

DER - 30
The Little Man's Burden

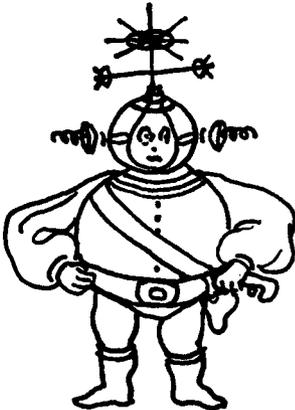
November 11, 1954
c/o Barclays Bank
Queensway
Nairobi, Kenya

Mr. Walter S. Rogers
Institute of Current World Affairs
522 Fifth Avenue
New York 36, New York

Dear Mr. Rogers:

In a recent issue of Time magazine, Psychiatrist Jung rattled off a psychiatric explanation for the recent flying saucer epidemic in France. But if they should turn out to be real visitors from outer space? As quoted by Time, Dr. Jung said, "The impact of such a fact on humanity is unforeseeable." The doctor, however, managed to see a few things, as follows:

"...Without doubt, we would be placed in the very questionable position of today's primitive societies that clash with the superior cultures of the white race. All initiative would be wrested from us. As an old witch doctor once said to me, with tears in his eyes: We would 'have no more dreams.'



"Our sciences and technology would go to the junk pile. What such a catastrophe would mean morally we can gauge by the pitiful decline of the primitive cultures that takes place before our eyes. The capacity to manufacture (interplanetary space ships) points to a technology towering sky high over ours.

"Just as the Pax Britannica made an end to tribal warfare in Africa, so our world could roll up its Iron Curtain and use it for scrap... This might not be so bad. But we would have been 'discovered' and colonized."

* * *

The President and his top advisers were meeting. Congress had been called back hurriedly the day before and was waiting for the President to appear before it. The Russians had heaped a new outrage on all the previous ones. The nation just couldn't stand it anymore. The TV channels throbbed as with the muffled beat of the war drums. Commentator after commentator was chanting one word: War!

The President had a grim expression as he hurried to Capitol Hill. He mounted the rostrum. Everyone knew what he was going to say: it just had to be war. As the President opened his mouth to speak, he noticed that the Congressmen were leaving rapidly. He was just going to bark out "Halt!" when he too was swept up in the crowd and carried out to the front steps of the Capitol.

Scores of flying saucers were settling down over Washington. A particularly large one landed on the President's limousine, but no one

took any notice of that. Everyone was retreating cautiously as Little Men began hopping out of the saucers. The Little Men were only three feet high and they were wearing space suits and glass-bubble helmets topped with antennas.

A military official raged for a moment when he realized that they had slipped through the radar net without having been detected. A stray egghead tried to assure the crowd that they were only experiencing a "collective vision." But then both men quieted down.

"xickiT," a Little Man exclaimed.

A murmur went through the crowd and they pressed closer to hear what the Little Man was saying.

"xickiT," he repeated in a louder voice.

Some of the people in the crowd laughed. "The little guy looks just like one of those daffy midget clowns in the circus," a Senator declared. "Heck," everybody said, "it's just a publicity stunt for some new soap."



A policeman saw his duty. He stepped forward and told the crowd, "Okay now, break it up. Move along." Then he grabbed the Little Man by the shoulder and said, "I'm arrestin' ya for obstructin' traffic 'n disorderly conduct."

The Little Man pulled what looked like a gun out of his belt and pointed it at the cop. There was a noise that sounded like a water pistol being squirted. The cop disappeared without even a trace of smoke.

The crowd gasped and even the President retreated a few steps.

"Now, see here," an Army officer hollered. He shouted for his aides to bring troops, call out the National Guard,

bring jet planes, bring The Bomb, if need be. The Little Man let him have it, too. The officer vanished.

"xickiT," the Little Man said firmly.

The crowd broke in panic. "I'm gettin' outta here," everybody said. Even the President ran home and when he got there, he locked all the doors and windows. More Little Men hopped out of the saucers.

"xickiT," they all exclaimed jubilantly. Soon there were hundreds swarming around Capitol Hill. They kept pointing at the Capitol building. Those Earthlings who watched from a distance thought that the Little Men were laughing at it.

* * *

A few hours later, the Little Men, brandishing their weapons, rounded up a dozen Earthlings including the President and took them to a saucer. Nobody wanted to go, but they were afraid they would be evaporated if they refused. Some were comic book enthusiasts and they knew a ray gun when they saw one.

Inside the saucer, one of the Little Men addressed them in English. "For many eras of time we have contemplated declaring a Protectorate over Earth," he said. "I am now privileged to tell you that we have taken possession of Earth in the name of xickiT. He is our leader. As you would say, he is our President.

