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MOD Form 329D
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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Date opened
8.8.96

Registered file number
D/SEC(AS)64/5

Part A

1. Attention is drawn to the notes on the inside flap
2. Enter notes of related files on page 2 of this jacket.

DIVISION/ESTABLISHMENT/UNIT/BRANCH
SEC(AS)2A

SUBJECT "UFOs"
PRESS CUTTINGS.

Referred to	Date	Min/ Encl

Registered File Disposal Form

MOD Form 262F
(Revised 9/01)

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

UFOs
Press Cuttings

Reference:
(Prefix and Number): D/Sec(AS)64/5

Part: A

PROTECTIVE MARKING (including caveats & descriptors):

Date of last enclosure: 9 FEBRUARY 2004

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 PRESERVATION

~~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 permanent preservation at The National Archives.

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. [redacted] below 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)



Have aliens got their eyes on Portsmouth?

BY SUZY AUSTIN

MOST sightings of UFOs turn out to be hoaxes, tricks of light or, in one case, a roof being lifted on to a building.

But enthusiast Anthony Woods claims to have captured comprehensive proof of alien life.

His camcorder film of 200 alleged sightings above Portsmouth is being hailed 'the greatest daylight UFO footage ever seen'. It shows strange orbs and lights in the sky.

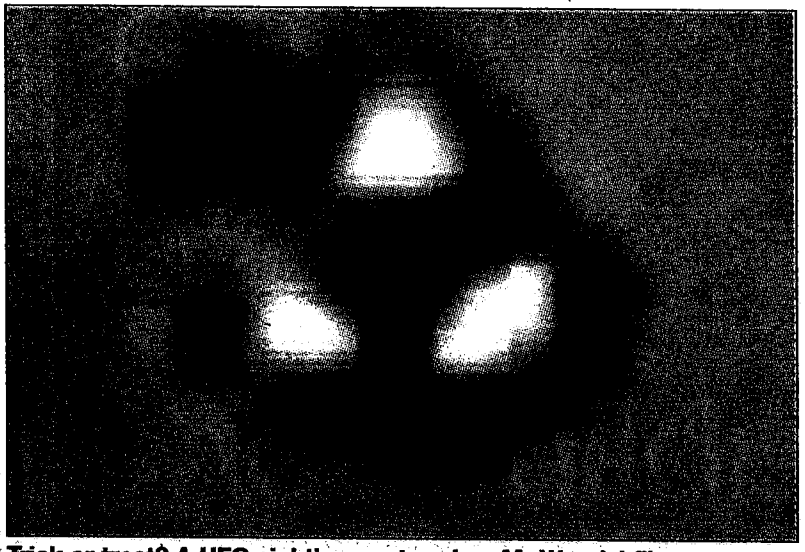
Experts, including Prof Roger Green of Warwick University, have ruled out digital trickery and UFO Magazine was so impressed it has helped Mr Woods release a DVD of his footage.

Mr Woods, who claims he first saw a UFO while playing football as an eight-year-old, said he did not know why he saw so many when no one else had reported sightings. 'What they are or where they come from is still very much a mystery. I feel very privileged that they have appeared to me but I do not feel chosen as such,' he added.

His DVD will be premiered this week at the International UFO Congress in Nevada before going on sale.



UFO spotter: Anthony Woods



Trick or treat? A UFO sighting captured on Mr Woods' film

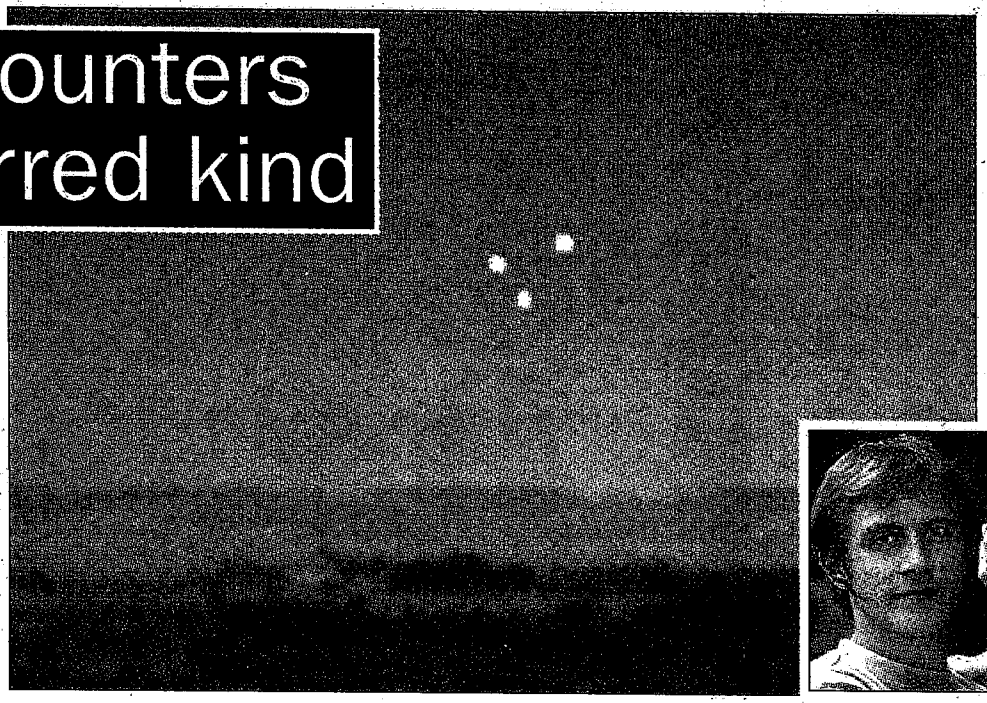
Keep your cool, even in death

GREEN crusaders are taking a chilling approach to death. Campaigners concerned about the impact of traditional cremation have launched a service that flash-freezes corpses to -18°C (-64°F) and dips them in liquid nitrogen at -196°C (-385°F). Bursts of sound shatter the remains, turning them to powder. Supporters say this avoids embalming, which releases formic acid into the soil. Swedish company Promessa Organic, which pioneered the environmentally friendly system, said remains 'return to the ecological cycle in a dignified manner'. They take a year to break down in a grave while decomposition by traditional burial can take years. The company is seeking a patent for its green burials in 35 countries.

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 150

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 149

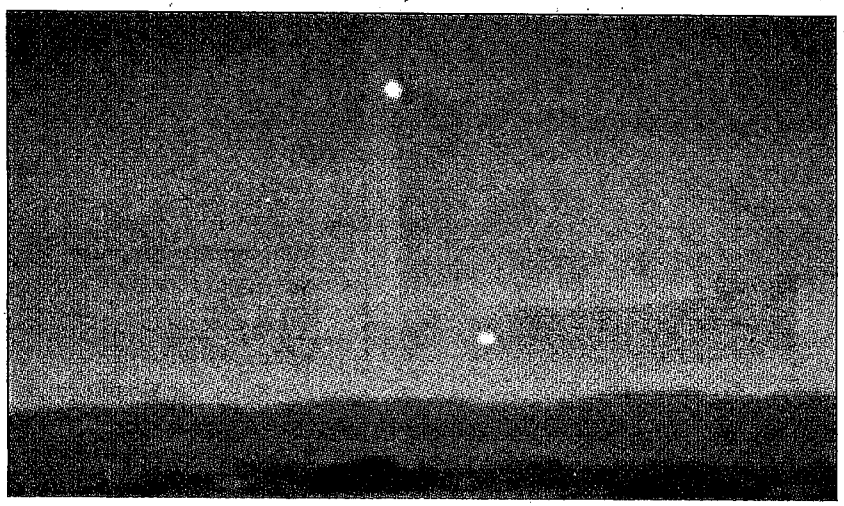
Close encounters of the blurred kind





Enlightening? Cameraman Tom Hines, below, claims the film he shot shows UFOs

THESE bright lights in the evening sky stopped a TV cameraman in his tracks. Tom Hines was filming near a stately home when he spotted the bright lights in the sky and quickly trained his camera on them. Two orbs appeared on the Worcestershire horizon and then disappeared, only for three to reappear seconds later and form a cluster. Tom, who works on BBC soap Doctors, filmed them for seven minutes. He said: 'The only way I can describe it was like somebody turning on spotlights in the sky. I'm certain what I filmed was from another world. It was seriously like something out of Close Encounters.'



So who is lording it on Web?

Grumpy adults spoil child's play

INTOLERANT adults are stifling the development of children by complaining when they play outside, it was claimed yesterday. Boisterous youngsters were often told off by parents and neighbours for making a noise and being a nuisance, the Children's Society said. In one case, a girl of eight was stopped from cycling down her street because a neighbour complained the wheels squeaked. Another time, an irate neighbour burst a three-year-old boy's ball because it bounced over her hedge. The charity polled 2,600 children, aged seven to 16, and found 80 per cent had been told off for playing out. Half had been shouted at. Tim Linehan, of the society, said: 'Playing outdoors is a fundamental part of everyone's childhood but that is being threatened by intolerance. We are in danger of letting grumpy grown-ups tidy our children away.'

THE GREEN ROOM

By Neil Sean



Celebrities behind closed doors

Sting is to announce dates for a world tour next year. The former Police frontman also teams up with Macy Gray for his new album, to be released in September

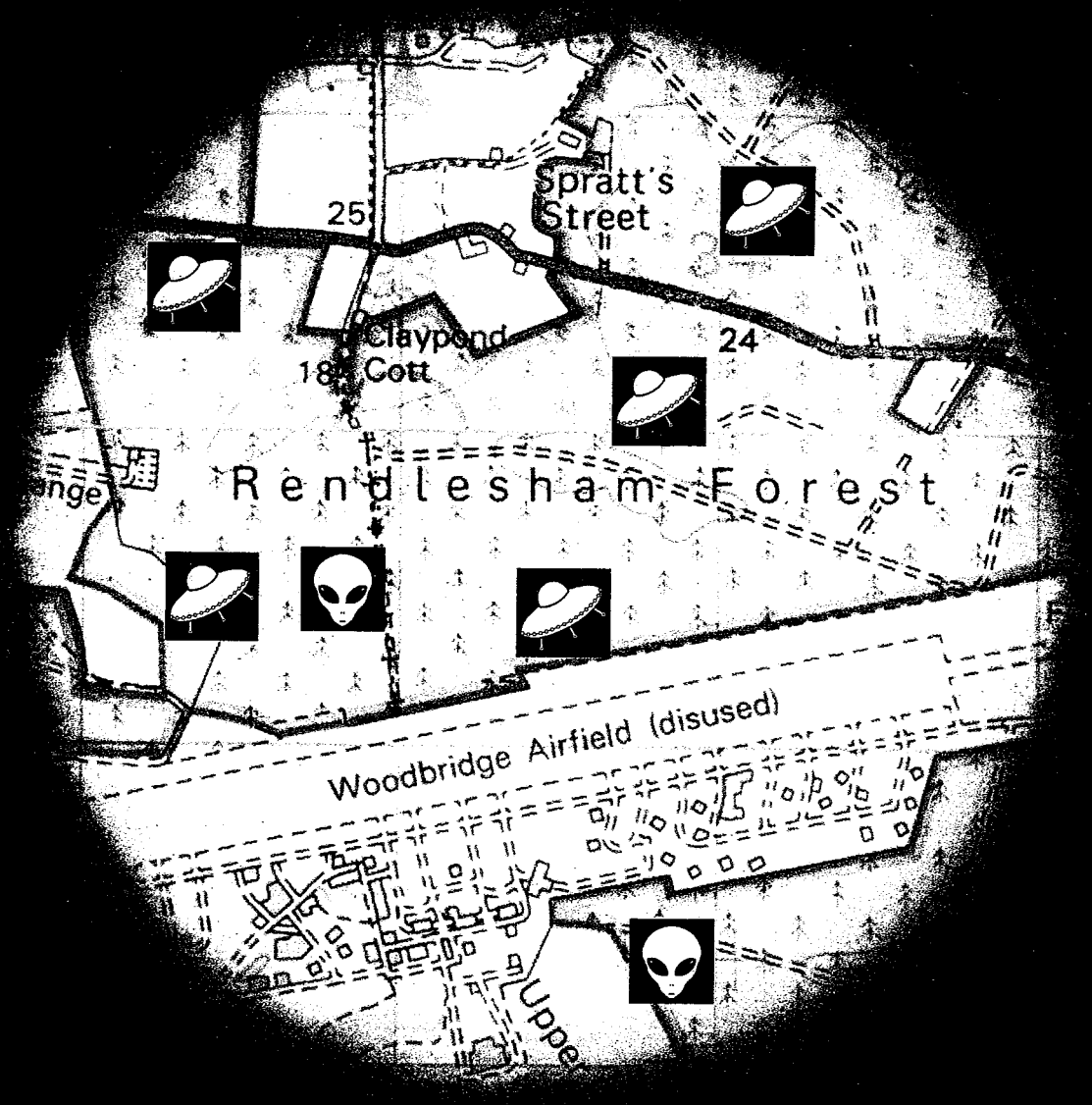
Ciggie-loving Nicole Kidman always requests a non-smoking room when she checks in to her fave London hotel but on arrival changes her mind

THE INDEPENDENT
REVIEW
WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER 2002

INSIDE

PROPERTY: YOUR 16-PAGE GUIDE TO BUYING AND SELLING.
THIS WEEK – HOW TO BUY A HOUSE AT AUCTION, PLUS ITALY IN FOCUS

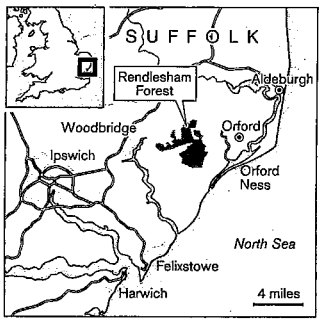




THE LIGHTS IN THE FOREST

The Government, the aliens and the truth about the Rendlesham Incident

If you go down to the woods today...



It is Britain's most celebrated UFO encounter: the sighting in 1980 of 'alien' craft in a Suffolk forest. Now, it has been revealed that the Government tried to hush up the affair. So what, asks **MARK LUCAS**, really happened in the strange case of the Rendlesham Incident?

Brenda Butler paused at the barbed-wire fence separating us from the field where the spaceship had landed. It was 2am. In the gloom I could just see the outline of the 60-year-old grandmother and UFO expert as she watched her partner, Peter, disappear into the darkness. He had gone in search of Marek, another of our party, who had stepped over the barrier and walked into the field a minute earlier.

Not long afterward, a lone figure loomed out of the darkness, stumbling over the ploughed earth towards us. Peter was back. "It's your mate," he whispered to me urgently. "He's passed out."

Half a mile behind us, down the Forestry Commission logging-road known as track 10, was RAF Woodbridge. This small Second World War airfield used by the US Air Force until 1993, hidden in the depths of Rendlesham Forest, in Suffolk, had been back in the news recently after two decades of anonymity with the release of the Ministry of Defence's Rendlesham Files. Now available for public inspection, the files contain information about Britain's most celebrated UFO sighting; their release was followed on Monday by the parliamentary ombudsman's announcement that the MoD had repeatedly suppressed information about what had happened in the forest. Particular secrecy has surrounded a "restricted file", the contents of which have been whispered about for years.

Over three nights around Christmas 1980, it is said, several spaceships visited the airbase after one of their number ran into trouble and had to stop and make repairs. What makes the Rendlesham Incident unique is the subsequently released memorandum from the base's deputy commander, Lt Col Charles Halt, to the Ministry of Defence. In the memo, Halt, who was later promoted to full colonel, described how two airmen, investigating strange lights in the forest, came across a "metallic, glowing object", which "manoeuvred through the trees and disappeared", whereupon the animals on a nearby farm went "into a frenzy". Two nights later, he reported, the object returned. Halt was out in the forest with a patrol when they saw a "red, sun-like object". After they had followed the light through the trees, it divided into five, and part of it "beamed down a stream of light from time to time". Here, at last, was the evidence that the ufologist community had been waiting for: official endorsement of an extraterrestrial encounter.

On the third night, Halt made a tape on his micro-cassette recorder, covering several hours on just less than 19 minutes of tape. The greater part is taken up by Halt's patrol of four officers assessing the site of a suspected landing, checking radiation levels and having trouble with their electrical equipment.

In the last few minutes of the tape, at around 2am, the men start to see lights moving through the trees. Their initial composure suddenly gives way to breathless panic: "It's coming this way. It's definitely coming this way... There's something very, very strange," says the deputy commander at one point.

At 3.15am, the light-show is still going on as Halt exclaims: "Here he comes from the south! He's coming in towards us now!"

Right beside him, another officer says: "Shit!", and a moment later, beams of light start hitting the ground around them.

"This is unreal," Halt gasps.

Almost 22 years have passed since the Rendlesham Incident, but the enthusiasm of ufologists has only intensified in that time, with one author calling the area "Black Hole Disneyland". Several books and hundreds of websites about the events either confirm Rendlesham's status in the international ufologist community as being second only to Roswell in importance, or debunk the notion that anything out of the ordinary happened at all.

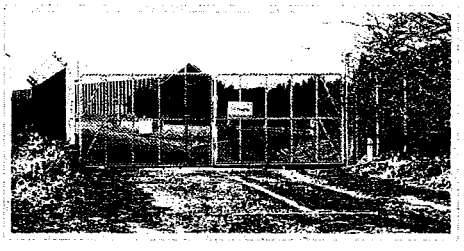
The first book to be published, entitled *Skycrash*, was co-written by my guide on the expedition into the forest, Brenda Butler, who has spent two or three nights a week out in Rendlesham Forest since the alleged landing.

I had phoned Butler, who could hardly be described as a sceptic, in the hope of discovering more about this tantalising chapter in the history of UFO sightings and official secrecy. But it soon became apparent that I would need someone to show me the landmarks in the 3,500-acre forest, so I asked if I could accompany her on one of her sky-watches. As their popularity had increased, she had had to divide the group into two parties that patrolled different areas of Rendlesham; she was happy for me to join hers. On the night we were due to meet, I had been fortifying myself at a party when I ran into a hypnopsychotherapist, Marek Sinski. When the quietly intense 40-year-old learnt of my plans, he expressed a strong desire to come along, too.

We met Butler at midnight beside the barrier to track 10. Behind me was the perimeter fence of the airfield; the disused runway lights loomed into the night sky. Ahead, the logging-road stretched away like a canyon, with its black walls of 70ft-tall Corsican pines. By the dull glow of a car's interior light, I could make out the small, dark woman surrounded by three regulars on her sky-watches – Terry, Paul and Jonathan – and her partner, Peter Parish. Her pure-white German shepherd, Mason, galloped around us, chasing his ball.

As we set off down track 10 on foot, Butler spoke, in her soft Suffolk accent, of some of the experiences she had had here, seeing glowing orbs and meeting extraterrestrials. "Last year, the yeti was down here," she said matter-of-factly, "looking very, very sad." The yeti, she explained, had followed the group on many occasions: "We had some people from Blackpool down here, and they also saw him. He freaked them out, actually."

Butler indicated a drain cover to our right. "It leads to an underground installation," she said. One day she was sitting on top of it when she "lost" four hours, a phenomenon known as missing time. We turned down a side-track. After a hundred yards, Parish led the way into the undergrowth off to the side, and we scurried through, bent over to avoid low branches, which we politely warned one another about, and only straightening up when we emerged into a clearing. "This", said Butler, "is Colonel Halt's landing-place."



We sat in silence, contemplating the events that took place there more than two decades ago: Halt and his fellow officers had been taking radiation readings and measuring imprints in the ground when they suddenly saw a bright light moving near by.

