

Obituary

JEAN COCTEAU

Jean Cocteau, died October 11, 1963.

Cocteau was one of us. He was the greatest mind that I have known (and I know several Nobel Prize winners).

It was he who was the very first to maintain to me – right at the very outset, in August 1954, when it was just beginning-that – the 1954 wave was something real. At that time I myself had my doubts about it.

Here are some of the phrases he used to love to repeat:

“One must be crazy – as in fact men are – to think oneself the navel of the Universe.” “The astonishing thing would be if they (the UFOs) did *NOT* exist.”

He was especially fond of the remark of one of our friends, Professor Chauvin (one of the top biologists in France): “When the scientists and scholars are stupid, they are methodically stupid.”

I might add that the evangelical theory about “Our Space Brothers who watch over us” seemed to him to be very naïve. He used to say: “Even if they are more intelligent than we are, they are probably just as mad.”

He was the most wonderful of mental stimulants. He knew how to make the most complicated of matters clear with a single word. For example on the subject of nuclear chain-reactions, he said: “It's like unravelling knitting.”

He would at once spot an error in reasoning and, contrariwise, could also perceive immediately the ultimate consequences of an idea. This is why his conviction as to the existence of the Extraterrestrials carries so much weight. He had recognized in it one of the greatest discoveries of the twentieth century, perhaps indeed the greatest.

In him many minds throughout the world have lost a lucid guide. And I have lost a very dear friend.

Aimé Michel.