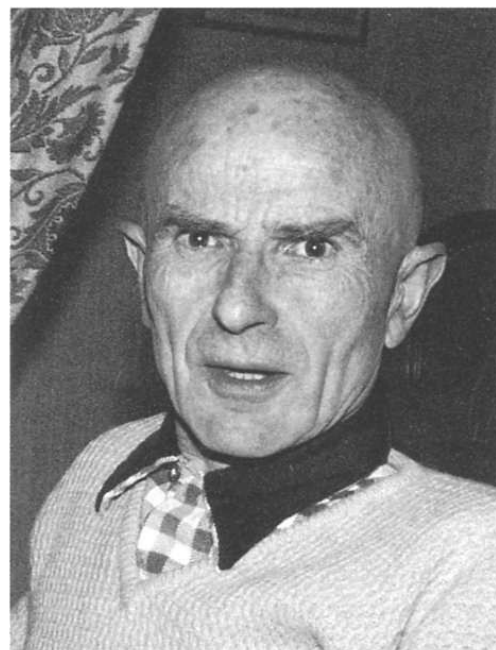


OBITUARY: AIMÉ MICHEL

By Dr. Pierre Guérin, French Astronomer, recently retired from the Institut d'Astrophysique, Paris; and Maître de Recherche in the CNRS (French National Centre For Scientific Research).

(Translated from French. G.C.)



FSR readers will be aware of the recent death, at the age of 73, of Aimé Michel, in his village of St. Vincent-les-Forts, in the Alpes de Haute Provence, in the early morning of December 28, 1992. He had been born there, on May 17, 1919, into a modestly placed farming family. Having suffered from polio in childhood, he was left with life-long physical effects, the growth of his lower limbs having been stunted, while his arms and torso remained unimpaired apart from some degree of spinal curvature. (He used to say that, had he not had this illness, he would have had the same athletic build as his brothers and would no doubt have been more inclined towards the material pleasures of life rather than towards philosophical introspection and scientific reflection.) He had the usual classical secondary education, and learned to read Latin and Greek texts. In order to overcome his physical handicap he forced himself to undertake difficult mountain climbs during his youth.

For a while he taught in a private school. Then he qualified as an acoustics engineer and went up to Paris where he worked as a journalist with the French Radio and Television Services.

At a very early date he began to take an interest in the “accursèd” subjects so fiercely rejected by the “rationalists” — paranormal phenomena, mystical manifestations — and, finally, *flying saucers*, which were just beginning to be talked about in Europe and became his favourite subject of study.

He became my friend, and remained my friend until his death. Among his other friends there were also a few other scientists who, for a time, and to varying degrees, “fellow-travelled” with him. We formed what was later called “*The Invisible College*”.

It was during the summer of 1954 that, having been greatly intrigued for several years past by

the flying saucer mystery, I bought Aimé Michel’s first book, *Lueurs Sur Les Soucoupes Volantes*,⁽¹⁾ published by Maime.

In it I found some sighting reports that were completely convincing and some that were not and that related either to bolides or planets, but, above all, I found a writer, with an alert style and a lucid mind, who had the gift of knowing how to confront the “rationalist” with the evidence of his own contradictions, his own mental blocks, and his own dishonesties.

I considered that I absolutely must meet the author of the book, even if only, as a scientist myself, to advise him of certain errors to be avoided. But I also wanted to get some sort of idea of the validity of his sources.

I shall always remember our first meeting, when I saw, coming towards me, this little man with limbs withered by polio, but broad-chested despite curvature, and with an impish and forceful face lit by piercing and bright, intelligent eyes that put me in mind of Picasso. Our friendship dated from that moment, and never would it flag.

As I have said, Aimé was interested in all the “accursèd” subjects: the paranormal, the manifestations of mysticism, of which there had for some years been a good deal of talk in Europe, and which were his favourite subject of study.

His second book, *Mystérieux Objets Célèstes*⁽²⁾, was concerned with the critical study of the French UFO Wave of 1954 and based on the innumerable press reports of the period. And there were in due course two further, enlarged, editions of it.

Aimé also wrote the “*For*” booklet of a “*Pro And Con*” discussion of flying saucers, in which he completely demolished his opponent who could produce no effective argument. Aimé also pub-

lished numerous brilliant polemical articles on UFOs in various reviews, particularly in *Planète*. Furthermore, he produced a book, which also ran into several editions, on mystical phenomena and manifestations.

There ensued a series of savage attacks against Aimé from the “rationalistic” university intelligentsia of France, and these displayed a degree of violence such as is scarcely to be imagined.

