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Registered File Disposal Form

MOD Form 262F
(Revised 9/01)

FILE TITLE: (Main Heading - Secondary Heading - Tertiary Heading etc)

UFO's
Parliamentary Questions and Enquiries

Reference:
(Prefix and Number)
D/DAS/64/4

Part: 1

PROTECTIVE MARKING (including caveats & descriptors): RESTRICTED UNCLASSIFIED

Date of last enclosure: 22 MARCH 2001

Date closed:

PART 1. DISPOSAL SCHEDULE RECOMMENDATION
(To be completed when the file is closed)

	✓
~~Destroy after ____ years~~	☐
Forward to INFO(EXP)-R after 10 years	☐
FOR PERMENANT RETENTION. ~~No recommendation~~	☐

FOR DEFENCE INFO(EXP)-R USE ONLY

Date of 1st review	Date of 2nd review	Forward Destruction Date

Reviewer's Signature: _____ Reviewer's Signature: _____

PART 2. BRANCH REVIEW
(To be fully completed at time of file closure)
(Delete as appropriate)

a. Of no further administrative value and not worthy of permanent preservation. DESTROY IMMEDIATELY (Remember that TOP SECRET and Codeword material cannot be destroyed locally and must be forwarded to INFO(EXP)-R. ☐

b. (i) To be retained ~~until the end of the year~~ indefinately for the following reason(s):

	✓		✓	
LEGAL	☐	DEFENCE POLICY + OPERATIONS	☐	
CONTRACTUAL	☐	ORIGINAL COMMITTEE PAPERS	☐	
FINANCE/AUDIT	☐	MAJOR EQUIPMENT PROJECT	☐	Public Interest
DIRECTORATE POLICY	☐	OTHER (Specify)	☑	For permenant preservation in The National Archive

PPQ = 100

(Continued overleaf)

(ii) Key enclosures which support the recommendation are:

(iii) At the end of the specified retention period the file is to be:

Destroyed ☐

Considered by DR for permanent preservation ☑

c. Of no further administrative value but worthy of consideration by INFO(EXP)-R for permanent preservation. ☑

PART 3. B [redacted] **w C2/equivalent)**

Signature: [redacted]

Name: [redacted] (Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank: B2 Date: 29/6/04

Branch Title and Full Address:

Tel No:

PART 4 DESTRUCTION CERTIFICATE

It is certified that the specified file has been destroyed.

Signature: _____

Name: _____ (Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank: _____ Date: _____

Witnessed by (TOP SECRET* and SECRET only)

Signature: _____

Name: _____ (Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank: _____ Date: _____

*(FOR DR USE ONLY)

Produced by MOD, DSDA(PC) KY Tel. 0117 9376256

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone Section 40 (Direct Dialling)
(020) 7218 9000 (Switchboard)
Fax Section 40

MINISTER OF STATE FOR
DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DAS 4 (SEC)
2 6 MAR 2001
FILE

FROM: THE RT HON BARONESS SYMONS

D/MIN(DP)/ECS 1197/01/M

22 March 2001

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your letters of 2 and 12 February about the written answers to the Questions you placed relating to the events at Rendlesham Forest on the nights of 27-29 December 1980.

I note what you say in your first letter about the use of the word "alleged" in regard to these events and would like to reassure you that there was most certainly no intention to mislead you or any other reader over this issue.

You have suggested that there are only two possible explanations to the events reported by Lieutenant Colonel Halt in his memorandum dated 13 January 1981. I do not agree that this is the case and it follows that I am unable to give you the simple yes or no answers to your questions which you are seeking. While there is no suggestion that Lieutenant Colonel Halt, or any others serving at RAF Woodbridge at the time, were either hallucinating or lying, neither can we explain exactly what these people did see.

These events happened over 20 years ago and from the surviving Departmental records it is clear that when Lieutenant Colonel Halt's memorandum was received in my Department it was passed to the military authorities with responsibility for air defence matters. Their conclusion was that there was nothing of defence interest in the report. Once this was established no further investigation was made. Nothing has emerged over the intervening years which has given us reason to believe that the original assessment made by the Ministry of Defence was incorrect.

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Private Office

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

I am sorry if you feel that this is a disappointing reply but I hope you understand that, after all these years, I cannot be more helpful.

I have also taken note of your letter dated 12 February relating to the Armed Forces Bill. I am sorry that I was unable to invite you in person to the meeting but, as I was absent overseas on Departmental business, I authorised my Private Office to write on my behalf in the interests of saving time. This is not uncommon practice within the Department in these circumstances. I am sorry that you were unable to attend the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40 [redacted]

Recycled Paper

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone Section 40 (Direct Dialling)
[redacted] (Fax)
(020) 7218 9000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

46

D/US of S/LM 1340/01/Y

21st March 2001

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DAS 4 (SEC)
22 MAR 2001
FILE

Dear Alan,

Thank you for your letter of 26 February (reference: 131871/01) to Robin Cook enclosing one from your constituent, Section 40 Section 40 of Section 40 [redacted] Swansea, who is enquiring about United States experimental craft flying over the Bristol Channel. Your letter has been passed to the Ministry of Defence and I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

Firstly, you may wish to assure Section 40 that, under agreed procedures, the US authorities are required to request clearance from the Ministry of Defence if they want to conduct unusual military air activity in UK airspace. I can confirm that no approach has been made which could account for Section 40 report.

With regard to Section 40 comments about 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs), it may be helpful if I explain that the Ministry of Defence examines any reports passed on from members of the public of sightings that they cannot themselves identify, solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance. My Department's only concern is to establish whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source, and on this occasion there is no corroborating evidence to suggest there was, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. On this occasion, although my officials have not tried to identify positively what was seen, it has been suggested to them that the

The Rt Hon Alan Williams MP

Private Office

description of the objects, given in the newspaper cutting attached to Section 40 letter, indicates that they could have been weather balloons which are sometimes released by Universities or weather centres around the country and Section 40 may wish to pursue her enquiries with these organisations.

Finally, I must say that my Department has no expertise or role in respect of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains open-minded. I should add, however, that to date the MOD knows of no evidence to substantiate the existence of these alleged phenomena.

Best wishes

Section 40

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP

DAS4A1(SEC)

From: PARLIAMENTARY TYPIST3 on behalf of PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
To: DAS4A1(SEC)
Sent: 13 March 2001 15:33
Subject: Read: DRAFT REPLY TO PE

Your message

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: DRAFT REPLY TO PE
Sent: 13/03/01 15:22

was read on 13/03/01 15:33.

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAS(Sec)64/4

March 2001

PE Unit
(through DAS AD4([redacted])

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY – US1340/2001- MR ALAN WILLIAMS MP

1. I enclose a draft reply for US of S to send to Alan Williams MP in response to his letter of 26 February, enclosing a letter from his constituent [redacted] about US experimental craft in UK airspace and Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs).

2. With regard to [redacted] first question, there are arrangements in place whereby the US authorities are required to seek clearance from the MOD if they wish to conduct any kind of unusual air activity in UK airspace. No such clearance has been sought on this occasion and we therefore conclude that the objects seen by [redacted] and others were not US experimental craft.

3. [redacted] has not contacted the MOD before about 'UFOs' and she will not therefore be aware that the MOD's only interest in reported 'UFO' sightings is whether there is any evidence of a breach of UK airspace by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is such evidence, we do not attempt to identify exactly what was seen; we believe that rational explanations could be found, but it is not within the MOD's remit to provide an aerial identification service. However, on this occasion, it has been suggested to us that the description of the objects given in the newspaper article attached to [redacted] letter, indicates that they could have been weather balloons and this information has been included in our reply as it may be helpful if [redacted] wishes to pursue her enquiries.

[redacted]
DAS 4a1(Sec)
MB8245 [redacted]

Drafted by: [redacted] DAS 4a1(Sec)
Authorised by: DAS AD4(Sec)

US 1340/2001 March 2001

DRAFT REPLY TO MR ALAN WILLIAMS MP

Thank you for your letter of 26 February, reference 131871/01, enclosing a letter from your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 [redacted] Swansea, who is enquiring about United States experimental craft flying over the Bristol Channel. Your letter has been passed to the Ministry of Defence and I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

Firstly, you may wish to assure Section 40 that, under agreed procedures, the US authorities are required to request clearance from the Ministry of Defence if they want to conduct unusual military air activity in UK airspace and I can confirm that no approach has been made which could account for Section 40 report.

With regard to Section 40 comments about 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs), it may be helpful if I explain that the Ministry of Defence examines any reports passed on from members of the public of sightings that they cannot themselves identify solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance. My Department's only concern is to establish whether there is any evidence from what has been seen that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source, and on this occasion there is no corroborating evidence to suggest there was, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. On this occasion, although my officials have not tried to identify positively what was seen, it has been suggested to them that the

description of the objects, given in the newspaper cutting attached to Section 40 letter, indicates that they could have been weather balloons which are sometimes released by Universities or weather centres around the country and Section 40 may wish to pursue her enquiries with these organisations.

Finally, I must say that my Department has no expertise or role in respect of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains open-minded. I should add, however, that to date the MOD knows of no evidence to substantiate the existence of these alleged phenomena.

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP

Alan Williams MP

MOD Form 174B
(Revised 5/99)

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D DAS 64/4

Enclosure Jacket No 16

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)
22.2.2001

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:
DAS 4a(Sec)

SUBJECT: PE: DP1197/2001
LORD HILL-NORTON
RENDLESHAM FOREST / RAF WOODBRIDGE

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

2. When a TEJ is incorporated into the parent file it should be placed in the file in date order (according to the date of the last action on the TEJ) and allocated an enclosure number.

3. The file minute sheet should be annotated to record the enclosure number of the TEJ along with details of the number of enclosures contained within it. The TEJ record sheet (MOD Form 262A) should be annotated to record the date on which the TEJ was incorporated into the parent file (JSP 441, paragraph 4.13 refers).

SEC)

From: PARLIAMENTARY TYPIST1 on behalf of PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
To: DAS4A1(SEC)
Sent: 28 February 2001 11:54
Subject: Read: PE DP1197/2001

Your message

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: PE DP1197/2001
Sent: 28/02/01 11:44

was read on 28/02/01 11:54.

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAS(Sec)64/4

28 February 2001

PE Unit
(through DAS AD4(Section 40 [redacted] 27/2

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY- DP 1197/2001 – ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET THE LORD HILL-NORTON GCB

1. Lord Hill-Norton has a long standing interest in 'unidentified flying objects' and has tabled many PQs and PEs. In January 2001 he tabled ten PQs, nine of which concerned a recently published book by Georgina Bruni on the subject of the alleged 'UFO' sighting in Rendlesham Forest. He is not content with the answer given to PQ 0392L concerning alleged events in Rendlesham Forest/ RAF Woodbridge between 27-29 December 1980.

2. In his letter of 2 February, the Peer takes issue with the Minister's use of the word "alleged" when discussing these events. In view of Lord Hill-Norton's stance on this matter, I do not believe there is anything to be gained by challenging him and the draft reply (see para 5, below) simply notes his point and seeks to assure him that it was not the Minister's intention to mislead the reader over this issue.

3. In his letter of 12 February, Lord Hill-Norton is essentially repeating the question that he put to Lord Gilbert on 22 October 1997, namely, would we agree that either something intruded into UK airspace and landed near RAF Woodbridge, or that those who say they witnessed this event (including the Deputy Base Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Halt) were either hallucinating, or lying.

4. We are not suggesting that Lieutenant Colonel Halt or any others are lying and it is clear that they observed something which they were unable to explain at the time. However, surviving Departmental records show that when Lt Col Halt's memo arrived at the MOD it was passed to the military authorities responsible for air defence matters and they concluded there was nothing of defence concern. No further investigation was deemed necessary and no evidence has come to light over the intervening years to suggest that this assessment was incorrect.

5. I enclose a draft reply for Min(DP) to send to Lord Hill-Norton in response to his letters of 2 and 12 February.

Section 40 [redacted]

DAS 4a1(Sec)
MB8245 Section 40

Drafted by: Section 40 DAS 4a1(Sec)
Authorised by: [redacted] DAS AD4(Sec)

DP 1197/2001 February 2001

DRAFT REPLY TO ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET THE LORD HILL-NORTON GCB

Thank you for your letters of 2 and 12 February about the events at Rendlesham Forest on the nights of 27-29 December 1980.

I note what you say in your first letter about the use of the word "alleged" in regard to these events and would like to reassure you that it was most certainly not my intention to mislead the reader over this issue.

You have suggested that there are only two possible explanations to the events reported by Lieutenant Colonel Halt in his memorandum dated 13 January 1981. I do not agree that this is the case and it follows that I am unable to give you the simple yes or no answers to your questions which you are seeking. While there is no suggestion that Lieutenant Colonel Halt, or any others serving at RAF Woodbridge at the time, were either hallucinating or lying, neither can we explain exactly what these people did see.

These events happened over 20 years ago and from the surviving Departmental records it is clear that when Lieutenant Colonel Halt's memorandum was received in my Department it was passed to the military authorities with responsibility for air defence matters. Their conclusion was that there was nothing of defence interest in the report. Once this was established no further investigation was made. Nothing has

emerged over the intervening years which has given us reason to believe that the original assessment made by the Ministry of Defence was incorrect.

I am sorry if you feel that this is a disappointing reply but I hope you understand that, after all these years, I cannot be more helpful.

THE BARONESS SYMONS OF VERNHAM DEAN

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: DAS 4(SEC) **PE REF NUMBER:** DF1197/2001

Copy to:

MINISTER REPLYING: Min(DP) **DRAFT REQUIRED BY:** 5/3/2001

DATE: 21/2/2001 **FROM:** Section 40 **PE Unit** **TEL:** Section 40

FAX: Section 40

YOU WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE, WHICH MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY.

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET: FROM 2001/02 ONWARDS, THE DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO ANSWERING 90% OF ENQUIRIES WITHIN 15 WORKING DAYS; OUR PERFORMANCE IN 2000 WAS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THIS.

A NAMED OFFICIAL AT B2 (GRADE 7) LEVEL OR ABOVE MUST CLEAR ALL DRAFTS. OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS OR MOD DIVISIONS SHOULD BE CONSULTED AS NECESSARY.

IF YOU ARE AN AGENCY, THE MINISTER'S OFFICE HAS DIRECTED THAT THIS ENQUIRY SHOULD RECEIVE A MINISTERIAL – NOT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – REPLY.

E-MAIL DRAFTS TO *'PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES'*, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES.
(Please ensure sensitivity of your email message is 'Normal'.)

IF THIS CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE DEALT WITH BY ANOTHER BRANCH, PLEASE PASS IT ON AND INFORM US IMMEDIATELY.

Number of pages sent by fax: 5

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DAS 3 (SEC)
21 FEB 2001
FILE

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

- ***Ministers place great importance on the content, style and speed of replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.***

- **DEADLINES**: It is important that your draft is with us by the date shown at the top of this notice, as Ministers must send a written reply within 15 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS ENQUIRY. The Department's performance is reported each year to Parliament. If you cannot meet the deadline, you should therefore provide an interim reply that apologises for the delay, sets out the action being taken to answer the enquiry, and advises when a substantive reply can be expected. You should aim to provide a substantive draft reply within a further 8 working days.
  Interim replies should be used infrequently, as every effort must be made to reply to correspondence from MPs (and others) promptly.

- **Action at official level on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts, or other policy aspects, direct with the relevant Private Office.**

- **LAYOUT**: Draft replies should be double-spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft. Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

- **OPENING AND CLOSING**: All Ministers prefer to start: *"Thank you for your letter of ...(MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... about ..."*
  If a Minister is replying on behalf of another, start: *"Thank you for your letter of ... to Geoff Hoon/Liz Symons/John Spellar/Lewis Moonie on behalf etc"*
  For Mr Spellar, add: *"I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."*
  For Baroness Symons, add: *"I am responding because of my responsibility for this issue." (or, in the case of letters from fellow Peers: "I have been asked to respond.")*
  For Dr Moonie, add: *"I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility."*
  Choose an appropriate ending (except for Dr Moonie, who will add his own) - such as:
  "I hope this is helpful"; "I hope this explains the position/situation"; "I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"; or *"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply"*.

- **OPEN GOVERNMENT**: Replies **MUST** be drafted in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. It is set out in **DCI 223/99**. If you are recommending to a Minister that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld - eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of Part II of the *Code of Practice on Access to Government Information*." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

INTERIM REPLIES: If it is obvious on receipt of a PE that you cannot reply in full, an interim **MUST** be provided by the deadline stated. **REMEMBER**: an interim reply covering the majority of the issues raised could help our performance statistics.

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

RECEIVED BY
PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH
ON: 20/2/01
MIN:
G: Min (DP)
UFO's
DAS 4 (Sec)
RELATED CASE:
CLERK Section 40

The Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
House of Lords
London SW1A OPW

12th February, 2001

Dear Lady Symons,

PQR Reference 03921

I gave you notice in my letter dated 2nd February that I would be writing to you separately about your failure to answer my Question HL 354.

I take the charitable view that your Private Secretary has simply not read the Question, or has misunderstood it. The only other explanation is that you were trying deliberately to mislead any reader of your Answer. I should not like to think you guilty of misleading the House, on purpose.

To avoid any possibility of any further misunderstanding, I will spell it all out as follows:

I asked whether HMG now agreed with my analysis of the basic facts of the Bentwaters/Rendlesham incident, stated in a letter of mine to Lord Gilbert in 1997. That analysis was, in essence,

"There are only two possible explanations of the actual facts available to you

a. Something physical of non-UK origin landed at the base, as stated by Colonel Halt and many others. Or

b. Colonel Halt, the Deputy Commander and many of the men under his command at a USAF Base in England were hallucinating, in what they reported.

In either case, surely this is of Defence Interest? or, if not, why not?"

The whole correspondence is now precisely available in Ms Bruni's book to which I referred in the Question.

You will see that my Question is susceptible of only two answers: Yes or No. In the latter instance my Question requires you to give reasons.

Continued:

You cannot possibly clam that your Written Answer has any relevance whatever to the Question. If you are unable or unwilling to answer it now, I shall have to ask for the protection of all the "Usual Channels", and/or the Clerk of the Parliaments. In that event I shall ensure that the media are aware of the whole story.

Yours truly

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Section 40 **Fordingbridge Hants** Section 40

The Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
House of Lords
London SW1A

2nd February, 2001

Dear Lady Symons,

I have received a number of your written answers to Questions which I had put down.

You refer in most of them to the "..... alleged incident (at Bentwaters, Rendlesham Forest) .....". This is a simple mistake in English. There is no doubt, nor dispute, that there was an incident there on the day(s) in question. You have at least two written reports about it; in your files.

What you, and various of your predecessors doggedly claim is that the statements (which you prefer to call allegations) by a great many eye-witnesses are un-true. This flies in the teeth of what is now a considerabl volume of written, spoken and photographic evidence. But that is not the point.

The point of this letter is to tell you that the use of the word "alleged" in the context of your answers is either ignorant, or deliberately intended to mis-lead the reader.

Your answer dated 30th January does not answer my Question (HL 354), and I shall write to you separately about that. I did not ask you the question you have answered, as you will see if you care to read my Question again. I realise that you will have been very busy recently, but you will have to answer the Question in the end.

Yours sincerely,

Hill-Norton.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 81ST COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (USAFE)
APO NEW YORK 09755

REPLY TO ATTN OF: CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT: Unexplained Lights

TO: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metalic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10^{0} off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.

CHARLES I. HALT, Lt Col, USAF
Deputy Base Commander

for PQs – Please see DIPASSEC/04/1/1 Enclosures 31-42 — Briefing to MinDP Monday 29 Jan 01. DDAS/DAS4A/4A1.

UNCLASSIFIED

BACKGROUND NOTE

1. Lord Hill-Norton, Chief of the Defence Staff from 1971 to 1973, has a long standing interest in 'UFOs' and over a sixteen month period, up to December 1998, tabled 26 PQs.

2. Lord Hill-Norton has tabled ten PQs relating to the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects ('UFOs'). Nine, are in respect of information contained in a book by Georgina Bruni on the subject of an alleged Unidentified Flying Object ('UFO') incident said to have occurred in 1980. One asks for the highest classification of any MOD document on the subject of 'UFOs'. This linked background note is in respect of four of the ten PQs, numbers 0348L, 0349L, 0350L and 0351L for answer on 26 January, the remaining are for answer on 30 January.

3. The title of the book is "You can't tell the people - the definitive account of the Rendlesham Forest UFO mystery". It concerns a well known 'UFO' incident, alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk over the Christmas period in 1980 in the vicinity of two RAF bases, made available at that time to US Visiting Forces, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge. The subject of the incident first came to prominence in 1983 when a memorandum sent to MOD shortly after the event by the then Deputy Base Commander, Lt Col Charles Halt USAF, was unearthed in the US by researchers. The Halt memorandum describes the alleged incident in some detail and is reprinted in the book where claims are also made that USAF personnel met and communicated with "beings".

4. The book is a detailed account but one that includes contradictory evidence from a range of alleged witnesses. It accuses both UK and US authorities of a "cover-up" of the detail of the event. There is an unclassified MOD file on the subject. It was opened almost two years after the event is alleged to have occurred and appears to contain documents drawn from a number of other files. It cannot be regarded with any degree of certainty as a record of all the papers ever held by MOD on the event.

5. PQs 0348L and 0350L ask about alleged involvement in enquiries following the incident of personnel from either the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) Chemical and Biological Defence (CBD) laboratories at Porton Down, or from the Special Branch.

6. The book repeats the allegation of an unidentified witness that a team of four scientists from the CBD laboratories at Porton Down visited the site of the alleged incident shortly after the event is said to have taken place. Lord Hill-Norton has asked whether personnel visited the Rendlesham Forest or in the area of Watton (further to the north) in December 1980 or January 1981. MOD has been informed by DERA that a search of records has been conducted and enquiries made of a very few existing members of staff who were working at the CBD laboratories in 1980 but that no information has come to light.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

7. A copy of a letter is reprinted that was sent to Ms Bruni from Police Headquarters in Suffolk in answer to a number of questions, including the possibility that Special Branch officers may have been aware of the event. In connection with this enquiry it has not proved possible in the time available for the Home Office to locate any files that might relate to the alleged incident. In addition many personnel serving in the force in 1980 have since retired and are no longer available for consultation. The reply repeats information contained in the letter from Suffolk Police Headquarters and confirms that Special Branch would not have had an interest in the event unless there was evidence of a potential threat to national security. It is believed that no such threat was evident.

8. PQ 0349L asks if there were any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in November or December 1980. Uncorrelated targets may be defined as radar tracks that have not been positively identified by normal means. No records remain dating back to 1980. Some paper information is retained for a period of three years before destruction; recordings of radar data are retained for only 30 days prior to re-use of the recording medium.

9. Lord Hill-Norton's fourth question, PQ 0351L, asks for the highest classification applied to any MOD document concerning 'UFOs'. A search of material identified as relating to 'UFOs', necessarily limited by the time available, indicates that the vast majority of the papers that exist on the subject, on open and closed files, are unclassified. Directorate Air Staff (Secretariat) has traced a small number of documents classified SECRET. They relate to discussions concerning handling of correspondence and administrative arrangements rather than 'UFO' reports and appear to hold a higher classification than might be expected from the nature of the material they contain. The DIS has applied the classification of SECRET UK EYES ONLY to a recent report on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP). The overall classification of the report was dictated by analysis material included on the UK Air Defence Ground Environment. The document is otherwise UK RESTRICTED.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY	:	Section 40 [redacted]	TEL:	Section 40
AUTHORISED BY	:	[redacted]	TEL:	[redacted]
GRADE/RANK	:	B1		
BRANCH	:	DAS(Sec)		

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

RESTRICTED
UNCLASSIFIED

BACKGROUND NOTE

1. This linked background note is in respect of six PQs that have been tabled by the Lord Hill- Norton on the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects. Three are for answer on Friday 26 January, the remaining three are for answer on Tuesday 30 January. All relate to incidents alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest around Christmas 1980. A book, "You can't tell the people - the definitive account of the Rendlesham Forest UFO mystery" written by Georgina Bruni, was published in November 2000. Four other PQs tabled by Lord Hill-Norton, on the same subject, are also for answer on 26 January (PQs 0348, 0349, 0350, 0351) and have been submitted separately.

2. PQS 0355L and 0393L - The book by Ms Bruni alleges a cover-up of information of the alleged events and subsequent investigation by the US authorities. Lord Hill-Norton asks about MOD awareness of any US investigation in 1980 and whether any approach was made to US authorities, or by the US authorities to MOD, concerning the publication of the book.

PQ 0355L - There are only a very few papers from the early 1980's on a MOD file concerning the alleged events. Along with correspondence from members of the public, they include the report from Lt Col Charles Halt USAF to the RAF Liaison Officer at RAF Bentwaters and limited official comments on that report. However, a press briefing prepared in 1983 reveals that evidence of investigation by the US authorities was limited to the information contained in Lt Col Halt's memorandum.

PQ 0393L - In view of the fact that the book was critical of US authorities, and that RAF Bentwaters/Woodbridge were at the time US bases, Headquarters 3rd Air Force were informed by telephone of the publication of the book. The aim of the call was to ensure that the HQ 3 AF public relations staff were aware, so that they would not be compromised by any media contact. As the answer indicates, there has been no other contact on the issue.

3. PQ 0358L - Asks whether there is any knowledge of involvement by the Ministry of Defence Police, or personnel from the Suffolk Constabulary. Ms Bruni pursued both lines of enquiry as US ex-Servicemen interviewed by her suggested that British Police (she assumes from either the Ministry of Defence Police or the local Suffolk Constabulary) might have visited the site of the alleged landing of a craft and kept civilians away from the site. Replies from both the Head of the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) Secretariat and from Suffolk Police are reprinted in the book. No reference to events in Rendelsham Forest has been found in incident files held by the MDP. In addition several Senior Officers of the Force were contacted but they had no recollection of MDP officers having investigated, or having been involved in, the alleged events. The Home Office has been able to confirm that the letter from the Suffolk Constabulary is genuine but has been unable, in the time available, to locate the incident files or confirm the detail with the author of the letter who has retired from the Force.

4. PQ 0359L - Asks for information on the nature and purpose of the underground facilities at RAF Bentwaters. Ms Bruni was taken round the site and installations at the former RAF Bentwaters, now owned by Bentwaters Investments Ltd, while conducting research for her book. Her viewing of the buildings led her to suggest there might be underground facilities and that nuclear weapons may have been stored there in 1980, contrary to UK/US Treaty obligations. In 1997 Lord Hill-Norton asked if nuclear weapons were stored at RAF Woodbridge and Bentwaters at the time of the alleged events in Rendlesham Forest. The answer given was that it was the policy of present and previous Governments neither to confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons at any site, either in the past or present; this policy has not changed. The current reply repeats the advice of Defence Estates who have confirmed that there are no underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters.

5. PQ 0392L - Asks if HMG will agree with an analysis of the basic facts of the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest as set out in a letter (written by Lord Hill-Norton) to Minister DP in 1997. A copy of that letter, and the reply from Lord Gilbert's office (D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/4290/97/M) is attached at Flag A.

6. The unclassified MOD file on the subject was opened almost two years after the event is alleged to have occurred and appears to contain documents drawn from a number of other files. It cannot be regarded with any degree of certainty as a complete record of all the papers ever held by MOD on the alleged event. However, the text of a press release issued by DS8 (now DAS(Sec)) in October 1983 indicates that Lt Col Halt's memorandum had been passed to staff concerned with air defence matters and the conclusion was that there was nothing of defence interest in the reported sightings. This conclusion has been repeated in reply to numerous enquiries over the intervening years and features once again in the answer to this question.

7. PQ 0394L - Asks if HMG will launch an investigation into the alleged incident and the response to this incident by MOD and the USAF in the light of new information contained in Ms Bruni's book. The response by MOD to other requests to reopen the investigation has been that no additional information has come to light that might call the original judgement into question and that remains the position. The memorandum sent by Lt Col Halt was received by MOD shortly after it was written. Although a complete set of papers has not been traced, the 1983 press release confirms that the memorandum was supplied to MOD staff concerned with air defence matters and that MOD was satisfied that there was nothing of defence interest in the alleged sightings. The press release goes on to confirm that there was no question of any contact with "alien beings", which was one allegation made when the interest of the press was aroused in 1983 and subsequently in Ms Bruni's book.

DEFENCE INTEREST IN UFO REPORTS

The MOD's only interest in reports of UFO sightings is whether there is anything which may be of defence concern, such as unauthorised or hostile military aircraft in UK airspace.

Unless there is corroborating evidence to suggest that UK airspace has been compromised by unauthorised or hostile military activity, the MOD does not investigate or seek to provide a precise explanation for each report received.

The MOD is not aware of any evidence which might substantiate the existence of extraterrestrial craft or lifeforms and no threat has been discerned which has been attributed to a UFO.

UFO SIGHTING REPORTS MADE TO MOD

Over the past 20 years the number of UFO sighting reports made to the MOD has remained consistently between 200-400 per year, accept for 1981 when 600 reports were received and 1996 when 609 were received. Mr Pope, a former member of Sec(AS) published his first book about UFO's in 1996 and this may account for the increased public interest at this time.

The geographical distribution of reports made shows that most reports are received from those living in large built up areas, often near airports.

Section 40 [redacted]

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone Section 40 (Direct Dialling)
071-21 89000 (Switchboard)

ENCLOSURE 3

Minister of State
for Defence Procurement

From: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/4290/97/M

14 November 1997

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your further letter of 22 October about the alleged events at Rendlesham Forest of the nights of 27-29 December 1980.

Officials here had previously drawn my attention to the memo written by Colonel Halt. I am afraid, however, that there is nothing further I can add. From surviving Departmental records we remain satisfied that nothing of defence significance occurred on the nights in question.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40 [redacted]

Private Secretary
approved by Lord Gilbert and
signed in his absence on duty

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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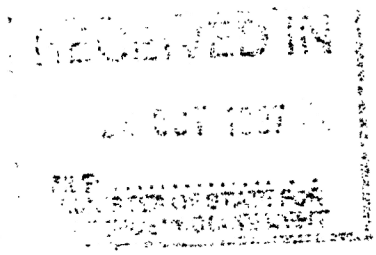
Section 40

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Lord Gilbert
Minister of State
Ministry of Defence
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB



22 October, 1997

Dear Lord Gilbert,

Thank you for your letter of 16 October (it took five days to get here!) about my Question and Colonel Halt's Memo. It was good of you to take the trouble to reply.

I do not want to go on and on, but because you are new to this particular matter I would like to put you more fully in the picture. Your officials, and those (perhaps the same individuals) of the previous Administration, have sought to pretend that Col. Halt's report was only about "unexplained lights in the sky", but as I said in my letter of 22 September it was about a good deal more than that.

So that there is no possibility of further misunderstanding I attach a copy of the Memo in full, and I beg you to read it yourself. From this you will see that he reported that an unidentified object breached UK Air Space and landed in close proximity to the US/RAF Air Base. He gives considerable detail about what happened at the time, and subsequently, together with physical evidence of an intrusion.

My position both privately and publicly expressed over the last dozen years or more, is that there are only two possibilities, either:

a. An intrusion into our Air Space and a landing by unidentified craft took place at Rendlesham, as described.

or

b. The Deputy Commander of an operational, nuclear armed, US Air Force Base in England, and a large number of his enlisted men, were either hallucinating or lying.

Continued:

Either of these simply must be "of interest to the Ministry of Defence", which has been repeatedly denied , in precisely those terms. They, or words very like them, are used again in your letter and I believe, in the light of the above, you would not feel inclined to sign your name to them again.

I could give you a great deal more evidence in similar vein, not only about this incident but about many others, but on this occasion I will spare you. I ought, however, in all fairness let you know that the routine denials by the Ministry - usually the ubiquitous Ms Phillips - will very soon become extremely damaging to its general credibility in this field.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Aitken.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 81ST COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (USAFE)
APO NEW YORK 09755

REPLY TO ATTN OF: CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT: Unexplained Lights

TO: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metalic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10^{0} off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.

CHARLES I. HALT, Lt Col, USAF
Deputy Base Commander

Lord Hill-Norton - CDS from 1971 to 1973.

- He has a long standing interest in 'UFOs' .
- He was a member of the (long defunct) House of Lords All-Party 'UFO' Study Group.
- He has written the Foreword for at least 2 books on the subject.
- Correspondence between him and Lord Gilbert on the subject of Rendlesham Forest is reprinted in Georgina Bruni's e book.
- Between Sept 97 and Dec 98 he asked 26 PQs on the subject of UFOs, 6 relate to Rendlesham Forest, and 4 PE, 3 on Rendlesham Forest. (July '97 to date 60 PQs - arranged subjects)
- He has, asked, more than once that all UFO files held in MOD archives be released to the PRO (in advance of the 30 year rule).

Rendlesham Forest

- The alleged event occurred around Christmas 1980. Claims are that lights were seen in the sky over a number (possibly three) nights. There are also claim that a craft landed and, by some, that USAF personnel saw and communicated with alien beings.
- The Halt memorandum was sent to MOD within weeks of the event.
- Several of those ex-USAF personnel interviewed by Georgina Bruni have been and are active on the 'UFO' lecturing/speaking circuit in the US.

Review of reports on UAP (Unidentified Aerial Phenomena.

A DIS matter; they have been receiving copies of UAP sighting reports for some 30 years, an analysis of reports was recently carried out.

- **Main conclusion: sightings provided nothing of value to the DIS in the assessment of weapon systems.**
- **Sightings can be explained as: mis-reporting of man-made vehicles, natural but not unusual phenomena and natural but relatively rare and not completely understood phenomena.**
- No further work will be carried out on the subject by DI.
- The classification of the report, SECRET, was dictated by the analysis material included on the UK Air Defence Ground Environment, otherwise it is UK RESTRICTED

Internal review of staffing of UFO reports 1997

Agreement was reached with Air Defence (DAO) (and DI) staff that in future only those reports in the following categories should be referred for further defence-related advice (this arrangement persists):

- **Credible Witness Reports**: reports from service personnel, civil pilots, staff in air traffic control centres/emergency service staff and reports with evidence (eg photos).

- **Corroborated Sightings**: where reports from more than one person on what appears to be the same sighting are received.

- **Timely sightings**: reports of a phenomenon currently being observed.

Other aspects:

- Since 1967, at the request of Parliament, files on the subject have been kept due to **public interest** in the subject..

- A few have not survived but most remain and the vast majority are unclassified. Those classified papers seen by current staff concern handling of correspondence and administrative arrangements.

MR NICK POPE

Nick Pope worked as an EO in Sec(AS)2a from 1991 to 1994. In 1996 he published a book entitled 'Open Skies, Closed Minds' based on his time in Sec(AS) and his views on UFOs. Following the publication of this book the number of letters and sighting reports made to the MOD rose dramatically from 373 in 1995 to 609 in 1996.

Nick Pope has written three further books; 'The Uninvited'- about alien abduction (published 1997): 'Operation Thurnder Child'- fictional book about an imagined alien invasion of earth (published 1999) and 'Operation Lightening Strike'- sequel to Operation Thunder Child about aliens returning to earth (published 2000). In a recent interview with a MOD reporter Nick Pope was asked if he is going to write another non-fiction book. His reply was '**I will return to the theme of UFOs and alien abduction as non-fiction. People will be hearing more from me. I want to write an update to my first book Open Skies, closed minds'**. This article was never published.

In addition to writing books Nick Pope has written articles on UFOs for various magazines and newspapers and has his own internet website. Some magazines are still quoting him as being 'A Government UFO expert'. He has also been mentioned in other authors books and recently wrote the foreword for a book entitled 'You Can't Tell The People' by Georgina Bruni in which he is openly critical of MOD. This book concerned a famous UFO incident at Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in December 1980 and is critical of both the MOD and the US authorities. He also appeared at a charity event in Henry VIII wine cellar in Main Building on 14 November 2000 at which Georgina Bruni was selling her book.

Section 40 [redacted]

Written Answers

Thursday, 25th January 2001.

Chinook Helicopter Mk II: Conversion Training

Lord Chalfont asked Her Majesty's Government:

When the Chinook helicopter simulator training facility and its related training programme were upgraded to cater for the Mk. II version of the helicopter; and when Flight Lieutenants Tapper and Cook completed their upgraded training programme. [HL324]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean): The reconfiguration of the Chinook simulator to Mk2 standard was completed in the last quarter of 1993. The instructing training staff of the Operational Conversion Flight had completed conversion to the Mk2 version in August 1993.

Flt Lt Tapper and Flt Lt Cook completed their conversion training programmes on 28 February 1994 and 17 March 1994 respectively.

European Security and Defence Policy: Intelligence Management

Lord Shore of Stepney asked Her Majesty's Government:

What are the commitments which the United Kingdom has entered into, under the European Security and Defence Policy, for the gathering, analysis and distribution of intelligence material for European Union purposes. [HL405]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: At the European Council at Nice, EU member states agreed the terms of reference of the EU Military Staff, which would perform "early warning, situation assessment and strategic planning for Petersberg tasks".

To carry out this task the staff will rely on appropriate national and multinational intelligence capabilities. The detailed arrangements for handling intelligence material will be subject to stringent safeguards and will take full account of existing national and multinational agreements.

Rendlesham Forest Incident

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are aware of any involvement by Special Branch personnel in the investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident. [HL303]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: Special Branch officers may have been aware of the incident but would not have shown an interest unless there was evidence of a potential threat to national security. No such interest appears to have been shown.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether personnel from Porton Down visited Rendlesham Forest or the area surrounding RAF Walton in December 1980 or January 1981; and whether they are aware of any tests carried out in either of those two areas aimed at assessing any nuclear, biological or chemical hazard. [HL301]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: The staff at the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) Chemical and Biological Defence (CBD) laboratories at Porton Down have made a thorough search of their archives and have found no record of any such visits.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in November or December 1980; and whether they will give details of any such incidents. [HL302]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: Records dating from 1980 no longer exist. Paper records are retained for a period of three years before being destroyed. Recordings of radar data are retained for a period of thirty days prior to re-use of the recording medium.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is the highest classification that has been applied to any Ministry of Defence document concerning Unidentified Flying Objects. [HL304]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: A limited search through available files has identified a number of documents graded Secret. The overall classification of the documents was not dictated by details of specific sightings of "UFOs".

Arms Brokering and Trafficking: Licensing

Lord Hylton asked Her Majesty's Government:

When they expect to implement licensing for arms brokering and trafficking, which they announced at last year's Labour Party Conference. [HL343]

The Minister for Science, Department of Trade and Industry (Lord Sainsbury of Turville): The new licensing controls on arms brokering and trafficking announced last September will be introduced under new powers on trafficking and brokering to be contained in an Export Control Bill; The Queen's Speech announced that the Government will publish this Bill in draft during this session of Parliament. Full details of the new controls proposed on arms

Section/Schedule of Act	*Timing of Commencement*
Schedule 21 (Minor and consequential amendments)	
Paragraphs: 1 to 5; 6(1), (5), (6), (7)(b) & (c), (8)	16 February
& (9); 8 to 11, 12(2) & (13); and 13 to 15.	1 July 2001
Paragraphs: 6(2) & (7)(d) and 16 to 18	On Royal Assent (i.e. on 30 November 2000)
Paragraphs: 12(2) & (3)	
Schedule 22 (Repeals)	As with corresponding provisions
Part I of Schedule 23 (Transfer of Registration of existing registered parties).	Two weeks after Royal Assent (i.e. on 14 December 2000)

Those provisions of the Act not listed in the table will be brought into force by means of one or more subsequent commencement orders at a date or dates to be announced.

Rendlesham Forest/RAF Bentwaters Incident

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will detail the underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters installation; and what is the purpose of these facilities. [HL320]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean): There are no underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are aware of any involvement in the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident by either Ministry of Defence Policy or personnel from the Suffolk Constabulary. [HL321]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: The Minister of Defence is not aware of any involvement by the Ministry of Defence Police in the alleged incident. The Ministry of Defence's knowledge of involvement by the Suffolk Police is limited to a letter dated 28 July 1999 from the Suffolk Constabulary to Georgina Bruni that is contained in the recent book.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are aware of any investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident carried out by the United States Air force, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations or any other United States agency. [HL322]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: The Ministry of Defence's knowledge of an investigation by the US authorities into the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 is limited to the information contained in the memorandum sent by Lt Col Halt USAF, Deputy Base Commander at RAF Woodbridge, to the RAF Liaison Officer at RAF Bentwaters on 13 January 1981.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether, in the light of the new information contained in Georgina Bruni's book *You Can't Tell the People*, they will now launch an investigation into the Rendlesham Forest incident and the response to this incident by the United States Air Force and the Ministry of Defence. [HL352]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: No additional information has come to light over the last 20 years to call into question the original judgment by the Ministry of Defence that nothing of defence significance occurred in the location of Rendlesham Forest in 1980. Accordingly there is no reason to hold an investigation now.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they have made any approach to, or received any approach from, any United States government or military agency concerning Georgina Bruni's book *You Can't Tell the People*; and, if so, whether they will give details of any such approach. [HL353]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: As a matter of courtesy, the Ministry of Defence informed Headquarters 3rd Air Force at RAF Mildenhall about the book. The US authorities have not subsequently approached the Ministry of Defence on the issue.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they now agree with the analysis of the basic facts of the Rendlesham Forest/RAF Bentwaters incident in the fourth paragraph of Lord Hill-Norton's letter to Lord Gilbert of 22 October 1997, reported on page 429 of Georgina Bruni's book *You Can't Tell the People*; or, if not, in what respect they disagree. [HL354]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: The Ministry of Defence's position regarding this alleged sighting remains as it did at the time of Lord Gilbert's reply to the noble Lord's letter of 22nd October 1997. From surviving departmental records, we remain satisfied that nothing of defence significance occurred on the nights in question.

Nuclear Test Veterans

Lord Ashley of Stoke asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will make available to British nuclear test veterans the same screening facilities that are being provided for other ex-servicemen. [HL374]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: Work co-ordinated by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB), together with other published studies, indicates that even the most powerful radiobiological techniques for estimating historic radiation exposure in individuals are of doubtful use in the case of nuclear test veterans.

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BACKGROUND NOTE

1. Lord Hill-Norton, Chief of the Defence Staff from 1971 to 1973, has a long standing interest in 'UFOs' and over a sixteen month period, up to December 1998, tabled 26 PQs.

2. Lord Hill-Norton has tabled ten PQs relating to the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects ('UFOs'). Nine, are in respect of information contained in a book by Georgina Bruni on the subject of an alleged Unidentified Flying Object ('UFO') incident said to have occurred in 1980. One asks for the highest classification of any MOD document on the subject of 'UFOs'. This linked background note is in respect of four of the ten PQs, numbers 0348L, 0349L, 0350L and 0351L for answer on 26 January, the remaining six are for answer on 30 January.

3. The title of the book is "You can't tell the people - the definitive account of the Rendlesham Forest UFO mystery". It concerns a well known 'UFO' incident, alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk over the Christmas period in 1980 in the vicinity of two RAF bases, made available at that time to US Visiting Forces, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge. The subject of the incident first came to prominence in 1983 when a memorandum sent to MOD shortly after the event by the then Deputy Base Commander, Lt Col Charles Halt USAF, was unearthed in the US by researchers. The Halt memorandum describes the alleged incident in some detail and is reprinted in the book where claims are also made that USAF personnel met and communicated with "beings".

4. The book is a detailed account but one that includes contradictory evidence from a range of alleged witnesses. It accuses both UK and US authorities of a "cover-up" of the detail of the event. There is an unclassified MOD file on the subject. It was opened almost two years after the event is alleged to have occurred and appears to contain documents drawn from a number of other files. It cannot be regarded with any degree of certainty as a record of all the papers ever held by MOD on the event.

5. PQs 0348L and 0350L ask about alleged involvement in enquiries following the incident of personnel from either the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) Chemical and Biological Defence (CBD) laboratories at Porton Down, or from the Special Branch.

6. The book repeats the allegation of an unidentified witness that a team of four scientists from the CBD laboratories at Porton Down visited the site of the alleged incident shortly after the event is said to have taken place. Lord Hill-Norton has asked whether personnel visited the Rendlesham Forest or in the area of Watton (further to the north) in December 1980 or January 1981. MOD has been informed by DERA that a search of records has been conducted and enquiries made of a very few existing members of staff who were working at the CBD laboratories in 1980 but that no information has come to light.

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UNCLASSIFIED

7. A copy of a letter is reprinted that was sent to Ms Bruni from Police Headquarters in Suffolk in answer to a number of questions, including the possibility that Special Branch officers may have been aware of the event. In connection with this enquiry it has not proved possible in the time available for the Home Office to locate any files that might relate to the alleged incident. In addition many personnel serving in the force in 1980 have since retired and are no longer available for consultation. The reply repeats information contained in the letter from Suffolk Police Headquarters and confirms that Special Branch would not have had an interest in the event unless there was evidence of a potential threat to national security. It is believed that no such threat was evident.

8. PQ 0349L asks if there were any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in November or December 1980. Uncorrelated targets may be defined as radar tracks that have not been positively identified by normal means. No records remain dating back to 1980. Some paper information is retained for a period of three years before destruction; recordings of radar data are retained for only 30 days prior to re-use of the recording medium.

9. Lord Hill-Norton's fourth question, PQ 0351L asks for the highest classification applied to any MOD document concerning 'UFOs'. A search of material identified as relating to 'UFOs', necessarily limited by the time available, indicates that the vast majority of the papers that exist on the subject, on open and closed files, are unclassified. Directorate Air Staff (Secretariat) has traced a small number of documents classified SECRET. They relate to discussions concerning handling of correspondence and administrative arrangements rather than 'UFO' reports and appear to hold a higher classification than might be expected from the nature of the material they contain. The DIS has applied the classification of SECRET UK EYES ONLY to a recent report on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP). The overall classification of the report was dictated by analysis material included on the UK Air Defence Ground Environment. The document is otherwise UK RESTRICTED.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY	:	Section 40 [redacted]	TEL:	Section 40
AUTHORISED BY	:	[redacted]	TEL:	[redacted]
GRADE/RANK	:	B1		
BRANCH	:	DAS(Sec)		

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

UNCLASSIFIED

BACKGROUND NOTE

1. This linked background note is in respect of six PQs that have been tabled by the Lord Hill- Norton on the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects. Three are for answer on Friday 26 January, the remaining three are for answer on Tuesday 30 January. All relate to incidents alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest around Christmas 1980. A book, "You can't tell the people - the definitive account of the Rendlesham Forest UFO mystery" written by Georgina Bruni, was published in November 2000. Four other PQs tabled by Lord Hill-Norton, on the same subject, are also for answer on 26 January (PQs 0348, 0349, 0350, 0351) and have been submitted separately.

2. PQS 0355L and 0393L - The book by Ms Bruni alleges a cover-up of information of the alleged events and subsequent investigation by the US authorities. Lord Hill-Norton asks about MOD awareness of any US investigation in 1980 and whether any approach was made to US authorities, or by the US authorities to MOD, concerning the publication of the book.

PQ 0355L - There are only a very few papers from the early 1980's on a MOD file concerning the alleged events. Along with correspondence from members of the public, they include the report from Lt Col Charles Halt USAF to the RAF Liaison Officer at RAF Bentwaters and limited official comments on that report. However, a press briefing prepared in 1983 reveals that evidence of investigation by the US authorities was limited to the information contained in Lt Col Halt's memorandum.

PQ 0393L - In view of the fact that the book was critical of US authorities, and that RAF Bentwaters/Woodbridge were at the time US bases, Headquarters 3rd Air Force were informed by telephone of the publication of the book. The aim of the call was to ensure that the HQ 3 AF public relations staff were aware, so that they would not be compromised by any media contact. As the answer indicates, there has been no other contact on the issue.

3. PQ 0358L - Asks whether there is any knowledge of involvement by the Ministry of Defence Police, or personnel from the Suffolk Constabulary. Ms Bruni pursued both lines of enquiry as US ex-Servicemen interviewed by her suggested that British Police (she assumes from either the Ministry of Defence Police or the local Suffolk Constabulary) might have visited the site of the alleged landing of a craft and kept civilians away from the site. Replies from both the Head of the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) Secretariat and from Suffolk Police are reprinted in the book. No reference to events in Rendelsham Forest has been found in incident files held by the MDP. In addition several Senior Officers of the Force were contacted but they had no recollection of MDP officers having investigated, or having been involved in, the alleged events. The Home Office has been able to confirm that the letter from the Suffolk Constabulary is genuine but has been unable, in the time available, to locate the incident files or confirm the detail with the author of the letter who has retired from the Force.

4. PQ 0359L - Asks for information on the nature and purpose of the underground facilities at RAF Bentwaters. Ms Bruni was taken round the site and installations at the former RAF Bentwaters, now owned by Bentwaters Investments Ltd, while conducting research for her book. Her viewing of the buildings led her to suggest there might be underground facilities and that nuclear weapons may have been stored there in 1980, contrary to UK/US Treaty obligations. In 1997 Lord Hill-Norton asked if nuclear weapons were stored at RAF Woodbridge and Bentwaters at the time of the alleged events in Rendlesham Forest. The answer given was that it was the policy of present and previous Governments neither to confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons at any site, either in the past or present; this policy has not changed. The current reply repeats the advice of Defence Estates who have confirmed that there are no underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters.

5. PQ 0392L - Asks if HMG will agree with an analysis of the basic facts of the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest as set out in a letter (written by Lord Hill-Norton) to Minister DP in 1997. A copy of that letter, and the reply from Lord Gilbert's office (D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/4290/97/M) is attached at Flag A.

6. The unclassified MOD file on the subject was opened almost two years after the event is alleged to have occurred and appears to contain documents drawn from a number of other files. It cannot be regarded with any degree of certainty as a complete record of all the papers ever held by MOD on the alleged event. However, the text of a press release issued by DS8 (now DAS(Sec)) in October 1983 indicates that Lt Col Halt's memorandum had been passed to staff concerned with air defence matters and the conclusion was that there was nothing of defence interest in the reported sightings. This conclusion has been repeated in reply to numerous enquiries over the intervening years and features once again in the answer to this question.

7. PQ 0394L - Asks if HMG will launch an investigation into the alleged incident and the response to this incident by MOD and the USAF in the light of new information contained in Ms Bruni's book. The response by MOD to other requests to reopen the investigation has been that no additional information has come to light that might call the original judgement into question and that remains the position. The memorandum sent by Lt Col Halt was received by MOD shortly after it was written. Although a complete set of papers has not been traced, the 1983 press release confirms that the memorandum was supplied to MOD staff concerned with air defence matters and that MOD was satisfied that there was nothing of defence interest in the alleged sightings. The press release goes on to confirm that there was no question of any contact with "alien beings", which was one allegation made when the interest of the press was aroused in 1983 and subsequently in Ms Bruni's book.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY : TEL:

GRADE/RANK : B1

BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director Section 40

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

39

Ministry of Defence

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the light of the new information contained in Georgina Bruni's book You Can't Tell the People, they will now launch an investigation into the Rendlesham Forest incident and the response to this incident by the United States Air Force and the Ministry of Defence. (HL352)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

No additional information has come to light over the last twenty years to call into question the original judgement by MOD, that nothing of defence significance occurred in the location of Rendlesham Forest in 1980. Accordingly there is no reason to hold an investigation now.

January 01 PQ Ref 0394L

BACKGROUND NOTE

See combined background note attached to PQ0355L.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY : TEL:

GRADE/RANK : B1

BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director Section 40

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 22 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0394L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS) DAS (Sec) coordinator
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

MDP Sec
DI(Sec)
D NEWS
D AIR RP
CAS
ACAS

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

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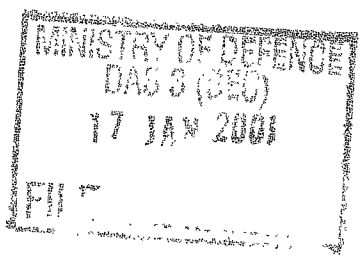
Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the light of the new information contained in Georgina Bruni's book You Can't Tell the People, they will now launch an investigation into the Rendlesham Forest incident and the response to this incident by the United States Air Force and the Ministry of Defence. (HL352)



RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

38

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D DAS(SEC) 64/4

Enclosure Jacket No 315

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:

DAS(SEC)4A

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)

22 January 2001

SUBJECT:

PQ 0393L
LORD HILL-NORTON
REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

2. When a TEJ is incorporated into the parent file it should be placed in the file in date order (according to the date of the last action on the TEJ) and allocated an enclosure number.

