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### CNI News Interview with Philip Mantle

From: **UFO UpDates - Toronto** <updates@globalserve.net>  
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CNI News is a twice-monthly electronic newsletter addressing UFO phenomena, claims of human-alien contact, space exploration and related issues, including the cultural and political impacts of contact with other intelligent life. CNI News is edited by Michael Lindemann and distributed by the 2020 Group. Prior to October 1, 1996, CNI News was published under the name ISCNI\*Flash.

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The subject matter of CNI News is inherently controversial, and the views and opinions reported herein are not necessarily those of the editorial staff.

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QUOTABLE: "From an anthropological point of view, space exploration must be undertaken not only out of simple human curiosity but also to further ensure the survival of the species. The twentieth century has seen unprecedented development and proliferation of magnificent technologies. Many of them, though, through design, ignorance, or misuse, are capable of destroying life as well as enhancing it. Space exploration alone holds the promise of eventual escape from a dying planet, provided that we wisely manage our resources in the meantime and actually survive that long."

-- Dr. Edgar Mitchell, "The Way of the Explorer"

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CNI NEWS INTERVIEWS UFO RESEARCHER PHILIP MANTLE  
UK Expert Says Santilli Autopsy Film May Be Authentic

[Philip Mantle has investigated UFO cases in the UK for more than 16 years as an associate of BUFORA, the British UFO Research Association. For the past three years he served as BUFORA's Director of Investigations, a post he recently resigned; and he remains on BUFORA's Board of Directors. In 1994, he co-authored with Carl Nagaitis a book on abductions in the UK titled "Without Consent." In 1997, his next book will appear, co-authored with German researcher Michael Hesemann, titled "Beyond Roswell." In this book, Mantle will discuss the possibility that the controversial "Santilli Alien Autopsy Film" may be authentic.

Mantle is 38 years of age and lives in the town of Batley, in West Yorkshire, with his wife Sue and their two children. CNI News editor Michael Lindemann interviewed Philip Mantle on November 16, 1996, when they met at a conference in Blackpool, England. Thanks to Celeste for assistance in transcribing the interview.]

ML: Apart from your UFO research, what do you do for a living?

PM: I've been employed at the same company now for the last 17 years. We manufacture lithographic printing plates in huge quantities. That's what pays the mortgage and feeds the children.

ML: Did you ever serve in the military?

PM: No, I've never been in the military.

ML: You've been associated with BUFORA for a long time. When and how did your interest in UFOs begin?

PM: My interest in UFOs began in about 1978, quite by accident. I was with a friend in Wiltshire, in the west country of England. We were actually amateur astronomers. I've been interested in astronomy ever since the moon landings, as a young boy. We'd gone to visit a gentleman [who'd] built himself a small observatory. On this particular evening -- I can't remember exactly why -- we couldn't use the telescope.

I was loaned a book on UFOs, basically dismissing them, and it mentioned the town of Walmington in Wiltshire. To my surprise, we were some eight or ten miles away from this town. So, quite literally, we had nothing better to do on that particular evening, [and] we drove to the town.

We found the local vantage point which was mentioned in the book, called Bradle Hill, [and] perched ourselves on the hilltop. There were other people there. We saw an orange light descend that we couldn't identify in astronomical terms. It wasn't the stars, the planets, meteors, so on. We were completely ignorant of the surrounding area, having never been there before.

With the benefit of hindsight, it was probably something to do with the military -- there is a military garrison there, and they do military maneuvers in the area. It may have been a flare, or something like that. But at that time we didn't know that, and that sparked the interest.

I had a prior interest also in the paranormal. And I decided at that point to find out for myself what this thing was. And it mentioned the British UFO Research Association in the book, and even gave an address for them. So I thought, well, I'll write to these people. That was in 1978. I eventually joined BUFORA, and also a local organization which I happened across in Yorkshire, just outside of Leeds. And that's how my interest started, quite by chance. Had it not been cloudy that particular evening, the probability is that I wouldn't be speaking to you today.

ML: Apart from that first serendipitous event, have you had any other sightings or unusual experiences that you think were UFOs?

PM: The only thing that I would classify as a UFO that I've seen, personally, took place on July 23, 1984, at about 9:55 p.m. At my job, I have to work shifts. I finished early that evening, at about 9:50. I wasn't married at that time. I was driving home to my parents' house, on a long straight road. As I turned the car onto the main highway, I could see these lights in the sky. It was a beautiful summer's evening; it wasn't dark, there was still a red glow in the sky. And I knew, because of my background in astronomy, that it wasn't Venus, etc., and that it shouldn't have been there. There was still the possibility that it was an aircraft, because there is an airport in Leeds.