"We are here to protect you. Any resistance on your part to our protection would be futile. You have had your lesson this morning. You now know what happens to those who go against our will. There should be no need for any further ill-considered actions on your part. Do I make myself clear?"



The President said, "Well, yes, but maybe you didn't know it, but we were just going to declare war on the Russians." The Little Man drummed his fingers on his desk. The President stooped down and peered into the Little Man's glass bubble and saw that the Little Man had a pained expression on his face.

"We have abolished Earthling warfare," the Little Man said at last. "There will be no war between you and the Russians. We see no reason for allowing you simple people to fight among yourselves. Our representatives who landed in Moscow this morning have made it abundantly clear to those Earthlings as well. I think you realize the wisdom of not going against our wishes in this respect. Am I understood?"

The President said, "Well, but what about our battleships and our bombs?"

The Little Man put on the same pained expression. "We are taking those things away from you," he said. "You won't need them anymore now that our peace has come to Earth. Do you understand?"

The President frowned. "Well, yes," he said. "But wait. Just one more thing. Where are you fellers from, anyway? Mars?"

The Little Men all burst into hilarious laughter. "What quaint ideas you have," the spokesman said when he finally stopped laughing. "Heavens no---we're from pciapdpGR. Mars is just another one of our Protectorates.

The meeting being over, the President thought he should shake hands with the Little Man. When he extended his hand, all the Little Men burst into laughter once more. "What quaint customs you have," the spokesman said, brushing aside the President's hand. His aides hustled the President and the others out.

* * *

"Well, they're something like us," said one of the Earthlings who had attended the saucer conference.

"But where are they from?" one man asked.

"The little fellow told us, but you know me---I'm never any good at pronouncin' foreign names."

"But what do we do now?"

"I dunno. What can we do? Just do what we're told, I guess."

"But, but, how can they even exist?"

* * *

There was a loud thud in Washington the next day. The Little Men tipped over the Washington Monument. "A pagan monument, a relic of your barbarous past," one Little Man explained. "You must forget these foolish things and advance now along pciapdpGR lines."

A retired general in New York declared that the Little Men were un-American. He gathered his aides around him and started out to do battle. When he got to the door of his hotel, he saw that the Little Men were busy toppling the Empire State Building. He retreated to his room.

* * *

People began venturing outside their homes after a few days for a look at the strangers. The Little Men collared a couple of the inquisitive Earthlings.

"We need you to do some work for us," the Little Men said.

"But, but, we've got our own work to do," the Earthlings protested.

The Little Men were exasperated at such impudence and gave them a couple of smart cuffs on the ear. Then they told the Earthlings, "Get on with the job and quit agitating." They put them to work sweeping out saucers.

"We'll pay you 10 copaicuapK a week," the Little Men said.

Nobody knew what a copaicuapK was, but no one dared ask.

* * *

The Little Men got some machines out of the flying saucers and took them over to where the Washington Monument once stood. One Little Man pushed the machine around the ground.

"It's a Vegetable Machine," a Little Man explained. In a few minutes, strange plants were pushing up from the ground, each bearing strange vegetables.

"That's our food!" a Little Man exclaimed with pride, pointing to the vegetables.

"Yes," said the Earthlings, "but that's our land."

The Little Men smiled one of their superior smiles and said, "You don't know how to use the land properly. Havn't you ever heard of right by virtue of superior utilization? No, we didn't think you had."

"But..." the Earthlings protested.

The Little Men gave them a Book to hush them up.

"What's this?" the Earthlings said.

"It's our Bible," the Little Men replied. "After you've studied it, you can be a rtospdicJ just like us."

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The Senate met the next day. The meeting was called to order and someone said, "Now, let's see, where were we now?"

One Senator got up and said, "What the hell. Why bother?" Everybody said, "Yes, what the hell, why bother?" So the Senate adjourned without even setting a date for another meeting.

It was learned later that the same thing happened in the British Parliament and in the House of The Heroes of the Soviet Union. Even Pandit Nehru had nothing to say that day.

* * *

The Little Men next demolished the Capitol, the White House and all the other public buildings in Washington. They turned their ray guns on them and they all disappeared.

Then they built their own buildings. It took them only four and a half minutes to construct them. The Earthlings watched in amazement. They were the tallest buildings the Earthlings had ever seen. In fact, no one could see to the top of them.

The job completed, a Little Man addressed the crowd. "Now that pciapdpgr administration has been established on Earth, we will expect each of you to pay two copaicuapK a week," the Little Man said.

"What for?" the Earthlings asked.

"Why, for taxes, of course. Who else should pay for the benefits you will receive under our administration?" the Little Man said.

One pretty smart lawyer thought for a minute and then he said, "Say, fellers, can I pay in dollars instead? That'll be all right, won't it? Won't it, fellers?"

The Little Men roared with laughter.

