literature, much of which is premature, unscientific, incomplete, and highly disastrous in its misleading influence upon the popular mind and morals.

This fine principle—which we would do well to remember in these days of psychic ripoffs—led Dr. Sadler to consider the phenomenon of spirit communication and automatic writing, which he generally found to be false and misleading.

Dr. Sadler goes on to enumerate charms, relics and shrines, various forms of quackery, astrology, palmistry, crystal-gazing, trances, and catalepsy. He writes:

It is not uncommon for persons in a cataleptic trance to imagine themselves taking trips to other worlds [my italics]. In fact, the wonderful accounts of their experiences, which they write out after these cataleptic attacks are over, are so unique and marvelous as to serve as the basis for founding new sects, cults, and religions.'

He explains these phenomena, as well as automatic writing and speaking, by the projection of "marginal consciousness without the awareness of the central consciousness." One wonders what Dr. Sadler would have to say about current best-selling books based on automatic writing, such as Jane Roberts' *Seth Material*, which have had a major effect on the public.

In his later book, *The Mind at Mischief* (published in 1929 and subtitled "Tricks and Deceptions of the Subconscious and How to Cope with Them"), he develops his theory of dissociation, double personality, and automatic writing. He concludes:

We now have a thoroughly scientific hypothesis which will account for all phenomena of this kind that deserve to be classified as genuine. Nothing as yet has ever come to us through automatic writing which bears any evidence of supernatural origin, or which contains authentic truths, facts, or principles heretofore unknown to the human race.

Having said this, however, Sadler refers the reader to an appendix "for a brief notice of a *very unusual case of supposedly automatic writing associated with other psychic phenomena which came under my observation many years ago.*"²

In this appendix, Sadler is evidently dealing with the *Book of Urantia*, although he never mentions the word. The appendix deserves to be quoted extensively, for it sheds much light on the scientific methods that can be applied to alleged communications from cosmic entities.

Dr. Sadler begins the appendix with a *reversal* of his previously stated theoretical position:

In the interests of scientific accuracy on the one hand, and of strict fairness on the other, it becomes necessary to explain that there are one or two exceptions to the general statement that all cases of psychic phenomena which have come under my observation have turned out to be those of autopsychism.

Sadler goes on to describe his contacts with the "channel" of the *Urantia Book*, who may have been a former stockbroker:

The exception has to do with a rather peculiar case of psychic phenomena, one which I find myself unable to classify, and which I would like very much to narrate more fully; I cannot do so here, however, because of a promise which I feel under obligation to keep sacredly. In other words, I have promised not to publish this case during the lifetime of the individual.

I was brought in contact with it in the summer of 1911, and I have had it under my observation more or less ever since, having been present at probably 250 of the night sessions, many of which have been attended by a stenographer who made voluminous notes.

A thorough study of this case has convinced me that it is not one of ordinary trance. While the sleep seems to be quite of a natural order, it is very profound, and so far we have never been able to awaken the subject when in this state; but the body is never rigid, and the heart action is never modified, though respiration is sometimes markedly interfered with. *This man is utterly unconscious, wholly oblivious to what takes place, and, unless told about it subsequently, never knows that he has been used as a sort of clearing house for the coming and going of alleged extraplanetary personalities [my italics].* In fact, he is more or less indifferent to the whole proceeding, and shows a surprising lack of interest in these affairs as they occur from time to time.

Sadler draws a clear distinction between this case and the usual "spiritualist" phenomena:

In no way are these night visitations like the seances associated with spiritualism. At no time during the period of eighteen years' observation has there been a communication from any source that claimed to be the spirit of a deceased human being. *The communications which have been written, or which we have had the opportunity to hear spoken, are made by a vast order of alleged beings who claim to come from other planets to visit this world [my italics], to stop here as student visitors for study and observation when they are en route from one universe to another.*

The medical expert goes on to explain why this case forced him to revise many ideas in his approach:

Eighteen years of study and careful investigation have failed to reveal the psychic origin of these messages. . . . *Psychoanalysis, hypnosis, intensive comparison, fail to show that the written or spoken messages of this individual have origin in his own mind [my italics].*

² Much of the material secured through this subject is quite contrary to his habits of thought, to the way in which he has been taught, and to his entire philosophy.