So I drove to a vantage point where I knew I could see the whole city of Leeds and the valley below me. It wasn't one light, it was two lights, side by side, extremely large. They were like a pearly white, an off-white color. They weren't bright to the eyes, they didn't hurt the eyes, but they were bright, nevertheless; [and] something like 30 degrees above the horizon. They were over a suburban town of Leeds called Middleton, only a couple of miles from where I was. Completely stationary. And [they] disappeared before my eyes -- didn't go up or down, left or right, [they] just went.

In the course of our investigations, lots of people, probably well into three figures, eventually came forward who had observed the same thing that night, not just around Leeds, but across the north of England, from the East Coast from Humberside, right across Yorkshire and into parts of North Yorkshire as well.

ML: You've probably investigated some pretty unusual cases. What do you think is the most impressive UFO case you've ever been involved with?

PM: In the summer of 1979, I had only been involved for about a year. And not far from where I used to live, at my parents' house, there is a town called Normanton, basically a mining community. A lady [there] phoned me, and her first words were, "You won't believe what I'm about to tell you. You won't believe this." So I persuaded her to tell me the story. And colleagues and I

eventually went to see her.

She related an observation, in daylight, in the summer. The children -- she had five children -- were outside playing a ballgame, and the ball rose into the air, and they saw this thing that they called an aeroplane, actually land in some fields adjacent to the houses. They ran inside. "Mum, mum, there is an aeroplane crashed in the fields." She took a walk outside and from her front door she could see across these fields. And she described to us a gray-colored object -- [she said it] looked like a Mexican hat -- actually on the ground in the field.

They decided to take a closer look. They walked across the fields. At one point you go down a small dip, and you lose sight of this area. When they came up the other side of the dip, not only was this thing still there, but there were three tall men in white boiler-suits, completely covered with a visor over their faces. They got so close, they could make out that [the men] didn't have gloves, they were wearing mittens; and they could see the wedge-shaped boots they were wearing, and some kind of instrument in their hands.

The field was bordered by a fence, at which they stopped. The lady was quite perturbed at this point, but the children were totally fearless and wanted to climb the fence and get over into the field. It was at this point that the three men appeared to notice the children's presence, and the lady as well.

They walked to the rear of this thing. [Then] it rose vertically, stopped in midair, and took off at a great speed, without making a sound. And these are just a farmer's fields, that they grew some grass in. There are electricity pylons there. There is a power station quite nearby.

My colleagues and I tried extensively to come up with a solution to this.

The lady didn't want any publicity. She wore curlers, for example, when we went to interview her and she wouldn't allow a photograph. She was married to a coal miner. My father was a coal miner for 40 years, so I'm used to associating with this type of person.

The two conclusions that I could draw were that they were either all lying, or they had seen something quite bizarre, and I had no evidence to suggest that they were lying.

ML: Did you talk to the children?

PM: Oh yes, we interviewed all of the children, all separately. They did drawings for us. They never called it a flying saucer or UFO or spaceship, just this thing and these tall men. Not spacemen, but these tall men. And, you know, we examined the field. There were no traces, no nothing, which is not uncommon, of course.

It made a great impression on me. Bear in mind, I had only been involved in this subject for about a year, although colleagues who were with me had been involved much longer, and had much more experience than I had. So we worked together on this. But it just made a very distinct impression. She was a very down-to-earth lady, no nonsense, the type of person that I've grown up with all of my life. And what it was, I couldn't honestly say.

ML: How long after the event itself were you actually on the scene?

PM: We were there within about three or four days.

ML: And you went to the site but couldn't find any trace that this thing had been there?

PM: None whatsoever. There was not even a flattened blade of grass. Nothing.

ML: Did she indicate that the thing was standing on legs?

PM: No, no. This was flat down on the ground. No legs, no wheels, no protrusions. She also described it as looking like a military tank, but without the gun turret. But her first impression was that it looked like a Mexican hat, but dull gray in color. That's how she described it.

ML: Fascinating. Let's cut to a more recent case. You've had quite extensive contact with Ray Santilli, and have had plenty of opportunity to examine the controversy of the autopsy film. What is your current view of the film?

PM: For a long time, in private conversations with Ray, I told him in no uncertain terms that I didn't believe a word of it. Not that I didn't believe him -- I couldn't accept the film, for a whole variety of reasons. When I became involved with him, it was my intention to expose the film to the public domain, not necessarily for the ufologists, but for the members of a variety of different professions, to see what they could make of the film.