"What can you feel?" Butler asked.

My new friend Sinski broke the silence. "It's strong, isn't it?" he said.

Butler's dog, Mason, began dashing around us, growling happily. "He always goes mad where there's energy or there's been contact," she remarked. "On several occasions he's been chased by strange lights which engulf him." Her online journal goes into more detail: "Mason had disappeared for several minutes", it states, of one typical evening, "during the time when Brenda spoke in an unknown language. He returned covered in red, green and blue fibre-optic-type lights, and licked each person, still in the circle, by placing his paws on their shoulders."

Leaving Col Halt's place, we returned to the small avenue, veering right toward track 12. As we walked in single file along the narrow pathway, I asked Butler about her life. She had been a clairvoyant, she told me, with her own circle, and had been involved "in a lot of things – paranormal, ghosts, poltergeists" ever since being contacted by an alien named Ra when she was five.

"I've been abducted on several occasions," she added. Her kidnappers, she had learnt since undergoing regressive hypnosis, were the "greys" – "classic" small aliens. She now worked in a home for people with learning difficulties.

We came out into a clearing at the edge of the forest and saw the flash of the Orfordness lighthouse on the horizon. "This is Larry Warren's landing-place," Butler declared, indicating a field. It was then that Sinski stepped over the barbed-wire fence and strode purposefully into the darkness.

Larry Warren's extraordinary book *Left at East Gate* was published in 1993. The former airman, a member of the security forces at RAF Woodbridge, claimed to have witnessed the overall commander of the twin-base complex, Squadron Leader Gordon Williams, conversing with extraterrestrials. After that, said Warren, a New Yorker, he was taken to an underground installation and introduced to an

Robert Estall/Corbis; Mark Lucas; Anglia Press Agency



alien "who had an accent I couldn't identify". His description of the visitors had clearly struck a chord with Butler: "Little tiny ETs dressed in white jumpsuits!" she exclaimed. "I've seen them myself!"

"Do you ever worry that people may think you're a bit strange?" I asked her.

She cheerfully dismissed my suggestion. "I don't care what they think," she replied. "It's better than sitting at home drinking coffee and watching television day in, day out." But if I was finding things weird, Sinski was taking to it all like a duck to water.

When Butler's partner came out of the field to tell us that the psychotherapist had passed out, ufologists were quickly dispatched to carry him back, but he returned with them on foot without saying a word, and in the awkwardness of the situation, we found ourselves moving on.

As we struggled through a dense patch of undergrowth, I recalled the 1956 Incident – in which up to 18 objects apparently combined to form a single radar echo, which was then clocked, and witnessed from the air and on land, doing roughly 12,000mph over the airbase – and wondered why UFOs were rarely seen nowadays.

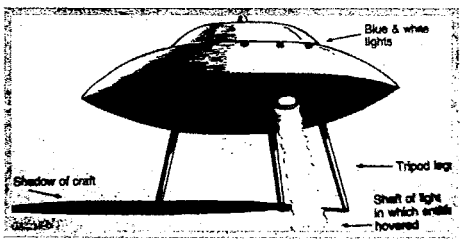
"You're joking, aren't you?" Butler asked, before telling me about her last sighting, less than three weeks previously. Unfortunately, her partner had turned his flashlight on the spaceship, and it had disappeared.

"I won't be doing that again," he told me, sheepishly.

As we headed down track 12, Butler explained why she had had contact there. "There's a portal," she said: "they come through on interdimensional energy." On occasion, the ETs had pulled her hair, put things in her pockets and hit Parish on the back of the head. One night, the Dark Shadow pushed her backward, and she fell over on to her partner, who collapsed on top of their companion, Terry. "We have a laugh with them," she said.

At 3am, we returned to the Woodbridge runway lights at track 10. Leaving Butler deep in conversation about UFO organisations' finances with the second group, which had appeared from track 1, Sinski and I walked over to our cars, discussing the night's events. There was a hesitancy in his manner, but finally he leant toward me: "Something very important happened here tonight," he told me, though an explanation would have to wait until morning.

Driving home, I pondered the various theories that had been used to explain the incidents, mostly by people who weren't present. Georgina Bruni, author of the most recent book about the events, *You Can't Tell the People*, believes that there were three nights of activity, with a full-blown close encounter of the third kind. At the other end of the spectrum is Ian Ridpath, editor of *The Oxford Dictionary of Astronomy*. In his view, excited airmen were merely chasing the beam of the Orfordness lighthouse, and the starlike objects of Halt's memo "were just that – stars."



Secrets and files: the Rendlesham forest (above), site of the UFO sightings; a sketch of the 'alien craft' by a US airman who saw the 'incident' in 1980 (below); the gates to RAF Woodbridge (opposite, bottom)

Ridpath's scepticism is persuasive. In particular, he has shown that it is at least possible that when Halt's patrol came out of the forest, they, like the first night's witnesses, were confused by the lighthouse. But another airman says: "If Charles [Halt] says a beam of light shone down at his feet, then a beam of light shone down at his feet. You can take that to the bank."

Halt retired from the air force in 1991 and now lives in Virginia, in the USA. I managed to obtain an e-mail address for him and wrote several times without response before he was finally persuaded to answer. He was, he told me rather pointedly, "tired of being pestered" by what he described as "most unusual people".

Though he refused to talk about the Rendlesham Incident, we began a tentative exchange on the neutral subject of the airbase's history as a "crash-recovery" runway for damaged aircraft returning from raids over occupied Europe. He told me that "more than one young cop" swore he had seen East End Charlie – the ghost of a Second World War airman – from the guardhouse at East Gate, where the events of December 1980 had begun. "On one particular Friday night, late," he recalled, "I drove out the back gate, and the guard was trembling so badly, I ended up having a replacement sent out." In 1983 – 32 years after the Americans took over the airbase – they discovered that dynamite had been buried under the runway in case it was overrun by invading Germans. Despite the clean-up operation, Halt wrote, "we never were completely sure that all the explosives had been removed."

Sinski appeared after breakfast the following day, and we settled down to talk. I asked why he had been apparently unconscious in Larry Warren's landing-place, but he was annoyed that I'd thought he might have been. "I had a very powerful experience," he explained, "and I was recovering." He told me of a message he had received while out in the field. He assured me that, although it might not have meant much to someone like me, there were people for whom it was of great importance. "I can confirm that it is the greys out there, and that they are the ones responsible for the abductions," he told me, in his quietly compelling manner. "What they have been doing up until now has been very, very bad. I learnt last night that they are changing their ways."

In search of further guidance, I approached Reg Presley, lead singer with the Sixties pop group The Troggs and now an expert in the paranormal, and asked for his opinion of the Rendlesham Incident. He was very interested in the case and said that they were "all good sightings". Clearly not a man who had trouble believing in the possibility of abductions, he even mentioned his surgeon friend who removed pieces of alien hardware from people's feet and hands. "You wouldn't believe what he took out of them," he reflected, adding that the objects had "the teeniest-weeniest little wires".

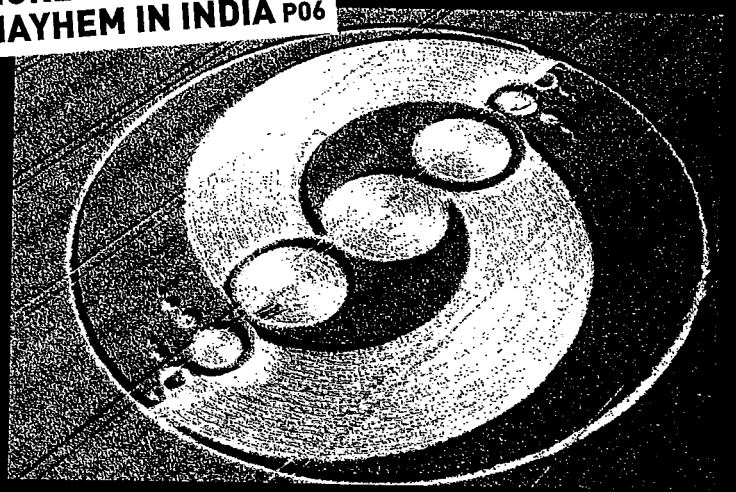
The MoD has finally made a decision on the airbase after its nine years of neglect and has announced that two army regiments will be moving in after a £100m refit. The soldiers may be surprised at some of the visitors – alien and otherwise – they receive outside the perimeter fence. "Once you start coming here," Butler told me, "you can't keep away." For, although Woodbridge's role as an airbase may have been in doubt, its status as a UFO tourist shrine has never looked more assured.

MARINA WARNER ON ZOMBIES P46 FROZEN DEAD GUY DAY P20 JUMPING JESUS P09

FORTEAN TIMES

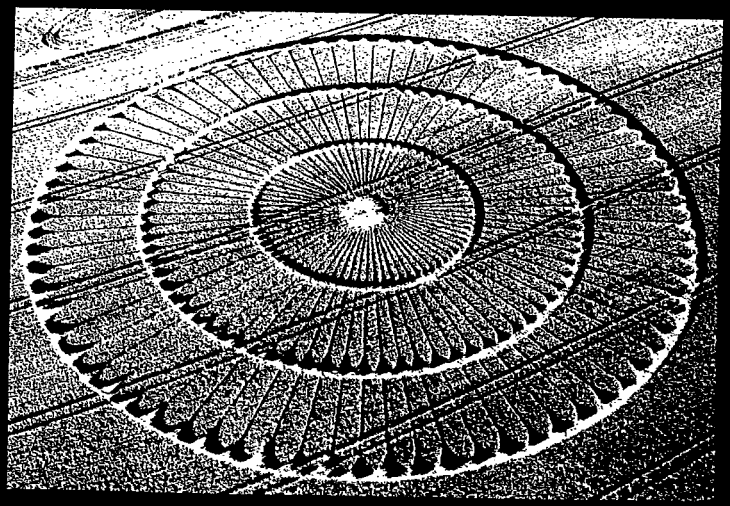
THE WORLD OF STRANGE PHENOMENA | FT 164 | NOV 2002 | £2.80

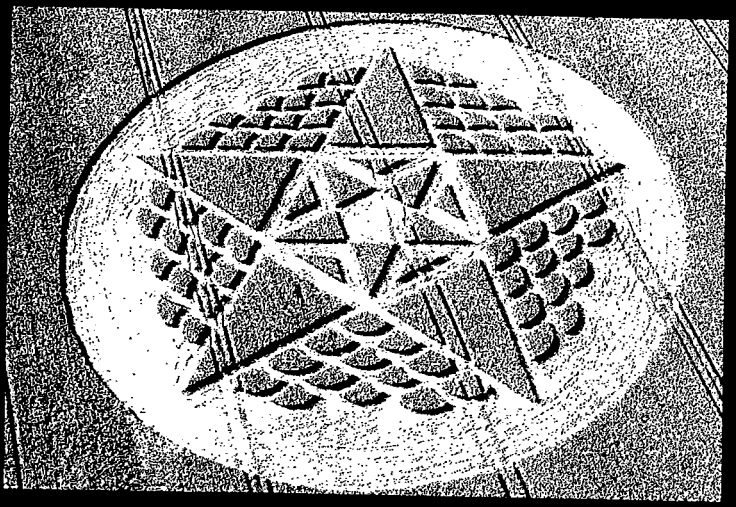
MORE MONSTER MAYHEM IN INDIA P06





TOP OF THE CROPS





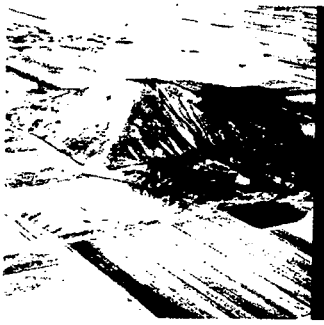
THE BEST OF THE YEAR'S CROP CIRCLES P10

ARTISTS, ALIENS OR EARTH ENERGIES? P50



OPENING BRITAIN'S X-FILES P38

SECRET GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS REVEALED



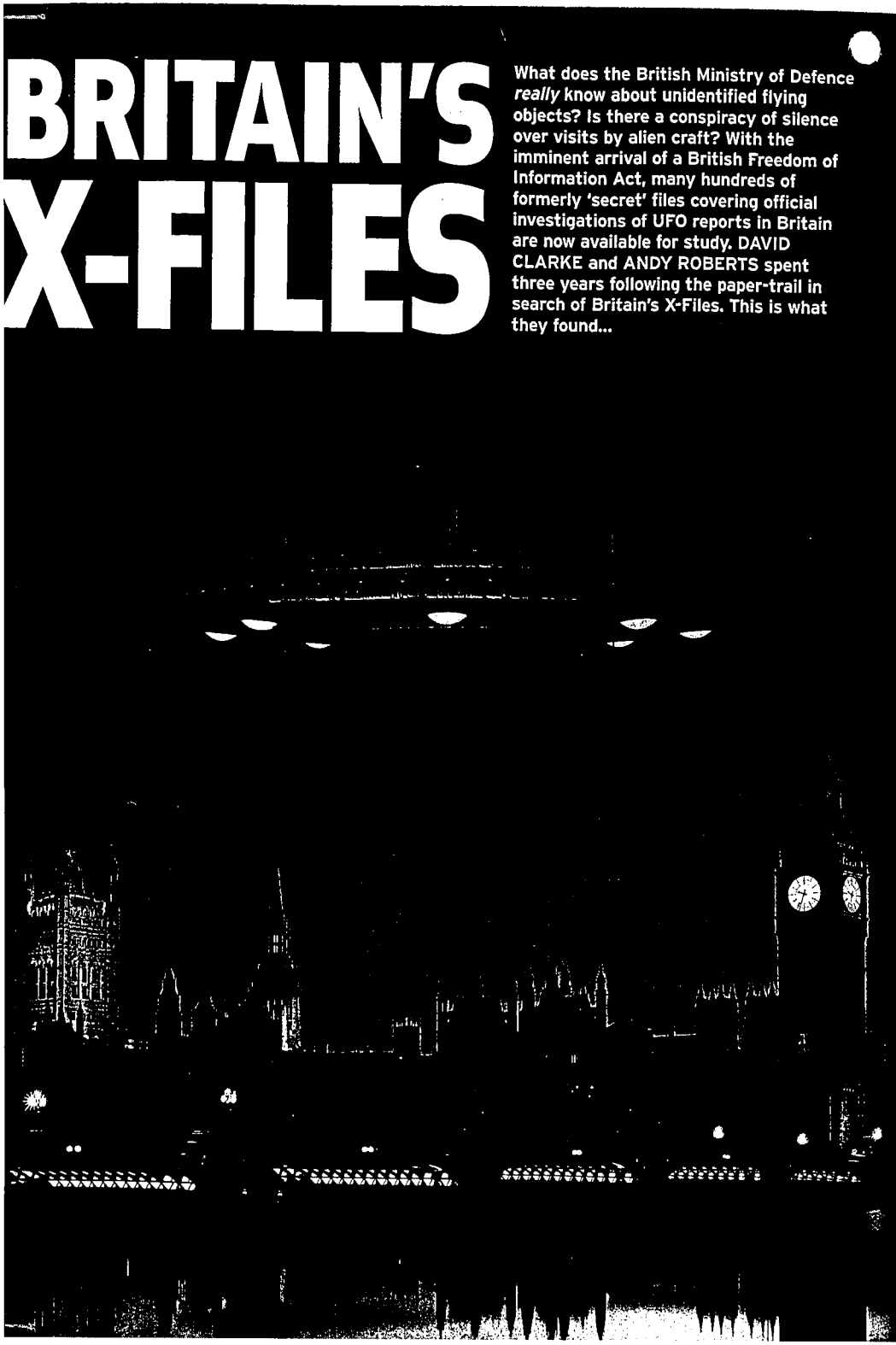
CHINA'S WHITE PYRAMID P28

SEARCHING FOR THE ORIENT'S MYSTERY MONUMENT

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BRITAIN'S X-FILES

What does the British Ministry of Defence *really* know about unidentified flying objects? Is there a conspiracy of silence over visits by alien craft? With the imminent arrival of a British Freedom of Information Act, many hundreds of formerly 'secret' files covering official investigations of UFO reports in Britain are now available for study. DAVID CLARKE and ANDY ROBERTS spent three years following the paper-trail in search of Britain's X-Files. This is what they found...



HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT: PAWEL LIBERA/CORBIS UFO: JONATHAN FALLOWN

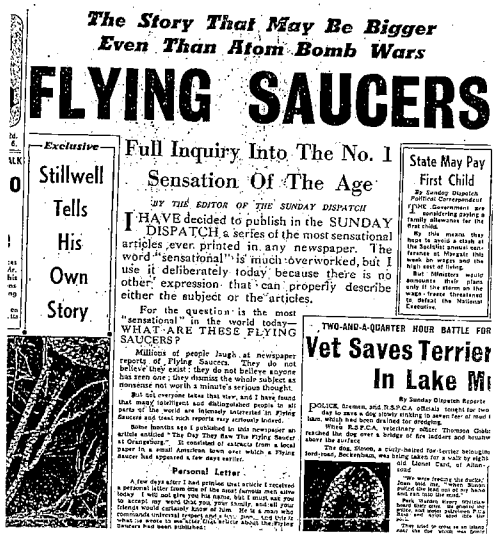
The question of just how much the British government knows about UFOs has preoccupied ufologists since the subject first made newspaper headlines. No real evidence has ever emerged to suggest that the government knows any more about the subject than the ufologists, but claims of a deep conspiracy continue.

Although the Royal Navy and the War Office investigated reports of strange "aerial phenomena" during the First and Second World Wars [*see panel*], from 1952 investigation of UFOs [1] had become exclusively a matter initially for the Air Ministry and later the Ministry of Defence (MoD). MoD policy towards UFOs has been consistent over the past 50 years. Members of the public who report sightings receive a standard statement which has altered little. After investigating thousands of sightings [2], the MoD claims it has never found any solid evidence in one single case for "extraterrestrial activity."

But why, if UFOs – in the popular sense of 'flying saucers from outer space' – do not exist, does the MoD continue to collect reports? According to the Air Staff, the only reason reports are studied is to assess if they have any "defence significance." The definition of this phrase has long puzzled ufologists, but is as follows: "An event that has 'no defence significance' is an event that is regarded as presenting no direct military threat against sovereign territory." [3] Once that assessment is made, the MoD maintains that its interest ends.

But how does the MoD assess whether a UFO report is of defence significance? "The means by which reports are categorised include an assessment of the location, time and nature of a report and any likely explanation of its cause (planetary objects, areas of high density air traffic, atmospherics, space objects etc). A check of operational logs may be included to determine whether any related air activity was detected at the time by UK Air Defence system [radar]." If no threat is found, and the MoD maintains this has been the case in all reports to date, no further action is taken. What's more, "it is quite common for a sighting to remain unexplained but not require further official action." [4]

Put simply, the MoD relies upon the comprehensive and overlapping coverage of modern high-powered radar to detect any 'hostile' intrusions into UK Airspace. Once a 'UFO' is deemed to pose no threat to defence, MoD interest ends. Radar is the most important tool in the identification process. Before the development of modern microwave radar, equipment was prone to malfunction and natural phenomena were frequently misinterpreted as enemy aircraft. Phantom radar returns and 'angels' were common during the 1940s and 1950s, when the majority of the classic UFO cases involving radar were reported, but have largely disappeared today. Few, if any, UFOs reported visually have been independently confirmed by a radar tracking [5] and as one senior officer who commanded a front-line RAF station at the height of the 'flying saucer' era explained: "Of course we were interested in UFOs, as they were essentially our *raison d'être*. Any object appearing on our detection radars was literally a UFO until identified. There were some that were never satisfactorily identified, but this must not be taken to mean that they were caused by phenomena from other worlds."



