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Saucer contactee Howard Menger, author of "From Outer Space to You," has changed his ideas considerably since writing the book in 1959. The first public knowledge of this came when Menger appeared on one of Long John Nebel's television shows a few years ago, and shocked everyone by saying he was no longer sure about his own contacts.

Now, in an open letter to Colonel Jordan, City Clerk of Sebastian, Florida, where Menger now lives, - Menger sounds very different indeed from the old days. He insists that his book henceforth be labeled "fact/fiction" rather than be accepted as factual.

Long-time readers of SAUCER NEWS will recall that Dr. Leon Davidson has propounded the idea that UFOs are a hoax perpetrated by the Central Intelligence Agency. The following key passages from Menger's letter to Colonel Jordan sound like he is expressing a view very similar to Dr. Davidson's:

"I wrote my book based on an actual experience, which I accidentally stumbled upon in an isolated field to the rear of my property in Highbridge, N.J. These photographs I sent to a department in the Pentagon. It wasn't long afterwards that I was contacted and asked if I would co-operate in an experiment based on what I had inadvertently seen, and project into this experience an expanded futuristic view of 'things to come,' with their help and information. (I suppose they must have figured the only way to obtain my silence and co-operation was to put me on the 'team.')

In other words, the 'Highbridge Incident.' "The Highbridge Incident was used as a gauge to indicate the people's reaction to alien contact. You will think this is not too strange when you consider that our astronauts today are being thoroughly conditioned and trained to meet any and every strange condition or situation they may face upon landing on an alien world!....

"Bearing this in mind, let us suppose they superimpose a hypothetical condition (based on truth) - like a spacecraft landing in an obscure country town, and some alien creatures disembarking, giving messages of good will by a local yokel acting as 'contactee! This would be one way of getting an index of human reaction. Of course, I could go on at length, but I assume by now you have the point established....

"I agreed to co-operate in the above experiment, and when the press picked up the story of flying saucers over Highbridge (and they were there and the people did see them; don't ask me how or why), they really had a ball. They worked it up into a real sensation. However, all the publicity did not help me, my work, or my family, as I had little or no privacy left. But this was all part of it. I had to meet and talk to people. At first I was a little shy and more or less tongue-tied, but after many lectures I gained in confidence, and with the material and suggestions handed to me, I was able to carry on....

"After the 'Highbridge Incident' had been widely publicized and the experiment was considered finished, I completely withdrew from all activities in saucer research. I refused to give lectures, or show movies, or speak to anyone about it. I had completed my mission. I wanted peace."

Then, in a recent letter to Gray Barker, Menger had this to say:

"At present I'm working on another book, that will drop a few 'bombs' in certain places. No one can deny the documented evidence presented in this hard-hitting book. I might be threatened, or bribed by people in high places, but I'm going through with it, come what may! I must have the courage of my own convictions. I'm sure you and possibly Jim Moseley and Leon Davidson suspect some hidden big story lurks in the Government shadows, and it's true....

"Here is an excerpt from my new book, which is called 'What Happened at Highbridge': 'A specialized element of Government intelligence, located in a well-guarded room of the Pentagon, has for several years spent 24 hours a day compiling documented, indisputable facts on the known existence of extraterrestrial beings coming and going at will, from outer space to our planet Earth. These beings are not, as yet, known to be hostile to the people of Earth. They far exceed Earth-born people in scientific, spiritual, and social development.'"

Menger goes on to say that he is ready and willing to come up to New York at any time, to publicize his new book as well as his old book, provided that the latter is clearly understood to be "fact/fiction."

All we can add is this: It takes courage for a contactee or anyone else to change his story. Although the editors of SAUCER NEWS tend to disbelieve all saucer contact stories, we must admit that Menger is apparently sincere. We eagerly await further developments in this strange case.