

The Case of Antoine Prioré and His Therapeutic Machine: A Scandal in the Politics of Science

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Forty-four years ago, in 1944, an Italian engineer working as a prisoner and forced laborer for the Germans in the huge submarine base in Bordeaux, approached a French police agent to plead for his life. He would be killed when the Germans left Bordeaux, he said, and since they were by that time obviously losing the war, the day of his execution was at hand.

The police officer, who also worked clandestinely for the French underground, told the engineer to get in his car, then simply drove him out of the base and introduced him to the 7th battalion of underground resistance fighters, in the nearby province of Dordogne. There he so distinguished himself in military operations that he was ultimately decorated by the French government.

It was due to his thankfulness to his savior, and his loyalty to his companions-in-arms, that Antoine Priore decided after the war's end to live out the rest of his life in Bordeaux. Thus he became the focus of one of the strangest, and most scandalous, chapters in the scientific history of France or any other nation.

Antoine Priore had earlier graduated from a small provincial school for electricity in Trieste, Italy and become a radar operator in the Italian Navy. During this period he observed what to him was an exciting anomaly: some oranges left in a room filled with electrical bric-a-brac had fallen into an assemblage where they seemed to have been preserved in the same fresh state they had enjoyed when bought off a fruit stand. Other oranges in the room, bought at the, same time, were rotten and putrid.

Stunned by his observation, Priore dreamed throughout the war of one day working out an electrical means of conserving foods in their fresh state based on what he surmised was a new, and wholly unexplained, principle. Newton's apple had become Priore's orange.

Occupied during the day as a humble electrical repairman - and projectionist in a movie theater - the almost wholly self-taught Priore devoted all his free time and his meager resources to research. With the help of his war-time companions, some of whom had attained high rank in the Bordeaux police force, he was able to beg, borrow, steal, scrounge, or otherwise acquire a mini-warehouse of electrical and electronic components and parts. With these he put together a device worthy of Rube Goldberg. Exposing lentil seeds to a magnetic field of 225 gauss and electromagnetic frequencies of 80, 32, 3 and 10 Hertz, Priore's device caused the lentil plants which sprouted from them to grow 12-15 centimeters in length, as against only 5 centimeters for controls not subjected to the same treatment. He got similar results for tulips, asparagus and other plants.

Shifting his focus, he next irradiated fertilized hens' eggs, only to see the chicks hatch in 19 days, instead of the normal 21. Though he could not explain these astonishing results, he realized he had stumbled upon a process basic to the enhancement, or speeding up, of cellular growth.

It was at this point that one of his police friends introduced him to Francis Berlureau, the former Director of Studies at the School for Veterinary Medicine in Toulouse and, at the time of their meeting, director of the Bordeaux abattoir. Priore asked Berlureau to supply him with various animal tissues for experimentation. For 10 years they worked together, Priore's free time allowing, during which Priore noticed he could get no electrical measurement from a cancerous bull's testicles. Since he realized that, in some way, his newly constructed device (no trace of which remains today, except for a snapshot of it) affected the electrical properties of cells, he put two and two together and his sum

of four led him to believe that he might be onto an electromagnetic cure for cancer. Newton's gravity had become Priore's cancer cure.

Berlureau next allowed him to expose a cat with cancer of the mammary glands to radiation of his machine. To make absolutely sure that he was not exposing himself to mockery, the veterinarian had all the histological work done by his friend and colleague, a Professor Drieux at the famous Veterinarian School of Maisons- Allfort, near Paris. Drieux wrote a technical report proving that a tumor taken from a cat had, before treatment, started to become cancerous and, after treatment, had become benign.

By 1953, with the help of a doctor of general medicine, Maurice Fournier, Priore began treating human patients whose cancers had been judged hopeless. The huge file of cases maintained by Fournier, and filed with a notary until after his death, was subsequently mysteriously lost. But a few details were preserved in letters discovered in an old dog-eared file.

Some of these dating to the year 1954 concerned a 12-year old boy, Alain B., whose diagnosis wavered between one of reticulo-histio-sarcoma and a malignant form of Hodgkin's disease. The boy was taken by his parents to Priore, who irradiated him. Though the exact nature of the radiation was not known, 12 years later a Bordeaux physician, after a medical examination, certified that the boy, now become a man of 24, was free of disease.

A second case unearthed from the old file indicated that a patient with cancer of the larynx was able to avoid a laryngectomy and be totally cured after Priore's new ministrations.

Fascinated by the principle which he suspected must lie behind the strange Priore Ray, Dr. Berlureau tried to get some Bordeaux University physicists interested in the problem but was laughed out of their offices. He next turned to cancer specialists, beginning with Professor Lachapele, the Director of the Bergonie Foundation, a prestigious center for cancer research, to whom he proposed animal experiments to prove the efficacy of Priore's methodology. His plea met with a stony affirmation on Lachapele's part to the effect that he and his colleagues had no need of the new discovery, inasmuch as "all the patients treated in his hospital were cured and departed in perfect health." As if bound in the chains of his curt reply, years later Lachapele was to become one of the bitter adversaries of Priore's pioneering research.

Only somewhat discouraged, Priore kept up his momentum. He went on to build a new and more complicated version of his treatment device, called the P-1, over the next year. When it was finished he secretly and unofficially began to treat dozens of cancer patients who had been given up by their doctors as incurable. At his funeral in March of last year, among the crowd of mourners was, it is said, a small platoon of older people who had been cured of their terrible afflictions by Priore in the 1950s.

While his findings excited him, he nevertheless felt tremendously frustrated that he could apparently get no one in the world of medicine or science to pay attention to them. Undaunted by his previous rebuffs, his friend Berlureau next introduced the Italian at the end of 1959 or the beginning of 1960 to Professor Tayeau, vice dean of Bordeaux's Medical Faculty. Unlike Lachapele, Tayeau behaved as a true physician and scientist. He sent Priore to two researchers, Biraben, head of the Faculty's Department of Pathological Anatomy, and his assistant, Delmon. The two had been working together on cancerous rats for two years -- specifically on animals grafted with T-8 tumors, discovered by the internationally famous team of Guerin and Oberling in Paris, which had proven to be intractable to any form of treatment yet known. To their utter surprise, the tumors in the rats treated with Priore's machine were reduced in volume by 60%, marking the first time in the history of cancerology that the virulent T-8 tumor had in any way been affected by any form of treatment.

Knowing that the mayor of Bordeaux, Jacques Chabans-Delmas -- who has kept his post until this day, and was soon to become prime minister of France -- was most interested in the work of Priore (who, he too, had known as a fellow resistance fighter), they also informed Chaban.

Promptly Chaban convoked not one, but two, commissions made up of Bordeaux and Parisian scientists to study the Biraben-Delmon results in detail. Both commissions rejected Priore and his machine out of hand, and without appeal. It is curious that, in the science of our day, a result, undeniable though it may be, seems to have no hearing unless and until all means to effect it can be adequately explained. It was for this ostensible reason that the two commissions decided to so adamantly reject the research: Biraben and Delmon could not explain the nature of the radiation engendered by the Priore device.

One can stress the word *ostensible* here because the principal reason for the rejection lay elsewhere. The decision by the first commission was, in fact, hardly unanimous. But among its members was the same Professor Lachapele who had refused Berlureau's plea for assistance. His opinion was that even the results themselves were of little value because they were obtained, not on spontaneously arising, but on grafted, cancers. The fact that no treatment whatsoever had ever affected a T-8 tumor was totally discounted. As the sole cancerologist on the commission, Lachapele's dictum was preponderant.

When he learned that the rejection of the first commission had actually been a split decision, the Bordeaux mayor asked for the formation of a second commission to re-examine the problem. Fearing a reversal, Lachapele was able to get one of his colleagues, Professor Courtial, director of the Radium Institute in Paris, and one of the so-called top authorities of French cancer research, named to it. It was all but impossible for the other physicians on the new commission now to outvote not one, but two, cancer specialists, so again the antagonists won the day.