"No---what would we want dollars for?" a Little Man said. "Dollars, pounds, rubles, rupees---all of them are finished. We are introducing the copaicuapK economy to Earth."

"But," the Earthlings said, "where do we get copaicuapKs?"

"By working," the Little Man replied with firm conviction.

"But we are working. At least most of us are working," the Earthlings protested.

The Little Man cleared his throat. "We mean working for us," he said. "It's for your own good, but you are too stupid to realize that. It is our duty to civilize you. How can we civilize you if you never come into contact with us? What better contact is there than your working for us?"

"But..." a few Earthlings said. They knew, though, that there was no use arguing once the Little Men had made up their minds. So the Earthlings went to work (under proper Little Man supervision), sweeping out flying saucers, polishing glass-bubble helmets, pushing the Vegetable Machine around the land that used to hold the Washington Monument and building Saucer Ports for the streams of new saucers that kept arriving from pciapdpgr every day.

Yet still there were a lot of slackers. So the Little Men jacked up the tax to four copaicuapK a week. Then everybody had to become civilized. The Little Men had by this time established The Club in one of their towers. They would peer out the window occasionally and shout to the working Earthlings: "It's for your own good!"

One of the Little Men wrote a report to the Colonial Office back in pciapdpgr. He said, "The natives here are being weaned from their indolent ways. We are laying the foundations for a modern state in this incredibly primitive place. Of course it will take at least 1,000 eras for them to catch up to us."

* * *

The President was called to the Little Men's headquarters tower where the Capitol had once stood. All the way there he kept telling himself that he was going to stand up for Earthling rights during his talk with the Little Men.

But then he lost his composure. He became rattled as soon as he stepped into the tower. He thought he must have entered an elevator. But then he realized that no doors had opened or shut. He had just zoomed suddenly to the umpteenth floor. The Little Men laughed at his confusion and he felt embarrassed. They kept him waiting a long time.

"We're not going to dismiss you from your position," they finally told him. "Our policy is to work through the indigenous institutions. We are not going to tolerate a repetition of the difficulties that ensued when we declared our Protectorate over Mars. We ignored the indigenous institutions there and tried to impose our superior way of life at once. It did not work.

"You will be retained. But, of course, you realize that we, as your Protectors, cannot tolerate any untoward behavior on your part. Our Thought Machine will be tuned into your (hah) mental frequency all the time. Should you entertain improper ideas, you will of course be deposed. Is that clear?"

The President said, "Well, yes, I guess so. However there's something I want to tell you fellers..." The President didn't get a chance to tell them, though, because they zoomed him back to the ground floor by the same old confusing elevator. Or was it an elevator?

The Prime Ministers, Dictators, Kings and all other rulers on Earth had the same experience that day.

* * *

The next morning, the President called Congress into special session. Everybody was pretty scared. They didn't know what to do. But then a Little Man arrived and sat on the President's right shoulder. With the Little Man barking advice into the President's ear, a bill was pushed through raising the tax to six copalcuapK a week. "They're just like the Democrats," the Republicans muttered.

All of the other Parliaments and Congresses in the world did the same that day.

* * *

The young Earthlings had been just as scared as the oldsters at first. But as time went on their fear of the Little Men changed to curiosity.

The young boys had by this time thrown away their bicycles and their electric trains and model airplanes.. No one bothered to travel

those ways anymore now that the Little Men had inaugurated saucer travel to all parts of Earth, at two copaicuapK per hundred miles or fraction thereof.

In fact, Earth customs fell into abeyance to such a degree that when the first anthropologists arrived from pciapdpgr, the Earthlings had difficulty answering their persistent questions.

"Now, before we came here, what sort of powers did your President have?" the pciapdpgr anthropologists would say.

The youngsters would just shrug their shoulders. The oldsters would frown and scratch their heads and say, "Now, let's see, what sort of powers did he have?" They couldn't remember, but the pciapdpgr anthropologists kept on asking anyway. So finally the Earthlings wised up and started giving the anthropologists any old answer that came to their heads, just to hush them up.

The young Earthlings were eager to get jobs sweeping up and washing down saucers. Once inside the saucers, the young Earthlings would stare in awe at the internal mechanisms. It was all so wonderful: The machinery was all in one little glass bottle.

The Little Men gave the Earthlings a smart cuff on the ear now and then when they broke something. "The Earthlings are so exasperatingly clumsy," the Little Men would tell each other. "They're so stupid. Why, they've just been dragged out of the atomic age and put down all at once in the middle of the wqpdxB age."

But the young Earthlings kept on learning more about the saucers and eventually some of them knew enough to be able to fly them and repair them.