And if these attacks finally ended by disheartening him totally, it was firstly and primarily because, by that time, although already well aware of the possible limitations of the human brain, Aimé was nonetheless still counting on the expectation that an official scientific study of the UFO Phenomenon *would* be made, and he was hoping that such a study would yield us some ideas regarding the method of propulsion of the unknown objects and would in any event provide us with the proof of their *physical reality*, and that this in turn would lead to the public recognition of that reality.

But Aimé was obliged to capitulate in the face of the evident fact that a formidable mental block was preventing the initiation of any such study in the realms of scientific research. Simultaneously it was also discovered that this mental block had the support and backing of a policy of secrecy and denial conducted by the Security Services of the U.S.A. — a policy that Aimé was one of the first people in France to denounce.

Nevertheless, for some years he continued to hope... Prior to our first manned voyage in Space, it was still possible to wonder and to ask oneself whether, despite the thinning of its atmosphere, the planet Mars might perhaps nevertheless have retained some higher form of life that had managed to adapt itself. This theory of Martian flying saucers offered some hope of a speedy solution of the problem, for we would soon be sending probes to Mars. Moreover, had there not also been the idea that some sort of correlation could be detected between the “Waves” of the flying saucers and the Red Planet’s arrivals at the point of Opposition with the Earth? I recall that Aimé was greatly attached to that hope, which however ended in disappointment when it was known that there were no Martians and that the atmosphere of Mars was ten times thinner than we had thought. At about the same time we measured the temperature on Venus — the other “candidate” for Extraterrestrials. It was found to be as high as 500°C!

From then on the UFO Problem assumed a totally different aspect. Aimé very quickly realized that if the UFOs came from other planetary systems, then, in order to make the journey, they must have been utilising dimensions of Space-Time unknown to our physics and not actually “representable” to our minds. This meant such a scientific lead over mankind, and doubtless such an intellectual superiority, that any study of the matter could seem vain. This feeling of futility increased when

it became clear that any public recognition of the existence of the flying saucers would for ever be excluded. And proof of this was provided by the “loaded dice” of the Condon Committee in the USA, and subsequently by the summary command to halt operations, imposed on the GEPAN. investigations in France.

Aimé Michel was now to contemplate the evaporation of all the hope that he had invested in the prospect of a scientific study of the UFO Phenomenon. He now knew that in his lifetime he would never learn the solution to the enigma, and he was sure that he had backed a loser.

Finally, the lying nature of the “messages” given to contactees — the deceptive side of this phenomenon which mocks us and refuses to permit direct proof — plus the long, persistent, nature of the UFO Phenomenon’s ongoing intrusion, over centuries, into our environment — all this finally induced him to drop the entire subject — particularly as he was now greatly weakened by a grave illness, plus various personal worries.

Having withdrawn to the village where he had been born, from then on he never ceased to reply, to anyone who desired to listen, that in the final count *he knew nothing; that, throughout his entire life, he had been seeking for things that lie outside the four spatio-temporal dimensions available to our understanding — things that our very nature of being Homo Sapiens does not permit us to apprehend or to understand.*

Aimé Michel’s life thus ended with a tragic sentiment of failure.

What remains of his work nevertheless is still broadly positive. While it is true that the “*Orthoteny*” (alignments of sites where UFOs were observed) which he believed he had discovered, turned out to be an illusion due to estimates of probability as well as due to certain errors over places and dates, and while (like all other writers on UFOs) he quoted in his books some sighting reports that turn out to have been due to known objects or known phenomena and not to UFOs at all, the fact remains that, as a whole, his account of the Great UFO Wave of 1954 *is accurate and objective.*

And no alteration of that objectivity is going to result from the botched up or deliberately slanted “investigations”⁽³⁾ of a pair of crooked scribblers hired by the Rationalist Union to “demolish” Aimé Michel’s achievement.

So, let us sum up: you can say, straight away, right at the outset, that Aimé Michel was a splendid popularizer, both in the volume of his writings and in their content. He made the public at large aware of those facts that everybody *ought* to know about most of the subjects that Science does not always want to take into account.

Secondly, and above all, one can say that he was the very first person — at any rate to my knowledge — to have understood what would be implied by contact with an intelligence *that is higher and that is non-human.*

I believe that this is what will remain as the most significant — indeed as the most genially *inspired* — element of his work.

His ideas on this subject were set forth already in his second book, and he developed them and carried them forward again several times subsequently.