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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

3

Ministry of Defence

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have made any approach to, or received any approach from, any United States government or military agency concerning Georgina Bruni's book You Can's Tell the People; and, if so, whether they will give details of any such approach. (HL353)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

As a matter of courtesy the Ministry of Defence informed Headquarters 3rd Air Force at RAF Mildenhall about the book. The US authorities have not approached the Ministry of Defence on the issue.

January 01 PQ Ref 0393L

BACKGROUND NOTE

See combined background note attached to PQ0355L.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY : TEL:
GRADE/RANK : B1
BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director Section 40

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

2

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 22 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0393L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

MDP Sec
DI(Sec)
NEPG
D AIR RP
CAS
ACAS

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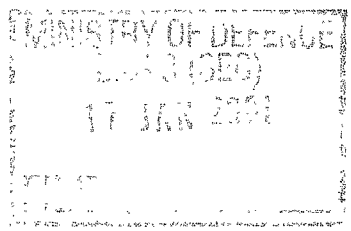
Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have made any approach to, or received any approach from, any United States government or military agency concerning Georgina Bruni's book You Can's Tell the People; and, if so, whether they will give details of any such approach. (HL353)



PQ0393 - Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Question:

To ask HMG whether they have made any approach to, or received any approach from, any United States government of military agency concerning Georgina Bruni's book You Can't Tell the People; and, if so, whether they will give details of any such approach.

Answer:

As a matter of courtesy Headquarters 3rd Air Force (USAFE) at RAF Mildenhall were informed by MOD of the publication of the book in November 2000. There has been no approach to MOD on the subject by the US authorities.

For Background Note:

As a matter of courtesy, and in view of the fact that the book was critical of US authorities, Headquarters 3rd Air Force (USAFE) were informed informally in a telephone call of the publication of the book by Directorate Air Staff in November 2000. There has been no approach by US authorities to MOD.

Passed to Section 40 for comment/clearance.
Section 40 1.01.

Final

Answers approved DMASec. Section 40

PQ0393 – Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Question:

To ask HMG whether they have made any approach to, or received any approach from, any United States government or military agency concerning Georgina Bruni's book You Can't Tell the People; and, if so, whether they will give details of any such approach.

Answer:

As a matter of courtesy Headquarters 3rd Air Force (HQ 3 AF) at RAF Mildenhall were informed by MOD during November 2000 that the book was about to be published. There has been no approach to MOD by the US authorities, and no other contact on the issue.

For Background Note:

In view of the fact that the book was critical of US authorities, and that RAF Bentwaters /Woodbridge were at the time US bases, Headquarters 3rd Air Force were informed informally by telephone of the publication of the book. The aim of the call was to ensure that the HQ 3 AF public relations staff were aware, so that they would not be compromised by any media contact. As the answer indicates, there has been no other contact on the issue and none is envisaged.

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

37

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D DAS(SEC) 64/4

Enclosure Jacket No 13

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:

DAS(SEC)4A

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)

22 JANUARY 2001

SUBJECT: PQ 0392L
LORD HILL-NORTON
REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

4

Ministry of Defence

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they now agree with the analysis of the basic facts of the Rendlesham Forest/RAF Bentwaters incident in the fourth paragraph of the Lord Hill-Norton's letter to the Lord Gilbert of 22nd October 1997, reported on page 429 of Georgina Bruni's book You Can't Tell the People; or, if not, in what respect they disagree. (HL354)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

The Ministry of Defence's position regarding this alleged sighting remains as it did at the time of the Rt Hon Dr the Lord Gilbert's reply to the Noble Lord's letter of 22 October 1997. From surviving Departmental records, we remain satisfied that nothing of defence significance occurred on the nights in question.

January 01 PQ Ref 0392L

BACKGROUND NOTE

See combined background note attached to PQ0355L.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY : TEL:

GRADE/RANK : B1

BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director Section 40

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

3

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 22 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0392L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

DAS (Sec) consideration.

Defence Estates
CS HQ Strike Cmd
D NEWS
MDP(SEC)
D AIR RP
CAS
ACAS

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Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they now agree with the analysis of the basic facts of the Rendlesham Forest/RAF Bentwaters incident in the fourth paragraph of the Lord Hill-Norton's letter to the Lord Gilbert of 22nd October 1997, reported on page 429 of Georgina Bruni's book You Can't Tell the People; or, if not, in what respect they disagree. (HL354)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DAS 3 (SEC)
17 JAN 2001
FILE

Section 40

2 18/11

ENCLO 3

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone Section 40 (Direct Dialling)
071-21 89000 (Switchboard)

Minister of State
for Defence Procurement

From: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/4290/97/M

14 November 1997

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your further letter of 22 October about the alleged events at Rendlesham Forest of the nights of 27-29 December 1980.

Officials here had previously drawn my attention to the memo written by Colonel Halt. I am afraid, however, that there is nothing further I can add. From surviving Departmental records we remain satisfied that nothing of defence significance occurred on the nights in question.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Private Secretary
approved by Lord Gilbert and signed in his absence on duty

MINIS... SEC... 17 NOV 1997 FILE

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Recycled Paper

MINC
Sec CAS UFOs
D-3824
Section 40

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Lord Gilbert
Minister of State
Ministry of Defence
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

22 October, 1997

Dear Lord Gilbert,

Thank you for your letter of 16 October (it took five days to get here!) about my Question and Colonel Halt's Memo. It was good of you to take the trouble to reply.

I do not want to go on and on, but because you are new to this particular matter I would like to put you more fully in the picture. Your officials, and those (perhaps the same individuals) of the previous Administration, have sought to pretend that Col. Halt's report was only about "unexplained lights in the sky", but as I said in my letter of 22 September it was about a good deal more than that.

So that there is no possibility of further misunderstanding I attach a copy of the Memo in full, and I beg you to read it yourself. From this you will see that he reported that an unidentified object breached UK Air Space and landed in close proximity to the US RAF Air Base. He gives considerable detail about what happened at the time, and subsequently, together with physical evidence of an intrusion.

My position both privately and publicly expressed over the last dozen years or more, is that there are only two possibilities, either:

a. An intrusion into our Air Space and a landing by unidentified craft took place at Rendlesham, as described.

or

b. The Deputy Commander of an operational, nuclear armed, US Air Force Base in England, and a large number of his enlisted men, were either hallucinating or lying.

Continued:

Either of these simply must be "of interest to the Ministry of Defence", which has been repeatedly denied , in precisely those terms. They, or words very like them, are used again in your letter and I believe, in the light of the above, you would not feel inclined to sign your name to them again.

I could give you a great deal more evidence in similar vein, not only about this incident but about many others, but on this occasion I will spare you. I ought, however, in all fairness let you know that the routine denials by the Minist≠y - usually the ubiquitous Ms Phillips - will very soon become extremely damaging to its general credibility in this field.

Yours sincerely,

Hill-Norton.

Copy of Memorandum by Lt. Col. Halt USAF
Sent to the Ministry of Defence on 13.1.81"

Subject: Unexplained Lights
To: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, three depressions 1.5" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/Gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05 -.07) readings at the side of the tree toward the depressions.

3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10^{o} off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.

PQ0392L -

Draft.

. . . whether they now agree with the analysis of the basic facts of the Rendlesham Forest/RAF Bentwaters incident in the fourth paragraph of the Lord Hill-Norton's letter to the Lord Gilbert of 22 October 1997, reported on page 429 of GB's book . . .; or, if not, in what respect they disagree.

Answer:

An examination of the MOD records that are available confirm that there was nothing of defence significance in the alleged sighting in 1980.

Background Note:

The book claims to present new information on the subject of the alleged incident in 1980 and Lord-Hill Norton appears to wish to re-open discussion of his letter of 22 October 1997 in the light of allegations made in the text. A copy of that letter, and the reply from Lord Gilbert's office (D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/4290/97/M) is attached.

There is an unclassified MOD file on the subject. It was opened almost two years after the event is alleged to have occurred and appears to contain documents drawn from a number of other files. It cannot be regarded with any degree of certainty as a record of all the papers ever held by MOD on the alleged event. However, a DS8 (now DAS(Sec)) internal file note and subsequent press release from October 1983 indicate that Lt Col Halt's memorandum had been passed to staff concerned with air defence matters and the conclusion was that there was nothing of defence interest in the reported sightings. This conclusion has been repeated in reply to numerous enquiries over the intervening years.

~~I have nothing to add~~ The ~~Department's~~ MOD's position ~~on~~ regarding this alleged sighting remains as it did at the time of the Rt Hon Dr the Lord Gilbert's reply to the Lord H-N's letter of 22 October 1997. From surviving Departmental records we remain satisfied that nothing of defence significance occurred on the nights in question.

Colin Mom & BRNI Book

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone Section 40 (Direct Dialling)
071-21 89000 (Switchboard)

Minister of State
for Defence Procurement

From: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/3842/97/M 16 October 1997

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your letter of 22 September concerning the alleged events at Rendlesham Forest of December 1980.

From Departmental records available from that period we have found no evidence to suggest that this Department contacted Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt following receipt of his memo of January 1981 recording "Unexplained Lights" in the area in December 1980. Some 16 years after the event we can only conclude, therefore, that it was not considered necessary to make further enquiries in the light of the lack of any evidence to suggest that the UK's Air Defence Region had been compromised by unauthorized foreign military activity.

It was then, and is still the case, that MOD does not routinely contact witnesses who submit reports of "unexplained" aerial sightings. Follow-up action is only deemed necessary if there is corroborating evidence to suggest an unauthorized incursion of the UK Air Defence Region or other evidence of a matter of defence concern.

I hope this clarifies the position.

Section 40

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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Recycled Pape

MOD letter from Lord Gilbert to Lord Hill-Norton

Col 1ED FROM G. BRUNI BOOK

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Lord Gilbert
Minister of State
Ministry of Defence
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

22 October, 1997

Thank you for your letter of 16 October (it took five days to get here!) about my Question and Colonel Halt's Memo. It was good of you to take the trouble to reply.

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So that there is no possibility of further misunderstanding I attach a copy of the Memo in full, and I beg you to read it yourself. From this you will see that he reported that an unidentified object breached UK Air Space and landed in close proximity to the US/RAF Air Base. He gives considerable detail about what happened at the time, and subsequently; together with physical evidence of an intrusion.

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or

b. The Deputy Commander of an operational, nuclear armed, US Air Force Base in England, and a large number of his enlisted men, were either hallucinating or lying.

Continued:

Letter to Lord Gilbert from Lord Hill-Norton

Either of these simply must be "of interest to the Ministry of Defence", which has been repeatedly denied , in precisely those terms. They, or words very like them, are used again in your letter and I believe, in the light of the above, you would not feel inclined to sign your name to them again.

I could give you a great deal more evidence in similar vein, not only about this incident but about many others, but on this occasion I will spare you. I ought, however, in all fairness let you know that the routine denials by the Ministry - usually the ubiquitous Ms Phillips - will very soon become extremely damaging to its general credibility in this field.

Page 2 of Lord Hill-Norton's letter

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 22 January 2001**
REFERENCE	:	PQ 0392L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS) DAS (Loc) consideration.
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

Defence Estates
CS HQ Strike Cmd
D NEWS
MDP(SEC)
D AIR RP
CAS
ACAS

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

- **Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.**

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- **If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.**

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they now agree with the analysis of the basic facts of the Rendlesham Forest/RAF Bentwaters incident in the fourth paragraph of the Lord Hill-Norton's letter to the Lord Gilbert of 22nd October 1997, reported on page 429 of Georgina Bruni's book You Can't Tell the People; or, if not, in what respect they disagree. (HL354)

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Lord Gilbert
Minister of State
Ministry of Defence
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

22 October, 1997

Thank you for your letter of 16 October (it took five days to get here!) about my Question and Colonel Halt's Memo. It was good of you to take the trouble to reply.

I do not want to go on and on, but because you are new to this particular matter I would like to put you more fully in the picture. Your officials, and those (perhaps the same individuals) of the previous Administration, have sought to pretend that Col. Halt's report was only about "unexplained lights in the sky", but as I said in my letter of 22 September it was about a good deal more than that.

So that there is no possibility of further misunderstanding I attach a copy of the Memo in full, and I beg you to read it yourself. From this you will see that he reported that an unidentified object breached UK Air Space and landed in close proximity to the US/RAF Air Base. He gives considerable detail about what happened at the time, and subsequently; together with physical evidence of an intrusion.

My position both privately and publicly expressed over the last dozen years or more, is that there are only two possibilities, either:

a. An intrusion into our Air Space and a landing by unidentified craft took place at Rendlesham, as described.

or

b. The Deputy Commander of an operational, nuclear armed, US Air Force Base in England, and a large number of his enlisted men, were either hallucinating or lying.

Continued:

Letter to Lord Gilbert from Lord Hill-Norton

- 2 -

Either of these simply must be "of interest to the Ministry of Defence", which has been repeatedly denied , in precisely those terms. They, or words very like them, are used again in your letter and I believe, in the light of the above, you would not feel inclined to sign your name to them again.

I could give you a great deal more evidence in similar vein, not only about this incident but about many others, but on this occasion I will spare you. I ought, however, in all fairness let you know that the routine denials by the Ministry - usually the ubiquitous Ms Phillips - will very soon become extremely damaging to its general credibility in this field.

Your Ref.

Our Ref.

Dear Si:

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Section 4

Chief Conste

Page 2 of Lord Hill-Norton's letter

Lette

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

36

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D DAS(SEC) 64/4

Enclosure Jacket No ...13...

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)

19 JAN 2001

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:

DAS (SEC)

SUBJECT:

PQ 0359L

LORD HILL-NORTON

REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

2. When a TEJ is incorporated into the parent file it should be placed in the file in date order (according to the date of the last action on the TEJ) and allocated an enclosure number.

3. The file minute sheet should be annotated to record the enclosure number of the TEJ along with details of the number of enclosures contained within it. The TEJ record sheet (MOD Form 262A) should be annotated to record the date on which the TEJ was incorporated into the parent file (JSP 441, paragraph 4.13 refers).

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

2

Ministry of Defence

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will detail the underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters installation; and what is the purpose of these facilities. (HL320)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

There are no underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters.

January 01 PQ Ref 0359L

BACKGROUND NOTE

See combined background note attached to PQ0355L.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY : TEL:

GRADE/RANK : B1

BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director Section 40

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 22 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0359L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	DEFENCE ESTATES
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

DAS(SEC)
MDP Sec
D MOD Sy
CS HQ Strike Cmd
D NEWS
D AIR RP

Section 40

check book - Under 15

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

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Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will detail the underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters installation; and what is the purpose of these facilities. (HL320)

Reference Estates

Section 40

fax: Section 40

Section 40

Section 40

COVERING:
CLASSIFICATION:

DEFENCE ESTATES
Delivering Estate Solutions to Defence Needs

Agency Secretariat
Blakemore Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B77 7RL

FACSIMILE COVER SHEET

TRANSMISSION DETAILS	DOCUMENT DETAILS
To: Section 40	From: Section 40
	File Reference: 0359L
	Tel No (Std/Mil): Section 40
	Fax No (Std/Mil): Section 40
	Total number of pages including cover sheet: 3
Recipient's Fax No: Section 40	Date: 22 Jan 2001 Time: 09:05

Subject: RAF BENTWATERS – UNDERGROUND FACILITIES

Section 40

Background and draft reply as requested

Section 40

Transmission No:	Transmitted by: Section 40	Sig Section 40

CLASSIFICATION:
COVERING:

For incorrect transmissions please contact on

Ministry of Defence

Fri 26 January 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X)(CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will detail the underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters installation; and what is the purpose of these facilities. (HL320)

Minister Replying **Baroness Symons**

There are no underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters.

17 January 01 PQ Ref 0359L

DRAFTED BY: Section 40 TEL: Section 40

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and attached background note are in accordance with the government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

AUTHORISED BY: TEL:
GRADE/RANK: SCS
BRANCH:

Section 40

0359L

BACKGROUND NOTE

RAF Bentwaters was a USAF airfield and was sold to Bentwaters Investments Ltd on 15 May 1997. There were no underground facilities.

URGENT

From: Section 40 DAS 4a(Sec)
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Secretariat (Air Staff)
Room 8243, Main Building, Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) Section 40
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000
(Fax) Section 40
CHOTS - DAS4A(SEC)

FAX MESSAGE

TO: Section 40 DE. Section 40

SUBJECT: PQ - Land Hill - Norton

DATE: 19 Jan '01.

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER:

Section 40

The reference to the possibility of there being an underground facility is at Page 11. There is a "build-up" from page 8 onwards. This leads to the, apparently decidedly reasonable, speculation that there is an underground Crime at the site.

Section 40

(For info: Land H-N is an enthusiast - and tireless!)

Section 40

who kindly escorted us to the plush visitors' room and offered us piping-hot coffee, which went down very well on such a cold winter's day. Drane was equally accommodating, and when I cheekily asked for a copy of the huge Bentwaters map that graced his office wall, he willingly obliged. In all the excitement, I had forgotten it was my birthday and I could not have wished for a better gift than a USAF map of the entire Bentwaters complex, which listed and numbered every building above ground.

Vernon Drane had assigned one of his more mature security guards to accompany us on the tour. Derek Barnes was due for retirement soon, so we were lucky to have his expertise. He was a local who had been with Bentwaters security since the Americans had departed, before that he used to service their domestic appliances. Our first stop was the air-traffic control tower and although not that high, it was one hell of a climb on a wet and windy day. The view from the tower was quite amazing, one could see right across the base, over towards the forest. The fittings, which had once held the controls, were still mostly intact, and I could imagine being seated there, watching the A-10s coming in to land. However, this was not the tower I was looking for, that was in the weapons storage area. It was from that particular standpoint that an airman was instructed to keep an eye on low-flying UFOs. Just as I was taking photographs of the panoramic view, an aggressive young security guard came barging in. He thought we were intruders and had charged in with the aim of confronting us. I was now beginning to feel guilty at dragging old Barnes up those slippery metal steps to the tower, if the climb up was difficult in the gale-force wind and heavy rain, the climb down was equally so.

Our next stop was the base headquarters, where the wing commander would have ruled with his commanding officers. It was a large complex, surrounded by overgrown gardens, and at the entrance was a canopy that had obviously protected the officers from the elements as they stepped into their vehicles. I noticed most of the rooms were carpeted, and as we climbed the staircase to the higher echelons' offices they became much grander. We entered a reception

area through two huge glass doors: one etched with the emblem of the USAF and the other with that of the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing, the last squadron to occupy the base. The doors led to a spacious reception area, and off to the right was the grandest office of all, the wing commander's. As with some of the other top-floor offices, its walls were a mass of wall-to-ceiling storage cupboards, concealed by sliding doors with no handles. Jacquieline and I had fun trying to figure out how to open them. This particular office had its own private toilet, en-suite shower and small built-in wardrobe: Air Force luxury at its best, I thought. I could not resist a nose around and found myself looking on to an enormous balcony that Barnes said had been used for cocktail parties during the summer months. This is where the wing commander would have entertained the local Anglo/American Social Committee, commonly known as the Mutual Admiration Society. This building was only constructed in the mid-1980s and according to a former wing commander the old place was embarrassingly decrepit and he had often found himself apologizing to visitors.

Adjacent to the headquarters was the Command Post, which was the nerve centre of the installation. This was another nuclear-protected building. We had the spooks about the Woodbridge shelter, but this was far more sophisticated, and much larger, and I could not resist exploring it. I thought Barnes was not so keen but he never once complained. While we waited for him to open the combination locks we spotted more of the strange showers outside the main entrance to the building.

After entering by the heavy door, we had to once again use our torches because there was no electricity inside the unused structures, and of course there were no windows. The door led into a small cubicle, which must have been where a security policeman once stood guard. From there we entered another door that led to a narrow corridor, and on the left-hand side there was a sign with the words DECON 1. This consisted of a small cubicle with a shower unit. We then passed through another heavy door and as we walked down the narrow corridor we passed three more decontamination

units, DECON 2, 3 and 4. We realized that in the event of a nuclear attack, personnel would have been required to take an outside shower and go through the decontamination procedures before they entered the main complex. All along the corridor were strange-looking devices that we realized were oxygen vents. One room consisted of enormous pipes which led through the walls to where we did not know, but assumed these would have provided the oxygen. To my right was a small room full of row upon row of decaying telephone switchboards. Obviously, this had been their communications outfit, and I considered whether it would have functioned had there been an all-out nuclear attack. As we continued through the complex we passed other empty rooms and it felt as if we were inside some kind of capsule. It was difficult in the blackness with only torches for light and I almost fell down some steps as I tried to gain my bearings. At the far end of the building was a room that featured two rows of fittings joined end to end; these had, no doubt, housed computers. Barnes accidentally knocked over an empty can of coke and the noise suddenly brought me back to reality. This was some place! Exiting through the other side of the room, we came across another huge door and it occurred to us that we had passed through several of these on the way in. As with the Woodbridge post, we hoped that none of these would close behind us. I slid back a door that seemed to take up the whole of one wall, only to discover there was a sliding panel behind it made out of some type of steel. When I slid back the panel it revealed another of the same, and another, and another, and so on. After sliding all the panels back a solid steel wall was revealed. Moving back into the room I had previously exited, I found that the panels and sealed wall led right along the edge of that room too. It was obviously a nuclear-safe outside wall and it made me realize what little chance we civilians would have stood had there been a nuclear attack. The government information booklet, *Protect and Survive*, which advised its citizens on how to protect themselves from such an attack, seemed preposterous in comparison.

Suddenly we found ourselves in another passageway that led to

a small room. At the end of the room was an unusual solid red door that looked very important indeed. It had a small glass pane but was covered in warning signs such as: 'No photographs beyond this point. This is a restricted area,' and 'Warning. Controlled Area. It is unlawful to enter this area without permission of the Installation Commander.' Next to the door was some sort of old security system; unfortunately the door was well and truly locked and Barnes explained that there were no keys for it. I surmised this must have been one of the sensitive areas that Vernon Drane had told me still existed, apparently there were still a few of these on the installation. The door was at the very end of the building, which meant it could not really lead anywhere other than outside or down. But when I looked through the glass pane there was an area three-feet square directly in front of the door which was blocked off by a wall, and the exit which I could not see clearly was off to the left. However, there were no exits on that side of the wall because I checked when I left the building. Besides, it could not have been an exit because the signs clearly indicated it was an entrance to somewhere. We had to conclude that it was most probably the entrance to an underground facility. Disappointed, and knowing that the secret door would stay in my memory forever, we turned back, looking for the way we came in, but we seemed to have found another route. In the dark everything looked so much more confusing. We passed several more vaults and small rooms, and a sign on one of the heavy doors read: 'There are no classified documents in this vault.' Barnes pointed to a round steel contraption that reminded me of a submarine door. Was it an escape route? Did it lead to secret tunnels? Regrettably, I was not about to explore further. We were becoming nauseous at having to inhale the stale trapped air and desperately needed to get some fresh air into our lungs. As we stepped outside I was overwhelmed by a feeling of relief, and found myself thinking how fortunate we were to be able to walk out of that confined space into a world that was free from nuclear fallout.

Our next stop was the weapons storage area. We passed numerous dull buildings on the way, with our tour guide Barnes

********** -COMM. JOURNAL- ********** DATE 19-JAN-2001 ***** TIME 11:10 *** P.01

MODE = TRANSMISSION START=19-JAN 11:08 END=19-JAN 11:10

STN NO.	COM	ABBR NO.	STATION NAME/TEL.NO.	PAGES	DURATION
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-SECRETARIAT (AIR STAFF) -

********** - ***** - Section 40 **********

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

35/1

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D/DAS 64/4

Enclosure Jacket No 12

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)
18-1-2001

SUBJECT: PQ 0351L

LORD HILL-NORTON
Reply by Baroness Symons.

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

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PQ 0351L - Lord Hill Norton

Question:

To ask HMG what is the highest classification that has been applied to any Ministry of Defence document concerning Unidentified Flying Objects.

Answer:

The highest classification is Secret.

Background Note: headed **UK RESTRICTED**

A [limited] search of material identified as relating to 'UFOs' indicates that the vast majority of the papers that exist on the subject, on open and closed files, are unclassified. Directorate Air Staff (Secretariat) has traced a small number of documents graded Secret. They relate to discussions concerning handling of correspondence and administrative arrangements not 'UFO' reports and appear to hold a higher classification than might be expected from the nature of the material they contain. The DIS has applied the classification of SECRET UK EYES ONLY to a recent report generated on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP). The report concluded a low priority study to database reports of UAP sightings that have been received within that area over a period of some 30 years. The main conclusion of the report was that sightings provided nothing of value to the DIS and a decision has been taken to cease work on the subject. The overall classification of the report was dictated by analysis material included on the UK Air Defence Ground Environment. The document is otherwise UK Restricted.

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0351L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

MDP Sec
DI(Sec) / D Ao.
D NEWS
D AIR RP

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Peer's DETAIL: **Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB**

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the highest classification that has been applied to any Ministry of Defence document concerning Unidentified Flying Objects. (HL304)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNRESTRICTED

POSSIBLE ANSWER TO PQ 03511

The DIS has applied the classification of SECRET UK EYES ONLY to a recent report generated on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP). The DIS has received copies of UAP sightings for about 30 years. These were filed without analysis. Recently, a low priority study was conducted to database the reports and carry out an analysis. The main conclusion was that the sightings provided nothing of value to the DIS in the assessment of weapon systems and that sightings can be explained as mis-reporting of man-made vehicles, natural but not unusual phenomena and natural but relatively rare and not completely understood phenomena. A decision has been made not to carry out any further work on the subject. The overall classification of the report was dictated by the analysis material included on the UK Air Defence Ground Environment otherwise it is UK RESTRICTED.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNRESTRICTED

Classification

Caveat

Covering

F Sigs 927
(Int.9/92)

Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Transmission Details		Document Details
Serial Number:	Date and Time of Transmission: 17/1/01	Reference:
From: Section 40	Section 40	Subject:
To: Section 40	Fax Number: Section 40	Total number of pages including this cover sheet: 2.

Authorizing Officer	Transmit Operators
Rank, Name and Appointment:	Rank/Grade and Name:
Signature:	Signature:

Message/Remarks:

DI Sec

Phone: Section 40

Covering

Caveat

Classification

***** FACSIMILE COVER SHEET *****

17 JAN '01 17:57

Message To:

Section 40

Message From:

DI SEC Section 40

DAS4A1(SEC)

From: Info(Exp)-Records1
Sent: 17 January 2001 09:37
To: DAS4A1(SEC)
Subject: RE: PQ 0351L

Section 40

How about something like this for the background note?

Identification of relevant records.

The Ministry of Defence has two main archives. One, the main archive located at Hayes that currently has in excess of 65 linear miles of records. A great majority of these are Services personnel records, but approximately, 10 linear miles are registered and unregistered files created by MOD HQ branches an[redacted]tstations. These date back to the mid-1970s and are held awaiting review or for those already reviewed destruction. These records will carry a protective marking no higher than SECRET. A second, a much smaller archive, is located in central London holding approximately 3,000 linear feet of files with a protective marking at TOP SECRET level or requiring SPECIAL HANDLING).

There is **no thematic index** of files stored in either archive, although an exercise to create a database of archive holdings has been in place for a couple of years. But this is limited to recording basic file information such as file reference and the title as designated by the branch creating the record. The latter have proved to be particularly unhelpful on other exercises over the years for example a Ministerial file titled "USA" carried exchanges of correspondence of an ephemeral nature as well as significant details of "co-operation on special projects".

To undertake any search of the archives staff must be in the possession of at least - the abbreviate branch title and key words that might appear in the title. A physical search through MOD Form 262Fs (stored, in the main separately from files and totalling more than 1 million) ensures.

The identification of relevant files would then leads to the physical examination of the contents to establish the protective marking of individual documents and their relevancy to the subject.

Similar exercises in the past PQs Vol. C. Re. PRO holdings

In 1998 Lord Hill Norton asked a number of PQs relating to departmental holding of files relating to the subject of ufos. As a consequence of the above research was limited to the identification only of Sec(AS) and predecessor files that carried the title "UFOs".

More recently, a member of the public ask for information relating to files on the same subject that also required a search of the archives. As with the previous occasion only a limited search was undertaken.

[PQ0351L *(you might wish to consider ending on an upbeat!)*

So far as this PQ is concerned, and in attempt to be helpful, a limited search through the holding of files held by DAS(Sec) on this subject has been carried out. With the following result.....]

I hope that this is helpful

Section 40

-----Original Message-----
From: DAS4A1(SEC)
Sent: 16 January 2001 15:53
To: Info(Exp)-Records1
Subject: PQ 0351L

Section 40

Further to our discussion earlier today about the classification of documents concerning UFOs for one of the PQs we are answering, I would be grateful if you could send me something in writing that we can include in the background note. It may be helpful to mention the trawl of files you did for Section 40 query.

The question asked in the PQ is:

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the highest classification that has been applied to any Ministry of Defence document concerning Unidentified Flying Objects.

As our deadline for the PQ is 1200 on Thursday 18 January, I would appreciate a response as soon as possible.

Thank you

Section 40
DAS4a1(Sec)
MB8245 Section 40

I 34A1(SEC)

From: STC-OPSSPT-ATC-AREA2/SO2
Sent: 16 January 2001 16:07
To: DAS4A1(SEC)
Cc: DAO ADGE1; STC-OPSSPT-ATC-AREA/SO1; STC-OPSSPT-ATC-Gp Capt
Subject: UFO RELATED PQs

Importance: High

DAO ADGE 1 requested that we provide input to you on the following 2 PQs:

a. "What is the highest classification that has been applied to any MOD document concerning UFOs?"

b. "Is HMG aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in Nov or Dec 1980; and whether they (HMG) will give details of any such incidents?"

Records Classification :-

We have examined the file records of the Area Radar Units (LATCC (Mil) and ScATCC (Mil)) and the Headquarters STC Operations Support Air Traffic Control (formerly HQ MATO) for instances of UFO reports. We do not hold any files that contain data relating to UFOs at either the HQ or the Area Radar units. In any case the maximum classification of files held is SECRET, therefore if there had been any input in the past this would have been the likely maximum classification. What we can say is that reports of UFOs received by AIS (Mil), are reported to your office on an unclassified FAX using an insecure telephone line.

Uncorrelated targets :-

In so far as the question of an awareness of any "uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in Nov or Dec 1980" our records do not extend that far back. Unusual incidents would be noted in the Air Traffic Control Watch Logs at LATCC (Mil) or ScATCC (Mil); The ATC Watch Logs are retained for a period of 3 years and are then subsequently destroyed. Recordings of radar data are retained for a period of 30 days prior to the re-use of the recording medium.

Signed on CHOtS

Section 40
Sqn Ldr
SO2 ATC (Area) 2
Section 40

L 34A1(SEC)

From: 2GP-ISTAR2-2A-SO2 & SO1,
Sent: 17 January 2001 13:23
To: DAS4A1(SEC)
Cc: DAO ADGE1; STC-CMDSEC-SEC-PARL
Subject: RE: UFO Related PQs

Importance: Low

Not a very comprehensive reply I am afraid, but it is as follows:

Records Classification

a. Our highest classification for UFO documents is RESTRICTED.

b. We have no records dating back to Nov Dec 1980. Therefore it is impossible to give any information regarding the second question.

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance.

Section 40

Sqn Ldr Section 40
SO2 ASACS Ops1
Section 40

Section 40

-----Original Message-----
From: DAO ADGE1
Sent: 16 January 2001 10:38
To: 2GP-ISTAR2-SO1; 2GP-ISTAR2-2A-SO2; STC-OPSSPT-ATC-AREA2/SO2
Cc: DAS4A1(SEC)
Subject: UFO Related PQs
Importance: High

Section 40

Sorry for this fast ball but Lord Hill-Norton has submitted 4 PQs relating to a UFO report about lights in Mendlesham Forest circa 1980!! We (I) have been asked to provide inputs to DAS4A1 (SEC) on 2 of the PQs:

The first question is ' What is the highest classification that has been applied to any MOD document concerning UFOs'

The second question is 'Is HMG aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in Nov or Dec 1980; and whether they (HMG) will give details of any such incidents'

I doubt we have any records remaining for this period, but we must go through the motions. Grateful therefore if you could check down the organisation to see if there are any files or logbooks that go back to 1980 and whether any record exists of such activity. On the AD side could you also check with STCOC (old DCON records) as well as the CRCs.

By way of interpretation, I would define 'uncorrelated targets' as 'radar tracks that have not been positively identified by normal means'.

Answers have to be with DAS4A1(SEC) by cease work Wed 17 Jan 01. As I shall be out of office on that day, grateful if you would forward your inputs (including any pertinent background info and an indication of what, if anything, we would be happy to release to the public domain by way of a stated answer) on CHOtS direct to Section 40 (DAS4A1 (SEC)), info me. TVM

[redacted]4A1(SEC)

From: DAO ADGE1
Sent: 16 January 2001 10:38
To: 2GP-ISTAR2-SO1; 2GP-ISTAR2-2A-SO2; STC-OPSSPT-ATC-AREA2/SO2
Cc: DAS4A1(SEC)
Subject: UFO Related PQs

Importance: High

Section 40

Sorry for this fast ball but Lord Hill-Norton has submitted 4 PQs relating to a UFO report about lights in Mendlesham Forest circa 1980!! We (I) have been asked to provide inputs to DAS4A1 (SEC) on 2 of the PQs:

The first question is ' What is the highest classification that has been applied to any MOD document concerning UFOs'

The second question is 'Is HMG aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in Nov or Dec 1980; and whether they (HMG) will give details of any such incidents'

I doubt we have any records remaining for this period, but we must go through the motions. Grateful therefore if you could check down the organisation to see if there are any files or logbooks that go back to 1980 and whether any record exists of such activity. On the AD side could you also check with STCOC (old DCON records) as well as the CRCs.

By way of interpretation, I would define 'uncorrelated targets' as 'radar tracks that have not been positively identified by normal means'.

Answers have to be with DAS4A1(SEC) by cease work Wed 17 Jan 01. As I shall be out of office on that day, grateful if you would forward your inputs (including any pertinent background info and an indication of what, if anything, we would be happy to release to the public domain by way of a stated answer) on CHOtS direct to Section 40 Section 40 DAS4A1 (SEC)), info me. TVM

Section 40
DAO ADGE1

Official Report - Written Answers
7th May Columns 19-20.

Unidentified Objects, (Rendlesham Forest)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the current security classification on the documents his Department holds on the unidentified objects seen by members of the United States Armed Forces in Rendlesham forest, Suffolk in 1980; and if he will make a statement. [27644]

Mr. Soames: The papers held by my Department relating to the alleged events at Rendlesham forest, Suffolk in 1980 are unclassified.

6-4/4 ENCLOSURE NUMBER 54

Unidentified Objects (Rendlesham Forest)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his answer of 7 May, *Official Report*, columns *19–20*, if he will list the titles of the papers held by his Department in respect of unidentified objects seen in Rendlesham forest, Suffolk; and if he will make a statement. [31490]

Mr. Soames: Apart from a report of the events written at the time by the United States Air Force deputy base commander at RAF Woodbridge, which has been in the public domain for a number of years, the documents held by my Department are internal staffing papers and correspondence from members of the public relating to the alleged events.

Bourlon Barracks, Catterick

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the cost of the structure and fixed equipment of building 36 at Bourlon barracks, Catterick, for the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers light aid detachment; and if the final payment for that building has been made by his Department. [31612]

Mr. Soames: The total cost of the structure and fixed equipment of building 36, Bourlon barracks, REME lad, was £524,179. The final payment for this building—that is, the release of retention—has not been made.

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what will be the cost of modifications to the crane, doors and exhaust ventilation system in the LAD building (No. 36) at Bourlon barracks, Catterick, to facilitate maintenance work on Warrior armoured personnel carriers. [31614]

Mr. Soames: The estimated cost for the modification of the crane from a single to a two-speed motor is £5,500. There are no plans to modify any of the doors in building 36. The exhaust extraction system was modified in January 1996 at an approximate cost of £2,500.

Sea Training

Sir Dudley Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which operational sea training facilities the United Kingdom will make available to the Western European Union, following the Birmingham declaration of 7 May. [31746]

Mr. Soames: We will make available, for national or collective participation by WEU nations, the Royal Navy's operational sea training facility at Plymouth, and the joint maritime courses which are run off the coast of Scotland.

Western European Union

Sir Dudley Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to develop further the Western European Union's intelligence section. [31750]

Mr. Soames: The intelligence section agreed by Ministers in 1995 is not operational. Any further development of its capabilities would be undertaken by WEU in the light of experience.

Sir Dudley Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made with the Western European Union mobility study following the Western European Union Ministerial Council meeting in Birmingham and the meeting of Western European Union Chiefs of Defence Staff in London. [31752]

Mr. Soames: Following endorsement of the strategic mobility concept by Chiefs of Defence Staff and by Ministers, a special WEU working group has begun examining the most effective means by which the concept might be implemented.

Sir Dudley Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made as to when the Western European Union will be in a position to conduct a full-scale Petersberg-type operation. [31747]

Mr. Soames: Our target is for WEU to be capable of conducting a small-scale crisis management mission by the end of 1996. Achievement of this goal depends on WEU making further progress on the operational improvements we have initiated during our presidency.

Sir Dudley Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which countries have not to date offered to provide intelligence data to the Western European Union's intelligence section. [31751]

Mr. Soames: This is a matter for the nations concerned.

Sir Dudley Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures will be taken to increase the involvement of the associate partner members in Western European Union's work on operational development with particular reference to Africa peacekeeping, exercise policy and humanitarian task force operations. [31749]

Mr. Soames: WEU associate partners have already taken part in discussions on the specific issues referred to by the hon. Member. They have also been invited to provide information on the forces that they might make available for WEU operations. We look forward to their further involvement in discussions on other operational matters.

Sir Dudley Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will encourage the Western European Union to add a public relations element to its current crisis exercises, Crisex 96. [31753]

Mr. Soames: WEU intends to use this exercise to promote its operational role to the media, and plans a press visit to the exercise. WEU will also be testing internally new procedures for operational public information policy, developed as a UK initiative.

Sea Harrier Aircraft

Mr. Home Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Sea Harrier aircraft have been lost in the last year; how many new aircraft from the attrition batch whose procurement was announced in January 1994 have now been deployed in squadron service as replacements; and what navigation system was fitted to those replacement aircraft when they were delivered by British Aerospace. [31758]

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

35+1

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D DAS(SEC)64/4

Enclosure Jacket No 11

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)
16 JAN 2001

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:
DAS (SEC)

SUBJECT:
PQ 0358L
LORD HILL-NORTON
REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

2. When a TEJ is incorporated into the parent file it should be placed in the file in date order (according to the date of the last action on the TEJ) and allocated an enclosure number.

3. The file minute sheet should be annotated to record the enclosure number of the TEJ along with details of the number of enclosures contained within it. The TEJ record sheet (MOD Form 262A) should be annotated to record the date on which the TEJ was incorporated into the parent file (JSP 441, paragraph 4.13 refers).

'EMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

7

Ministry of Defence

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any involvement in the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident by either Ministry of Defence Police or personnel from the Suffolk Constabulary. (HL321)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

The Ministry of Defence is not aware of any involvement by the Ministry of Defence Police in the alleged incident. The Ministry of Defence's knowledge of involvement by the Suffolk Police is limited to a letter dated 28 July 1999 from the Suffolk Constabulary to Georgina Bruni that is contained in the recent book.

January 01 PQ Ref 0358L

BACKGROUND NOTE

See combined background note attached to PQ0355L.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY : TEL:

GRADE/RANK : B1

BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director Section 40

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DA FOR RETURN	:	12:00 ON 22 January 2001
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0358L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

MDP Sec
D NEWS
CAS
ACAS

6 Lead

Section 40 [redacted] ~~Info~~

Replies received

HO/MDP.v

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

- **Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.**

- **The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.**

- **If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.**

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any involvement in the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident by either Ministry of Defence Police or personnel from the Suffolk Constabulary. (HL321)

Tuesday 12 Jan - Suffolk Police 5

Copy of their reply (reply to 0350.) Sent to HO. Section 40 23.1.01

Home Office

Action Against Crime and Disorder Unit
50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT
Switchboard Section 40 Facsimile Section 40 Direct Line Section 40

FAX

URGENT

To: Section 40 **DAS 4a (Sec) - Ministry of Defence**

From: Section 40

Date: 18 January 2001

Time: 11.20am

Fax number: Section 40

Number of pages: 4
(including this one)

If any part of this fax is unclear please telephone: Section 40

PQs ON RENDLESHAM FOREST INCIDENT IN 1980

I have enclosed a response from Suffolk Constabulary concerning PQ's on the Rendlesham Forest incident in 1980. As you will see, they have enclosed a letter from Inspector Section 40 Section 40 to Ms Bruni on the incident which concerns Suffolk police involvement at the time. This appears to be their only interest but I note that the contents of this letter was already included in the chapter of Ms Bruni's book which was enclosed. I think that the answer to this question will have to be that Suffolk Police did investigate incident (as per ← not available in the timescale. Section 40 letter) at the time but that it has been impossible to locate the incident files for a more detailed response. Also most of the officers serving at the time have since retired including Section 40

22 Jan. Suffolk Police

18 Jan. Special Branch

I suggest that the answer to the Special Branch qestion is that they may have been aware at the time of the incident but would not have got involved due to there being no threat to national security.

Section 40

Public Order Section

Last deadline from Constabulary agreed beg Section 40 over the phone. 18.1.01

Section 40

SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

FORCE HEADQUARTERS
MARTLESHAM HEATH
IPSWICH IP5 3QS

Tel: Section 40 Fax: Section 40 E-mail: Section 40

DATE	:	18 January 2001
TO	:	Home Office Action Against Crime and Disorder Unit
FAX NO.	:	Section 40
FOR ATTENTION OF	:	Section 40 Public Order Section
ORIGINATOR	:	Section 40 Executive Services Manager
PAGES TO FOLLOW	:	2
TEXT	:	

Section 40

As discussed please find a copy of a letter sent to Georgina Bruni in July 1999 which may be of use. As also discussed due to the period elapsed since the 'incident' it has not been possible to locate any files (due to them being stored in a different location). Furthermore the situation is exacerbated by the fact that most police officers serving at that time have since retired (including the author of the attached letter!).

I trust this will suffice.

Section 40
Executive Services Manager

Confidentiality Notice - this message is intended only for the addressee and may contain information that is confidential or privileged. Unauthorised use is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you are not the addressee, you should not read, copy, disclose or otherwise use this message, except for the purpose of delivery to the addressee. Please telephone the above number if this fax is incomplete, illegible, or if you have received it in error.

FORCE HEADQUARTERS, MARTLESHAM HEATH, IPSWICH IP5 7QS
Tel: Ipswich Section 40 Telex: Section 40 Fax: Section 40
All official correspondence should be addressed to the Chief Constable

Section 40 QPM
Chief Constable

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 28 July 1999

Dear Ms Bruni,

INCIDENT IN RENDLESHAM FOREST - DECEMBER 1980

I refer to your letter of 22 July 1999 in relation to a series of unusual events which allegedly occurred outside the perimeter of RAF Woodbridge, Suffolk, during the last week of December 1980.

A great deal of interest has understandably been generated in respect of this story, not least because of the apparent number and standing of witnesses. However, over the intervening years, various reports of the incident(s) seem to have taken on a life of their own to the extent that the 'sighting' details and corroborative evidence have been substantially embellished. This contrasts sharply with the views of the local police who attended at the time and did not perceive this occurrence as being anything unusual considering the festive significance of the date and expected high spirits.

Such a perception lends support to the lack of police documentary evidence and one needs to understand the minimalistic nature of rural policing in order to appreciate the answers which I will attempt to give to your questions.

(1) Both Section 40 and Section 40 have retired from the force but, being a long standing friend of the former, I have spoken to him recently and at great length in response to other similar journalistic enquiries. He does not recall making any official report and there is no evidence that one was made.

(2) Section 40 has confirmed that he and Section 40 were in the Law Enforcement Office at RAF Bentwaters when they were diverted to a 'higher priority' task at Otley post office. As rural night-duty officers they would have sole responsibility for policing a huge territorial area (approx 400 square miles) and would certainly have treated a post office burglary as more important than a recurrence of an earlier incident which was seen as somewhat frivolous.

(3) Section 40 (also now retired) visit to the alleged landing site would not have generated more than a standard incident log unless he was convinced that something worth reporting had occurred. Section 40 had discussed the matter with him and it appeared that all three officers were equally unimpressed with the nights events.

(4) Civilian police officers were not employed in guarding the area surrounding the alleged landing site(s) or to deter access as there was no evidence to indicate that anything of immediate concern to the police had occurred.

continued .....

Georgina Bruni

(5) There is no documentary evidence that police officers were involved in similar incidents on 27-31 December that year and Section 40 cannot recall any further requests for police attendance.

(6) Special Branch officers should have been aware of the incident(s) through having sight of the Incident Log(s) but would not have shown an interest unless there was evidence of a potential threat to national security. No such threat was evident.

I have tried to be as objective as possible with the answers provided and, like yourself, would undoubtedly be pleased to see a local incident such as this substantiated as an authentic 'UFO' experience. Section 40 holds similar views to myself and returned to the forest site in daylight in case he had missed some evidence in the darkness. There was nothing to be seen and he remains unconvinced that the occurrence was genuine. The immediate area was swept by powerful light beams from a landing beacon at RAF Bentwaters and the Orfordness lighthouse. I know from personal experience that at night, in certain weather and cloud conditions, these beams were very pronounced and certainly caused strange visual effects.

If you have any other query in respect of this subject I will be pleased to discuss the issues further. My direct dial telephone number is Section 40

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Inspector - Operations (Planning)

DAS4A1(SEC)

From: DAS3B1(SEC)
Sent: 18 January 2001 08:22
To DAS4A1(SEC)
Subject: FW: PQ 0358:UFOs.

Section 40
Good morning.

Forwarded as requested by Section 40 I hope it helps.

Section 40
-----Original Message-----
From: Sec(MDP)Co-ord
Sent: 17 January 2001 13:17
To: DAS3B1(SEC)
Subject: PQ 0358:UFOs.

PQ0358.doc

Good afternoon Section 40

Would you mind passing this on the the UFO desk!

Regards
Section 40

LOOSE MINUTE

4

D/MDP/36/2/8 (/01)

16 January 2001

DAS(Sec)
Copy to:
Ch Supt (Ops)
CID (CS)

LORDS PQ 0358.

1. Thank you for sight of the above.

2. I would suggest you reply along the following lines:

ANSWER:

"There is no record of the Ministry of Defence Police having investigated or being involved in the 1980 Rendelsham Forest incident. Issues relating to the Suffolk Constabulary are a matter for the Chief Constable of that Force".

BACKGROUND NOTE:

"We have been unable to find any reference to the Rendelsham Forest incident in files held by MDP. Several Senior Officers of the Force have been contacted to see if they had any recollections not recorded on file. The consensus seems to be that RAF Woodbridge did not have a dedicated MDP presence on site but rather was the subject of infrequent visits by MDP officers stationed at other establishments in the area. There are no recollections of MDP officers having investigated or been involved in the incident.

We cannot comment on whether Suffolk Constabulary personnel were involved in the incident. Such issues are matters for the Chief Constable of Suffolk".

[signed]
Section 40 [redacted]
Hd of MDP Sec
Section 40 [redacted]

LOOSE MINUTE

D/MDP/36/2/8 (/01)

3

16 January 2001

DAS(Sec)
Copy to:
Ch Supt (Ops)
CID (CS)

LORDS PQ 0358.

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[signed]
Section 40 [redacted]
Hd of MDP Sec
Section 40 [redacted]

DAS 4A (Secretariat)
Room 8245
Main Building
Tel: Section 40
Fax:

2

Fax

To: Section 40 - MDP Sec **From:** Section 40

Fax: Section 40 **Date:** January 17, 2001

Phone: **Pages:** 6

Re: **CC:**

☑ **Urgent** ☐ **For Review** ☐ **Please Comment** ☐ **Please Reply** ☐ **Please Recycle**

•Comments:

Dear Section 40

We have received PQ 0358L, one of a series of PQs which relate to an incident said to have taken place in 1980 on which we have the lead interest and are providing a consolidated response. This particular PQ asks about alleged involvement by MDP in the incident.

I would be grateful if you could provide us with an answer and appropriate material for the background note by COP 18 January.

I attach, along with the PQ, a short note on the incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 and a photocopy of extracts which mention MDP from a book that was published in November 2000.

With thanks

Section 40

~~WRITTEN~~ PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	12:00 ON 22 January 2001
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0358L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

Lead

[redacted] Section 40

info

MDP Sec
D NEWS
CAS
ACAS

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

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Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any involvement in the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident by either Ministry of Defence Police or personnel from the Suffolk Constabulary. (HL321)

[redacted] Section 40

[redacted] Section 40

MDP Sec.

Fax.

Weatherfield [redacted] Section 40

Mahemail to DAS Sec by COP 18 Jan.

[redacted] Section 40

FAX.

[redacted] Section 40

BACKGROUND NOTE - PQ TABLED BY LORD HILL-NORTON JAN 01

1. . . . Lord Hill-Norton has tabled XXX PQs on the subject of material contained in a book by Georgina Bruni published in November 2000 and MOD handling of material relating to 'UFOs'. Miss Bruni's book, "You can't tell the people" concerns a well known 'UFO' incident alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk over the Christmas period in 1980 in the vicinity of two RAF bases at that time on lease to the USAF, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge.

2. The subject of the incident said to have taken place in Rendlesham Forest came to prominence in 1983 when a memorandum sent to MOD shortly after the event by the then Deputy Base Commander, Lt Col Charles Halt USAF, was unearthed in the US by researchers. The Halt memorandum describes the alleged incident in some detail and is reprinted in the book where claims are also made that USAF personnel met and communicated with "beings". The book accuses the UK establishment of a "cover-up" to hide the detail of the alleged event in Rendlesham Forest. Text of correspondence on the subject between a retired Chief of Defence Staff, Lord Hill-Norton, and a previous MOD Minister is reprinted in the book.

3. MOD's interest in 'UFO's' is limited to whether alleged sightings might have any defence significance; namely, if they provide evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace may have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is corroborating evidence to suggest that the UK's airspace may have been compromised, MOD does not investigate or seek to provide a precise explanation for each of the 'UFO' letters and reported sightings received each year. MOD believes that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for most of the sightings. However, it is not the function of MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and resources are not diverted for this purpose.

Extract from Georgina Bruni's book 'You can't tell the people' featuring references to MOD

I must be careful what I say because I was with the MOD, but I can tell you that Colonel Spring was very much involved. I remember he suddenly disappeared from his office at short notice to meet the police. I think they were from Hull, but can't be sure about that. I think they had a similar incident up there and that was the reason for their visit – to compare notes. Colonel Spring went to the station to meet them.

Betty pointed out that the visitors were British civilian police and even the chief of police for Hull, or wherever they were from, was among the group. She insists there were no MOD police stationed at the bases, and she does not recall seeing any visit the base during that time. When I pushed her further, she replied, 'They sent people away and gave them new identities. Some were sent to RAF Lakenheath, others further afield.' I was surprised to hear that Sergeant Nevilles was sent back to the United States the day after the incident. I had not mentioned Nevilles' name to Betty, but she asked me if I had heard of him. Nevilles was the sergeant who accompanied Lieutenant Colonel Halt into the forest on the night he was involved. Betty told me that he had not only been sent away, but his name had also been changed. Apparently, his wife left soon afterwards. All attempts to contact Nevilles or his former boss, Captain Coplin, have been fruitless.

Betty did not explain how Lieutenant Colonel Spring was involved but confirmed he was the Chief of Operations. Because Lieutenant Colonel Spring was in charge of base operations he would no doubt have been informed of the incident and would most likely have played an important role in what happened after the events. Betty offered her own opinions about the incident, which I found very interesting, especially the part about electricity – was she trying to tell me something?