The young Earthlings had by this time become strangers to the older generation. The oldsters couldn't understand the glib terminology that the young men used in talking shop about saucer repair work. "I tried to fix it by adjusting the apaidpzicJ, but it was no use. It needed a new apdivhapdX," the young men used to say and the oldsters would say, "Huh? What was that you said?" "Please," the young men would say icily. "You wouldn't understand."

The young men threw away their Earth clothes and made space suits and glass-bubble helmets for themselves. Then they would boast to the old folks of how they knew all about the Little Men and how they had even eaten the strange vegetables grown by the Vegetable Machine.

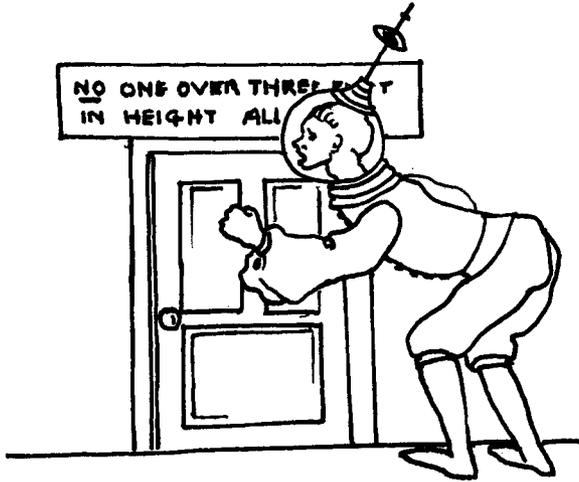
"But didn't it make you sick? Didn't it kill you?" the old folks would say.

"Please," the young men would say icily. "You wouldn't understand."

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One day a young Earthling felt very proud of himself. He had just graduated from the Saucer Pilots' School that the Little Men had opened for promising young Earthlings. He was a very civilized

Earthling indeed. He had mastered the language of the Little Men and had even adopted the rtospdicJ religion. He decided it was time he presented himself at The Club of the Little Men.



But when he got there, he found that the Little Men had anticipated his move. He was confronted by a sign that said:

"NO ONE OVER THREE FEET IN HEIGHT ALLOWED."

The young Earthling went home and brooded. As time went on, other promising young Earthlings had the same experience with the Height Bar. "There's nothing wrong with us except for one thing," they told each other. "We're the wrong height."

The Little Men, sitting in The Club, told each other: "It's too bad of course, but we've got our racial integrity to protect. Would you want your daughter to marry an Earthling? Imagine having grandchildren four or five feet high!"

For a while, a few Earthlings did a flourishing business selling bottles of a solution guaranteed to make one shorter. Large numbers of Earthlings bought the medicine but, drink as many bottles as they would, they found they still looked like Earthlings.

Finally one young Earthling said, "All right, then. We don't want what they've got to offer after all. The heck with them. Their way of life is no good anyway. We'll go back to our old ways."

They knew, though, that they didn't want to go back all the way. They wanted to keep flying saucers and ray guns and things like that. But they would get rid of the Little Men.

"Throw them out!" the cry went up. The Earthlings had learned a lot and they thought they didn't need the Little Men anymore. They knew how to fly the saucers, they told each other confidently. What they didn't tell each other was that no one knew how to build a new one. But that made no difference: they would establish an Independent Earth.

It was necessary to capture the support of the Earthling masses, but that wasn't too difficult. "Earth for Earthlings," the young men started saying. "Yes, Earth for Earthlings," the masses were soon saying. Somebody remembered the Washington Monument and said, "They stole our land." Soon even those Earthlings who had been Russians and Englishmen were saying, "Yes, they stole our land."

The masses had other reasons as well for wanting to get rid of the Little Men. For example, those in what had been America pined for the old days, when they used to sit in front of their television

sets watching ball games. The Little Men had banned ball games as sinful and they had laughed so hard at television that everyone had quietly gotten rid of his set. But now a new mood was in the air and everyone was saying, "Remember Milton Berle?"

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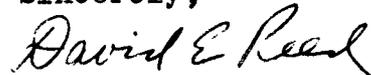
Soon all the Earthlings were swearing allegiance to The Organization. The young men stole ray guns from the Little Men. Then the young men took off for the stratosphere, where they would hide while not making guerrilla raids against the Little Men on Earth.

The Little Men, living in isolation in their towers, hadn't an inkling of what was building up. But when the young Earthlings started taking pot ray shots at them, they woke up and went out to put down this rebellion by the ungrateful Earthlings.

The Rebellion set the Little Men to thinking about their relations with the Earthlings and one fellow, who was a bit of a philosopher and who took the long view of things, wrote a poem, with which we will close this newsletter:

Take up the Little Man's Burden---
Send forth the best ye breed---
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness
On fluttered folk and wild---
Your new-caught sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

Sincerely,



David E. Reed

Cartoons by Lenni Brown.

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