

GUEST VIEWS

An open letter to alien life forms on Earth

Dear aliens,

You may have been amused by a recent news story about the latest chapter in America's long, futile, semi-secret, widely mocked efforts to unmask you, to prove that your spaceships have been hovering, darting and befuddling fighter pilots with impossible aerobatics for decades.

The latest episode, revealed in The New York Times: The Pentagon spent millions over several years on a top-secret Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program to investigate UFOs.

The Pentagon says the program was shut down in 2012. Ha ha! Who believes that? You know humans won't quit pursuing you. We are too curious and persistent.

Seriously, we know you are here. How else to explain all those alleged sightings, including the video from a 2004 encounter between a Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet and a UFO. "There's a whole fleet of them ... they're all going against the wind," an awestruck pilot radios to a comrade. "The wind's 120 knots to the west. Look at that thing, dude."

Gives us chills just listening to that exchange and watching that video of a darting space-crafty blip on the radar screen.

One Navy pilot who encountered that craft recently told The Washington Post: "It was a real object; it exists and I saw it."

What was it? "Something not from the Earth," he said.

Off-world friends, please show yourselves. If you are as technologically advanced as we

We guarantee the planet's inhabitants will celebrate your arrival. (Never mind 'The Day The Earth Stood Still' and its ilk.) You'll be instant celebrities. Bigger than Trump.

suspect, what's the harm? And, truthfully, aren't you getting tired of flitting around the planet, playing hide-and-seek? Bonus incentive: How about we throw in a free iPhone X for your crew members?

We guarantee the planet's inhabitants will celebrate your arrival. (Never mind "The Day The Earth Stood Still" and its ilk.) You'll be instant

celebrities. Bigger than Trump. Even He of the Globe-sized Ego will have to admit that.

If you come down to Earth now, you will save humans decades of constructing conspiracy theories about Area 51, yearning to know if we are truly alone—and spending a lot more government money to ferret out the truth.

In October, a group called Messaging Extraterrestrial Intelligence, or METI International, beamed a message at a star a dozen light-years away with a possibly inhabitable planet. METI's ice-breaking message, sent via radio telescope, included the universal languages of music and math.

Yes, we know that famed theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking has warned against sending such messages, lest space invaders find us to be easily vanquishable. Those space marauders may be so powerful that they "may not see us as any more valuable than we see bacteria," Hawking cautions.

Hawking also predicts that humans have about 1,000 years to master space travel and populate a new planet if the species is to survive. He believes that climate change, asteroid strikes, epidemics and population growth make a long-term future on Earth problematic at best.

Is that your strategy, aliens? Wait us out for the next 10 centuries, then claim this splendid blue orb?

We hope not. That would be a terrible anticlimax for those of us eager for first contact sooner than, say, 3018.

Come on, extraterrestrials, let's cut out the chase. We're here. You're here. Let's meet.

—Chicago Tribune



OTHER VIEWS

Critics proven wrong as economy soars

WASHINGTON

"It's the economy, stupid," as we used to say back in the good old days—the good old days being the 1990s, when the president of the United States could have molested women in the White House during business hours with impunity.

In fact, if memory serves, that president, William J. Clinton, saw his popularity soar after accusations of his molestations were made public, or at least after some of them were made public. If all of them were made public, according to wisdom of the time, he might have been elected President for Life. Those were the days when then-Sens. Edward Kennedy and Christopher Dodd ranged freely on Capitol Hill and, back in New York City, young Anthony Weiner was getting amorous thoughts and restless stirrings in his lower parts about the life led by the likes of Kennedy.

Yet even in those heady times, "it" was "the economy stupid," a phrase made famous by the poet James Carville. The vibrant economy saved President Clinton, and I assume it will save President Donald Trump from his shocking tweets and other inexcusable acts that are so hurtful to the bien pensants of Washington, D.C., and New York.

At present, the stock market is setting record after record. That is truly significant to the lives of an increasing number of people who have money in the market or look to the market for direction. According to a CNBC All-America Economic Survey, for the first time in at least 11 years more than half those surveyed thought the prospects for the economy either good or excellent.

Unemployment is down; the Bureau of Labor Statistics claims that 1.9 million jobs have been added to the economy since President Trump's inauguration. The growth in gross domestic product has been vibrant—and over 3 percent in the last two quarters—and now the New York Fed is talking about 4 percent for this last quarter.

If Carville's observation is correct—and in the 1990s it was held to be sacred by tout le monde—Trump and the Republicans do not have much to worry about in the off-year elections of 2018, to say nothing of the presidential election two years later.

Yet there is more. The Islamic State group, or ISIL, as it has been called, was held to be formidable back in President Barack Obama's day but has been

decimated. At one time it was spreading its tentacles throughout Syria and Iraq, and one got the impression from the Obama administration that it was invincible. Doubtless there were people in his national security apparatus who considered giving ISIL a seat at the United Nations, or possibly one on the UN Security Council.

Now the so-called Islamic caliphate is in terminal decline, and that is thanks to President Trump and his national security team. By the way, Trump's whole Middle Eastern policy is looking better all the time.