When I first saw some of the film, which was some 18 months after my first contact with Ray, I asked him three questions: 1) Could we have a piece of the film to analyze? (He said "maybe"); 2) Could I speak to the cameraman? (He said "no"); and 3) Would he show it at a conference I was planning later that year? (To my surprise, he said "yes.") I knew from my past experience that the film's association with the conference would release it into the public domain; the two would go hand-in-hand. That way, if it was fake, or genuine, or whatever, there was always the possibility that somebody out there would know something more about it and would come forward.

What I and others have tried to do, to give you one example, is to show the film to members of the medical community -- physicians, surgeons, pathologists, not just in England or in the United States, but around the world. The film has been shown at the Academy of Sciences in Moscow, for example, to friends and colleagues of ours who are scientists with the Academy. And a [Russian] gentleman, whose name I cannot pronounce without my notes -- formerly the head pathologist for the Russian Army -- claims that the creature is flesh and blood, and gives a variety of technical reasons as to why he believes that. Other colleagues and associates showed it in Norway. It was shown at a conference of pathologists in Switzerland, and they came to the same conclusion: it was flesh and blood. By all means, not all surgeons believe that, but quite a large percentage of them do.

Dr. Roger Leir [California-based podiatrist and "alien implant" researcher] gave a number of reasons why he believes the film is genuine. For example, at one point [in the film] they flex the damaged leg, and Dr. Leir says that if you study it closely and slowly, you can see the thigh muscles moving. For special effects to do that -- it's not impossible, but only the trained eye was able to observe that. I have looked at it and I have seen something move, but I would never recognize it as the thigh muscle, as I'm not a physician.

Even more recently, in Japan, a pathologist there who has seen part of the film has claimed that it is flesh and blood.

So that kind of evidence swayed my opinion that perhaps what we are looking at is an authentic piece of film -- of what, I don't think I'm qualified to say. I'm not sure anyone is, to be honest. But the creature has no navel, and every human born, irrespective of genetic defects or otherwise, has a navel. And we have to remember also that there are two autopsy films. Only one has ever been released into the public domain. There are two, similar looking creatures. I have seen the two -- I've seen both of them. So if it was some kind of deformed human creature, for example, it would probably have to be twins. And neither of them had a navel. But they would have to have had parents, [and] doctors, to look after them for many years. You would have expected them to have been written up in some medical literature somewhere, because they are so unique. When the film was aired back in 1995 on television, Professor Christopher Milroy, a pathologist in the UK, stated that he expected to find it somewhere in the medical literature. But no one ever has.

So, it kind of narrows it down as to what it may be, and what we are looking at. I don't know. But it was the medical opinion that swayed me.

ML: Have you had any contact with the person you think is the cameraman?

PM: We've tried very hard to get to him, through Santilli. On June 22, I believe, of 1995, Ray Santilli phoned me at about 7:30 [pm], and he said that the cameraman would phone me at some point that evening. He didn't know when, but he advised me to keep the lines clear.

Just before 9:00 pm that same evening, the telephone rang and a gentleman introduced himself as the cameraman. We had a 15-minute conversation. He retold the story that's been released everywhere, of how he filmed the events and kept hold of the film. I pointed out to him [that he] could be phoning from a call box at the end of my street. I had no way of knowing that this was even a transatlantic call. And he appreciated that. The gentleman said, "Have you got any more questions for me?" [I said], "I've got about a thousand, but I would like to put them to you face-to-face. It's no good on the telephone." Had I put questions to him, they were worthless because I couldn't even guarantee who he was, so I would have been criticized whichever way I went. So, in my opinion, I felt it was better to try to build a bridge with this gentleman, whoever he may be, just in case there was the remote chance that we might get to meet face-to-face. I put that to him, and he said that he wouldn't rule it out at some point in the future. So, that future hasn't arrived yet. We have never met. But I remain optimistic.

ML: Did you tape-record that conversation?

PM: I didn't. I didn't have the facilities at that time to be able to tape record telephone conversations. And in the short notice that I had, of Ray

ringing me and saying he will phone now, I wasn't sure where I could go to get those facilities. So, unfortunately not.

ML: You're about to release a new book. Can you describe it briefly?