At no time did either of the commissions bother to interview Priore himself or to run a supplementary experiment under their own control.

This seemingly incomprehensible attitude on the part of scientific authority was only a foretaste of what was to come, again and again, over the years. Biraben and Delmon went on to do new experiments. They modified either the time after grafting that the radiation was applied, or the length of its duration. This time their efforts were crowned with unequivocal and complete success. The tumors stopped growing and, when still living cells were excised from them and implanted in healthy control animals, none of them became malignant.

Though these results should normally have fascinated any academy of medicine or sciences, the two researchers did not publish them. Why? The reasons horrify or disgust. It seemed that Biraben was simultaneously preparing an examination for the *agregation*, the highest French academic degree leading to a senior university teaching post. In charge of the committee to pass on, and award, this degree was none other than that same Professor Lachapele who told him: "Either you get the degree, necessary to your professional advancement, or you publish your research paper. But not both!" Discouraged, Biraben ceded to this demand but nevertheless continued to work on the research that looked so exciting and promising.

Most mystifying to him was how the machine operated to achieve its startling results. At the 3rd Congress of Biometerology held in 1963 in the Pyrennees mountains, a New York City researcher by the name of Kenneth McLean reported he had been able to obtain regressions on tumors and improve the health of cancer patients by using a magnetic field of a strength of 3000 gauss or more. Acting on this hint, Biraben and Delmon made an electromagnet that put out a field of 4,500 gauss and tried it

out on the T-8 tumors but without the slightest success. Obviously, something other than a simple magnetic field was at issue.

In 1966, after others had had the same success with the T-8 tumor by irradiating it with the "Priore Ray," the two scientists finally published a memoir in the **Revue of Comparative Pathology** in which they stated that neither magnetic fields nor X-rays had any effect on the T-8s and that "only certain devices associating a magnetic field with high frequency waves seem at present to reveal therapeutic properties..."

Their conclusions were too late for, by that time, a campaign to stamp out Priore and his electromagnetic approach to cancer cure was well underway, a campaign that has lasted right up to the present moment.

The all-powerful Lachapele had sealed the fate of the Priore device as far as the local Bordeaux medical community was concerned. Veterinarian Berlureau and Priore next decided to carry their case to Paris. They contacted Professor Guerin at the cancer institute at Villejuif, the leading French center for cancer research and the equivalent of the American National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. Guerin, one of the discoverers of the T-8 tumor, which for the first time had been stopped in its tracks by the Priore device, courteously received his guests and heard them relate the whole story of how the device had come into being, starting at the point when Priore had seen the oranges strangely preserved by some unaccountable electromagnetic effect.

Guerin was sufficiently impressed that he assigned his colleague, Marcel-Rene Riviere, to delve into the whole question. For two years, Riviere, who also had teaching responsibilities at the University of Rennes in Brittany, unremittingly worked to corroborate the Biraben-Delmon findings. On 9 December 1964 a note was sent for publication in the **Proceedings** of the French Academy of Sciences detailing the research and modestly concluding: "... as of now, one may already state that our first observations show that electromagnetic fields used can lead to most interesting data from a point of view of the biological behavior of grafts and their therapeutic action on experimental tumors."

Riviere next decided to see if the Priore Ray could affect another tumoral form that had never been affected by any therapeutic method, the 347 lymphoblastic lymphosarcoma. The results were even more spectacular than for the T-8 tumor. The effects produced were of broader scope and took place more rapidly. A second note was sent to the Academy for publication. The conclusion read: "We can now already affirm that our research offers proof that electromagnetic fields are capable of producing effects on quite different types of neoplasms."

At this point one of the key characters in this extraordinary drama must be introduced. There might have been no drama at all without his appearance on stage. This personage was Robert Courier, an eminent endocrinologist, who had been named, while still in his 30s, a full professor. Courier was now perpetual secretary of the Academy of Sciences and later would become President of the Academy of Medicine. Because no scientific paper can be accepted by an academy unless introduced by one of its members, Riviere would have had no chance to see his work so prestigiously published had not Courier, who knew Riviere well, since he had shepherded him through the winning of his doctorate, taken the responsibility for its introduction.

It was Courier who, at this point, also took up the cudgel to interest various highly placed French organizations responsible for the administration of scientific projects and their funding. Thus, he sent a personal letter to the French Minister for Scientific Atomic and Space Research, who immediately offered to try to make funds available for further research on and with the Priore Ray. He also personally asked the Director of the CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research, which coordinates and oversees all such activity in France) to receive Priore and Riviere.

That this meeting was, in its way, somewhat of a disaster, can be explained in part only by a brief resume of the complex character of Priore himself. Priore throughout his life had great difficulty making himself understood in the French language and, as the years went by, he even forgot how adequately to speak his own mother tongue, Italian. Added to these twin impediments was his lifelong fear that his discoveries and inventions were prone to being stolen, a fear which led him never to fully explain the exact nature of the complex radiation emitted from his machine, far less the settings which controlled its various parameters. Whether Priore would not, or could not, exactly explain the functioning of his invention (which, as we shall see, went through several increasingly complex generations) is a question to which no precise answer has been given. It would appear that Priore was an excellent engineer gifted more with a God-given intuition than with school-book reasoning and logic. In short, Priore had a combination of talents that could remind one of the same enigmatic personality that was Nikola Tesla, the deductive reasoning behind some of whose discoveries has never fully been unraveled.

Highly placed scientific administrators are neither comfortable with, nor sympathetic to, what they see as self-appointed geniuses who have not run the same academic gauntlet through which they themselves had to pass. Thus the CNRS director took aversion to Priore's somewhat incomprehensible, yet fairly prolix explanations of his technology and only recommended that a physicist be sent to look over his device to properly decipher its working. At the same time, the Minister, together with the head of the general delegation for Scientific Research (DGRST) - still another key body in the administration of the French scientific decision-making process - let it be known to Robert Courier that they had not understood a single thing about Priore's invention despite his best efforts to present it.

Advancing one more step into what was to become for him a 20 year-long expedition into a jungle of scientific intrigue, Courier next resolutely decided to send to Bordeaux one of his most trusted laboratory workers, Madame Colonge, to repeat Riviere's experiments under her personal supervision. The DGRST director fully concurred with Courier's decision, while letting slip his admission that he strongly suspected that Riviere might well have been duped in some manner by Priore. When Courier asked the minister for travel funds for Madame Colonge, he was refused with the dry remark that such a request was "premature." The now angry Courier telephoned to reply: "You've been spending millions for programs and hypotheses about the cancer problem. Riviere has been presenting you with facts!"

The physicist who had been sent to try to elucidate the functioning principles of Priore's device, reported that he could make neither "head nor tail" of the machine.

Madame Colonge's experimentation was as prolonged as necessary. She was so meticulous that, in order not to take her eyes off the experimental animals for an instant, she limited her lunches to sandwiches eaten in the laboratory. She returned, profoundly impressed, to Paris.

Nor was Riviere idle during this period. He decided to experiment with the L-52 lymphosarcoma, a tumor similar to, but even more malignant than the 347. This time, he used not rats, but mice, as hosts for the grafts. So successful were his results that, this time, Courier decided to bar no holds. Instead of simply having a note published in the Academy Proceedings on the quiet, he decided to present it personally, orally, and in all solemnity, before his fellow academicians at an official meeting scheduled for 1 May 1965.

That date was, and is, a turning point in what came to be known in France as the "Priore Affair." From then on the whole French, and even the international, scientific community could be divided into a minority and a majority group, the first that believed in the research, the second that did not know enough details about it, did not or would not believe, or simply didn't give a damn.

