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The Council of Nine

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One New Age channeling cult, above all the rest, has had a huge - very disturbing influence on hundreds of thousands of devotees worldwide. Known as 'The Nine', its disciples include cutting edge scientists, multi-millionaire industrialists and leading politicians. This exclusive extract based on The Startgate Conspiracy by Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince looks at the sinister origins of The Nine

I am the beginning. I am the end. I am the emissary. But the original time I was on the Planet Earth was 34,000 of your years ago. I am the balance. And when I say "I" - I mean because I am an emissary for The Nine. It is not I , but it is the group. We are nine principles of the Universe, yet together we are one.

The declaration above is typical of the channelled pronouncements of the Council of Nine - or just 'The Nine'. They contain all the usual New Age ingredients of grandiose statements, shaky grammar and unprovable predictions. But unlike all the other channelling cults, that of The Nine has serious clout. Perhaps the reason for this is that they claim to be the Ennead, or the nine major gods of ancient Egypt (see panel). Or could there be another reason, one that owes more to The X-Files than the Pyramid Texts? Although The Nine may appear to be quintessentially a modern phenomenon, our research uncovered its truly astonishing pedigree. In fact, the story begins nearly 50 years ago, in a private research laboratory in Glen Cove, Maine, called the Round Table Foundation, run by a medical doctor named **Andrija Puharich** (also known as Henry K Puharich). Set up in 1948 to research the paranormal, among the noted psychics studied at the Foundation were the famous Irish medium **Eileen Garrett** and the Dutch clairvoyant **Peter Hurkos** (Pieter van de Hirk). Prominent members included the influential philosopher and inventor Arthur M Young and the socialite Alice Bouverie (née Astor).

In December 1952, **Puharich** brought into his laboratory an Indian mystic named Dr D G Vinod, who began to channel The Nine or 'the Nine Principles'. In the months before Vinod returned to India, a group met regularly to hear The Nine's channelled wisdom. Never known for their modesty, The Nine proclaimed themselves to be God, stating "God is nobody else than we together, the Nine Principles of God."

Three years later, there appeared to be independent confirmation of their existence. In Mexico, **Puharich** and Young met **Charles** and **Lillian Laughead**, former Christian missionaries who were by then prominent in the burgeoning UFO contactee movement. (For a

description of their involvement in the Dorothy Martin circle, see **Jerome Clark's** 'When Prophecy Failed' in FT117.) Back in the States a few weeks later, Puharich received a letter from the Laugheads containing messages received by their group's channeller. This message also claimed to come from the Nine Principles, even - amazingly - including references to the earlier communications transmitted through **Dr Vinod**. Could The Nine possibly be for real?

Perhaps the answer is embedded in the career of **Puharich** himself. After disbanding the Round Table Foundation in 1958, he worked for 10 years as an inventor of medical devices and achieved international recognition as a parapsychologist, most famously studying the Brazilian psychic surgeon, **Arigo** (José Pedro de Freitas). But all that was to pale into insignificance because, in 1971, Puharich discovered **Uri Geller**.

At their first meetings in Tel Aviv in 1971, **Puharich** hypnotised **Geller** in an attempt to find out where his abilities came from. As a result, the young Israeli started to channel 'Spectra' - an entity which claimed to be a conscious super-computer aboard a spaceship. However, Puharich suggested to him that there might be a connection with the Nine Principles, and Spectra readily agreed that there was. The Nine claimed that they had programmed Geller with his powers as a young child.

Through **Geller**, The Nine alerted **Puharich** to his life's mission, which was to use **Geller's** talents to alert the world to an imminent mass landing of spaceships that would bring representatives of The Nine. However, **Geller** - by now an international psychic superstar - bowed out in 1973 and has resolutely turned his back on The Nine ever since. **Puharich** had to find other channels. He joined up with aristocratic former racing driver Sir **John Whitmore** and Florida-based psychic and healer **Phyllis Schlemmer**. They found a new channeller - a Daytona cook known to history only by the pseudonym 'Bobby Horne' - who lived to regret his dealings with The Nine. Driven to the brink of suicide by their constant demands, he too dropped out of the scene - his despair being dismissed by **Whitmore** as "signs of instability". After this, **Phyllis Schlemmer** was appointed the authorised spokesperson for the entity - known simply as 'Tom' - who represented The Nine.