It was all very hush-hush at the time. I do believe it happened. The universe is massive and there must be others more advanced than we are. We don't know enough about electricity. I think they can transform themselves by using electricity. A tremendous amount

> genuine AFOSI Statement of Witness form but there should be a page with AFOSI's details [1168]. I don't know what Halt was doing taking these statements or who typed them. I notice it's dated 2 January. There doesn't seem much point in taking statements a week after the events were said to have happened. I can't see the point. You need to take them when they are fresh in the memory.

He asked me what the base commander was doing whilst all this was going on. I told him that during one of the events he was supposed to be at an awards dinner party on the Woodbridge base, and this is why his deputy commander was instructed to investigate. Persinger thought it was highly questionable that the base commander would continue to hand out awards when there was supposed to be a crisis on. I asked him if he would oblige me by giving a rundown on what procedures would be taken if such an incident had occurred (my comments in parentheses). According to Persinger, if there was a report of a 'hostile invasion or a craft that had come down', the base commander (Colonel Ted Conrad) would have dropped everything and put his police and fire departments on alert. The wing commander (then Colonel Gordon Williams) would have been notified immediately. The commander in charge of the Bentwaters AFOSI (Chuck Matthews) would have been informed and special agents (possibly John Wolfe and Steve Smith) would have been put on alert notification and would probably have gone out to investigate. The major in charge of security police (Malcolm Zickler) would have alerted his men and called in those on stand-by. He would then have had the patrols surround the craft and guard the surrounding area. ARRS would normally have been called if there was an aircraft down, but due to the close proximity of the base they would not have been involved. The British authorities, such as the Ministry of Defence Police and Special Branch, would have been informed, and of course the CIA.

So did the AFOSI investigate, I wanted to know? According to Diana Persinger, a few years after her husband's retirement they received a visit from Special Agent Steve Smith. He was a fairly new

was surrounded by hundreds of women and children who began living in disgustingly filthy conditions at a makeshift peace camp situated outside the perimeter fence. Top bodyguard and covert operator Jacquieline Davis spent several weeks under-cover at Greenham Common. She recalls being disturbed in the middle of the night by a Ministry of Defence police officer urinating on her face. It seems this was one way they relieved their boredom, another was to smear faeces on the tent poles. There has been much speculation that Greenham Common was none other than a front for Bentwaters, where the real missiles were stored. One wonders just how different the Rendlesham Forest case might have turned out had the forest surrounding the Suffolk bases been overrun by the Greenham Common protesters.

Lord Lewin, Admiral of the Fleet and the Chief of Defence Staff in 1980, was a great supporter of the United States Air Force in Europe. In fact, Lord Lewin visited RAF Bentwaters on several occasions and eventually retired to live near Woodbridge, where he died a couple of years ago. Apparently Lewin was also a supporter of nuclear weapons and argued the need for Britain's cooperation with NATO on this very subject.

Although no high-ranking American officer will openly admit that nuclear weapons were deployed at Bentwaters, there is a clue perhaps: it seems that RAF Bentwaters carried out exercises that still remain classified. On 30 June 1998 Member of Parliament Matthew Taylor posed a question to the House of Commons regarding the USAF and an exercise carried out in the United Kingdom:

> MR MATTHEW TAYLOR: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what was the scenario of the exercise, Proper Watch, in 1989; on what dates and where it took place; if the United States Department of Defense took part; and if he will place a copy of the results of the exercise in the Library.[5]

[5] Written Answers 130.

> DR REID: Exercise Pr
> May 1989. The ex
> responding to the cra
> weapons. The Unite
> exercise. A classified
> reasons my hon frier
> gave to the hon M
> column 470, and ur
> Access to Governme
> the report.

Based on all the
continuing cover-up t
incident. Could it be t
weapons? I asked Nick
issue.

> The Ministry of D
> were of no defence
> and investigated Ul
> this whole business

Much has been n
initial incident, but w
isolated case of radiat

George Wild is a
Yorkshire. Several yea
that Highpoint Priso
of 27 December 198(
prison officer at Arm
officers' seminar tha
struck up a conversa
claimed to have rec
evacuate the building
that night. Furthern
national security. Th

********** -COMM. JOURNAL- ********** DATE 17-JAN-2001 ***** TIME 14:09 *** P.01

MODE = TRANSMISSION START=17-JAN 14:06 END=17-JAN 14:09

STN NO.	COM	ABBR NO.	STATION NAME/TEL.NO.	PAGES	DURATION
001	OK	[redacted]	Section 40 [redacted]	006	00:02'15"

-SECRETARIAT (AIR STAFF) -

********** - ***** - Section 40 [redacted] **********

PQ0358 - is to be answered by us on 22 January. The chapter I mention above is entitled "The Police file" and contains references to Suffolk Constabulary. I would be grateful if you would arrange for an appropriate individual in the Home Office to provide us with an answer to the element of the question on the Suffolk Constabulary and appropriate material for the background note by COP 19 January. Perhaps you would be good enough to let me have a contact numbers for the second PQ if it is to be passed to another Home Office division.

With thanks.

Signed Section 40 [redacted]

From: Section 40 DAS 4a(Sec)
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Secretariat (Air Staff)
Room 8243, Main Building, Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) Section 40
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000
(Fax) Section 40
CHOTS - DAS4A(SEC)

FAX MESSAGE

TO: Section 40 - Home Office Fax: Section 40

SUBJECT: PQ 0350L/PQ 0358L

DATE: 17 January 01

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER:

Section 40

We spoke on the telephone.

I attach copies of the above PQs which I understand from MOD Parliamentary Branch are to be answered by MOD on behalf of HMG as they relate to an incident said to have taken place in 1980 in which MOD has the lead interest. Both make reference to Home Office issues and I was given Section 40 Section 40 number as a contact in the Department.

PQ0350 - is to be answered by us by 1200 on 18 January. I would be grateful if you would supply us with an answer to the question and paragraphs to insert in the background note by 0900, 18 January. I attach a short note on the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 and a photocopy of a chapter in the book on the incident that was published in November 2000. The Chapter contains references to Special Branch.

BACKGROUND NOTE - PQ TABLED BY LORD HILL-NORTON JAN 01

1. . . . Lord Hill-Norton has tabled XXX PQs on the subject of material contained in a book by Georgina Bruni published in November 2000 and MOD handling of material relating to 'UFOs'. Miss Bruni's book, "You can't tell the people" concerns a well known 'UFO' incident alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk over the Christmas period in 1980 in the vicinity of two RAF bases at that time on lease to the USAF, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge.

2. The subject of the incident said to have taken place in Rendlesham Forest came to prominence in 1983 when a memorandum sent to MOD shortly after the event by the then Deputy Base Commander, Lt Col Charles Halt USAF, was unearthed in the US by researchers. The Halt memorandum describes the alleged incident in some detail and is reprinted in the book where claims are also made that USAF personnel met and communicated with "beings". The book accuses the UK establishment of a "cover-up" to hide the detail of the alleged event in Rendlesham Forest. Text of correspondence on the subject between a retired Chief of Defence Staff, Lord Hill-Norton, and a previous MOD Minister is reprinted in the book.

3. MOD's interest in 'UFO's' is limited to whether alleged sightings might have any defence significance; namely, if they provide evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace may have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is corroborating evidence to suggest that the UK's airspace may have been compromised, MOD does not investigate or seek to provide a precise explanation for each of the 'UFO' letters and reported sightings received each year. MOD believes that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for most of the sightings. However, it is not the function of MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and resources are not diverted for this purpose.

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

34

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D/DAS(SEC)64/4

Enclosure Jacket No 10

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)
22 JAN 01

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:
DAS(SEC)

SUBJECT: PQ 0355L
LORD HILL-NORTON
REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

2

Ministry of Defence

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident carried out by the United States Air Force, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations or any other United States agency. (HL322)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

The Ministry of Defence's knowledge of an investigation by the US authorities into the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 is limited to the information contained in the memorandum sent by Lt Col Halt USAF, Deputy Base Commander at RAF Woodbridge, to the RAF Liaison Officer at RAF Bentwaters on 13 January 1981.

January 01 PQ Ref 0355L

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

Lead

Section 40 - Info

DATE FOR RETURN	**:**	**12:00 ON 22 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0355L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

Info from DAS 3 Dec.

MDP Sec
D NEWS
CAS
ACAS

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

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Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident carried out by the United States Air Force, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations or any other United States agency. (HL322)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DAS 3 (SEC)
16 JAN 2001
FILE

DAS3 Section 40
Cabinet with reply and background note. Text cleared with USAF.

(DRAFT answer to P0355l - Admiral of The Fleet Lord Hill-Norton, CGB)

Question: To ask HMG whether they are aware of any investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident carried out by the United States Air Force, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations or any other United States agency.

Answer: "The only evidence of investigation by the US authorities into the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 of which MOD is aware is contained in the memorandum sent by Lt Col Halt USAF, Deputy Base Commander at RAF Woodbridge, to the RAF Liaison Officer at RAF Bentwaters on 13 January 1981."

(Insert for PQ 0355L - Background material)

The MOD file on the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 (D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1) claims to have been opened as a registered file on 25 October 1982. However, as Sec(AS) did not exist until towards the end of 1984, or early in 1985 it is impossible to be certain when the file was actually created. An examination of the file that took place in 1998 confirmed that many of the papers it contained had been removed from their original location. The file cannot, therefore, be regarded with any degree of certainty as a full record of all papers available to MOD on the event that ever existed. A mention in a file note written in October 1983 to an unclassified USAF report is likely to be a reference to the "Halt memorandum" (Annex). The handwritten note also records that the US authorities did not carry out investigations (conducting interviews of personnel) but left MOD to carry out any inquiries it felt necessary.

When the Ministry of Defence was informed of the events which are alleged to have occurred at Rendlesham Forest in December 1980, all available substantiated evidence was looked at in the usual manner by those within the MOD/RAF with responsibility for air defence matters. The judgement was that there was no indication that a breach of the United Kingdom's air defences had occurred on the nights in question. As there was no evidence to substantiate an event of defence concern no further investigation into the matter was necessary.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 81ST COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (USAFE)
APO NEW YORK 09755

REPLY TO ATTN OF: CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT: Unexplained Lights

TO: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metalic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10^{0} off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.

CHARLES I. HALT, Lt Col, USAF
Deputy Base Commander

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE 33

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D DAS(SEC)64/4

Enclosure Jacket No 9

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)
17 JAN 01

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:
DAS (SEC)

SUBJECT: PQ 0350L
LORD HILL-NORTON
REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

6

Ministry of Defence

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any involvement by Special Branch personnel in the investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident. (HL303)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

Special Branch officers may have been aware of the incident but would not have shown an interest unless there was evidence of a potential threat to national security. No such interest appears to have been shown.

18 January 01 PQ Ref 0350L

BACKGROUND NOTE

Linked to PQ 0348.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY	:	Section 40 [redacted]	TEL:	Section 40
AUTHORISED BY	:	[redacted]	TEL:	[redacted]
GRADE/RANK	:	B1		
BRANCH	:	DAS(Sec)		

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED 81991

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0350L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

5

MDP Sec
D (F&S)AIR 1
Defence Evaluation& Research
Head of Sec HSF
GVIU
D SEF POL
D NEWS
HD of MDP QQR

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

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Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any involvement by Special Branch personnel in the investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident. (HL303)

assumer there
was an investigation

4

Home Office

Action Against Crime and Disorder Unit

50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT
Switchboard Section 40 Facsimile Section 40 Direct Line Section 40

FAX

URGENT

To: Section 40 **DAS 4a (Sec) - Ministry of Defence**

From: Section 40

Date: **18 January 2001**

Time: **11.20am**

Fax number: Section 40

Number of pages: **4**
(including this one)

If any part of this fax is unclear please telephone: Section 40

PQs ON RENDLESHAM FOREST INCIDENT IN 1980

I have enclosed a response from Suffolk Constabulary concerning PQ's on the Rendlesham Forest incident in 1980. As you will see, they have enclosed a letter from Inspector Section 40 Section 40 to Ms Bruni on the incident which concerns Suffolk police involvement at the time. This appears to be their only interest but I note that the contents of this letter was already included in the chapter of Ms Bruni's book which was enclosed. I think that the answer to this question will have to be that Suffolk Police did investigate incident (as per Section 40 letter) at the time but that it has been impossible to locate the incident files for a more detailed response. Also most of the officers serving at the time have since retired including Section 40

22 Jan. Suffolk Police

HO do not contend that a second of the three may be accomplished in the time allowed.

18 Jan. Special Branch

I suggest that the answer to the Special Branch qestion is that they may have been aware at the time of the incident but would not have got involved due to there being no threat to national security

Section 40

Case of time from Suffolk Constabulary agreed beforehand Section 40 over the phone.

Public Order Section

18.1.01

Section 40

SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

FORCE HEADQUARTERS
MARTLESHAM HEATH
IPSWICH IP5 3QS

Tel: Section 40 Fax: Section 40 E-mail: Section 40

DATE	:	18 January 2001
TO	:	Home Office Action Against Crime and Disorder Unit
FAX NO.	:	Section 40
FOR ATTENTION OF	:	Section 40 Public Order Section
ORIGINATOR	:	Section 40 Executive Services Manager
PAGES TO FOLLOW	:	2
TEXT	:	

Section 40

As discussed please find a copy of a letter sent to Georgina Bruni in July 1999 which may be of use. As also discussed due to the period elapsed since the 'incident' it has not been possible to locate any files (due to them being stored in a different location). Furthermore the situation is exacerbated by the fact that most police officers serving at that time have since retired (including the author of the attached letter!).

I trust this will suffice.

Section 40
Executive Services Manager

Confidentiality Notice - this message is intended only for the addressee and may contain information that is confidential or privileged. Unauthorised use is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you are not the addressee, you should not read, copy, disclose or otherwise use this message, except for the purpose of delivery to the addressee. Please telephone the above number if this fax is incomplete, illegible, or if you have received it in error.

FORCE HEADQUARTERS, MARTLESHAM HEATH, IPSWICH IP5 7QS
Tel: Ipswich Section 40 Telex: Section 40 Fax: Section 40
All official correspondence should be addressed to the Chief Constable

Section 40 QPM
Chief Constable

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 28 July 1999

Dear Ms Bruni,

INCIDENT IN RENDLESHAM FOREST - DECEMBER 1980

I refer to your letter of 22 July 1999 in relation to a series of unusual events which allegedly occurred outside the perimeter of RAF Woodbridge, Suffolk, during the last week of December 1980.

A great deal of interest has understandably been generated in respect of this story, not least because of the apparent number and standing of witnesses. However, over the intervening years, various reports of the incident(s) seem to have taken on a life of their own to the extent that the 'sighting' details and corroborative evidence have been substantially embellished. This contrasts sharply with the views of the local police who attended at the time and did not perceive this occurrence as being anything unusual considering the festive significance of the date and expected high spirits.

Such a perception lends support to the lack of police documentary evidence and one needs to understand the minimalistic nature of rural policing in order to appreciate the answers which I will attempt to give to your questions.

(1) Both Section 40 and Section 40 have retired from the force but, being a long standing friend of the former, I have spoken to him recently and at great length in response to other similar journalistic enquiries. He does not recall making any official report and there is no evidence that one was made.

(2) Section 40 has confirmed that he and Section 40 were in the Law Enforcement Office at RAF Bentwaters when they were diverted to a 'higher priority' task at Otley post office. As rural night-duty officers they would have sole responsibility for policing a huge territorial area (approx 400 square miles) and would certainly have treated a post office burglary as more important than a recurrence of an earlier incident which was seen as somewhat frivolous.

(3) Section 40 (also now retired) visit to the alleged landing site would not have generated more than a standard incident log unless he was convinced that something worth reporting had occurred. Section 40 had discussed the matter with him and it appeared that all three officers were equally unimpressed with the nights events.

(4) Civilian police officers were not employed in guarding the area surrounding the alleged landing site(s) or to deter access as there was no evidence to indicate that anything of immediate concern to the police had occurred.

continued .....

Georgina Bruni

(5) There is no documentary evidence that police officers were involved in similar incidents on 27-31 December that year and Section 40 cannot recall any further requests for police attendance.

(6) Special Branch officers should have been aware of the incident(s) through having sight of the Incident Log(s) but would not have shown an interest unless there was evidence of a potential threat to national security. No such threat was evident.

I have tried to be as objective as possible with the answers provided and, like yourself, would undoubtedly be pleased to see a local incident such as this substantiated as an authentic 'UFO' experience. Section 40 holds similar views to myself and returned to the forest site in daylight in case he had missed some evidence in the darkness. There was nothing to be seen and he remains unconvinced that the occurrence was genuine. The immediate area was swept by powerful light beams from a landing beacon at RAF Bentwaters and the Orfordness lighthouse. I know from personal experience that at night, in certain weather and cloud conditions, these beams were very pronounced and certainly caused strange visual effects.

If you have any other query in respect of this subject I will be pleased to discuss the issues further. My direct dial telephone number is Section 40

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Inspector - Operations (Planning)

Phone Nos.

Section 40

Sec. Section 40

From: Section 40 DAS 4a(Sec)
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Secretariat (Air Staff)
Room 8243, Main Building, Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) Section 40
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000
(Fax Section 40
CHOTS - DAS4A(SEC)

FAX MESSAGE

TO: Section 40 Home Office Fax: Section 40

SUBJECT: PQ 0350L/PQ 0358L

DATE: 17 January 01

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER:

Section 40

We spoke on the telephone.

I attach copies of the above PQs which I understand from MOD Parliamentary Branch are to be answered by MOD on behalf of HMG as they relate to an incident said to have taken place in 1980 in which MOD has the lead interest. Both make reference to Home Office issues and I was given Section 40 Section 40 number as a contact in the Department.

PQ0350 - is to be answered by us by 1200 on 18 January. I would be grateful if you would supply us with an answer to the question and paragraphs to insert in the background note by 0900, 18 January. I attach a short note on the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 and a photocopy of a chapter in the book on the incident that was published in November 2000. The Chapter contains references to Special Branch.

PQ0358 - is to be answered by us on 22 January. The chapter I mention above is entitled "The Police file" and contains references to Suffolk Constabulary. I would be grateful if you would arrange for an appropriate individual in the Home Office to provide us with an answer to the element of the question on the Suffolk Constabulary and appropriate material for the background note by COP 19 January. Perhaps you would be good enough to let me have a contact numbers for the second PQ if it is to be passed to another Home Office division.

With thanks.

Signed Section 40 [redacted]

BACKGROUND NOTE - PQ TABLED BY LORD HILL-NORTON JAN 01

1. . . . Lord Hill-Norton has tabled XXX PQs on the subject of material contained in a book by Georgina Bruni published in November 2000 and MOD handling of material relating to 'UFOs'. Miss Bruni's book, "You can't tell the people" concerns a well known 'UFO' incident alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk over the Christmas period in 1980 in the vicinity of two RAF bases at that time on lease to the USAF, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge.

2. The subject of the incident said to have taken place in Rendlesham Forest came to prominence in 1983 when a memorandum sent to MOD shortly after the event by the then Deputy Base Commander, Lt Col Charles Halt USAF, was unearthed in the US by researchers. The Halt memorandum describes the alleged incident in some detail and is reprinted in the book where claims are also made that USAF personnel met and communicated with "beings". The book accuses the UK establishment of a "cover-up" to hide the detail of the alleged event in Rendlesham Forest. Text of correspondence on the subject between a retired Chief of Defence Staff, Lord Hill-Norton, and a previous MOD Minister is reprinted in the book.

3. MOD's interest in 'UFO's' is limited to whether alleged sightings might have any defence significance; namely, if they provide evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace may have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is corroborating evidence to suggest that the UK's airspace may have been compromised, MOD does not investigate or seek to provide a precise explanation for each of the 'UFO' letters and reported sightings received each year. MOD believes that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for most of the sightings. However, it is not the function of MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and resources are not diverted for this purpose.

3

From: Section 40 DAS 4a(Sec)
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Secretariat (Air Staff)
Room 8243, Main Building, Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) Section 40
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000
(Fax) Section 40
CHOTS - DAS4A(SEC)

FAX MESSAGE

TO: Section 40 (Home Office) Section 40

SUBJECT: PQ 0350L/PQ 0358L

DATE: 17 January 01

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER: 26

Section 40

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Signed Section 40

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED 81991

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 January 2001**
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PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

MDP Sec
D (F&S)AIR 1
Defence Evaluation& Research
Head of Sec HSF
GVIU
D SEF POL
D NEWS
HD of MDP QQR

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Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any involvement by Special Branch personnel in the investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident. (HL303)

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 22 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0358L
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COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

Lead

Section 40 [redacted] ~~Info~~

MDP Sec
D NEWS
CAS
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Peer's DETAIL: **Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB**

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any involvement in the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident by either Ministry of Defence Police or personnel from the Suffolk Constabulary. (HL321)

EXTRACT FROM THE BOOK 'YOU CAN'T TELL THE PEOPLE' BY GEORGINA BRUNI

THE POLICE FILE

Wherever I turned there were hints that the Suffolk Constabulary were not only involved in the Rendlesham Forest incident but also its cover-up. Researchers and journalists complained at having come up against a wall of silence when trying to question the Woodbridge police, and it was not until years later that one of the police officers spoke publicly, if only to dismiss the 'lights' as being nothing more than the beam from the nearby lighthouse. I was warned that trying to get anywhere with the Woodbridge police might be very difficult. Even veteran defence journalist Chuck de Caro failed to interview the officer who claimed the ground indentations at the landing site were mere animal scratchings. The Suffolk Constabulary wrote to science writer Ian Ridpath suggesting that nothing could be gained by trying to contact the officers concerned. But undeterred, I was going to give it my best shot.

According to local police records, the first reported sighting was received at precisely 04.11 hrs on the morning of 26 December. This was almost five hours after the initial sighting had been reported and the men had long since returned to the base. The call was made to the head office of the Suffolk Constabulary at Martlesham Heath. A staff member from RAF Bentwaters told the officer on duty that there were 'lights in the woods over near Woodbridge', and asked if there were any reports of a downed aircraft. Martlesham Heath checked with Air Traffic Control at West Drayton and was told there was no knowledge of any aircraft in the area to coincide with the current sightings. However, the officer was briefed on earlier sightings that had already caused quite a stir in media circles. Martlesham

then called the Woodbridge police station, which in turn alerted their night patrol.

On 6 July 1997, almost seventeen years after the call was made to Martlesham Heath Constabulary, a man calling himself Chris Armold contacted the UK UFO Network, run by ufologists Raine and Crow, and claimed that he was the airman who had called the civilian police. Andy Tugby, a.k.a. Crow, explained that Armold had shown up out of the blue claiming they had all been 'well and truly snookered by Halt and his buddies'. I managed to trace Armold, who had obviously read about the case, but when I posed questions to him he was unusually evasive, considering he had made such wild claims to Raine and Crow. I contacted Colonel Halt, who, as the deputy base commander at the time of the incident, might have remembered him. Halt confirmed Armold had been a member of Law Enforcement at RAF Woodbridge but was not involved in the actual incident. From reading Armold's statement it is obvious he has a dislike for some of the witnesses, namely Halt and Burroughs. Armold actually puts himself in the picture by claiming to have been involved in the 'non-event', but his testimony appears to me to be a mix and match of various stories passed down over the years, and not even the sceptics seem prepared to accept it. I certainly cannot take Armold's critique seriously because, apart from his comments on the witnesses, there are several discrepancies. which are important enough to question his own alleged involvement.

In the early hours of 26 December PC Dave King and PC Martin Brophy were in their police vehicle heading towards RAF Bentwaters. This was part of their regular nightly visit to the USAF Law Enforcement desk. Being Christmas night it was relatively quiet and they were not expecting much activity, if any, before they went off duty later that morning. So they were surprised when a call came through on their radio instructing them to proceed to RAF Woodbridge to investigate some unexplained lights over Rendlesham Forest. It would take the officers another twenty minutes or so to arrive at the Woodbridge east gate, and it would

be coming up to 05.00 hrs before they started trekking through the forest. Dave King recounted what took place during that morning:

> It was the early morning of the 26 December. It was a quiet, mild night and there was nothing going on in the area. I don't know if you are aware of this but, for the police, Christmas Day is the quietest night of the year . . . My partner and I were out on patrol when we received a call to proceed to Woodbridge, the east gate, to check out a report of something going on in the forest. We were actually on our way to visit the Bentwaters Law Enforcement desk when the call came through. When we arrived at the Bentwaters base we were escorted through the back gate to the east-gate sentry post and were then taken to the forest by some security policemen. We had to follow their vehicle. They took us towards the spot where they said the other SPs had gone and we were told they were still out there. We had to park the car and walk on foot. The Americans didn't come with us. We walked about half a mile into the forest toward the direction we were pointed in, but we didn't see any lights out there except the lighthouse and there were no Americans out there, not a soul. We walked for some thirty minutes. If you look on the forest area as being a square foot then we must have covered only a square inch of it . . . We didn't report to the base because when we got back to our car there was no one there so we just left and went home.

I asked King if he had passed any houses or buildings in the forest but he could only remember seeing some cottages beside the Woodbridge flightline. These were most probably Foley Cottages. King explained that this was not his usual patch and although he knew Woodbridge very well, he did not tend to go into the forest. I wondered if he had gone straight ahead, towards the farmer's field near Capel Green, which would have been separated from the forest by wire fencing. But he did not recall seeing any field or fencing.

King and Brophy reported they had not seen anything unusual in the forest and concluded that the Americans had confused the lights with the Orfordness lighthouse. I told King that several

witnesses had testified to seeing lights other than the lighthouse, including a craft of some kind. I also pointed out that the first sighting was probably around 23.30 hrs, and wondered if it were possible that something was there before he arrived and had long since gone. 'It's possible. We were called out late and that's five hours after that. I can only report what I saw when I was there,' said King.

When I asked him what the Americans were doing out in the forest in the first place, he agreed that in normal circumstances they would never have investigated off their patch without consulting the police. 'Not one inch,' he told me. When I mentioned that the Americans had later put up roadblocks near the alleged landing site, he was not aware of it, but pointed out that this would have been a private road belonging to the Forestry Commission, and the police would not have been notified had that been the case.

At 10.30 hrs that same morning, RAF Bentwaters called the Suffolk Constabulary headquarters for a second time. They wanted to report that they had found a site where a craft of some sort could have landed. Ian Ridpath, who took an interest in the case in 1983, wrote to the chief constable at Martlesham Heath in November of that year, requesting information on the Suffolk Constabulary's alleged involvement. He received a reply stating that an officer had attended and the area involved did bear three marks of an indeterminate pattern, but the marks were of no depth and the attending officer thought an animal could have made them.

King recalls seeing the message in the police log:

> When I went on duty the next day I saw another message in the log that had come from RAF Bentwaters at around 10 a.m. on 26 December. It said they thought they had found the place were the UFO had landed. Another police officer went out to the site that morning but he found nothing.

On the second night of the sightings (26/27), PC Dave King and PC Martin Brophy were in the Law Enforcement Office at Bentwaters when the report came in. Dave King recalls the incident:

> It was a frosty night. I was doing my routine check with the Law Enforcement desk on RAF Bentwaters. We did that every night. We checked in with them and exchanged information. While I was there another report came in on the radio, a pocket radio, saying that there were lights in the forest at the exact same spot as the previous night. This would now be the early hours of the 27th. I was just about to go and have a look, thinking I might see something this time, when I got an emergency call to attend to a post office break-in about ten miles away at Otley.

I asked King if there was a report filed in the police log for this sighting.

> No, we didn't bother with it; we just thought they were bored watching their planes, and besides we had an emergency on. If that happened today the police wouldn't have time to mess around with it. It was a quiet time due to Christmas so there wasn't much going on. There were rumours that the Americans had set up searchlights on that second night waiting for it to return, but I don't believe it.

The fact that PC King did not take the incident seriously enough to at least make a report, resulting in it not being recorded in the police log, is somewhat disturbing. I pointed this out to him, but he considered the post office break-in to be an emergency and the sighting of lights in Rendlesham Forest to be of little consequence. In fact, I was curious to know more about the post office break-in, and why King had been called to an incident ten miles away. I thought, surely there must have been a police station at Otley, where the break-in had occurred, or at least closer to the incident than he was. King agreed this was a distance away, although it was not entirely unusual that Woodbridge police would be called to investigate further afield. Nevertheless, he has confirmed that patrols were off base for a second night, and even though there is no evidence to suggest that a landing of any kind took place that night, we know there were unidentified lights in the sky over Woodbridge.

King and Brophy finished their night shifts on the morning of 27 December, when they went on break for a few days. If, as has been suggested, the Woodbridge police were involved in the second major encounter, it has been a well-kept secret. Through the help of Malcolm Zickler, who was in charge of the police forces at the bases, I was able to contact retired Police Superintendent George Plume, who was the officer in charge of the Woodbridge police station during that period. Plume said he was surprised to hear from me because no one had contacted him about the case in eighteen years. I soon realized, however, that he was not on duty at any time during the events because he only worked the day shift from 08.00-18.00 hrs. Of course, he was aware that something unusual had occurred, but reminded me that it was a long time ago, and in order to assist me he would need the names of the officers concerned.

If George Plume needed names I had to find them. On one of my trips to Woodbridge I decided to pay a visit to the local police station. Being brought up in the country I knew they were always willing to help visitors and were known to be generous with advice. Woodbridge station looked like any other small country police station: you walk into the small reception, ring the bell and out pops the friendly bobby. The officer was indeed very friendly, and when I began asking him about the Rendlesham Forest incident and wanted to know the names of the police officers involved, he seemed familiar with the case and gave me the names of Dave King and Martin Brophy. Having explained that I had already interviewed King and was aware of Brophy, I asked for the names of the other officers involved. Surprisingly, he offered the name of Brian Creswell, and I was told that he had recently retired from the force and was still living locally. The officer could not remember the names of any other policemen who might have been involved, so I asked him if he would enquire of his colleagues. He disappeared into the back office and after what seemed like a very long time, returned with a look of shock on his face. He was positively white! Something had happened in the back office and, whatever it was, it had caused him to clam up. The friendly police officer had suddenly become very aggressive.

'There is no use you trying to contact him because he won't discuss it,' he stated. 'Contact who? Brian Creswell?' I asked. 'He doesn't want to talk about it, so there is no point you trying to get in touch with him,' he continued. I could see he was very agitated and was probably angry because he had already revealed too much. I decided to change the subject slightly and ask if it were possible to view the incident log for that particular period, to which he replied, 'Are you recording this?' I thought this was an odd sort of question. Indeed, why would he be concerned about me recording the conversation? Realizing I was not getting anywhere, I asked if he would summon one of the other officers to talk to me, but he flatly refused, which I found even more odd. After all, it was a quiet police station and I was requesting assistance.

I was not surprised to learn that the log books were no longer available, but according to George Plume, the police force had changed over to computers in 1975 and therefore records of that period should still be stored somewhere. I explained this to the police officer, only to be told that I would need to contact the head office at Martlesham Heath. I had a better idea. Armed with a name, I contacted Plume. He remembered Brian Creswell and told me he was living in Ipswich. Creswell had retired three years earlier, after thirty-three years' honourable service with Her Majesty's police force. Apparently, his colleagues were known to call him 'Monster', probably because he is over six feet tall. Plume suggested I try calling him but I explained that his number was unlisted. He seemed to think it was unusual for a rural police officer, retired or otherwise, to be listed as ex-directory. However, Plume was able to update me on Martin Brophy. PC Brophy had retired a couple of years after the incident and being very ambitious had moved to a civilian job, possibly with a technology company, and was last known to be living near RAF Mildenhall.

George Plume had been a great find, and as a former senior police officer he was able to offer valuable tips that helped with my investigation. But he reminded me of the USAF commanders I had spoken to. They were all very willing to assist in my enquiries,

provided I did not ask too many questions about the incident itself. This was very difficult considering that was my main reason for contacting them in the first place. Plume seemed to think I was delving too deep and gave me a friendly warning to be careful. There had been several of these friendly warnings, mostly from USAF commanders, but his was especially interesting, inasmuch as it came from a man who had been in charge of the Woodbridge police when all this was going on. As with the others, his warning was in no way threatening: on the contrary it was very well meant. It was nice to know that so many people were concerned about my welfare, but it only made me realize that something unusual must have occurred, and maybe I really was getting too close for comfort.

I decided to contact Dave King again. I wanted to find out what he knew about Brian Creswell's involvement. Thinking that Cresswell might have been one of the officers called out during the second landing, I was surprised to learn that he was the police officer who had visited the landing site and examined the ground indentations the day after the initial incident. 'He won't talk to you, he refuses to talk to anyone about it,' said King. Where had I heard that before? I asked King why Cresswell was being so secretive. I considered that if he had finished his day shift on the 26th, there was a possibility he might have been one of the officers called out during night duty between 27 and 29 December. King thought it was also possible. It just seemed strange that he would be so evasive if all he did was examine a few rabbit scratchings.

It would take me several months to locate Brian Creswell, and I was not convinced he would not want to talk to me. In spite of warnings that witnesses would not cooperate, most turned out to be very helpful, but I was certainly wrong about Creswell. The lady who answered the telephone took my name and a minute later he was on the line. I had barely introduced myself when he began shouting down the phone in a very determined gruff voice. Now I know why Woodbridge had a low crime rate for so long. You would not want to get on the wrong side of PC Creswell!

> I know who you are. I know you have been trying to find me. I know you want to talk to me and I don't want to talk to you. I have nothing to say to you, but I do want to know who gave you my number because I am ex-directory.

When I told him his uncle had given me the number, he would not believe me, and I thought it was just as well he was not aware that I had his work number too, which incidentally was given to me by another retired police officer of the same surname. At this stage I expected him to slam down the receiver, but he wanted me to know that the incident was built up over nothing but rubbish. It was useless trying to ask any questions because these were overpowered by his yelling. Realizing I only had a few seconds with this man, I threw in my ace and told him I had a photograph of a police officer examining the alleged landing site and I had reason to believe it was him. He wanted to know where I had got the photograph, but then he answered his own question by suggesting it must have come from the Americans. I explained that I only wanted to talk to him about his visit to the forest and his conclusion that the ground indentations he had examined were nothing more than animal scratchings. He was clearly not going to discuss it. 'I know what I saw. I know what I did and I'm not giving you any information,' he stated. I apologized for the inconvenience and bid him farewell. A few minutes later he returned my call. There was something he wanted me to know. He had retired from the police force after thirty-three years and, contrary to rumours, had not become an alcoholic but was almost teetotal. I realized he was referring to local rumours and assured him I was not interested in them and they should not concern him either, pointing out that they were related to two officers who had allegedly been involved in the second major incident. With that he offered an apology for the way he had reacted and the call was terminated. In all the time I had been working on this case I had never come across anybody who was so reluctant to talk about it.

According to witness Jim Penniston, the police officer who

investigated the landing site was adamant that he was not going to report anything other than that they were animal scratchings. When Penniston described the UFO to him, the officer refused to write it in his report. From what he told me, Penniston was clearly bothered by what he thought was the police officer's apparent lack of interest in the evidence; I have often wondered what would have happened if a full police report had been written based on Penniston's first-hand encounter with a UFO. I wished there had been an opportunity to discuss this with Cresswell.

Malcolm Zickler assured me there was a British police presence on Bentwaters. He called it a 'subdivision', and he is in no doubt that these officers were fully aware of the incident. It turned out that George Plume was stationed at Bentwaters for several years after his retirement, but was not too happy when I discovered this, which I believe he thought was none of my business. Zickler explained that there were always one or two British police officers on the base, and after-hours they would be called if there were any civilian visitors. Sometimes there were those who drank too much and they apparently had girl problems. Zickler recounted, 'Some of the girls were there to look for husbands, and there were those who were looking for something else – the Colchester lot. So we had to call them if there were problems.'

I met Nick Ryan at a social function I attended at the Bulgarian Ambassador's home in London. Nick was with the elite Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron, based at RAF Woodbridge from 1982 to 1984. I spent the evening drilling him on the Rendlesham Forest incident, the bases and especially the ARRS. He confirmed that at least one British police liaison officer was stationed at Bentwaters during office hours. I asked him if they would have been involved in the incident.

> The British civilian police would not have been notified about this incident until it was over. Under no circumstances would we have involved the civilian police. We would call them afterwards to find out if they had any reports, it was a way of finding out if any civilians were involved. But we would not ask for assistance on

something like this. The MOD Police are responsible for the areas surrounding any USAF bases in Britain. If need be, they would be required to guard the area around the perimeters.

However, Major Edward Drury told me outright that the British civil police were involved in the second incident but could not supply me with names. He even remarked that it was a local police officer he was friendly with who had told him there was a D-Notice slammed on the incident. (A D-Notice is a government instruction given to the press requesting them not to publish because it involves national security.)

Woodbridge resident Gerry Harris had a story to tell about the civilian police. Soon after his own sighting he became curious, and following his conversation with some of the foresters he decided the best way to find out was to visit the area for himself. On 29 December he was passing the east-gate entrance to the Woodbridge base when he noticed a British policeman and an American security policeman guarding the entrance to a forest logging path. After parking his van, he approached the police officer to tell him of his intention to visit the forest to see what was going on. As incredible as it may seem, Harris claims the American refused to allow him access. He argued that it was a public footpath and he had a right to enter but was told, in no uncertain words, 'Go away.' Not easily discouraged, he moved forward only to see the American cock his M-16 rifle and to hear the British policeman warn him, 'You better do as he says.' One burning question has to be, who was the British police officer? If Harris's recollection of events is correct it poses some even more important questions: (a) why was a USAF security policeman guarding British territory? (b) Why was the USAF security policeman armed on British territory? (c) Why was a USAF security policeman allowed to threaten a British citizen on British territory?

It has been a difficult task trying to find the names of the policemen who would have been on night duty during the rest of Christmas week. Over the years the Suffolk Constabulary appear to

have gone to great lengths to protect the identity of these officers. As a result, local rumours were invented and these are what appear to have upset Brian Creswell. The gist of the tales is that one of the officers was supposed to have been so disturbed by the incident that he ended up in a mental institution. The other was said to have suffered severe shock and become an alcoholic. I had already checked out these stories and knew they were nothing but nonsense. Whilst I admit that I have not been able to trace either of these men, none of the local policemen I have spoken to appears to know anything about these claims. I realize the police have been very cagey about this case, and it is possible that two local policemen were involved, but I am sure word of them having left the force in such strange circumstances would be known locally. George Plume thought the stories were very amusing, but insisted that there was not a grain of truth to them. 'I would have known if that had happened. None of the men left the force for those reasons,' he exclaimed. I could not help wondering if it was Plume who had forewarned Brian Creswell about these stories and my interest in trying to contact him. Either that or someone was listening in on my phone line.

Dave King does not believe there was any cover-up by the Suffolk Police. He told me:

> I didn't know this was a story until I first heard about that book *Skycrash* a few years later. The reason those researchers never heard from us was because they got the date wrong. They came to the police station saying it was the 27th, but there wasn't a log of it for that day. There was no cover-up from us.

It is very interesting that no further incidents were reported in the Woodbridge police log, especially considering the police visited the bases every night. One would assume that whoever was on duty during the second major incident must have known what was going on. Did they think the same as King, that it was nothing of any importance or are they staying silent for other reasons?

Adrian Bustinza recalls the British police being involved in the second incident. He explained to me what he witnessed:

> The British police weren't there at the beginning. I was on my way back to the forest, after filling the light-all in Woodbridge, and I saw two British policemen blocking the road into the forest. Their vehicle was parked on the road and they were there to make sure no civilians went in.

When I asked him if he had seen any British police officers near the landing site, he was certain they never went near the UFO or into the forest at any time. Apparently, they stayed on the perimeter of the forest, near the road.

Adrian Bustinza's memory of the British police being responsible for keeping civilians out of the way corresponds with the testimony of Gerry Harris, who claims they were blocking the same entrance on 29 December. It stands to reason that the local police would know if there was such an incident taking place. After all, this was a much bigger event than the initial encounter, where only a handful of US personnel were involved. On this particular night, or early morning, we are told that convoys of vehicles were moving through the Suffolk roads heading for Rendlesham Forest. What were the Woodbridge police doing during all of this? With such a large operation going on they must have known about it. So why are they denying it? Could it be that they were under strict orders to stay quiet because the incident was a threat to national security? Or maybe they were told it was a top-secret exercise. According to a police spokesman, there would have been a skeleton staff on duty during the Christmas period, as it was such a quiet time. Could it be that the local police were simply uninformed, or are there police officers out there who know something of the matter but are unable to discuss it because they have signed the Official Secrets Act?

If the Woodbridge police were involved, one wonders what they told the press. Journalists are known to call the local police station every day to pick up the latest news stories. In rural areas they will hear everything from Mrs Jones's cat stuck up a tree to a burglary in

the High Street. If there is a serious accident or crime, very often one of the police officers will tip off a journalist whom he is familiar with. So what happened with this particular incident? Why was it not on the front pages of the East Anglian newspapers or mentioned in the national press? Searching through decades of press reports referring to the Suffolk installations, I discovered that several USAF planes had crashed in the area. Surely if the Rendlesham Forest incident involved a plane crash it would have been reported in the local press along with the other reports. But there was no mention of an accident occurring in Woodbridge during that month.

A few months after I spoke to Dave King, the retired police officer visited Rendlesham Forest and retraced his steps of 26 December. He explained that it was nothing like it had been in 1980, when the trees were up to eighty feet tall. Since then, of course, the severe storm of 1987 that hit the British Isles had destroyed a large part of the forest. I was pleased to hear that King had made this trip, and even more so when he told me that he was not so sure it was the lighthouse the witnesses had been referring to after all. This was partly due to the call he had received from Marjorie Wright, a local woman who told him about her father's sighting, explaining that it could not have been a lighthouse. The fact that King had a change of mind was a real breakthrough, because his original lighthouse theory had been damaging to the authenticity of this case. It came as a surprise then that, following my interviews with King, the Suffolk Constabulary had contacted him and were now claiming he was still unconvinced that the 'occurrence' was genuine.

I had decided to write to the chief constable of the Suffolk Police because I wanted to know what their involvement was, if any, and whether Special Branch was aware of the situation. Because it was so long since the incident had occurred, I thought it was necessary to offer as much information as possible. I wanted to make sure they knew my information was not based on rumour.

I received a prompt reply from Inspector Mike Topliss and was

very impressed that he had taken the time and trouble to reply in such detail.

28 July 1999
Dear Ms Bruni
INCIDENT IN RENDLESHAM FOREST – DECEMBER 1980

I refer to your letter of 22 July 1999 in relation to a series of unusual events which allegedly occurred outside the perimeter of RAF Woodbridge, Suffolk, during the last week of December 1980.

A great deal of interest has understandably been generated in respect of this story, not least because of the apparent number and standing of witnesses. However, over the intervening years, various reports of the incident(s) seem to have taken on a life of their own to the extent that the 'sighting' details and corroborative evidence have been substantially embellished. This contrasts sharply with the views of local police who attended at the time and did not perceive this occurrence as being anything unusual considering the festive significance of the date and expected high spirits.

Such a perception lends support to the lack of police documentary evidence and one needs to understand the minimalistic nature of rural policing in order to appreciate the answers which I will attempt to give your questions.

(1) Both PC King and PC Brophy have retired from the force but, being a long-standing friend of the former, I have spoken to him recently and at great length in response to similar journalistic enquiries. He does not recall making any official report and there is no evidence that one was made.

(2) Dave King has confirmed that he and PC Brophy were in the Law Enforcement Office at RAF Bentwaters when they were diverted to a 'higher priority' task at Otley post office. As rural night-duty officers they would have sole responsibility for policing a huge territorial area (approx. 400 square miles) and would certainly have treated a post-office burglary as more important than a recurrence of an earlier incident which was seen as somewhat frivolous.

(3) PC Brian Creswell's (also now retired) visit to the alleged landing site would not have generated more than a standard incident log unless he was convinced that something worth reporting had occurred. PC King had discussed the matter with him and it appeared that all three officers were equally unimpressed with the night's events.
(4) Civilian police officers were not employed in guarding the area surrounding the alleged landing site(s) or to deter access, as there was no evidence to indicate that anything of immediate concern to the police had occurred.
(5) There is no documentary evidence that police officers were involved in similar incidents on 27–31 December that year and PC King could not recall any further requests for police attendance.
(6) Special Branch officers should have been aware of the incident(s) through having sight of the incident log(s) but would not have shown an interest unless there was evidence of a potential threat to national security. No such threat was evident.

I have tried to be as objective as possible with the answers provided and, like yourself, would undoubtedly be pleased to see a local incident such as this substantiated as an authentic 'UFO' experience. PC King holds similar views to myself and returned to the forest site in daylight in case he had missed some evidence in the darkness. There was nothing to be seen and he remains unconvinced that the occurrence was genuine. The immediate area was swept by powerful light beams from a landing beacon at RAF Bentwaters and the Orfordness lighthouse. I know from personal experience that at night, in certain weather and cloud conditions, these beams were very pronounced and certainly caused strange visual effects.

If you have any other query in respect of this subject I will be pleased to discuss the issue further. My direct dial telephone number is —.

Yours sincerely
[signed]
Mike Topliss
Inspector – Operations (Planning)

Apart from Dave King's verbal recollection of the 26 December incident, the Suffolk Police claim they were not involved in any further events. As there appears to be no official documentation at Martlesham Heath, Inspector Topliss had interviewed Dave King in order to find answers to my questions. However, King was on his break during the rest of that week and having interviewed him myself I know he has no personal knowledge of what occurred after he went off duty.

I cannot blame Inspector Topliss for thinking there was nothing to the case, especially if there is no documented evidence available in the Martlesham police records for him to refer to. Unless the police officers who were allegedly involved in the incident or its aftermath come forward, then it is unlikely we will progress further in this enquiry. Topliss agrees with Dave King that the Suffolk Constabulary were in no way involved in a cover-up. However, he suggested the officers could be reluctant to discuss the case in general because they are afraid it might be classed as secret, or because they were discouraged to talk to the press.

Also, on 22 July 1999, I wrote to the secretariat of the Ministry of Defence Police. I wanted to know if they were involved in the incident. On 17 August I was surprised to receive a reply from the chief of the department, Paul A. Crowther, whose title is Agency Secretary and Director of Finance and Administration.

D/DMP/36/2/7 (262/99)

17th August 1999

Dear Ms Bruni

Thank you for your letter dated 22nd July 1999, requesting information about an incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980. With regard to your request, we have been unable to find any reference to the incident in files held by our Operations and CID departments. However, it is worth noting that files of this age are not normally held centrally – they are either destroyed or archived. Several of the more senior officers of the Force have

however been contacted with regard to the presence of an MDP detachment at Woodbridge in 1980. It would appear that RAF Woodbridge did not sustain its own detachment; rather it was the subject of infrequent visits by MDP officers stationed elsewhere in Suffolk. There is no recollection of the reporting of such an incident.

The Ministry of Defence Police Agency, like all Government Departments and Agencies, is bound by the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. This means that we are committed to providing you with the information you require, as long as it is not exempt under the Code. If you wish to make a complaint that your request for information has not been properly dealt with, you should appeal to: Ministry of Defence, OMD14, Room 617, Northumberland House, Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5BP.

Yours sincerely

[signed]
P. A. Crowther

I am grateful to Paul Crowther for taking the trouble to investigate and respond to my questions. Nevertheless, the fact that, according to the more senior officers, there was no recollection of such an event does not surprise me. This case is too big, and nobody from the Ministry of Defence, retired or otherwise, is willing to openly discuss it. If any police were involved it might have been the MOD Police. According to local resident Gary Collins, the Ministry of Defence owned the road that separated RAF Woodbridge from the landing sites. This would certainly account for why the Americans were allowed to block the road and guard the perimeter of the forest, because when they leased the bases from the Ministry of Defence, they probably had rights to the road as well. Apart from a different badge, the MOD Police uniform is very similar to the regular force uniform and their vehicles have 'Police' on the side, so witnesses may have confused them with the Suffolk Constabulary.

I read the MOD Police reply to a Ministry of Defence source

whom I have known for many years, and he was surprised to hear that I had received a response from the top man of the department. 'It must be very sensitive to have been considered by the most senior person. You must have worried them. Maybe this case warrants a public enquiry,' he said. Maybe it does.

If Special Branch were involved in the investigation, they certainly cannot admit to it because, by doing so, it would indicate that there had been a threat to national security. As Inspector Topliss points out, Special Branch officers should have been aware if anything had occurred through having sight of the incident log. However, we know that the Woodbridge police log did not record any further incidents; therefore we must consider whether they blundered in this case. The Suffolk Constabulary either took the incident seriously enough to inform Special Branch or, as Topliss suggests, it was dismissed as 'frivolous'. But let us not forget that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had just warned Russia to keep out of the Polish crisis, the IRA were threatening to bomb Britain, and unidentified flying objects were playing havoc on the perimeter of a USAF NATO base with Bentwaters armed to its teeth in nuclear weapons. Under the circumstances, are we really expected to believe that Special Branch would not have a reason to investigate? We can forgive the Woodbridge police for thinking that a post-office break-in was far more important than a UFO report near a military base, but surely someone would have been responsible for investigating the incident? Apart from the Ministry of Defence, who claimed to have only checked the radar reports, no government or military department either side of the Atlantic is taking any responsibility for it. The fact that 'unidentifieds' were hovering over RAF Woodbridge for several hours on at least three consecutive nights, even landing in the nearby forest, is, in my opinion, a definite threat to national security. This is especially so when one considers that RAF Bentwaters deployed nuclear weapons.

According to a fact sheet on the Metropolitan Police, Special Branch was formed as 'The Special Irish Branch' in 1883 to combat the threat from the Fenian movement, whose aim was independence

in Ireland, and who had been responsible for a series of explosions in London. The Special Irish Branch later became known as the 'Special Branch', and extended work into royalty protection with Queen Victoria's Jubilee. While Special Branch is a division of the police force, in practice it coordinates closely with MI5, and has continued to develop its role as a conduit of information and intelligence for the Metropolitan Police and Security Service.

I wondered if MI5 might have had an interest in the Rendlesham Forest incident. I was in for a surprise, inasmuch as MI5 had a presence at Martlesham Heath for a number of years. Martlesham Heath, just a few miles from Woodbridge, was the headquarters of the Suffolk Constabulary, the headquarters of the Suffolk Special Branch and certain MI5 operations. According to former MI5 agent Peter Wright, the agency had a major post office laboratory based there. In his infamous book, *Spycatcher*, Wright describes how the MI5 infiltrated public mail. The headquarters of this special outpost, known as the 'Post Office Special Investigations Unit', was based near St Paul's in London, where MI5 had a suite of rooms on the first floor run by MI5 agent and ex-military officer Major Denham. This unit specialized in mail tampering and telephone tapping. Apparently, each major sorting office and exchange in the country had, and probably still has, a 'Special Investigations Unit Room'. The headquarters were later moved to Martlesham Heath where a special post office laboratory was set up. Although St Paul's was still in use, if a letter which had been opened needed special attention, it was dispatched by motorcycle courier up to the Suffolk office. It seems there was quite a set-up at Martlesham Heath.

It is worth mentioning that, according to the Bentwaters Staff Judge Advocate, Lieutenant Colonel Arnold I. Persky, the British authorities, including the local police, would have been contacted and expected to accompany the USAF patrols to the scene of the incident. Although Persky was aware that there had been an incident he assured me that if it had concerned an American air crash on British territory someone from his office would have been

summoned to investigate, in case the USAF were charged with damages to any property. Persky was sure that the British authorities were alerted and that they went to the forest sometime during the incident. He also thinks that British police were on the scene.