Having acknowledged that he is at a loss to explain these facts with classical answers, he presents a summary of this unique material:

I can only say that I have found in these years of observation that all the information imparted through this source has proved to be consistent within itself. While there is considerable difference in the quality of the communications, this seems to be reasonably

explained by a difference in state of development and order of the personalities making the communications. Its philosophy is consistent.

William Sadler, who thus studied the "channel" of *Urantia*, had the unusual courage to confess that, after 18 years of study, "I find myself at the present time just where I was when I started." We might ask ourselves the same question about UFOs and their alleged agents among us: a phenomenon that leaves physical traces must be taken seriously, but what can we say of the people who claim to be in contact with superior intelligences emanating from these objects? What should we do about their claim that the phenomenon of UFOs is directing the evolution of mankind? This idea, which once attracted only a handful of devotees, now has the potential to draw the attention of the media and to make a major impact.

The claim is even made that if we fail to listen to the voice of the "higher levels," there will be a major catastrophe on Earth.

From the gentle belief in higher forms of life bent on helping mankind, we have gone to explore increasingly disturbing systems of philosophy and some new faiths that demand total obedience from their followers. The forces they released were not forces of love, but of disorder and violence. Yet they were forces of change, bending those who allowed themselves to be used.

Melchizedek, UFOs, and the Sex Function

The psychopathology of the contactees was the next area to explore. I began reading everything I could locate about Melchizedek, and found references to him in the books of Leadbeater,³ but it was in the work of another contemporary of Madame Blavatsky that I picked up the trail again.*

* Madame Blavatsky, the colorful author of *Isis Unveiled*, was an extraordinary leader of occult organizations in the nineteenth century, many of which still exist. According to Jacques Bergier, one of these organizations is the Helena Petrovna Blavatsky Foundation, of which Richard Nixon is a member of the Board. I have not been able to verify this statement.

Hiram Erastus Butler, a Pennsylvanian by birth, who died in 1916, was a simple, self-educated man who worked in a sawmill. Following an accident in which he lost several fingers, he became a recluse, and for 14 years he lived as a hermit. During these years Butler was favored with many revelations from God, and developed the peculiar philosophy of the sect which is still known today as the American branch of the Order of Melchizedek.

In the late 1880s, Butler came out of seclusion and described his revelations in a series of lectures in Boston; in 1889 he moved to California with a dozen disciples, homesteaded a 260-acre area overlooking the American River near Applegate, in Placer County, and built a mystical center. When a journalist visited his Esoteric Fraternity in 1971, he found an old four-story house at the end of a dirt road, and only two surviving members, William Corecco, 89, the fourth president of the organization, and his brother, Steven, who had recently buried the last female member of the sect. They met in the library:

As he talked, Corecco swayed back and forth in a creaky old rocker beside a pot-bellied stove that warmed the musty library: "The Bible says that when 144,000 persons establish the Order of Melchizedek, the Kingdom of God will be established on Earth. That was our hope . . . We've all lived on Earth hundreds of times before. The population of the world remains constant. Souls that leave at death reappear in the newborn."⁴

Corecco retraced the history of the group that came to California with Butler. They had built the 18-room house from timber on the property, and they made their own furniture, too. They planted and harvested their own crops, and had a small herd. The rest of their time was taken up with meditation and writing. They operated their own publishing house, and they still sell about 20 books and pamphlets. One of these, by Enoch Penn,⁵ first copyrighted in 1926, states the philosophy of the Order and describes its four degrees of initiation.

The prerequisite for joining the Fraternity is to abstain absolutely from any sexual activity.

According to Penn, there are two great truths, or natural facts, in this world. First, *there is a more subtle life*, "which is interior to the life that makes the physical man live. A man can