Before Courier could make his presentation, its scheduling and subject were inadvertently and prematurely leaked to the press. Immediately thereafter, a horde of journalists arrived in Bordeaux. After one or two of them managed to all but force entry into his lab, Priore closed its doors and, with the help of his friends, wrote a printed press release that stressed his thankfulness to the many people who had helped him over the years rather than providing any comprehensible details about the machine he had brought to birth. Stymied, many of the newsmen traveled across town to seek an explanation from its leading cancerologist, Professor Lachapele, who informed them acidly that the machine was all but useless and unworthy of their attention or their time.

The journalists' reports, founded as they were on rumor of outright lies, roiled the pages of their newspapers and magazines in such a way that they either over-exaggerated the potential or a forthcoming cancer cure, or came close to billing Priore as just one more cancer-cure charlatan. All of which so alarmed, among many others, Dr. Wilhelm Bernhard, world specialist in electron microscopy, that he called his friend Courier to warn him that his forthcoming presentation to the academy might put his hard-won reputation at risk as well as those of Guerin, Riviere and the Villejuif cancer institute itself.

In the journalistic melee, no one had bothered to read the declaration carefully issued by Riviere from Rennes, where he was occupied with his university courses, which formally stated: "Our experiments are of real interest. Much more experimental research has of course to be done before any therapeutic application on human cancer victims can even be considered. It goes without saying that this will take a certain time and no little effort of many types, both scientific and financial. Our work, as fascinating a perspective as it might hold, in no way, therefore, allows anyone to offer the public hope which could only lead to deception at the present time."

On May Day, Courier gave his report to an Academy assembly hall crowded with scientists, newspapers and television reporters, photographers and an unusual number of curious bystanders. Accompanied with slides showing histological details, and animals before and after treatment, his lecture was heard out in almost tomb- like silence. When the lights came on again, he announced that he had personally checked the validity of Riviere's findings through the offices of his personal assistant, Madame Colonge. He then went on to say that he had taken the responsibility of presenting three notes to the Academy for two reasons. The first was a ringing declaration and a challenge to critics and skeptics of every stamp. It reads "When it is a question of a problem as serious as that of cancer and when one sees a little light beginning to dawn, one has the obligation to see what this light might represent. One has no right to snuff it out before learning what it may be worth."

The second was a tribute to his colleagues who had done the pioneering work, particularly Guerin, Riviere and Madame Colonge, and a statement of the essence of the problem to be faced down the road. It read: "Attention must naturally be given to the apparatus which Monsieur Priore has conceived and constructed. It has apparently already been examined by several physicists. It is found to be too complicated. While that may be possible, it is nevertheless a fact that Guerin and Riviere have obtained results with it that had to be made public. What is emitted from such an apparatus? I hope Monsieur Priore will allow disinterested physicists to study it at their leisure, for Science cannot tolerate apparatuses enveloped in mystery ." Then, as almost a footnote to the history of the moment: "The biological action of magnetic fields is the object of intense research in the United States. In specialized institutes, the influence of these fields on tissue cultures, microbes, plant forms, diastases and certain tumors is under study. Up to now, the results obtained on grafted tumors seem less significant than those which have here been presented."

After Courier sat down, a leading cancer specialist, Professor Lacassagne, rose to ask snidely why the notes had included no bibliographical references on work done on the bio-effects on tumors from electromagnetic fields, and criticized the experimentation as "impromptu." When Courier denied this

allegation as ludicrous, Lacassagne stalked out of the assembly hall in full view of the audience.

The meeting caused a new eruption of media reports which unfortunately accented one of three aspects of the problem at the expense of the other two. These were 1) the hope that a miraculous cure for cancer was in the offing 2) the contradictory, not to say discordant, reception of the data by various academics and 3) the enigma of Priore's personality.

Remarkably, no serious discussion among the scientists present at the meeting ever took place. This led a foreign scientist, present in Paris at the time, to remark: *"I don't understand. Here is a report given to the most authoritative scientific body in France by one of the most respected and eminent of its members and it is publicly subject to doubt without that leading to any reaction whatsoever."*

The General Delegation for Scientific Research was at this point still open to the idea of providing funds for more research with the Priore Ray. The big stumbling block, however, was one related to niceties involved in relations up and down the scientific hierarchy. To open the way to the allocation of such funds required the approval of the Delegation's own section for cancer research and that section was headed by none other than the same Professor Lacassagne who had so rudely walked out of the Academy's assembly hall.

At the same time the General Delegate diplomatically covered himself by suggesting to Robert Courier that he had to have more information underscoring the potential importance of the research accomplished. Courier told him to simply re-read the three notes he had presented to the academy. His matter-of-fact, yet terse, come-back then elicited his invitation to a full-dress meeting of scientific experts at the Institute for Scientific Cancer Research.

In this short historical account we obviously cannot go into the ins and outs of what transpired at this meeting or any of the many similar meetings which followed it. A paragraph in a brilliant book, four years in the writing, by the courageous Bordeaux journalist, Jean-Michel Graille and entitled: **Dossier Priore, A New Pasteur Affair** (of which this account is but a tenuous synopsis) must suffice to pointedly characterize the nature of the problem in its most general sense.

Writes Graille: "To read what follows in this chapter might well seem tedious: an enumeration of names and titles, the content of a debate held at an administrative meeting, personal remarks by one ranking personage or another, exchanges of letters following the meeting itself and the official report which came out of it. Tedious but indispensable for not a few reasons. It is important to know who were the participants at this meeting and what of these participants each was trying to represent. It is important to know how such scientific meetings go about their business at the 'top level,' And, finally, it is important to learn about and to understand, in the particular case of the Priore Affair, the behavior and reactions of all concerned. A reading of all this could be difficult {and it won't be the only such passage in this book} yet it is necessary to understand the essence of the dossier in order to be able to create for oneself as clear and well-motivated a personal opinion about it as to subsequently be able to discuss it, or to hear it discussed, with a thorough knowledge of the facts."

In this single paragraph, Jean-Michel Graille has, in my opinion, pointed to both the nub and the difficulty in getting at the essence of the real facts behind a case such as that of Priore's that are so important to its proper understanding, an understanding which can be painted against the backdrop of the history of science and the backdrop of human pettiness and maliciousness or human courage and magnanimity.

One of the participants, Professor Andre Lwoff, soon to become a Nobel Laureate for his work in virology, was violently against the meeting's central issue: namely, whether or not funds should be spent to build a new and better Priore machine. Not only did Lwoff aver that the three notes presented

to the Academy never should have been published, but he also opined that since all the work was done, not on spontaneously generated but on grafted cancers, the effects of the machine were hardly impressive. He later added in writing that 1) the patents issued to Priore for his device were nothing but a web of nonsense, 2) the machine itself could never be duplicated based on any description given for it by its inventor and, in a repetition of his oral remarks, 3) the fact that only cancer grafts were experimented with was nothing to shout about: He strangely added that because the animals who had been irradiated subsequently were able to entirely reject new grafts, the whole phenomenon offered no proof that cancer cells could be killed while healthy cells were not. The whole thing came down to a question of immunity, he said, as if that were not of the greatest possible importance.

To which, in due course, Guerin and Riviere replied: "It has been claimed that our experiments are valueless because they were carried out on grafted tumors and that other therapeutic measures were known to get rid of such tumors and their metastases. *We defy those persons who have made such affirmations to prove, with the use of such other measures, that animals infected with T-8 tumors can be cured at a percentage rate identical to those obtained by using the device which Monsieur Priore has developed.*"

Not a soul has responded to this challenge, then or since.

A second cancer expert at the meeting, a woman of great influence, resorted only to the cavil that the experiments had been of doubtful quality since none of the animals had been *weighed*. The fact that those same animals had survived normally lethal cancers seemed not to have *weighed* with her.

There were many more observations of the same ilk. They seem atrociously paltry, trifling and picayune coming from professionals who, if they no longer believed in the Hippocratic oath to which they once swore, are considered by the public in general, and by cancer patients in particular, at least to be concerned with seeing what a little light on the problem might reveal before extinguishing it, as Professor Courier expressed it.