Here on Earth it is customary and normal for man, due to his brain and his intelligence, to be dominant over the other species of creatures, and consequently he naturally tends to believe in the omnipotence of his *Reason* for comprehension of the Universe. Now, the actual fact of the matter is that there are no grounds whatever for any argument that would permit us to think that, in the Cosmos, Biological Evolution has halted with the human level.

And if such beings superior to us do exist and do visit us (*which is virtually a statistical necessity given the immense number of stars that must possess a planetary system*), then some of them could be as far ahead of us mentally as we are ahead of our higher mammals — *and indeed even more so*.

Consequently, in Physics, they might manipulate certain concepts which — *by their very nature* — will always be “unformulatable” for us — which fact is dangerously liable to limit our own possible comprehension of the UFOs and of their occupants.

Others, long before Aimé Michel, had already conceived of the possibility that there might be thinking (i.e. the thinking of God, and of His Angels) that transcends human thinking. But Aimé Michel was, to my knowledge, the first to have introduced this “super-human hierarchisation” in the beings produced by Biological Evolution, by doing what he did — namely by knocking man off the pedestal on which he had installed himself.

But of course our human “*Intelligentsia*” are not prepared to pardon such a piece of insolence. And consequently Aimé Michel’s ideas have scarcely begun yet to penetrate into the scientific field, which as a general rule remains totally inimical to them. Only a few radio astronomers — just very recently — have suggested that intelligent signals from an extraterrestrial civilization that, according to them, we might one day capture, *could possibly be indecipherable for us anyway*. But they don’t go much further than that, and the idea does not yet occur to them that already now we might be confronted by the very problem here, with the visits of UFOs in our skies and on our soil.

And so it goes: the true precursors, like Aimé Michel, are always several decades ahead of their times. Does this mean that, like Aimé Michel, we should simply give up?

I refuse to believe so.

Our brain has not yet fired its last shots. If there are, on other planetary systems around distant stars, beings who are mentally totally ahead of us, there must on the other hand also be some who

are only *slightly* ahead of us.

Maybe the UFOs conceived by these latter would seem, to the first-mentioned beings, to be as primitive as our own vehicles must appear to those who have just barely mastered the art of passing to other dimensions so as to be able to go to the stars.

Maybe we ourselves are on the very threshold of making this same leap. *We don’t know*. And our research in theoretical physics is far from having pronounced its final word.

We are, after all, in our own home here, and it is *our duty* to exercise surveillance of all intrusions by “Foreigners” into our environment — and indeed of their *eventual implantation* — possibly — here on our planet.

(Something that Aimé Michel didn’t want to believe in!).

And so it is that, now more than ever, Ufology has got to go on.

NOTES BY EDITOR, FSR

(1) The preface to this, Aimé Michel’s first book was by the genial poet/playwright Jean Cocteau, famous for his marvellous remark that “*The only truly unbelievable and impossible thing about flying saucers would be if they did not exist!*” An English translation was put out in London in 1957 by Robert Hale under the title: *The Truth about Flying Saucers*. All of Aimé’s work contains excellent accounts of many important but now wellnigh forgotten cases offering massive proof of the presence here of alien beings and alien vehicles.

(2) *A Propos des Soucoupes Volantes: Mystérieux Objet Célèstes*. First published in Paris in 1958 by Editions B. Arthaud. Enlarged fourth edition issued in Paris in 1966 by Editions Planète.

In 1958, Criterion Books, New York, brought out an American composite version of Aimé’s work under the title of *Flying Saucers and the Straight Line Mystery*, with preface by General L.M. Chassin, French Air Force, General Air Defence Coordinator of Allied Air Forces, Central Europe (NATO)!

This is one of the most important early UFO books, and many folk today are careful not to refer to it. It is valuable because it gives, in English, a lot of the contents of Aimé’s two books.

General Chassin, who, after retirement, later became the president of the first French civilian UFO investigative body, was a courageous advocate of our cause, and must have been quite a thorn in the side of French officialdom. *Note too that General Chassin was, when he wrote that preface, the Commander-in-Chief of the NATO Air Forces, Central Europe! (This was, of course, during the early days of NATO, when France was still one of our loyal members. Subsequent revelations have shown what a tragic thing it was for NATO and for all of Western Europe when the Soviets succeeded in infiltrating key agents into General de Gaulle’s Government and Cabinet, and in spreading a venomous hatred - - which is still alive in France today - - against USA and Britain, the two allies without whom France could never have been liberated from the power of the Nazis).*

But did Macchiavelli not warn us (and who knew human nature better than he?) that it does not pay to do another man a favour -- for he will end up feeling obligated to you -- AND HE WILL HATE YOU FOR IT. America’s crime was that she had bailed out France (and Britain too) in two World Wars! The British, too, hate them for it.

