

APPENDIX D

HUMAN INDIVIDUAL METAMORPHOSIS

In 1975, the incident that caused most press coverage involved not a UFO sighting, but rather a man and a woman who were claiming that if one joined their movement, Human Individual Metamorphosis (HIM), sometime within the next ten years a UFO would arrive and take one to a higher level of consciousness.

The couple, who variously referred to themselves and Bo and Peep, The Two, Him and Her and other such names, required that a member of HIM give up all material possessions and earthly pleasures, including sex. They spoke to groups in towns throughout the Pacific Northwest, and attracted anywhere from 20 to 100 followers, depending upon various reports. Most of these came from the State of Oregon, where relatives asked the authorities to look into the matter. Police and FBI were powerless, since those who had joined HIM had done so of their own free will, and had asked relatives not to search for them. Therefore, missing person reports could not be filed.

The two people who lead the cult have been identified as Marshall H. Applewhite, a music teacher from Houston, and Bonnie Lu Trusdale Nettles, a nurse, also from Houston. The pair reportedly had been arrested in a stolen car and records show that Applewhite was wanted on charges of failing to return a rental car in St. Louis, as well as on other charges in Houston, and Nettles was wanted for fraudulent use of credit cards. 142/

142/ See Music Teacher, Nurse Led Search for 'Higher Life'. Washington Post, Oct. 18, 1975. Bo and Peep were interviewed by the New York Times. See Phelan, James S., Looking For: The Next World. New York Times Magazine, Feb. 29, 1976:L 12-13, 58-59, 62, 65-66].

Robert Balch and David Taylor, who joined the UFO group in the fall of 1975 and observed its members, later wrote that nearly all the members were long-time seekers of truth who had been on other religious and spiritual trips before. 143/ According to Balch and Taylor, the members had been searching for self-awareness, for ways to become more open, more loving, more human. They were not starry-eyed, religious fanatics. For a few, the group was an escape from a lifetime of unhappiness, or from the tedium of a meaningless existence.

Bo and Peep told the followers that they could reach the "next level," the Kingdom of Heaven, only through a physical metamorphosis, by leaving their humanity behind, the way a butterfly leaves its caterpillar form. Since the group had not been subjected to indoctrinations and lacked a rigid organization, during the long, idle waiting, when no progress was apparent toward any transformation, no UFO came to rescue them, and The Two were away on long, unexplained absences, many members developed doubts, became disillusioned, and defections were high. 144/

Supposedly, the group was still in existence in 1979, somewhere in Wyoming, considerably reduced in size, and highly regimented. 145/

143/ Balch, Robert W. and David Taylor. Salvation in a UFO. Psychology Today, v. 10, Oct. 1976: 58, 61-62, 66, 106.

144/ Ibid.

145/ Flying Saucers in the Wilderness, Religion column, Time, v. 114, Aug. 27, 1979: 58.