********** -COMM. JOURNAL- ********** DATE 17-JAN-2001 ***** TIME 12:17 *** P.01

MODE = MEMORY TRANSMISSION START=17-JAN 12:10 END=17-JAN 12:17

FILE NO.= 060

STN NO.	COM	ABBR NO.	STATION NAME/TEL.NO.	PAGES	DURATION
001	OK		Section 40	026/026	00:07'07"

-SECRETARIAT (AIR STAFF) -

********** - - ***** - Section 40 **********

From: Section 40 DAS 4a(Sec)
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Secretariat (Air Staff)
Room 8243, Main Building, Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) Section 40
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000
(Fax) Section 40
CHOTS - DAS4A(SEC)

FAX MESSAGE

TO: Section 40 (Home Office) Section 40

SUBJECT: PQ 0350L/PQ 0358L

DATE: 17 January 01

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER: 26

Section 40

We spoke on the telephone.

I attach copies of the above PQs which I understand from MOD Parliamentary Branch are to be answered by MOD on behalf of HMG as they relate to an incident said to have taken place in 1980 in which MOD has the lead interest. Both make reference to Home Office issues and I was given Section 40 number as a contact in the Department.

Section 40

PQ0350 - is to be answered by us by 1200 on 18 January. I would be grateful if you would supply us with an answer to the question and paragraphs to insert in the background note by 0900, 18 January. I attach a short note on the alleged incident in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 and a photocopy of a chapter in the book on the incident that was published in November 2000. The Chapter contains references to Special Branch.

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

32

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D DAS(SEC) 64/4

Enclosure Jacket No ...8.....

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)

.....16 JAN 2001.....

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:

DAS(SEC)

SUBJECT: PQ 0349L
LORD HILL-NORTON
REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

2. When a TEJ is incorporated into the parent file it should be placed in the file in date order (according to the date of the last action on the TEJ) and allocated an enclosure number.

3. The file minute sheet should be annotated to record the enclosure number of the TEJ along with details of the number of enclosures contained within it. The TEJ record sheet (MOD Form 262A) should be annotated to record the date on which the TEJ was incorporated into the parent file (JSP 441, paragraph 4.13 refers).

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

4

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in November or December 1980; and whether they will give details of any such incid. (HL302)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

Records dating from 1980 no longer exist. Paper records are retained for a period of three years before being destroyed. Recordings of radar data are retained for a period of thirty days prior to re-use of the recording medium.

18 January 01 PQ Ref 0349L

BACKGROUND NOTE

Linked to Background Note for PQ 0348

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 TEL: Section 40
AUTHORISED BY : TEL:
GRADE/RANK : B1
BRANCH : DAS(Sec)

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

Section 40

DAS/AD

18/1/2001

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0349L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-

3

LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	
DI(Sec)		
Defence Evaluation& Research		DAO
GVIU		
D SEF POL		(2 Gp Sec)
D NEWS		

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

- **Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.**

- **The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.**

- **If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.**

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in November or December 1980; and whether they will give details of any such incidents. (HL302)

1980

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAO 3 (SEC)
12 JAN 2001
FILE

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 81ST COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (USAFE)
APO NEW YORK 09755

REPLY TO ATTN OF: CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT: Unexplained Lights

TO: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metalic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10^{o} off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.

CHARLES I. HALT, Lt Col, USAF
Deputy Base Commander

DAS4A1(SEC)

2

From: 2GP-ISTAR2-2A-SO2
Sent: 17 January 2001 13:23
To: DAS4A1(SEC)
Cc: DAO ADGE1; STC-CMDSEC-SEC-PARL
Subject: RE: UFO Related PQs

Importance: Low

Not a very comprehensive reply I am afraid, but it is as follows:

a. Our highest classification for UFO documents is RESTRICTED.

Uncorrelated Targets.

b. We have no records dating back to Nov Dec 1980. Therefore it is impossible to give any information regarding the second question.

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance.

Section 40

Reply: There are no records dating back to 1980.

Sqn Ldr Section 40
SO2 ASACS Ops1
Ext Section 40
Section 40

-----Original Message-----
From: DAO ADGE1
Sent: 16 January 2001 10:38
To: 2GP-ISTAR2-SO1; 2GP-ISTAR2-2A-SO2; STC-OPSSPT-ATC-AREA2/SO2
Cc: DAS4A1(SEC)
Subject: UFO Related PQs
Importance: High

Section 40

Sorry for this fast ball but Lord Hill-Norton has submitted 4 PQs relating to a UFO report about lights in Mendlesham Forest circa 1980!! We (I) have been asked to provide inputs to DAS4A1 (SEC) on 2 of the PQs:

The first question is ' What is the highest classification that has been applied to any MOD document concerning UFOs'

The second question is 'Is HMG aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in Nov or Dec 1980; and whether they (HMG) will give details of any such incidents'

I doubt we have any records remaining for this period, but we must go through the motions. Grateful therefore if you could check down the organisation to see if there are any files or logbooks that go back to 1980 and whether any record exists of such activity. On the AD side could you also check with STCOC (old DCON records) as well as the CRCs.

By way of interpretation, I would define 'uncorrelated targets' as 'radar tracks that have not been positively identified by normal means'.

Answers have to be with DAS4A1(SEC) by cease work Wed 17 Jan 01. As I shall be out of office on that day, grateful if you would forward your inputs (including any pertinent background info and an indication of what, if anything, we would be happy to release to the public domain by way of a stated answer) on CHOtS direct to Section 40 (DAS4A1 (SEC)), info me. TVM

DAS4A1(SEC)

From: STC-OPSSPT-ATC-AREA2/SO2
Sent: 16 January 2001 16:07
To: DAS4A1(SEC)
Cc: DAO ADGE1; STC-OPSSPT-ATC-AREA/SO1; STC-OPSSPT-ATC-Gp Capt
Subject: UFO RELATED PQs

Importance: High

DAO ADGE 1 requested that we provide input to you on the following 2 PQs:

a. "What is the highest classification that has been applied to any MOD document concerning UFOs?"

b. "Is HMG aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in Nov or Dec 1980; and whether they (HMG) will give details of any such incidents?"

Records Classification :-

We have examined the file records of the Area Radar Units (LATCC (Mil) and ScATCC (Mil)) and the Headquarters STC Operations Support Air Traffic Control (formerly HQ MATO) for instances of UFO reports. We do not hold any files that contain data relating to UFOs at either the HQ or the Area Radar units. In any case the maximum classification of files held is SECRET, therefore if there had been any input in the past this would have been the likely maximum classification. What we can say is that reports of UFOs received by AIS (Mil), are reported to your office on an unclassified FAX using an insecure telephone line.

Uncorrelated targets :-

In so far as the question of an awareness of any "uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in Nov or Dec 1980" our records do not extend that far back. Unusual incidents would be noted in the Air Traffic Control Watch Logs at LATCC (Mil) or ScATCC (Mil); The ATC Watch Logs are retained for a period of 3 years and are then subsequently destroyed. Recordings of radar data are retained for a period of 30 days prior to the re-use of the recording medium.

Signed on CHOtS

Section 40
Sqn Ldr
SO2 ATC (Area) 2
Section 40

Always put this for a Log to be monitored

DAS4A1(SEC)

From: DAO ADGE1
Sent: 16 January 2001 10:38
To: 2GP-ISTAR2-SO1; 2GP-ISTAR2-2A-SO2; STC-OPSSPT-ATC-AREA2/SO2
Cc: DAS4A1(SEC)
Subject: UFO Related PQs

Importance: High

Section 40

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The second question is 'Is HMG aware of any uncorrelated targets tracked on radar in Nov or Dec 1980; and whether they (HMG) will give details of any such incidents'

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By way of interpretation, I would define 'uncorrelated targets' as 'radar tracks that have not been positively identified by normal means'.

Answers have to be with DAS4A1(SEC) by cease work Wed 17 Jan 01. As I shall be out of office on that day, grateful if you would forward your inputs (including any pertinent background info and an indication of what, if anything, we would be happy to release to the public domain by way of a stated answer) on CHOtS direct to Section 40 Section 40 (DAS4A1 (SEC)), info me. TVM

Section 40
DAO ADGE1

	All persons ILO unemployed of working age (thousands) of which (percentage) with highest qualification[1]	Degree or other higher education	'A' level and equivalent (excluding trade apprenticeships)	Trade apprenticeship	GCSE or equivalent	Other	No Qualification
United Kingdom	2,344	11.6	12.3	10.6	18.1	20.0	27.4
Great Britain	2,274	11.7	12.3	10.4	18.2	20.4	27.0
England	1,942	11.8	12.2	9.7	18.1	20.8	27.4
South East	742	14.1	12.8	8.7	16.7	22.1	25.5
Greater London	379	15.6	11.2	7.1	15.8	23.7	26.5
Rest of South East	362	12.6	14.4	10.5	17.7	20.3	24.5
East Anglia	72	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	21.1	23.6	23.0
South West	169	12.7	14.9	10.1	22.1	18.4	22.0
West Midlands	219	9.0	12.1	6.6	16.9	19.5	35.9
East Midlands	152	9.9	13.4	11.5	18.5	18.7	28.0
Yorkshire and Humberside	189	11.0	11.9	8.2	18.3	20.2	30.4
North west	248	11.9	9.4	10.7	19.9	20.0	28.2
North	151	7.1	11.3	16.5	16.8	22.1	26.3
Wales	114	9.3	9.7	10.8	19.2	20.2	30.8
Scotland	218	12.0	14.6	16.0	19.1	16.6	21.6
Northern Ireland	69	[2]—	[2]—	19.4	14.1	[2]—	41.0

Notes:
[1]Working age is men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59. Includes those who did not answer, but percentages are based on totals excluding them.
[2]Sample size too small for reliable estimate.
Source:
Labour Force Survey (winter 1995–96), Office for National Statistics.

Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative

Mr. Bill Michie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the recently agreed highly indebted poor countries initiative; and if he will make a statement. [1329]

Mrs. Angela Knight: I refer to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Newham, North-East (Mr. Timms) on 14 October, *Official Report,* columns *705–706.*

DEFENCE

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the report of the Canberra Commission on the elimination of nuclear weapons. [2931]

Mr. Soames: We have noted the conclusions of the Canberra Commission. We remain committed to the pursuit of negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament, as set out in article VI of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. But nuclear disarmament cannot realistically be pursued independently of the broader security context. We and NATO continue to judge that nuclear deterrence plays an essential role in maintaining peace and stability in Europe.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the circumstances of the two occasions referred to in his answer of 24 July, *Official Report,* column *424,* when RAF aircraft were scrambled or diverted from task to investigate uncorrelated radar targets; if the objects were identified; if it was judged that breaches of United Kingdom airspace had occurred; and if he will list all similar incidents which have occurred since 1979. [2932]

Mr. Soames: The targets were identified as Russian maritime patrol aircraft and were in the northern portion of the UK air defence region. They did not penetrate UK airspace. Information covering the period from 1979 is not held in a readily available form and could be provided only at disproportionate cost and effort.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when United Kingdom military personnel were briefed about the scrambling of Belgian F-16 aircraft on 30 and 31 March 1990; when the unidentified flying object concerned was detected on United Kingdom radar systems; and if RAF aircraft were scrambled. [3185]

Mr. Soames: The Belgian authorities did not notify adjacent countries because no threat was perceived. There is no evidence of radar contacts within the UK air defence system.

Radiation

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the radiation readings, reported to his Department by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt on 13 January 1981, were judged to have posed any threat to Lieutenant Colonel Halt and his team; who assessed the readings; how the radiation compared with background radiation in the area; and if he will make a statement. [2934]

Mr. Soames: There is no record of any official assessment of the radiation readings reported by Lieutenant Colonel Halt.

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D
(Revised 5/99)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

31

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D/DAS(SEC)64/4

Enclosure Jacket No 7

DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure)
16 JANUARY 2001

DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH:
DAS(SEC)

SUBJECT: PQ 0348L
LORD HILL-NORTON
REPLY TO BARONESS SYMONS

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.

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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

FILE 4

Ministry of Defence

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2001

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether personnel from Porton Down visited Rendlesham Forest or the area surrounding RAF Walton in December 1980 or January 1981; and whether they are aware of any tests carried out in either of those two areas aimed at assessing any nuclear, biological or chemical hazard. (HL301)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

The staff at the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) Chemical and Biological Defence (CBD) laboratories at Porton Down have made a thorough search of their archives and have found no record of any such visits.

18 January 01 PQ Ref 0348L

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 January 2001**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0348L
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	DERA
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	

DAS(SEC)
DI(Sec)
GVIU
D SEF POL
D NEWS

3

- Supply with background "The Book" - RF inadeb.

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

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- **The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.**

- **If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.**

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government whether personnel from Porton Down visited Rendlesham Forest or the area surrounding RAF Walton in December 1980 or January 1981; and whether they are aware of any carried out in either of those two areas aimed at assessing any nuclear, biological or chemical hazard. (HL301)

MEC - [illegible] - probably "test"

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
12 JAN 2001
[illegible]

DERA

Fax Message

Documents protected above restricted may not be sent. Restricted documents without a caveat may be sent to UK mainland addresses only.

Directorate of Corporate Affairs,
Cody Building, Ively Road,
Farnborough, GU14 0LX

2

To *(recipient's name)*:	Section 40
Department or company:	DAS
From *(sender's name)*: Section 40	Authorised signature: Section 40
Fax number: Section 40	Tel number:
Recipient's fax number: Section 40	Number of pages including this sheet: 2+1
Copied to:	
Date: 18/1/01	Protective marking and descriptor of material:
Document date:	Document Reference:

Message:

Section 40

PQ 0348L

Draft answer and background note attached. This has not gone to Parliamentary Branch.

Regards

Section 40

NOTICE: This communication may contain information which is commercial-in-confidence and/or legally privileged and is intended only for the addressee named above. If you are not the named addressee, the communication has been sent to you in error. Any copying, distribution or other use of the information is strictly prohibited. We should be grateful if you would contact us immediately so that we can arrange for its return.

If this fax is incomplete, please telephone this number immediately: Section 40

Ministry of Defence

Fri 26 January 2001

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) CB

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether personnel from Porton Down visited Rendlesham Forest or the area surrounding RAF Walton in December 1980 or January 1981; and whether they are aware of any carried out in either of those two areas aimed at assessing any nuclear, biological or chemical hazard. (HL301)

Minister replying Baroness Symons

The staff at the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) Chemical and Biological Defence (CBD) laboratories at Porton Down have made a thorough search of their archives but have been unable to find any records of such visits taking place.

January 01 PQ Ref 0348L

Background to PQ Ref No: 0348L

This is one of several PQs raised by Lord Hill-Norton, the answers to which, including this one, are being coordinated by the Directorate of Air Staff. The questions are believed to have been prompted by a recently published book on the Rendlesham Forest incident about an alleged UFO sighting,

Staff at DERA Porton Down have searched records for details of this incident and also made enquiries with some of the very few existing members of staff who were working at Porton Down at that time. No information about this incident has been found.

Drafted by: Section 40 Directorate of Corporate Affairs, DERA, Farnborough
Tel: Section 40 Fax Section 40

Approved by: Section 40 Director Corporate Affairs, DERA, Farnborough
Tel: Section 40 Fax Section 40

From: Section 40
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Directorate of Air Staff 4a1 (Secretariat)
Room 8245, Main Building, Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) Section 40
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000
(Fax) Section 40

FAX MESSAGE

Phone:
Section 40

TO: Section 40

SUBJECT: PQ 0348L

DATE: 16 January 2001 **NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER: 7**

Fax:
Section 40

Section 40

Sorry about the delay but Lord Hill Norton has now tabled a further two PQs on this subject that diverted our attention slightly.

Please find attached a background note, a copy of the acknowledgements from a recently published book on the Rendlesham Forest incident (thanking Lord Hill-Norton) and extracts from the book which mention possible involvement of Porton Down personnel.

I hope this helps. Please let me know if there is anything else we can help with.

Section 40

BACKGROUND NOTE

1. . . . Lord Hill-Norton has tabled five other PQs on the subject of material contained in a book by Georgina Bruni published in November 2000 and MOD handling of material relating to 'UFOs'. Three are being answered by MOD, one by the Home Office and one is to be answered by (DERA). Miss Bruni's book, "You can't tell the people" concerns a well known 'UFO' incident alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk over the Christmas period in 1980 in the vicinity of two RAF bases at that time on lease to the USAF, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge.

2. The subject of the incident said to have taken place in Rendlesham Forest came to prominence in 1983 when a memorandum sent to MOD shortly after the event by the then Deputy Base Commander, Lt Col Charles Halt USAF, was unearthed in the US by researchers. The Halt memorandum describes the alleged incident in some detail and is reprinted in the book where claims are also made that USAF personnel met and communicated with "beings". The book accuses the UK establishment of a "cover-up" to hide the detail of the alleged event in Rendlesham Forest. Text of correspondence on the subject between a retired Chief of Defence Staff, Lord Hill-Norton, and a previous MOD Minister is reprinted in the book.

3. MOD's interest in 'UFO's' is limited to whether alleged sightings might have any defence significance; namely, if they provide evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace may have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is corroborating evidence to suggest that the UK's airspace may have been compromised, MOD does not investigate or seek to provide a precise explanation for each of the 'UFO' letters and reported sightings received each year. MOD believes that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for most of the sightings. However, it is not the function of MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and resources are not diverted for this purpose.

known civilians to hear
1999. © *Georgina Bruni*
ral Petr S. Deynekin, the
Air Force (centre), and
:r Chief of Staff of the
ion circa 1996. *Courtesy*

RAF Bentwaters (1999).

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RAF Woodbridge, taken
anuary 1981). © *Adrian*

sites (1999). © *Georgina*

)9). © *Georgina Bruni*
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

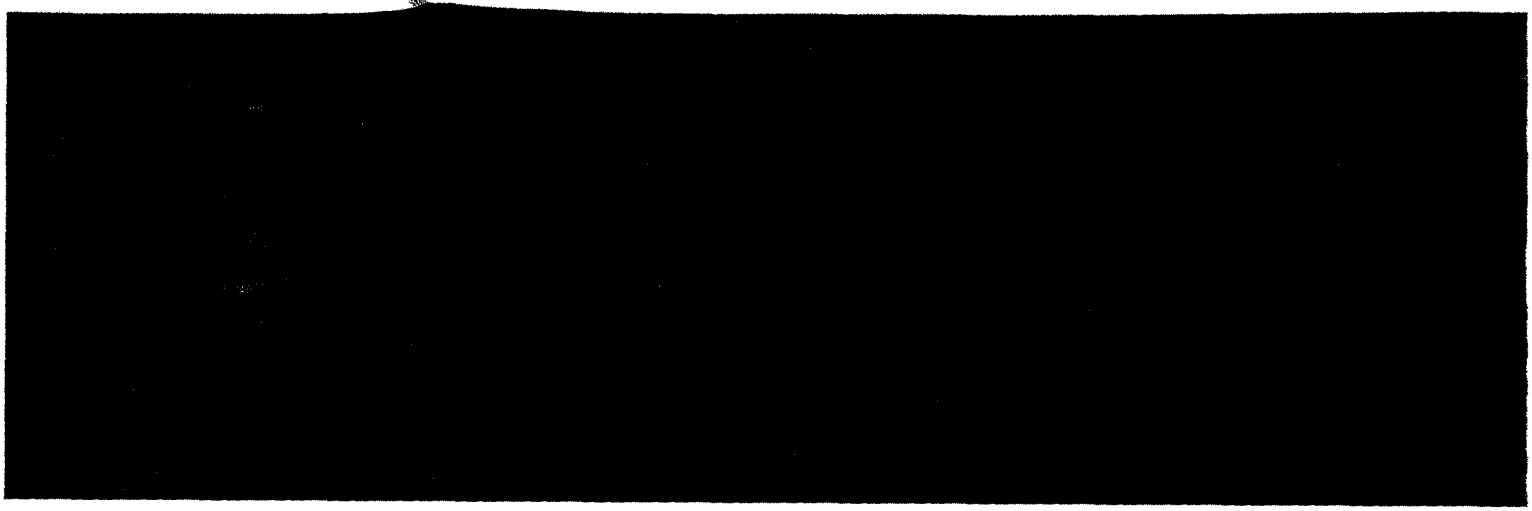
This book has only been made possible thanks to a great many people. I am deeply indebted to my agent, Andrew Lownie, for his encouragement, support and efforts. My thanks also to my editor Gordon Scott Wise, Editorial Director at Sidgwick and Jackson, for his enthusiasm and patience and for helping me to turn this extraordinary, complex case into a valuable casebook. To Nick Pope for contributing the foreword, for advising me on the best way to obtain government documents and for his precious contributions. To my parents, family and friends for their understanding of my isolation whilst working on this investigation.

This story could not have been told without the generous assistance of the witnesses and many people who have played an important role in these strange events. I am especially grateful to Major General Gordon E. Williams USAF (ret.) for his patience and contributions and allowing me to interview him in person. To former Special Agent Wayne Persinger, Deputy Commander, Air Force Office of Special Investigations (Bentwaters), USAF (ret.), for his contributions. To Colonel Sam P. Morgan USAF (ret.), for providing me with the first copy of the 'Halt Tape'. To Ray Gulyas USAF (ret.) and his wife Maryann, for their contributions and for leading me to the original photographs of the initial landing site. I am grateful to all these men and women for allowing me to interview them and for assisting me with my enquires: Rick Bobo USAF (ret.), Lieutenant Colonel Fred 'Skip' Buran USAF (ret.), Adrian Bustinza USAF (ret.), Tony Brisciano USAF, Edward N. Cabansag USAF (ret.), Gary Collins, Lieutenant Colonel Bernard E.

USAF (ret.), Timothy
Charles I. Halt USAF
:t.), Anthony Johnson
ʒ, William Kirk USAF
dron Leader Donald
ersinger, Maisie Pettit,
dt USAF (ret.), Steve
ĸ Simms USAF (ret.),
on RAF (ret.), Jerry
Vaughn USAF (ret.),
ıant Colonel Malcolm
o remain anonymous.
'hatcher. To Michael
of the Fleet, The Lord
ıse his exchange of
ın Gordon Kinsey for
ing the history of
for showing me the
and for sharing her
ır, valuable assistance
Ray Boeche, Antonio
for opening their old
also to the following
and assistance, thus
h. David Bonner BSc
pert help on hypno-
d contributions, and
:. Budd Hopkins for
: helping with local
:et.) for his contacts,
f the early years. Dave
eorge Plume for his
friendship, patience
contributions. Many
like Topliss, Vincent
Thurkettle, George Wild and Marjorie Wright for sharing their stories.

I would also like to thank the following people for their assistance and patience: James Anderson, Derek Barnes, Linn Barringer, Keith Beabey, Graham William Birdsall, Mrs David Boast, James Buckles USAF (ret.), John Lawrence Briggs, Lieutenant Colonel Al Brown USAF (ret.), Robin D. Cole, Paul Crowther, Jacquieline Davis, Vernon Drane, Sean Emerson USAF (ret.), Jackie Errington, Mary Everest, Lucius Farish, Halan E. Girard, Walter F. Hern USAF (ret.), Tony McEvoy, Fred Nunn, Lieutenant Colonel Pevsky USAF (ret.), Peter Phillips, Jeff Rense, Ian Ridpath, Nick Ryan ARRS, USAF (ret.), Malcolm Scurrah, Andrew Sheepshanks, Simon Smith, Steve Smith USAF (ret.), Gaynor South, Lee Speigel and Robert Todd.

And last but by no means least: Alan Akeroyd, Dennis Bardens, Ron Burrell USAF (ret.), Sally Brown, Charles Chow, Neil Cunningham, Brian Creswell, Jonathon Dillon, Ann Drury, Mrs Drury SRN, Timothy Good, Dr Jane Grundy BSc (Hons) PhD DSc FRCPath, Ron Harlan, Bob Higgins, Kane, Michele Kaczynski, Dr Gerhard Knecht, Dr Helmut F. Lammer, Rowena Naylor, William John Naylor, Dan Sherman USAF (ret.), Martin Stout, Bruce Taylor, Bernard Thouanel, Glenmore Trenear-Harvey RAF (ret.), Jenny Randles, Sonia White, Martin Wood, Anglia International Airpark, CAUS, CompuServe, Colchester Barracks, Kodak, Ministry of Defence for Air, Ministry of Defence Police, Ministry of Defence Library, *Sightings Magazine*, Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk Record Office, *UFO Magazine* (UK), *Unopened Files*. To friends Penelope Bouchot-Humbert, Lady Anna Brocklebank, Robert A. Bell and Lord Anthony Leitrim, for you know what, Walter F. Hern USAF (ret.), CUFON, East Anglican Press, Quest, United States Air Force. To everyone I might have failed to mention, my apologies, and of course not forgetting Alan, because you always knew.



forget what they had seen because it was only poachers and it was now a matter for the local police. Neither of the witnesses believed the poacher story and, as Thompson recalls, their notebooks covering that particular night were immediately confiscated. He also claims that the duty log in Operations and the occurrence log went missing. According to Thompson, the loss of one of these logs would result in a major investigation and in the case of RAF police would never happen.

According to Thompson, for several days after the incident Americans visited the forest around the perimeter of the Watton base. Just after the New Year Thompson was at the local public house, and whilst in the company of a couple of civilian police from the area he remembers joking with them about the locals filling their freezers with poached sheep and venison. It appears that the local police were unaware of any poaching activity during the night in question, though it was known that poachers did operate in the area all year round. They were also surprised to hear about the unusual lights and had not been told that Americans were messing around in the forest. Were these the same American scientists who were reported to have been investigating Rendlesham Forest?

Thompson had more to add, explaining that immediately after the Watton incident a team of four British government scientists, supposedly from the Ministry of Defence Research Centre, Porton Down, were driven to the forest by another of his colleagues, also an RAF policeman. Once in the forest, the scientists changed into strange-looking space-type suits with tubes running into air compressors which seemed to be connected to their backs. The police officer was left waiting for them while they wandered off through the trees. On their return they changed back into their clothes, packed their suits and climbed into the vehicle in complete silence. In fact, the only word they spoke during the whole time they were in the police officer's company was a simple 'goodbye' as they speedily departed. One cannot dismiss the possibility that there may be a connection between the Rendlesham Forest incident and RAF Watton. There are obvious similarities between the two: they occurred on the same dates;

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Porton Down Research Centre, situated in Wiltshire, is one of the United Kingdom's most secretive and sensitive sites. Known as the Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment, it was founded in 1916 to combat German gas attacks. If this centre was involved in an investigation, then there is no doubt that the incidents which occurred during Christmas week 1980 were of great concern to both the US and UK defence departments. I also believe that should their results have proved positive then Highpoint Prison, and possibly others like it, would have been used to isolate those suffering with whatever virus or contamination the visitors might have brought with them. This would also indicate that, contrary to their denial, the Ministry of Defence and the CIA not only carried out an investigation but made preparations.

I spoke to a scientist who is familiar with Porton Down Research Centre. She explained that in the event of an unknown threat, all precautions would be taken. When dealing with the unknown, such as objects landing from space, you would aim for the highest level of isolation in case they brought an infectious agent. When I described the men in white suits with tubes attached to their backs, she explained that this attire would most probably have been used as a protection against dealing with an unknown microbiological threat. I had to conclude that if there was a risk of an unknown threat, it would be much easier to evacuate the local community in such a crisis, but the government would want to have the prisoners made more secure in case they later had to deal with a national disaster. The more I looked into the Rendlesham Forest incident as being a possible biological threat, the more I began to believe that this was indeed something that our defence departments were very much concerned about.

Lord Hill-Norton should be congratulated for his diligent efforts in trying to find answers to the Rendlesham Forest incident. In 1997 he wrote to Lord Gilbert at the House of Lords but was furious when Gilbert failed to respond positively to his questions. Hill-Norton replied to Gilbert's letter on 22 September 1997:

Donahue USAF (ret.), Major Edward Drury USAF (ret.), Timothy Egercic USAF (ret.), Betty Garfield, Colonel Charles I. Halt USAF (ret.), Gerry Harris, James Hudnall USAF (ret.), Anthony Johnson USAF (ret.), Nigel Kerr RAF (ret.), Dave King, William Kirk USAF (ret.), Steven La Plume USAF (ret.), Squadron Leader Donald Moreland RAF (ret.), Richard Nunn, Diana Persinger, Maisie Pettit, James W. Penniston USAF (ret.), Lori Rehfeldt USAF (ret.), Steve Roberts USAF (ret.), Lieutenant Colonel Park Simms USAF (ret.), William Sone USAF (ret.), Harry Thompson RAF (ret.), Jerry Valdes-Sanchez USAF (ret.), Lindy 'Cookie' Vaughn USAF (ret.), Larry Warren USAF (ret.), Roy Webb, Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm Zickler USAF (ret.) and to all those who wish to remain anonymous.

Special thanks to Baroness Margaret Thatcher. To Michael Portillo for taking my questions. To Admiral of the Fleet, The Lord Hill-Norton GCB for allowing me to use his exchange of correspondence with Lord Gilbert. To historian Gordon Kinsey for his knowledgeable help with understanding the history of Orfordness and Bawdsey. To Brenda Butler for showing me the landing sites, allowing me to interview her and for sharing her important files. To Dot Street for her humour, valuable assistance and for allowing me access to her files. To Ray Boeche, Antonio Huneeus, Mark Birdsall and Nicholas Redfern for opening their old files on the case for me to study. Many thanks also to the following people who have given much of their time and assistance, thus making a valuable contribution to my research. David Bonner BSc CCQSW DHP (NC) MNRHP for his expert help on hypnotherapy. Chuck de Caro for his humour and contributions, and Barry Greenwood for his valuable assistance. Budd Hopkins for taking my questions and Bill Kemball for helping with local information. Captain Mike Martin USAF (ret.) for his contacts, Chris Pennington for sharing his knowledge of the early years. Dave Piggot for his scientific evaluations and George Plume for his professional advice. To Peter Robbins for his friendship, patience and understanding, and for his precious contributions. Many thanks to Max Shortley, Ronnie Spaine, Mike Topliss, Vincent Thurkettle, Georg
stories.

I would also
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Barringer, Keith I
Boast, James Bu
Lieutenant Colon
Crowther, Jacquiel
(ret.), Jackie Erri
Girard, Walter F.
Lieutenant Colon
Ian Ridpath, Nicl
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And last but b
Ron Burrell US
Cunningham, Bri
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FRCPath, Ron H
Gerhard Knecht,
John Naylor, Da
Taylor, Bernard T
Jenny Randles, S
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Section 40 [redacted]

30

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone (020 Section 40 (Direct Dialling)
(020 [redacted] (Fax)
(020) 7218 9000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

11

D/US of S/LM 3359/00/Y

14th September 2000

Dear Martin,

Thank you for your letter of 19 August on behalf of your constituent, Mr Eric Morris of Northwich, Cheshire, about an alleged sighting of an 'unidentified flying object' over Hartford on 9 July. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

It might be helpful if I explained that my Department examines any reports of 'unidentified flying objects' it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely whether there is any evidence that United Kingdom airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from such an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report provided to us has revealed such evidence, no attempt is made to identify the precise nature of each alleged sighting reported. We believe that rational explanations such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but it is not the function of my Department to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so.

Mr Morris contacted my Department by telephone on 10 July to say that he had witnessed a 'UFO'. A letter providing more details was received on 17 July. Enquiries were set in hand to investigate what had been reported. My officials acknowledged Mr Morris's letter on 31 July and advised that a full response might be delayed. Mr Morris telephoned my officials on 3 August and was advised that an investigation was in progress and that the outcome would be reported to him as soon as enquiries were complete.

Martin Bell Esq MP

Private Of

INVESTOR IN P

The investigation found no evidence in what Mr Morris reported of any defence significance. A full reply was sent to him on 23 August and has crossed in the post with your letter. I enclose copies of the correspondence for your information.

Best wishes

Section 40 [redacted]

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP

Recycled Pape

29

From: PARLIAMENTARY TYPIST3 on behalf of PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
To: SEC(AS)2
Sent: 30 August 2000 08:39
Subject: Read: Reverse PE

Your message

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: Reverse PE
Sent: 29/08/00 16:50

was read on 30/08/00 08:39.

EC(AS)2

28

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: Reverse PE

I attach a draft reply to a letter we have received direct from Martin Bell MP. Copies of the Martin Bell letter and the corespondence mentioned in the draft reply will be walked down in the morning (Wednesday).

Section 40

PE@MartinBell.doc

file
27

Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)64/4

25 August 2000

Parliamentary Enquiries

REVERSE PE – MARTIN BELL MP

1. Martin Bell MP has written direct on behalf of a constituent, Mr Morris, about a substantive response to a letter about an alleged UFO sighting.

2. Mr Morris left a message on the Sec(AS)2 'UFO' answerphone on the evening of Monday 10 July to say that he had witnessed a 'UFO' the previous evening. A letter providing more details (copy attached) was received by RAF Valley and Sec(AS)2 on 17 July. Mr Morris claimed that he and a colleague had videoed a 'ufo' and obtained a recording of a pilot in a 'chasing' aircraft. RAF Valley acknowledged their copy of the letter on 18 July and advised that it had been passed to Sec(AS)2; we advised Mr Morris on 31 July that it was unlikely that we would be able to provide a substantive response within the 20-day Charter timescale because staff absences at the time meant that we were not able to deal with all correspondence as quickly as we would normally do so.

3. The MOD Press Office was contacted by BBC Radio 1 and the local media (the Knutsford Gazette) about the alleged incident the day after the letter was received. They advised that within the limits of MOD's interest in these matters, enquiries would be made about what had been reported. Mr Morris was interviewed on Radio 1 about the incident the same day (18 July). He telephoned Sec(AS)2 on 3 August to ask how the enquiries were progressing and was advised that they were not, at that stage, complete.

4. A detailed investigation into the facts reported by Mr Morris was carried out by MOD Air Defence Staffs and included checks with Military Air Traffic Staffs. No evidence was found to substantiate a threat to the UK Air Defence Region or that the 'craft' witnessed had military origins.

5. A full reply was sent to Mr Morris on 23 August and crossed with Mr Bell's letter in the post.

Section 40

DAS AD4(Sec)
MB 8247 Section 40
CHOTs Address SEC(AS)2

D/USofS/

Thank you for your letter of 19 August on behalf of you constituent, Mr Eric Morris of Northwich, Cheshire, about an alleged sighting of an 'unidentified flying object' over Hartford on 9 July. I am replying as the Minister responsible for these matters.

It might be helpful if I explained that my Department examines any reports of 'unidentified flying objects' it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely whether there is any evidence that United Kingdom airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from such an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report provided to us has revealed such evidence, no attempt is made to identify the precise nature of each alleged sighting reported. We believe that rational explanations such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but it is not the function of my Department to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so.

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The investigation found no evidence in what Mr Morris reported of any defence significance. A full reply was sent to him on 23 August and has crossed in the post with your letter. I enclose copies of the correspondence for your information.

DR LEWIS MOONIE

Martin Bell Esq MP

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: DAS4 (Sec) PE REF NUMBER: 05/1349/2001

Copy to:

MINISTER REPLYING: USofS DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 13/3/2001

DATE: 1/3/2001 FROM: Section 40 redacted PE Unit TEL: Section 40 redacted

FAX: Section 40 redacted

YOU WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE, WHICH MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY.

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET: FROM 2001/02 ONWARDS, THE DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO ANSWERING 90% OF ENQUIRIES WITHIN 15 WORKING DAYS; OUR PERFORMANCE IN 2000 WAS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THIS.

A NAMED OFFICIAL AT B2 (GRADE 7) LEVEL OR ABOVE MUST CLEAR ALL DRAFTS. OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS OR MOD DIVISIONS SHOULD BE CONSULTED AS NECESSARY.

IF YOU ARE AN AGENCY, THE MINISTER'S OFFICE HAS DIRECTED THAT THIS ENQUIRY SHOULD RECEIVE A MINISTERIAL – NOT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – REPLY.

E-MAIL DRAFTS TO *'PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES'*, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES.
(Please ensure sensitivity of your email message is 'Normal'.)

IF THIS CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE DEALT WITH BY ANOTHER BRANCH, PLEASE PASS IT ON AND INFORM US IMMEDIATELY.

Number of pages sent by fax: 6

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Revised 26 January 2001

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DAS 3 (SEC)
- 1 MAR 2001
FILE

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

- ***Ministers place great importance on the content, style and speed of replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.***

- DEADLINES: It is important that your draft is with us by the date shown at the top of this notice, as Ministers must send a written reply within 15 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS ENQUIRY. The Department's performance is reported each year to Parliament. If you cannot meet the deadline, you should therefore provide an interim reply that apologises for the delay, sets out the action being taken to answer the enquiry, and advises when a substantive reply can be expected. You should aim to provide a substantive draft reply within a further 8 working days.
  Interim replies should be used infrequently, as every effort must be made to reply to correspondence from MPs (and others) promptly.

- **Action at official level on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts, or other policy aspects, direct with the relevant Private Office.**

- LAYOUT: Draft replies should be double-spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft. Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

- OPENING AND CLOSING: All Ministers prefer to start: *"Thank you for your letter of ...(MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... about ..."*
  If a Minister is replying on behalf of another, start: *"Thank you for your letter of ... to Geoff Hoon/Liz Symons/John Spellar/Lewis Moonie on behalf etc"*
  For Mr Spellar, add: *"I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."*
  For Baroness Symons, add: *"I am responding because of my responsibility for this issue." (or, in the case of letters from fellow Peers: "I have been asked to respond.")*
  For Dr Moonie, add: *"I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility."*
  Choose an appropriate ending (except for Dr Moonie, who will add his own) - such as: *"I hope this is helpful"; "I hope this explains the position/situation"; "I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"*; or *"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply"*.

- OPEN GOVERNMENT: Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. It is set out in DCI 223/99. If you are recommending to a Minister that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld - eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of Part II of the *Code of Practice on Access to Government Information*." It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice.

INTERIM REPLIES: If it is obvious on receipt of a PE that you cannot reply in full, an interim MUST be provided by the deadline stated. REMEMBER: an interim reply covering the majority of the issues raised could help our performance statistics.

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

131871/01

26 February 2001

Dear Foreign Secretary

I shall be grateful if you will give the enclosed communication from Section 40 your attention and send me a reply which I can forward to my constituent.

Please acknowledge.

Yours faithfully

Section 40

Section 40

The Rt Hon Robin Cook MP
Foreign Secretary

H.C.91B

RECEIVED BY
PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH
DATE: 28/2
LETTER REPLYING: US+S
KEYWORD(S): UFOs
LEAD BRANCH: DAS 4 Sec
COPIED TO:
RELATED CASE:
CLERK: Section 40

Section 40

Swansea

Section 40

20/2/2001

Dear Section 40 Section 40

Please can you ask the appropriate Minister to confirm or deny the existence of U.S. experimental craft in the skies of the Bristol channel area, as I am now aware of at least a dozen "U.F.O." sightings in our area over the past couple of years, some confirmed by several or more eye witnesses and one of which was caught on videotape after repeated appearances. This was broadcast on H.T.V.'s programme "Weird Wales". I highly recommend a visit to their archive, as the footage was no hoax, and the lady who had the courage to take the video, was obviously experiencing anxiety.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Section 40

puzzled by sky sight

A GROUP of Swansea workers spotted some possible UFOs in the sky on Saturday — three silver-coloured spheres the size of planes.

The five colleagues, who work in Mount Pleasant but do not want to be named, said they were totally bewildered by the sight at about 11.15am.

One of the group said the spheres were spotted in the sky over Mount Pleasant.

He added: "We saw these three spheres — one was stationary and another one knocked it across the sky towards Mumbles and replaced it by remaining stationary itself.

"These two spheres just disappeared after this. The whole thing lasted about five minutes.

"It was really spooky. They were all about the size of a plane high up.

"We thought at first it might have been balloons but not after one of them shot off towards Mumbles."

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

TO: Section 40 MOD Correspondence PRECEDENCE: _____

FAX NO Section 40 DATE: 28th Feb 2001

FROM: CLASSIFICATION: U/C.

(Contact myself on Section 40

MESSAGE: Section 40

Please see attached letter re: 'UFO sightings'. Do you have a dept that respond to these or is this a case for the 'X-Files'!

Please let me know if you can accept the transfer.

Thanks.

accepted. Section 40 Section 40

This transmission consists of 4 page(s) (including leader).
For transmission queries please phone Section 40

26/1

Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)64/4

21 August 2000

PE UNIT

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY – US 3156/00- DAVID CHIDGEY MP

1. Section 40 has written direct to the Department about UFOs on two previous occasions, in February and August 1996.

2. In February 1996 Section 40 asked about a newspaper report that MOD was to release UFO sighting reports from the late 1950s and asked for an opinion about an alleged sighting he had witnessed in the early 1960s. He was advised of the Department's limited interest in the subject and that anything reported at that time would be held on files already open for viewing at the Public Record Office.

3. In his letter in August 1996, Section 40 mentioned meeting Nick Pope, a former member of Sec(AS), who had just published his first book on UFOs, '*Open Skies, Closed Minds*' and that he was in correspondence with him. Section 40 also recounted further sightings he had witnessed and asked when Ministers and the Department would admit that extraterrestrial craft had penetrated the UK Air Defence Region. Our reply reiterated the Department's limited interest and advised that the views expressed in Mr Pope's book were entirely his own and did not reflect those of MOD.

Section 40

Section 40
AD/Sec(AS)2
MB8247 Section 40

(1) Section 40 - you may wish to compare the formal/ text with your draft to see where/ how I changed it.

Section 40

(2) Section 40 for info

Section 40

21/8

www.raf.mod.uk

ROYAL AIR FORCE

D/USofS/LM/3156/00 August 2000

Thank you for your letter of 31 July (Reference: 42/ExS/9/5/30-ho) enclosing one from Section 40 of Section 40 about an alleged sighting on 19 May of an 'unidentified flying object' over Southampton Water.

Section 40 will be aware from previous correspondence with my Department that the Ministry of Defence examines any reports passed on from members of the public of sightings that they cannot themselves identify only to establish whether what has been witnessed might have some defence significance. My Department's only concern is to establish whether there is any evidence in what has been seen that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. I should add that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence region by the Royal Air Force and MOD remains vigilant for any potential threat. However, unless there is evidence of a potential threat, and to date no 'unidentified flying object' reported to us has revealed such evidence, no attempt is made to identify the precise nature of each sighting. We believe that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose but it is not a function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so.

I should wish to assure Section 40 that my Department received no other reports of 'unidentified flying objects' for 19 May and my officials are satisfied that there is no

corroborating evidence to suggest that UK airspace was breached by unauthorised activity on that date.

Finally, I must say that my Department has no expertise or role in respect of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains open-minded but I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence to substantiate the existence of these alleged phenomena.

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP

David Chidgey Esq MP

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)64/4

August 2000

PE UNIT
(through Sec(AS)2 – Section 40

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY – US 3156/00- DAVID CHIDGEY MP

1. Section 40 has corresponded with the Department about UFO on two occasions, once in February 1996 and again in August 1996.

2. In his letter of 2 February 1996 Section 40 enquired about a newspaper report that mentioned the MOD were to release reports of 'UFO's' and their attempted interception by Air Defence aircraft, from the late 1950's. He then went on to recall a 'UFO' sighting he had had in the early 1960's and asked for our opinion as to what he saw. A response was sent detailing our limited interest in the subject and advising him of the references of files that were open for viewing at the Public Record Office that covered the period in question.

3. Section 40 then wrote to the Department on 2 August 1996 following his meeting with Mr Nick Pope a former member of Sec(AS) who had then just published his first book on this subject of 'UFO's, 'Open Skies, Closed Minds'. Section 40 went on to recount further sightings he had allegedly seen and ask when the Department and Ministers were going to 'come clean'. Our reply reiterated the Department's limited interest and said the Mr Pope's views were entirely his own and did not reflect the views of the MOD.

Section 40
Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 Section 40
CHOTS:SEC(AS)2A1

US 3156/00 **August 2000**

DRAFT REPLY TO DAVID CHIDGEY MP

Thank you for your letter of 31 July on behalf of your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 [redacted] concerning his alleged sighting of an 'unidentified flying object' over Southampton Water on 19 May 2000. This Department is the focal point within the MOD for correspondence of this nature.

As Section 40 will be aware from previous correspondence with this Department, the Ministry of Defence examines any reports of 'unidentified flying objects' it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised foreign military activity.

Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so.

With regard to Section 40 particular observation, I have looked back through our sighting report files and can confirm that we received no other reports of 'UFO' sightings for 19 May from anywhere in the UK. We are satisfied that there is no

corroborating evidence to suggest that the United Kingdom's airspace was breached by unauthorised military aircraft.

You may wish to assure Section 40 that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous surveillance of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force. This is achieved by using a combination of civil and military radar installations, which provide a continuous real-time "picture" of the UK airspace. Any threat to the UK Air Defence Region would be handled in the light of the particular circumstances at the time (it might if deemed appropriate, involve the scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft). From that perspective, reports provided to us of 'UFO' sightings are examined, but consultation with air defence staff and others as necessary is considered only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach of UK air space. Only a handful of reports have been received in recent years that warranted further investigation and none revealed any evidence of a threat.

The MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

David Chidgey MP

Dr Lewis Moonie MP

From: PARLIAMENTARY TYPIST1 on behalf of PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
To: SEC(AS)2
Sent: 21 August 2000 13:54
Subject: Read: PE 3156/2000 - DAVID CHIDGEY

Your message

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: PE 3156/2000 - DAVID CHIDGEY
Sent: 21/08/00 13:54

was read on 21/08/00 13:54.

UBD

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

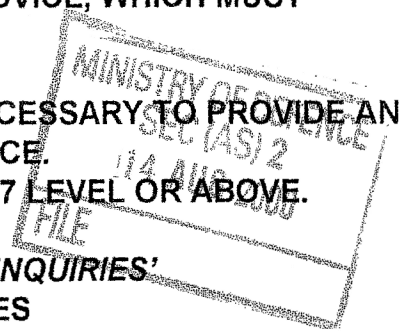
IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: Sec (AS) 2 PE REF NUMBER: US 3156/2000

MINISTER REPLYING: USofS DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 24/8/2000

DATE: 14/8/2000 FROM: Section 40 PE Unit TEL: Section 40 FAX: Section 40

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE, WHICH MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY.



ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET - IF YOU CANNOT, IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO PROVIDE AN INTERIM REPLY. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

PLEASE E-MAIL DRAFTS TO *'PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES'*
NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES

Ministers place great importance on the content, style and speed of replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

***DEADLINES** Ministers must send a written reply within 15 WORKING DAYS OF THIS ENQUIRY as the Department's performance is reported each year to Parliament. It is therefore very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline, an interim reply should be provided giving as much information as possible. You should also inform me immediately.*

IF THIS PE IS NOT FOR YOUR BRANCH, YOU MUST LET ME KNOW AT ONCE.

Action at official level on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant Private Office.

LAYOUT Draft replies should be double-spaced, Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft. Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

OPENING AND CLOSING All Ministers prefer to start: "Thank you for your letter of ...(MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... about ..."
If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start "Thank you for your letter of ... to Geoffrey Hoon/ Elizabeth Symons/John Spellar/Lewis Moonie on behalf etc"
For Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."
(EXCEPT FOR DR. MOONIE'S DRAFTS) choose an appropriate ending, such as:
"I hope this is helpful"
"I hope this explains the position/situation"
"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply"

OPEN GOVERNMENT Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. It is set out in **DCI 223/99**. If you are recommending to a Minister that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld - eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of Part II of the *Code of Practice on Access to Government Information*." It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice.

INTERIM REPLIES If it is obvious on receipt of a PE that you cannot reply in full, an interim **MUST** be provided. REMEMBER: An interim reply covering the majority of the issues

David Chidgey, C.Eng., FICE M.P. (Eastleigh)

Tel: Section 40
Fax: [redacted]

PE

RECEIVED
10 AUG 2000
US OF S

USA
SECRETARY
UFOS

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dr. Lewis Moonie MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

31st July 2000

Dear Lewis

Unidentified Sightings over Southampton Water

My constituent Section 40 has raised the above matter with me which is of some concern to him.

I enclose copies of his letters together with a copy of the newspaper article referred to, and I would be grateful for any information you may be able to supply in relation to these sightings.

Many thanks.

Yours

Section 40 [redacted]

Ref: 42/ExS/9/5/3-ho

Constituency Office: 113 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO50 9DS
Tel: 023 8062 0007 Fax: 023 8061 8245

RECEIVED 12 JUN 2000

Thursday 8th June 2000

Section 40
[redacted]
Section 40
Hants.
Tel; Section 40

Dear David;

Further to that very long standing question of mine ref; the Bilderberg Group and the financing of attendance by a former (?) Defence representative and companion, which, as you will recall, points to a blatant lie by said minister as proved by the copy of Hansard I drew your attention to, do I get the impression that, dating from the "passing the buck" ever since October 1999, is still ongoing, maybe in the hope that the matter will die away by neglect?

Perhaps it is now the time to draw your attention to an even more dramatic..and I use the description in the full awareness of it`s ramifications having dealt in, and experienced, the subject, for over sixty years, although the earlier such was not recognised at that period as what it is has since been re-evaluated.

In order not to complicate matters, I am enclosing a copy of a letter to a Southern Daily Echo reporter who may, or may not, take it up, as he did so splendidly with a similar incident in the issue of the 26th April...copy enclosed in case you missed it..hardly likely I hope as it involves your constituent!

I do not know what you will be inclined to do with it! I am in full, I hope, possession of my inbuilt faculties. I am just one of thousands, and according to surveys, millions, who have had "the experience" as we wryly describe it!

You might try the MOD in Whitehall or even our current Minister of Defence although one gets a standard reply from both more often than not of `no defence significance`..a misnomer if nothing else.

However, I would be fairly satisfied..if not entirely!..if you could arrive at a suitable explanation of this episode over Southampton Water,,surely NOT an area, with all it`s civilian and military installations on each shore, that `anyone can do anything` over it, as one responsible authority told me..see article. While other authorities, listed, deny ANYTHING took place as described AND FILMED!

I have left nothing out. You will have to take on board the more "paranormal" incidents as you wish. I have been writing a book on such things, based, mostly, on personal experiences, for some 15 years or so, a manuscript of some

80.000 words although requiring, again, an increasingly lengthy "epilogue" which is ongoing!

The recent "blanket" of silence which has descended upon those NASA films taken from and around the Space Shuttle..copies of which many of us have seen..including repeated denials by television spokespeople concerning "missing" segments of film previously announced or known to be in their possession of unexplained phenomena is also quite blatantly part and parcel of that Freedom of Information Act of both the UK and the USA and in particular the product of the most secretive Government we may well have had, under the Great Leader (!) who might as well pack his bags NOW!

Politics, of course, are part and parcel also of the enigma..which I fully realise has the power to change the entire civilisation of this planet. But, like Churchill, whatever history tries to make him into, told it as it was..insofar as that is allowed!..AND WE RESPONDED.

Are our present lot going to leave it at that? We will never forgive them, you know. We MIGHT forgive them for the FEAR they have of losing their power over their peoples. That is a human emotion. We will NOT forgive them for allowing millions to suffer untold psychological and spiritual misery of being abandoned by those supposely responsible and answerable to them. Fortunately..and maybe not so much by my own choice..I have been able to deal with the phenomena with no apparent negative emotions. My reason for that is..again, probably, because the "missing bits" have been blanked off to date!

In the last four years or so, and as a natural progression of the healing ability "acquired" in 1978-9, I think, I have beeb able to speak of the formerly unspeakable on TV, Radio, and to audiences, as I re-evaluated childhood "dreams" and vaguely recalled incidents thence to adult ditto in the seventies onwards.

Also..again, fortunately, I have many friends and colleagues who share my experiences and dawning comprehension.

There you are, David. I know I have opened the legendary "Pandora`s Box" and hope your maturity of knowledge and beliefs will allow you to examine all this carefully and open-mindedly.

Your reply..of whatever complexion!..would be appreciated.

I am,

Yours Sincerely,

Section 40

[redacted]

Copy of letter to "Echo" reporter.

Tuesday 30th May 2000

Section 40
[redacted]
Hants. Section 40
Tel; Section 40

Dear Section 40

Seems as if the last iteM on what is currently a`going on around here wasnt good enough to reach the Echo but thanks anyway. Cannot but think the one penned herewith DOES deserve exposure although have a disturbing feeling that the apparent worldwide clamp down..Western World anyway..on recent NASA films samples of which I`ve seen along with the SUFOG group and other items ongoing..is even going to reach the local Press or public! Hopefully I`m wrong! But can`t help recalling that X Files series item that had it christened..aptly!..`Deny Everything`! Read on..your reply please!