As Dr. Guérin has mentioned, Aimé Michel was crippled by polio, with very short legs, but robust and deep-chested. He came to England to visit us at FSR once or twice and was, throughout, our most loyal and active friend and supporter, and he wrote some fine articles for FSR.

Charles Bowen and I had our own nickname for him. We always greeted him as “*The Martian*”. (Many French and South American UFO reports of that period habitually referred to the little alien critters as “*les Martiens*”)

Our photograph, taken toward the end of his life, shows Aimé as hairless. This must assuredly have been the result of the chemo therapy treatment he underwent for cancer. *Aimé Michel’s body*

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THE WESTCOTT UFO

*By Captain Gordon Millington, Retd., B.A.
Hons., T. Cert. RAEC, FSR Consultant ©*

The following is my Report of my interview, on September 1, 1992, with the witnesses, Mr. & Mrs. Peter Mackrell, of Dorking, Surrey, regarding an experience of ten years before (Saturday, April 17, 1982).

Mr. Mackrell's Statement to me, dated April 27, 1982: "Whilst driving along the A25 from Guildford to Dorking on Saturday 17.4.82., two very bright lights were sighted in the distance. The closer we got, we noticed the lights were not moving, they just stayed hovering above the trees. When we got to the trees the lights were shining through the trunks of the trees. We started going down the hill and the lights then became above us but still did not move. I slowed the car down, wondering what these lights were. As we reached the bottom of the hill and turned the corner we soon found out. There above us was a huge shape, something like a fat cigar. It had a red and green light on the front and green square lights running down the side, which I think must have been windows. I drove up the kerb with surprise. As we got to the other end of the shape we could not believe our eyes. There were two massive jet-like burners glowing. They were so big you could see into them. The shape was not moving and we heard no sound. It could only have been about 100 feet above us. I turned the car around as fast as I could and went back, but the shape had vanished completely out of sight." — (signed) P. Mackrell, HGV driver for MMB Dorking.

* * * * *

Although ten years had elapsed since the events it was still vivid in the memory of the witnesses. They stated that the lights first observed through the trees were white, like a pair of car headlights, and first seen at 11.15 p.m. At 11.20 the Mackrells were directly beneath and to the left of the UFO for about 30 seconds, during which time they looked into the "burners" at the rear and experienced an eerie "cone of silence" effect. (This memory was only recalled by them at the interview with me, but was not suggested by me). The UFO was above a field on the right of the A25 at Westcott (Grid Reference TQ 134484), a location about five and a half miles from Pitch Hill, where several previous UFO events have been reported.

Mrs. Mackrell, who was at the time of the incident Ms Christine Blackmore-Davey, the witness's fiancée, made the following tape-recorded statement for me:-

"We were on the road from Abinger Hammer. In the distance, in the sky, were two bright — very bright — white lights, which we immediately thought were car headlights. I probably watched these more than Peter, because he was doing the driving. It was something to watch, down that road. It was dark, and as we kept going round the bend we lost these lights but they would reappear again later. Eventually we went round a bend and they were there on our right, through the trees. We were making jokes about it being a UFO and about stopping and buying a cornetto, and perhaps it would land and be friendly. And it was all a big joke, never actually expecting that, when we came right to it and went past it, Peter would wind the window down and shout "*Christ! It's a UFO!*".

Immediately my legs went to jelly — I felt absolutely petrified, my whole body just felt like a jelly. He was going berserk, right up on the kerb, and I said "*Go back, go back!*" and I looked behind me and I said "*Go home, just keep driving!*" but he said "*No, I'm going back, I'm going back!*" and as we went past it I looked behind me, and there were two blooming great orange jet burners and that made me feel even more scared. It was so eerie, it was horrible, unbelievable. It was an evil-looking shape. All I wanted to do was go home, but not Peter, no! He had to turn the car round and go back. Now he turned the car round at the first opportunity. We had only been passing that thing about thirty seconds before, but now, as we came back, there was nothing there! It was as if we'd imagined it, there was nothing there.

We drove on, looking, *and then the cars started to turn up again, because all this time while we had been looking at those lights there hadn't been a single car and everything was still. And when I think about it now, it seems it was an unearthly sort of stillness as well, although it was peaceful, if you know what I mean, it was a peaceful sort of stillness. I wouldn't say it was a frightening stillness, and you didn't even realise that it had been still, until afterwards, when you suddenly realised that everything was busy again.*"