Upon second glance, his recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital was greeted with relative calm throughout the region, where things have quieted down from a couple of weeks ago. Obviously, the Arabs have graver concerns today, for instance Iran and missiles launched from Yemen.

Actually, on a whole range of issues, the president is looking not like a billionaire real estate developer, or even a television celebrity, but like a graduate of Harvard Kennedy School.

There are his many superb court appointments. There is his successful deregulation program that is encouraging growth. He took the United States out of the Paris climate accord.

He is shoring up our borders and attending to our out-of-control immigration laws, and now he has his tax reform. It cuts corporate and individual taxes and repeals the Obamacare individual mandates once thought immutable. The blooming economy will bloom some more, and my guess is that it will not contribute to the national debt as President Obama's slow growth did.

How has Donald Trump been such a wizard without conferring with Official Washington or any of the usual sages? I have researched the matter. He is not a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He never attended class at the Kennedy School, and if he visited a Washington think tank, it was The Heritage Foundation.

Where has he gotten his ideas, and how did he learn to implement them with all the Washington wiseheimers against him?

Well, here is a tip from one of Trump's earliest supporters: He got his ideas from the American experience. He is a patriot.

As for how he implemented them, he did it the same way he amassed a fortune. He used his seichel—the Yiddish word for a combination of intelligence, street smarts and wisdom. Some call it statecraft.

R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr. is founder and editor-in-chief of The American Spectator.



R. EMMETT TYRRELL

YOUR VIEWS

In need of justice after tampering with car

I'm asking for anyone to come forward with proof to bring those to justice. I'm a hardworking veteran who doesn't deserve to have my car tampered with at all.

During the week of Nov. 13 in the 5300 block of Baxter Lane in Janesville, someone put sugar and syrup in my car's gas tank. You can call the Rock County Sheriff's Office with this information. It's wrong to do it to anyone. Help me bring those to justice.

CATHY KVISTAD
Janesville

WEB VIEWS

From online story comments and Facebook

On sale of former GM plant: My dad and two of my three brothers worked there. Sad that it closed but praying for this sale to bring new jobs to Janesville and a renewal of the area in the landscaping and plant as well. God bless this venture for all concerned.

—Lora Marsh

■ Good news to end the year with. Hopefully, the new year will bring even better news.

—Garry K Kolberg

■ OK, so now what? I'm interested to see what will become of this.

—Phil Junior

■ Should have been a GM museum.

—Dennis Williams

On petition against Janesville relocation of sex offender: I'm wondering why they only petitioned him but not all the hundred others that live in Rock County.

—Sabrina Rusch

On Janesville police's high-risk list: Next thing is they'll just arrest people who they think will commit a crime. Regardless of what they're trying to do, these people have already been deemed guilty in the law's eyes. And aren't we innocent until proven guilty?

—Sean Willi

■ Don't be a repeat offender and be on a first-name basis with police, and you'll be fine. People make mistakes, but if you keep running in and out of jail, is it really a mistake? More a choice. You deserve to be on the police's radar.

—Amanda Oldfield

On the new GazetteXtra website: Nice! I've been wanting a way to see (and pay) for digital access but to NOT have to also receive the paper copy. It seems that previously that was not possible, or at least there was no savings between paper and digital, which seemed ridiculous. I fully intend to subscribe to digital!

—Mike Genrich

■ Looks good, a detailed and informative and better overall layout.

—Mark Mowbray

On GazetteXtra's new Facebook comment platform: Did anyone ask readers about these changes beforehand? While I do use my own name, I have no intention of putting my comments on social media, period.

—Frank Drew

■ Requiring Facebook totally turns me off from The Gazette. Sorry guys, you are making a big mistake! News is news, Facebook is DANGER. Bye, bye.

—Boston Bill



On Sunday column, "UW-Rock County will continue to thrive": Ken Brosky seems confused about a couple of things, including the future name of the college. He continually refers to UW-Rock County in the future. In fact, there will be no UW-Rock County. The campus now known as UW-Rock County will be a satellite or branch of UW-Whitewater.

—philosophyofliberty

On Craig High School students recording Christmas CD: Love this. It's really nice to see the young helping those less fortunate in OUR community. Good job, guys.

—Tom Hathaway

On Tuesday editorial, "County board justified in censuring Sheriff Spoden": His interference in the city police's investigation is unacceptable, parent or not. He should have known better. His refusal to acknowledge his act as wrong disqualifies him. The sheriff shouldn't get to threaten a police officer and keep his job. The county board should demand his resignation, not just censure him.

—William Schultz

On Sunday editorial: "Scrutiny of nonprofits in the public interest": Companies, nonprofit or otherwise, are going to pay for the executive experience they need to sustain the organization's mission and operations and be accountable for everything. They won't be able to attract and keep talent if they pay what some newspaper readers find acceptable.

—Brian Hansen

■ A nonprofit doesn't need to pay over \$100,000 to get a qualified person to run the organization. Nor do they need to pay 10 percent of their budget. Most of the fundraising outlets have been in place for years. All the "CEO" does is maintain and look for a few new donations.

—Don Prestia

■ And walk around portraying themselves as a compassionate person when in fact they have no idea what it's like to barely live paycheck to paycheck.

—Shannon Cutright

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