At the same time, we must not forget Priore's decidedly difficult personality. He was an inventor determined at all costs that his invention be developed for the benefit of humanity, yet anxious that that same humanity not steal it from him. As author Graille puts it, "His conceptions and attitude directly or indirectly conditioned the overall essence of this affair. Full of enthusiasm, from the very day he discovered that the ray he had developed had a curative effect on a cancerous cat, he developed a single-minded fixation on cancer. One could understand and sympathize with him on this score. Here he is, a little Italian immigrant without money or means, and he is going to offer the world a cancer cure. He is so convinced that he wants to move ahead to doing just that. He will never understand or accept the exigencies of Science or Medicine. For him, experiments, controls, verifications and parallel research are a waste of precious time. 'I've made machines which cure cancer. Take them and treat cancer patients. Don't bother with the rest.' Such would be a summation of his point of view."

Through the efforts of persons kindly disposed to the inventor, this point of view was softened and he came finally to understand the necessity for what has been called scientific rigor, on the other hand, another aspect of his character never changed an iota. This was his determination to preserve the secret of his invention, motivated first of all by his unshakeable desire that it be developed in Bordeaux, the city of his adoption, for the citizens of that city. Deeply rooted was his belief that if he made his secret public, the machine would be taken from the Bordeaux region and further developed by Parisians, those who considered themselves to be in the penthouse of the scientific edifice. Once this was accomplished, he would likely not have one more word to say about the matter. Therefore he continued jealously to conserve his secret and put confidence in nobody.

As Graille generously concedes, he may well have been right, and adds: "All his life he had to go up against men, whether scientists or industrialists, who had but one idea in their heads: to get to the bottom of the inventor's secret in order to build for themselves a machine which they then could exploit for their own account, for their own glory. Many such 'Priore Machines' were to be actually built more or less surreptitiously or clandestinely. Not one of them ever worked."

While one might easily accuse Priore of a limited view, the horizons of the researchers themselves were certainly not as broad as they might have been. Those involved in bio-medicine were content with the results produced by the machine, the workings of which were of no concern to them. A black box, as it were, emitted a ray that definitely affected experimental animals. At the same time, as researchers specifically interested in the cancer problem, they never gave a thought to what the Priore Ray might accomplish in the wider clinical domain of other afflictions.

As for the physicists, they were seemingly not up to the task of comprehending a complex radiation that had miraculously sprung, as from the head of Zeus, out of the intuition of a man they considered to be an undereducated and all but illiterate gadgeteer. Still others, whether physicists, biologists, doctors of medicine or specialists in a dozen other fields, were willing to throw the baby out even before it went into the bath water. In their eyes Priore was just a nobody.

Behind the scenes, many of these scientists resorted to using the press to achieve their own ends. Thus, the chief medical chronicler for **Le Monde** (the French **New York Times**), herself a doctor of medicine, was led to write outright lies about the Priore Affair -- specifically and falsely stating that cancer patients had been treated with the Priore Ray in the clinic of Professor Lachapele in Bordeaux with not only negative, but disastrous, results.

On the other hand, a journalist for another leading Paris daily, **Le Figaro**, scrupulously conscious of his responsibility to fairly report what was going on, aptly wrote: "We would like to see at least one thorny point clarified as soon as possible. Several years ago Professor Biraben of the Bordeaux Medical Faculty (who at that time had not become a ranking professor) was involved with the Priore device. According to certain reports from medical circles, his results seemed, even at that time, to have been already quite positive on small animals and he seems to have written a report to that effect. He was advised by highly placed authorities "to keep quiet" and stop talking about this affair. If this turns out to be true, it would be a veritable medical scandal to be judged in the harshest terms."

Could one have put it more succinctly?

The foregoing is to present something of the flavor of what was transpiring in the wide world far removed from the laboratory of Priore who, at the time unaware of it, was reveling in the fact that his machine had been successfully used by high-ranking French cancerologists and its results reported in three separate notes to the Academy of Sciences.

His courage was also more than buoyed by the arrival on the scene of the commercial director of a large French industrial firm specializing in the intricacies of manufacturing glass components. This man had heard that Priore needed a large tube that was beyond all existing norms and perhaps did not exist anywhere in the world. This tube, it can be stated, contained a rare gas, neon, which when excited into a plasma, seemed somehow to convert the various electromagnetic inputs into a single Priore Ray which surged from the business end of the tube. In the tube were an anode and cathode. Peculiar to the anode was that it had to *rotate* to produce the desired biological effects and this is but one of the anomalies in Priore's equipment which physicists and bio-physicists have to this day been unable to explain.

The manufacturing company, a subsidiary of the internationally known company, Saint Gobain, was looking for a new product. The commercial director thought the new tube might fill the bill, particularly if it could be adapted to a machine that might ultimately cure cancer, a product that indubitably would have an enormous market across the world. There were plenty of problems with regard to the tube, notably those of its large dimension, its resistance and its conductivity. When the tube was finally made, it now seemed that Priore would have to explain his discoveries to the scientists of the company that had made it. One of these was sent to elicit such an explanation but was, so to speak, "shot down in flames" by Priore. So a second attempt was made by Ivan Peyches, a senior executive of the company, and president of the Society of Civil Engineers of France, who made a detailed investigation of the device. His reports were subsequently lost, but there remained an article he published in a leading French journal, **Sciences and Technics**, a short time before his death in 1978. It bore the intriguing title: "What Are So-Called Paranormal Phenomena?"

In it the engineer wrote: "There was so great an accumulation of components capable of having some kind of action, and being unable to work separately, that the results of measurement were limited to proving that there were no specific rays that issued from the tube (Priore talked about canal rays), no more than there were any X rays. On the other hand one could detect a magnetic field which was the end result of a field proper to the tube and of the magnetic field of a solenoid that constituted the experimental chamber, an electromagnetic field with a frequency of 16 megacycles (19 meters) and a high frequency field (metric waves), the whole being pulsed at a very low frequency of an order of one per second. It was impossible, in such an imbroglio, to determine what was necessary and what was sufficient. Priore maintained that the simultaneous action of his various generators was indispensable to achieving his effect."

Peyches then went on to relate how he tried to persuade Priore to offer a more precise definition of his thinking about the workings of his device. He wrote the inventor: "At this point, I would say that all reticence on your part, which in your eyes would be justified by the fear of seeing yourself partially dispossessed of your work, would be of far greater detriment to you than any safeguard of your interests. Moreover, since it has become a question involved in public health, you are no longer entirely your own boss... you absolutely must bring all this to the clear light of day and I don't believe you can do it alone... You must supply all the characteristics so that third parties can reproduce your results." Then, he concluded by citing the words of an academician: "Many phenomena are rejected by the scientific world because they are considered irrational: But it is not a proof of scientific honesty to refuse **a priori** to try, out of homage to truth, to have a look at them and perhaps to understand them. Will Science one day be able to abandon its taboos?"

It was Peyches' final conclusion that, in the end, Priore was a man of genius who knew absolutely nothing about what occurred in his machine from the scientific point of view. The company which he represented no longer exists since it was bought out by the American firm of Coming Glass.

Industrial interest in the Priore device was not limited to the Saint Gobain subsidiary. Next into the lists was a company in Angouleme, Leroy-Somer, which specialized in electric motors, generators and later was to branch out into solar power. Its president, Georges Chavanes, took the initiative to write to Priore in 1965 that his company was interested in providing some of the complex electrical equipment needed by the inventor, more particularly high-powered generators, on the condition that Priore move his operation to the company seat at Angouleme. When the inventor categorically refused, Chavanes tentatively agreed to build a factory to manufacture the Priore device in Bordeaux itself.