The Story That May Be Bigger Even Than Atom Bomb Wars

FLYING SAUCERS

Exclusive

Stillwell Tells His Own Story

Full Inquiry Into The No. 1 Sensation Of The Age

BY THE EDITOR OF THE SUNDAY DISPATCH

I HAVE decided to publish in the SUNDAY DISPATCH a series of the most sensational articles ever printed in any newspaper. The word "sensational" is much overworked, but I use it deliberately today because there is no other expression that can properly describe either the subject or the articles.

For the question is the most "sensational" in the world today—WHAT ARE THESE FLYING SAUCERS?

Millions of people laugh at newspaper reports of Flying Saucers. They do not believe they exist: they do not believe anyone has seen one: they dismiss the whole subject as nonsense not worth a minute's serious thought.

But not everyone takes that view, and I have found that many intelligent and distinguished people in all parts of the world are intensely interested in flying saucers and treat such reports very seriously indeed.

Some [illegible] are prohibited in this newspaper on article entitled "The Day They Saw The Flying Saucer at Oranjeberg". It consisted of extracts from a local paper in a small American town over which a Flying device had appeared a few days earlier.

Personal Letter.

A few days after I had printed that article I received a personal letter from one of the most famous men alive today. I will not say who you the native, but I shall not you to accept as proof of it, your timely, and all your friends would certainly accept him. He is a man who commands universal respect and whose [illegible] what he wrote to me after I had written my article about the Flying Saucers that week astonished.

State May Pay First Child

By Sunday Dispatch Political Correspondent

TWO Government are considering paying a family allowance for the first child.

By this means they hope to avoid a clash of the Socialist majority [illegible] at Margate this week on wages and the high cost of living.

But Ministers would announce their plans only if the storm on the wages front threatened to defeat the National Executive.

TWO-AND-A-QUARTER HOUR BATTLE FOR

Vet Saves Terrier In Lake Mi

By Sunday Dispatch Reporter

POLICE, firemen, and R.S.P.C.A. officials fought for two day to save a dog slowly sinking in seven feet of mud t [illegible] which has been drained for dredging.

When R.S.P.C.A. veterinary officer Thomas Clabo reached the dog over a bridge of fire ladders and breathe above the surface.

The dog, Sheen, a curly-haired fox-terrier belonging [illegible] Sandown, Isle of Wight, was being taken out a walk by eight-year-old Lionel Card, of Allan-road.

"We were feeding the ducks," Jean told me. "When Sheen jumped she [illegible] not at my heels [illegible] and more.

Park Superintendent [illegible] Mr. [illegible] "My particular [illegible] Sheen [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]



BELIEVER: Air Chief Marshall Lord Dowding (left) went public in the *Sunday Dispatch*. 11 July 1954, while Louis Mountbatten (bottom) kept his interest in the 'flying saucers' craze strictly private.

ity – as any rainbow."[8]

Although the first official investigation of aerial phenomena (Project Sign) began in the USA following the sightings of 1947–48, the British government did not begin any formal study until forced to do so by public opinion. This began during the summer of 1950, when British newspapers and magazines began to serialise the first American 'flying saucer' books by Donald Keyhoe and Frank Scully[9]. Initially, senior officers viewed 'flying saucers' as a silly season fad. If they were taken seriously at all it was in the context of Cold War fear of a new 'secret weapon' of either American or Soviet origin. From 1950 onwards, the 'secret weapon' theory slowly lost ground to the popular idea that the saucers were visitors from other worlds. When viewed alongside the latest developments in faster-than-sound jets, atomic energy and speculation about future space travel, the ETH seemed a possible, even logical explanation for the growing mystery. By 1954 this belief had spread to the high echelons of the Royal Air Force, when Desmond Leslie, co-author with George Adamski of *Flying Saucers Have Landed*, was invited to present the 'facts about flying saucers' to a gathering of 'brass hats' which included the Commander in Chief of Fighter Command, Air Marshal Sir Dermot Boyle.[10] In the early days, several public figures such as Lord Dowding and Lord Mountbatten became caught up in the 'saucer' craze. Mountbatten persuaded his former press advisor Charles Eade, then editor of the *Sunday Dispatch*, to place the 'facts' before the public in what was to be the first of many tabloid media series on 'flying saucers.'[11] The ensuing blitz of media coverage was a major factor in altering perceptions, both among the public and in the government.

THE "DOME-HEADED BOYS" DISMISSED FLYING SAUCERS

Alongside the emergence of the ETH into public consciousness came a sub-myth that was to become one of the characteristic themes of the modern UFO mythology – the government conspiracy. The belief that the US and British governments, and their intelligence agencies in particular, were working to conceal facts about alien visitors from the public is a motif that occurs in the earliest 'saucer' literature. This idea was largely a literary device invented by Major Donald Keyhoe and found a resonance in the growing paranoia and distrust of government that was characteristic of the Cold War. Keyhoe's version of the cover-up was far more straightforward than the elaborate conspiracies featured in series such as *The X-Files*. According to Keyhoe, the government feared a *War of the Worlds*-style panic if the 'truth' were revealed. His 'deep throat' sources also hinted there was a covert 'space race' to capture a saucer and plunder the secrets of UFO propulsion systems before they could fall into the hands of the Communists[12]. Keyhoe also believed there was an ongoing battle between those officials in government who wanted to reveal 'the truth' and those who wished to perpetuate the 'cover-up.'

The deeply secretive British establishment was equally as divided over the UFO issue. While some influential public figures such as Mountbatten were taking 'flying saucers' seriously, they were careful to confine their views to a private audience. Meanwhile, the British government's intelligence and scientific advisors (who were dubbed "the dome-headed boys" by one highly placed believer) dismissed the whole subject. They regarded UFOs as an unnecessary diversion from what they perceived to be the real threats, the expanding Soviet empire and the imminent Third World War. While some viewed the arrival of hostile aliens as a development that could help unify a divided world in the face of a common threat, others saw the subject as a source of potential danger.

To the intelligence agencies, widespread popular belief in 'alien' UFOs led to the possibility that a wave of 'fake' sightings could be generated as a weapon to confuse the West's early warning system in the critical moments before a pre-emptive nuclear strike. This nightmare scenario was central to the CIA's interest in UFOs and the thinking of Dr HP 'Bob' Robertson, who chaired the CIA Panel on UFOs that met in 1953. His close friend, Dr RV Jones of British Intelligence, briefed the Air Staff on the "UFO problem" during the waves of 1952 and 1967. Jones drew heavily upon his American contacts and pointed to a list of similar scares and mass delusions that had spread during earlier periods of tension and war[13].

It was typical of the close US–UK relationship during the Cold War that Britain's UFO policy would follow the lead taken by the Americans, particularly the key recommendations made by the CIA-sponsored Robertson Committee. The committee called for a systematic campaign to play down the mystery, debunk sightings and to "strip the UFOs of the special status they have been given and the aura of mystery they have unfortunately acquired." Within weeks, orders were circulated to all RAF stations that reports of 'aerial phenomena' by RAF personnel – particularly involving radar – were covered by the Official Secrets Act and should not be discussed with members of the public, specifically the Press[14]. Initially, intelligence officers from DDI (Tech) at Air Ministry had sole responsibility for the investigation of UFOs, but from 1958 "for security reasons" all public and parliamentary business related to the subject was delegated to two civilian branches of the air staff, S6 and S4f (Air). Henceforth, Air Intelligence slipped



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back into the shadows as mere 'technical advisors' to the civilians who ran what would become known as "the UFO desk."[15] Defence Intelligence were routinely copied in on the more 'unusual reports' received until October 2000, when the DIS decided they no longer wished to receive UFO reports from the Air Staff[16].

After 1969, when the US Air Force had closed down its own Project Blue Book, the MoD decided it should continue to quietly monitor UFO reports. This was not because officials disagreed with the American conclusion that further study was not justified, but because it felt there was a "need to answer questions from the public which might arise from a real anxiety about national security."[17]

UFOS HAD BECOME A 'PUBLIC RELATIONS' HEADACHE

The MoD was also sensitive to public opinion, particularly criticism by MPs and the Press over the way UFO reports were handled. With the ending of the Cold War, UFOs were no longer a 'defence issue' and had instead become a 'public relations' headache. As one official put it, while they wished to avoid wasting public money chasing phantoms, "it would only require one sensational unexplained and much publicised incident to bring down a shower of public criticism on government for failing to give adequate attention to such matters."[18] Consequently, the MoD decided to continue collecting reports, albeit in a half-hearted manner, and occasionally sent out teams of experts to investigate those which it considered to be the most puzzling.


Yorkshire Late City
Evening Press
Saturday, September 20, 1952
TOPCLIFFE AIRMEN SIGHT A "FLYING SAUCER"
"Incredible Speed"
12 Months Fo Crystal-Gazer
£500 Bail For Estate Agent
AIR SALUTE AT 76 R.A.F. STATIONS
PLANE RIPS OFF ROOFS
Only Wanted A Uniform
PLAYER'S DIGGER MIXTURE

CAPTAIN'S CLOSE ENCOUNTER: The *Evening Press*, 20 September 1952.

The 'UFO desk' has been known by a variety of different names as a result of the MoD's internal changes, but continues to perform essentially the same duties today as it did in 1958. Its incumbents stay for a three-year stint before being posted, and their level of interest in the subject has varied from total lack of interest to the enthusiastic opportunism of Nick Pope. Despite many claims to the contrary, it remains the central reporting point in the UK for UFO reports made by service personnel, police, civilian aircrew and members of the public. In addition, its staff of career civil servants work with Air Staff advisors in the preparation of answers to Parliamentary questions and brief Ministers on the subject.

Files of correspondence from the era 1962–72 reveal how the UFO desk staff divide their time between making routine inquiries into reports and answering letters from witnesses and ufologists. The attitude they have cumulatively displayed was once summed up by one incumbent as "politely unhelpful."[19] Letters in PRO files range from puzzled and sincere witnesses of 'lights in the sky' to missives penned in capital letters and red ink which demand the MoD immediately release "the captured flying saucer" and alien cadavers hidden in vaults below Whitehall.

Pro-ETH writers such as Tim Good and Nick Redfern have argued that the 'UFO desk' was merely a front for a more extensive, lavishly funded and covert UFO investigation team hidden within the nearby offices of the Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS). For his part, Pope has never denied that his branch was able to draw upon the expertise of 'specialist divisions' such as DI 55 for advice on technical aspects such as radar. But he claimed that there was no 'covert branch' within those divisions who were dedicated to the study of UFOs – indeed, if there was, he would have known about it. But Pope also places great emphasis upon the fact that all government employees are signatories to the Official Secrets Act and have to 'toe the party line' on UFOs. Could we, therefore, rely on Nick Pope, as a MoD civil servant, to tell us 'the truth'?

The MoD continues to maintain that it has never employed experts dedicated solely to the study of UFOs, or indeed had ever conducted its own scientific study of the subject. Until recently this claim could not be independently checked, as serving personnel were subject to the OSA and those files that had not been routinely destroyed (as was Air Ministry policy until 1967) were covered by the strict 30 year closure rules[20]. Now, that situation is changing almost daily. More than 100 files dealing with UFOs, dating from between 1950 and 1975, have been released to the Public Record Office. These records include large numbers of case files, studies such as the Flying Saucer Working Party report and collections of UFO policy documents. With a British Freedom of Information Act due for implementation by 2005, the MoD along with other government departments have for some time been obliged to adopt a more open response to requests for information. As a result, a host of UFO material once closed indefinitely is slowly becoming available for researchers. Probably the biggest prize of all was the release to the authors in May 2001 of the complete file on the classic Rendlesham Forest UFO incident. Although the file was acquired under the existing Code of Practice for Access to Government Information, its release was hastened by the impending FOIA[21].

With a flood of government documents now available, research into official UFO archives in Britain is rapidly catching up with the situation in America, where researchers have enjoyed the benefits of a FOIA since 1974. What is absent from the British X-Files is one single, unambiguous piece of evidence to suggest that the MoD had ever tried to conceal 'the truth' about UFOs from the public. All they reveal is embarrassment, ignorance and occasional concern about the effect belief in UFOs was having upon the media and politicians, particularly when this led to demands for more expenditure. Ufologists in America and Britain have devoted decades to their quest to force the government to reveal its 'Top Secret' files. They believed these would prove the existence of alien visitors. Today many of those files have been released and yet no evidence either for aliens or cover-ups has been found, so a deeper cover-up is suspected. Those who enter this hall of mirrors adopt the position that official conclusions which do not support the ETH must be disinformation. Evidence that disproves classic UFO cases must be forged, or planted by government agents. During our research, it became clear that the idea of an official cover-up is belief-driven and can never be disproved.

As one exasperated civil servant servant put it, "The 'inescapable conclusion' that major governments of the world are holding back some critical information about UFOs can be utterly repudiated. There is no official cover-up conspiracy." Or to quote Daniel Webster, 'There is nothing so powerful as the truth and often nothing as strange." FT

THE FLYING SAUCER WORKING PARTIES

DURING THE SUMMER OF 1952, REPORTS OF UFOS TRACKED BY RADAR AND CHASED BY JET FIGHTERS ABOVE WASHINGTON DC LED THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER, WINSTON CHURCHILL, TO ASK HIS AIR MINISTER: "WHAT DOES ALL THIS STUFF ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS AMOUNT TO?"

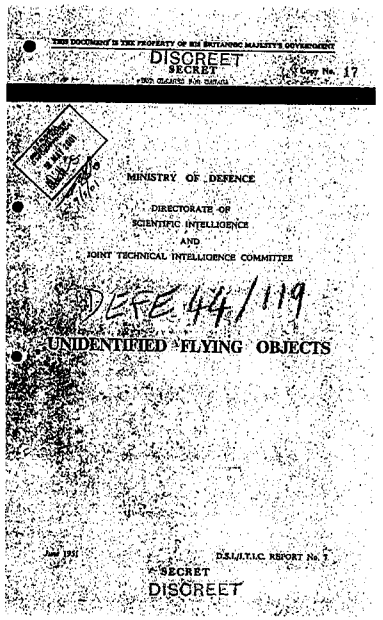
The British Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry have taken an interest in aerial phenomena whenever they were perceived as a possible threat to defence. In 1912, on the orders of Winston Churchill, the Admiralty investigated reports of an 'unidentified aircraft' which flew over Sheerness in Kent. This incident triggered off a wave of sightings of 'phantom' Zeppelin airships that were the subject of an investigation by a branch of military intelligence which, in 1916, became MI5.

During the Second World War, military intelligence became interested in a series of strange reports by bomber crews who described strange pulsating lights that pursued aircraft involved in raids upon Germany. They were concerned these UFOs, dubbed 'foo fighters' by US aircrew, might be a new Nazi secret weapon. Although the reports could never be fully explained, as no aircraft had suffered harm, it was decided they were harmless natural phenomena that could be safely ignored.

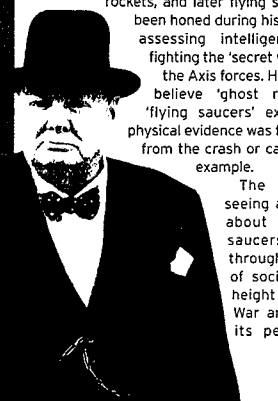
Official interest continued after the war, when 'ghost planes' were tracked by RAF radar and 'ghost rockets' were reported in the skies above Scandinavia. In response the RAF supplied radar equipment to the Swedes and two secret agents were sent to the Baltic to investigate. British Intelligence came to believe that a terrestrial enemy – Soviet Russia – was the source of these aerial phantoms until a scathing demolition of the sightings was presented by the Air Ministry's Director of Scientific Intelligence, Dr R V Jones.

Jones' scepticism towards the ghost rockets, and later flying saucers, had been honed during his experience assessing intelligence whilst fighting the 'secret war' against the Axis forces. He refused to believe 'ghost rockets' or 'flying saucers' existed until physical evidence was found either from the crash or capture of an example.

The craze for seeing and writing about flying saucers filtered through all levels of society at the height of the Cold War and reached its peak during


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DEFE 44/119
UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS
June 1951
D.S.I./J.T.I.C. REPORT No. 7
SECRET
DISCREET

'AFTER THE WAR, 'GHOST PLANES' WERE TRACKED BY RAF RADAR



the summer of 1952, with reports of UFOs tracked by radar and chased by jet fighters above Washington DC. These events led the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, to ask his Air Minister: "What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to? What can it mean? What is the truth?"

In a reply, Churchill was told that "a full intelligence study" had been carried out in 1951 which had found that all sightings could be accounted for as misidentifications, natural phenomena and hoaxes. Rumours about the existence of an official study also leaked out and questions were asked in Parliament. In 1955, the Conservative MP Major Patrick Wall asked if the Air Ministry intended to publish its report on 'flying saucers'. Wall was assured that there had been "no formal inquiry" but the question was carefully evaded until, almost 50 years later, we found the minutes of this non-existent study in a file marked 'Top Secret' at the Public Record Office.

Our research established that, contrary to official statements, the 'Flying Saucer Working Party' of 1950-51 was just the first of a series of informal inquiries initiated by the MoD. A follow-up study by the Air Ministry in 1954 resulted in a 10,000 word 'secret' report that has yet to be released. The 'informal' nature of these inquiries meant that even evidence of their existence could be successfully erased from official history. Their conclusions, if not the motivation behind them, were no secret: the majority of UFOs could be explained by a range of natural phenomena, but 'flying saucers' were entirely a matter of belief.

The first, short-lived Working Party, under the Directorate of Scientific Intelligence (DSI) operated for eight months in 1950-51. Its five members included technical intelligence experts from the MoD, Air Ministry, Admiralty and War Office. This team was set up as a direct response to the concerns expressed by Lord Mountbatten and the defence scientist, Sir Henry Tizard, who argued that 'flying saucers' deserved serious study.

The Working Party's brief six-page final report, *DSI/JTIC Report No. 7: Unidentified Flying Objects*, betrays a half-hearted attempt to debunk the subject. It relied upon in-depth field investigation of just three reports made by RAF officers, including a group of test pilots from Farnborough. US intelligence played a key role in the formulation of the Working Party's scathing conclusions. These recommended that there should be no further investigation of the subject until new evidence came to light.

The 'Flying Saucer Working Party' of 1950-51 was just the first of a series of informal inquiries initiated by the MoD.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

The Washington UFO 'invasion' led to a re-think and initiated a new information exchange with American Intelligence, but the secrecy remained. In September 1952, the MoD reformed its 'flying saucer committee' under the sole control of the Air Ministry, reporting to Dr Jones. Responsibility for UFOs was delegated to the sole control of the Deputy Director of Intelligence (Technical) or DDI (Tech), at the Air Ministry. Here, the most unusual reports were studied by a team of two, led by Wing Commander Myles Formby, who was based in an attic room in the former Metropole Hotel on Northumberland Avenue, near Trafalgar Square. The Air Ministry's secretive UFO HQ would become immortalised in a Sunday newspaper headline of 1957 which revealed 'the Secret of Room 801.'

Further ad hoc UFO studies were undertaken in 1957 and 1959 by Technical Intelligence officers reporting to the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) which advised the Prime Minister on intelligence and security. On all these occasions official interest followed reports of radar-visual sightings made by the RAF which threatened to expose weaknesses in Britain's air defences at the height of the Cold War.