"What IS going on in the skies over Southampton Water?"

On Friday the 19th May the Southampton UFO group (SUFOG) held another "skywatch" from the vantage point of the hill behind the Millhouse pub/restaurant in Grange Road, Netley Abbey. Section 40 [redacted] Section 40 [redacted] Section 40 [redacted] Section 40 and Section 40 made up the contingent) Nothing drastic happened until around 10.30pm, (unlike the last skywatches) when a strong light was observed hovering over Southampton Water in the vicinity of Hythe. The groups camcorder equipment swung into action. filming an amazing six minute sequence of events that had very mysterious consequences, still ongoing.

The "light" moved around in various directions, sometimes staying absolutely still. The film shows a light aircraft of some kind,coming out from the Southampton Docks direction..or Southampton Airport?..and then circling the first "light" a few times before flying back. The plane carried normal lights. The first light them began to move towards the docks..still quite low in height...and then in a descending arc back again. More hovering..the plane re-appeared..circling again..then moved off to a distant location where the film still picks it up. The first light then begins to apparently descend into the sea although this may have been because it vanished behind trees on the waters-edge at Netley Abbey. Having watched the film I thought the first light might have been a helicopter as it shone a strobe type light once or twice. However, UFO "history" has many reports of unmarked helicopters that everyone, but everyone, denies possessing!

Once I`d seen the film twice I began to make enquiries of various authorities since the first light was "unidentified"

Beginning with the Coastguard at, I believe, Lymington, they soon gave me the answer that `nothing was reported`..not even an aircraft! Onto Hythe Police Station..ditto! They patched me to Bitterne Station since that stands in for Netley Abbey ditto currently..I knew that anyway..they in turn put me through to Police Central Control who also had no reports of activity or aircraft and suggested, in any case, the police don`t possess a helicopter, only a plane..which statement had repercussions concerning a previous incident observed by Netley residents! However, from there I contacted Air Traffic Control...denial of anything they knew about. I then tried Air Sea Rescue at Lee on Solent..an affable sounding chap also said `no reports` for that night but put me on to some kind of Special Air Service who apparently oversee incidents. Nothing to report but suggested it might have been a `private` incident. I queried this and was told Southampton Water wasn`t a "controlled area" and `anyone could do anything over it`. The mind boggled at this.

Finally, and in some sort of desperation, I rang, via the telephone book, the MOD/RAF/USADA (!) at Hythe..I mean, how high can you go?..and a pleasant enough guy briefly discussed the incident...when I described it he said `you are talking about a UFO, arent you?` I said `yes`, since it was so far "unidentified," all I was trying to do was get any answer! Not surprisingly, in view of my recipients status and organisation, he said he couldnt answer that one anyway but put me onto another source which gave me the by then familiar rejoinder. By then I had come to a full stop! Can you wonder? We have, of course, the video should you wish to take this further.

I might add...recall my previous article to you? that the intrepid skywatching group repeated their practice of going on, after the incident, to Netley Royal Victoria Park where they had encounters of a different kind, ...even more so than the first occasion when they had left the park rather hurriedly! If you are wondering what "spooks, ghosts" etc etc have to do with UFO`s..my friends, many researchers and actual "experiencers" have come around to the conclusion,,backed up by notable professionals..that "it" is all ONE that comes under the "umbrella" of what we call the paranormal..an interdimensional area of science that Quantum physics have made the paradigm leap into in the last decade.

Since I am just one who has had these experiences..still ongoing currently from the last sixty odd years or so..I can go along with all this. By the way, those "ghostly" Park experiences were further added to over the May Bank Holiday when I casually mentioned them to one of the park`s tea rooms staff who I`ve known for many years,and who is aware of my interests. I got back a whole series of ghostly goings on over some years that some had UFO type details too. The

same kind of incidents that my SUFOG colleagues have been reporting! Plus the stinging proof of a whack on the bent over posterior of one of the staff when she was alone in the tearooms! Fortunately she is a lady who takes it all in her stride! There was also that lighted candle phenomenom in the chapel top windows reported several times.

And....I. along with my driver..have again seen that huge reddish orange light over the Hamble area while driving, as before, down Hamble Lane to Netley..my third sighting and her first! Stunning! Around, also, about the post 11.00pm time. I`m still not convinced that it`s an emission from a Fawley chimmey stack in spite of the video I`ve seen taken by our group on a seperate occasion. No answers from the oil refinery spokeswoman I contacted who seems to have difficulty in tracking down someone who knows the details!

Why, too, has it suddenly appeared recently after I`ve been traversing the same route most Sundays and such for some ten years or more at the same time? Why have the Southampton UFO Group been able to film undidentified objects not less than four times in the last two months over the area? Oh, yes...thanks to the Netley gentleman who rang in following those first Echo articles claiming to have the answer to my sighting..it was, he was certain the `BBC Balloon`..the one they use to publicise their programmes...as he`s seen it going over Netley at 10.30pm when out with his dog. I rang the BBC unit and they `never fly it at night` and `mostly it stays in a garage`.

Why brings me, us, to another question! What DID he see, then?

So..the mysteries continue..if only because those who are, one way or the other,responsible to us, yet hide those responsibilites.

Section 40

MYSTERIOUS UFOS SPOTTED IN HAMPSHIRE SKIES

STAR GAZERS: UFO experts Ernie Sears (left) and Andy Phillips.

The truth is over here . . .

Special report
by **Malcolm Prior**

IT'S A MYSTERY that would not be out of place on cult sci-fi series The X-Files.

But even television's top UFO investigators Mulder and Scully would have their work cut out for them in Hampshire.

If our very own alien spotters are to be believed, the county is a top destination for uncanny visitors from other worlds.

And they point to two recent near-identical sightings in the night skies around Southampton to support their claim.

ENCL No 85

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

From: Section 40 Secretariat(Air Staff)2a, Room 8245,
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct Dialling) 0171 218 **2140**
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000
(Fax)

Section 40

Hants
Section 40

Your reference

Our reference
D/Sec(AS)/64/3
Date
29 February 1996

Dear Section 40

1. Thank you for your letter of 2 February 1996 concerning the subject of "unexplained" aerial sightings, or "UFOs" as they are sometimes characterized. Your letter has been passed to this office as Secretariat(Air Staff)2a is the Ministry of Defence focal point for correspondence on this subject.

2. As explained in my letter to you of 24 March 1995, the MOD does not have any direct interest, expertise or role in respect of "UFO/ flying saucer" matters, or those relating to the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain totally open-minded. To date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena, and no threat to the UK has been discerned which has been attributed to a "UFO".

3. However, in the context of MOD and HM Forces' responsibility for the effective defence of the United Kingdom, we remain vigilant for any potential threat, from whatever source. It is in this context alone that we look at reports of "unexplained" aerial sightings in order to establish whether what was seen has defence significance. If no threat is discerned, and in connection with "unexplained" aerial sightings this has been the case in all instances to date, we make no further attempt to investigate and establish exactly what may have been seen.

4. From the reports which we receive it is quite clear that there are many sights in the sky which are not immediately identifiable. However, we believe explanations could be found for most of them. Possibilities include aircraft lights or aircraft seen from unusual angles, helium balloons, searchlights or lasers reflecting off clouds, or even natural phenomena like fireballs and meteorites. However, we accept that there will always be some sightings that appear to defy explanation, and we are open-minded on these as essentially it is outside our remit to investigate further if there is no defence interest.

5. You may be interested in viewing the MOD's archived "UFO" files. As is the case with other government departments' files, all MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. As you may be aware, this Act of Parliament states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years, as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject files are now preserved. A few files from the Fifties and Sixties have, however, survived and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17527
AIR 20/9322	
AIR 20/9994	
PREM 11/855	

If you wish to research a matter which occurred in 1960/61 (ie. more than 30 years ago), you may care to visit the PRO and look through these files, as events from that period are now a matter of public record.

6. I hope that this is helpful. I am returning your sae with thanks as we have our own postal arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

Section 40

Friday February 2nd 1996

Section 40
Hants Section 40
Tel Section 40

Dear Sir:

Having noticed, in one of the more "serious" daily newspapers in recent weeks, some mention of the Ministry of Defence releasing reports of "UFO'S" and their attempted interception by our Air Defence aircraft, as far back as the late fifties, etc, I am hoping you can throw some light on the following incident which I witnessed, details herewith;

In either 1960 or 1961, I made no note of the actual year and date at the time since I felt it uneccesary, I was working as an insurance agent in the town of Gosport, Hampshire, and on this particularly bright, windy, and cold Monday morning in the month of March. I was traversing a footbridge over the railway, at about 9.30 to 10.30am, when my attention was caught by a very bright object, high in the sky to the north, and seemingly situated over what was then known as the "ASWE"complex on top of Portsdown Hill.I stopped and leaned on the parapet for a minute or so..the object appeared to be "cigar" shapedbut due to the reflected sunlight no firm outline could be distinguished.

It did not appear to be moving, but I put this down to the very strong wind that was blowing. I stopped a young man walking over the bridge and asked him if he thought it was an aircraft..he looked at it, and said 'yes'. That was sufficient to assure me that it wasnt one of those "flying saucers" I had been reading about and I went on my way.

Some thirty minutes later I was in another part of Gosport when I heard the roar of jet aircraft engines. Running to where I had a clear view of the skies, I saw two Gloster Meteor jet fighters, climbing up low over the towns rooftops. Having spent some five years in the RAF during and just after WW11 I was quite good at aircraft recognition and procedures of such a take-off over built up areas and knew this was some kind of emergency.

I followed the climbing path of the jets, and saw, to my amnazement, that same "cigar" still hovering in the same spot over the Air Surface Weapons Establishment on Portsdown Hill!

I watched with some excitement since I now realised this was no aircraft....the two jets roared up towards the object and as they approached it it just seemed to vanish!Like the proverbial light bulb being turned off!

-5 FEB 1996
FILE 643

I ran along the road to where there was a telephone box and found the control tower number of nearby Thorney Island airbase where I thought the Meteors had originated..as a second guess this might have been HMS Daedulus at Lee-on-Solent..however, I was amazed to hear, when the officer in the control tower at Thorney Island spoke to me, when I asked him what was the object those two Meteor jets were chasing, tell me that not only had I NOT seen any "object", neither had I seen two Meteor jets!

I repeated the same question, confirming my RAF service and assuring him I knew what Meteor jet aircraft looked and sounded like,,he firmly repeated his same answer! I hung up!Needless to say, after getting a non -commital answer from the Portsmouth Evening News office of 'nothing reported', my interest was aroused in the subject of "UFO's"!

Perhaps you would be so kind as to take a small amount of trouble to put to rest my concern over this incident?

I enclose a SAE for your reply.I am only sorry I cannot pin the year down more accurately,but trust this will not cause you undue difficulty.

I am,

Yours Faithfully.

Section 40

[redacted]

From: Section 40 Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000
(Fax) Section 40

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 61

Section 40

Southampton
Hants
Section 40

Your reference

Our reference
D/Sec(AS)/64/3
Date
9 August 1996

Dear Section 40

1. Thank you for your letter to Mr Soames of 2 August 1996 on the subject of "UFO/flying saucers". Your letter has been passed to this office for reply as we are the Ministry of Defence focal point for correspondence of this nature.

2. I am unable to comment on the News of the World article to which you refer as I have not seen it. We have corresponded on the subject of the MOD's role in relation to "UFO" reports in the past, most recently my letter dated 29 February 1996. However, I should be happy to set out the position once more.

3. The MOD takes its responsibilities for ensuring the effective defence of this country very seriously indeed. We examine any reports of "UFO" sightings received solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, is there any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by a hostile foreign military aircraft? However, unless there are defence implications, and to date no "UFO" report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

4. As we make no attempt to investigate a sighting for which there is no defence interest, we are not in a position to provide a precise explanation for the hundreds of reports we receive each year. We believe that rational explanations could be found if resources were devoted to so doing. However, it is not the function of the MOD to provide a general aerial identification service and it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so. From the types of descriptions we receive, however, aircraft or natural phenomena probably account for most of the observations.

5. The wider debate over possible extraterrestrial life is outside the remit of this Department. To date the MOD remains unaware of any evidence which proves that "UFO/flying saucers" or extraterrestrial lifeforms exist, and no threat to the UK has ever been discerned which has been attributed to either phenomena.

6. You make reference to the book recently published by Mr Pope, entitled *"Open Skies, Closed Minds"*. The views expressed by Mr Pope represent his personal opinions, and do not represent nor reflect the views of the Ministry of Defence.

7. I hope this clarifies the position.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Section 40 [redacted]

D/MIN(AF)/NS/10/1/5

Date: 8/8/96

4/SecCAS)

Copy to:

Minister(AF) has received the attached letter from Section 40 [redacted] of Section 40 [redacted] Southampton

This is forwarded for official reply.

The Department's performance in answering letters from members of the public is seen by the public as an indication as to how effective and efficient the Department is. You should therefore send a full reply within two weeks of the date of this covering note. If this is not possible an interim reply should be sent with a full reply following as soon as possible thereafter.

Drafts should be polite, but informal in tone. MOD and military jargon, including abbreviations, should be avoided and clear, uncomplicated language should be used. Where documents or other texts are referred to, an indication of where they can be obtained should be given.

Minister(AF) is concerned that there should be good co-ordination of the Department's activities. You should therefore consider carefully whether other Divisions (within or outside the MOD) have an interest in the issue(s) and consult accordingly (this may include Divisions other than those shown as copy addressees). In particular you should consider whether other TLB holders need to be consulted.

Section 40 [redacted]

APS/Minister(AF)
MB6113 Section 40 [redacted]

64/3.

Section 40
[redacted]
SOUTHAMPTON, HANTS. Section 40
ENGLAND
Section 40
[redacted]

Friday 2nd August 1996

Dear Minister:

I have only just been handed a cutting from the News of The World newspaper, dated July 21st 1996, in which you are quoted as assuring the electorate that "flying saucers" (ie:UFOS) are 'no threat to Britain', and, further, that 'there is no evidence to indicate that UK air defence may have been compromised'.

I find these statements astounding!

Since I have recently had the pleasure of meeting, and subsequently striking up a correspondence with, the MOD's ex "UFO" expert, who held down the desk at the MOD for three years and who has just had published his potential "best seller" book,"Open Skies, Closed Minds", whose main thrust is that he now believes, after his original scepticism, that 'a number of extra terrestial craft are penetrating our air defences'etc etc.

His belief supports the views and personal experience of many of us "out there"..I myself have seen a strange glowing daylight object vainly intercepted by two Meteor jet aircraft in the early 1960's..it just vanished, after hovering for some 30,minutes over an experimental air surface weapons establishment near Portsmouth. This event was absolutely denied within ten minutes when I telephoned the air base from whence the two jets had been "scrambled"..denied TWICE!As an ex RAF serviceman experienced in aircraft recognition I knew what Gloster Meteor jets looked and sounded like!

In the late seventies I watched a small white "blob" being pursued, at night, (followed, not pursued,) by a fighter aircraft at some height...various authorities knew nothing of it until I reached Middle Wallop Air Defence base by telephone when I was put through to a Major there by a female switchboard operator with the words 'we have a code red here, sir!'The Major denied, briskly, that they had 'anything up, old boy'

In November of 1977 I watched, in open mouthed amazement, as a huge triangular metallic looking object,hovered silently, over head at eight pm, then vanished in a clear sky as I turned my head to call my wife out. No one could account for this until the next morning when I discovered that a mutual friend along with four others had watched this same, or a simliar object,cavorting about the clear skies, in sheer bursts of incredible speed, with no noise, as they first drove., and then stopped their car to watch, some five miles from my own vantage point, at the same time, until they had to proceed to an appointment.

In America, I know, that they have a so-called "black economy", which uses public funds to pursue highly secret projects, the UFO enigma being just one such. Not even their Presidents are allowed access to this information. It may well be that your own Government, no, OUR Government, is also kept ignorant of such over here, of the same subject.It may also be that, bearing in mind the absurd and dangerous delayed information that the Government, notably the Tory Party,had, on the BSE etc etc crisis, that such greater secrets are kept firmly from their constituents for obvious reasons.

However, under the circumstances, ie: the mass of information, sightings etc by reliable professional pilots,military personnel,radar operators,etc etc, equivalent, or exceeding thereof, enough evidence that would convict in court,isnt it about time that your good self, along with other Ministers and such, "came clean" and told their electors just where we all stand?

Up until now, and with no sign of a discontinuence, we have come to distrust our "betters" who supposedly are concerned, and rightly so,with our welfare and wellbeing. Now could be the chance to reverse such a feeling..to lay your cards on the table..we are, you know, not daft out here,we would much prefer, the truth, in spite of the temporary chaos this would cause,..and it would be far better to do this soon, before the lid blows off and those such as yourself find themselves no longer in power. This would apply to all parties who failed to fulfil their elected obligations!

I will expect a reasoned and sensible reply, no waffle, please, my, our, many experiences in this real world out here,leave us in no doubt that real, solid,apparently crewed by strange creatures, craft, are, indeed, penetrating our defences with impunity, as they have been doing, for many many years.

My own personal record of such stands at a total of fourteen such incidents!Since I have appeared on television and radio, as well as carrying out talks to the general public and interested parties, over 30 years, relating these and other "paranormal" incidents,I hope you understand, dear Minister, that I feel you owe ME, US, an honest answer!Please, no "standard" replies from the usual MOD department dealing with UFO'S!

I am,

Yours Sincerely, and maybe Hopefully,

Section 40 [redacted]

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephon Section 40 Direct Dialling)
Fax)
(020) 7218 9000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

2/6 REMIND
deadline 26+1
13 JUN 2000

D/US of S/LM 2033/00/Y

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (RA) 1
15 JUN 2000
FILE

13th June 2000

Dear Geoff,

Thank you for your letter of 3 April on behalf of your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 Sutton-in-Ashfield, who would like more information to be made available about 'Unidentified Flying Objects'. I apologise for not having replied earlier.

As Peter Kilfoyle said in his letter of 28 January, MOD files are subject to the provision of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967 and remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action on the file has been taken. We have looked carefully to see whether early release of 'UFO' files is possible. However, the files contain personal details of all those contacting and corresponding with the Department and MOD has a duty to protect this third party confidentiality. Staff would need to be diverted from essential tasks to manually scrutinise and remove all personal details on the files and the knock-on effect would be a major disruption to MOD's overall programme for release of files to the Public Record Office. If, however, Section 40 is interested in a specific date during the last 30 years, my officials would be happy to check to see what information might be held on file.

Best wishes

Section 40

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP

The Rt Hon Geoffrey Hoon MP

SEC(AS)2A1

From: PARLIAMENTARY TYPIST2 on behalf of PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
To: SEC(AS)2A1
Sent: 02 June 2000 09:47
Subject: Read: PE US of S 2033/00

Your message

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: PE US of S 2033/00
Sent: 02/06/00 09:38

was read on 02/06/00 09:47.

SEC(AS)2A1

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES

Subject: PE US of S 2033/00

Please find attached our reply to the above mentioned PE. The attachment mentioned in para 1 of the covering letter will be walked down to the Parliamentary Branch by a member of Sec(AS) staff shortly.

Section 40 [redacted]

02/06/00

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)64/4

25 May 2000

PE UNIT
(through Sec(AS)2 - [redacted] 1/6
Copy to: Hd of DR1 - [redacted]

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY – US OF S 2033/00 –THE RT HON GEOFFREY HOON MP

1. [redacted] has been in correspondence with the Department about UFOs since 1996. His last approach was made through Secretary of State at the beginning of this year (D/US of S/PK0081/00, copy attached for ease of reference). We have explained to [redacted] on a number of occasions the Department's limited interest in this subject and Mr Kilfoyle's letter provided details about how information is released.

2. The Department receives some 200-300 alleged sighting reports each year and about a similar number of letters from members of the public about UFO issues. We have looked carefully to see whether files not yet 30 years old might be released to the Public Record Office. All of the sighting reports and correspondence contain personal details of those providing the information. Legal advice was sought: the Public Record Act gives an implied override of the Department's duty to protect the third party confidentiality by use of the 30 year rule. Release after that date would present no problems to MOD, but release in advance would lay the Department open to the risk of legal action for breach of confidence. To remove the personal details from the files would be a time consuming task. Staff in CS(RM), the MOD's Records Branch would need to be diverted from their essential tasks to manually scrutinise and sanitise thousands of pages on the files. The knock-on effect would be a major disruption to the Department's overall programme for the release of files to the PRO and cannot be justified.

3. [redacted] has already been advised that UFO files are released at the 30 year point. The draft attached explains why it is not possible to do so any earlier.

[redacted]
Sec(AS)2a
MB8245 [redacted]
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A1

US 2033/00 **May 2000**

DRAFT REPLY TO THE RT HON GEOFFREY HOON MP

Thank you for your letter of 3 April on behalf of your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 Sutton-in-Ashfield, who would like more information to be made available about 'Unidentified Flying Objects'.

As Peter Kilfoyle said in his letter of 28 January, MOD files are subject to the provision of the Pubic Records Act of 1958 and 1967 and remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action on the file has been taken. We have looked carefully to see whether early release of 'UFO' files is possible. However, the files contain personal details of all those contacting and corresponding with the Department and MOD has a duty to protect this third party confidentiality. Staff would need to be diverted from essential tasks to manually scrutinise and remove all personal details on the files and the knock-on effect would be a major disruption to MOD's overall programme for release of files to the Public Record Office. I am afraid it simply cannot be justified. If however, Section 40 is interested in a specific date during the last 30 years, my officials would be happy to check to see what information might be held on file.

The Rt Hon Geoffrey Hoon MP

Dr Lewis Moonie MP

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION
IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: Sec(AB)2 **PE REF NUMBER:** US2033/2000

MINISTER REPLYING: US of S **DRAFT REQUIRED BY:** 2/6 /2000

DATE: 24/5/2000 **FROM:** Section 40 **PE Unit** **TEL** Section 40 **FAX:** Section 40

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE, WHICH MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY.

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET - IF YOU CANNOT, IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO PROVIDE AN INTERIM REPLY. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.
ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

PLEASE E-MAIL DRAFTS TO *'PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES'*
NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES

Ministers place great importance on the content, style and speed of replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

DEADLINES Ministers must send a written reply within 15 WORKING DAYS OF THIS ENQUIRY as the Department's performance is reported each year to Parliament. It is therefore very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline, an interim reply should be provided giving as much information as possible. You should also inform me immediately.

IF THIS PE IS NOT FOR YOUR BRANCH, YOU MUST LET ME KNOW AT ONCE.

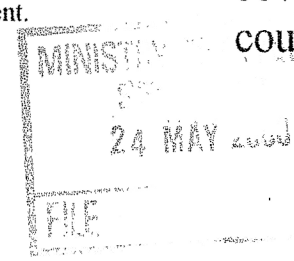
Action at official level on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant Private Office.

LAYOUT Draft replies should be double-spaced, Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft. Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

OPENING AND CLOSING All Ministers prefer to start:
"Thank you for your letter of ...(MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... about ..."
If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start
"Thank you for your letter of ... to Geoffrey Hoon/ Elizabeth Symons/John Spellar/Lewis Moonie on behalf etc"
For Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."
(EXCEPT FOR DR. MOONIE'S DRAFTS) choose an appropriate ending, such as:
"I hope this is helpful"
"I hope this explains the position/situation"
"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply"

OPEN GOVERNMENT Replies **MUST** be drafted in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. It is set out in **DCI 223/99**. If you are recommending to a Minister that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld - eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of Part II of the *Code of Practice on Access to Government Information*." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

INTERIM REPLIES If it is obvious on receipt of a PE that you cannot reply in full, an interim **MUST** be provided. REMEMBER: An interim reply covering the majority of the issues raised could help our performance statistics.



- 5 APR 2000

Sec(A2)
05

8 Station Street
Kirkby-in-Ashfield
Nottinghamshire
NG17 7AR
Tel. 01623 720399
Fax. 01623 720399

0098

from Geoffrey Hoon
Member of Parliament
for Ashfield

Lewis Moonie MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Ministry of Defence
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

31 April 2000

Dear Lewis,

I have been contacted by my constituent a Section 40 of Section 40 Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire regarding UFO's.

I understand that Section 40 investigates UFO's. Section 40 would like the Ministry of Defence to move towards making more information available regarding UFO's.

I would be most grateful for your comments on this issue.

My thanks in anticipation of your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Geoffrey Hoon.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

D/US of S/PK 0081/00/P

28th January 2000

Dear Geoff,

You wrote to me recently as the Minister with responsibility for the MOD's limited interest in 'Unidentified Flying Objects' and asked, on behalf of your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 Section 40 Sutton in Ashfield, if we would be releasing any information.

Section 40 has corresponded with the Department on several occasions in recent years and our officials have already explained to him the limited interest we have in these matters. We examine reports passed to us from members of the public of sightings that they cannot themselves identify only to establish whether what has been witnessed might have some defence significance. Our only concern is whether there is any evidence in what has been seen that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised foreign military activity. I should add that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence region by the Royal Air Force and the Department remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source, and to date no 'UFO' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting. We believe that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose but it is not a function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SLC (AS)1
- 1 FEB 2000
FILE

The Rt Hon Geoffrey Hoon MP

Section 40 has asked about the release of information. He will already know that MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967 and generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action on the file has been taken. It was generally the case that before 1967 all MOD 'UFO' files were destroyed after five years as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However, as a result of growing public interest the files have been routinely preserved since 1967 and released to the Public Record Office. The PRO catalogue shows that our 1969 files were opened on 1 January this year; files from 1967 and 1968 and any from the 1950s and early 1960s that survived are already open. Files from 1970 onwards will be opened annually as they reach their 30-year maturity point. If Section 40 would like any more information about these files he can contact the PRO at the following address:

Public Record Office
Ruskin Avenue
Kew
Richmond
Surrey TW9 4DU

I hope this explains the position.

Best wishes,

Section 40

PETER KILFOYLE MP

SEC(AS)2

From: PARLIAMENTARY TYPIST1 on behalf of PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
To: SEC(AS)2
Sent: 18 January 2000 10:32
Subject: Read: PE US0081

Your message

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: PE US0081
Sent: 18/01/00 10:20

was read on 18/01/00 10:32.

Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

17 January 2000

Parliamentary Enquiries

PE US 0081/00

1. Section 40 one of Secretary of State's constituents, is interested in UFOs and has asked if MOD will be releasing information about them. His question may have been prompted by media interest in the release of the next batch of archived files. MOD 'UFO' files are released each year in accordance with the 30-year rule and files for 1969 (thirteen in total) have been opened recently by the Public Record Office.

2. Section 40 first contacted the Department by telephone in July 1996 to ask about 'UFOs'. A detailed reply was provided explaining the Department's limited interest in the phenomena. He has written on four occasions since then, most recently in September 1998. Section 40 said in July 1996 that he was unable to visit the Public Record Office to research old MOD 'UFO' files and asked that we provide copies of any files containing sightings by members of the public. He was advised that this was not a service provided by the Department; contact details for the PRO were provided so that he might liaise with them on the range of services they offered. It may be that Section 40 latest approach has a similar motive and it seems sensible to remind him of the details for contacting the PRO. Copies of the previous correspondence are attached for background information.

3. As requested by APS/SofS, I attach a draft reply for USofS to send to Secretary of State to pass on to Section 40

Section 40

Sec(AS)2
MB8247 Section 40
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2

DRAFT FROM USofS TO SofS

You wrote to me recently as the Minister with responsibility for the MOD's limited interest in 'Unidentified Flying Objects' and asked, on behalf of your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 Sutton in Ashfield, if we would be releasing any information.

Section 40 has corresponded with the Department on several occasions in recent years and our officials have already explained to him the limited interest we have in these matters. We examine reports passed to us from members of the public of sightings that they cannot themselves identify only to establish whether what has been witnessed might have some defence significance. Our only concern is whether there is any evidence in what has been seen that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised foreign military activity. I should add that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence region by the Royal Air Force and the Department remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

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Section 40 has asked about the release of information. He will already know that MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967 and generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action on the file has been taken. It was generally the case that before 1967 all MOD 'UFO' files were destroyed after five years as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However, as a result of growing public interest the files have been routinely preserved since 1967 and released to the Public Record Office. The PRO catalogue shows that our 1969 files were opened on 1 January this year; files from 1967 and 1968 and any from the 1950s and early 1960s that survived are already open. Files from 1970 onwards will be opened annually as they reach their 30-year maturity point. If Section 40 would like any more information about these files he can contact the PRO at the following address:

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I hope this explains the position.

PETER KILFOYLE MP

The Rt Hon Geoffrey Hoon MP

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: SEC (AS) 2 PE REF NUMBER: US 0081 /00

MINISTER REPLYING: USofS DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 19 / 1 /00

DATE: 7 / 1/00 FROM: Section 40 PE Unit TEL: Section 40 FAX: Section 40

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

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For Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."
Choose an appropriate ending:
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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE SEC (AS)1 - 7 JAN 2000 FILE

SURGERY SHEET

DATE 8/12/94

NAME Section 40 [redacted]

ADDRESS Section 40 [redacted] Sind, Section 40 [redacted]

TELEPHONE NO.

SPECIFIC TYPE OF ENQUIRY

CASE DESCRIPTION

Interested in U.F.O.'s — will the M.O.D. be releasing information ?

Poly Band

Please arrange a letter from Peter K to GHoan MP to pass to Section 40 [redacted] Section 40 [redacted] with the standard line on UFOs

Section 40 [redacted] 9/12.

Section 40 [redacted]

check Section 40 [redacted] Section 40 [redacted] post-code

Notes

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

Write to Peter Lloyd asking for ? (& MOD).

GLOUCESTER 20 NUMBER

Armed Forces: Redresses of Complaint

The Earl of Carlisle asked Her Majesty's Government:

How many times, since 1 May 1997, a redress of complaint, made by an officer or an other rank in the Armed Forces, has taken more than 12 months to process from submission to conclusion; and what was the reason for the delay in each case. [HL4144]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean): The number of redresses of complaint submitted since 1 May 1997 which took more than 12 months to be concluded was 57 for the Army and seven for the RAF. In addition, the Army has 102 cases and the RAF 12 cases which remain unresolved after 12 months. These figures cover complaints processed within the chain of command and by the Service Board. The Navy only collects information centrally on cases which fall to be determined by the board. On this basis, four cases took more than 12 months to resolve and seven cases are still outstanding.

The most common reasons for delay are the need to carry out special investigations, which may involve service police inquiries and the taking of witness statements; the need to take legal or other expert advice; and the extensive consultation required on complaints which challenge existing policy. Delays are also caused by complainants, or their legal representative, seeking information from the department to help them formulate their complaint, adding new complaints as the redress processes or delaying their response to the disclosure to them of all relevant papers before their case is submitted to the Service Board.

Although the services seeks to deal with all complaints expeditiously, the overriding importance of the thorough investigation and careful consideration of complex complaints often militates against this.

US National Security Agency: Menwith Hill

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether currently planned developments by the United States National Security Agency at Menwith Hill are under the United Kingdom's operational control and are compatible both with the provisions of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and with the security and commercial interests of the United Kingdom and other members of the European Union. [HL4199]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: Her Majesty's Government retain legal possession and control over sites made available for use by the United States visiting forces. Operational control of deployed forces rests with the United States. The facilities currently under construction at RAF Menwith Hill, which relate to the US Space-Based Infra-Red System, will be operated in accordance with these principles.

The systems will provide warning of ballistic missile launches, directly contributing to the security of the UK. This does not affect the commercial interests of either the UK or other EU members. Interpretation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is a matter for the parties to that treaty.

WTO Negotiations: ACP Supplying States

Lord Moynihan asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether, in the context of the forthcoming World Trade Organisation negotiations, they will support a balanced agenda accommodating the concerns and interests of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) supplying states. [HL4213]

The Minister for Science, Department of Trade and Industry (Lord Sainsbury of Turville): Her Majesty's Government have made clear their commitment to ensuring that the agenda for new comprehensive negotiations in the WTO should take full account of the needs and priorities of all developing countries.

Sovereignty above National Airspace

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they consider national sovereign rights pertain to vehicles, whether civil or military, that operate above national airspace. [HL4195]

Lord Sainsbury of Turville: National sovereignty applies to airspace; no sovereignty applies in outer space. There is no established definition of the height at which airspace ends and outer space begins.

Regarding vehicles, a state on whose registry a space object appears retains jurisdiction and control over such object while in outer space (Article VIII, 1967, Outer Space Treaty).

Hospital Doctors: Suspension

Baroness Knight of Collingtree asked Her Majesty's Government:

When Baroness Knight of Collingtree can expect an answer concerning the introduction of new rules governing the suspension of hospital doctors, requested by a committee of medical experts and submitted by her to the Government Minister in July. [HL4171]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Lord Hunt of Kings Heath): An internal management review of the procedures for the suspension of hospital doctors has been completed taking into account information received from a number of sources. The findings of this review will now be taken forward as part of work on the wider issues concerning the recognition and handling of poor clinical performance.

MOD Form 174D

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 18

REGISTERED FILE No. D / SEC(AS) 6414

Enclosure Jacket No. 6

DATE OPENED 12 APRIL 1999

DIVISION/DIRECTORATE/BRANCH:

SEC(AS)2A

SUBJECT:

LETTER FROM CLLR BUCHANAN RE: BONNYBRIDGE.

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

NOTES

1. A Temporary Jacket will only be used when the Registered File is not available.
2. The contents of a Temporary Jacket must be incorporated in the Registered File at the earliest opportunity, and this incorporation recorded on a transit slip or file record sheet.
3. The movements of Temporary Jackets are recorded by the Registry. Transit is to be recorded on transit slips as for Registered Files.

DOWNGRADING

(to be completed when the jacket is incorporated in the Registered File)

This jacket may be downgraded to:— RESTRICTED / UNCLASSIFIED on..... (insert date)

Certifying Officer.....

Date..... Appointment and Branch.....

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone Section 40 (Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

ENCLOSURE 3 NUMBER

US of S dist
Sec (AS) 2a 1

Councillor Buchanan
Municipal Buildings
Falkirk
FK1 5RF

D/US of S/JS 28/1/0

12th April 1999

Dear Councillor Buchanan,

At a recent Ministry of Defence Press Conference you handed a member of the Ministry of Defence security staff a 'Demand Notice' for Mr Spellar, the Under Secretary of State for Defence, about sightings of 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs) in the Bonnybridge area. Mr Spellar has seen the Notice and has asked me to reply.

As you will be aware, the Ministry of Defence has a very specific and limited interest in 'UFO' sighting reports. You will recall from correspondence with MOD officials that this interest is solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source the Ministry of Defence does not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose. However, it is not a function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to do so. Geographically, Falkirk is located between Glasgow and Edinburgh and it is possible that aircraft flying into and out of the airports located there or, perhaps, using the Cumbernauld aerodrome, might account for what has been seen.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS) 2
13 APR 1999
FILE

Recycled Paper

The Ministry of Defence has no plans to expand its interest in these matters. I can however assure you that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential external military threat. In the event that any video or photographic evidence is forwarded to the Ministry of Defence to substantiate public concerns, it will be examined by experts as necessary.

Finally, I should add that the views expressed by Mr Pope on the subject of 'UFOs' are entirely his own personal opinions and do not represent nor reflect the views of the Ministry of Defence.

Section 40 [redacted]

Assistant Private Secretary

Recycled Paper

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)64/4

12 Apr 1999

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 2

Section 40 [redacted]

APS/US OF S *
(through SEC(AS)2 [redacted]

* [by CHOTS e-mail only]

LETTER FROM COUNCILLOR W BUCHANAN

Reference: D/US of S/JS 28/1/0 dated 29 March 1999

Issue

1. Councillor Buchanan's attempt to lobby Ministers during an Op Allied Force press briefing about 'UFO' sightings in the Bonnybridge area.

Recommendation

2. That a Private Secretary reply is sent to Councillor Buchanan using the attached draft.

Timing

3. Routine.

Background

4. Councillor Buchanan is an elected Member of Chacefield Ward, Falkirk Council. He sits as an independent Member.

5. Councillor Buchanan's interest in alleged 'UFO' sightings came to our attention in September 1994 when a letter to the Prime Minister saying that in the preceding two years over 600 people had come forward with reports of 'UFO' sightings in the Falkirk district was passed to MOD for official action reply. We advised Councillor Buchanan of the Department's limited interest in these matters and explained that only two or three reported sightings for the area during the period in question had been received by the Department, none of which were of defence significance.

6. In January 1995 Councillor Buchanan pursuaded his local MP, Dennis Canavan, to write to Sec(AS)2 requesting a meeting between the Councillor, a local Falkirk ufologist and MOD officials to discuss the alleged 'UFO' sightings. The then US of S responded declining the meeting as there was no evidence to indicate a phenomena of defence significance.

7. Nothing more was heard until March 1997 when Dennis Canavan wrote to the then S of S enclosing a further letter from Councillor Buchanan. Again, US of S replied reiterating that MOD only examines 'UFO' reports to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance and that Falkirk and Bonnybridge were not experiencing any phenomena of defence concern.

8. Councillor Buchanan wrote again to the Prime Minister in October 1997 and December 1998 demanding answers to the "thousands of 'UFO' sightings" on behalf of the people of Bonnybridge. On both occasions, Sec(AS)2a replied reiterating the Departments limited role in these matters.

9. Geographically, Falkirk is located between Glasgow and Edinburgh airports, and Cumbernauld aerodrome is near by. It is likely that civil aircraft activity accounts for much of what Councillor Buchanan claims has been seen. The number of reported 'UFO' sightings received by Sec(AS)2a for the Falkirk and Bonnybridge area is not high: 2 in 1997; 2 in 1998; and 1 to date for 1999.

10. Given the background to this case we believe it appropriate to send a Private Secretary reply to Councillor Buchanan and the draft attached is couched in these terms. Copies of the previous correspondence are also enclosed for information.

[Signed]

Section 40
SEC(AS)2a1
MB8245 Section 40

DRAFT REPLY TO COUNCILLOR W BUCHANAN

At a recent Ministry of Defence Press Conference you handed a member of the Ministry of Defence security staff a 'Demand Notice' for Mr Spellar, the Under Secretary of State for Defence, about sightings of 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs) in the Bonnybridge area. Mr Spellar has seen the Notice and has asked me to reply on his behalf.

The Ministry of Defence has a very specific and limited interest in 'UFO' sighting reports. You will recall from correspondence with MOD officials that this interest is solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source the Ministry of Defence does not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose. However, it is not a function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to do so. Geographically, Falkirk is located between Glasgow and Edinburgh and it is possible that aircraft flying into and out of the airports located there or, perhaps, using the Cumbernauld aerodrome, might account for what has been seen.

The Ministry of Defence has no plans for the foreseeable future to expand its interest in these matters. I can however assure you that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential external military threat. In the event that any video or photographic evidence is forwarded to the Ministry of Defence to substantiate public concerns, it will be examined by experts as necessary.

Finally, I should add that the views expressed by Mr Pope on the subject of 'UFOs' are entirely his own personal opinions and do not represent nor reflect the views of the Ministry of Defence.

I hope this explains the position.

Councillor W Buchanan

032 → 64/4

MINISTERIAL BUSINESS – TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES

ENCLOSURE 1 MOVEMENT

COVERING: Unclassified.

REFERENCE: D/US of S/JS 28/1/0 P2

TO Sec(AS)2 DATE 29/3/99

SUBJECT UFOs

I attach a letter / ~~minute~~ from Councillor W Buchanan

To U.S. of S Dated 28th March '99

I am referring this correspondence to you for:

- ~~Information and any necessary action~~
- Advice, and a draft reply for US of S's / ~~PS signature~~

Please submit your advice not later than 12th April 1999

In preparing your advice you should consult other Departments, divisions and branches as necessary.

Minister would like to know which party the councillor belongs to.

The Open Government Code of Practice came into force on 4 April 1994. You should ensure that replies to members of the public are provided in accordance with its procedures.

I am sending copies of this to:

Section 40 [redacted]

APS/US of S
MB6215 Section 40
FAX: Section 40
CHOtS: USofS/Mailbox

MINISTERIAL BUSINESS – TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES

US of S / Clerk 2

MB6210

1. Mr Buchanan, accompanied by two cameramen, attempted to join today's press conference. He agreed to depart without making a fuss upon the guard undertaking to pass the attached 'Demand Notice' to Mr Spellar.

2. For information, Mr Nick Pope is a well-known writer on UFO matters and is also an Section 40 Section 40 He was advised that his name was mentioned in the Demand Notice and identified Mr Buchanan as a vociferous lobbyist on the subject of UFOs.

3. For action as wished.

26 Mar 99

Section 40

HQ Sy 2 (Cc)

Section 40

DEMAND NOTICE

Mr John Spellar
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence

Sir,

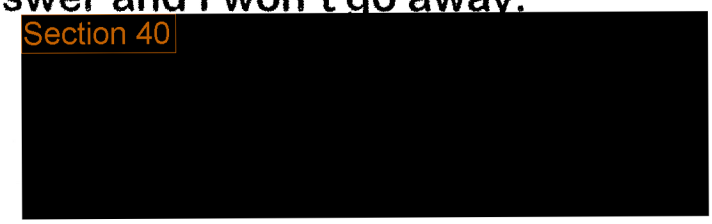
For over six years there has been a UFO phenomenon in my area that has not gone away. Thousands of individuals have come forward during this period, and despite public ridicule are still coming forward.

I have contacted the MOD and both the former and present Governments during this time to ask for an investigation into these sightings, without success. The reply is always the same - nothing happening in the Bonnybridge area that is a threat to national security - and an absence of evidence.

Well Sir, if thousands of individuals are watching something for which they cannot give a rational explanation, and there is video and photographic evidence to back this up, then why oh why does the MOD continue to be so negative in their attitude and also disrespectful to my constituents.

It is strange that your own spokesman who I contacted initially, Mr Nick Pope, tried to discredit the Bonnybridge phenomenon and now he is a TV celebrity telling anyone who wants to listen that he believes aliens are here, and yet he still works for the MOD - strange indeed!

Bonnybridge demands an answer and I won't go away.



This is a duplicate of PE US 0807/99 which was inserted on 2 Mar 99. ANsyn 3/3. Informed PE Unit of this on 3/3

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 17 Section 40 SEC (AS) 2a

THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT

TO: Sec(AS)2 PE REF NUMBER: US916/99

MINISTER REPLYING: USofS DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 15/3/99

DATE: 3/3/99 FROM: Section 40 PE Unit TEL: Section 40

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

****** *IMPORTANT UPDATES* ******

1. Ministerial responsibilities changed.

2. Opening and Closing All Ministers prefer to start:
"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."
If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:
"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/Doug Henderson/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"
Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ... "
Do not end "I hope this is helpful" when the reply is obviously disappointing. Alternatives are:
"I hope this explains the position"
"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

3. Open Government A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 54/1998.

Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within 15 working days to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

Ministers place great importance on the content style and speed of the replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES, otherwise send drafts by fax to Section 40

PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

MIN (A) SEC (AS) 1 -3 MAR 1999 FILE

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

RECEIVED BY
PRIVATE SECRETARY

19 February 1999

George Howarth Esq MP
The Under-Secretary
HOME OFFICE
Queen Anne's Gate
LONDON SW1

3018/99

I'm not sure who takes responsibility for UFOs, but I should be grateful for the Government's thinking on this issue.

Section 40

Section 40

UFO Magazine
Sep/Oct 1998.

Regarding
Section 40

Section 40

To Mrs
Section 40

13:2:99

Dear Section 40

Refering to the article in the above Magazine which you will probably have read by now.

I am writing to you in the hope that you can get this Government to fulfil its obligations to the British Nation, and stop treating us like backward children.

The Article by Section 40 speaks for itself and as a person who has communicated & studied (despite Medicine matters) since 1956 (circa) — I feel entitled to know the answers to world wide manifestations such as these. Millions of people have seen them, many governments acknowledge them — why can't ours publically.

You may have my copy of the magazine or order your own phone Section 40

my No: Section 40

MOD Form 174D

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 16

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D/SEC(AS)6414

Enclosure Jacket No. 5

DATE OPENED 2 MARCH 99

DIVISION/DIRECTORATE/BRANCH:

SEC(AS)2A

SUBJECT: PE:- US 0807/99

MP:- ANTHONY STEEN

CONST: Section 40 [redacted]

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

NOTES

1. A Temporary Jacket will only be used when the Registered File is not available.
2. The contents of a Temporary Jacket must be incorporated in the Registered File at the earliest opportunity, and this incorporation recorded on a transit slip or file record sheet.
3. The movements of Temporary Jackets are recorded by the Registry. Transit is to be recorded on transit slips as for Registered Files.

DOWNGRADING

(to be completed when the jacket is incorporated in the Registered File)

This jacket may be downgraded to:— RESTRICTED / UNCLASSIFIED on..... (insert date)

Certifying Officer.....

Date..... Appointment and Branch.....

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 3

D/US of S/JS 0807/99/M

10 March 1999

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS)1
11 MAR 1999
FILE

Dear Anthony,

Thank you for your letter of 19 February to George Howarth enclosing one from your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 Section 40 Totnes, about reports of 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs). Your letter has been passed to the Ministry of Defence and I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

Given the points raised by your constituent it may be helpful if I explain the policy in relation to UFOs.

My Department examines any reports of UFOs it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose. However, it is not a function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to do so.

Anthony Steen Esq MP

Recycled Paper

The MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

Finally, my Department has no plans for the foreseeable future to expand its interest in these matters. I can however assure your constituent that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential external military threat.

I hope this explains the position.

Section 40 [redacted]

JOHN SPELLAR MP

Recycled Paper

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)64/4 ←

2 Mar 1999

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 2

PE UNIT *
(through SEC(AS)2 [redacted] 2/3 * [by CHOTS e-mail only]

LETTER FROM ANTHONY STEEN MP – US 0807/99

1. I enclose a draft reply which US of S may wish to send to Anthony Steen MP who forwarded a letter he received from his constituent, Section 40 about unidentified flying objects (UFOs).

2. Section 40 constituent is asking the Government/MOD to investigate an article in 'UFO Magazine' as he would like to know the "answers" behind numerous sightings of UFOs Worldwide that are reported each year. However, the Department's interest in this subject is very limited and the draft reply sets out the position in full.

Section 40 [redacted]

SEC(AS)2a1
MB8245 Section 40

US 0807/99

DRAFT REPLY TO ANTHONY STEEN MP

Thank you for your letter of 19 February to George Howarth enclosing one from your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 [redacted] about reports of 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs). Your letter has been passed to the Ministry of Defence and I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility .

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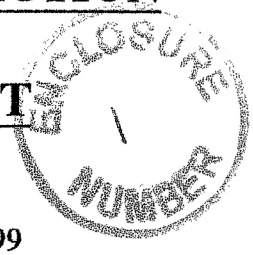
JOHN SPELLAR MP

Anthony Steen Esq MP

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

THE GUIDANCE IS NEW: YOU MUST READ IT



TO: SEC(AS)2 **PE REF NUMBER:** US 0807/99

MINISTER REPLYING: USofS **DRAFT REQUIRED BY:** 9/3 /99

DATE: 25/2/99 **FROM:** Section 40 **PE Unit** **TEL:** Section 40

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

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PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

From: Anthony Steen, M.P.

→ MoD ?

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

19 February 1999

George Howarth Esq MP
The Under-Secretary
HOME OFFICE
Queen Anne's Gate
LONDON SW1

I'm not sure who takes responsibility for UFOs, but I should be grateful for the Government's thinking on this issue.

Section 40

Section 40

UFO Magazine
Sep/Oct 1998.

Regarding

Section 40

Section 40

To Mrs

Section 40

13:2:99

Dear Mr Green,

Refering to the article in the above Magazine which you will probably have read by now.

I am writing to you in the hope that you can get this government to fulfil its obligations to the British Nation, and stop treating us like backward children.

The Article by Section 40 speaks for itself and as a person who has communicated & studied (despite medical matters) since 1956 (circa) – I feel entitled to know the answers to world wide manifestations such as these.

Millions of people have seen them, many governments acknowledge them – Why can't ours publically.

You may have my copy of the magazine or order your own phone Section 40.

Mrs No Section 40

I hope as my representative in Parliament you would Sunday investigate fully. That is if we have any Parliament left!!

Yours with anticipation,

Section 40

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 4

D/US of S/JS 0743/99

10 March 1999

Dear John,

Thank you for your letter of 15 February to George Robertson enclosing one from your constituent Section 40 of Section 40 Leeds, about reports of 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs). I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility .

My Department examines any reports of UFOs it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose. However, it is not a function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to do so.

Section 40 asks about the alleged incident at Rendlesham Forest. When the Ministry of Defence was informed of the events which are alleged to have occurred at Rendlesham Forest/RAF Woodbridge in December 1980, all available evidence was assessed at the time by the staff in my Department responsible for air defence matters. Since the judgement was that there was nothing of defence significance, no further action was taken. Although a number of allegations have subsequently been made about these reported events, nothing has emerged over the last 19 years which has given my officials reason to believe that the original assessment made by this Department was incorrect.

John Battle Esq MP

Recycled Paper

Finally, my Department has no plans for the foreseeable future to expand its interest in reports of 'unidentified flying objects'. I can however assure Section 40 that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force and remains vigilant for any potential external military threat.

I hope this explains the position.

Section 40

JOHN SPELLAR MP

Recycled Paper

OOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)64/4 ←

8 Mar 1999

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 3

PS/US of S * Section 40 4/3 *[by CHOTS e-mail only]
(through SEC(AS)2 –

LETTER FROM JOHN BATTLE MP – US 0743/99

Reference. Telecon Section 40 of 4 Mar 99.

1. I enclose a revised draft including a paragraph about Rendlesham Forest as requested.

[Signed]

Section 40
SEC(AS)2a1
MB8245 Section 40

[S 0743/99

DRAFT REPLY TO JOHN BATTLE MP

Thank you for your letter of 15 February to George Robertson enclosing one from your constituent, Section 40 of Section 40 Leeds, about reports of 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs). I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility .

My Department examines any reports of UFOs it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose. However, it is not a function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to do so.

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I hope this explains the position.

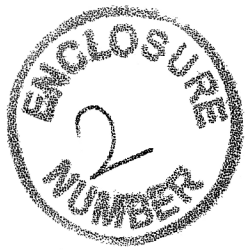
JOHN SPELLAR MP

John Battle Esq MP

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)64/4

24 Feb 1999



PE UNIT *
(through SEC(AS)2 Section 40 [redacted] 25/2

* [by CHOTS e-mail only]

LETTER FROM JOHN BATTLE MP – US 0743/99

1. I enclose a draft reply which US of S may wish to send to John Battle MP who forwarded a letter he received from his constituent, Section 40 [redacted] about unidentified flying objects (UFOs).

2. Section 40 [redacted] is essentially asking the Government/MOD to have a greater involvement in the investigation into UFOs following two UFO documentaries he recently viewed on the television. However, the Department's interest in this subject is very limited and the draft reply sets out the position in full.

Section 40 [redacted]

SEC(AS)2a1
MB8245 Section 40 [redacted]

US 0743/99

DRAFT REPLY TO JOHN BATTLE MP

Thank you for your letter of 15 February to George Robertson enclosing one from your constituent Section 40 of Section 40 Leeds, about reports of 'unidentified flying objects' (UFOs). I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility .

My Department examines any reports of UFOs it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose. However, it is not a function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service and it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to do so.

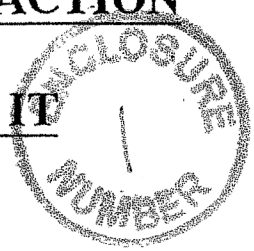
My Department has no plans for the foreseeable future to expand its interest in these matters. I can however assure Section 40 that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential external military threat.

I hope this explains the position.