The alliance between Leroy-Somer and Priore, shaky at best, lasted two years and blew up on Holy Thursday of 1967. The period was a stormy one for both parties to the agreement. Priore did his best to convince Chavanes to commit himself to building a huge machine with a magnetic gauss strength of

10,000 gauss. In the end he got one that put out only 920 gauss, not much stronger than the machine he had already built which put out 620 gauss. Since the field of action increased with the gauss strength, Priore reasoned that a machine of literally behemoth size would be able to irradiate the whole, or every part, of a human cancer victim lying on a stretcher, whereas the smaller machines had been effective only for small animals or for treating a limited portion of the human body.

Chavanes and his company were aware that it would be a tremendous financial burden to contemplate building the larger machine. So they went ahead with plans for the smaller one while at the same time putting great pressure on Priore himself to make him feel that he was the least important cog in a new gear, in fact that his status was reduced to being a simple employee of Leroy-Somer. In Graille's estimation, this lack of psychological finesse on Chavanes' part constituted what he called "the blackest pages in the Dossier Priore."

Even the smaller machine was to cost about half a million dollars, a price which today, due to inflation, could be tripled or quadrupled. During a stage in which an intermediate machine was designed by the chief Leroy-Somer engineer, Ribeau, a machine that never did function properly, Chavanes all but forced Priore, who was heavily in debt, to sign a contract which was falsified. The falsification was a matter of one word which was changed in the contract. In a phrase reading that an exclusive license of patents, and subsequent patent modifications, would accrue to the company "for all countries solely for therapy on cancers concerning animals and humans," a word was inserted by hand so that the phrase read: "concerning *particularly* animals and humans" implying that other uses of the machine, whatever they might turn out to be, would also accrue to the company. This one word change was amended on Priore's copy of the contract by calling the word "particularly" a "nullified word," but on Chavanes' copy it was called an "added word."

Leroy-Somer believed it was sufficiently well positioned in the driver's seat to be able to deal on behalf of Priore himself with the French governmental institutions, mainly the General Delegation, concerned with the funding of the new machine. When Priore learned of Chavanes' contact with the General Delegation he wrote a letter informing it that no one had the right to deal in his name. Nor did Chavanes even attempt to cut the Saint Gobain subsidiary, which alone could supply the tube, key to the device's functioning, in on the government funding.

In the meantime, no less a figure than Professor Kastler, soon to win the Nobel Prize in Physics, came down from Paris to inspect the existing Priore device. He brought with him Delmon, who, we recall, had worked with Berlureau on the first animal experiments and who now, it turned out, was trying to build his own version of a Priore device on the sly without telling Priore. Kastler's bringing Delmon with him to Priore's lab so angered Robert Courier that he told the physicist he had committed a real gaffe. He also convinced Kastler that Leroy-Somer should build a machine with a power of at least 5000 gauss, but Chavanes refused. There seemed to be no harmony of outlook between the leading industrialist concerned, on the one hand, and the top physical and biological scientists on the other.

While all these, and many more, peripatetics were proceeding, Priore's sister in Italy came down with cancer. Beside himself with grief, Priore informed all concerned to commit themselves either to building an intermediate machine correctly, under his supervision or, better, the 5000-gauss machine, and to do this in time to save his sister, or he would wash his hands of the entire matter. Confronted with this ultimatum, the company began to work round the clock to perfect the intermediate machine but engineers involved, believing themselves to be more adroit with respect to its design than Priore, left out a host of what, to them, were unnecessary components. The result was that when the machine was first put to trial, most of the components burned out or otherwise failed, and the machine itself became a useless pile of rubble.

Shortly thereafter, Priore's sister died of cancer. Her grief-stricken brother went into what amounted to total isolation, unwilling to talk to a soul.

The whole Priore affair might have ended at that point, in the early part of 1967, were it not for the entry onto the scene of a key figure, [Professor Raymond Pautrizel](#). Born on 3 June 1916 in Basseterre, capital of the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, at forty years of age he was on the Faculty of Medicine at Bordeaux. He soon became known, world-wide, as the "father of parasitological immunity," a title he never accepted, saying that, if others had awarded it, it was simply because "he had searched through old scientific publications to find ideas that were as valid for modern research as they were forgotten by modern researchers." And he later was quoted as adding: "It is really too bad that researchers today don't pause from time to time to dig into studies made by their predecessors, some of which were performed even decades ago!"

Professor Pautrizel was awarded the first academic chair in France for immunology, and later a special unit was created for him for parasitological immunology, a subject which is both simple and complex. The simple part involves the fact that various immunological techniques can be applied to diagnosing specific parasites that have invaded an organism in order to develop preventative actions against them via vaccines, or curative actions via serums.

When invaded by parasites, organisms react by creating antibodies, specific substances aimed at killing the invaders also known as antigens. These antibodies are liberated, like an attacking army, into the blood. Simple enough so far. The complexity arises because the defending army, the parasites, don't just lie down and die under the attack. They are capable of modifying their "personalities," as it were, and of changing various of their characteristics such that the mechanisms that the host uses to recognize, or detect, the invaders are invalidated. Thus, the substance which an organism would secrete to destroy an invader A becomes incapable of recognizing A, now become A-1, and therefore incapable of destroying it.

The organism at this point seems to realize it has to create a different substance to rid itself of its antagonist but, in the meantime, the metamorphosed parasite is getting on with its assigned destructive task. Alternatively, the parasite has another capability: that of itself liberating substances which can annul or annihilate the organism's overall defense system. A sort of "in the blood" version of Star Wars is going on at the microscopic level.

The study and classification of the substances -- call them weapons -- emitted by parasite-attacked organisms allows for the establishment, in turn, of batteries of tests to define the exact nature of the parasites themselves in order to come up with an appropriate therapy or counter-weapon.

This then, is the essence of parasitological immunology, Raymond Pautrizel's area of research. He specialized on a particularly lethal parasite known as trypanosome, the scourge of tropical third-world countries where, in one form, it causes sleeping sickness in animals and humans, in another, equine syphilis, in still others, other afflictions. Over the years, during which he produced a small library of literature on the problem (known mostly to specialists in countries where that problem is acute), Pautrizel and his team discovered, among other things, that the trypanosome can modify itself, again and again, up to 101 times over a period as short as only three weeks.

Even before his work on trypanosomes, Pautrizel, back in 1949, was one of the first researchers to discover what is known as *ambivalence* in drugs, notably histamine. Histamine is a substance which is secreted by an organism as a defense mechanism but if over secreted by certain cells circulating in the blood, it becomes virulently noxious, mainly by over dilating blood vessels, thus making them permeable to water and leading to edema and even death. This process occurs, for instance, in some human beings who are highly susceptible and over-reactive to bee or wasp stings.

Pautrizel's research on the noxious aspects of histamine led to his finding that the same substance, applied in requisite small doses, is extremely important to the defense system of the organism. Today he stresses the notion of *ambivalence* in many areas of his work and characterizes it as "a key to the biology of the day after tomorrow."

To finish with the background on Pautrizel, before bringing him on stage in the Priore drama, it may be added that only a few years ago, at a formal reception for him attended by the medical elite of France, he was given a Basque *makila*, an iron-bound honorific cane of sculptured wood, in tribute to his work. On it was the incised inscription: "Sometimes to heal, often to alleviate, always to console," an epithet that perfectly characterizes a medical doctor imbued with that kind of rare compassion that marked Pautrizel's character.

When Robert Courier sent Madame Colonge to Bordeaux, it was Pautrizel whom he asked to provide her with every assistance. In this way, Pautrizel was first introduced to Priore and his device. After witnessing the results obtained with it he was to say: "What stupefied me, and led me to ponder the question, was to see the control animals die from their tumors in 3 weeks, while at the same time I could observe that the tumors in the animals under treatment were literally melting away and the same animals were taken back to Courier's lab at the College de France in Paris in perfect health." As a result of his thinking about the problem, Pautrizel came to the belief that the machine, however it worked, did not exert any action at all to kill cancer cells but, through as yet unexplained mechanisms, stimulated the afflicted organisms to provide themselves with new immunological weapons that could overpower the cancer cells.