Puharich, Whitmore and **Schlemmer** then set up Lab Nine at **Puharich's** estate in Ossining, New York. The Nine's disciples included multi-millionaire businessmen (many hiding behind pseudonyms and including members of Canada's richest family, the **Bronfmans**), European nobility, scientists from the Stanford Research Institute and at least one prominent political figure who was a personal friend of President **Gerald Ford**.

We also know that **Lyall Watson** (then the darling of the alternative scene because of his seminal 1973 book *Supernature*) was involved, as was the influential counter-culture guru **Ira Einhorn** - and **Gene Roddenberry**, creator of Star Trek.

The key to predicting eclipses is noticing that they occur in cycles, or at more or less regular intervals. The Sun goes round the sky once a year; the Moon once a month. This means that, every month, the Moon 'overtakes' the sun. This happens at the New Moon, and this is when solar eclipses occur. But, of course, we don't get an eclipse every New Moon. This is because the Moon has an elliptical orbit: sometimes it passes above the Sun when it overtakes it, sometimes below. But the Moon's elliptical orbit has its own cycle: it returns to the same place it started from every 18 years or so. Thus - if seen from the same place on Earth - an eclipse will be followed by another one just over 18 years later.

Roddenberry was part of that circle in 1974 and 1975, and even produced the screenplay for a movie about The Nine. How much he was influenced by them is unknown, although it is said that some of their concepts found their way into the early Star Trek movies, and The Next Generation and Deep Space Nine (what a giveaway!) series.

(There is a character named 'Vinod' in one Deep Space Nine episode.) Another key player in Lab Nine was Dr **James J Hurtak**, who was appointed **Puharich's** second-in-command by The Nine. In fact, **Hurtak** had been independently channelling The Nine since 1973. **Puharich** and **Whitmore** commissioned British writer **Stuart Holroyd** to write an account of their adventures, which appeared

in 1977 as *Prelude to the Landing on Planet Earth* (retitled *Briefings for the Landing on Planet Earth* in paperback)

In this extraordinary book the true identity of the Nine - and of Tom - was finally revealed. Far from being the chummy character that his rather avuncular name suggests, Tom is actually Atum, the creator-god of the ancient Egyptian religion of Heliopolis, and Uncle Tom with his eight mates are none other than the Great Ennead of Heliopolis,

But even with such impressive contacts, all was not well with **Puharich**. Lab Nine broke up in 1978 after a series of mysterious events that culminated in an arson attack on the Ossining estate, and he fled to Mexico, claiming that he was being persecuted by the CIA. He returned to the USA two years later, and appears to have played no further part in The Nine story. He died in 1995 after falling down the stairs in his South Carolina home. However, The Nine continued. Not only did **Schlemmer** and **Whitmore** continue their mission, but Dr **Hurtak** has also moved on. He has become a major player in the unfolding millennial drama currently being played out at Giza, but perhaps more importantly he has established himself as a New Age guru par excellence, travelling the world giving workshops on his book of channelled revelations from The Nine, *The Keys of Enoch*. Written and laid out in classic Biblical style, its darkly apocalyptic vision has huge numbers of influential devotees. This we find very worrying.

Another Nine channel - an Englishwoman named **Jenny O'Connor** - was introduced to the avant garde Esalen Institute in San Francisco by **Sir John Whitmore**. She and The Nine became so influential there that they held seminars and - unbelievably - were actually listed on the Institute's staff, even successfully ordering the sacking of its chief finance officer and the reorganisation of its entire management structure..

This should concern us, because many influential people attended The Nine's Esalen seminars, including Russians who were part of the Institute's Soviet Exchange programme. Some of these later rose to prominence in the Gorbachev regime and were instrumental in the downfall of Communism. (The Esalen Institute now runs the US branch of the Gorbachev Foundation.)