JOHN SPELLAR MP

John Battle Esq MP

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION



THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT

TO: SEC (AS)2 PE REF NUMBER: US0743/99

MINISTER REPLYING: USofS DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 4/3/99

DATE: 22/2/99 FROM: Section 40 PE Unit TEL: Section 40

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

******** IMPORTANT UPDATES ********

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"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."
If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:
"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/Doug Henderson/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"
Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ... "
Do not end "I hope this is helpful" when the reply is obviously disappointing. Alternatives are:
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"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

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Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within 15 working days to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

Ministers place great importance on the content style and speed of the replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

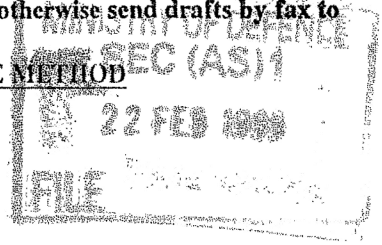
Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us IMMEDIATELY by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES, otherwise send drafts by fax to Section 40

PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD



John Battle. M.P.
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA.
Telephone: 0171 219 4201
Fax: 0171 219 4286

Leeds Office:
Tel/Fax 0113 231 0258

Rt Hon George Robertson MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2HB

15 February1999

Dear George,

RE Section 40 [redacted] **Leeds** Section 40

Section 40 [redacted] has contacted me regarding U.F.O's.

I enclose a copy of Section 40 [redacted] letter and would be most grateful if you could look into this matter and advise me of the outcome.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Section 40 [redacted]

JOHN BATTLE MP

ENC

Section 40
[redacted]
Section 40
Leeds,
Section 40
[redacted]

Tuesday 2nd February,

Dear Mr. Battle,

I feel compelled to write to you as my Member of Parliament.

I myself am a fifty year old married father of four children. I consider myself to be level-headed, fair and open minded. I am not subjected to bouts of fantasy. Generally I am an average man in the street.

Now to the reason for this letter. Last Friday I watched, and taped, the programme on B.B.C.2. entitled, U.F.O., Northern Lights. Last night I watched, and taped the programme on Chanel 4 entitled, Riddle of the Skies.

At this point let me state that I do not believe that the planet Earth is the only habitated planet in our Galaxy, or any other Galaxy. I also personally believe that U.F.O.'s are real extra terrestrial vehicles piloted by intelligent beings.

I would like to know exactly what the British government knows about U.F.O.'s. I certainly believe they know more than they have so far admitted to. There is a well documented incident which took place in Rendlesham Forest in the early

hours of Friday 26th December 1980.
R.A.F. Woodbridge and R.A.F. Bentwaters are respectfully in and adjacent to the forest. At the time both bases were leased to the U.S.A.F. and technically were under supervision from London. Personel based at R.A.F. Bentwaters witnessed a U.F.O. which landed in Rendlesham Forest on 26th December 1980. At the same time R.A.F. Neatishead picked up the object on radar. The object returned no signal and was outperforming the R.A.F.'s finest aircraft before it disappeared off screen moving at phenomenal speed.

The radar tapes from R.A.F. Neatishead and nearby R.A.F. Watton were requisitioned three days later and examined by U.S.A.F., and presumably, R.A.F. intelligence officers.

The next evening the U.F.O. returned at 1.48a.m. and was witnessed by several people for approximately one and a half hours. A cover up and a series of dis-information followed. I still do not believe that all the facts have been released to the public.

I think the British public have a right to know all the facts apertaining to the U.F.O. question. What do you think would happen if, within the next five to ten years, U.F.O.'s openly visited Earth? I would hazard a guess that there would be such widespread panic and pandemonium that would be difficult to contain. For years now we have been served a catalogue of monsters, megalomanic aliens and the

like by Hollywood and other filmmakers. Is this all part of a worldwide cover up by the American government and their allies so that the public at large did not look too closely or ask too many embarrasing questions?

I am sorry Mr. Battle but I earnestly believe that the British government comes clean and give out all the facts. We are after all making a contribution via our taxes to the S.E.T.I. programme being conducted by the Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope. We deserve the right to know.

The present Labour government prides itself on its honesty and its answerability to the British public which voted for them thus allowing them to be in Office.

I leave this matter in your hands Mr. Battle and hope your conscience allows you to instigate a course of actions which will lay all the facts before the British public as requested by me in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

[redacted]

MOD Form 174D

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 15

REGISTERED FILE No. D / SEC(AS) 64/4

Enclosure Jacket No. 4

DATE OPENED 26 FEB 99

DIVISION/DIRECTORATE/BRANCH:

SEC(AS)2A

SUBJECT: PE: US 0743/99

MP: JOHN BATTLE

CONST: Section 40 [redacted]

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

NOTES

1. A Temporary Jacket will only be used when the Registered File is not available.
2. The contents of a Temporary Jacket must be incorporated in the Registered File at the earliest opportunity, and this incorporation recorded on a transit slip or file record sheet.
3. The movements of Temporary Jackets are recorded by the Registry. Transit is to be recorded on transit slips as for Registered Files.

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(to be completed when the jacket is incorporated in the Registered File)

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Certifying Officer.....

Date..... Appointment and Branch.....

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MOD Form 174D

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 14

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D/SEC(AS) 64/14

Enclosure Jacket No. 3

DATE OPENED 20 JAN 99

DIVISION/DIRECTORATE/BRANCH:

SEC(AS)2A

SUBJECT: PE: US 0177/99

MP: MARTIN CATON

SIGHTINGS OVER SWANSEA

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

NOTES

1. A Temporary Jacket will only be used when the Registered File is not available.
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This jacket may be downgraded to:— RESTRICTED / UNCLASSIFIED on ..... (insert date)

Certifying Officer .....

Date ..... Appointment and Branch .....

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

Section 40 [redacted]

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 3

D/US of S/JS 0177/99/P

28 January 1999

Dear Martin,

Thank you for your letter of 13 January (reference GOVT-01-RO-SP-09-C) to George Robertson about sightings of lights in the sky over Swansea on the evening of 8 October 1998. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

Two Sea King helicopters, one from RAF Chivenor and one from RAF Valley, were given permission to land at Swansea Airport on the evening of 8 October 1998. We believe that the lights from these helicopters hovering near Swansea Airport might have been responsible for what was seen.

I hope this is of help.

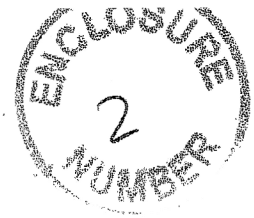
[redacted]

Section 40 [redacted]

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS) 2
29 [illegible] 1999
FILE

JOHN SPELLAR MP

Martin Caton Esq MP



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

20 January 1999

PE Unit [redacted] 20/Jan
(thro [redacted]

LETTER FROM MARTIN CATON MP - US0177/99

1. I attach a draft reply for USofS to send to Martin Caton MP who has received several reports from his constituents of strange objects and lights in the sky over Swansea on 8 October 1998.

2. Two Sea King helicopters, one from RAF Valley and the other from RAF Chivenor, were given permission to land at Swansea Airport on the evening of 8 October 1998. We believe the lights from the helicopters hovering around the Airport caused members of the public to report sightings of 'strange lights in the sky'. The Department did not receive any reports of 'UFO' sightings from anywhere in the UK on the night in question.

[redacted]
SEC(AS)2A1
MB8245 [redacted]
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A1

US/0177/99 January 1999

Thank you for your letter of 13 January (Ref: GOVT-01-RO-SP-09-C) to George Robertson about sightings of lights in the sky over Swansea on the evening of 8 October. I am replying in view of my responsibility for military aircraft activity in the UK.

Two Sea King helicopters, one from RAF Chivenor and one from RAF Valley, were given permission to land at Swansea Airport on the evening of 8 October 1998. We believe that the lights from these helicopters hovering near Swansea Airport might have been responsible for what was seen.

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Martin Caton MP

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

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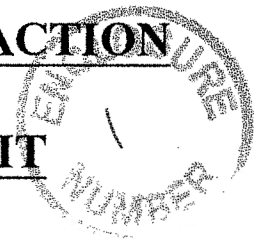

TO: SECCAS2 **PE REF NUMBER:** 0517?/99

MINISTER REPLYING: OSofS **DRAFT REQUIRED BY:** 22/1/99

DATE: 15/1/99 **FROM:** Section 40 **PE Unit** **TEL:** Section 40

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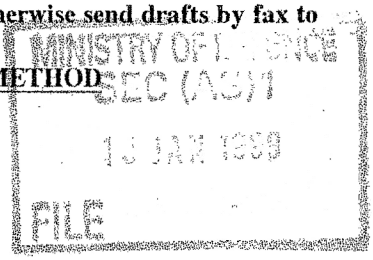

Martin Caton
Labour Member of Parliament for Gower
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel: 0171-219-5111 Personal Assistant: 0171-219-2078 Fax: 0171-219-0905
Constituency Office: 26 Pontarddulais Road, Gorseinon, Swansea SA4 4FE
Tel: 01792-892100 Fax: 01792-892375

Please quote our reference number on all correspondence.

The Rt. Hon. George Robertson MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2HB

OUR REF: GOVT-01-RO-SP-09-C

13 January 1999

Dear George

Sightings of "lights" and "objects" over Swansea and Gower on 8th October 1998

A very large number of my constituents and residents of the city of Swansea have reported sighting strange objects and lights in the sky on the night of 8th October, last year.

Some people have suggested that military aircraft were involved.

Could you please advise me as to whether this was the case and, in any case, whether the armed forces have an explanation for these mysterious sightings?

With thanks.

Yours sincerely

Section 40 [redacted]

Martin Caton MP

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 13/1

18 October concerning General Pinochet were an expression of personal view and not government policy; and whether they will say (a) how viewers were expected to know that this was so, (b) whether any other of his remarks expressed only personal opinion, (c) whether it is their policy that Ministers being interviewed in their official capacity should mix personal and official views without distinction. [HL39]

Lord Sainsbury of Turville: The views expressed by my right honourable friend were personal, as was made clear by my noble friend Lady Symons of Vernham Dean (H.L. Deb., col. 370).

Agriculture Council, 14–15 December

Baroness Pitkeathley asked Her Majesty's Government:

What was the outcome of the Agriculture Council held in Brussels on 14 and 15 December. [HL354]

Lord Carter: My right honourable friend the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food represented the United Kingdom at a meeting of the European Union Agriculture Council in Brussels on 14 and 15 December.

The Council agreed by qualified majority (Belgium, Spain and Portugal abstaining) a Commission proposal to ban the use of four antibiotics in animal feed as from 30 June 1999. My right honourable friend welcomed the proposal as an appropriate response to advice, including from our own specialist scientific committees, that the use of antimicrobial growth promoters which may impair the efficacy of antibiotics used in human medicines should be phased out. He also welcomed the Council's statement stressing the need for an overall science-based approach to the issue of antibiotic resistance and calling for the Commission to submit a further report on the question of third country compliance with equivalent rules.

The Council also agreed by qualified majority (Italy and the Netherlands opposing, Portugal abstaining) two regulations establishing new agrimonetary arrangements to apply following introduction of the Single Currency on 1 January 1999. My right honourable friend supported these measures which will greatly simplify the agrimonetary system while reducing its costs and making it easier to operate. He was particularly pleased to secure provision that the impact of the ending of the freeze on green rates on 1 January, which benefited our farmers more than any other member state's, will be subject to a gradual transition over three years.

The Council reached unanimous political agreement on a proposal to send food aid to Russia, targeted towards regions most in need. My right honourable friend particularly welcomed this important gesture of EU solidarity with the Russian people.

A discussion of the Commission's proposal for reform of the wine regime concluded with agreement that final decisions should be taken in the context of the Agenda 2000 CAP reforms in the early part of next year. The Commission debated a proposal to establish EU-wide rules governing organic livestock standards, agreeing guidelines for further negotiations.

A package of proposals concerning the marketing of seeds was adopted by qualified majority (Denmark voting against). Council resolution on an EU forestry strategy was agreed unanimously, as was a decision approving a national aid to certain Greek co-operatives. The Commission also adopted unanimously a further postponement of the implementation of the 1997 Decision on Specified Risk Materials and a short deferral of implementation of new intra-Community health rules on trade in cattle and pigs.

Dr. Bishop

Lord Evans of Parkside asked Her Majesty's Government:

When they intend to reply to the letter sent on 5 October by the Lord Evans of Parkside to the Secretary of State for Health concerning Dr. Bishop of Warrington which was acknowledged on 7 October; and when they intend to reply to a further letter on the same subject which has not so far been acknowledged but which was sent on 26 November. [HL350]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Baroness Hayman): A reply was sent to my noble friend on 16 December including an apology for the delay and the lack of communication with him while detailed inquiries were made into the specific case he raised.

Brazil

Lord Rea asked Her Majesty's Government:

What the United Kingdom is doing to assist Brazil in the light of its current economic difficulties. [HL337]

Lord McIntosh of Haringey: We welcome and support the agreements between the Brazilian Government and the international community to restore confidence in the Brazilian economy. The UK's role in furthering this objective is explained in the written statement laid before both Houses today, pursuant to the International Monetary Arrangements Act 1983.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answers by the Lord Chancellor on 14 October (*WA 99–100*) and by the Lord Gilbert on 19 November (*WA 190*), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970–1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files? [HL310]

15-NOV-1999 11:41 FROM MOD WHITEHALL LIBRARY TO Section 40 P.03/04

TOTAL P.04

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Gilbert): Thirty-eight files are held at the Public Record Office for release under the terms of the Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967, the 30-year rule applying:

AIR 2/18564 & 18565 UFO Reports—due for release 2002.

AIR 20/12067, 12297 to 12306 Unidentified flying objects–due for release 2001.

AIR 20/12399 to 12411 UFO reports—due for release 2003.

AIR 20/12544 to 12555 UFO reports—due for release 2004.

BJ 5/311 UFO: Met aspects—due for release 2001

Four files are held by the MoD records management branch pending acceptance and transfer to the PRO, PRO references and transfer arrangements awaiting confirmation:

AF/7463/72 UFO reports—provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18831 for release in 2003.

AF/7464/72 UFO reports—provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18872 for release in 2004.

AF/7464/72 Pt. II UFO reports—provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18873 for release in 2005.

AF/7464/72 Pt. III UFO reports—provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18874 for release in 2006.

In the absence of a thematic index of files stored in MoD's archives the identification of files has, of necessity, been limited to those created by the Air Staff Secretariat and predecessor branches. The following files have been identified and are earmarked for review by MoD at future dates, at which point they will be assessed for their suitability for preservation at the PRO. It is possible that some files created by other Headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers on this topic. These could only be identified at disproportionate cost:

AF/S4f(A)/422—one file—UFOs, BBC Radio Oxford Programme.

AF/S4f(Air) U/506—one file—Statistical Analyses of UFOs.

AF/3459/75—one file—UFOs: Policy and Policy statements—1970.

AF/584 to 595—12 files—UFO reports.

AF/596 to 602—seven files—UFO reports.

AF/447—one file—UFO reports.

AF/607 & 608—two files—UFO reports.

AF/610 to 613—four files—UFO reports.

AF/616 to 619—four files—UFO reports.

AF/419—one file—BBC 2, Man Alive Programme: UFOs.

D/DS8/75/2/1—six parts—UFO reports, correspondence.

D/DS9/75/2/2—12 parts—UFO correspondence.

D/DS8/75/2/3—six parts—UFO reports, edited copies.

D/DS8/75/2/4—three parts—UFO reports.

D/DS8/75/2/5—two parts—UFO reports.

D/DS8/75/3—one part—UFO, Parliamentary Correspondence.

D/DS8/75/6—one part—UFO, TV discussion.

D/DS8/75/7—one part—UFO, satellite debris.

D/DS8/10/209—seven parts—UFO briefs, reports and correspondence.

D/DS8/10/209/1—three parts—general briefs, reports, UFO correspondence.

UN Charter: Article 53

Lord Judd asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is their current interpretation of Article 53 of the Charter of the United Nations on the relationship between regional security measures and the Security Council; and what is their current assessment of the effectiveness of its application. [HL238]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean): Under Article 53 of the United Nations (UN) Charter, enforcement action under regional arrangements described in Article 52 requires Security Council authorisation. As I said in my Written Answer to the noble Lord, Lord Kennet, on 16 November (*WA 140*) the prohibitions on the use of force contained in the UN Charter do not preclude the use of force by a state or group of states in accordance with Article 51 or under the authority of the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter. Cases have also arisen when, in the light of all the circumstances, a limited use of force was justifiable in support of the purposes laid down by the Security Council but without the Council's express authorisation when that was the only means to avert an immediate and overwhelming humanitarian catastrophe. Such cases would in the nature of things be exceptional and would depend on an objective assessment of the factual circumstances at the time and on the terms of relevant decisions of the Security Council bearing on the situation in question.

We are working to ensure the closest possible co-operation between the Security Council and regional arrangements. I draw the noble Lord's attention to the 30 November statement by the President of the Security Council "Enhancing Monitoring of Activities authorised by the Council but carried out by member states or Coalitions of States", which has been placed in the Library of the House.

15-NOV-1999 11:41 FROM MOD WHITEHALL LIBRARY TO Section 40 P.04/04

Accession No.: 956892562

Group : Parliamentary Questions
Type : Lords PQs - oral, written and Private notice

Date : 17/12/98
Reference : 595 c176-8WA
Session : 98/99
Member : Hill-Norton, Lord; Gilbert, RtHonLord

Description : Further to the Written Answers by the Lord Chancellor (593 c99-100WA, 14 October 1998) and by the Lord Gilbert (594 c190WA, 19 November 1998), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970-1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files? [HL310].

Subject Terms: Unidentified flying objects; Disclosure of information

Organisation : Ministry of Defence

Update Date : 07/01/99

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ENQUIRY DESK
TEL Section 40
FAX

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO: Section 40	FROM: Section 40
BRANCH: SEC AS	DATE: 15 November 1999
FAX NUMBER: Section 40	TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 4
PHONE NUMBER: Section 40	SENDER'S REFERENCE NUMBER:
RE: PQ ON RELEASE OF UFO FILES	YOUR REFERENCE NUMBER: PHONE CALL 15/11/99
	UNCLASSIFIED / [redacted]

☑ URGENT ☐ FOR REVIEW ☐ PLEASE COMMENT ☐ PLEASE REPLY ☐ PLEASE RECYCLE

NOTES/COMMENTS:

Please see attached. The House of Lords wasn't sitting between 18th December 1998 and January 10th 1999. The attached PQ was answered on the 17th December 1998. There are no other PQs by Lord Hill-Norton.

15-NOV-1999 11:40 FROM MOD WHITEHALL LIBRARY TO Section 40 P.01/04

UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED

Tue 15 Dec, 1998 13:56 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
15/12/98	Hd of CS(RM)1	PQ HILL-NORTON.	[ ]

Intended:
Sent: 15/12/98 at 12:49 Delivered: 15/12/98 at 12:52
To: SEC(AS)2
CC:
Ref: /GUID:2B85BAE5AA91D211B3BB00005A422BE6
From: Hd of CS(RM)1 Auth by:
Subject: PQ HILL-NORTON.

Text:

Priority: Normal SEE PAGE Attachments [2]
Reply Request [ ] View Acknowledge [ ] Codes [ ]

Section 40 [redacted]

Hmo still looks "messy" but is better than it was

Section 40 [redacted]

RESTRICTED

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Section 40 copy of our final submission for your records. Section 40

From: Hd of CS(RM)
Sent: 15 December 1998 12:27
To: Hd of CS(RM)1
Subject: FW: PQ 0202J

Section 40 as sent.
Section 40

From: PS/Hd of CS
Sent: 15 December 1998 12:24
To: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS
Cc: Hd of CS(RM)
Subject: PQ 0202J

PSA PQ 0202J

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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER 1998

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by the lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 99-100) and by the Lord Gibert on 19th November (WA 190), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970-1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files. (HL 310).

Minister replying Rt Hon Dr The Lord Gilbert

Thirty eight files are held at the Public Record Office for release under the terms of the Public Records Act, 1958 & 1967 (the thirty year rule applying):

AIR 2/18564 & 18565 UFO Reports - due for release 2002

AIR 20/12067, 12297 to 12306 Unidentified flying objects - due for release 2001
AIR 20/12399 to 12411 UFO reports - due for release 2003
AIR 20/12544 to 12555 UFO reports - due for release 2004

BJ 5/311 UFO: Met aspects - due for release 2001

Four files are held by the MOD records management branch pending acceptance and transfer to the PRO (PRO references and transfer arrangements awaiting confirmation):

AF/7463/72 UFO reports - provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18831 for release in 2003.
AF/7464/72 UFO reports- provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18872 for release in 2004.
AF/7464/72 Pt II UFO reports - provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18873 for release in 2005.
AF/7464/72 Pt III UFO reports - provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18874 for release in 2006.

In the absence of a thematic index of files stored in MOD's archives the identification of files has of necessity been limited to those created by the Air Staff Secretariat and predecessor branches. The following files have been identified and are earmarked for review by MOD at future dates at which point they will be assessed for their suitability for preservation at the PRO. It is possible that some files created by other

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Headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers on this topic but these could only be identified at disproportionate cost:

AF/S4f(A)/422 - one file - UFOs, BBC Radio Oxford Programme
AF/S4f(Air) U/506 - one file - Statistical Analyses of UFOs
AF/3459/75 - one file - UFOs: Policy and Policy statements - 1970
AF/584 to 595 - twelve files - UFO reports
AF/596 to 602 - seven files - UFO reports
AF/447 - one file - UFO reports
AF/607 & 608 - two files - UFO reports
AF/610 to 613 - four files - UFO reports
AF/616 to 619 - four files - UFO reports
AF/419 - one file - BBC 2, Man Alive Programme: UFOs

D/DS8/75/2/1 - six parts - UFO reports, correspondence
D/DS8/75/2/2 - twelve parts - UFO correspondence
D/DS8/75/2/3 - six parts - UFO reports, edited copies
D/DS8/75/2/4 - three parts - UFO reports
D/DS8/75/2/5 - two parts - UFO reports
D/DS8/75/3 - one part - UFO, Parliamentary Correspondence
D/DS8/75/6 - one part - UFO, TV discussion
D/DS8/75/7 - one part - UFO, satellite debris

D/DS8/10/209 - seven parts - UFO briefs, reports and correspondence
D/DS8/10/209/1 - three parts - general briefs, reports, UFO correspondence

PQ Ref 0202J

BACKGROUND NOTE

This question follows three recent questions tabled by Lord Hill-Norton, 2 answered by the Lord Chancellor on

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14 October 1998 (WA 99-100) and one by Min(DP) on 19 November 1998 (WA 190).

WA 99 sought the identification of all open files on this subject at the Public Record Office (PRO). By way of reply a list giving details of 23 readily identifiable files was published.

WA 100 sought a list of all closed files at the PRO on this subject. The titles of 33 files, together with PRO references was provided but covered only the years 1967 - 1970. In all cases release into the public domain is subject to the 30-year rule.

WA 190 sought the details of all open and closed files, on this subject, held by the MOD. On the grounds of disproportionate cost the answer was limited to the identification of files held by the Air Staff Secretariat. 76 files were found and covered the period from 1985.

The following should be noted:

A number of files are held by the PRO awaiting release under the 30 year rule. This list includes a number of files in addition to those given in an earlier answer by the Lord Chancellor (WA 100 - 14 October 1998). Our source was our own copy of the PRO lists. It is not known by what process PRO staff briefed the Lord Chancellor, but their list did not include files after 1970, a discrepancy which is likely to be pick-up by Lord Hill-Norton.

There is no thematic index of records stored in the archives. Files are stored in date of review order and then by branch. A manual search for relevant files would not be possible without examining every file record sheet stored, in excess of one million. We have therefore limited our search to trawling for files created by the MOD focal point for all matters relating to "ufos" (Air Staff Secretariat and predecessor branches ie DS 8 and S4(Air)). After a search totalling 10 man hours, a number of files have been identified. All are earmarked for review at future dates, at which point consideration will be given to their suitability for preservation at the PRO.

This submission was prepared with input from, Sec(AS) Section 40 A copy has been sent to the PRO - Central Management Department (fax Section 40

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 Head CS(RM)1 TEL: Section 40
AUTHORISED BY : Section 40 Head CS TEL Section 40
GRADE/RANK : Grade 5

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

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changes telephone to [redacted]

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

[redacted]

14/12

Ministry of Defence

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER 1998

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by the lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 99-100) and by the Lord Gibert on 19th November (WA 190), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970-1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files. (HL 310).

Minister replying Rt Hon Dr The Lord Gilbert

Thirty eight files are held at the Public Record Office for release under the terms of the Public Records Act, 1958 & 1967 (the thirty year rule applying):

AIR 2/18564 1957 - 71 UFO Reports: ~~West Freugh~~
AIR 2/18565 1970 - 71 ~~UFO Reports~~

2 files dealing with UFO Reports.

AIR 20/12067 1970 Jan Unidentified flying objects
AIR 20/12297 1970 Feb "
AIR 20/12298 1970 Mar "
AIR 20/12299 1970 Apr "
AIR 20/12300 1970 May "
AIR 20/12301 1970 Jun "
AIR 20/12302 1970 Jul "
AIR 20/12303 1970 Aug "
AIR 20/12304 1970 Sep "
AIR 20/12305 1970 Oct "
AIR 20/12306 1970 Nov "
AIR 20/12399 1971-72 UFO reports
AIR 20/12400 1972 Jan "
AIR 20/12401 1972 Feb "
AIR 20/12402 1972 Mar "
AIR 20/12403 1972 Apr "
AIR 20/12404 1972 May "
AIR 20/12405 1972 Jun "

12067 Unidentified flying objects
12297 - 12306 inc
12399 - 12411 UFO Reports
12544 - 12555

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AIR 20/12406 1972 Jul "
AIR 20/12407 1972 Aug "
AIR 20/12408 1972 Sep "
AIR 20/12409 1972 Oct "
AIR 20/12410 1972 Nov "
AIR 20/12411 1972 Dec "
AIR 20/12544 1973 Jan "
AIR 20/12545 1973 Feb "
AIR 20/12546 1973 Mar "
AIR 20/12547 1973 Apr "
AIR 20/12548 1973 May "
AIR 20/12549 1973 Jun "
AIR 20/12550 1973 Jul "
AIR 20/12551 1973 Aug "
AIR 20/12552 1973 Sep "
AIR 20/12553 1973 Oct "
AIR 20/12554 1973 Nov "
AIR 20/12555 1973 Dec "

BJ 5/311 1968 - 70 UFO: Met aspects

Four files are held by the MOD records management branch pending acceptance and transfer to the PRO (PRO

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references to be confirmed):

[AIR 2/18831 provisional]	1972	UFO reports	former reference - AF/7463/72
[AIR 2/18832 "]	1972-73	"	" AF/7464/72
[AIR 2/18833 "]	1973-74	"	" AF/7464 Pt II
[AIR 2/18874 "]	1974-75	"	" AF/7464 / Pt III

In the absence of a thematic index of files stored in MOD's archives the identification of files has been limited to those created by the Air Staff Secretariat (and predecessor branches). Seventy five files have been identified. All are earmarked for review at a future date at which point they will be assessed for their suitability for preservation at the PRO. It is possible that some files created by other Headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers on this topic but these could only be identified at disproportionate cost:

AF/S4f(A)/422	Dec 1972	UFOs, BBC Radio Oxford Programme
AF/S4f(Air) U/506	1967 to 1973	Statistical Analyses of UFOs
AF/3459/75		UFOs: Policy and Policy statements - 1970
AF/584 to 595	Jan to Dec 1974	UFO reports
AF/596 to 602	Jan to Jul 1975	"
AF/447 Part 1	Aug 1975 to Jun 1976	"
AF/607 & 608	Dec 1975 & Jan 1976	"
AF/610 to 613	Mar 1976 to Jun 1976	"
AF/616 to 619	Sep 1976 to Nov 1976	"
AF/419	Dec 1976	BBC 2, Man Alive Programme: UFOs

D/DS8/75/2/1 - Parts A & B	1977	UFO reports, correspondence
D/DS8/75/2/1 - Part C	1978	"
D/DS8/75/2/1 - Part F	1979	UFO correspondence
D/DS8/75/2/1 - Parts G & H	1980	"
D/DS8/75/2/2 - Parts A to C	1977	UFO reports, edited copies
D/DS8/75/2/2 - Parts D to F	1978	"
D/DS8/75/2/2 - Parts G & H, J & K	1979	"
D/DS8/75/2/2 - Parts L & M	1980	"
D/DS8/75/2/3 - Parts D to H & J	1978	UFO reports
D/DS8/75/2/4 - Parts A, B & D	1979	UFO reports
D/DS8/75/2/5 - Parts A & B	1980	UFO reports
D/DS8/75/3 - Part A	1978	UFO, Parliamentary Correspondence
D/DS8/75/6 - Part A	1979	UFO, TV discussion
D/DS8/75/7 - Part A	1979	UFO, satellite debris

D/DS8/10/209 - Parts A & B	1981	UFO briefs, reports, correspondence
D/DS8/10/209 - Parts C & D	1982	"
D/DS8/10/209 - Part E	1983	"
D/DS8/10/209 - Parts F & G	1984	"
D/DS8/10/209/1 - Part A	1983	General briefs and reports, UFO correspondence
D/DS8/10/209/1 - Part B	1984	"
D/DS8/10/209/1 - Part C	1985	"

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PQ Ref 0202J

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BACKGROUND NOTE

Lord Hill-Norton, aged 83, and Chief of the Defence Staff from 1971 - 73, has a long standing interest in "UFOs". This question follows three recent questions, 2 answered by the Lord Chancellor on 14 October 1998 (WA 99-100) and one by USofS on 19 November 1998 (WA 190).

WA 99 sought the identification of all open files on this subject at the Public Record Office (PRO). By way of reply a list giving details of 23 readily identifiable files was published.

WA 100 sought a list of all closed files at the PRO on this subject. The titles of 33 files, together with PRO references, covering the years 1967 - 1970 was provided. In all case release into the public domain is subject to the 30-year rule.

WA 190 sought the details of all open and closed files, on this subject, held by the MOD. On the grounds of disproportionate cost the answer was limited to the identification of 76 files held by the Air Staff Secretariat, covering the period from 1985.

This PQ asks specifically about the period 1970 - 1985 and no doubt seeks draw a further list of files on the subject.

The following should be noted:

A number of files are held by the PRO awaiting release under the 30 year rule. This list includes a number of files in addition to those given in an earlier answer by the Lord Chancellor (WA 100 - 14 October 1998). Our source was our own copy of the PRO lists. It is not known by what process PRO staff briefed the Lord Chancellor, but the discrepancy is likely to be pick-up by Lord Hill-Norton.

The process by which files selected for permanent preservation eventually find the way to the PRO can be time-consuming; hence, four files selected for preservation but with transfer arrangement still to finalised.

There is no thematic index of records stored in the archives. Files are stored in date of review order and then by branch; more recently random storage has been introduced. A manual search for relevant files would not be possible without examining each and every file stored, in excess of one million. We have therefore limited our search by trawling through files created by the Air Staff Secretariat (and predecessor branches ie DS 8 and S4(Air)). Sec (AS) being the MOD focal point for all matters relating to "ufos". After a search totalling 10 man hours, seventy five files have been identified. All are earmarked for review at a future date, at which point consideration will be given to their suitability for preservation at the PRO.

This submission was prepared with input from, Sec(AS) Section 40 A copy has been sent to the PRO - Central Management Department (fax Section 40

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 Head CS(RM)1 TEL: Section 40

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AUTHORISED BY : Section 40 Head CS TEL: Section 40
GRADE/RANK : Grade 7

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

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LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 11

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 15 December 1998**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 0202J
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	CS(RM)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	
SEC (AS)		

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**

- **Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.**

- **The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.**

- **If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.**

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by the Lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 99-100) and by the Lord Gibert on 19th November (WA 190), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970-1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files. (HL 310).

Sec (AS) - Section 40

Fm cs(RM),

6414

ENCLOSURE 10 NUMBER 8

After the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Ministers will be able to make Orders or Directions in relation to initiatives applying in Scotland only, and as appropriate make Directions in relation to the application in Scotland of UK wide initiatives, after consultation with and, where necessary, the consent of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State. My right hon. Friend will remain responsible for Orders or Directions relating to UK wide initiatives, after consultation with Scottish Ministers. The details of these arrangements are still under consideration.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Telephone Lines

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee what plans he has to ensure that hon. Members have access to ISDN telephone lines. [61438]

Mr. Richard Allan: An hon. Member who has a specific communications requirement concerning his Parliamentary duties should raise the matter with the Director of Communications. The provision of communications, including ISDN, at locations outside the Parliamentary Estate is currently being considered, and the Information Committee will be discussing this in the new year.

DEFENCE

Territorial Army

Mr. Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many vacancies there were for the Territorial Army and Voluntary Reserve *(a)* in May 1997 and *(b)* at the latest date for which figures are available. [60860]

Mr. Doug Henderson: The Territorial Army establishment in May 1997 was 59,000 posts, of which 55,900 were filled. In October 1998, the latest date for which figures are available, the establishment was also 59,000 posts, of which 53,847 were filled.

Service Personnel (Electoral Roll)

Mr. Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what procedures exist for service personnel to be registered on the electoral roll; and what proposals he has to increase the number of registrations. [60862]

Mr. Doug Henderson: Service personnel may vote only when they are registered as Service Voters. The Representation of the People Act 1993 obliges my Department to ensure that all eligible members of the Armed Forces and their spouses are given the opportunity and adequate assistance to register as Service voters. To register, personnel make a Service declaration to the electoral registration officer for the area in which the applicant's qualifying address is situated, and this single registration remains valid throughout a Service career. Spouses may register as either Service or civilian voters.

Queen's Regulations for all three Services contain detailed information on the timetable for submitting declarations to ensure inclusion in the register of electors for Parliamentary, European Parliament and local government elections.

Instructions on the action required to make initial Service declarations or to make new ones on any change of address are also included in the Regulations. In addition, each Service issues formal reminders annually describing the registration procedures and listing the relevant forms to be completed. The reminders draw attention in particular to the need to re-register or to amend qualifying addresses where necessary. Commanding Officers are made personally responsible for ensuring that unit administrative arrangements are efficient and that units hold sufficient forms, and are regularly formally reminded of their responsibilities.

We will continue to employ these measures to encourage Service personnel to register and to vote, but doing so is, of course, a matter of personal choice.

Soldiers (New Entrants)

Mr. Corbett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what financial assistance is available to new entrant soldiers who are themselves on income support, or whose parents are, towards the cost of equipment and supplies which they are required to purchase and to meet obligatory insurance costs. [60921]

Mr. Doug Henderson *[holding answer 27 November 1998]:* All new entrant soldiers are given an advance of pay, equivalent to one day's pay, when they are attested at a recruiting office, regardless of whether they, or their parents, are in receipt of income support. This advance is intended to cover the purchase of small personal items a new soldier may require. Any equipment a soldier needs to perform his or her duties is provided by the Army.

My Department places no obligation on new entrants to the Army to take out insurance cover, but applicants are advised to insure their personal belongings, and any military equipment they are issued with against loss or damage for which the holder would be held responsible. New entrants are also advised to consider the purchase of personal accident or life insurance.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the changes in departmental practices which would be required to comply with the planned Freedom of Information Act. [61512]

Mr. Spellar: The Ministry of Defence is already committed to greater openness in its work and currently operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. The Department's policy is that staff should take a positive approach towards the release of information. Details of MOD's policy and guidance to staff can be found on the Department's internet site at http://www.mod.uk/policy/opengovt/index.htm. Once the details of the draft FoI Bill have been finalised, instructions, advice and training will be available for staff in order to ensure that they are able to implement the Act and to foster an open culture.

Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

3rd December 1998

APS/Minister(DP) - Section 40

Copy to:

APS/USofS
CS(RM) - Section 40

DRAFT REPLY FROM MINISTER(DP) TO LORD HILL-NORTON

Reference: Your E-mail of 2 December 1998

1. Thank you for sight of the proposed reply for Lord Hill-Norton. Much of the draft is culled from the background note provided with the PQ answer and I have therefore cleared the text with Section 40 CS(RM), who provided most of the information.

2. We are concerned that giving Lord Hill-Norton a broad cost estimate for the records search for the Official History of the Falklands War might lead the wider public to assume it as indicative of searches generally and prompt further requests on issues of minor importance. CS(RM) have advised that the £5,000 quoted related to their own staff effort (some 50-70 man days), and did not include costs incurred searching files elsewhere in the Department, including Historical Branches, or the associated typing and reprographic effort involved. It is also the case that the Falklands History is to be an Official Record, and the search criteria concentrated on certain specific identifying words (eg Falklands, Corporate, Belgrano etc).

3. I am also concerned about saying Sec(AS) 'holds a substantial proportion of all the information currently held by the MOD on UFOs.' We simply do not know that we do. We are the MOD focal point and have a number of files opened in recent years, but it may also be the case that there are files at MOD archives and we have no way of knowing what else might be held at Stations and Establishments. We do not know the overall total so we cannot know what proportion we hold.

4. Finally, and without wishing to labour the point, 'closed' files mean different things to the Department and the public. Lord Hill-Norton probably means files that are no longer in use, ie less than 30 years old and containing too great a number of enclosures to continue in use necessitating a subsequent part to be opened. To the Department, a 'closed' file is generally one over 30 years old containing information that continues to be sensitive and not therefore available for scrutiny at the PRO. Following Lord Hill-Norton's lead in respect of 'closed' files runs the risk of perpetuating the myth that MOD knowingly has 'closed' (ie over 30 years old and sensitive) 'UFO' files - it does not.

5. For the above reasons I have amended your draft and attach a revised version. Could we have a copy of the Hill-Norton letter please for our file.

Section 40
Sec(AS)2
MB8247 Section 40
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2
FAX : Section 40

FROM: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/MIN(DP)/JWG/6/1 December 1998

Thank you for your letter of 25 November seeking clarification of the definition of disproportionate cost.

The Ministry of Defence, like every other Government Department, applies the advisory cost limit to researching written Parliamentary Questions. This limit is currently £500 and I attach a copy of the announcement from Lord McIntosh which explains the background to the limit. In summary, the assessment is based on the value to the taxpayer of Government Departments publishing such information against the cost it takes to provide it. This assessment is, ultimately, made by the Minister responsible for answering the question, based on advice from officials.

Your question concerned the references and titles of all files held by the MOD which contain information about unidentified flying objects, 'UFOs'. As you will know, the MOD does not maintain a Department-wide file database and it is simply not possible to locate all files which might contain such information without a manual search of over one million currently held in MOD archives. Even if manpower could be spared from essential defence tasks to undertake such a search, the cost would be significant. For example, a highly selective search of the archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War was far in excess of the Parliamentary Question cost limit in terms of staff effort. In addition, we would need to research records held by individual Service units and establishments to ensure that a complete list of all references to UFOs had been compiled. You will know that this is simply not practicable.

Instead, the list I provided detailed all the files currently held by the MOD focal point for matters relating to 'UFOs', the Air Staff Secretariat. I judged that this largely answered your question, without incurring significant cost for what would be only marginal value.

I hope this explains the position.

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

F Sigs 927
(Rev 2/95)

Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Serial Number:	Transmission: Date: 3 Dec 98 Time:
Document Reference: 6414	
Total number of pages including this one: 4	
From: Section 40 Sec(AS)2	Fax Number: Section 40 Tel Number: Section 40
To: Section 40 CS(RM)	Fax Number: Section 40
Authorised by: Rank: G7 Name: Section 40 Appointment: Signature:	Transmitted by: Rank: CO Name: Section 40 Tel Number: Signature:

Subject: LORD HILL-NORTON LETTER.

Section 40

To follow: APS/Min(DP)'s draft
Sec(AS)'s proposed reply
Sec(AS)'s minute to APS/Min(DP)

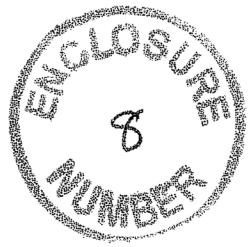
Please confirm by telephone that you are content with the proposed reply + minute to APS/Min(DP) asap.

Many thanks.

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:



Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

2nd December 1998

APS/Min(DP) - Section 40

Section 40

amendments invited.

Copy to:

CS(RM) - Section 40

DRAFT REPLY FROM MINISTER(DP) TO LORD HILL-NORTON

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5. For the above reasons I have amended your draft and attach a revised version.

Sec(AS) Revision

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D/MIN(DP)/JWG/6/1 December 1998

Thank you for your letter of 25 November seeking clarification of the definition of disproportionate cost.

The Ministry of Defence, like every other Government Department, applies the advisory cost limit to researching written Parliamentary Questions. This limit is currently £500 and I attach a copy of the announcement from Lord McIntosh which explains the background to the limit. In summary, the assessment is based on the value to the taxpayer of Government Departments publishing such information against the cost it takes to provide it. This assessment is, ultimately, made by the Minister responsible for answering the question, based on advice from officials.

Your question concerned the references and titles of all files held by the MOD which contain information about unidentified flying objects, 'UFOs'. As you will know, the MOD does not maintain a Department-wide file database and it is simply not possible to locate all files which might contain such information without a manual search of over one million currently held in MOD archives. Even if manpower could be spared from essential defence tasks to undertake such a search, the cost would be significant. For example, a highly selective search of the archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War was far in excess of the Parliamentary Question cost limit in terms of staff effort. In addition, we would need to research records held by individual Service units and establishments to ensure that a complete list of all references to UFOs had been compiled. You will know that this is simply not practicable.

Instead, the list I provided detailed all the files currently held by the MOD focal point for matters relating to 'UFOs', the Air Staff Secretariat. I judged that this largely answered your question, without incurring significant cost for what would be only marginal value.

I hope this explains the position.

APS/Min (DP) draft.

Thank you for your letter of 25 November seeking clarification of the definition of disproportionate cost.

The Ministry of Defence, like every other Government Department, applies the advisory cost limit to researching written Parliamentary Questions. This limit is currently £500 and I attach a copy of the announcement from Lord McIntosh which explains the background to the limit. In summary, the assessment is based on the value to the taxpayer of Government Departments publishing such information against the cost it takes to provide it. This assessment is, ultimately, made by the Minister responsible for answering the question, based on advice from officials.

As far as your specific question is concerned, you asked if we could list the references and titles of all open and closed files held by the MOD which contain information about unidentified flying objects, UFOs. As you will know, the MOD does not maintain a Department-wide file database and, as such, it is not possible to locate all files which might contain such information without a manual search of over one million files currently held in MOD archives. Even if manpower could be spared from essential defence tasks to undertake such a search, the cost would be significant. For example, a highly selective search of the archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War cost more than £5,000 in staff effort. In addition, we would need to research records held by individual Service units and establishments to ensure that a complete list of all references to UFOs had been compiled. You will know that this is simply not practicable.

Instead, the list I provided detailed all the files currently held by the MOD focal point for all matters relating to UFOs, the Air Staff Secretariat, which holds a substantial proportion of all the information currently held by the MOD on UFOs. I judge that this largely answers your question, without incurring significant cost for what would be only marginal value.

I hope this explains the position.

Secretariat(Air Staff) Fax [redacted]

** Transmit Conf.Report **

3 Dec '98 9:18

Secretariat(Air Staff)---> [redacted]	
No.	1841
Mode	NORMAL
Time	2'13"
Pages	4 Page(s)
Result	O K

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 7

Lord Gilbert: NATO continues to examine how a requirement for Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence for deployed forces could be met, and is considering the costs of such a requirement and how it could be funded. NATO's work has considered general scenarios rather than potential threats from specific countries.

NATO: Force Structure

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether it has been agreed in the NATO Council that NATO's European members should in future "shift more focus to such priorities as mobility, deployability and reinforcement missions [thus to] become better equipped to operate with United States forces in a broader range of contingencies in the years ahead" (Report to the Congress on the Enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation: Rationale, Benefits, Costs and Implications 1997); and if so, what they understand by this reference to "a broader range of contingencies in the years ahead". [HL3748]

Lord Gilbert: At the NATO Ministerial Meeting of the Defence Planning Committee on 11 June 1998 Ministers agreed that the maintenance and enhancement of interoperabilty are key elements in the transformation of NATO's force structure, and of the Alliance itself, as it prepares to meet future challenges. The Defence Planning Committee approved requirements to allow the Alliance to carry out collective defence and deterrence, and crisis management, including peace support operations.

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are fully informed by the United States, and by the other countries of the scale and scope of their bilateral military relations, including military funding, in the whole Organisation for the Security and Co-operation in Europe area; and, if not, whether they consider the situation satisfactory as regards the transparency that NATO brings to its members' relationships. [HL3784]

Lord Gilbert: Her Majesty's Government has a wide range of contacts with the United States and other countries on the scope and scale of bilateral military relationships with the countries in the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, OSCE, area. These contacts provide transparency and contribute to our overall efforts to promote security and stability in the region.

NATO: Security of Sensitive Information

Lord Hardy asked Her Majesty's Government:

What efforts are being undertaken to ensure that the sensitive information is kept secure within NATO operational planning; and whether security has been breached in recent months. [HL3686]

Lord Gilbert: NATO has mechanisms in place to ensure the security of sensitive information. Her Majesty's Government supports these mechanisms. Any breaches are a matter for the relevant NATO authorities. NATO does not comment on NATO-personnel security issues..

SECMOD

RAF Feltwell: 5th Space Surveillance Squadron

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by the Lord Gilbert on 20 October (*WA 143*), whether the United States Air Force 5th Space Surveillance Squadron based at RAF Feltwell searches for or tracks any objects other than satellites, space debris and space probes; and, if so, what these objects are. [HL3908]

Lord Gilbert: Further to the answer given on 20 October, the only role of the 5th Space Surveillance Squadron at RAF Feltwell is to detect, track and identify the status of satellites, space debris and space probes.

Human Rights Obligations: Compliance

Lord Lester of Herne Hill asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether Ministers and civil servants are in a position to comply with the obligations imposed by the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, having regard to the United Kingdom's ratifications of those instruments, the guidance *Questions of Procedure for Ministers* and the Civil Service Code. [HL3768]

The Minister of State, Cabinet Office (Lord Falconer of Thoroton): Yes.

Latin America: Balance of Debts to UK

Viscount Exmouth asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is:

(a) the total amount owed to the United Kingdom by the countries of Latin America;

(b) the amount owed by each country in the region; and

(c) the annual repayments, including interest, paid by each country in the region. [HL3843]

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 6

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 November 1998**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 4144l
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS) Copy to: Sec (AS)2 for info.
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	-NOTFOUND-

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**
- **Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.**
- **The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.**
- **If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.**

Peer's DETAIL: **Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB**

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government TO ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Lord Gilbert on 20th October (WA143), whether the United States Air Force 5th Space Surveillance Squadron based at RAF Feltwell searches for or tracks any objects other than satellites, space debris and space probes; and, if so, what these objects are. (HL3908)

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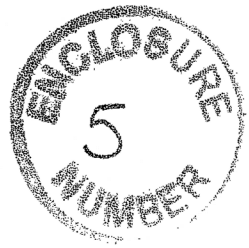

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 1998

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 100), whether they will authorise the opening of the thirty-three closed files at the Public Record Office which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3909)

Minister replying Rt Hon Dr The Lord Gilbert

The 33 files identified contain correspondence between members of the public and officials and as such we are mindful of our duty to protect third party confidentially. They will be release routinely at the normal 30 year point..

PQ Ref 4146l

Hansard copy & answer held in TEJ no 2 (enc 4)

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BACKGROUND NOTE

Lord Hill Norton, aged 83, and Chief of the Defence staff from 1971-73, has a long standing interest in "UFOs". On this occasion he has raised three PQs two of which, 4144 and 4145,- Sec(AS) will provide advice.

This particular question has previously been raised by Lord hill Norton.

Earlier this year, 9 March 1998, he asked for all closed files on this subject to be released in advance of the normal 30 year point. A holding reply was prepared by DOMD, 3 April 1998, citing the need to resolve the question of "personal confidentially" before a final reply could be given.

In all some 55 files have been identified, not just the 33 identified by the PRO in their PQ answer. All with planned releases between 1999-2003, with an additional 12 (with a projected release date of 2004) in the early stages of preparation of transfer to the PRO.

A final submission was made to PS/USofS, 24 September 1998, presenting three possible options:

(1) that we obtain permission from correspondents on an individual basis to release personal details.

(2) that the personal details (in excess of 55 files) be removed

(3) that a shorter period, say 25 years rather than 30 years, be acceptable for protection of privacy

Option (1) was considered time-consuming; (2), is possible, but would represent a major diversion of resources, ie some 200 man hours would be required to sanitise in the region of 5,000 pages; for (3) legal advice was sought: the Public Record Act gives an implied override of the Department's duty to protect the third party confidentiality by use of the 30 year rule. Release after that date would present no problems to the MOD, but release in advance would lay the Department open to the risk of legal action for breach of confidence .

We therefore concluded that having rejected all three options we are unable to make a block release of these files in advance of the normal release period.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY :Section 40 Hd CS(RM)1 TEL Section 40
AUTHORISED BY :Section 40 Hd CS TEL: Section 40
GRADE/RANK : Grade 5

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

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LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

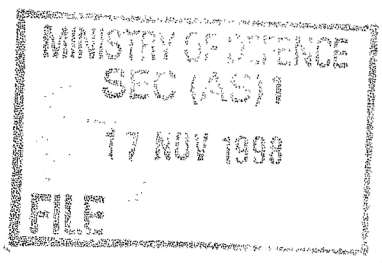
DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 November 1998**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 4146I
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	CS(RM)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	
Hd Sec (AS)		

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**
- **Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.**
- **The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.**
- **If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.**

Peer's DETAIL: **Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB**

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 100), whether they will authorise the opening of the thirty-three closed files at the Public Record Office which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3909)



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PQ CHECKLIST

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

* YOUR PROPOSED ANSWER MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

* MEET THE DEADLINE & CONSULT EARLY IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS

* YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE

* IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE FROM A SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT WITH EXPERTISE IN ANSWERING PQs

PQ ANSWER

* DO USE PLAIN AND PRECISE LANGUAGE
  - is the answer unambiguous and free from jargon?

* DO BE OPEN, STRAIGHTFORWARD AND HONEST
  - have you included all the facts necessary for a full and unambiguous answer?
  - do you fully understand the policy governing the answering of PQs? See attached note on Government Policy
  - if you have excluded anything can it be justified under the Open Govt Code (see DCI GEN 54/98)

* DO CHECK SOURCES AND ENSURE EVIDENCE IS AVAILABLE TO BACK UP ANSWERS
  - is sufficient documentary evidence available to back up the answer if challenged?
  - does anybody outside your management area need to be involved? Have you consulted them?

* DO CHECK PREVIOUS ANSWERS ON THE SAME SUBJECT

* DO MAKE CLEAR THE BASIS ON WHICH YOU ARE ANSWERING THE QUESTION
  - if you have gone beyond a literal interpretation of the question have you made it clear?

* DON'T RELY ON HEARSAY OR GUESSWORK
  - are you confident that the information provided will stand up to detailed scrutiny?

* DON'T BE ABSOLUTE UNLESS YOU HAVE THE PROOF
  - think very carefully before you say "all" or "never" or "not possible"
  - does it differ from the views of outside experts, if so why?

BACKGROUND NOTE

* DO KEEP IT RELEVANT
  - does it explain the answer?

* DO EXPLAIN JUDGEMENTS MADE, AND ANY DOUBTS OR CAVEATS

* DO MAKE IT CLEAR IF INFORMATION IS BEING RELEASED FOR THE FIRST TIME OR IF IT IS DIFFERENT FROM INFORMATION RELEASED PREVIOUSLY
  - have you sought and included advice on the wider implications (including PR)?

* DO GIVE A CLEAR EXPLANATION FOR WITHOLDING INFORMATION
  - details of disproportionate cost included?
  - have you explained your justification for exclusion under the Open Govt Code?

* DO RECORD THE SOURCES RELIED ON IN PREPARING YOUR PROPOSED ANSWER
  - have you included details of those who have provided you with information?