MoD files released at the PRO also contain records of occasions when officers from Defence Intelligence and the RAF Police were sent to interview UFO witnesses. These may be the source of rumours surrounding the activities of sinister 'Men In Black' whose mission was to 'silence' UFO witnesses and remove evidence. In reality, in all the cases where field investigations were made by the MoD, prior appointments were made with the witnesses who were almost exclusively police officers and retired service personnel rather than members of the public.

In October 1967 a massive UFO wave engulfed the British Isles following reports that two Devon police officers had chased a 'star-spangled flying cross' in their patrol car at speeds approaching 90 mph (145km/h). For the last time, following pressure from MPs, the MoD assembled a team of specialists to make field investigations of the more impressive reports, advised by R V Jones who was now in retirement. The team included a physicist from Defence Intelligence (DI 55), a civil servant attached to the 'UFO desk' and a RAF psychologist whose inclusion reflected a growing realisation that UFOs were a socio-psychological, rather than a physical, phenomenon.


ROBERT JONES


JACKET FORMBY

THE BACKROOM BOYS OF ROOM 801: Dr R V Jones (left) and Wing Commander Myles Formby (right) worked in the Air Ministry's secretive UFO HQ near Trafalgar Square.

OFFICERS AND RAF POLICE WERE SENT TO INTERVIEW WITNESSES

The team's psychologist was Alex Cassie, a wartime POW whose experiences formed the basis for Donald Pleasance's character in the film *The Great Escape*. His conclusions were similar to those reached by the Flying Saucer Working Party: "I looked into UFO sightings on behalf of the MoD for two years and came to the conclusion that the people who reported sightings were far worthier of research than the reports themselves." FT

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Andy Roberts is a veteran fortean researcher, writer and broadcaster with a special interest in UFOs. He believes that the ultimate truth lies somewhere in the music of the Grateful Dead. **Dr David Clarke** teaches an undergraduate course on supernatural belief at the Centre for English Cultural Tradition, University of Sheffield. Before completing his doctorate in folklore he worked as a journalist and has a lifelong interest in UFOs and fortean anomalies. He is the author of 7 books, the latest – *Out of the Shadows* – co-authored with Andy Roberts.

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2. 11,287 UFO reports were received by the MoD between 1959 and 2000.

3. Letter from DAS 4 (MoD), 26 October 2001.

4. *RAF News*, 19 April 1996.

5. See *Out of the Shadows* (Piatkus: London 2002) pp 122-144 for more information on 'angels' and radar-UFO reports.

6. *Air Ministry Secret Intelligence Summary: Flying Saucers*, 1955: see PRO AIR 22/93.

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10. PRO AIR 2/18117

11. *Sunday Dispatch*, 1 October 1950.

12. A similar explanation for MoD secrecy was given by the former Chief of Defence Staff, Lord Hill-Norton, to Ufologist Jenny Randles in 1982.

13. The best source for R V Jones' conclusions is the article he wrote for *Physics Bulletin*,19 (July 1968), 'The Natural Philosophy of Flying Saucers', later republished in the University of Colorado's *Scientific Study of UFOs* (1969)

14. PRO AIR 20/9994.

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16. Statement from DAS 4 (MoD) to authors, 26 October 2001.

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18. From a 1967 letter from Defence Intelligence director Archie Potts to Dr Robert Lowe, of the Condon Committee. Copy in PRO DEFE 31/119.

19. PRO DEFE21/118.

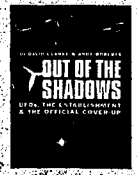
20. Prior to 1967 Air Ministry routinely destroyed its UFO files at five yearly intervals. This policy was halted as a result of pressure from MPs and a campaign organised by UFOlogist Julian Hennessey. As a result, the MoD claim the earliest UFO records they hold date from 1962.

21. See James Easton, 'Rendlesham Revealed' *FT152:28-31.*

RESOURCES

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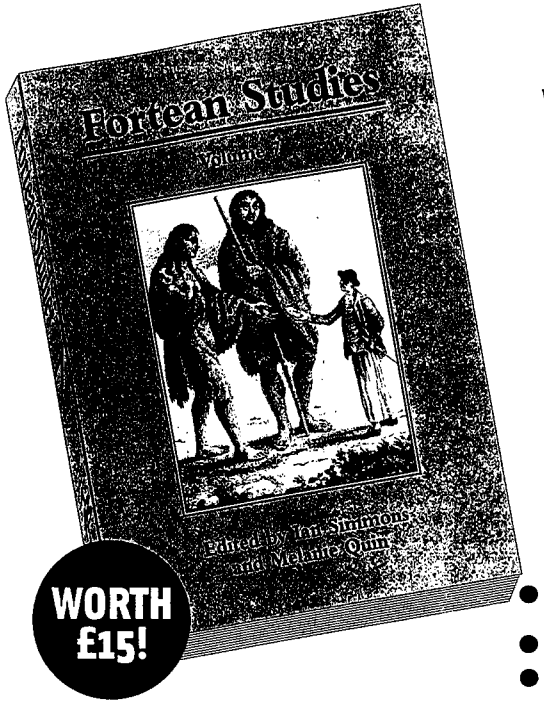
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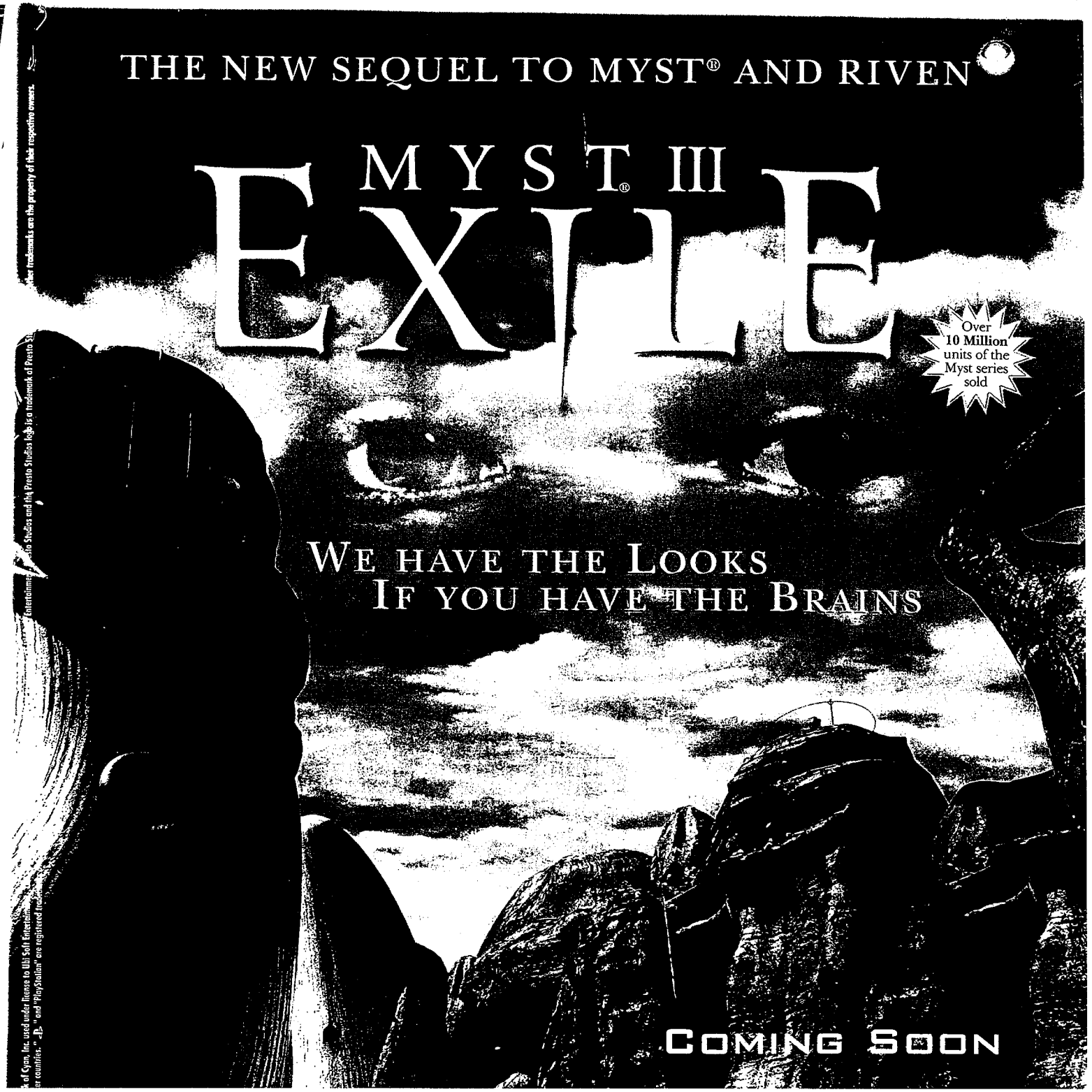
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UAA:

	Name (file ref)	LFA(s)	Aircraft / Description
18-28 NOV	CQWI 2/02 (20/9)	12, 13, 14, 16 & 17	STC/AWC EX BASED AT RAF LOSSIEMOUTH. SEE NEWS BRIEF AT THE FOOT OF THIS DOCUMENT.
28/29 JAN	**EX TARTAN JOUST (20/9)**	**14**	**ANNUAL 1 DAY EX INVOLVING UP TO 34 TDO AC FROM RAF LOSSIEMOUTH. (29 JAN IS BACKUP DAY)**

DISPLAYS/FLYPASTS ETC (note: this is by no means an exhaustive list):

19 NOV	HELO PUBLICITY DEMO (20/5/1)	B/S/I AVOID	1 x LX CONDUCTING ROPING DEMO IN PORTSMOUTH AS PART OF FILM/RN PROMOTION. NB RECCE FLIGHT ON 4 OR 5 NOV AND REHEARSAL ON 18 NOV.
28 NOV	RNAS CULDROSE FLYING DISPLAY	3	**- CNX -** DISPLAY INC SK, LX & MERLIN HELOS PLUS HARRIERS, JETSTREAM AND NIMROD.
6 DEC	**LINTON-ON-OUSE FP**	**11**	**9 x TUCANO FOR GRADUATION FLYPAST - 1040Z**

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UPDATED 22/11/02
LATEST ENTRIES SHOWN IN BOLD
UNDERLINED & 'TBC' INFO IS NOT FOR RELEASE

Key:
AAC – Army Air Corps
AWC - Air Warfare Centre (RAF Waddington)
BBMF – Battle of Britain Memorial Flt.
CAOC – Combined Air Operations Centre
COMAO – Composite Air Operation
CSST - Captain Submarine Sea Training
EAG – European Air Group
EWTR – Electronic Warfare Tactics Range (RAF Spadeadam)
Ex – Exercise
FP – Flypast
JMC – Joint Maritime Course
NVG – Night Vision Goggles
OOH – Out of hours
OTA - Otterburn Training Area
PODT – Pre-Operational Deployment Training
RAFAT - RAF Aerobatic Team (Red Arrows)
RN – Royal Navy
SAR - Search & Rescue
SPTA - Salisbury Plain Training Area
STANTA - Stanford Training Area
STC - HQ Strike Command
TBC – To be confirmed
TLP – Tactical Leadership Programme
TLT – Tactical Leadership Training
UAA - Unusual Air Activity
USL - Under Slung Load
BE – Belgium
CA – Canada
DE – Denmark
FR – France
GE – Germany
GR - Greece
IT – Italy
NL – Netherlands
NO – Norway
PO – Portugal
SP – Spain
SQ - Slovakia
TU - Turkey
US – United States

CQWI NEWS BRIEF

DATE: 4 November 2002

SUBJECT: LOW FLYING BY USAF AIRCRAFT DURING THE COMBINED QUALIFIED WEAPONS INSTRUCTORS (CQWI) COURSE 2/02

SOURCE: DAS (LA) Ops&Pol2 - [redacted]

D/NEWS: D News RAF - Sqn Ldr [redacted]

BACKGROUND

CQWI 2/02 is a medium-scale exercise taking place between 18-29 November. Prior to the exercise a number of USAF B1 aircraft will deploy to the UK, these are expected to conduct low flying with RAF aircraft in certain areas of the United Kingdom. The B1 will be an unusual sight at low level over the UK and its participation in the exercise might attract public interest.

KEY MESSAGE

B1 aircraft of the United States Airforce are deploying to RAF Fairford and taking part in a routine RAF training exercise, the Combined Qualified Weapons Instructors Course 2/02. The aircraft are joining the course on 19 and 20 November in order to provide participating crews with experience of operating with dissimilar aircraft types. During this time the aircraft may operate at low level over parts of Scotland and northern England. We are sorry if anyone is disturbed by this training activity.

KEY POINTS

B1s:

- Three USAF B-1 strategic bomber aircraft will arrive in the UK on 15 November, and will return to the US on 22 November. The aircraft will be unarmed.

- The aircraft will conduct training sorties from RAF Fairford during the period 18-20 November. Sorties on 19 and 20 November may involve two of the aircraft operating at low level over Scotland and northern England, as part of a routine RAF training exercise, CQWI 2/02.

- The current operational status of RAF Fairford as a NATO designated standby base remains unchanged.

- *If asked:*
  This training exercise, like all others, is necessary to help maintain a high level of operational readiness and effectiveness. It does not imply any decision has been taken in respect of future military action.

CQWI:

- CQWI courses are designed to develop the tactical skills of frontline aircrew and provide a framework for qualified weapons instructor staff to train & assess candidates. A Composite Air Operation (COMAO) flying sortie takes place each weekday afternoon.

- Exercise planners and participating aircrew will do all they can to ensure that this essential training activity causes the least possible disturbance to members of the general public.

Nuclear power

Hail, Caesar

A clever new design could lead to a kinder, gentler form of nuclear power

IT SOUNDS impossible: a nuclear reactor that generates electricity from nuclear waste. Yet that is what Claudio Filippone, a nuclear scientist and director of the Centre for Advanced Energy Concepts at the University of Maryland, proposed a few years ago. He has now devised an improved design, called CAESAR ("clean and environmentally safe advanced reactor") that is even more counterintuitive. As well as being environmentally friendly—it can produce electricity without causing any extra pollution—his new design could also help prevent nuclear proliferation.

Conventional nuclear reactors run on fuel rods made largely of uranium-238, enriched with about 4% uranium-235. If you hit a uranium-235 atom with a neutron, it releases a tiny amount of energy and breaks up into smaller nuclei and more neutrons, which can in turn hit other atoms. Pack atoms close enough together, and a self-sustaining reaction occurs, producing a vast amount of energy in the form of heat. Several things control the reaction rate, including a "moderator" that is inserted between the fuel rods to slow down some of the neutrons so that they move slowly enough to split atoms. After two or three years, there are so few uranium-235 atoms left that the reaction cannot sustain itself. At this point, fresh fuel rods are needed.

In contrast, Dr Filippone's new design works by splitting the far more numerous uranium-238 atoms inside fuel rods. Such atoms are very picky. To get them to split, you have to hit them with a neutron going at exactly the right speed. (Uranium-235 and plutonium atoms are far less choosy, so getting a self-sustaining reaction going is relatively easy—hence their use in weapons.) The key to the new design is the unusual choice of moderator: steam. Steam's density can be controlled very finely, so it can be used to slow passing neutrons to ensure that they are moving at exactly the right speed to split a uranium-238 atom.

The result is a tiny burst of energy, more neutrons and smaller nuclei, as usual. But CAESAR exploits the fact that these smaller nuclei also decay to produce additional, slow-moving neutrons, known as "delayed neutrons". In a conventional reactor, the moderator slows these neutrons down so much that they cannot contribute to the reaction. But when steam is used as the moderator, the delayed neutrons keep going until they hit another uranium-238 atom. It should then be possible to maintain a self-sustaining reaction in "spent" fuel rods of pure uranium-238 for several decades. So material now treated as waste could be used as fuel. The problem of disposing of spent fuel will remain, but CAESAR is, in effect, a form of waste storage that produces electricity.

The design also has implications for preventing nuclear proliferation. The cores of existing reactors have to be accessible so that fuel rods can be moved in and out. By adjusting the configuration of the core in the right way—by judicious positioning of graphite, for example—almost any civilian reactor can be made to produce plutonium, and thus to make weapons. Access to the core is not necessary with CAESAR, as it could run for decades without any need for refuelling. Thus it could be sealed. Countries could then adopt the design to show that their nuclear intentions were entirely peaceful.

Dr Filippone has tested some aspects of his design using the experimental TRIGA reactor at the University of Maryland, and in computer simulations. But to prove that it will work he has to demonstrate a self-sustaining reaction in uranium-238. Working with Ivo Vasa of the Nuclear Research Institute in Rez, in the Czech Republic, he is now looking for the money needed to perform such an experiment, which is expected to take about two years and cost around $2m. With luck, his new design will generate a favourable reaction. ■