PM: I co-authored a book with Michael Hesemann from Germany, called "Beyond Roswell." We've put our arguments for the Santilli film's authenticity into this book -- that's about four chapters of a 16-chapter book. We've also reiterated the conventional Roswell story, and we've mentioned the controversy around the MJ-12 and Area 51. We have tried to place the Santilli film in what we believe is the correct context, and it will be up to the readership to either accept [our] argument or to refute it. But we've also put out a request for further information. Someone, somewhere, other than Ray Santilli, knows something about this film, but they aren't saying.

[I've been] asked what my reaction would be if the film was proved to be a fake. Well, if it was proved to be a fake, I can accept that. If someone comes forward who can prove that it is not authentic -- one of the actors that's in it, for example, would be a good idea -- then, fine. But until that time comes, I remain optimistic that it is the genuine article.

ML: It's been pointed out that the story about the film doesn't seem to square with the standard Roswell timeline. Is it your view that, if it's authentic, it's associated with a different set of events than Roswell?

PM: On the surface it appears to be a different set of events. The cameraman claims that it took place on May 31, [1947], in New Mexico but nearer to Socorro, for example. And we have located a number of potential witnesses to an event on that evening. They were Native American Indians who were children at that time, and they used to play outside at night because it was cooler. They observed a meteorite or a fireball, and it lit up their faces, it was so bright. And one of the little girls remembers it for a particular reason, because she had a coin in her mouth as she was playing, and she actually swallowed the coin. Another of the girls -- it was her birthday, so that's why she remembers the date. They've grown up and moved from the area. And they have been interviewed. So there are potential witnesses to something on that particular evening. There is also Indian folklore about beings with six fingers and six toes, and there are even glyphs in the canyons where the Indians lived, for example, glyphs with six-fingered and six-toed beings. Probably irrelevant, but at least there is a folkloric, historical precedent for that kind of thing.

So, having said that, it wouldn't surprise me that there was a connection somewhere with the accepted events of Roswell. But it appears to be a different event.

ML: You're undoubtedly aware that many people believe we're heading toward some sort of official revelation, or perhaps some kind of breakthrough discovery that will establish the reality of UFO phenomena once and for all. On the other hand, more skeptical people, including some ufologists, point out that such expectations have been around for decades, and nothing really seems to change. What's your personal view? Are we getting somewhere, or are we sort of treading water, or beating a dead horse?

PM: I think we are getting somewhere. I think the possibilities of what may be about to happen or what the final solution may be are narrowing. And that's for a whole variety of reasons. Public interest, [for example], which can be changed to public pressure. More and more officials, in a variety of capacities, are becoming involved. [Ministry of Defense official] Nick Pope is a primary example, of course. In the past, they've just completely pooh-poohed it. And I think there has been a great change in atmosphere, like in the media, certainly in the UK, where they've looked at the subject much more seriously. I think it all started with the Belgium affair in 1989 and 1990. So I think there is a general movement in the right direction. How long that will last or whether it will continue is, you know, another argument, but I think it's certainly to be encouraged.

ML: One more question. There is some confusion, at least in the States, about your current status with BUFORA. Can you explain that, please?

PM: Yes. I was BUFORA's director of investigations for almost three years, and I planned to relinquish the job in April of next year just because of family pressures. I have two young daughters, ages four and seven. I work rather long hours in my job, as well. And I couldn't, in my opinion, give the [BUFORA] job enough time, so I was going to stand down. I had already groomed my deputy, a lady by the name of Gloria Dixon, to be my replacement. But there was a degree of confusion, so Gloria has actually taken over for me now. But I am still on the Board of Directors of BUFORA. They have a ruling body, the BUFORA Council, on which I am still a serving member. I also stood down as BUFORA's conference organizer. Again, it's very time consuming. And at work, I was also a union steward for the best part of ten years. I stood

down from that at the end of last year. So it's been a gradual relinquishing of certain things that were extremely time-consuming. I want to spend [more] time with my two daughters. My youngest daughter starts full-time school next year. So rather than disappoint people, let people down, I gave up the tasks.

ML: Thanks, Philip, for sharing your thoughts and experiences with CNI News. Is there anything more you'd like to say in closing?

PM: Again, if anyone has any information about the Santilli autopsy film, positive or negative -- not opinions, as they don't count for anything -- we would like to hear from them. Somebody out there, other than Ray Santilli, knows more about this film. And I'm determined that eventually, if it takes the next 10 years, we'll get to the bottom of it, one way or the other. I still pester Ray on a regular basis. I don't see him very often -- I live 200 miles north of London, and perhaps I've seen him twice this year -- but I keep reminding him on the fax or by email, or on the telephone. And I remain optimistic that we will get to the bottom of it. Time will tell if we are correct.

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