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QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

ALL DRAFT REPLIES MUST BE CLEARED AT SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE (GRADE 5) OR ONE STAR LEVEL OR ABOVE

THE CHECKLIST IS TO HELP YOU DRAFT THE ANSWER PROPERLY YOU MUST USE IT

REPLIES SHOULD BE SENT BY CHOTS E-MAIL TO "**Parliamentary Questions**". DIVISIONS NOT ON CHOTS SHOULD SEND THEIR DRAFTS BY FAX TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH Section 40

ALWAYS QUOTE THE QUESTION (PQ) NUMBER AND THE NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF THE PERSON WHO DRAFTED THE REPLY AND THE SENIOR OFFICIAL WHO APPROVED IT.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY ADVICE, PLEASE CALL Section 40

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1. WRITTEN PQs

All written PQs **must** be answered within 14 days of being tabled, even if the House is by then in recess.

2. DEADLINE FOR REPLY

a. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline, you should contact this Branch to see if an extension to the deadline can be given. **You should do this before 12.00 on the day on which you are due to return the PQ answer.**

b. You must provide a full explanation of why you cannot meet the deadline.

c. If it is impossible to answer the question within 14 days the Minister has to write to the Lord concerned explaining the circumstances and undertaking to provide a full answer as soon as possible. You must provide the draft letter.

3. OPEN GOVERNMENT

a. A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 54/98.

b. Replies must be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

4. DRAFTING THE ANSWER

- USE THE CHECKLIST -

a. The draft reply should be concise, clear and meticulously accurate. It should have a positive tone where possible.

b. Use clear and direct language to avoid any ambiguity. Short everyday words and short sentences are best. Avoid cliches and MOD/Service jargon. Use abbreviations only after using the words or name in full.

c. The answer must be unclassified.

d. If you refer to a previous PQ answer or document, send a copy.

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5. BACKGROUND NOTE

a. Ministers need a short note explaining the facts and thinking behind the suggested reply if it is not completely obvious from the reply itself.

b. If the answer varies from a previous answer or statement explain fully why this is so.

c. If new information comes to light in your research which might affect this or previous answers or statements you must ring the Minister's Private Office **AT ONCE** as well as stating this clearly in the background note.

6. GROUPED PQs

Related PQs, tabled by an individual Lord for answer on the same day may be grouped together and given a single answer. This Branch can give advice on grouping.

7. PARTIAL REPLIES

If a full reply is not possible you should give what information is available and make it clear in the answer what you are doing.

8. COST OF GIVING A REPLY

If the cost of giving a reply will exceed £500 you can recommend to Ministers that the reply should be along the lines of "This information [is not held centrally] and could only be provided at disproportionate cost". You must explain in the background note how these costs - usually staff costs - would arise. The decision whether or not then to give an answer depends on the merits of the case. As a rough guide use these hourly rates: AO-£8, EO-£13, HEO-£15, SEO-£18, G7-£22, G5-£31. Capitation rates can be increased by 50% for Service equivalents.

9. LONG REPLIES

If the reply is long (ie will fill more than a page of Hansard) it may, exceptionally, be better to give the information in a letter to the Lord or put information in the Library of the House. In these cases the reply is "I will write to the noble Lord (or "my noble Friend") and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House" or "I am placing the information requested in the Library of the House". This Branch is responsible for placing material in the Library. We need **6** copies of any document placed in the Library.

10. INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE FROM PUBLIC SOURCES

PQs are expensive in terms of Ministers' and officials' time. Lords should be encouraged to get information from published sources where it is already available in the Library of the House. In such cases the reply is along these lines "The information requested is contained in para X of the Statement on Defence Estimates 1996 (Cm 3223), a copy of which is in the Library of the House".

11. PQs ASKING FOR STATISTICAL INFORMATION

a. PQs which ask for statistical information will be sent normally to the Chief Executive of DASA and copied to the relevant policy branch.

b. If such a question has not been sent to DASA please let us know. In any event you should liaise with DASA about the reply in case there are policy implications of which they are unaware.

12. TRANSFER OF PQs

a. To another Government Department
If you think this PQ is not primarily a matter for MOD tell this Branch **AT ONCE.**
We will need the name and Branch of an official in the more appropriate Department who has agreed to take the PQ. Parliamentary Branches in other Government Departments will usually only agree to transfers on this basis.

b. To another Branch
If a PQ has been sent to you incorrectly, please let this Branch know **AT ONCE.** If you know who is responsible for the subject please pass it to them as well.

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON ANSWERING PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

1. Never forget Ministers' obligations to Parliament which are set out in the Cabinet Office publication "Ministerial Code: A code of conduct and guidance on procedure for Ministers". It states that:

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It is of paramount importance that Ministers give accurate and truthful information to Parliament, correcting any inadvertent error at the earliest opportunity. Ministers who knowingly mislead Parliament will be expected to offer their resignation to the Prime Minister. Ministers should be as open as possible with Parliament and the public, refusing to provide information only when disclosure would not be in the public interest, which should be decided in accordance with relevant statute and the Government's Code of Practice on Access to Government Information"(Second Edition, Jan 1997)

2. It is a civil servant's responsibility to Ministers to help them fulfil those obligations. It is the Minister's right and responsibility to decide how to do so. Ministers want to explain and present Government policy and actions in a positive light. They will rightly expect a draft answer that does full justice to the Government's position.

3. Approach every question predisposed to give relevant information fully, as concisely as possible and in accordance with guidance on disproportionate cost. If there appears to be a conflict between the requirement to be as open as possible and the requirement to protect information whose disclosure would not be in the public interest, you should check to see whether it should be omitted in accordance with statute (which takes precedence) or the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, about which you should consult your departmental openness liaison officer if necessary.

5. Do not omit information sought merely because disclosure could lead to political embarrassment or administrative inconvenience.

6. Where there is a particularly fine balance between openness and non-disclosure, and when the draft answer takes the latter course, this should be explicitly drawn to the Minister's attention. Similarly, if it is proposed to reveal information of a sort which is not normally disclosed, this should be explicitly drawn to Ministers' attention.

7. If you conclude that material information must be withheld and the PQ cannot be fully answered as a result, draft an answer which **makes this clear and which explains the reasons in equivalent terms to those in the Code of Practice, or because of disproportionate cost or the information not being available.** Take care to avoid draft answers which are literally true but likely to give rise to misleading inferences.

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MOD Form 174D

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 4

REGISTERED FILE No. D/SEC(AS) 6414

Enclosure Jacket No. 2

DATE OPENED 18 NOV 98

DIVISION/DIRECTORATE/BRANCH:

SEC(AS)2A

SUBJECT: PQ 4145
LORD HILL NORTON

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

NOTES

1. A Temporary Jacket will only be used when the Registered File is not available.
2. The contents of a Temporary Jacket must be incorporated in the Registered File at the earliest opportunity, and this incorporation recorded on a transit slip or file record sheet.
3. The movements of Temporary Jackets are recorded by the Registry. Transit is to be recorded on transit slips as for Registered Files.

DOWNGRADING

(to be completed when the jacket is incorporated in the Registered File)

This jacket may be downgraded to:— RESTRICTED / UNCLASSIFIED on ..... (insert date)

Certifying Officer .....

Date ..... Appointment and Branch .....

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

...s—1996–97 Parking Accounts

£000s

Expenditure	*Net Income*	*Comments*
1,714	69	Surplus put towards off-setting deficit on off-street car parking account and design and implementation and extension of CPZs
4,544	201	Surplus used for CPZs (25) and carry forward to 1997–98 (176)
18,645	33,598	Surplus used as contribution to capital expenditure: on-street parking (715), off-street parking (468), highways and traffic improvement schemes (9,534), Departmental systems improvement (21), street trees and parks (119) and as a contribution to revenue expenditure: off-street parking (9,684), car parks business unit (517), highways and traffic improvement schemes (3,552), street lighting (1,299), gully cleansing (88), street trees (635), transport planning (90) concessionary fares and taxicard scheme (5,046), home to school transport (635). Remainder of surplus carried forward to 1997–98
91,651	71,786	

In the six weeks that the Veterans' Advice Unit has been operational, the unit has taken nearly 1,100 calls. Most calls can be dealt with immediately, but some require investigative work and a subsequent return call to the enquirer.

The range of problems dealt with has been quite diverse, including homecare and housing, Falklands and Gulf war issues, finance, the tracing of relatives, War Graves and historical records, among others. However, the largest number of calls have concerned pensions, employment, the provision of medals and information about the unit itself.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will list the references and titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying objects. [HL3910]

Lord Gilbert: Within the Air Staff Secretariat, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to "UFOs", a total of 76 files dating from 1985 are held. These files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows:

Reference:

D/Sec(AS)/12/1) 5 parts dealing with policy
D/Sec(AS)/64/1) issues.

ENROLLED PAPER NUMBER

D/Sec(AS)/12/2)

D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1)

D/Sec(AS)/12/5) 27 parts dealing with alleged
D/Sec(AS)/12/6) sightings.

D/Sec(AS)/12/7)

D/Sec(AS)/64/2)

D/Sec(AS)/12/3) 34 parts dealing with public
D/Sec(AS)/64/3) correspondence.

D/Sec(AS)/12/4) 8 parts dealing with
D/Sec(AS)/64/4) Parliamentary business

D/Sec(AS)/64/5 1 part for media issues.

D/Sec(AS)/64/6 1 part listing answerphone messages.

It is possible that some files held in other MoD headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers relating to this topic, but these could only be identified and provided at disproportionate cost.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by the Lord Chancellor on 14 October *(WA 100)*, whether they will authorise the opening of the thirty-three closed files at the Public Record Office which contain information about unidentified flying objects. [HL3909]

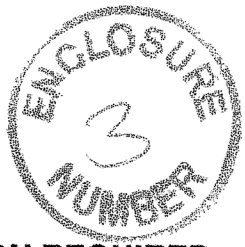
Lord Gilbert: The 33 files identified contain correspondence between members of the public and officials. They will be released at the 30 year point in the normal way.

Operation Granby: Use of Depleted Uranium Ammunition

The Countess of Mar asked Her Majesty's Government:

How many rounds of depleted uranium ammunition were fired by British forces, including tomahawk missiles, tank rounds, and cannon shells fired from aircraft, during Operation Granby; and whether they agree with United States figures that 1,200,000 rounds were fired in total by coalition force. [HL3862]

Lord Gilbert: During the 1990–91 Gulf conflict, UK armoured forces used a new 120mm armour-piercing tank round which contained a solid depleted uranium, DU, penetrator core with a protective, non-DU, coating in its Challenger 1 tanks. The Government's current assessment is that UK tanks fired fewer than 100 of these rounds against Iraqi military forces, which equates to less than 1 metric tonne of DU, although additional rounds were fired during earlier work-up training to establish the round's mean point of impact.



LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 November 1998**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 4145I
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
LEAD BRANCH:	:	Sec(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	APS/USofS CS(RM)

Peer's DETAIL: **Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB**

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the references and titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3910)

DRAFTED BY : Section 40
GRADE/RANK: Grade 7 [signed] TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY: Section 40 [signed] TEL: Section 40
GRADE/RANK: SCS

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the following answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

ANSWER

Within the Air Staff Secretariat, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to 'UFOs', a total of 76 files dating from 1985 are held. These files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows:

Reference

D/Sec(AS)/12/1) 5 parts dealing with policy issues.
D/Sec(AS)/64/1)

D/Sec(AS)/12/2)
D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1)
D/Sec(AS)/12/5) 27 parts dealing with alleged sightings.
D/Sec(AS)/12/6)
D/Sec(AS)/12/7)
D/Sec(AS)/64/2)

D/Sec(AS)/12/3) 34 parts dealing with public correspondence.
D/Sec(AS)/64/3)

D/Sec(AS)/12/4) 8 parts dealing with Parliamentary business.
D/Sec(AS)/64/4)

D/Sec(AS)/64/5 1 part for media issues.

D/Sec(AS)/64/6 1 part listing answerphone messages.

It is possible that some files held in other MOD headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers relating to this topic but these could only be identified at disproportionate cost.

BACKGROUND

CS(RM) are answering another of Lord Hill-Norton's PQs (4146) about 'UFO' files. Lord Hill-Norton is keen to have all 'UFO' files not in current use, including those less than 30 years old, released to the Public Record Office.

It is simply not possible to say where all files containing 'UFO' information might be held. We know that a number of archived files less than 30 years old are held by CS(RM), the MOD records branch, responsible for reviewing and transferring records selected for preservation at the PRO. However, in the absence of a Departmental-wide file database and without knowing the details of all originating Branches, a manual search of in excess of one million files at the two main MOD archives would be necessary to locate and list other relevant titles and reference numbers. Even if staff effort could be diverted from essential tasks for this purpose, (and it is difficult to quantify how much but as an example, a highly selective search of these two archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War cost more than £5,000 in staff effort), we could still not be sure that all 'UFO' information had been found; a more detailed search of enclosures on less obviously titled files would be necessary. It is also the case that Service Units and establishments might have information on local records and this would also need to be recorded.

The draft answer therefore explains that there are difficulties in providing the information requested but, in an effort to be helpful, lists 'UFO' files currently held by Sec(AS)2.

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
18/11/98	Delivery Report	Ref: 1189	[ ]

Report For Ref: 1189 Delivered: 18/11/98 12:52

Delivered To:

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Not Delivered To:

Codes [ ]

UNCLASSIFIED

Wed 18 Nov, 1998 13:03 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
18/11/98	PARLIAMENTARY QUES	View Acknowledgement	[ ]

Intended :
Sent : 18/11/98 13:00 Delivered: 18/11/98 13:02

Viewed : 18/11/98 13:00

Ref : 1189

Recipient: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS
Intended : PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Codes [ ]

UNCLASSIFIED

Classification:

Caveat: * URGENT *

Covering:

F Sigs 927
(Rev 2/95)

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 2

Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Serial Number: /	Transmission: Date: 17 NOV 98. Time:
From: Section 40 Sec(AS)2	Fax Number: Section 40
Tel Numb: Section 40	
Authorised by: Rank G7 Name Section 40 Appointment	
Signature:	

Document Reference: 64/4	
Total number of pages including this one: 5.	
To: Section 40 CS(RM) 1	Fax Number: Section 40
Transmitted by: Rank EO Name Section 40	Tel Number Section 40
Signature:	

Subject: PQ 4145 - LORD HILL NORTON.

Section 40

Grateful for your comments, amendments + additions to the attached draft answer asap.

Thank you,

Section 40

Sec(AS)2.

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 1998

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the references and ~~tiles~~ titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying ojects. (3910)

Minister replying Rt Hon Dr The Lord Gilbert

(Please type answer here using as much space as necessary).

PQ Ref 4145l

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

DRAFT ANSWER

A full list of files could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Within Sec(AS)2, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to 'UFOs', a number of files dating from 1985 are held. The files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows (those annotated 'open' are currently in use):

REFERENCE	TITLE	PART	
D/Sec(AS)/12/1	'UFOs' - Policy	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	D	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	B	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	C	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	D	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	E	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	F	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	G	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	H	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	I	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	J	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	K	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	L	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	M	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	N	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	O	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1	'UFOs' - Report	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/5	'UFOs' - Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	F	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	G	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	H	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/6	'UFOs' - Alleged 'UFO' Incident - 8 Sept 1970	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/7	'UFOs' - Alleged 'UFO' Incident - 31 March 1993	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	B	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	C	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	D	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	E	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	F	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	G	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	H	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	I	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	J	

D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	K	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	L	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	M	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	N	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	O	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	P	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	Q	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	R	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	S	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	F	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	G	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	H	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	I	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	J	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	K	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	L	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	M	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	N	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	O	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	F	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/5	'UFOs' - Press Cuttings	A	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/6	'UFOs' - Answerphone Messages	A	Open

The absence of a central database of files created by MOD Headquarters and Establishments, precludes identification of any other files that might contain information on this topic.

Background

Lord Hill-Norton has tabled two other PQs (4144 and 4146) in his quest for more information about 'UFOs'. He is keen to have all 'UFO' files not in current use, including those less than 30 years old, released to the Public Record Office. Some 33 files covering the period 1968-70 are already lodged with the PRO for release at the 30-year point (PQ 4146 refers).

It is simply not possible to say where all files containing 'UFO' information might be held. In addition to the 33 files held at the Public Record Office pending release, we know that a number of archived files less than 30 years old are held at the MOD Archives at Hayes. However, in the absence of a Departmental-wide file database and without knowing the details of all originating Branches, a manual search of some three million files at Hayes would be necessary to locate and list the relevant titles and reference numbers. Even if staff effort could be diverted from essential tasks for this purpose (likely to take some [x] man hours) we could still not be sure that all 'UFO' information had been found; a more detailed search of enclosures on less obviously titled files would be necessary. It is also the case that Service Units and establishments might have information on local records and this would also need to be recorded.

The draft answer therefore explains that there are difficulties in providing the information requested but, in an effort to be helpful, lists the files held by Sec(AS)2.

(Copy to:USofS)

Secretariat(Air Staff) Fax [redacted]

** Transmit Conf.Report **

17 Nov '98 15:13

Secretariat(Air Staff)---> [redacted]	
No.	1666
Mode	NORMAL
Time	2'19"
Pages	5 Page(s)
Result	O K

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 November 1998**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 4145l
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	APS/USofS CS(RM)

Peer's DETAIL: **Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB**

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the references and titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying ojects. (3910)

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 [redacted]
GRADE/RANK: Grade 7 [signed] TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY: Section 40 [redacted] [signed] TEL: Section 40
GRADE/RANK: SCS

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the following answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

ANSWER

The absence of a central database of files created by MOD Headquarters and Establishments, precludes identification of all files that might contain information on this topic. A full list could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Within ~~Sec(AS)2~~ the Air Staff Secretariat, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to 'UFOs', a total of 76 files dating from 1985 are held. These files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows:

REFERENCE

D/Sec(AS)/12/1) 5 parts dealing with Policy issues.
D/Sec(AS)/64/1)

D/Sec(AS)/12/2)
D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1)
D/Sec(AS)/12/5) 27 parts dealing with alleged sightings.
D/Sec(AS)/12/6)
D/Sec(AS)/12/7)
D/Sec(AS)/64/2)

D/Sec(AS)/12/3) 34 parts dealing with public correspondence.
D/Sec(AS)/64/3)

D/Sec(AS)/12/4) 8 parts dealing with Parliamentary business.
D/Sec(AS)/64/4)

D/Sec(AS)/64/5 1 part for media issues.

D/Sec(AS)/64/6 1 part listing answerphone messages.

It is possible that some files held in other MOD headquarters divisions or establishments may contain such papers relating to this topic but these could only be identified at disproportionate cost.

Background

CS(RM) are answering another of Lord Hill-Norton's PQs (4146) about 'UFO' files. Lord Hill-Norton is keen to have all 'UFO' files not in current use, including those less than 30 years old, released to the Public Record Office.

It is simply not possible to say where all files containing 'UFO' information might be held. We know that a number of archived files less than 30 years old are held by CS(RM), the MOD records branch, responsible for reviewing and transferring records selected for preservation at the PRO. However, in the absence of a Departmental-wide file database and without knowing the details of all originating Branches, a manual search of in excess of one million files at the two main MOD archives would be necessary to locate and list other relevant titles and reference numbers. Even if staff effort could be diverted from essential tasks for this purpose, (and it is difficult to quantify how much but as an example, a highly selective search of these two archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War cost more than £5,000 in staff effort), we could still not be sure that all 'UFO' information had been found; a more detailed search of enclosures on less obviously titled files would be necessary. It is also the case that Service Units and establishments might have information on local records and this would also need to be recorded.

The draft answer therefore explains that there are difficulties in providing the information requested but, in an effort to be helpful, lists 'UFO' files currently held by Sec(AS2.

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Section 40 some suggested changes to Background Note, para 2:

"...less than 30 years old are held by CS(RM), the MOD records branch, responsible for reviewing and transferring records selected for preservation at the PRO.. .... a manual search of in excess of one million files at the two main MOD archives would be necessary...." " Even if staff effort could be diverted from essential tasks for this purpose (difficult to quantify but by way of an example a highly selective search of these two archive in support of the Official History of the Falkland War cost more than £5,000 in staff effort) we. ..."
Iain

advice received by CHOTS from CS(RM) 17/11

Section 40 [redacted]

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dposed files

Ops Hist Branch

Sec (AS) + DS 8

dep files

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 November 1998**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 4145l
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	-NOTFOUND-

- **The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.**
- **Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.**
- **The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.**
- **If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.**

Peer's DETAIL: **Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB**

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government ~~To ask Her Majesty's Government~~ whether they will list the references and tiles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying ojects. (3910)

titles

checked with Section 40 Policy Branch - correct wording as shown

Section 40

17/11

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE SEC (AS) 1 17 NOV 1998 FILE

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PQ CHECKLIST

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

* YOUR PROPOSED ANSWER MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

* MEET THE DEADLINE & CONSULT EARLY IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS

* YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE

* IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE FROM A SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT WITH EXPERTISE IN ANSWERING PQs

PQ ANSWER

* DO USE PLAIN AND PRECISE LANGUAGE
  - is the answer unambiguous and free from jargon?

* DO BE OPEN, STRAIGHTFORWARD AND HONEST
  - have you included all the facts necessary for a full and unambiguous answer?
  - do you fully understand the policy governing the answering of PQs? See attached note on Government Policy
  - if you have excluded anything can it be justified under the Open Govt Code (see DCI GEN 54/98)

* DO CHECK SOURCES AND ENSURE EVIDENCE IS AVAILABLE TO BACK UP ANSWERS
  - is sufficient documentary evidence available to back up the answer if challenged?
  - does anybody outside your management area need to be involved? Have you consulted them?

* DO CHECK PREVIOUS ANSWERS ON THE SAME SUBJECT

* DO MAKE CLEAR THE BASIS ON WHICH YOU ARE ANSWERING THE QUESTION
  - if you have gone beyond a literal interpretation of the question have you made it clear?

* DON'T RELY ON HEARSAY OR GUESSWORK
  - are you confident that the information provided will stand up to detailed scrutiny?

* DON'T BE ABSOLUTE UNLESS YOU HAVE THE PROOF
  - think very carefully before you say "all" or "never" or "not possible"
  - does it differ from the views of outside experts, if so why?

BACKGROUND NOTE

* DO KEEP IT RELEVANT
  - does it explain the answer?

* DO EXPLAIN JUDGEMENTS MADE, AND ANY DOUBTS OR CAVEATS

* DO MAKE IT CLEAR IF INFORMATION IS BEING RELEASED FOR THE FIRST TIME OR IF IT IS DIFFERENT FROM INFORMATION RELEASED PREVIOUSLY
  - have you sought and included advice on the wider implications (including PR)?

* DO GIVE A CLEAR EXPLANATION FOR WITHOLDING INFORMATION
  - details of disproportionate cost included?
  - have you explained your justification for exclusion under the Open Govt Code?

* DO RECORD THE SOURCES RELIED ON IN PREPARING YOUR PROPOSED ANSWER
  - have you included details of those who have provided you with information?

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QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

ALL DRAFT REPLIES MUST BE CLEARED AT SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE (GRADE 5) OR ONE STAR LEVEL OR ABOVE

THE CHECKLIST IS TO HELP YOU DRAFT THE ANSWER PROPERLY YOU MUST USE IT

REPLIES SHOULD BE SENT BY CHOTS E-MAIL TO "**Parliamentary Questions**". DIVISIONS NOT ON CHOTS SHOULD SEND THEIR DRAFTS BY FAX TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH Section 40

ALWAYS QUOTE THE QUESTION (PQ) NUMBER AND THE NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF THE PERSON WHO DRAFTED THE REPLY AND THE SENIOR OFFICIAL WHO APPROVED IT.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY ADVICE, PLEASE CALL Section 40

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1. WRITTEN PQs

All written PQs **must** be answered within 14 days of being tabled, even if the House is by then in recess.

2. DEADLINE FOR REPLY

a. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline, you should contact this Branch to see if an extension to the deadline can be given. **You should do this before 12.00 on the day on which you are due to return the PQ answer.**

b. You must provide a full explanation of why you cannot meet the deadline.

c. If it is impossible to answer the question within 14 days the Minister has to write to the Lord concerned explaining the circumstances and undertaking to provide a full answer as soon as possible. You must provide the draft letter.

3. OPEN GOVERNMENT

a. A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 54/98.

b. Replies must be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am witholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

4. DRAFTING THE ANSWER

- USE THE CHECKLIST -

a. The draft reply should be concise, clear and meticulously accurate. It should have a positive tone where possible.

b. Use clear and direct language to avoid any ambiguity. Short everyday words and short sentences are best. Avoid cliches and MOD/Service jargon. Use abbreviations only after using the words or name in full.

c. The answer must be unclassified.

d. If you refer to a previous PQ answer or document, send a copy.

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5. BACKGROUND NOTE

a. Ministers need a short note explaining the facts and thinking behind the suggested reply if it is not completely obvious from the reply itself.

b. If the answer varies from a previous answer or statement explain fully why this is so.

c. If new information comes to light in your research which might affect this or previous answers or statements you must ring the Minister's Private Office **AT ONCE** as well as stating this clearly in the background note.

6. GROUPED PQs

Related PQs, tabled by an individual Lord for answer on the same day may be grouped together and given a single answer. This Branch can give advice on grouping.

7. PARTIAL REPLIES

If a full reply is not possible you should give what information is available and make it clear in the answer what you are doing.

8. COST OF GIVING A REPLY

If the cost of giving a reply will exceed £500 you can recommend to Ministers that the reply should be along the lines of "This information [is not held centrally] and could only be provided at disproportionate cost". You must explain in the background note how these costs - usually staff costs - would arise. The decision whether or not then to give an answer depends on the merits of the case. As a rough guide use these hourly rates: AO-£8, EO-£13, HEO-£15, SEO-£18, G7-£22, G5-£31. Capitation rates can be increased by 50% for Service equivalents.

9. LONG REPLIES

If the reply is long (ie will fill more than a page of Hansard) it may, exceptionally, be better to give the information in a letter to the Lord or put information in the Library of the House. In these cases the reply is "I will write to the noble Lord (or "my noble Friend") and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House" or "I am placing the information requested in the Library of the House". This Branch is responsible for placing material in the Library. We need **6** copies of any document placed in the Library.

10. INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE FROM PUBLIC SOURCES

PQs are expensive in terms of Ministers' and officials' time. Lords should be encouraged to get information from published sources where it is already available in the Library of the House. In such cases the reply is along these lines "The information requested is contained in para X of the Statement on Defence Estimates 1996 (Cm 3223), a copy of which is in the Library of the House".

11. PQs ASKING FOR STATISTICAL INFORMATION

a. PQs which ask for statistical information will be sent normally to the Chief Executive of DASA and copied to the relevant policy branch.

b. If such a question has not been sent to DASA please let us know. In any event you should liaise with DASA about the reply in case there are policy implications of which they are unaware.

12. TRANSFER OF PQs

a. To another Government Department
If you think this PQ is not primarily a matter for MOD tell this Branch **AT ONCE**.
We will need the name and Branch of an official in the more appropriate Department who has agreed to take the PQ. Parliamentary Branches in other Government Departments will usually only agree to transfers on this basis.

b. To another Branch
If a PQ has been sent to you incorrectly, please let this Branch know **AT ONCE.** If you know who is responsible for the subject please pass it to them as well.

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON ANSWERING PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

1. Never forget Ministers' obligations to Parliament which are set out in the Cabinet Office publication "Ministerial Code: A code of conduct and guidance on procedure for Ministers". It states that:

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"It is of paramount importance that Ministers give accurate and truthful information to Parliament, correcting any inadvertent error at the earliest opportunity. Ministers who knowingly mislead Parliament will be expected to offer their resignation to the Prime Minister. Ministers should be as open as possible with Parliament and the public, refusing to provide information only when disclosure would not be in the public interest, which should be decided in accordance with relevant statute and the Government's Code of Practice on Access to Government Information"(Second Edition, Jan 1997)

2. It is a civil servant's responsibility to Ministers to help them fulfil those obligations. It is the Minister's right and responsibility to decide how to do so. Ministers want to explain and present Government policy and actions in a positive light. They will rightly expect a draft answer that does full justice to the Government's position.

3. Approach every question predisposed to give relevant information fully, as concisely as possible and in accordance with guidance on disproportionate cost. If there appears to be a conflict between the requirement to be as open as possible and the requirement to protect information whose disclosure would not be in the public interest, you should check to see whether it should be omitted in accordance with statute (which takes precedence) or the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, about which you should consult your departmental openness liaison officer if necessary.

5. Do not omit information sought merely because disclosure could lead to political embarrassment or administrative inconvenience.

6. Where there is a particularly fine balance between openness and non-disclosure, and when the draft answer takes the latter course, this should be explicitly drawn to the Minister's attention. Similarly, if it is proposed to reveal information of a sort which is not normally disclosed, this should be explicitly drawn to Ministers' attention.

7. If you conclude that material information must be withheld and the PQ cannot be fully answered as a result, draft an answer which **makes this clear and which explains the reasons in equivalent terms to those in the Code of Practice, or because of disproportionate cost or the information not being available.** Take care to avoid draft answers which are literally true but likely to give rise to misleading inferences.

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REFERENCE	TITLE	PART	STATUS
D/Sec(AS)/12/1	'UFOs' - Policy	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	B	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	C	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	D	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	E	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	F	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	G	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	H	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	I	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	J	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	K	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	L	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	M	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	N	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	O	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1	'UFOs' - Report of Sighting, Rendlesham Forest, Dec 1980	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	B	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	C	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	D	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	E	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	F	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	G	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	H	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	I	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	J	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	K	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	L	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	M	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	N	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	O	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	P	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	Q	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	R	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	S	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/4	'UFOs' - PQs & PEs	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/4	'UFOs' - PQs & PEs	B	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/5	'UFOs' - Close Encounter Reports, Alien Entities, Abductions, etc.	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/6	'UFOs' - Alleged UFO Incident - Crash of Lightning F6 - 8 Sept 70	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/12/7	'UFOs' - Alleged UFO Incident - 31 March 1993	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	B	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	C	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	D	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	B	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	C	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	D	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	E	Closed

D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	F	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	G	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	H	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	B	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	C	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	D	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	E	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	F	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	G	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	H	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	I	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	J	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	K	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	L	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	M	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	N	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	O	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - PQs/PEs	A	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - PQs/PEs	B	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - PQs/PEs	C	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - PQs/PEs	D	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - PQs/PEs	E	Closed
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - PQs/PEs	F	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/5	'UFOs' - Press Cuttings	A	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/6	'UFOs' - Answerphone Messages	A	Open

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN	:	**12:00 ON 18 November 1998**
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 4145l
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	SEC (AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	APS/USofS CS(RM)

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the references and titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying ojects. (3910)

DRAFTED BY : Section 40
GRADE/RANK: Grade 7 [signed] TEL: Section 40

AUTHORISED BY: Section 40 [signed] TEL: Section 40
GRADE/RANK: SCS

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the following answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

ANSWER

The absence of a central database of files created by MOD Headquarters and Establishments, precludes identification of all files that might contain information on this topic. A full list could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Within Sec(AS)2, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to 'UFOs', a number of files dating from 1985 are held. These files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows (those annotated 'open' are currently in use):

REFERENCE	TITLE	PART	
D/Sec(AS)/12/1	'UFOs' - Policy	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	D	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	A	

D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	B	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	C	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	D	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	E	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	F	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	G	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	H	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	I	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	J	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	K	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	L	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	M	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	N	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	O	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1	'UFOs' - Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/5	'UFOs' - Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	F	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	G	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	H	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/6	'UFOs' - Alleged 'UFO' Incident 8 Sept 1970	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/7	'UFOs' - Alleged 'UFO' Incident 31 March 1993	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	B	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	C	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	D	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	E	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	F	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	G	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	H	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	I	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	J	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	K	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	L	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	M	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	N	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	O	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	P	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	Q	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	R	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	S	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	F	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	G	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	H	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	I	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	J	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	K	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	L	

D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	M	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	N	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	O	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries C		
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	F	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/5	'UFOs' - Press Cuttings	A	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/6	'UFOs' - Answerphone Messages	A	Open

No.

attacks on unarmed individuals in public places, with the resultant deaths of passers-by, can hardly be considered as "military" actions. Her Majesty's Government condemned both attacks unreservedly.

The MKO remains on the US State Department list of terrorist organisations despite the recent statement by the House of Representatives.

Gibraltar

Viscount Exmouth asked Her Majesty's Government:

In light of the unanimous opposition demonstrated by the Government and opposition parties of Gibraltar, how they intend to reply to the proposals presented by the Spanish Foreign Minister, Senor Matutes, during the last round of the Brussels agreement talks on 10 December 1997. [HL3363]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: Her Majesty's Government have said that we will study the proposals and reply in due course. We have also said that we stand by the commitment enshrined in the preamble to the 1969 Constitution. There can be no change in sovereignty over Gibraltar without the consent of its people. That remains the position.

International Criminal Court

Lord Goodhart asked Her Majesty's Government:

What plans they have to ratify the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction over war crimes. [HL3383]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: It is our hope that we shall be among the first 60 states to ratify the Statute of the International Criminal Court. We will bring forward the necessary legislation as soon as the parliamentary timetable allows.

Kosovo

Lord Russell-Johnston asked Her Majesty's Government:

What discussions the "Contact Group" has had with President Rugova about the future of Kosovo. [HL3386]

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: Representatives of the Contact Group have been in regular contact with Dr. Rugova at which they have underlined that the Contact Group's position on the status of Kosovo is clear: we support an enhanced status with a large degree of autonomy for Kosovo within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This must include meaningful self-administration. Dr. Rugova's negotiating team is engaged in talks on a Contact Group-endorsed interim settlement based on these principles.

Strategic Defence Review White Paper: Leak

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos asked Her Majesty's Government:

What has been the outcome of his inquiry into the leak of the Strategic Defence Review White Paper. [HL3490]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Gilbert): A copy of the Strategic Defence Review White Paper was leaked to the Opposition Front Bench and to the press on the afternoon and early evening of Tuesday 7 July. As soon as my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Defence learned about the leak, he asked the Cabinet Secretary to authorise an immediate and thorough investigation into how it came about. This inquiry has been conducted by two independent investigators. It has now been completed.

We regret that after extensive enquiries, the investigators were not able to identify the person responsible for the leak. They have, however, established the course of events on the afternoon and evening of 7 July with a high degree of probability.

The investigators concluded that on 7 July a photocopy of the White Paper was sent by an authorised recipient within government to the Opposition Front Bench; and that subsequently four copies were made within the House and made available to selected journalists. The first newspaper to receive a copy was the *Daily Telegraph*. Further copies went to *The Times*, the *Financial Times* and the *Daily Mail*, apparently in phased distribution because of the bulk of the document being copied. The investigators found no evidence to suggest that, in addition to the copy sent to the Opposition, a second authorised recipient sent copies to the newspapers.

The investigation revealed some small weaknesses in the generally very successful procedures for the distribution of the White Paper. None of them was a likely cause of the leak. The necessary steps will be taken to ensure that these small errors are not repeated. In itself the leak was of no significance to national security. But we are naturally most concerned that someone working for the government breached security in this way. Ten thousand copies of the White Paper were circulated under embargo in advance of its publication. It appears that only one of the authorised recipients did not respect its confidentiality.

The leak was a gross discourtesy to Parliament; and I once again express my anger and my apologies that it occurred.

RAF Feltwell Deep Space Tracking Facility

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether the deep space tracking facility at RAF Feltwell has a role in tracking or searching for satellites, space debris, ballistic missiles and space probes. [HL3312]

Lord Gilbert: RAF Feltwell is responsible for searching for man-made objects in deep space and as such does have a role in searching for and tracking satellites, space debris, and space probes. However, it has no role in ballistic missile detection and tracking.

Greece and Turkey: Defence Expenditure

Lord Judd asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is their estimate of the level of defence expenditure by Greece and Turkey for the next five years and the number of tanks already possessed by each of these two countries; what they perceive as the implications for NATO and stability in Europe; and what action they are taking to deal with those implications. [HL3351]

Lord Gilbert: The defence expenditure and military forces of Greece and Turkey are the responsibilities of the countries concerned. We support both countries in their commitment to resolve any bilateral disagreements through dialogue, and welcome the NATO Secretary-General's announcement on 4 June 1998 that the 1988 Memorandum of Understanding on Confidence Building Measures in the Aegean is to be implemented in full.

Interest Liabilities

Lord Sudeley asked Her Majesty's Government:

What further measures they are taking to protect consumers and firms from having to pay not only interest on national debt but also interest on corporate and private credits. [HL3405]

Lord McIntosh of Haringey: None. Individuals and firms are responsible for paying the interest on debts they take out, but interest on the national debt is borne by the taxpayer.

Housing Renovation and Conversion: VAT

Viscount Brentford asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are considering reducing the 17.5 per cent. VAT currently placed upon the refurbishment or conversion of homes which have been empty for long periods. [HL3372]

Lord McIntosh of Haringey: The Government's aim is that within 10 years 60 per cent. of new housing, including conversions, will be built on previously developed sites. Although land use planning is, and will remain, the main instrument of achieving this objective, the Government will also be considering a wide range of economic instruments which could play a complementary part in achieving housing policy aims.

Electronic Publishing: VAT

Lord Walton of Detchant asked Her Majesty's Government:

Why it is that, while printed published books and journals are zero-rated for VAT, electronically published material is subject to VAT at the standard rate; and whether they have any intention of correcting this situation by zero-rating electronically published material. [HL3453]

Lord McIntosh of Haringey: Under EU agreements, while the UK may retain those zero rates it already has, it is not possible to extend their scope nor to create new ones.

Taxation of Savings and Tax Evasion

Lord Higgins asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Answers by the Lord McIntosh of Haringey on 5 October regarding the taxation of savings (H.L. Deb., cols. 162–164), to what extent they consider the draft European Union directive on that subject will deal with the problem of tax evasion rather than tax avoidance. [HL3434]

Lord McIntosh of Haringey: The draft directive is intended to help prevent illegal tax evasion—that is, failure by individuals to declare interest income received from a foreign source. It is not aimed at legal tax avoidance. My remarks during the debate on 5 October were entirely concerned with tax evasion, not avoidance.

Lord Pearson of Rannoch asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Answer given by Lord McIntosh of Haringey to Lord Higgins on 5 October (H.L. Deb., col. 163), whether they consider that the European Commission consulted adequately with interested bodies in the City of London and elsewhere before proposing its draft directive on the taxation of savings. [HL3438]

Lord McIntosh of Haringey: The precise extent of prior consultation undertaken by the Commission is not clear. However, it is our view that adequate consultation of the financial sector is essential and we have urged the Commission to extend the range and scope of their external discussions. As I said in the debate on 5 October, the Government have already undertaken extensive consultation with the City on the draft directive.

GDP and GNP

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will take steps to replace measurements of gross domestic product and gross national product, both within the United Kingdom and in international bodies, with measurements that are being developed by the Office for National Statistics which are able to take into account

Written Answers

Wednesday, 14th October 1998.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will list the document references and titles of all open files at the Public Record Office that contain information about unidentified flying objects. [HL3314]

The Lord Chancellor (Lord Irvine of Lairg): I list below the document references and titles of all open files at the Public Record Office known to staff to contain information about unidentified flying objects. There may be information in other open files but this could be discovered only at disproportionate cost.

AIR 2 Air Ministry Registered Files

AIR 2/16918 1961–1963, alleged sightings of UFO's. Letters from members of the public on alleged sightings. Magazine entitled *Cosmic Voice "Mars and Venus Speak to Earth"*, dated November–December 1961/Article entitled *Men from Outer Space: Are they visiting Britain?*

AIR 2/17318 1963 UFO reports
AIR 2/17526 1964 UFO reports
AIR 2/17527 1964–1965 UFO reports
AIR 2/17982 1965–1966 UFO reports
AIR 2/17983 1966 UFO reports (with photographs)
AIR 2/17984 1966–67 UFO reports (with photographs)

AIR 14 Bomber Command

AIR 14/2800 1943 December No. 115 Squadron: News Sheet *Bang On* No. 1. Aerial phenomena—reports of UFOs on RAF bombing raids.

AIR 16 Fighter Command

AIR 16/1199 1952 September Flying saucers: occurrence reports by service personnel at Topcliffe station, Thirsk, and local public.

AIR 20 Unregistered Papers

AIR 20/7390 1952 Reported sightings of UFOs: memorandum prepared for the War Office.

AIR 20/9320 1957 Parliamentary Question from 17 April 1957 by Mr. Stan Awbery MP: To ask the Secretary of State for Air, what recent investigations have been made into unidentified flying objects; what photographs have been taken; and what reports have been made on this subject. Reply by the Secretary of State (Mr. Ward). Notes on UFOs provided for the Minister's use. Also: UFO incident at West Freugh in Wigtownshire in 1957; incidents and signals at RAF Church Lawford, RAF Bempton and RAF Lakenheath; newspaper clippings 6 April 1957 from the *News Chronicle* and the *Evening Standard;*, photographs of object over the Channel Islands from the *Daily Sketch* of 6 April 1957.

AIR 20/9321 1957 Parliamentary Question 15 May 1957 from Major Patrick Wall MP: To ask the Secretary of State for Air, how many unidentified flying objects have been detected over Great Britain this year as compared with previous years; and whether the object picked up on radar over the Dover Straits on 29 April has yet been identified. Further questions to the Minister from Mr. Frank Beswick MP. Notes for Minister on reported sightings. Replies by Mr. Ward. Newspaper clippings April–May 1957: *The Times, News Chronicle, Daily Worker, Daily Mirror, Daily Sketch, Daily Telegraph, Daily Express* and the *Evening News.*

AIR 20/9322 1957 Parliamentary Question 15 May 1957 from Mr. Frank Beswick MP: To ask the Secretary of State for Air, what was the nature of the aircraft or other aircraft sighted on the radar defence screens on Monday night and which occasioned the despatch of Fighter Command. Reply by Mr. Ward. Notes for Ministers.

AIR 20/9994 Headquarters Southern Section Intelligence. Reports on Aerial Phenomena, including "observation of unusual aerial phenomena at Royal Air Force Ventor on 29 July 1957". Two Copies of "Track Tracing" Sheets.

Description of UFOs, for example, RAF Lyneham 9 December 1957: "December 1957: Description large bright crescent shaped object or could be a sphere with trails from edges. Travelling on a course of 290 degrees at a moderate speed. Seemed to be descending and not at a very great height".

AIR 20/11887 1967 August (with maps)

AIR 20/11888 1967 September

AIR 20/11889 1967 October (with photographs)

AIR 20/11890 1967 October (with maps)

AIR 20/11891 1967 November (with maps)

AIR 20/11892 1967 November

AIR 20/11893 1967 December

AIR 22 Periodical Returns, Summaries and Bulletins

AIR 22/93 1955 Air Ministry Secret Intelligence Summary March 1955. Volume 10, Article No. 3 on Flying Saucers "An object was reported . . .".

PREM 11 Prime Minister's Office: Correspondence and Papers, 1951–1964.

PREM 11/855 1952 Personal Minute from the Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill to the Secretary of State for Air, Lord Cheswell, dated 28 July 1952. "What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to? What can it mean? What is the truth? Let me have a report at your convenience." Minute from the Secretary of State, dated 9 August 1952, dismissing stories about flying saucers.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will list the document references and titles of all closed files at the Public Record Office that contain information about unidentified flying objects. [HL3315]

The Lord Chancellor: I list below the document references and titles of all closed files in the Public Record Office known to its staff to contain information about unidentified flying objects. There may be information in other closed files but this could be discovered only at disproportionate cost.

AIR 2 Air Ministry: Registered Files

AIR 2/18183 1968–1969 Unidentified Flying Objects*

AIR 20 Unregistered Papers

AIR 20/11612 1967–1968 Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs)*

AIR 20/11895 1968 April UFOs*

AIR 20/11896 1968 May UFOs*

AIR 20/11897 1968 June UFOs*

AIR 20/11898 1968 July UFOs*

AIR 20/11899 1968 August UFOs*

AIR 20/11900 1968 September UFOs*

AIR 20/11901 1968 October UFOs*

AIR 20/11902 1968 November UFOs*

AIR 20/12055 1969 January UFOs*

AIR 20/12056 1969 February UFOs*

AIR 20/12057 1969 March UFOs*

AIR 20/12058 1969 April UFOs*

AIR 20/12059 1969 May UFOs*

AIR 20/12060 1969 June UFOs*

AIR 20/12061 1969 July UFOs*

AIR 20/12062 1969 August UFOs*

AIR 20/12063 1969 September UFOs*

AIR 20/12064 1969 October UFOs*

AIR 20/12065 1969 November UFOs*

AIR 20/12066 1969 December UFOs*

AIR 20/12067 1970 January UFOs*

AIR 20/12297 1970 February UFOs*

AIR 20/12298 1970 March UFOs*

AIR 20/12299 1970 April UFOs*

AIR 20/12300 1970 May UFOs*

AIR 20/12301 1970 June UFOs*

AIR 20/12302 1970 July UFOs*

AIR 20/12303 1970 August UFOs*

AIR 20/12304 1970 September UFOs*

AIR 20/12305 1970 October UFOs*

AIR 20/12306 1970 November UFOs*

* = Thirty year closure rule applies.

Surrogacy: Review Report

Baroness Gould of Potternewton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will publish the report of the review of aspects of surrogacy arrangements announced in June 1997. [HL3414]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Baroness Hayman): The Government have received the report of the review team, chaired by Professor Margaret Brazier, OBE, and this is being published today as Cm 4068. Copies will be placed in the Library. We intend to consult formally on the recommendations in the report and an announcement about that will be made in due course. We are very grateful to Professor Brazier and her colleagues, Professors Alastair Campbell and Susan Golombok, for their work.

National Blood Authority

Lord Clement-Jones asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether a new management plan has been received from the new Chairman of the National Blood Authority and when it will be published. [HL3390]

Baroness Hayman: We have received the operational plan for 1998–99. Copies are available from the National Blood Authority and copies will be placed in the Library.

Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting Strategy

Lord Clement-Jones asked Her Majesty's Government:

Following the recent consultation, when it is anticipated that the Department of Health will publish its Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting Strategy. [HL3391]

Baroness Hayman: The Department of Health plans to publish a new Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting Strategy in the new year.

CIREA: Asylum Information Exchange

Lord Lester of Herne Hill asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by the Lord Williams of Mostyn on 3 September (*WA 12*), whether they will publish the proceedings of the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum (CIREA). [HL3303]

The Minister of State, Home Office (Lord Williams of Mostyn): The outcome of proceedings of the CIREA group are contained in Council documents which can be applied for under the Council's Decision 93/731 on Access to Documents. Applications should be made in writing to the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union, 175 Rue de la Loi, 1048 Brussels. The Council Secretariat will decide whether the documents may be disclosed, in accordance with the criteria laid down in the Decision. In the event of a refusal, applicants may make a confirmatory application for the document to the Council. The official journal of the European Union published a report of CIREA activities on 23 June 1997 C.191 concerning the period 1994 to 1996. The Government favour disclosure of as great a number of documents as possible.

MOD Form 174D

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 1

REGISTERED FILE No. D/SEC(AS)64/4

Enclosure Jacket No. 1

DATE OPENED 26 OCT 98

DIVISION/DIRECTORATE/BRANCH:

SEC(AS)2A

SUBJECT: PE: US3909/98
LORD HILL-NORTON

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

NOTES

1. A Temporary Jacket will only be used when the Registered File is not available.
2. The contents of a Temporary Jacket must be incorporated in the Registered File at the earliest opportunity, and this incorporation recorded on a transit slip or file record sheet.
3. The movements of Temporary Jackets are recorded by the Registry. Transit is to be recorded on transit slips as for Registered Files.

DOWNGRADING

(to be completed when the jacket is incorporated in the Registered File)

This jacket may be downgraded to:— RESTRICTED / UNCLASSIFIED on..... (insert date)

Certifying Officer.....

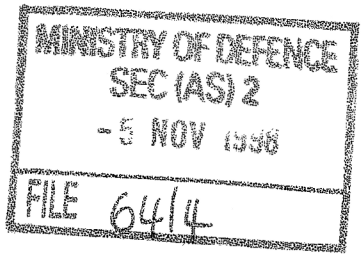
Date..... Appointment and Branch.....

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

Section 40 [redacted]

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE



D/US of S/JS 3909/98/P

4 November 1998

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your letters of 7 October to George Robertson and myself about 'unidentified flying objects'.

I hope you will be reassured when I say that when dealing with letters and questions from Parliamentary colleagues, Defence Ministers receive written briefing, supplemented as necessary with oral advice, on the facts of the case. It is only having satisfied ourselves that it is pertinent to the matter in hand, that we respond to our colleagues.

You ask a number of questions in your latest letters; where these have not previously been dealt with insofar as my Department's interest is concerned in correspondence or Parliamentary answer, I can add the following information.

Military Task 9 requires the integrity of UK airspace to be maintained and this is fulfilled by the continuous air picture and air policing capability. There is therefore no requirement for 'UFO' reports to be forwarded to my Department, but any that are sent will of course be read. Where the contents justify it, our air defence and other experts as necessary are consulted. As you are now aware from Lord Gilbert's answer on 21 October (Official Report col 158), an answering machine is left permanently on to receive any reports.

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Recycled Paper

You say that sighting reports have increased significantly each year but this is not the case. The figures for the last ten years are as follows:

1988 (397); 1989 (258); 1990 (209); 1991 (117); 1992 (147); 1993 (258); 1994 (250); 1995 (373); 1996 (609); 1997 (425); 1998 to end September (163).

I recognise of course that you remain dissatisfied with the responses you have received to Parliamentary Questions and letters in recent months. I can only repeat that there is no defence requirement for research or investigation into allegations of 'UFO' activity where there is no perceived threat to the integrity of UK airspace.

I hope this explains the position.

Section 40 [redacted]

JOHN SPELLAR MP

Recycled Paper

COVERING UNCLASSIFIED - POLICY.

ENCLOSURE 4 NUMBER

Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

23rd October 1998

PE Unit

Copy to:

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PSO/ACAS
ADGE1
Sec(AS)1
DI Sec
CS(RM)1

'UFOs': LORD HILL-NORTON

Reference: PE US3909/98 dated 13 October 1998

ISSUE

1. Lord Hill-Norton's dissatisfaction with the Department's limited interest in 'UFO' phenomena.

RECOMMENDATION

2. USofS to write; SofS has asked to see the draft.

TIMING

3. Routine

BACKGROUND

4. Lord Hill-Norton believes in 'UFOs' and has taken on himself the mission of persuading Government to take seriously the notion that we are being visited by craft of extra-terrestrial origin. He pursues this with evangelical fervour through numerous PQs and PEs, and is something of a champion of the cause of 'ufologists' in this country.

MOD Interest in 'UFOs'

5. Military Task 9 is to maintain the integrity of the UK's airspace. This requirement is met by the continuous recognised air picture and an air policing capability. From that perspective we read reports sent to us of 'UFO' sightings but consultation with air defence staff and others as necessary is considered only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach of UK air space: such as reports from credible witnesses (pilots, air traffic controllers etc); those supported by photographic, video or documentary evidence; corroboration by a number of witnesses; or are of a phenomenon currently being observed and might,

therefore, be capable of detection. Only a handful of reports have been received in recent years in these categories and further investigation of them has found no evidence of a threat.

6. The most recent full investigation by the Department, in October 1996, was prompted by reports of lights in the sky over the sea in the Wash at the same time as Claxby radar was reporting an unidentified plot over Boston. The investigation, carried out by MOD Air Defence Staff, included discussions with civil and military observers and operators, examination of duty radar logs and advice from the Royal Greenwich Observatory. It concluded the radar plot to be a permanent echo from a church spire appearing only in certain weather conditions, and the lights in the sky to be in all probability the planet Venus, particularly bright at that time of the year.

Re-investiagtion of Alleged Sightings

7. Lord Hill-Norton continues to question decisions made years ago. He does not accept that the 'Rendlesham Forest' incident (involving the then Deputy Base Commander of RAF Bentwaters/RAF Woodbridge) was investigated satisfactorily in 1980-81. We have tried to explain on numerous occasions that decisions made in the past were reached by those responsible for considering the relevant material available at the time. It would not possible to recreate the circumstances of what was seen, and witness recollections would have blurred with the passage of time. All of the available information about decisions made more than 30 years ago is available for public scrutiny at the Public Record Office.