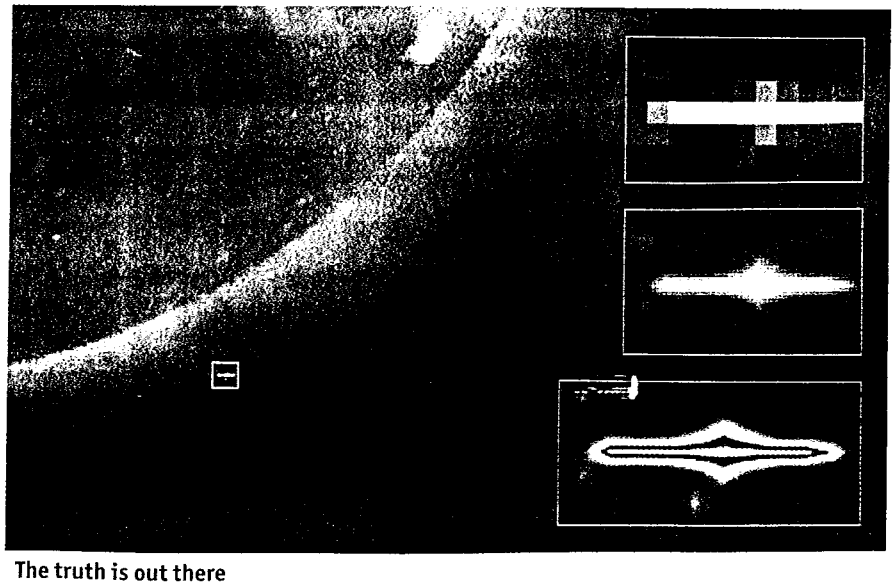
Flying saucers

DIY UFOs

Government scientists deny photographing UFOs. It must be true then

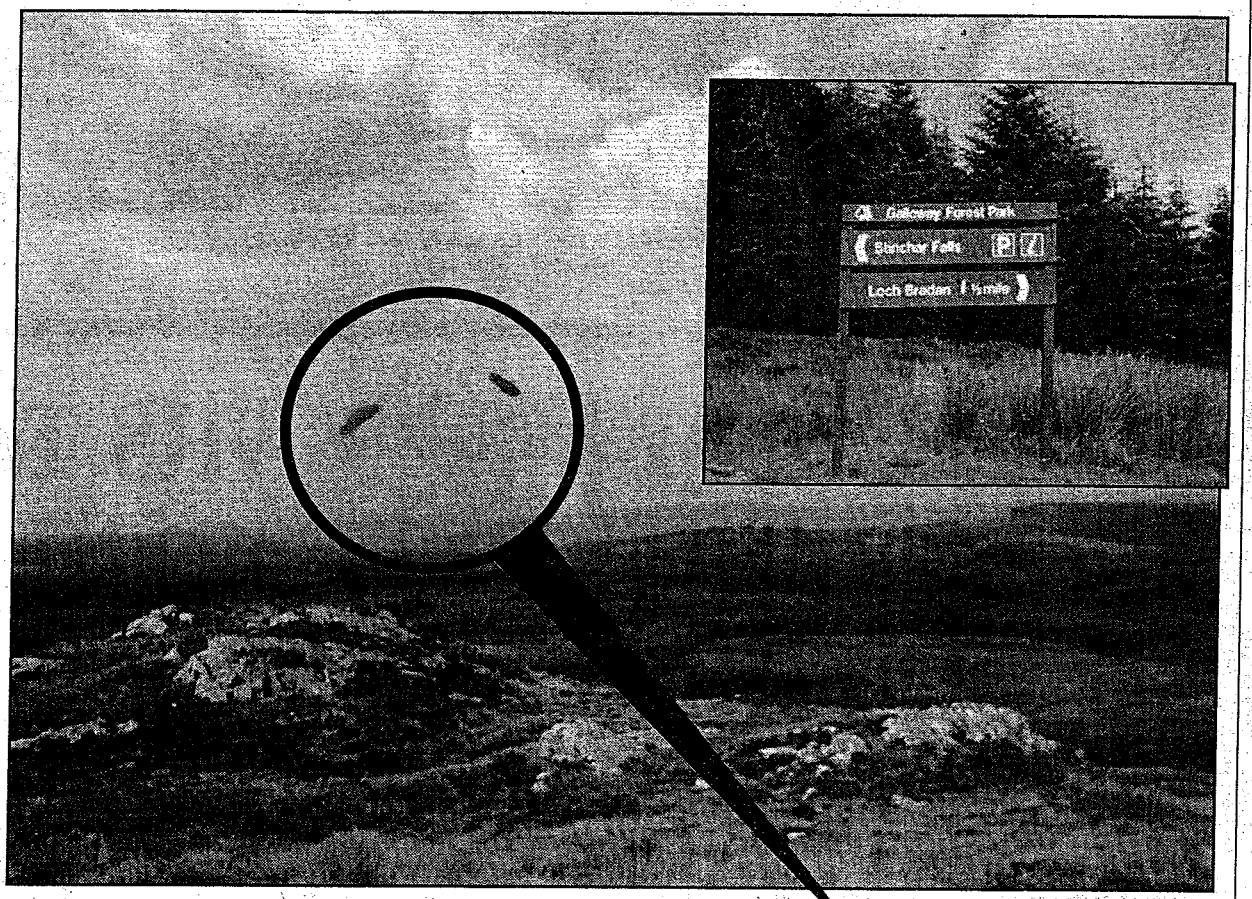
IT SOUNDS like a scene from "The X-Files". Government scientists, after years of "covering up" and "refusing to comment", have now "officially denied" taking pictures of UFOs. The photographs in question come from a spacecraft called the Solar & Heliospheric Observatory, or SOHO, which studies the sun. Ever since its launch in 1995 by Europe's and America's space agencies, SOHO's pictures have generated ferment among UFOlogists, who say it has taken hundreds of shots of flying saucers.

Now the scientists say they want to set the record straight. "We've never seen anything that even suggests that there are UFOs 'out there'," they say. The strange marks on the photographs are either planets, cosmic rays, debris, software glitches or defects in their detectors that have been modified by UFO proponents. The scientists show how a picture of a cosmic ray can be smoothed (see picture) to make something that looks very much like a glowing flying saucer and exhaust fumes. Only it isn't. Details for making your own UFO can be found at http://sohowww.nascom.nasa.gov

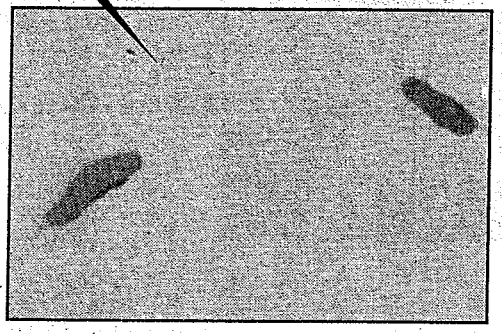


The truth is out there

ENCLOSURE 145



Hillwalker's UFO mystery in Carrick Forest



The mystery objects in the Carrick sky.

A SENSATIONAL new photograph of UFOs in the Carrick Forest has been discovered, the *Carrick Gazette* can exclusively reveal.

The amazing image was taken by a walker near Loch Braden in 1997.

Michael Barford, 61, had been a regular visitor to South West Scotland's forest parks, before moving to Newton Stewart in 1999.

It was during one of these excursions that the remarkable UFO photograph was taken.

Michael told the *Gazette*: "I was up there and I just had a cheap camera with me at the time. I was on top of a hill and to use up the film in the camera I started taking panoramic views. So I went round taking one photograph, then two, then three and when I got to the fourth shot I saw these two objects hovering in the sky."

"I watched them for about five minutes and they didn't move, then they just took off together in perfect unison, and then all of a sudden they were away. It was like 0 to 4,000 in two seconds," added Michael.

Michael never reported the incident and only came forward after a *Galloway Gazette* article on UFOs highlighted the growing number of encounters in South West Scotland in recent years.

Michael who lives in Albert Street, Newton Stewart, said: "I used to laugh at all this. I thought it was a joke. But something like that really shakes you."

● Have you seen something you can't explain? Contact the *Gazette* with the details.

CARRICK GAZETTE 22JAN03

UFO sightings on the increase

UFO sightings are on the rise in Galloway, with the region fast becoming a hot spot for perceived extra terrestrial activity.

Since the first recorded sighting of an unidentified object in 1955, sightings have become more and more common.

In recent years so much so that suspected alien activity is recorded in the region almost every year.

Although details are sketchy of the 1955 incident, the sighting is contained in several books cataloguing the history of UFO appearances. Occurring on a deserted road somewhere in Galloway, the first sighting saw a disk shaped object, illuminated with blue lights slowly manoeuvre above a car, before moving on at incredible pace.

Only two years after in April 1957 an even more convincing sighting was recorded.

Recently declassified data about the 1957 UFO sighting came from the most reliable of sources, the MOD (Ministry of Defence).

This UFO encounter involved the tracking by radar of three 'massive objects' moving against the wind and flying over West Freugh Airbase.

Described as "the size of battleships" by an MOD official, the objects stopped at 30,000 ft, directly above the airbase, then moved on as quickly as they had appeared.

Although the MOD carried out a full investigation the mysterious occurrence has never been explained.

In 1965 a family waiting for a ferry in Stranraer saw a 'brilliant, orange red object, shaped like a large soup plate'. The object flew directly over the family's car landed just 20 metres from them, then suddenly vanished.

Following on from these early sightings a wave of UFO encounters were recorded in the region in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Including reports of a 'cigar shaped object' seen at the Mull of Galloway in 1979.

And again an MOD sighting at RAF West Freugh in 1980, when three MOD police officers saw an 'orange oval' fly out to sea from Luce Bay.

In recent years there have been sightings in Stranraer, Dumfries, Newton Stewart and Kirkcudbright.

The most convincing a sighting by three tourists travelling near the region's Artist's town, witnessing a bright, blue, shape changing object, traverse the skies over Kirkcudbright early on an August Evening in 1998.

In Stranraer there have been sightings of UFOs as recently as 2000, and in Newton Stewart, in 1998 when two hillwalkers were 'buzzed' by a large, low flying, illuminated object.

With the MOD itself confirming the existence of unidentified phenomenon in the region, Galloway is fast garnering a reputation for UFO sightings, not quite rivalling Bonnybridge, but certainly outstripping most other regions in terms of UFO encounters.

● Have you seen something you can't explain? Contact the *Gazette* with the details.



UFO sightings are increasingly commonplace, but scenes like this are destined to remain acts of trick photography. *(Image: Adrian Braddy)*

The Galloway Gazette
3 JAN 03

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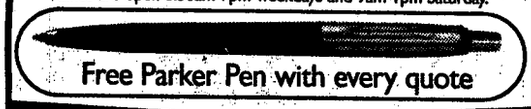
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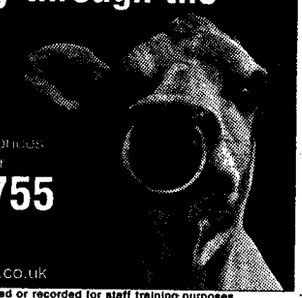
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UFO investigators claim th

A super

By **Tim Utton**
Science Reporter

THE object is certainly unidentified and appears to be flying.

Whether the enlarged image on the right really shows a UFO piloted by aliens remains to be seen.

But, according to the people who released it, this photo – and hundreds like it – is the best evidence yet of the existence of spacecraft from other worlds.

UFO investigators say the image was captured by the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (Soho), a Nasa satellite which was launched in 1996 to observe the sun.

Since then, it is said, the satellite has beamed back hundreds of images of UFOs travelling along a kind of alien super-highway.

A variety of 'spacecraft' can apparently be seen against the background of deep space.

They fail to navigate a straight course, which observers believe is evidence they are being steered by some sort of intelligent life form.

The satellite is stationed in space one million miles from Earth with its camera trained towards the sun. The objects photographed are likely to be only hundreds of miles from the satellite's lenses, say experts.

The images from Soho – a joint project by Nasa and the European Space Agency – are due to be made public at the National Space Centre in Leicester in a presentation by Mike Murray, 54, the owner of an electronics company in Manchester.

The images were shown to him by a Spanish businessman who picked them up from Soho through a huge satellite at his home outside Barcelona. Mr Murray said: 'I thought these pictures were astounding. The photos appear to show spacecraft passing in front of the sun.

'When we asked Nasa about it they originally said it might be a fault on the camera, but by digitally enhancing the images we proved this wasn't the case.

'Nasa then told us it could be asteroids or comets, but when we pointed out that the objects appeared to move independently and make turns they stopped answering our questions.

'The very fact these crafts appear to be the same shape as other UFOs spotted in our stratosphere is very exciting.'

Nasa has refused to comment, but Graham Birdsall, editor of UFO magazine, said he was excited by the images.

'The images are irrefutable in that they are from official satellites owned by Nasa,' he said. 'They resemble the kind of spacecraft we used to see in sci-fi films like Star Trek.

'To all intents and purposes here is evidence of anomalous objects in space that appear structured and seem to have intelligently controlled movements.

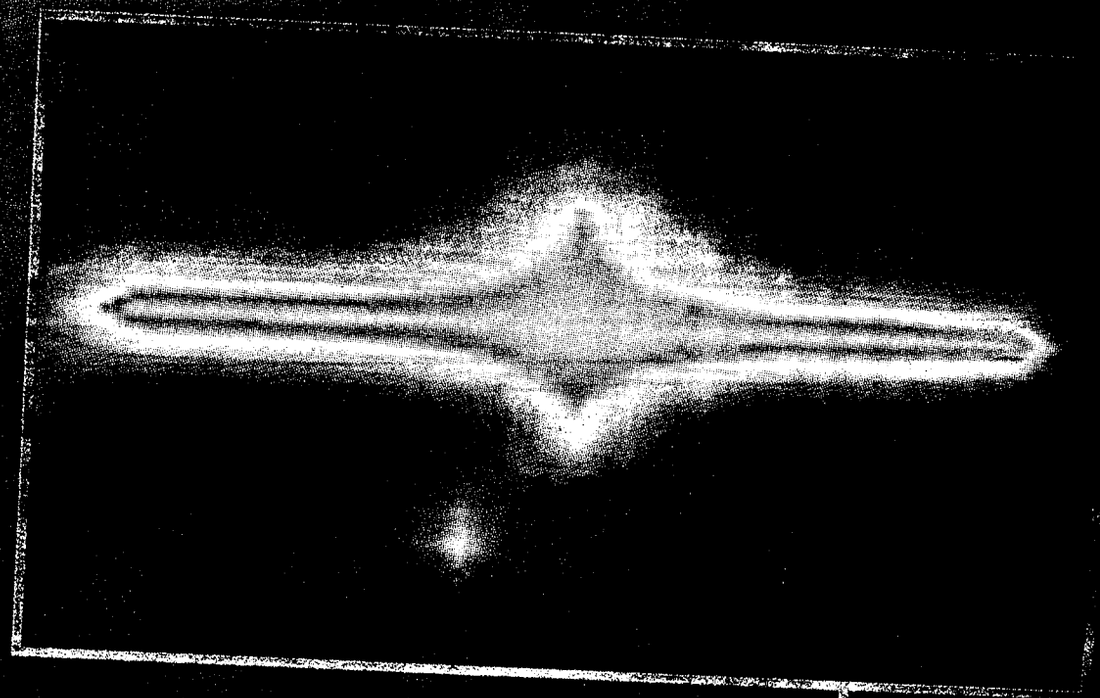
'I'm excited at the prospect of seeing authenticated images coming into the public domain that have taxed a considerable number of people at Nasa.'

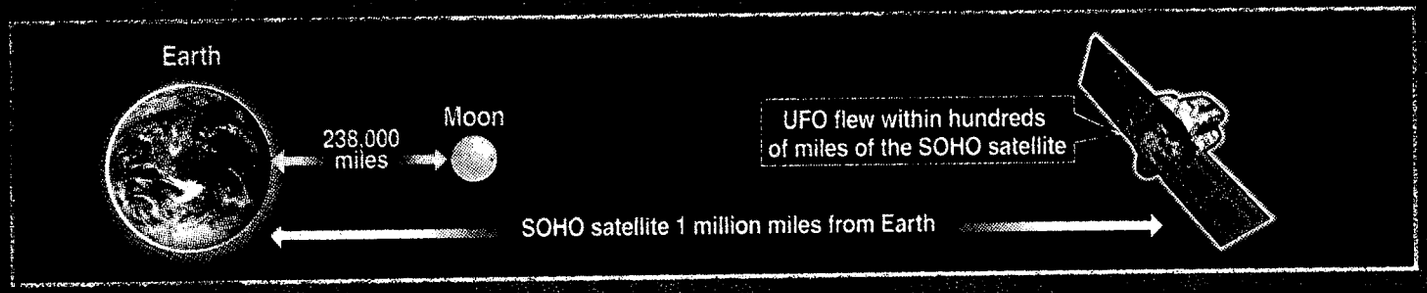
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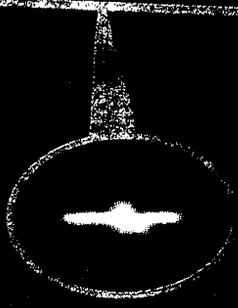
ENCLOSURE 4

image, from a Nasa satellite, is the best evidence yet of flying saucers

highway for aliens?







As Steven Spielberg's new £25 million TV blockbuster about alien encounters,



by Geoffrey Wansell

ON A hot, sticky July afternoon in 1987 Jason Andrews is celebrating his fourth birthday at his family's cottage near Slade Green in Kent when the heavens open.

As the thunder crashes all around, there is a single flash of lightning. Suddenly, a stream of numbers starts pouring out of Jason's mouth: fantastic numbers, complex mathematical equations, even algebra — all from a boy who struggles to count to ten.

Seconds later the windows and doors begin to shake violently and the four-year-old announces to his mother, father and elder brother: 'They're waiting for me. I have to go.'

Jason's father, Paul, grabs his son and stops him from walking out into the downpour, but the boy struggles violently, and as he does so the house shakes to its very foundations — until, finally, he seems to wake from a trance and the shaking stops.

It is the first sign that Jason Andrews is no ordinary little boy and, in the eight years that follow, that is dramatically confirmed.

It wasn't until 1995, when he was almost 12, that Jason told his astonished parents exactly what had been happening to him — aliens had been abducting him from his bed at night.

'It's always the light that comes first,' he confessed to his mother, Ann. 'Then I see the tall one rise up at the foot of the bed.

'Suddenly there's lots of little ones everywhere. They're fuzzy and indistinct, and they move very fast. I can't move or speak, but I'm awake and I can see and hear and feel. I want to scream and run, but the sound doesn't come out and my body doesn't move.

'I hate them. I hate them,' the boy sobbed. 'I have to go with them.

'They take me to an operating theatre, like at the hospital. It's all white and shiny. Sometimes it's a circular room with a metal floor. It's always cold.

'They're there. The big one touches me but I don't feel it, like as if I've had an anaesthetic.'

Then he added poignantly: 'But you don't believe me, you just think I'm making it all up.'

In fact, Ann *did* believe him, and went on to explore the phenomena affecting her son's life in a book, Abducted. This decent, uncomplicated wife and mother came to the conclusion that we may not be alone.

Now, the rest of the world may be about to agree with her. After five decades of ridicule, official denials and alleged cover-ups, the possibility that aliens may have visited Earth is beginning to be taken seriously — and not just by sci-fi fanatics and UFO freaks.

Scientific researchers are increasingly convinced that thin, grey-skinned beings about 4ft tall, with large almond-shaped eyes set in an oval, hairless, head, may not only have landed on earth, but have also abducted human beings for bizarre experiments; while all the time there has been an official conspiracy to keep their visits secret.

Tonight American filmmaker Steven Spielberg, the man who brought the world Close Encounters Of The Third Kind and ET, will bring those convictions — and aliens — to life in his new mini-series, Taken, on BBC2.

A CUNNING mixture of fact, conjecture and fiction, based on the latest research, it tells the story of how aliens affected the lives of three American families over the past half-century.

A massive hit in the U.S., where it was broadcast on consecutive nights last month, Spielberg's series is the most expensive TV science faction drama ever made — with a budget of more than £25 million — and it's certain to re-ignite public debate on this forever-contentious subject.

But surely all this talk of aliens is far-fetched? As a natural sceptic, I've always believed so, but over the past weeks and months of reviewing the evidence I've come to the conclusion that it does, in fact, warrant the closest investigation.

There certainly seems to have been an official conspiracy to keep the facts secret.

In the past few months, for example, firm evidence about unexplained events connected with Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) and extra-terrestrial phenomena has begun to appear for the first time as governments around the world have released previously secret documents.

And, for the first time, politicians have started to admit that evidence on the possibility of extraterrestrial life has been concealed.

In October last year, for example, former White House Chief of Staff John Podesta, who worked for President Clinton, called on the U.S. government to de-classify 'records that are more than 25 years old' and 'to provide scientists with data that will assist them in determining the real nature of this phenomenon'.

Only four years ago, former Prime Minister Baroness Thatcher hinted to British UFO researcher Georgina Bruni that there was considerable secret information on the subject, adding mysteriously: 'You can't tell the people.'

BRUNI was so struck by the remark that she used it as the title for her 2001 book on alien sightings in Suffolk in 1980. Shortly afterwards, former Tory Secretary of State for Defence Michael Portillo also confided to her on the subject: 'I know a lot, but I tell a little.'

After a campaign by Bruni and other researchers, the Government last month released scores of secret files on UFO sightings in this country, all of which suggest that aliens can no longer be dismissed merely as the product of fevered imaginations.

Certainly the majority of the public now seem to believe that aliens do exist. As the editor of the British UFO magazine, Graham Birdsall, points out: 'Sixty years ago, 90 per cent of the population thought the idea was "absolute rubbish".

'Now every single opinion poll on the subject shows that millions of people firmly believe in UFOs.'

Last June, for example, when it was announced that Bonnybridge in Scotland boasted more UFO sightings than any other place in the world, a Sky News poll showed 65 per cent of its viewers believed in UFOs.

Five years earlier — in one of the biggest telephone polls ever conducted on TV — 100,000 viewers phoned ITV to answer the question 'Have aliens already visited Earth?' and 92 per cent voted 'Yes'.