The Nine are very much still with us. One of their recent channels, who is also in contact with Tom, is the American writer **David M Myers**. He is co-author with Britain's **David S Percy** of that extraordinary tome *Two-Thirds*, a history of the galaxy and the human race according to **Myer's** otherwordly contacts (who clearly have no sense of the absurd). **Percy** - best known as a champion of the 'Face on Mars' and the 'hoaxing' of the Apollo moon landings - was at one time part of the **Schlemmer** circle. Among the other major proponents of the 'monuments' of Mars and their alleged connection with ancient Egypt is none other than Dr **James Hurtak** - The Nine's great prophet - who has promoted this idea since as long ago as 1973. **Richard C Hoagland** - familiar to FT readers as another unrepentant 'Mars Face' enthusiast - is also clearly under The Nine's spell. **David Myers** and **David Percy** were, respectively, American and European Director of Operations for **Hoagland's** Mars Mission. In fact, his interpretation of the 'monuments' of Mars comes directly from The Nine. Flake though he may appear (increasingly in these hallowed pages), but his influence over huge swathes of the hungrier mystery seekers is undeniable. This is the man who addresses rapt audiences at the United Nations.

But it is in the New Age channelling circuit that The Nine have truly come into their own. In any other circles their true agenda would no doubt have been rumbled long ago, but this is the New Age. Anything The Nine say must be sweetness and light, right? But an objective reading of their divine pronouncements reveal the first stirrings of something very nasty in Paradise.

Their words appeared in 1992 as the book *The Only Planet of Choice*, credited to 'transceiver' **Schlemmer** and edited by **Mary Bennett** (a one-time member of the Schlemmer circle who also edited Myers and Percy's *Two-Thirds*). This has had an unprecedented influence over the New Age. According to **Palden Jenkins** (editor of an earlier edition of *Only Planet*) more and more New Age channelling groups are 'realising' that the real source of their wisdom is The Nine. In fact, we have discerned what amounts to a campaign by The Nine - or their adherents - to 'take over' the New Age.

It would be a mistake to underestimate the economic or even political potential of this vast subculture - rich pickings indeed.

But The Nine's influence does not extend merely to New Age channelling circles. **Andrija Puharich**, **James Hurtak** and **Richard Hoagland** have all lectured at the United Nations in New York. And individuals connected with The Nine are also known to have influence with Vice-President **Al Gore**. Of course, if The Nine really are the ancient gods of Egypt, then surely there could be fewer more significant events than their return. One may be justified in thinking that the more leading politicians who fall under their influence the better; but are they really the ancient Ennead of Egypt? Can it be that they have actually returned to sort us all out, scattering love and enlightenment from their high moral ground?

Tom, in *The Only Planet of Choice*, chooses his words carefully as he explains that all the races of the Earth were seeded from space-gods - except one, the "indigenous race", the blacks. He is very careful to urge us not to make an issue out of this. After all, it's not the black race's fault that they have no divine spark like the rest of us.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the history of The Nine is its relationship to the career of **Andrija Puharich**. Recent research has revealed **Puharich** to have a distinctly sinister side. As an Army doctor in the 1950s, he was deeply involved with the CIA's notorious MKULTRA mind control project (see panel). He - together with the infamous **Dr Sidney Gottlieb** - experimented with a variety of techniques to change or induce actual thought processes, even to creating the impression of voices in the head. These techniques included the use of drugs, hypnosis and beaming radio signals directly into the subject's brain. And, significantly, he was engaged in this work at exactly the same time that The Nine made their first appearance at the Round Table Foundation. The Foundation itself is now known to have been largely funded by the Pentagon as a front for its medical and parapsychological research. **Puharich** was still working for the CIA in the early 1970s, when he brought **Uri Geller** out of Israel. Puharich's use of hypnosis is particularly interesting in The Nine circle. In the case of **Uri Geller** and **Bobby Horne**, he first hypnotised them and then suggested that they were in touch with The Nine - and lo, they were! **Ira Einhorn** - a close associate of **Puharich's** during the 1970s - confirmed to us that he believed that **Puharich** was "humanly directing" The Nine communications.

The evidence we have gathered strongly suggests that Tom and his fellow gods originated, not in the stars, but behind closed doors as part of a CIA mind control experiment. And what happened to that experiment? Now with hundreds of thousands of devotees, some in very high places, can The Nine be deemed a success? Of course, that depends very much on what the CIA had in mind. With their subtle racist propaganda, perhaps the flaky New Age Nine should worry the hell out of us.

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