

Scepticism

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Once upon a time there was a man who stood in court accused of stealing chickens. The farmer, his son and the hired man all testified that they had seen the man steal the chickens. After hearing the evidence the judge said, "Defendant, what have you to say for yourself?" The man just smiled and said, "Sir, I can produce twice as many witnesses who will testify that they did not see me steal the chickens."

Unfortunately, this is typical of much of the thinking with respect to flying saucers. Healthy scepticism is good, but this kind of scepticism is ridiculous. Non-awareness is NOT synonymous with non-existence, and disbelief in something does not in any way detract from its reality. No one can create a fact by making a statement, and no one can get rid of a fact by denying it.

Statistically many more people have seen flying saucers than have seen atomic bombs, but the bomb information comes gilded with authority while the flying saucer information comes draped in scepticism. We do not ordinarily think to question on the basic facts upon which the information is based, but form our opinions more on the way in which the information comes to us. We live our daily lives so very much under the shadow of Authority that we instinctively attribute to Authority an omniscience, which it really does not possess, and take the easier way of succumbing to its dictates than thinking for ourselves. A fact is nonetheless a fact through having been stated by a seedy waterfront character or suave diplomat or international reputation. It is we, and we alone, who must decide for ourselves what is or is not a fact; and we are responsible to ourselves for that decision.

"Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." No one can prove without investigation, and investigation takes time and effort; often more than we are prepared to put forth. If we are not prepared to make the necessary effort to carry out an adequate investigation, are we really entitled to have our opinions taken seriously? In the absence of personal investigation, it is tempting and easy to accept Authority for Proof, but we are really fooling ourselves when we do this, since we can never really KNOW. Better that we should keep an open mind, and seize on the individual facts as they come drifting by, until we have enough to justify an opinion which is really our own.