'There's strong evidence to suggest that Earth has been visited by extraterrestrial intelligence,' insists Birdsall.

And after my own research I am prepared to admit that it is no longer possible to dismiss people such as Birdsall as 'cranks'.

Spielberg, whose film Close Encounters Of The Third Kind dramatically raised the issue of alien encounters for a global audience, is certainly convinced they've happened.

Fascinated by the possibility from childhood, he's devoted part of his life to discovering the truth and has become an authority on the subject as a result.

But there is a striking difference between Spielberg's approach in his TV series Taken and the one he took two decades ago in ET.

This time the aliens he is depicting are not trying to phone home — they're here to subvert, and ultimately control, the human race.

And the new TV series, his first since the award-winning Band Of Brothers, is not only about the arrival o[illegible] it's also about 'alien abduction.

'I thought I couldn't do justice to this genre in a two-hour movie,' Spielberg explains.

'We would need a lot more time to do justice to the history of alien abductions, starting back in 1947 [illegible]ght through to today.'

Watching the first episodes, it's clear that Spielberg has done everything in his power to create a fictional series on the edge of fact. This is no sci-fi comic book, no Invasion Of The Body Snatchers, but a compelling — and all-too-plausible — drama.

British UFO expert Mike Soper, of Contact International, is as convinced as Spielberg that alien abductions have happened.

THE TELLING fact is that there are features common to all the people's stories,' he maintains. 'They all remember being taken to a craft, and often talk about being "examined".

'Many talk about something being "implanted" in their bodies, and when they return they often have triangular marks on their bodies and aren't wearing exactly the same clothes they were before the abduction'.

Ministry of Defence civil servant Nick Pope, 37, agrees.

'Abductions most definitely do occur,' he says. 'And although the phrase "alien abductions" is a gift to those people who want to deride it, these are genuine, ordinary people who believe that they have been in extraordinary situations.'

Pope isn't a man with an anorak and a slightly weird look in his eye. He is a down-to-earth civil servant who had no interest in aliens at all until 1991, when the MoD asked him investigate reports of UFOs, alien abductions and other strange phenomena.

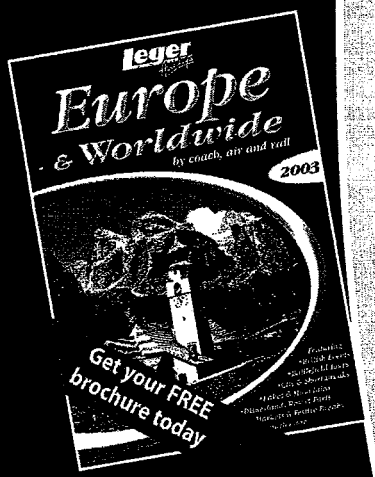
'The 100 or so people I interviewed about being abducted by aliens weren't publicity seekers merely after their 15 minutes of fame,' he explains.

'I came to the conclusion that some of these people had to be telling the truth. And if just one of the abductees' reports is true, the implications for the human race would be profound and disturbing.'

One person who helped to convince Pope was 37-year-old British-born make-up artist Bridget Grant, whom he met seven years ago.

She addressed an audience of 750 people at the British UFO conference in Leeds in 2001, where she talked about her own abduction. She

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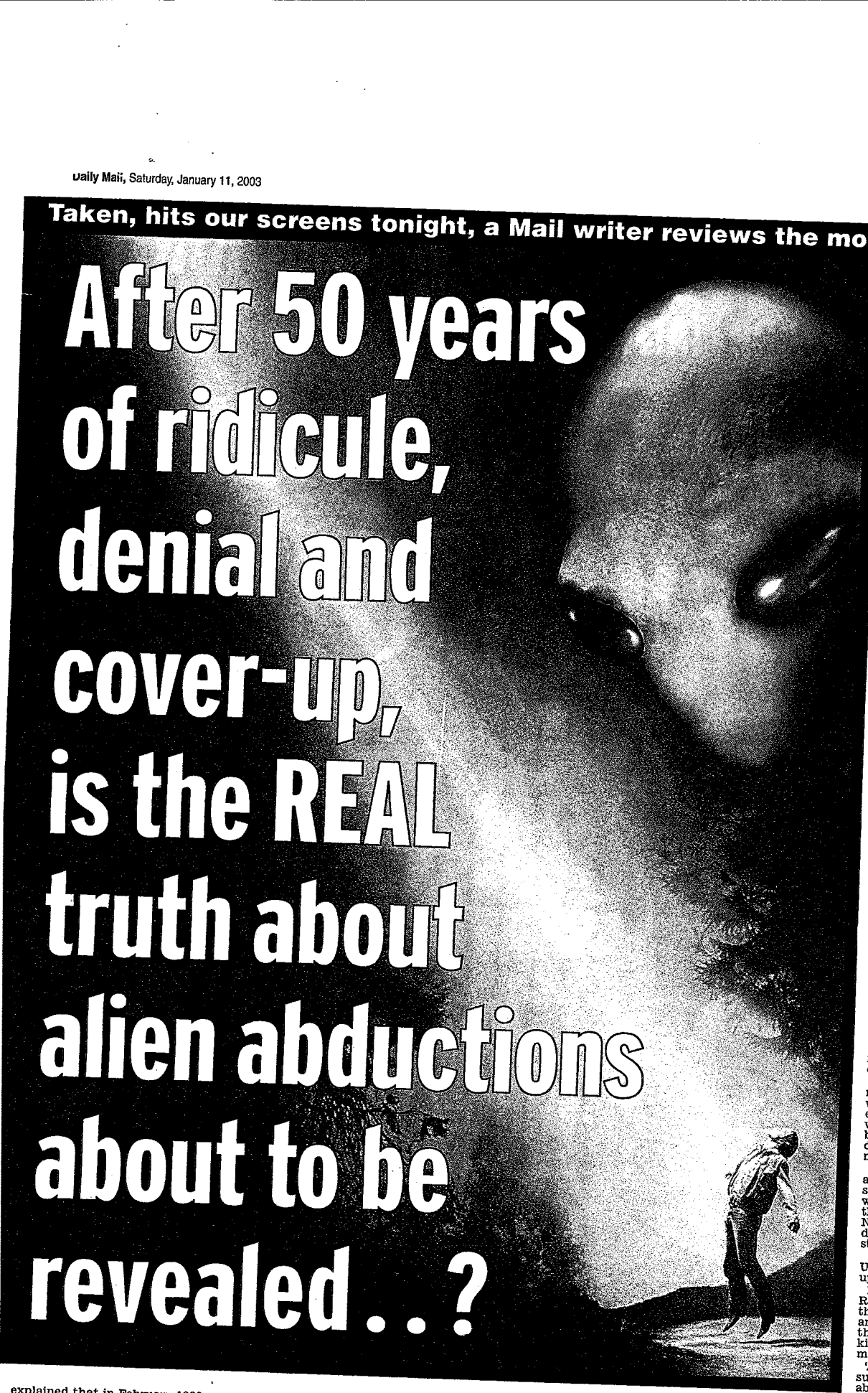
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Taken, hits our screens tonight, a Mail writer reviews the mounting evidence

After 50 years of ridicule, denial and cover-up, is the REAL truth about alien abductions about to be revealed..?



explained that in February 1993, when she was living in Los Angeles, she was driving with a friend in the Brentwood area at 5.50pm one bright, sunny day when she drew up at a set of traffic lights.

'I suddenly saw this silver tip out of the corner of my eye,' she explained. 'Then I saw that it was a solid silver craft, with a red-orange colour underneath it, about 35-45ft in diameter. It came right above the car and I leaned towards the steering wheel and looked up.'

The craft 'flew really, really low' over her head, she said, and away to the west. Her friend Jane, sitting in the passenger seat, saw it, too.

Grant was so disturbed by the experience that in September 1998 she went to see the American UFO researcher Budd Hopkins, of the Intruders Foundation in New York, to undergo four sessions of 'regressive hypnosis'.

She wanted his help to remember the exact details of what happened on that afternoon in 1993 — because she thought she had forgotten something. It appeared that she had. For when this pale young woman, with shoulder-length dark hair, addressed the Leeds audience she told them she'd not just seen the spacecraft but had been abducted by it, even though she thought she was in her car the entire time.

'There is often a time shift element in the stories of abduction, where the individual doesn't realise that time has passed,' explains Nick Pope.

'My hands were gripping the steering wheel,' Grant explained to the conference. 'But then I felt a pressure, like my body was being sucked. It felt like all the atoms of my body were going through the steering wheel.

'Then I saw this being. I was fascinated by its appearance — it was transparent, had white hair and was carrying a baby.'

Hard though it may be for some to believe, and Grant is reluctant to discuss the events further, there is no doubt that the artists' impression of the being which she said she saw looks uncannily like many of the other descriptions of aliens that have surfaced in recent years.

However, as sceptics point out, there have been so many depictions of 'space creatures' with dome heads and large oval eyes that it is hardly surprising that this has become something of a stereotype.

When Spielberg was researching the aliens for Close Encounters, he held lengthy consultations with the veteran American astronomer Dr J Allen Hynek — a once-fierce critic of UFOs and alien phenomena who changed his mind completely after he became a consultant on the subject for the United States Air Force.

Hynek assembled the authoritative American dossier on alien encounters, Project Blue Book, and advised Spielberg what aliens looked like.

But the idea that little grey — rather than green — men, with elongated fingers, legs and neck, may actually have visited this country still sounds incredibly far-fetched — until you talk to Georgina Bruni.

'When I interviewed Lady Thatcher a few years ago,' Bruni explains, 'I was describing to her the fact that U.S. military personnel here in Britain had reportedly had contact with aliens, and an alien spacecraft, in Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk in December 1980.

'I expected her to tell me that I'd been watching too many episodes of the X Files. But she didn't look shocked at all. She just said, twice: "You can't tell the people."'

WITH Bruni's encouragement, in the wake of this conversation Lord Hill-Norton, a former Chief of the Defence Staff, tabled 16 Parliamentary questions in the House of Lords — as a result of which the Government released more than 200 previously secret files concerning UFOs and aliens.

One of the files revealed that then Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill wanted the matter investigated in 1952.

He sent a memo to his scientific adviser, Sir Henry Tizard, asking: 'What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to? What can it mean? What it is the truth?'

After several months, Tizard reported that all the sightings were 'explicable by natural events', although shortly afterwards the Government explicitly banned RAF personnel from discussing sightings with anyone not from the military.

The U.S. Government had adopted a similar policy of official secrecy five years earlier, in the wake of a spate of incidents near the U.S. Air Force base at Roswell, New Mexico, in July 1947 — incidents that Spielberg uses as his starting point for his TV series.

And so the modern history of UFOs, aliens — and official cover-ups was born.

British UFO researcher Jenny Randles, who has spent more than 20 years investigating UFO and alien phenomena, maintains that in more recent times alien kidnapping has become much more common.

'An ever growing tide of people suspect that they may be alien abductees,' she says.

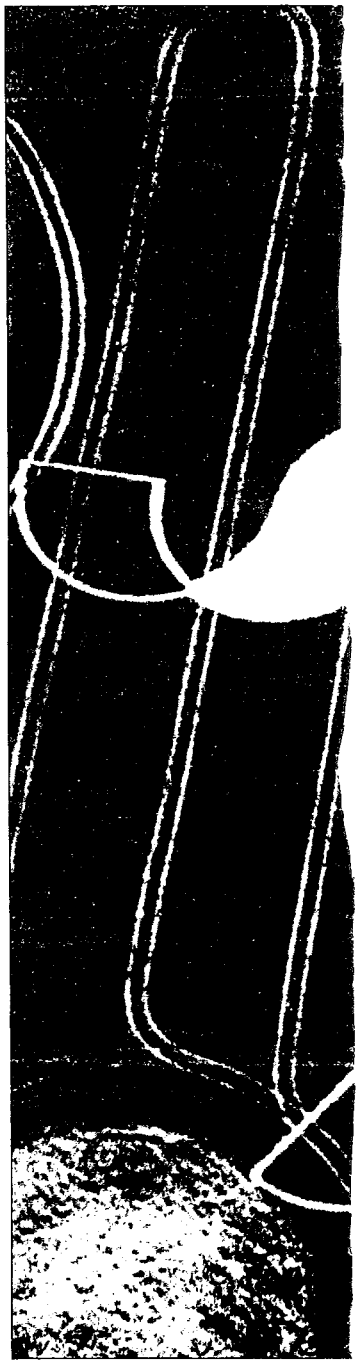
So is it fact or fiction? I'm not certain, but the evidence of witnesses such as Jason Andrews and Bridget Grant is hard to ignore. And it's clear that, as the 21st century begins, opinions are changing.

The Government announced recently that it was 'open-minded' about the 'existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial life forms' — a markedly different official position from the one taken half a century ago.

Perhaps the politicians are beginning to accept that we are not alone. Steven Spielberg certainly does.

Investigation

SIGNS OF THE TIMES



Mel Gibson stars in a new Hollywood movie about the phenomenon of crop circles – but who really makes them? Kevin Lewin and Angelique Van Engelen examine the evidence

THEY SEEM to appear from nowhere and their origins are shrouded in mystery – are they hoaxes or are they for real? It was the riddle of the Nineties and now a Hollywood blockbuster is set to start the great crop circle debate off again.

Signs, the new thriller directed by M Night Shyamalan that opened in America this weekend, has re-ignited interest in the unexplained phenomenon. Internet reports suggest that Touchstone Pictures have commissioned hundreds of circles to be produced in rural locations across the world in a marketing ploy for the film, in which Mel Gibson plays a Pennsylvania farmer defending his family from aliens who signal their arrival with a display of cornfield art.

For the record, Gibson is not convinced of the existence of extraterrestrials but is fascinated by crop circles. "I'm inclined to think it's all kind of a hoax, something made up for the tourists, but I'm willing to concede that there's something you can't explain with the board-and-rope theory," he has said.

The "board-and-rope" theory sprang from British artists Dave Chorley (who died in 1996) and Douglas Bower, who are viewed by many crop circle fanatics as pioneers of the hoax art. They got the idea from a mysterious reed bed sighted in 1966 in Queensland, Australia, where they lived at the time. "It started as a joke after drinking one night in the pub in 1978," reveals Bower, "but people's reactions encouraged us to perfect the circles. We'd sneak into farmers' fields, armed with planks and bits of rope and string, to create geometric patterns we had designed the night before."

Bower confirms that he and Chorley have been responsible for at least 250 circles – although he now says he wishes they'd never started as it has become the bane of his life. "I'd always been interested in UFOs, so I thought I'd make it look like one had landed. But it all got out of hand," he ruefully explains.

However, there are some, including eminent biophysicist and crop circle investigator Dr William Levengood, who insist there is "definite proof" that not all crop circles are hoaxes. The findings of this revered Michigan-based researcher over the past two decades remain the most conclusive with regard to the alien theory. In 1995 he reported in the Journal Of Scientific Explorations that he had found a natural "iron glaze" in Cherhill, a famous crop circle site in Wiltshire. "The glaze was composed of meteoritic particles traced shortly after a meteor shower in August 1993. It cast considerable doubt on this being an artificially prepared formation."



GOING ROUND IN CIRCLES: Mel Gibson and Joaquin Phoenix star in the new film Signs

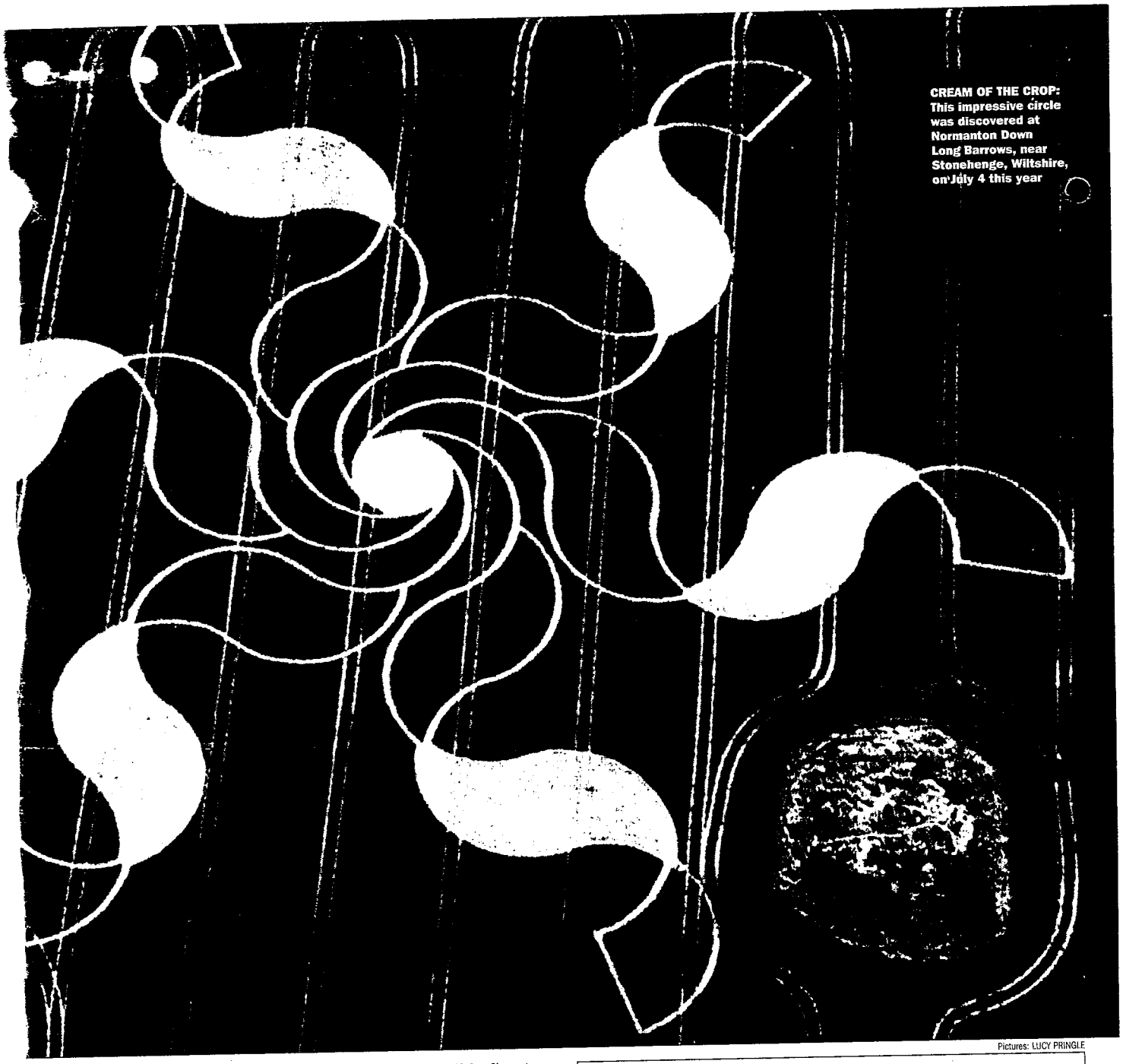
His findings prompted further scientific research into crop circles. George Bishop, a journalist-turned-circle specialist at the Centre for Crop Circle Studies in London, believes that, despite the claims of Bower and Chorley, only 3.5 per cent of all circles are man-made and adds that possibly as many as 60 per cent of crop circles are never discovered.

British researcher Colin Andrews insists that 20 per cent of all found circles "defy reasonable explanation", but this is an estimate without substantial proof. Andrews conducted a four-year study in which he measured the Earth's magnetic field in and around crop circles. He asserted that there was a magnetic flux present in the circles he researched and claimed they were not man-made. Andrews also said he was convinced something unresolved lies behind the many cases of "anomalous magnetic phenomena" such as spinning compass needles inside crop circles, unusual failures of electronic equipment and radio frequency interference.