To shed light on this problem, Pautrizel proposed the simple expedient of experimenting, not on cancer-infested animals, but on *in vitro* cultures of cancer cells. He made this proposition to both French and British cancerologists but they were convinced that the Priore device *had to be actually killing cancer cells themselves*. They could not see the point that, if the machine did not kill cancer cells, then it was doing something else to the body to allow it, and not the machine, to do that job.

Pautrizel's involvement with the British was the result of a team being sent from England to experiment with cancer mice with the Priore Ray. What happened cannot be related in this brief resume except to say that, out of a lack of understanding on the part of certain British cancer experts and malicious conniving on the part of one member of the cancer "aristocracy" in Paris, the experiments were put under a cloud. It was alleged that mice had been substituted somewhere during their long round-trip voyage between England and Bordeaux to make it look as if a failed experiment had been successful. This did not prevent Sir Alexander Haddow, chief of the prestigious Chester Beatty Research Institute for Cancer from stating, at a meeting in Paris, that the Priore machine had been indubitably effective on the English mice and supporting Pautrizel's idea that experiments should forthwith be done to see if the Priore Ray had any effect on cancer cells *in vitro*. Haddow's suggestion backing Pautrizel's recommendation fell on deaf ears.

Because of the emotional turmoil and rancor with respect to cancer that had so long surrounded Priore and the workings of his machine, Pautrizel suggested that it be tried in a completely new area, one he knew so well, namely on afflictions caused by the trypanosomic pathogen. Before these could get underway, however, someone had to persuade the still desolate Priore to return to work. Pautrizel, known to those really concerned with and knowledgeable about the potential of the Italian's invention, at last was able to convince the inventor to cooperate and get back into harness. This he did with that rare combination of diplomatic tact and warm human sympathy with which only the Pautrizels of this world are gifted.

In the meantime, Riviere had gone on to implant new 347 tumor grafts in rats previously cured of 347 tumors. When none of the tumors developed, that result added one more argument to back

Pautrizel's idea that the machine was, in fact, affecting the immunological defense system of the animals. However, when Riviere tried the same procedure with the T -8 tumors, his animals died. This led to the conclusion that the immunity acquired by the animals to lymphoblastic lymphosarcoma 347 was specific to that tumor. When a note on this research was sent, again through Courier's good offices, to the Academy, for the first time, it strangely omitted from the listing of the participating researchers the name of Antoine Priore. It seemed that Riviere had been taken to task by fellow cancerologists who believed that Priore was nothing but a naive bumpkin or, worse, a swindler. They had warned him against publishing any papers with which Priore's name would be associated. This rank injustice and lack of fair play again sent Priore into a fit of despondency and depression from which he could only be withdrawn by those subtleties involved in Pautrizel's sympathetic and friendly counsel.

On 25 July 1966, another note was sent to the Academy filed for the first time not under the rubric **Cancerology** but under the rubric **Immunology**. It was entitled "Influence of Associated Electromagnetic and Magnetic Fields on the Immunity of Mice Infected with *Trypanosoma equiperdum*." The conclusion read: "The treatment allows the organism to rid itself of parasites even when these have invaded it in a most intensive way.... There is an enhancement of both the specific and aspecific factors of immunity."

Thus, for the first time, the field of research shifted from the narrower field of cancer to the much vaster domain of immunology. And, for the first time, Pautrizel's name appeared as the senior author on the paper. It also appeared that, for the first time, there should no longer be any problem about experimenting with the Priore machine. Such was not the case.

Still complicating the whole issue was the fact that Priore himself was using different settings to produce different varieties of radiation depending upon his own intuitive evaluation of the particular biological experiments being run with his machine. He would never reveal the nature of these settings.

At this point there appeared on the scene a new researcher who became Pautrizel's loyal ally, a young woman, Pierette Chateau-Reynaud Duprat. During her work in Paris, she had learned of the Priore controversy, and, against the stern advice of mentors senior by many years to her in the cancer hierarchy, she came to Bordeaux to meet Pautrizel and learn more about the research.

Her work, performed over many years, is too detailed for presentation here but it led to important conclusions. One was that the Priore Ray had no direct effect on the trypanosomes themselves but stimulated and reinforced the defense mechanism of the infested organisms, allowing them to reject the parasitical influence with an effect so durable that they were no longer subject to this influence even after treatment stopped.

Another conclusion was even more important and involved, in part, British research. It pertained to the effects of the machine on both *allografts* or those made between two different individuals of the same species, and *isografts*, or those made between two different individuals of the same genetic line having in common antigens that were characterized by what is called the same histocompatibility. The conclusion was that not only was the rejection of *allografts* accelerated by the Priore Ray but that *isografts* were also rejected. This meant, in sum, that the ray stimulated not only the *defense* mechanisms of the organism but also, and more importantly, its *recognition* mechanisms. In the case of an isograft, this allowed the recognition of weak antigens that were not recognized in non-irradiated animals. In other terms, where at first the anti-aircraft batteries could not shoot down the aircraft because they could not see them, now they could shoot them down because they could see them. In immunological terms, the ray affected both humoral and cellular, both specific and aspecific, immunity.

Here we must return to the mystery of the settings on the device. As a result of the new experimentation it seemed that, depending on those very settings, the active ray, complex as it was, could have either similar, totally different, or diametrically opposed effects. Thus it was not a question of a ray having universal effects - a kind of magic bullet capable of killing any target but of multiple radiations which, due to the complexities in Priore's personal makeup, have unfortunately yet to be sorted out and explained.

Thus, the machine originally designed by Priore, called the P-I when it put out a wave length of from 19-21 meters, had a radical effect on certain animal cancers, on *cellular* defense mechanisms, and finally, but not universally, on organisms infested with **Trypanosoma equiperum**, (hereinafter called T.e.).

A second machine, dubbed the P-2, was at first not able to produce these frequencies. What it did put out was a frequency of 17 meters that *was* universally effective against T.e. and seemed to act not on the cellular, but the *humoral*, defense mechanisms. The rejection of grafts depends on the cellular defense mechanisms, which partially explains why Pautrizel when using the P-2 machine, selected the T.e. vector, as it is called in microbiology, just because this creature is fought by the organism's humoral defense system.

Consequently, the bio-effects that were successfully attained depend on the varying, not to say quixotic, nature of the radiation. At one point Pautrizel actually did experiments on animals infected with *plasmodia* - the vector for malaria which attacks red cells - and found that the settings used were effective while never learning exactly what they were or the exact nature of the radiation. Furthermore, Priore himself maintained that over the years he had successfully treated cases of human tuberculosis but, again, never revealed which frequencies had been used to achieve this.

Several more notes were sent to the academy on the successful work performed with the Priore Rayon animals affected with T.e. But the central issue remained: how to find out exactly how the machine worked. It fell, not to civilian scientists, but to those in the French army service to attempt, at this point, to work out the problem. The army service brought into the picture was the DRME (an acronym which translates as Administration for Research and Test Methods), to which Pautrizel had sent a request for funds in 1968.

This request was the subject of a meeting at which were present three of the top names in French science, one representing biology, the second physics and the third, medical physics. The latter two turned in extremely unfavorable reports recommending that no money be wasted on the problem. The biologist, however, turned in a most favorable report and, despite the fact that he was in the minority, his opinion won the day.

As remarkable as was this victory, it was even more stunning and incredible given the fact that this biologist was the same Andre Lwoff who had so adamantly opposed the Priore research a couple of years previously. Lwoff had summoned the courage to completely reverse himself only after he sent one of his most trusted colleagues to do secret experiments with the Priore Rayon mice injected with peroxydase (an antigenic solution) to see if they would produce a higher level of antibodies than non-irradiated animals. This they did so well that Lwoff became convinced that the Priore Ray caused an extremely important increase in immune reactions. These results were never published because, before the experiments could be repeated to be absolutely sure of their results, the machine suffered one of its many interminable breakdowns.