US Position

8. US DOD interest in 'UFOs' has been limited for some years to a statement on their Internet web site of their 1950s and 1960s research into the phenomenon ('Project Blue Book'), which concludes that they no longer have any interest in 'UFO' reports and related matters. Those seeking to report a 'sighting' are invited to contact a local law enforcement agency.

SUMMARY

9. The root of Lord Hill-Norton's dissatisfaction is that Government policy relating to 'UFOs' is narrower than he considers appropriate and there are no plans to widen it. He is unwilling to accept this policy. There is no evidence to support Lord Hill-Norton's claims that 'UFO' sighting reports are of defence significance, and his suspicion that the Department actively discourages or ignores reports is unfounded. Very few reports are worthy of departmental action, but that is a different point.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2
MB8247 Section 40
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2
FAX : Section 40

RESTRICTED - POLICY
UNCLASSIFIED

D/USofS/JS

Thank you for your letter of 7 October about 'unidentified flying objects'. I am also replying to the similar letter of the same date to George Robertson.

I hope you will be reassured when I say that when dealing with letters and questions from Parliamentary colleagues, Defence Ministers receive written briefing, supplemented as necessary with oral advice, on the facts of the case. It is only having satisfied ourselves that it is pertinent to the matter in hand, that we respond to our colleagues.

You ask a number of questions in your latest letters; where these have not previously been dealt with insofar as my Department's interest is concerned in correspondence or Parliamentary answer, I can add the following information.

Military Task 9 requires the integrity of UK airspace to be maintained and this is fulfilled by the continuous air picture and air policing capability. There is therefore no requirement for 'UFO' reports to be forwarded to my Department, but any that are sent will of course be read. Where the contents justify it, our air defence and other experts as necessary are consulted. As you now know from Lord Gilbert's answer on 21 October (Official Report col 158), an answering machine is left permanently on to receive any reports.

You say that sighting reports have increased significantly

RESTRICTED POLICY
UNCLASSIFIED

each year but this is not the case. The figures for the last ten years are as follows:

1988 (397); 1989 (258); 1990 (209); 1991 (117); 1992 (147); 1993 (258); 1994 (250); 1995 (373); 1996 (609); 1997 (425); 1998 to end September (163).

I recognise of course that you remain dissatisfied with the responses you have received to Parliamentary Questions and letters in recent months. I can only repeat that there is no defence requirement for research or investigation into allegations of 'UFO' activity where there is no perceived threat to the integrity of UK airspace.

JOHN SPELLAR

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton

Section 40

Would you like to try this? I think we can probably stick to the main points.

Head/D Sec(AS)

Help! I can keep quiet about this for weeks to come and still feel it's too long. As I mentioned to you, SofS wants to clear the draft USofS sends, but Rawlinson seen any of the PQs/PEs etc & recent trivia, Perce the overall summary in the background note.

I should appreciate your thoughts/comments

Section 40

22/10

ENCLOSURE 3 WITHDRAWN

Loose Minute

Section 40

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

October 1998

PE Unit

Copy to:

APS/SofS
APS/Min(DP)
APS/USofS PSO/ACAS
ADGE1
Sec(AS)1
DI Sec
CS(RM)1

'UFOs': LORD HILL NORTON

Reference: PE US3909/98 dated 13 October 1998

ISSUE

1. ~~To respond to the letters to SofS and USofS from Lord Hill Norton (PE 3909/98) about 'UFO'-related issues.~~ Lord Hill-Norton's dissatisfaction with the Department's limited interest in 'UFO' phenomena.

RECOMMENDATION

2. USofS to write; SofS has asked to see the draft.

TIMING

3. Routine.

BACKGROUND

4. Lord Hill-Norton believes in UFOs and has taken on ~~the~~ himself the mission of persuading Government to take seriously the notion that we are being visited by craft of extra-terrestrial origin. He pursues this with evangelical fervour ~~and~~ through numerous PQs and PEs, and is something of a champion of the cause of 'ufologists' in this country.

11. The number of 'UFO'-related letters and telephone calls from the public to Sec(AS)2 also rose significantly during 1996. At that time callers had direct access to Sec(AS)2 desk officers and callers they became more frequent in their efforts to pass on details of their personal concerns outwith the Department's remit (alien abductions, crop circles, extraterrestrial lifeforms, ghosts, animal mutilations etc). Callers did not accept that there was no defence interest in their concerns and staff effort became increasingly diverted from core tasks. In February 1997 the answerphone was installed: it sets out clearly the Department's interest in the subject, invites callers to leave a message within this remit, and makes clear that we will only respond when more defence-related information is required. That said, it is our policy to send a written response to all callers who leave their name and address.

12. It is not the case that installing the answerphone was directly responsible for the reduction in the number of reports received as the total for 1997 shows. It is rather the case that the lack of media interest in the subject this year has had this effect. Lord Hill Norton draws attention to the answerphone being switched off outside normal working hours suggesting the public has no way of reporting what they might have seen, but overlooks the fact that it was never the case that the Sec(AS)2 number was manned out of hours.

Re-investigation of Alleged Sightings

13. Lord Hill Norton continues to question decisions made some years ago. He does not accept that the 'Rendlesham Forest' incident (involving the then Deputy Base Commander of RAF Bentwaters/RAF Woodbridge) was investigated satisfactorily in 1980-81 ~~(Hansard extracts and background notes attached for ease of reference)~~. We have tried to explain on numerous occasions that decisions made in the past were reached by those responsible for considering the relevant material available at the time. It ~~must be the case that even with unlimited defence resources it~~ would not possible to recreate the circumstances of what was seen, and witness recollections would have blurred with the passage of

time. ~~It is also the case that~~ All of the available information about decisions made more than 30 years ago is available for public scrutiny at the Public Record Office.

US Position

14. ~~In the United States,~~ US DOD interest in 'UFOs' has been limited for some years to a statement on their Internet web site of their research into the phenomena ('Project Blue Book'), ~~and~~ which concludes that they no longer have any interest in 'UFO' reports and related matters. Those seeking to report a 'sighting' are invited to contact ~~the~~ a local law enforcement agencies.

SUMMARY

15. The root of Lord Hill Norton's dissatisfaction is that ~~current~~ Government policy relating to 'UFOs' is narrower than he considers appropriate and there are no plans to widen this interest. He ~~has made clear his~~ is unwilling~~ness~~ to accept this policy. There is no evidence to support Lord Hill Norton's claims that 'UFO' sighting reports are of defence significance, and ~~no substance to his allegation of a deliberate attempt to play down and reduce the number of sighting reports passed on to the Department.~~

16. I apologise for the length of this background note but I considered SofS would wish to note that we have gone to some lengths in recent months to deal with Lord Hill Norton's personal views on this subject.

PEs\3909HillNo

D/USofS/JS

Thank you for your letter of 7 October about 'unidentified flying objects'. I am also replying to the similar letter of the same date to George Robertson.

I am sorry that you remain dissatisfied with the responses to the Parliamentary Questions and letters you have received in recent months. However, this is inevitable when an issue is looked at from two different perspectives. You know the extent of my Department's interest in these matters and have clearly stated your own. They do not coincide. I can only repeat that there is no defence requirement for research or investigation into allegations of 'unidentified flying objects' where there is no perceived military threat to the integrity of United Kingdom airspace.

I hope you will be reassured when I say that when dealing with letters and questions from Parliamentary colleagues, ~~and Parliamentary Questions, all~~ Defence Ministers receive written briefing, supplemented as necessary with oral advice, on the facts of the case. It is only having ~~received such information and~~ satisfied ourselves ~~that it is pertinent to the matter in hand~~ that we respond to our colleagues.

You ask a number of questions in your latest letters; where these have not previously been dealt with insofar as my Department's interest is concerned in correspondence or Parliamentary answer, I can add the following information.

~~Military~~ Military Task 9 requires the integrity of UK airspace to be maintained and this is fulfilled by the continuous air picture and air policing capability. There is therefore no requirement for 'UFO' reports to be forwarded to my Department, but any that are sent will of course be read. Where the contents justify it, our defence and other experts as necessary are consulted. As you now know, from Lord Gilbert's answer on [October], an answering machine is left permanently on to receive any reports.

and the process for handling of 'UFO'-related issues is part of this. Air Defence experts and others as necessary are fully consulted about 'UFO' policy related issues.

You say that sighting reports have increased significantly each year but this is not the case. The figures for the last ten years are as follows:

1988 (397); 1989 (258); 1990 (209); 1991 (117); 1992 (147); 1993 (258); 1994 (250); 1995 (373); 1996 (609); 1997 (425); 1998 to end September (163).

We do believe that media interest in the books about the 'UFO' phenomenon published in 1996, and the 50th anniversary of the alleged sighting of the first 'flying saucer' at Roswell, USA, in 1997 influenced the number of sighting reports in those years.

I can assure you that all sighting reports are looked at with a rational and objective eye. It is, however, the case that the vast majority contain insufficient information to suggest an event of any nature has occurred. Where there is sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation, this is done as a matter of course.

It is also not the case that the installation of an answerphone in Sec(AS)2 was a deliberate act to restrict members of the public from making reports. The machine was installed early in 1997 so that desk officers in the Branch could carry out their core tasks without interruption from members of the public wishing to discuss 'UFO'-related issues outwith my Department's interest. I do not understand your point about out of hours access (ie evenings and weekends) as the Sec(AS)2 desk has never been manned at these times and any calls were have gone unanswered. The answerphone is now left on continuously and, therefore, provides an additional reporting facility. All callers leaving their name and address on the answerphone receive a written reply.

You question our confidence in the adequate defence of this country. As recently as the Strategic Defence Review, my Ministerial colleagues and I satisfied ourselves that our forces

I recognise of course that you remain dissatisfied with the responses you have received to Parliamentary Questions and letters in recent months. ~~This is however inevitable when my Department's responsibilities~~ and endeavour in this area ~~do not coincide with~~ I can only repeat that there is no defence requirement for research or investigation into allegations of 'UFO' activity where there is no perceived threat to the integrity of UK airspace.

JOHN SPELLAR

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill Norton

ENCLOS 2

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes are published in the Annual Report. A list of the current membership is also attached to the press releases announcing meetings of the committee. Copies of all these documents are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Salmon Fishing

The Earl of Shrewsbury asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether, in the light of the recommendations of the Environment Agency that a 10-year ban on the fishing for salmon with rod and line be imposed on rivers in England and Wales, they will take immediate steps to close down the North East coast drift net fisheries. [HL3344]

Lord Donoughue: The Environment Agency has not recommended a 10-year ban on fishing for salmon by rod in England and Wales. The agency is however considering a range of measures to reduce exploitation of spring salmon: these include postponing the start of the salmon netting season and requiring the release of all salmon caught by rod in the first half of the year. It is currently consulting its statutory advisory committees, and, in the light of the advice it receives, will decide whether to proceed with formal proposals.

Sand Eel Population: Protection

The Earl of Shrewsbury asked Her Majesty's Government:

What steps they intend to take to protect the sand eel population around the coasts of the United Kingdom. [HL3345]

Lord Donoughue: The Government set annual restrictions on sand eel fishing in the inshore fisheries around the Shetland Islands and Western Isles. In addition, they have proposed to the European Commission the introduction of a seasonal ban on sand eel fishing off the North Sea coast from the Orkneys to Humberside. This would be an international closure introduced through European Community rules.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by the Lord Gilbert on 3 September (*WA 60*), whether airports, observatories, RAF bases and police stations are still required to forward details of any report they receive of an unidentified flying object to the Ministry of Defence, or whether such action is now only discretionary, following the April 1997 review of procedures. [HL3313]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Gilbert): There is no requirement for anyone to submit 'UFO' sighting reports to the MoD, other than for military air defence purposes. However, any reports sent to the department will be given the attention they deserve, commensurate with the quality of information provided.

Defence Diversification

Lord Judd asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they have studied the paper by Ian S. Goudie on Defence Diversification published by the International Security Information Service; what conclusions they have drawn; and what action they are proposing to take. [HL3319]

Lord Gilbert: The Government have considered the paper submitted by Mr. Goudie as part of the consultation process following publication of the Green Paper "Defence Diversification: Getting the most out of defence technology", Cm 3861.

A wide range of comments were received and the Government are grateful to all those who commented. The views received have, as far as possible, been taken into account in reaching conclusions. These will be published in the form of a White Paper later in the autumn.

Military Attachments: Estonia and Latvia

The Earl of Carlisle asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they intend to attach, as military advisers, an officer of the rank of Lieutenant Colonel to the Ministries of Defence of Estonia and Latvia as they have done to the Ministry of Defence of Lithuania. [HL3334]

Lord Gilbert: We attach great importance to defence co-operation with the Baltic States and continue to provide military-related assistance to them in accordance with their priorities. The attachment of a military officer to the Lithuanian Ministry of National Defence (MoD) was to meet a specific Lithuanian requirement for advice on military training. Although we have no specific plans for military attachments elsewhere in the region at the moment, we keep our defence assistance programmes under review, considering all requests for assistance as they arise.

Northern Ireland: Abortion Laws

Lord Alton of Liverpool asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the answer made by Lord Dubs on 5 October (H.L. Deb., Col. 228), whether government time will be made available in the House of Commons for a Private Member's Bill seeking to extend the abortion laws to Northern Ireland; and whether they accept the principle established by John Major MP that the existing laws will not be changed either by a government initiative or by the

aim of bringing it into effect at the earliest available opportunity. This will require primary legislation.

National Air Traffic Services Ltd.

Lord Gladwin of Clee asked Her Majesty's Government:

When they expect to announce proposals for a public/private partnership for National Air Traffic Services Ltd. [HL3503]

Lord Whitty: We have today published a consultation paper on the Government's preferred option for a public/private partnership (PPP) for National Air Traffic Services Ltd.

The safe and efficient provision of air traffic control services is rightly a matter of great public interest and, since the PPP was announced, a debate has begun on key issues such as safety, the national interest and public accountability. The Government now want to launch a structured, full and open consultation on these issues. The consultation document therefore sets out a wide range of matters on which we are looking for views. Safety remains our top priority and we believe that the proposed PPP offers the opportunity to establish a structure which will strengthen safety, satisfy the public interest and the needs of aviation users while providing for the sound future of National Air Traffic Services Ltd. and its employees.

We hope that all those with an interest in this subject, whatever their views on the Government's preferred option, will take the opportunity to respond to the consultation document.

Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997

Viscount Simon asked Her Majesty's Government:

What plans they have to implement the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997. [HL3496]

Lord Whitty: It is clear that the setting of road traffic reduction targets will be an integral part of the process of drawing up local transport strategies. Local transport plans are a centrepiece of the Government's transport proposals and it is vital that we get implementation right. We have listened to the Local Government Association and local authority concerns about the difficulty of producing robust local transport plans by July 1999. We will therefore invite local highway authorities to produce "provisional" five year plans by July 1999, covering the period 2000/01–2004/05. These would be the basis for allocating resources for 2000/01 only. Authorities would then roll their plans on by one year and submit "full" plans for 2001/02–2005/06 in July 2000, when resources would be allocated across the plan period.

Statutory reports produced under the provisions of the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 will therefore be submitted in July 2000, as part of the first round of full local transport plans. We will expect authorities to submit non-statutory "interim" road traffic reduction reports in July 1999, as part of the provisional plans.

The London boroughs are not covered by the White Paper requirement to produce local transport plans, but will be separately required to produce *local implementation plans* which are in keeping with the Mayor's integrated transport strategy for London. We are taking this forward separately.

The Road Traffic Reduction (National Targets) Act 1998 requires the Government to consider the setting of national targets. We will therefore require a greater degree of standardisation from local authorities in the measurement of existing traffic levels and forecasts—in order that we can assess the national implications. We believe this can be done by building on the data already collected for national surveys. It will take some time to get an assessment framework in place. This is something we would like to take forward jointly with local authorities under the auspices of the Transport Statistics Liaison Group. The existing draft guidance on the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 will be revised in the light of this work. The Government have also undertaken that they will produce a first report to Parliament on the issue of national traffic targets by the end of 1999 (which will also need to reflect the views of the Commission for Integrated Transport, when appointed). To achieve this, they will need to draw on existing sources of information together with any useful inputs from local authorities from their 1999 plans, accepting that at this stage the material will not be in a standardised format.

UFOs: MoD Answering Machine

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will ensure that the answering machine which the Ministry of Defence uses both to explain its policy on unidentified flying objects and to provide a facility for the public to report sightings is turned on at all times and not switched off outside working hours. [HL3407]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Gilbert): Yes.

Medical Negligence Claims

Lord Clement-Jones asked Her Majesty's Government:

What activity the Department of Health is currently engaged in to review its exposure to medical negligence claims and its processes and procedures for dealing with them. [HL3460]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Baroness Hayman): On 29 April 1998 my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Health wrote to a number of organisations representing professional, legal, National Health Service and patient interests seeking their views on what can be done to reduce the number of incidents which give rise

TABA

either police or military personnel; and whether they will place copies of any such agreements in the Library of the House. [HL2808]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Gilbert): No formal arrangements to provide training for police or military personnel have been conducted with the Turkish authorities since 1 May 1997. The UK Government have, however, a programme of practical assistance to help the Turkish civil authorities in the field of human rights. This programme was announced in October 1997 and includes police training in the areas of public order policy, detainee rights, domestic violence and the role of an independent police complaints authority. Details of the military training given to Turkish personnel was set out in the reply I gave the noble Lord, Lord Hylton on 22 April, (*Official Report*, WA 212) and in the reply given by my right honourable friend the then Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Dr. Reid, to the honourable Member for Tooting, Mr. Cox, on 14 July 1998 (*Official Report*, col. 173).

NATO Members: Defence Expenditure

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether the need to increase defence expenditure is generally discussed within NATO; and whether the statement of the Turkish Minister of National Defence, Mr. Ismet Sezgin, that the Turkish armed forces need an investment of 150 billion United States dollars is agreed within NATO. [HL2955]

Lord Gilbert: At their meeting on 11 June 1998, NATO Defence Ministers noted that the armed forces needed in the new strategic environment, while smaller than before, still require significant funding levels. However, the setting of the overall level of defence expenditure of an individual NATO member is not a matter for the Alliance as a whole.

RAF Feltwell: Units and Roles

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will list those units based at RAF Feltwell, and what functions each of these units carries out. [HL3237]

Lord Gilbert: The units based at RAF Feltwell and their roles are:

UNIT: USAF 5th Space Surveillance Squadron
ROLE: Tracking of man-made objects in space.

UNIT: US Department of Defence Schools
ROLE: Educational establishments for dependants of USVF personnel.

UNIT: US Mathes Airmen's Leadership School
ROLE: Training for Junior NCOs.

UNIT: US Contracting Squadron
ROLE: US Visiting Forces contracting authority.

UNIT: US Army Veterinary Detachment
ROLE: Provision of veterinary services.

UNIT: US Army Air Force Exchange Services (AAFES)
ROLE: Furniture and retail warehouse.

UNIT: US Defence Audit Agency
ROLE: Provision of audit services.

RAF Feltwell: Space Tracking System

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is the role of RAF Feltwell in relation to the tracking of unidentified objects in space; how many objects detected by the Deep Space Tracking System at RAF Feltwell remain unidentified; and how many of these were transmitting a signal. [HL3238]

Lord Gilbert: RAF Feltwell is responsible for tracking man-made objects in deep space. I am withholding the further information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by the Lord Gilbert on 15 July (*WA 25*), what changes in procedures were implemented following the April 1997 review of the system to disseminate reports of unidentified flying objects; and whether airports, observatories, RAF bases and police stations receiving reports of UFOs are required to send them to the Ministry of Defence. [HL3239]

Lord Gilbert: Procedures were clarified to ensure that reports received by the department would have the attention they deserved. The department's responsibilities for maintaining the integrity of UK airspace, as set out in the Strategic Defence Review, are well known. Anybody may send in reports for assessment in that context.

Medical and Dental Officers: Pay Awards

Lord Vivian asked Her Majesty's Government:

Why the recent pay award to medical and dental officers in the Armed Forces is being awarded in two stages, with 2 per cent. being paid from 1 April and the remainder payable from 1 December. [HL3240]

Lord Gilbert: In line with government policy on public sector pay, the award for medical and dental officers has been staged in the same way as the pay

COVERING RELEASE UNCLASSIFIED-POLICY

Sec(A)
UFO

Section 40
[redacted] 26/8

TAB B

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Lord Gilbert
Ministry of Defence
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

21 August, 1998

Dear Lord Gilbert,

Perhaps you would read again your reply dated 19 August 1998 to my Question about the reporting of unidentified flying objects. It does not answer my question, which was " ..... whether airports, observatories, RAF bases and police stations receiving reports of UFOs are required (my emphasis) to send them to the MOD".

Of course "anybody may send in .....". but that was not the question. I should be grateful if you would now answer it. In short, are the people listed REQUIRED (by you) to send them to the MOD?

Yours sincerely,

Hill-Norton.

NATO: New Members and Command Structure

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether the new members of NATO will fill senior NATO commands; and, if so, which. [HL2479]

Lord Gilbert: It is planned that the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland will fill posts in the new NATO command structure. The exact number, seniority and location of these has not yet been determined.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

When arrangements for disseminating reports of unidentified flying objects within the Ministry of Defence were put in place and last reviewed; and whether they will ensure that all airports, observatories, RAF bases and police stations have accurate and up-to-date instructions about how to record details of unidentified aerial phenomena reported to them, together with instructions to pass them to the appropriate authorities within the Ministry of Defence; and [HL2607]

What follow-up action is taken by the Ministry of Defence when it receives a report of an unidentified flying object; and whether checks are routinely made to see whether such reports can be correlated by radar. [HL2609]

Lord Gilbert: The Ministry of Defence's interest in reports of unidentified flying objects is limited to establishing whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace has been penetrated by hostile or unauthorised foreign military activity and whether reporting procedures are adequate for this purpose. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat, no attempt is made to identify the precise nature of each reported incident. Arrangements within the MoD have been in place for a number of years for disseminating reports; they were last reviewed in April 1997. Where necessary, reports of unidentified flying objects are examined with the assistance of relevant MoD experts, and this may include radar correlation.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

How many reports of unidentified flying objects were notified to the Ministry of Defence in 1996, 1997 and the first six months of 1998; and how many of these sightings remain unexplained. [HL2608]

Lord Gilbert: The number of reports received by the Ministry of Defence of aerial activity not identifiable to the witness is as follows:

1996: 609

1997: 425

1998: 88 (January–June)

Unless there is evidence to suggest that the United Kingdom's airspace has been compromised by unauthorised foreign military activity, we do not seek to provide an explanation for what might have been seen as the MoD is not resourced to provide an identification service.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether, in evaluating reports of unidentified flying objects, the Ministry of Defence will routinely consult staff at the Royal Greenwich Observatory, the Ballistic Missile Early Warning Centre at RAF Fylindales and the Deep Space Tracing Facility at RAF Feltwell. [HL2610]

Lord Gilbert: These or other staff may be consulted, depending on the circumstances.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Why the Ministry of Defence has installed an answering machine on the line used by members of the public to report unidentified flying objects; and whether those people who leave contact details on the machine receive a formal reply. [HL2611]

Lord Gilbert: An answering machine enables members of the public to leave details about aerial activity or seek further information about our policy in respect of unidentified flying objects. The machine carries a message that sets out the MoD's limited interest in the subject and explains that, in the case of reported sightings, callers will be contacted only in the event that follow-up action is deemed appropriate.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

How many military personnel witnessed the unidentified craft that overflew RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury on 31 March 1993; and whether, when the craft has not been identified, such an event ought to be classified as being of no defence significance. [HL2612]

Lord Gilbert: The Ministry of Defence is aware of a single report from two military personnel of an alleged sighting in the West Midlands on 31 March 1993. The facts reported were fully examined at the time. No firm conclusions were drawn then about the nature of what had been seen, but the events were not judged to be of defence significance. The MoD has no reason to doubt the judgments made at the time.

European Parliament, House of Commons and House of Lords: Comparative Costs

Viscount Tenby asked Her Majesty's Government:

What are the costs of maintaining the European Parliament, the House of Commons and the House of Lords, including:

(a) salaries, pensions, travelling allowances, secretarial expenses and other expenses for Members;

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MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
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PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

TAB

D/US of S/JS 3354/98/P

15 September 1998

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your letter of 21 August to Lord Gilbert in which you seek further clarification of the Ministry of Defence's interest in the reporting of 'unidentified flying objects'. I am responding as Lord Gilbert is currently away

As you will know, the Ministry of Defence's interest in the subject of unidentified flying objects is limited to ensuring that the integrity of UK airspace is maintained. This is achieved by using a combination of civil and military radar installations, which provide a continuous real-time "picture" of the UK airspace, and an airborne military Air Defence capability.

There is, therefore, no requirement for anyone to submit 'UFO' sighting reports to the MOD. If any such reports are submitted, the Department will give them the attention they deserve commensurate with the quality of information provided.

Section 40 [redacted]

JOHN SPELLAR MP

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS) 2
16 SEP 1998
FILE

Recycled Pa

NUMBERS OF UNEXPLAINED AERIAL SIGHTINGS REPORTED TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

1959 - 22	1981 - 600
1960 - 31	1982 - 250
1961 - 71	1983 - 390
1962 - 46	1984 - 214
1963 - 51	1985 - 177
1964 - 74	1986 - 120
1965 - 56	1987 - 150
1966 - 95	1988 - 397
1967 - 362	1989 - 258
1968 - 280	1990 - 209
1969 - 228	1991 - 117
1970 - 181	1992 - 147
1971 - 379	1993 - 258
1972 - 201	1994 - 250
1973 - 233	1995 - 373
1974 - 177	1996 - 609
1975 - 208	1997 - 425
1976 - 200	1998 -
1977 - 435	
1978 - 750	
1979 - 550	
1980 - 350	

Figures from before 1959 are not available.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 28th October 1997.

Mr. Reginald Buckland: Court Documents

Lord Burton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will place in the Library of the House a copy of the judgment delivered at Cambridge Crown Court on 11 September 1997, and all other papers and documents submitted to the court, in case A970014, the appeal of *Reginald Buckland* v. *The Chief Constable of Cambridge* before His Honour Judge Haworth heard on 15 August 1997 against the refusal of the Chief Constable to vary the conditions of a firearms certificate, and in particular all other papers, documents, disclosures and submissions which Mr. Robert Gardiner, Clerk to the Court, has failed to provide upon request by Lord Burton.

The Lord Chancellor (Lord Irvine of Lairg): The Question concerns a matter which has been assigned to the Court Service under the terms of its Framework Document. I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to respond.

Letter to Lord Burton from the Chief Executive of the Court Service, Mr. M. D. Huebner, dated 28 October 1997.

RELEASE OF COURT DOCUMENTS

The Lord Chancellor has asked me to reply to your Question about the release of papers and documents submitted to the court in the case of *Reginald Buckland* v. *The Chief Constable of Cambridge*.

A copy of the judgment was placed in the Library of the House on 7 October. As the remaining documents are the property of the party who filed them, there is no obligation or authority for the court to disclose them. With Mr. Buckland's consent, copies of correspondence between himself and the respondent were provided to you on 15 October, and will today be placed in the Library.

Central and Eastern Europe: Military Training Assistance

The Earl of Carlisle asked Her Majesty's Government:

How many individual service personnel and military training teams from the United Kingdom Armed Forces will be deployed throughout 1998, in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which were formerly occupied by the Soviet Union, to assist with the training of their Armed Forces.

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Gilbert): The Ministry of Defence currently expects to deploy six individual Service personnel and 10 military Short Term Training Teams to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in 1998. All are deployed at the specific request of the countries concerned, who seek to benefit from the expertise of the United Kingdom's Armed Forces. The aim of the training teams is to advise on the conduct of either officer or non-commissioned officer training. The individual Service personnel, all officers, are deployed to provide expertise in specific areas of defence management.

RAF Bentwaters and Woodbridge: Nuclear Weapons Allegations

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether the allegations contained in the recently published book *Left at East Gate*, to the effect that nuclear weapons were stored at RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge in violation of UK/US treaty obligations are true.

Lord Gilbert: It has always been the policy of this and previous governments neither to confirm nor to deny where nuclear weapons are located either in the UK or elsewhere, in the past or at the present time. Such information would be withheld under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are aware of reports from the United States Air Force personnel that nuclear weapons stored in the Weapons Storage Area at RAF Woodbridge were struck by light beams fired from an unidentified craft seen over the base in the period 25–30 December 1980, and if so, what action was subsequently ta

Lord Gilbert: There is no evidence to suggest that the Ministry of Defence received any such reports.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

What information they have on the suicide of the United States security policeman from the 81st Security Police Squadron who took his life at RAF Bentwaters in January 1981, and whether they will detail the involvement of the British police, Coroner's Office, and any other authorities concerned.

Lord Gilbert: MoD has no information concerning the alleged suicide. Investigations into such occurrences are carried out by the US Forces.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

What information they have on the medical problems experienced by various United States Air Force personnel based at RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge, which stemmed from their involvement in the so-called Rendlesham Forest incident, in December 1980.

Lord Gilbert: Information on medical matters relating to US personnel is a matter for the US authorities.

BACKGROUND NOTE:

1. Lord Hill-Norton has a long-standing interest in "UFOs". He was a member of the (now defunct) House of Lords All-Party "UFO" Study Group, and has written forewords for two books on the subject. He has previously written to Ministers supporting individual "ufologists" causes.

2. All four PQs are linked to the alleged incident at Rendlesham Forest in Dec 80. In summary, on the nights of 27-29 Dec unusual lights were seen by USAF personnel, including the Deputy Base Commander of RAF Bentwaters, Lt Col Charles Halt, outside RAF Woodbridge in Rendlesham Forest. Lt Col Halt raised a memo to the RAF Liaison Officer at Bentwaters (copy attached at ANNEX A) some two weeks later which simply recorded events as he saw them and made no recommendation for further action. Nearly 17 years on, we can only conclude that no follow-up action was deemed necessary in view of the seeming lack of evidence that the UK Air Defence Region had been compromised by unauthorized foreign military activity. This is the Department's only interest in reports of "unexplained" aerial sightings.

3. The Rendlesham Forest incident is regularly quoted by the media and 'ufologists' as evidence of "UFOs" penetrating the UK Air Defence Region. However, as far as can be determined from the files at the time in question, nothing of defence concern was judged to have occurred. No additional information has come to light over the last 16½ years which casts doubt over the conclusions drawn by the Department at the time.

4. Lord Hill-Norton tabled two PQs on this subject in August (Official Report 14 Oct 97, WA 169 - copy at ANNEX B). He was unhappy with the replies given and wrote to say so in September (DP3842/97 - copy attached at ANNEX C). Lord Hill-Norton's letter said that he was putting together a dossier on this subject and these questions are likely to be part of that work.

5. <u>PQs 0876i/0877i</u>. We believe Lord Hill-Norton may be trying to establish whether USAF personnel serving at the bases at the time suffered any mental or physical side-effects following the alleged events.

(a) 0876i - MOD has no detailed information concerning this alleged suicide. Under the Visiting Forces Act, the US Authorities have the right to investigate such occurrences and a UK coroner cannot undertake an inquest in relation to a member of the US visiting force unless directed by a Secretary of State. There is no record of any such action being taken in this case.

(b) 0877i - MOD has no information on medical matters relating to US personnel. The US Air Force is unable to release medical information relating to its personnel without their specific authority or that of their next of kin.

6. PO 0878i. Whether or not nuclear weapons were stored at RAF Bentwaters and/or RAF Woodbridge at the time in question is not a matter for public discussion. D Nuc Pol advise that the various Government to Government agreements governing the presence of US nuclear weapons in the UK do not generally specify exact locations; this would have been subject to separate operational agreements at the time. It is the Department's policy neither to confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons at any site either in the past or present under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (ANNEX D). In the time available it has not been possible to establish whether nuclear weapons (British or American) were in fact stored at either base. We understand that the book mentioned by Lord Hill-Norton was written by Larry Warren (who was at the time serving with the USAF and allegedly witnessed the incident).

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 81ST COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (USAFE)
APO NEW YORK 09755

REPLY TO ATTN OF: CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT: Unexplained Lights

TO: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metalic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10^{o} off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.

CHARLES I. HALT, Lt Col, USAF
Deputy Base Commander

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt: Memorandum

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

(1) Whether the Ministry of Defence replied to the 1981 memorandum from Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt, which reported the presence of an unidentified craft that had landed in close proximity to RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge, witnessed by United States Air Force personnel; and if not, why not; and

(2) How the radiation readings reported to the Ministry of Defence by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt in his memorandum dated 13 January 1981 compare to the normal levels of background radiation in Rendelsham Forest.

Lord Gilbert: The memorandum, which reported observations of unusual lights in the sky, was assessed by staff in the MoD responsible for air defence matters. Since the judgment was that it contained nothing of defence significance, no further action was taken.

There is no record of any official assessment of the radiation readings reported by Lieutenant Colonel Halt. From a Defence perspective some 16½ years after the alleged events, there is no requirement to carry out such an assessment now.

Joint Services Command and Staff College

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether the site at Camberley, in favour of which the Greenwich site was rejected for the JSCSC, is to be cleared of asbestos, and, if so, at what cost; why was the presence of asbestos not ascertained before plans to move the JSCSC there were finalised and then changed; and what plans do the Ministry of Defence have for the Camberley site once it has been cleared of asbestos; and

Why, given that the consultation document on the future location of the JSCSC that was issued in January 1995 did not address the possibility of setting the college up on a greenfield site, there has been no consultation on the Shrivenham option; and

What is the anticipated total cost of the interim accommodation for the JSCSC until the work on Shrivenham is completed, and what date is being required for completion; and

Whether the anticipated overall cost to the taxpayer of the PFI scheme currently being considered for the new site of the JSCSC will be declared to Parliament; and

Further to the Written Answers by Lord Gilbert on 21 July *(WA 147–148)* on the future of the Joint Services Command and Staff College (JSCSC), whether apart from the provision of married accommodation, the Greenwich site would be at least £200 million cheaper than accommodation at the proposed greenfield site at Shrivenham; and whether the cost of the Shrivenham site is expected to be around £500 million.

Lord Gilbert: I am advised that the asbestos identified at the Camberley site presents no threat to health if left undisturbed. Its removal would be required if buildings were to be demolished, which was the case when the JSCSC was to have been based at Camberley. At that stage it was estimated that survey and removal together would cost no more than £87K. The presence of asbestos was not the reason for exploring a PFI solution for the JSCSC. Until a decision is reached on the future use of the Camberley site, it is not clear whether action will be needed to deal with the asbestos. It remains our intention to identify a fitting and appropriate military use for the historic Staff College building at Camberley and work is currently under way to this end.

Although the January 1995 Consultative Document did not consider greenfield sites for the permanent JSCSC, for the reasons given in paragraph 9 of the Document, the two further Consultative Documents of March 1996 and July 1996 indicated, inter alia, that interim arrangements would last for two years, that proposals for the permanent site would be dealt with separately, and that work in hand "to determine the best way of providing (a permanent JSCSC), on a site yet to be identified, includes a development under Private Finance Initiative (PFI) arrangements". Since then, the trades unions have been informed of the choice of a PFI Preferred Bidder and provided with extracts from the Invitation To Negotiate which are currently under discussion. In accordance with normal procedures, staff will be consulted again, after a contract has been placed, about the possible transfer arrangements for civilian staff working at interim sites.

The anticipated total cost of the JSCSC in its interim accommodation is approximately £70 million over the period 1996–97 to 1999–2000. The required completion date for the permanent JSCSC, as given in the published Statement of Requirement, is September 1999.

The estimated total, undiscounted and VAT inclusive, cost of the PFI contract over a 30-year period is approximately £500 million at current prices. This information was widely reported at the time of the announcement of the Preferred Bidder, and given out in another place on 26 February in response to a specific question. This estimate excludes the ongoing costs of MoD-provided teaching and directing staff of around £10 million per annum.

The last time that Greenwich costs were subjected to formal assessment was around the end of 1994. The results of this assessment were published in the Consultative Document of January 1995. These showed the Greenwich option, leaving aside the cost of providing the necessary married accommodation, to be more than 25 per cent. more expensive than the Camberley option. There is no evidence to suggest that, if the costs of the Greenwich option were revisited, they would prove anything other than significantly more expensive than both the Camberley option and the Preferred Shrivenham Bid submitted in the course of the PFI competition.

Real USAF please
Re MINOT
Secret
UFOs

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Lord Gilbert
House of Lords
Westminster
London SW1A

22 September, 1997

Dear Lord Gilbert,

I have just received your reply (I presume that the illegible squiggle is your signature) to my Question for Written Answer of 31 July, about Colonel Halt's report on an incident at RAF Woodbridge, in 1981.

You have not answered my question, which was " ..... Did the MOD reply to the Memo from Lt Col Halt .....", so I shall have to put it down again in a different form. The answer must be, simply, Yes or No. I need the formal reply for the dossier which is being prepared.

You may wish to know that his Memo, which has been in the public domain for 15 years, covers a great deal more than "lights in the sky". Five books have been written about the incident, of which the latest, published two months ago, is "Left at East Gate" by one Larry Warren, who was one of the enlisted men sent to investigate the violation of British Air Space.

Yours sincerely,

Hill-Norton.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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Minister of State
for Defence Procurement

5

MDE

From: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/3842/97/M

16 October 1997

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your letter of 22 September concerning the alleged events at Rendlesham Forest of December 1980.

From Departmental records available from that period we have found no evidence to suggest that this Department contacted Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt following receipt of his memo of January 1981 recording "Unexplained Lights" in the area in December 1980. Some 16 years after the event we can only conclude, therefore, that it was not considered necessary to make further enquiries in the light of the lack of any evidence to suggest that the UK's Air Defence Region had been compromised by unauthorized foreign military activity.

It was then, and is still, the case, that MOD does not routinely contact witnesses who submit reports of "unexplained" aerial sightings. Follow-up action is only deemed necessary if there is corroborating evidence to suggest an unauthorized incursion of the UK Air Defence Region or other evidence of a matter of defence concern.

I hope this clarifies the position.

Section 40 [redacted]

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

dppsMb39.pe/3842hillno/an.cs

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
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071-21 89000 (Switchboard)

Minister of State
for Defence Procurement

18

From: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/4290/97/M

14 November 1997

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your further letter of 22 October about the alleged events at Rendlesham Forest of the nights of 27-29 December 1980.

Officials here had previously drawn my attention to the memo written by Colonel Halt. I am afraid, however, that there is nothing further I can add. From surviving Departmental records we remain satisfied that nothing of defence significance occurred on the nights in question.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

Private Secretary
approved by Lord Gilbert and signed in his absence on duty

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

MINIS. DEF SEC (SI 2) 7 NOV 1997 FILE

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	All persons ILO unemployed of working age (thousands) of which (percentage) with highest qualification[1]	Degree or other higher education	'A' level and equivalent (excluding trade apprenticeships)	Trade apprenticeship	GCSE or equivalent	Other	No Qualification
United Kingdom	2,344	11.6	12.3	10.6	18.1	20.0	27.4
Great Britain	2,274	11.7	12.3	10.4	18.2	20.4	27.0
England	1,942	11.8	12.2	9.7	18.1	20.8	27.4
South East	742	14.1	12.8	8.7	16.7	22.1	25.5
Greater London	379	15.6	11.2	7.1	15.8	23.7	26.5
Rest of South East	362	12.6	14.4	10.5	17.7	20.3	24.5
East Anglia	72	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	21.1	23.6	23.0
South West	169	12.7	14.9	10.1	22.1	18.4	22.0
West Midlands	219	9.0	12.1	6.6	16.9	19.5	35.9
East Midlands	152	9.9	13.4	11.5	18.5	18.7	28.0
Yorkshire and Humberside	189	11.0	11.9	8.2	18.3	20.2	30.4
North west	248	11.9	9.4	10.7	19.9	20.0	28.2
North	151	7.1	11.3	16.5	16.8	22.1	26.3
Wales	114	9.3	9.7	10.8	19.2	20.2	30.8
Scotland	218	12.0	14.6	16.0	19.1	16.6	21.6
Northern Ireland	69	[2]—	[2]—	19.4	14.1	[2]—	41.0

Notes:
[1]Working age is men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59. Includes those who did not answer, but percentages are based on totals excluding them.
[2]Sample size too small for reliable estimate.
Source:
Labour Force Survey (winter 1995–96), Office for National Statistics.

Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative

Mr. Bill Michie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the recently agreed highly indebted poor countries initiative; and if he will make a statement. [1329]

Mrs. Angela Knight: I refer to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Newham, North-East (Mr. Timms) on 14 October, *Official Report*, columns *705–706*.

DEFENCE

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the report of the Canberra Commission on the elimination of nuclear weapons. [2931]

Mr. Soames: We have noted the conclusions of the Canberra Commission. We remain committed to the pursuit of negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament, as set out in article VI of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. But nuclear disarmament cannot realistically be pursued independently of the broader security context. We and NATO continue to judge that nuclear deterrence plays an essential role in maintaining peace and stability in Europe.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the circumstances of the two occasions referred to in his answer of 24 July, *Official Report*, column *424*, when RAF aircraft were scrambled or diverted from task to investigate uncorrelated radar targets; if the objects were identified; if it was judged that breaches of United Kingdom airspace had occurred; and if he will list all similar incidents which have occurred since 1979. [2932]

Mr. Soames: The targets were identified as Russian maritime patrol aircraft and were in the northern portion of the UK air defence region. They did not penetrate UK airspace. Information covering the period from 1979 is not held in a readily available form and could be provided only at disproportionate cost and effort.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when United Kingdom military personnel were briefed about the scrambling of Belgian F-16 aircraft on 30 and 31 March 1990; when the unidentified flying object concerned was detected on United Kingdom radar systems; and if RAF aircraft were scrambled. [3185]

Mr. Soames: The Belgian authorities did not notify adjacent countries because no threat was perceived. There is no evidence of radar contacts within the UK air defence system.

Radiation

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the radiation readings, reported to his Department by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt on 13 January 1981, were judged to have posed any threat to Lieutenant Colonel Halt and his team; who assessed the readings; how the radiation compared with background radiation in the area; and if he will make a statement. [2934]

Mr. Soames: There is no record of any official assessment of the radiation readings reported by Lieutenant Colonel Halt.

DEFENCE

Plutonium

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the United States Government have since 1966 requested the United Kingdom to provide reactor grade plutonium for the purpose of conducting a nuclear test explosion under the provisions of the US–UK mutual defence agreement on atomic energy co-operation. [38500]

Mr. Arbuthnot: No such requests have been made by the United States.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the impact of *(a)* his policies and *(b)* the work of his Department in helping small businesses in the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors the impact and the statistical results of such monitoring. [39141]

Mr. Arbuthnot: The Government recognise the crucial role played by small firms in the UK economy and aim to help them by providing sound economic conditions—keeping inflation and interest rates low; reducing legislative administrative and taxation burdens; and where appropriate provide direct assistance in the form of specialist advice and support and easing access to finance.

My Department supports the DTI's small business measures and initiatives. I am the Minister within this Department for small businesses and I attend or am represented at the DTI's regular meetings.

The Defence Suppliers Service assists companies, including small businesses, in making contact with appropriate contracts branches. It also arranges for details of many forthcoming tenders to be published in the fortnightly MOD *Contracts Bulletin* which is available to any interested party on subscription. This enables small businesses either to seek to tender directly for specific requirements or, more commonly, to become sub-contractors to larger companies.

Since the Procurement Executive of the Ministry of Defence moved to the new procurement headquarters at Abbey Wood near Bristol earlier this year, the Defence Suppliers Service is in contact with the Bristol chamber of commerce and DTI's business links, whose South-west regional supply network office has become their national focal point for the defence industry. Other areas of the country can reach my Department, and be reached by us, through the business links network.

As much of the assistance provided by my Department to small businesses tends to be in the sub-contractor sector, it is not possible to establish suitable performance parameters and therefore no statistics are available.

Rendlesham Forest (Incident)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what response his Department made to the report submitted by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt relating to events in Rendlesham forest in December 1980; what interviews were held; and if he will make a statement; [39247]

(2) who assessed that the events around RAF Woodbridge and RAF Bentwaters in December 1980, which were reported to his Department by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt were of no defence significance; on what evidence the assessment was made; what analysis of events was carried out; and if he will make a statement. [39249]

Mr. Soames: The report was assessed by the staff in my Department responsible for air defence matters. Since the judgment was that it contained nothing of defence significance no further action was taken.

Uncorrelated Radar Tracks (Investigations)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions RAF aircraft have been *(a)* scrambled and *(b)* diverted from task to investigate uncorrelated targets picked up on radar; and if he will make a statement. [39218]

Mr. Soames: In the past five years RAF aircraft have been scrambled or diverted from task on two occasions to intercept and identify uncorrelated radar tracks entering the United Kingdom air defence region.

Unidentified Craft

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what is his Department's assessment of the incident that occurred on 5 November 1990 when a patrol of RAF Tornado aircraft flying over the North sea were overtaken at high speed by an unidentified craft; and if he will make a statement; [39245]

(2) if he will make a statement on the unidentified flying object sighting reported to his Department by the meteorological officer at RAF Shawbury in the early hours of 31 March 1993. [39246]

Mr. Soames: Reports of sightings on these dates are recorded on file and were examined by staff responsible for air defence matters. No firm conclusions were drawn about the nature of the phenomena reported but the events were not judged to be of defence significance.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department made of the photograph of an unidentified craft at Calvine on 4 August 1990; who removed it from an office in secretariat (air staff) 2a; for what reasons; and if he will make a statement. [39248]

Mr. Soames: A number of negatives associated with the sighting were examined by staff responsible for air defence matters. Since it was judged that they contained nothing of defence significance the negatives were not retained and we have no record of any photographs having been taken from them.

Publicity

Ms Hodge: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his Department's budget in 1996–97 for consultants to assist with information, publicity, press and media. [39353]

all Ps will be replying, however SofS will [illegible]

ENCLOSURE NUMBER

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT

TO: SEC (AS) 2

PE REF NUMBER: WA 3909 /98

MINISTER REPLYING: WA of S

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 23 / 10 /98

DATE: 13 / 10/98 FROM: Section 40 PE Unit TEL: Section 40

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

******** IMPORTANT UPDATES ********

1. Ministerial responsibilities changed.

2. Opening and Closing All Ministers prefer to start:
"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."
If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:
"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/Doug Henderson/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"
Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ... "
Do not end "I hope this is helpful" when the reply is obviously disappointing. Alternatives are:
"I hope this explains the position"
"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

3. Open Government A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 54/1998.

Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within 15 working days to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

Ministers place great importance on the content style and speed of the replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us IMMEDIATELY by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES, otherwise send drafts by fax to Section 40
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE [illegible] FILE

HOUSE OF LORDS

3950

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

PERSONAL
The Rt Hon George Robertson MP
Secretary of State
Ministry of Defence
Main Building Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

7 October, 1998

Dear Secretary of State,

As you know, I take an active interest in the matter of unidentified flying objects, and you will doubtless have seen my recent letters and PQs on this subject. Frankly, I am extremely dissatisfied with the responses I have received, which clearly show that the subject is not being treated with the seriousness I believe it deserves.

Your own files are brimming with reports that should be of extreme concern to your Department. The Deputy Base Commander at RAF Bentwaters/Woodbridge reported the sighting of a craft "metallic in appearance and triangular in shape" in December 1980. All the witnesses were members of the United States Air Force. In March 1992, military personnel at RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury reported seeing an unidentified craft fly over these bases. Later in 1993, the Station Commander at RAF Donna Nook saw a UFO while driving along a road near Louth.

In all the above cases - and these are just the tip of the iceberg - the MOD's official position seems to be that the events were of no defence significance. This sounds to me like a fancy way of saying that you don't know what happened. Have you or any of your Ministers even been briefed on these incidents? Have you taken the time to talk directly to any of the witnesses, instead of merely listening to advice from officials who weren't present, and often didn't speak to the witnesses themselves? If not, why not?

Your Department's whole attitude to this subject seems to be to regard it as an embarrassing irritation, and indeed one MOD document at the Public Record Office states "Our policy is to play down the subject of UFOs and to avoid attaching undue attention or publicity to it". That was written in 1965, and much has changed since then. For a start, the number of reports you receive from the public each year has increased roughly tenfold. This brings me neatly to my next point.

Continued:

Your Department now appears to be implementing a deliberate policy to attempt to reduce the number of reports it receives, presumably in an attempt to justify later on a total cessation of any work on the subject. This seems to have been done in two ways. Firstly, I understand that it is no longer a requirement for RAF Stations to forward UFO reports they receive. This seems ludicrous in the face of the facts (though I realise you do not know them), and one can have no confidence in the MOD view that UFOs are of no defence significance if you aren't even looking at all the data you have. Secondly, the answering machine now installed on the number used to report UFOs seems to be switched off outside working hours. Presumably we are to hope that nothing of any import occurs outside the hours of 9am to 5pm, or at a weekend? Is it really too much trouble to leave this machine on, or divert calls to a continuously manned number? As a matter of interest may I be told how many people who have left details of a sighting on the answering machine have subsequently been contacted by your officials?

You (or perhaps your people) seem remarkably confident that there is nothing to worry about here, but your confidence seems to be based on nothing more substantial than the advice of civil servants who show no sign of any knowledge of the contents of your own files. The philosophy seems to be that unless something shows up on radar and behaves like a conventional aircraft you'll ignore it. Those in charge of the Iraqi Air Defence network in January 1991 probably had a similar mindset.

I shall doubtless receive similar platitudes to those I have received before, but can assure you that I shall continue to press this issue until such time as I am convinced that this subject is being properly addressed. If anyone allows their own media-fuelled prejudices about UFOs to blind them to a potential threat, then this is a triumph of ignorance over evidence. I would therefore ask that at the very least you get a proper oral briefing on some of the incidents mentioned in this letter, not just from civil servants but from RAF Air Defence experts, and Defence Intelligence Staff specialists. In short, I really do ask you to take a personal interest at least to inform yourself better on this subject. I do not ask you to share my views until or unless you know as much about it all as I do.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Sutton.

PE

09 OCT 1998

– Mr (DP)
– Sec (AF)
– UFO's

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Mr John Spellar MP
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

cc WLS - for info

7 October, 1998

Section 40

Dear MP Spellar,

Thank you for your letter of 15th September, concerning the policy of the Ministry of Defence with regard to unidentified flying objects.

I was disturbed to learn that there is no longer a requirement to forward UFO reports to the MOD. Previously, the RAF used to have a formal Standard Operating Procedure, and there was a standard form which was circulated to RAF stations, where those concerned were instructed to forward details of all sightings to the Department, irrespective of whether the witnesses were Service personnel or members of the public. I believe that these forms were also sent to police stations and airports, as these are the sorts of places that tend to receive sighting reports from the public. I have three questions on this, to which I would like specific answers. When was this policy stopped? Who was consulted in making this change of policy? Who took the final decision?

In public statements on this subject, your officials have often said that in examinations of UFO sighting reports, nothing of any defence significance has been found. But it seems to me that if the MOD is not prepared to look at all the available data, no meaningful assessment of the phenomenon can be made. As such, your "no defence significance" statement is invalid, because it is based on an incomplete picture. I presume that you are not being advised to pretend that the radar cover to which you refer is total, all the time.

The pity of the situation is that there is a wealth of interesting data in the public domain, about which I can only assume you and your officials are totally unaware. As an example, a panel of scientists led by Dr Peter Sturrock - a physicist from Stanford University - recently put together an analysis of physical evidence relating to UFO reports. Their examination included looking at cases involving photographic evidence, radar evidence and ground trace evidence. Has anybody in your Department even read the report summarising this work?

Continued:

PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH
12 OCT 1998
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

If you are to continue to assure everyone that reports of UFOs are of no defence significance, then I suggest you would be better advised to do so from an informed position, on the basis of having weighed the evidence and found it wanting. I consider it insulting to people's intelligence to do so solely on the basis of a selective trawl of the few sightings that are still sent to you, despite your best efforts to withdraw from this subject. I would really like to know how you have been persuaded to catch this line.

Yours sincerely,

Hill-Norton.