The circles created by the hoaxers are severely undermining the work being carried out by the likes of the BLT (Burke, Levengood and Talbot) crop circle research team in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which is dependent on 700 volunteers worldwide.

According to director Nancy Talbot, "The hoaxers' work and talk about UFOs is threatening to deter scientists from concerning themselves with the circles. There are clues here that we need to take seriously."

Colin Andrews is waging his own war against the hoaxers, having launched a campaign to hunt them down. His methods include detective work, site inspections, physical evidence, aerial photography, personal experiences and information from members of the media who have paid to have artificial circles created by groups such as the three-strong Circlemakers, who are



CREAM OF THE CROP: This impressive circle was discovered at Normanton Down Long Barrows, near Stonehenge, Wiltshire, on July 4 this year

Pictures: LUCY PRINGLE

based in London. Ironically, the Circlemakers became circle creators themselves after having pursued a mission similar to Andrews's campaign. Rob Irving, a Circlemaker, says they were contracted by a daily newspaper to track down a gang of Wiltshire hoaxers and expose them.

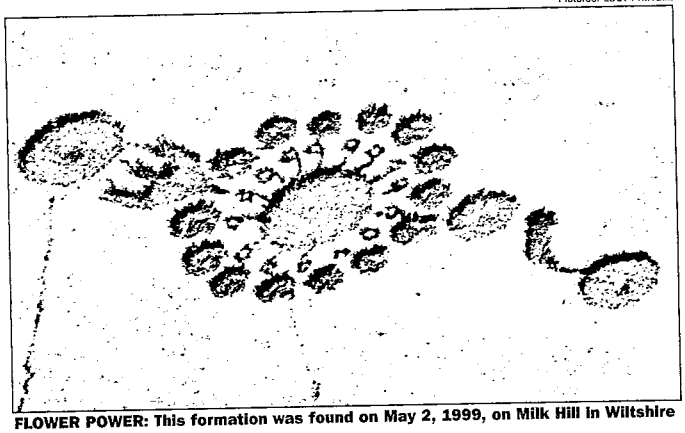
"We could never catch them in the act and they were having far more fun than we were, so we decided to join them," he says. Now the Circlemakers run an award-winning crop circle website (www.circlemakers.org) complete with a detailed "How To..." guide and reports of new sightings around the world.

Creating a formation is at once simple and deft, depending on the complexity of the design. The Circlemakers tend to first set up a central point out of which their creation evolves. They stick a pole in the ground and attach a string to it, the length of which is half the diameter of the formation. The vortex is created this way and perfect circles emerge. The artists measure exactly where each of them has to start and then work their way toward each other.

The flattening technique is as follows: "Place each stem between thumb and forefinger and stroke until it starts to bend. When the stems are bent at a right angle about two inches from their base, place each sheaf at the centre of each proposed circle. If this service is not performed, a greater ratio of breakage will occur.

"Cerealogists who find a sheaf of sharply-cut stems within the finished formation tend to see this as a sign of genuineness," say the Circlemakers.

Once they've completed their handiwork, the makers just have to hope that it gets spotted within a few



FLOWER POWER: This formation was found on May 2, 1999, on Milk Hill in Wiltshire

Daily Mail
Monday July 29 2002

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of alcohol there is a risk of organ damage and the baby's facial features may have a particular appearance.

'I am not aware of alcohol being problematic in relation to eye development. There is some research which suggests this but the link is not clear by any means.'

Pregnant women are advised generally not to drink but the Department of Health guidance is that up to four glasses of wine a week can be consumed without harming the foetus.

Other studies, however, have concluded that even a tiny amount of alcohol during pregnancy can affect a baby's brain and central nervous system.

Studies have shown that only a third of mothers abstains from alcohol completely during pregnancy.

b.marsh@dailymail.co.uk

Inherited tragedy

n ... ...ies, hormonal imbalances and

Fighters 'beaten by UFO'

TWO F-16 fighter jets armed with air-to-air missiles were scrambled to race across Washington in pursuit of a mysterious blue object travelling at 'phenomenal speed'.

The jets lost it somewhere over Waldorf, Maryland, about 30 miles from the capital.

Military spokesmen said radar had detected an unknown object and two fighters from Andrews air force base were sent up to investigate.

They refused to speculate and would not describe it as a UFO.

Renny Rogers, who lives in Waldorf, said: 'I saw this light blue object. There was one jet right behind it, chasing it, but the object was just leaving him in the dust.'

£½m Picasso found in raid

POLICE have uncovered a stolen Picasso oil painting and 40 other valuable artworks at the home of a jobless man in France.

They were found under blankets in a broom cupboard at the flat in Ecully, near Lyon.

All were stolen from the Krugier Gallery in Geneva in 1993 and 1994. The Picasso, Ace of Clubs, is worth around £500,000.

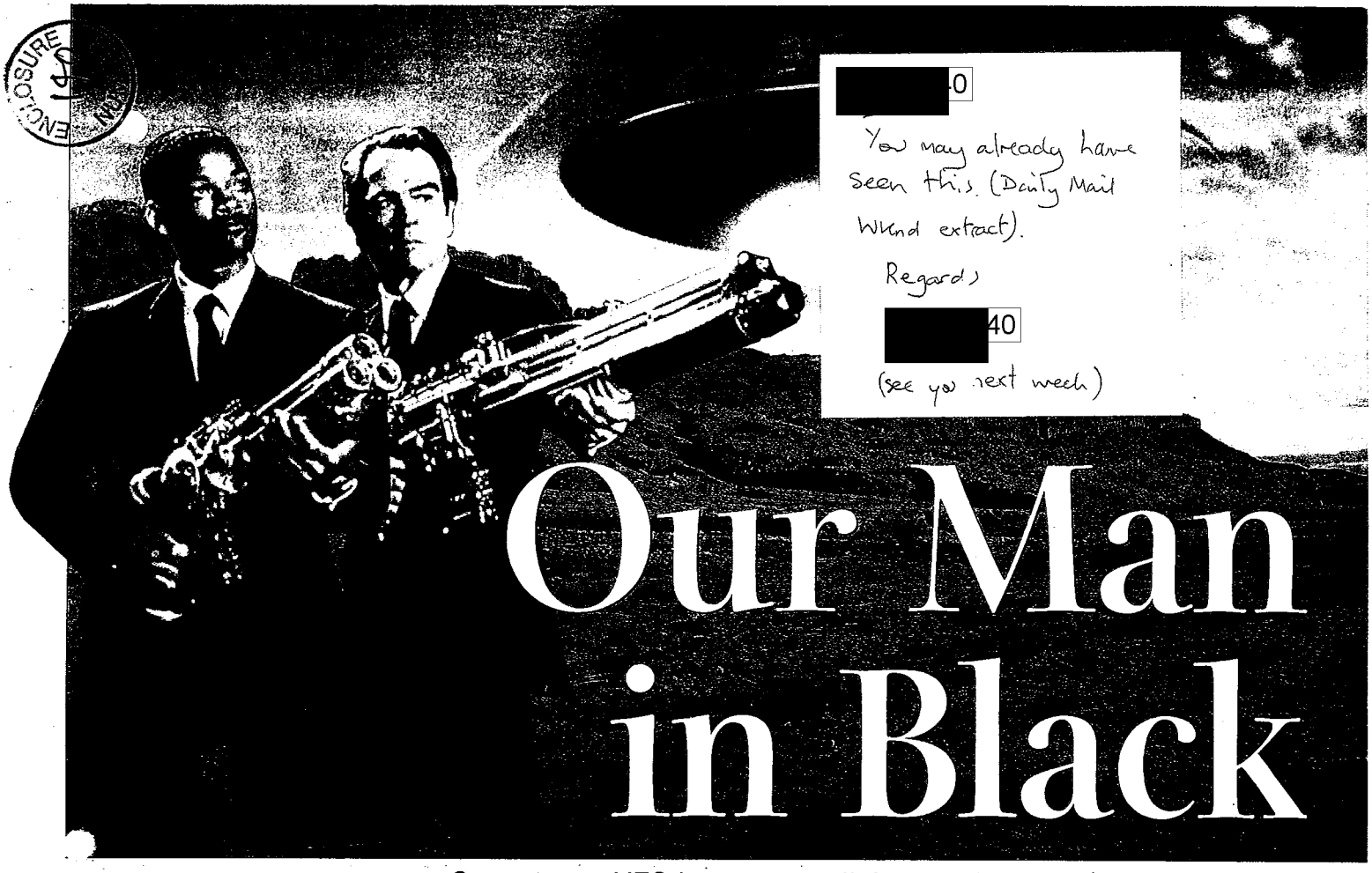
Police raided the 45-year-old man's flat after the gallery told them someone had phoned trying to sell the paintings back.

Quads born to gay couple

A LAWYER and beauty salon owner are believed to be the first gay couple to become parents of quadruplets – three boys and a girl born to a surrogate mother.

Attorney Michael Meehan, 36, is the biological father of the quads, who were born nine weeks early.

He and his partner Thomas Dysarz intend to raise the babies at their home in Lexington, Kentucky. The unidentified mother became pregnant by IVF.



[redacted]0

You may already have seen this. (Daily Mail Wknd extract).

Regards

[redacted]40

(see you next week)

Our Man in Black

Government UFO hunters are all the rage in films, but the authorities have always denied their existence – until now. As JULIAN CHAMPKIN reports, the recent release of confidential documents has revealed the identity of Britain's UFO hunter – and his secret mission...

A Mr Templeton from Carlisle has a strange tale to tell. Fifty years ago, he went to a lonely marsh; there he took a photograph of his young daughter in her best party frock. But when the photograph was developed, standing behind the girl was the figure of what seems to be an alien, in a spacesuit.

A little later, two men called on Mr Templeton. Dressed in black, they drove a new, black Jaguar car — a rarity in Carlisle back then. They questioned him; he asked their names. 'You do not need to know our names. We are government employees. You refer to us only by numbers. I am Number Nine; he is Number Eleven.' Then they drove away.

It sounds like a scene from The X Files — that's how Mulder and Scully pursue extraterrestrials. As did the Men in Black who, in the blockbuster and its sequel, fight ceaselessly to stop aliens invading the planet. Those men in black, for those who didn't see the original film, were government agents whose existence was officially denied. That was Hollywood fantasy, but shouldn't there actually be a real-life equivalent? What if UFOs really do threaten our world: is any government agency doing anything?

In fact, it now emerges that back in the 1950s, when flying saucers first gripped the public imagination, there really was a Man in Black. He was the head of a small, secret team investigating flying saucer activity. The rumour was that he worked from a room so secret that no lift reached it. Yet his mission, the reports he wrote, even the existence of that room from which he worked, were all officially denied.

But there *was* an official report written — the Flying Saucer Working Party Report Number Seven — and since then UFO believers have spent close on 50 years seeking it out. It has been their Holy Grail, the one official confirmation — perhaps — that UFOs exist. Nonsense, said the men from the Ministry of Defence. Any such reports, claimed the Ministry, had been destroyed, shredded, burned, or thrown out with the wastepaper long ago.

So was the Ministry of Defence incorrect, not quite accurate, or lying? Choose your own way of putting it. For the report has now surfaced. Other things have surfaced too — such as our mysterious Man in Black's centre of operations, that room so secret that its existence was denied. When one single newspaper report, back in 1951, mentioned Room 801 as the centre of government UFO investigations, the best traditions of Whitehall disinformation went into action. The lift in that building, they said, goes only up to the seventh floor.

Yet there was a Room 801, and it is still there. You can see it for yourself. Stand in Northumberland Avenue, near London's Whitehall, and look up at the rather Parisian-style building that was once the Metropole Hotel, before being taken over by the War Office. Its roof has one of those curved, slate-hung, pseudo-Baroque-style half-domes at the end. The room inside it is Room 801.

The Ministry of Defence was, in one sense, telling the truth. No lift reaches Room 801. The lifts *do* stop at the top floor, the seventh. That room under the curved eaves is reached only by a back stairway, and then by an open-air gangway built out across the roof. So private, so out-of-the-way, so hard to reach — but why?

> 'You do not need to know our names, only our numbers. We are government employees'



Encounters of the weird kind: In Men In Black, Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones played agents tracking down aliens, a job held in real-life by Myles Formby, below

Two investigators have discovered all this. Dr David Clarke and Andy Roberts are the men whose perseverance extracted Report Number Seven from the Ministry of Defence. 'It was the forthcoming Freedom of Information Act that finally produced it,' says Clarke. 'It comes into force in 2005, but evidently they have been told to begin acting in its spirit ahead of time. Even so, it took months.' Why? Embarrassment at previous denials, reluctance to admit they had once taken flying saucers seriously? 'All of those. But as well, I think they just didn't want to face the search through dusty files that it involved,' he says.

Now they have read the report; and it proves one thing. The British government, back in the days of the Cold War when flying saucer reports made newspaper headlines regularly, really did have a UFO hunter — and now, after 50 years, we know his name.

Wing Commander Myles Formby was the man who was told to research UFOs for the government. He had to investigate sightings of aliens, to find out what they were, and to establish

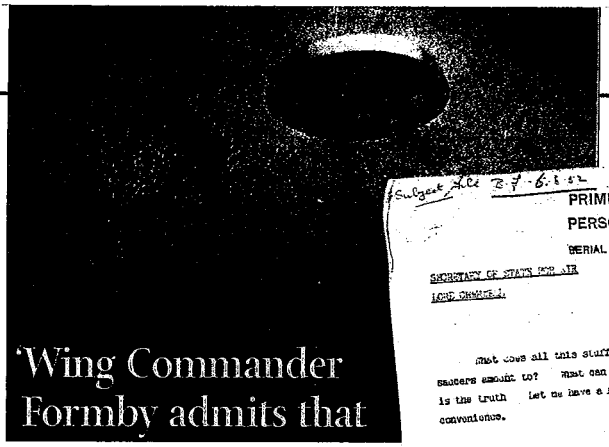
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PHOTOGRAPHS: RONALD GRANT/SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY/COURTESY OF DAVID CLARKE

FROM PAGE 21

what threat, if any, they posed. That is why he and his small band of colleagues toured the country, interviewing men with strange stories such as Mr Templeton, who took the photograph in Carlisle.

Now, 50 years of cover-up, 50 years of denial have crumbled in the face of a couple of dogged investigators and an impending change in the law; and the evidence is there, in the form of a six-page report and a man living in frail retirement on the coast of Northern Ireland. For Myles Formby is still alive, though in poor health. Clarke and Roberts have tracked him down. So who is he, and why was he given the job?



'Wing Commander Formby admits that one or two cases still intrigue him'

Myles Formby, our Ministry of Defence flying-saucer-hunter-in-chief, was, and is, a fluent linguist, proficient in Chinese. A career RAF officer, during the war he worked in intelligence, and flew small planes with secret dispatches in the Far East. After the war he became an expert on Russian aircraft — which was why he was chosen to track down flying saucers.

The first time the words 'flying saucer' were used was by an American pilot in 1947, who reported seeing strange shapes skimming across the sky in front of him at remarkable speed, 'like a saucer would if you skipped it across the water'. Soon everyone was seeing them, in Britain as well as America. And when RAF officers started seeing them too, the authorities had to start taking an interest.

'The Cold War was at its peak,' says Clarke. 'People expected a Russian attack daily. And they did not know what new sorts of planes the Russians might have. There was a real fear that the Soviets might have captured German experimental planes from the last days of World War II. And some of the experimental German rocket-plane designs really did look like round circular saucer-shapes — who knows what their performance might have been?'

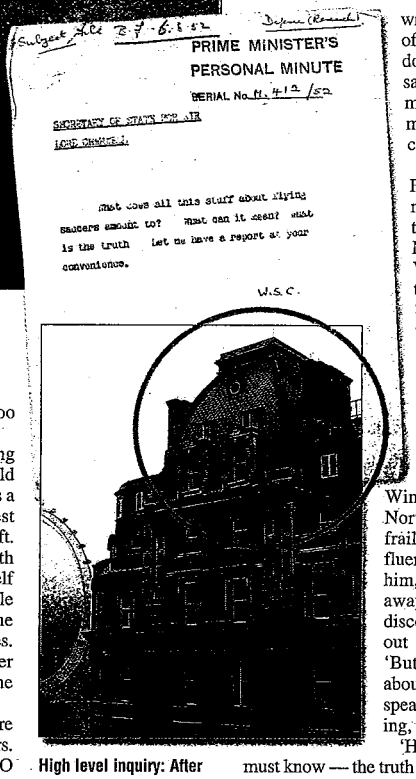
So when reports of strange, fast-moving saucer shapes in the sky began to appear, military authorities did not fear it was aliens from outer space: they feared it was the Russians. Which accounts for the choice of Wing Commander Formby to investigate them. There were not only strange lights and shapes in the sky; strange objects were appearing on radar screens as well — and radar was our first line of defence should World War III break out.

'There were all kinds of hair-trigger incidents,' says Roberts. 'In one, a warplane was scrambled and ordered to fire all its rockets at a UFO that suddenly appeared on radar screens over Suffolk. The pilot, with the target in his sights and his radar locked on to it, was seeking final authorisation to fire when the object, whatever it was, shot off too fast for him to catch.'

No wonder they wanted someone like the Wing Commander to work out which UFOs they should worry about, and which they should not. Here was a man who knew as much as anyone in the West about the different sorts of Russian military aircraft. But instead of looking at wonderful aircraft with revolutionary means of propulsion he found himself — a bit to his disgust, it appears — talking to people who had seen lights in the sky on their way home from the pub, and victims of photographic hoaxes. 'In general, the members of the Flying Saucer Working Party are not very enthusiastic,' said one internal memo.

Formby and the Flying Saucer Working Party were never convinced about the existence of flying saucers. Their Report Number Seven, the one that UFO believers hoped might show proof of a government cover-up about UFOs, is actually scathing on the subject. They found nothing that could not be explained as a weather balloon, an optical illusion, or a hoax. In 1951, after months of investigation, the report concluded, 'We recommend very strongly that no further investigation of reported mystery aerial phenomena be undertaken...' The MOD decided that the Russians had no terribly new sorts of planes, and that there were no aliens from space; Formby was stood down; and that should have been that.

However, just a few months later, a whole new spate of UFOs were seen over Washington, DC, and at a NATO exercise, and there was massive publicity. Presumably, had there really been aliens, their first words would have been 'Take me to your leader'. Our leader at the time was Winston Churchill, who wrote a memo to the Secretary of State for Air, asking, '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. W.S.C.'



PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL MINUTE

SERIAL No. M. 412/52

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AIR

LORD CHURCHILL

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.

W.S.C.

High level inquiry: After a spate of UFO sightings, Winston Churchill sent a memo asking to know what was going on. The matter was looked into at the mysterious Room 801, above

So the Ministry had to recall Formby and he had to spend more years investigating things that neither he nor the Ministry really believed in. Which perhaps accounts for the strange location of Room 801. Was it out of the way, at the top of the building, not for security reasons, but because the Ministry resented having to devote space to UFOs, and this was the nearest they could come to shutting it all up in a broom cupboard?

Clarke and Roberts found Wing Commander Formby in Northern Ireland. Despite his frailties, he could still speak fluent Chinese. 'When we found him, he came clean straight away. Everything that we had discovered, he confirmed, without reluctance,' says Roberts. 'But he knows much more; and about those things, he would not speak. He was unable, or unwilling, to say more.