The DRME report was at length, and in length, issued but not publicly since it was protected by a military classification. However, a synthesis of it was finally published in November 1979 by Herbert Gossot, Secretary General for the French Association for Bioelectromagnetism, under the title: "A Scientific Balance Sheet on the Priore Ray ." Its contents were as follows:

"The two physicists assigned by the army made a complete analysis of the electromagnetic radiations and magnetic fields activated by the Priore device. They thus determined the spectrum of frequencies which the device emitted. They showed particularly that frequencies in the visible light and infrared range had no biological effect; that there were no X-rays or Y-rays; and that the pulsed ultra-high frequency electromagnetic wave was modulated in amplitude to that of a high-frequency wave. They did a topographic survey of the respective intensities of the various magnetic and electromagnetic fields in the experimental plane of the device. In particular, they determined the spatial repartition in this plane of the density of the strength of the ultra-high frequency wave. They showed that its value was very weak and that it could not produce any kind of overall significant thermal effect imputable to the hyperfrequency ray.

Finally, and most importantly, by using what they had learned about these repartitions, they demonstrated a clear correlation between the biological effects obtained and the intensity of the hyperfrequency ray. What they actually observed was that, on the biological model used, i.e. experimental trypanosomiasis of the mouse, there was a diminution of the rate of evolution of the parasitemia that was proportional to the strength of the hyperfrequency wave. To quote them: *'These experiments of correlation are of certain interest: they confirm, if there is still any need of so doing, the biological efficacy of this device. '*

The two physicists, Bottreau and Berteaus, are still interested in rebuilding a Priore device with which additional biological research could go forward. At the same time they suggested to administrative bodies in French science the creation of a special laboratory for bioelectromagnetism to fund more work, a suggestion in which Professor Pautrizel concurred. No action was taken and their report was kept under wraps. In a note they presented to the Academy of Sciences on their investigation, they were not allowed to include the names of the laboratories where they worked: in the case of one, the CNRS Magnetic Laboratory at Bellevue near Paris, and of the other, the Laboratory of Ultra-Hertzian Optics and Talence near Bordeaux. Why? Because the directors of these laboratories did not want any mud in the Priore affair to be spattered on them.

The next experiment done by Pautrizel was on rabbits whose testicles had been so seriously affected by trypanosomes as to be almost entirely destroyed. After radiation the same testicles took on their normal histological appearance and the rabbits, able to procreate again, in no way abstained from their newly regained ability. **This implied the complete regeneration of an organ that had all but completely degenerated.**

Yet journalists, who sought out truths about the Priore affair in Paris from high officials they believed would know best about what was going on, continued to be led astray. For example, an American scientific reporter, writing in the **Saturday Review of Science** in 1973 saw fit to state: "It is really a question of a mystical problem that has little to do with science." He was quoting Professor Bader , a man who for 15 years held top administrative posts in science that could have allowed him to back the Priore research with all the funding necessary to its accomplishment. At the time Graille's book came out, Bader issued a book of his own about the Priore affair which offers no real idea of what was involved. When I asked several people in France why Bader had written the book, they were unaware of Bader's inmost motivation.

Machinations continued to swirl about the case over the next several years. Behind-the-scenes intrigues, distorted accounts in the press, lethargic attitudes on the part of administrative officials who would not take responsibility to cut an increasingly tight Gordian knot, outright fear of various personalities to become too deeply implicated lest they lose their jobs -- all these, and more, continued their daily round in an atmosphere of "Business As Usual," and "Don't Risk Your Neck."

To get to the nexus of the situation, we have but to cite the observation of one of the few perspicacious journalists who, in the prestigious scientific monthly, **Sciences and Life**, wrote: "The physicists are convinced that the effective Priore Ray is very complex but to analyze this further some things first have to be made clear. One is to raise the suspicion that has surrounded Monsieur Priore with a fabulous accretion of misunderstandings, insults and accusations of being a swindler over many years. What is needed is a veritable national effort to act effectively and to act rapidly."

Over the next two years the decision-making process of the French government lumbered its way along until it was finally decided to back the construction of a powerful machine. This decision was not favorably accepted in many quarters. As **Le Monde** would comment: "The decision was made in spite of the disapproval of many scientists. When money is tight, one should pay particular attention to how it is being spent. Such seems not always to be the case. A credit of some \$3.5 million francs (or about a million dollars) has just been accorded to finance the construction of a new Priore machine."

The scientists to whom the article referred were in a rage. They understood, at this juncture, that the only way to put an end to the affair was to eliminate Pautrizel who, because of the very success he was having with his research, was seen as a dangerous competitor that might even become one of the top figures in medicine and science on a national, or perhaps, on a world scale. Indeed, it was learned that Professor Courier had gone to the length of sending a report on Pautrizel's behalf to the Nobel Committee in 1979.

To make a long story short, the large powerful machine, the M- 600, was built but a huge tube in it, after functioning for about a week, exploded. Due to the galloping inflation of the 1970's, to replace it would have cost another million dollars. The money was not forthcoming.

In the meantime Pautrizel, ever experimenting with the still functioning smaller machine, was to discover new facts. Mice with their spleens cut out, for example, also could survive injections of T .e. The Priore Ray had important implications for Arterio-sclerosis, since it effected lipid modifications in rabbits given a dietary regime high in cholesterol. This research, published in another note in the Academy **Proceedings**, instead of being warmly received, only irritated the cardiological fraternity which felt, as some of its members put it, "trapped" by Pautrizel's efforts.

One particularly virulent opponent was Professor Bricault, Dean of the Bordeaux Medical School who, as late as 1980, was telling his own students that the published results were a farce and had never been obtained. The students, who carried out a special investigation of the matter on their own, were able to judge what a farce their own medical dean might represent.

L'Express, the **Time** magazine of France, read by at least half the population of French intellectuals, had the gall to compare the results of the Priore research to those of the infamous Trofim Lysenko of the Russia of Stalin's day. Haughtily **L'Express** added: "Today Priore's defenders explain that his machine has not only cured cancer but, in all probability, altered the immunological characteristics of mice. Were this, in fact, so, all the immunologists, all the geneticists of the world would unite to affirm that a machine capable of changing the genetic patrimony is the discovery of the century, far more important than the atomic bomb or the conquest of the moon. Unfortunately, the history of the whole thing has never been properly elucidated."

"The article was illustrated with photos distortedly selected to convince viewers that the Priore machine was as serious and effective as the one that purportedly brought Frankenstein to life.

In this poisonous atmosphere the slow work of building the M-600 went forward. To give anyone who was not there a feeling for this endeavor we may now cite verbatim a passage from Graille's book: "The construction and assembly of the prototype - the M-600, that of highest power and variable parameters - were fraught with many uncertainties and delays on the one hand and, on the other, were marked by the stamp of Antoine Priore's sparkling genius.

"To go from an apparatus that developed 1,240 gauss applied over an effective area of some 20 centimeters, to one developing 5000 gauss over an area of 60 centimeters means to take on an extremely risky technical and technological wager. Electrical, mechanical and glass-blowing specialists plunged into the unknown. They had to conceive, make, adapt and put together all the various myriad components almost haphazardly with no precise technical study being previously available. Priore's stubbornness forced them to take on a trial-and-error manufacturing "gimmickry" without precedent. As the thing was put together and preliminary tests made, it became clear that many of the components were unsuitable and that they would have to be modified or replaced. The tube itself, made of pyrex, 60 centimeters in diameter, and 6 meters tall, had to be replaced twice after it imploded. In fact, practically everything had to be reconsidered or readapted. "Everything" meant the parts going to make up a generator of 50 tons in weight. For example, the coil which created the magnetic field: 5.5 tons with 11 miles of copper wire. For example, the numerous cooling circuits which stabilized the thermal equilibrium of the generator and its environment or, additionally, the circuits governing command, control regulation and selection - 6 tons of electrical cables of which 15 miles were of tele-command wiring.

"Priore astonished everyone. Breakdown after breakdown, incident after incident, it was he alone who showed what to do next, indicated the proper steps to take, the right settings to adopt, the right way to assemble the components: He was virtually building his machine by himself, nursing its construction along day after day, all the engineers' studies and efforts actually, and ultimately, serving only as a preliminary attempt, a sketch as it were. When Priore made his presence felt, things began working. "

Then after the machine was built: "The part of the entire apparatus to generate electricity was set up on a provisional basis. It was so noisy that, while functioning, it woke up the whole neighborhood. The number of experiments had therefore to be curtailed so that the machine would not be used at night. And, all at once, everything came to a halt. The Faraday cage, shielding and isolating Priore's apparatus, was torn and fissured by the shock of the cement pilings that were being sunk into the ground all around to hold up the building under construction. This allowed high-frequency waves to escape which disturbed radio broadcasts emitted by local radio stations, the army, and civilian aircraft for miles around."

Nevertheless during the week or ten days that the machine was in good operation the results of experiments performed with it were more than formidable. First of all, it allowed for as many as forty experiments to be performed on some 280 animals in a remarkably short period of time. Among the discoveries made were: The ray emitted provided the treated animals with an extremely strong immunitary response. Animals whose immune defenses had been attenuated by an immunodepressant were able to overcome the effects of injected parasites but relapsed a few days later. One could therefore conclude their immune response was much weaker than those normally infested and treated.

Newborn animals, whether treated or not, developed a marked parasitemia leading to their deaths. At the time of death, the parasites had the same antigenic structure as those of the innoculum which

thus implied that they had met with no defense at all in the infected organisms. This also proved that the Priore Ray did not act directly on the parasites themselves but only by way of an increase in the immune defense system of the organisms. The newborn animals succumbed to their parasitemia because their immune system was not yet sufficiently developed to be stimulated by the P-Ray. The phenomenon of a stimulation of the immune defenses was demonstrated by the fact that animals which had received soluble antigens developed, after being irradiated, a level of antibodies far superior to the controls.

These and other conclusions were the object of notes presented to the Academy of Sciences by Pautrizel and his team in 1978. Even before, at a colloquium held in Antwerp, Belgium devoted to African human trypanosomiasis, the same team had offered the conclusion that the stimulation of the immune defense system that allowed organisms to throw off the effects of trypanosomiasis had to be very significant in that all attempts to try to effect such stimulation through immuno-stimulants as well known as B.C.G., or Coryne-bacterium granulosum, had led neither to the cure produced by the Priore Ray, nor to any prolongation of the infected animals' lives, nor even to the slightest modification in the evolution of the Trypanosomiasis.

These three scientific papers did little for the cancerologists who read them except to exacerbate their urge to oppose the Priore research, if not to arouse their outright hatred for the principal experimenter, Raymond Pautrizel. Could this have been because, for over 20 years, the same cancerologists had been working in vain to provoke in cancerous organisms immuno-stimulative reactions by intensively and successively vaccinating them with B.C.G.? Many others had been life-long apostles of chemotherapeutic cocktails of all sorts, or life-destroying ionizing radiations, or, what more recently has become the fashion, of applying the two methods in endless combination.

For this reason, they saw Priore and Pautrizel as nothing more than spoil-sports who had to be destroyed.

One of the opening shots in this campaign was a letter received by Pautrizel to inform him that his request for funds to continue his research through Unit-89, a unit that had been specially set up for him to direct, had been denied. It took many months of investigation for Pautrizel to learn that the real reason for the refusal was because of his work with Priore.

Next Pautrizel was informed that his appointment as director of the same research unit would be extended for only two years, whereas the normal extension for similar units was five years. A third insult came when Pautrizel tried to win a post within his unit for a high-ranking military physician, who had been his student and who had decided to quit the military in order to participate in the fascinating research prosecuted by his mentor. Pautrizel's request for funds to pay this physician, who all his life had been working on tropical medicine closely associated with problems of trypanosomiasis, were refused four times in a row with no cogent reason given. The physician, who in the meantime had volunteered his time without pay, finally became so emotionally overwrought that he gave up his medical career and retired to the countryside where he gave himself over to alcohol. Then Pautrizel tried to get a salaried post for another of his brilliant collaborators (who still works with him). He was told that this man could take up his new functions only if he left Bordeaux. One could go on with many other shocking stories but we will leave it to Graille to conclude: "Everything possible was done to isolate Pautrizel, to separate him from his collaborators. Every single one of these collaborators saw their careers put in jeopardy, compromised, or broken."

As a final insult, when the time came again to renew Pautrizel as director of Unit 89, those responsible, not daring to overstep what even they knew to be decent limits by not extending him, simply abolished the unit. And to add injury to that insult, a doctoral thesis that had now been prepared by Priore, and backed not only by Pautrizel but by Nobel Laureate Andre Lwoff himself, was summarily refused by the President of the University of Bordeaux.

It is perhaps unnecessary to state that the details behind all of this skullduggery could, and did, fill up two chapters of a book and make for the most heart-rending reading imaginable.

So what happened next? In the autumn of 1977, Professor Georges Dubourg, one of the leading lights in Bordeaux's company of surgeons and a friend and admirer of Pautrizel's, came to him to say openly and baldly: "My friend, at the point you've reached, there is only one more way to jolt medical opinion and that is to treat human cancer patients." Pautrizel was hesitant, believing his role to be one of continuing with his animal experiments but where would the funds for that come from now? He therefore asked his old mentor, Robert Courier's advice. Courier gave the green light. The treatments were restricted to terminal cancer patients whose immune defense systems had been disastrously weakened by chemotherapy or radiation or both. At least one of them was totally cured. The other lived, without pain, for a period many times longer than predicted by prognosis. Dubourg, Pautrizel and their collaborators wrote up the results and sent them as an official communication to the French Academy of Medicine for publication.

The reply they received from that Academy's perpetual secretary reads: "Experts whom we consulted consider that your work does not fall within the jurisdiction of our members and that it would doubtless find an audience more worthy of its purpose in a more specialized society ."

To which Pautrizel formally replied: "Since two of the four signatories of our note are corresponding members of your Academy, could we not benefit from the remarks and comments made by the committee which saw fit to refuse our paper? And even, if this is not too indiscreet a request, to learn the names of the expert members who were consulted which would allow us to get into contact with them directly and to benefit from their singular competence?"

His letter has remained unanswered for four years.

There was nothing more to do except one thing which Raymond Pautrizel, as a man of science, had always been careful to avoid: Get a responsible journalist interested in the case, inform him of all possible details, and let him carry the Priore Affair in all its harrowingly loathsome aspects to the broad reading public. That journalist was Jean-Michel Graille.

For four years, Graille went about his task, publishing three consecutive long articles in his newspaper **Sud-Ouest France** and finally the book to which we have referred and of which this presentation is largely a resume. As early as 1980, Graille would write in his newspaper: "The Priore Affair is simple in essence. It can be reduced to a simple alternative: either the machine developed by Antoine Priore is of no interest and, having shown this, the affair can be considered at an end. Or else the machine is of real and demonstrable medical interest and, if that is officially recognized, he would be allowed to get on with the work. For this dilemma runs the risk, yet again, of being buried under delays and evasions. Beyond all the powers-that-be that have been directly connected to the affair for many years now - the power of finance, the power of medicine, the power of science - perhaps it is now political power with which responsibility lies if it can rise to meet and assume that responsibility through decision."

That was Graille's statement in 1980. His book which came out four years later ends with the sentence: "The Dossier Priore thus depends, from here on out, on a decision that must be taken on the very highest level, and imperatively. This responsibility devolves, in last resort, on the chief of state and on him alone. Will he assume it?"

Would the President of the United States?