'He knows, for example — he must know — the truth behind that Suffolk incident. Did a pilot really come within a whisker of shooting at something, or at nothing, or of accident setting off World War III, over East Anglia? He says he is still unconvinced of the existence of craft from other planets — but admits that one or two cases still intrigue him.'

But Wing Commander Formby is of that generation, that style of man, who took their duties to the nation seriously. Flying saucers might be old news now, and UFOs might no longer have the national importance or pose the national threat that they once seemed to; but the Official Secrets Act still applies. He has signed it, so he will stick to it and he will not tell. Old age and decency forbid that he be harassed. So some things we shall never know...

Britain's Men In Black is on the Discovery Channel on Wednesday at 10.30pm.

THE DAY OF MY LIFE



Writer and broadcaster NED SHERRIN tells RAY CONNOLLY about the day after the first night that was

It would have to be the morning after That Was The Week That Was started, Sunday, November 25, 1962. I was 31. The show had gone out at about ten o'clock on the Saturday night and David Frost and I met in a coffee bar in the King's Road the following day to go through the papers and think about the next week's show.

We weren't expecting any notices at all, but we got to the back page of the Sunday Telegraph and a woman called Pat Wallace had written the review we would like to have written ourselves.

From then on the feeling of that day was euphoric, because I got a call from Roy Kinnear who'd heard from his agent who'd said, 'Oh Roy, I'm so sorry. It was awful, I shouldn't have let you be in it. But I've talked to some very high up people in the BBC and they say they'll be taking it off very quickly, so you needn't worry about your future.'

Roy had gone out feeling a bit depressed and bumped into Tom Bell, the actor, who'd said, 'That was fantastic last night'.

The programme had been about 18 months in gestation. I'd been directing the Cliff Michelmore Tonight programme when the BBC had realised nothing really happened on TV late on a Saturday night. On the first show we had Frostie, Bernard Levin, Willie Rushton, Lance Percival, David Kernan, Timothy Birdsall, the cartoonist, Kenneth Cope, and Millicent Martin, for whom Caryl Brahms and I wrote the lyrics to her song at the beginning of every show.

There was a very funny sketch by Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall. They'd discovered that if you stood for parliament you could get out of the Army, so they had Roy Kinnear as the leader of the Army Deserters Party doing a party political broadcast. The satire label became attached to us, but satire had actually become fashionable again with Beyond The Fringe a year or so earlier. I remember I had a wonderful letter from a lady who wrote, 'When my son grows up I want him to be a satirist. Which school would you recommend I send him to?'

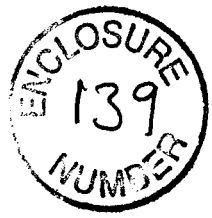
I don't suppose one did quite realise immediately that things were going to change, but you've only got to look at what BBC Light Entertainment felt they could do afterwards, programmes like Steptoe And Son and Till Death Us Do Part, to see how they did. The thing we tried to do was to make our programme researched and responsible and not just yah boo stuff.

Ned Sherrin presents Loose Ends, Radio 4, Saturday, 6.15pm, and edited the Dictionary Of Humorous Quotations, OUP.



Music man: Ned Sherrin with singer Millicent Martin

PHOTOGRAPHS: FOXTEAM PICTURE LIBRARY/PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE/DISCOVERY CHANNEL/BBC ARCHIVE



Traveller of the week

An illegal immigrant who decided he didn't like British life has been jailed after trying to smuggle himself back home to Albania. Besim Elezi, 30, was caught with a false Italian passport at Dover as he tried to leave the country on a coach. He arrived last month hidden on a lorry, but after 10 days decided that Britain was not as nice as he had been expecting. At Canterbury crown court he was jailed for six months for possessing false documents. At the end of his sentence he will be deported.

Oddballs of the week

"I've met about 16 alien varieties, from those who look like the Pillsbury Doughboy to ones that look like a blue Big Bird," said Bonnie Meyer, a presenter at the annual UFO Daze event in Dundee, Wisconsin. Her first encounter came during a camping trip in 1976 when a craft landed on a nearby road. "A ladder dropped down and an alien in a silver suit waved me over," she said. "At first I wasn't going to go, but I figured I'd never have that opportunity again." Since then aliens have visited her at home on several occasions, always putting up a force field so that her neighbours don't notice. Meyer was speaking after 150 spectators at the annual rally watched mysterious lights moving across the sky. "Aliens have always been friendly and kind," she insisted.

For Info

[redacted]

Dr Clarke looked at Material that has been in the PRO for years. There was nothing newly released

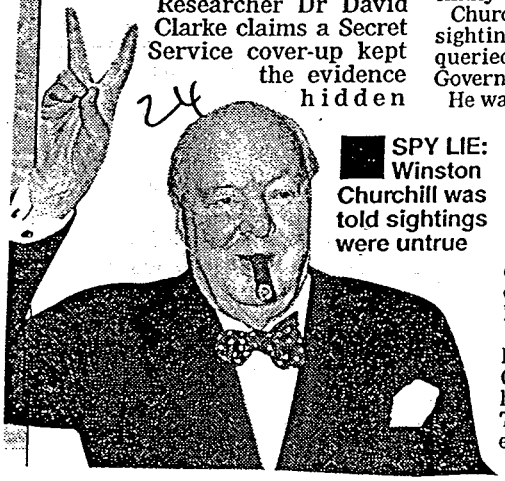
Daily Star
29 June 2002

UFOs SPY ON AIR BASES

UFOs have been spying on British air bases for 60 years, according to an astonishing new report.

Researcher Dr David Clarke claims a Secret Service cover-up kept the evidence hidden

■ by ADAM KENNET



SPY LIE: Winston Churchill was told sightings were untrue

from wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill and his many successors.

Churchill heard of flying saucer sightings during air battles and queried them, recently-released Government papers reveal.

He was told that tales of sightings over the UK were "a myth" but, then and since, security service agents interviewed RAF pilots who reported sightings.

Retired Wing Commander Ron Hubbard twice saw disc-shaped craft flying over the RAF base at Farnborough in 1950.

The former flyer, then an RAF test pilot, told Dr Clarke: "The spinning and hovering were incredible. There is no technology on earth even now which could make such things."

ENCLOSURE 138

The Sun
29 June 2002
Page 2

RAF fun run un-bear-able

From ANTONELLA LAZZERI
at Bagram Airbase

AN RAF helicopter squad went on a 40-mile run with a 2ft teddy bear yesterday in the scorching 40°C Afghan heat.

Fourteen members of 27 Squadron made the dash from Bargram Airbase to the capital Kabul to raise cash for the Marie Curie cancer charity.

The bear — known as Flying Officer Teddy Bear — was sent out to Afghanistan by the charity bosses to lend a helping paw with a variety of fund-raising duties undertaken by the Chinook squadron.

Since then he has flown on combat missions and even done sentry duty. When he returns to Britain with Our Boys next month he will be auctioned off to raise more cash.

RAF girl Abigail Ellis, 30, who has been in charge of Flying Officer Bear, said: "He's been an outstanding team member."

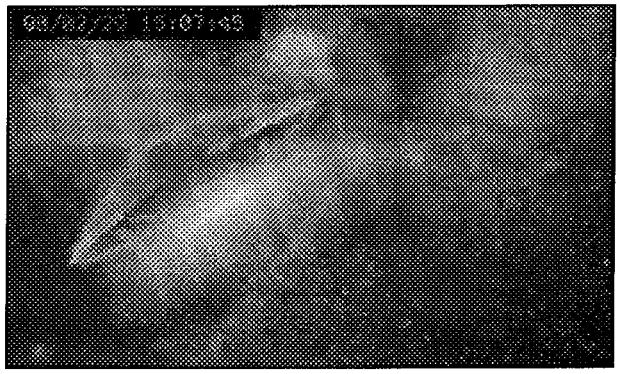
AT least 10 people died yesterday when an ammunition depot blew up in the southern Afghanistan town of Spin Boldak. Some witnesses claimed it was hit by a rocket fired by al-Qa'ida fugitives.

EXHIBIT 137

Monday, 24 June, 2002, 10:16 GMT 11:16 UK

Scotland dubbed 'top alien nation'

Northern



Bonnybridge tops the list for reported sightings

WORLD CUP

BBC SPORT

BBC Weather

SERVICES
Daily E-mail
News Ticker
Mobiles/PDAs
Feedback
Help
Low Graphics

Scotland can rightly lay claim to being the "Costa Del Sol" for aliens, according to tourism officials.

They are pointing to a survey which says that Scotland has the highest concentration of reported sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) of any country in the world.

The results have been published to coincide with International UFO Day and refer to 300 reported UFO sightings in Scotland a year.

According to the study, Scotland also recorded the highest number of reported UFO sightings per head of population.

The researchers said Scotland had 0.004 reported UFO sightings per square kilometre and one sighting per 17,000 inhabitants.

> **"In 90% of UFO reports, a bit of diligent research will produce a simple explanation, but that still leaves 10% remaining unexplained"**
>
> **Graham Birdsall, UFO magazine**

The research was commissioned by VisitScotland, the national tourist organisation.

A spokesman said: "This confirms that Scotland is the nearest thing there is to the Costa del Sol for aliens."

The village of Bonnybridge in Stirlingshire has become a hub for UFO enthusiasts following

WATCH/LISTEN ON THIS STORY

Author Ron Halliday
"People have seen all kinds of things in the Bonnybridge area"

BBC's Huw Williams
"So far this morning, no bright lights in the sky"

Stuart Campbell, author and UFO sceptic
"I have never been stumped"

See also:

14 Nov 00 | Scotland
First contact for UFO mecca?
04 Jan 00 | Scotland
UFOs lure Japanese TV firm
12 Jun 98 | UK
They came from space ...
01 Jul 98 | Sci/Tech
UFOs mystify scientists
25 Jun 98 | Entertainment
Roswell space alien breaks its silence

Internet links:

VisitScotland
International UFO and Research Centre

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Man accused of biker murder
Union makes nuclear site plea

Links to more Scotland stories are at the foot of the page.

numerous reports of sightings.

Visitor centre

The area became known as the "Falkirk triangle" and other "sightings" have been recorded in neighbouring West Lothian.

Bonnybridge councillor Billy Buchanan has called for a UFO visitors' centre to be built in the village.

Stirling-based UFO writer Ron Halliday said: "When you think of the number of sightings in Scotland compared to the size of its population, it is phenomenal."


Bonnybridge: Another dimension?

Of the Bonnybridge "phenomenon", he said: "One theory is that the area around Bonnybridge is some kind of window into another dimension.

"That would explain why some people see a UFO and others don't - because a UFO is some kind of paranormal phenomenon rather than a nuts and bolts spaceship.

"People are not so much seeing little green men as little grey men, tall grey men and different varieties of types."

Mr Halliday said it was important to emphasise that although there had been many reports of sightings, it was impossible to say that every one was an alien entity.

"But it does seem to be a bit of a mystery why Bonnybridge should be a target of spaceships from other planets."

Alien concept

Graham Birdsall, editor of UFO magazine, said: "UFOs tend to be attracted to regions that are fairly remote.

"Plus, if you have a remote area, look out for airbases - Scotland is littered with airbases.

"In 90% of UFO reports, a bit of diligent

research will produce a simple explanation, but that still leaves 10% remaining unexplained."

However, Stuart Campbell, author of The UFO Mystery Solved, said he had "never been stumped" to explain a reported sighting.

"I claim that 100 percent (of reports) are explainable, it just depends how many explanations you have available.

"I have never found one that I couldn't explain."

E-mail this story to a friend

Links to more Scotland stories

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FOCUS

By Hamish Mackenzie

Flying

After 50 years, the cover-up conspiracy goes on...

ON A raised platform beneath the galleried ceiling of the prestigious National Press Club in Washington DC, a group of men and women, all experts in their chosen field, waited patiently as the large hall filled with more than 150 journalists from newspapers and TV stations from all over the world.

For almost two hours, one by one, more than 20 "eye-witnesses" – amongst them US Army and Air Force officers, Nasa scientists, nuclear missile silo commanders and employees of large corporations – described their experiences to the assembled press. Some spoke of inexplicable encounters with unidentified lights and objects in the air, others of the crashes of strange craft, of "unaccountable, unelected and illegal projects". Yet others even claimed to be involved with the "back-engineering of advanced technology".

Many expressed frustration at their failure to be taken seriously. All referred to a worldwide conspiracy to keep the truth from governments and public alike. As each individual spoke there was hushed attention, as each sat down applause filled the room. At one point a cameraman for a US TV station was heard to say: "Bloody hell, this is amazing – bloody hell."

And yet, since that day in May 2001, the silence has been deafening.

Last year, the Sunday Express was the first newspaper to publish an article on the Disclosure Project, a US-based UFO group whose stated aim is to press the US Congress for an open hearing.

'CIA men took all the material from a meeting about a 747's UFO encounter, then told us it didn't happen'

The group's founder, Dr Steven Greer, claims he is continuing to gather "deep-insider witnesses" who, if released from their security oaths, would tell Congress what they know about an alleged cover-up of the existence of UFOs and extra-terrestrials as well as the possession of their advanced, life-changing technology.

But one year on, the Project seems nowhere nearer achieving its goal, despite positive feedback from US Senators and overwhelming interest from the public via their website. Dr Greer is now concentrating on a grassroots effort to spread the word via a global network of representatives.

"This is the best chance we have had in 50 years to find out what is really going on," says David Williams, one of the Disclosure Project's UK representatives. Now an IT director in the finance industry, he is a former crypto-analyst in the Royal Signals, once based in Whitehall.

"While I was there I had Top Secret clearance, and the continuous flow of UFO reports that crossed my desk intrigued me," he says. "They came from everywhere, and I forwarded them on to various MoD and Government departments.

"I don't know what happened to them after they left me. I have been trying to find out ever since, and after the 2001 press conference I decided to get involved with the Disclosure Project. It only needs the wider public to realise that one of the witnesses, someone like John Callahan, is telling the truth for the whole thing to be blown wide open."

John Callahan, a former senior investigator with the Accidents and Investigations Branch of the US Federal Aviation Authority, is a bluff and imposing presence. His story, like the man, is hard to dismiss. At the press conference he recalled how, on November 18, 1986, the pilots of Japan Airlines Flight 1628, flying over Alaska, reported they were seeing "a huge ball with lights running around it... four times as big as a 747". The sighting was significant because the object was simultaneously being recorded on ground-based radar at Anchorage Air Traffic Control.

The flight crew and ground radar operators watched as the UFO performed aerobatics and flew at speeds beyond the capability of any known aircraft. At one point the captain expressed concern at the effects the object appeared to be having on his instruments. After more than half an hour, the "strange craft" disappeared and the 747 landed safely.

THE FOLLOWING day Mr Callahan attended a hurriedly convened meeting at the request of Admiral Engen, then Administrator of the Federal Aviation Authority. This meeting was attended by all of those directly involved and, claimed Mr Callahan, three anonymous CIA men. He says these men confiscated all the audio, radar recordings, printouts and documents associated with the previous day's events and "told us this had never happened and we had never had this meeting". He paused for effect. "I took copies of everything before the meeting. They never asked anyone if we had copies, so I never told them I did."

There was a flurry of clicking cameras as Mr Callahan held up numerous documents and invited the audience to inspect them later. But many who were at the press conference were bemused at the subsequent lack of publicity for the event.

"Perhaps the media were taken aback by the seriousness of what they heard and just did not know how to handle it," David Williams remarks. "It is surprising no one has even tried to discredit the witnesses. Why have the big US corporations [Lockheed Martin, Northrop, Boeing and others] named as part of the cover-up, not objected and sued?" Only last month the US newspaper Florida Today contributed to the continuing speculation on how an event "with testimony designed to be so compelling the [national] media couldn't possibly freeze it out" had been left in the cold.

"We were disappointed but not surprised by the limited coverage," says Dr Greer, an accident and emergency doctor who now devotes all his time to the Project. "So we took our message direct to the people – local radio, TV and well-attended public meetings."

Since the press conference, it has emerged that Dr Greer is not alone in seeking to persuade the US Government to support disclosure.

Charles Huffer, a US-based UFO researcher, met the then campaigning Governor George Bush in 2000. Live on CNN, Huffer secured a promise from Bush that when in office he would "get right on to" the UFO issue and tell the people what was really going on. Once in power this campaign promise has been ignored, and last year one of Huffer's supporters went on hunger strike in protest.



CLUSTER CONUNDRUM : The US Coast Guard released this picture taken at Salem, Massachusetts, in 1952

saucers



GIVE US THE FACTS: Disclosure is our best hope for finding out about UFOs, says former Royal Signals analyst David Williams



LIGHTS FANTASTIC: A UFO photographed over Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1984

This year US business development consultant Stephen Bassett plans to run as an independent in the 8th Congressional District of Maryland on the UFO disclosure ticket. The election, in November, is expected to be hotly contested. Bassett's objective is to win sufficient votes to have a say in bringing the issue before Congress.

But interest among the general public has also been considerable. The Project's press conference was broadcast and watched live over the Internet by almost a quarter of a million people. "It was the largest webcast in history," says Dr Greer.

Since then a further million have downloaded a recording of the event from the Disclosure Project website, which has received more than six million hits since May last year. Dr Greer reports that more than 100 new witnesses have come forward, several from the UK.

"This is not surprising," says Denis Plunkett, head of the British Flying Saucer Bureau, still an active organisation though wrongly reported last year to have closed down. "For 50 years I have been receiving reports from military personnel and police officers. Most did not want any publicity, they were just trying to understand what they had seen."

When asked if the Sunday Express could interview a UK witness, Dr Greer said: "We do not want to reveal any of our new witnesses now. There will be another press conference later in the year, which we are planning to broadcast on cable and satellite TV."

One concern for many observers has been that the Project may not be as rigorous as it needs to be when screening witnesses. And there does appear to have been some dissension within the ranks. Some witnesses feel that the more exotic stories, such as contact with aliens, should have been excluded.

"There is enough out there – unusual aerial craft that need explanation," said a source who did not want to be named. And at least one prominent witness has requested that his name be withdrawn from the Project as he feels some of the conclusions being drawn from the testimonies are "a step too far". Edgar Mitchell, the Apollo 14 astronaut, and one of the few men to have set foot on the moon, is no longer a Disclosure Project witness, though he continues to support its aims. "I still believe that governments should open their files on the UFO subject, but we don't seem to be much closer to that, though likely it will happen sooner or later," he told the Sunday Express.

'There are too many people who have seen something they can't explain to keep all this secret forever'

"I am not a 'witness' of UFO events either in space or on Earth. I don't have any first-hand experience, but I have discussed the matter with some 'old timers' who do have first-hand knowledge."

One of the big tests of the Disclosure Project in the future will be the quality of the new witnesses and its openness to the sort of scrutiny it is claiming should be directed at others. The history of UFO sightings has been tarnished by fabrication – not just by people seeking attention but even by UFO researchers.

In the past few months, a prominent group has admitted planting false information to discredit others in an apparent attempt to prove that the whole UFO phenomenon can be dismissed.

"Is it possible we have been scammed by some witnesses? Yes. Do I think it likely? No," says Dr Greer, his hackles rising. "We are not the CIA, we can't afford to run $50,000 background checks on everyone. Our objectives are to disclose the truth to the public and to persuade Congress to hold an open hearing.

"Over 20,000 letters have gone out from constituents all over the US to their Congressmen. We have received numerous expressions of serious interest from Senators. Only last week I had a Congressman ring and ask us to give him a private briefing.

"To get a Congressional hearing one of three things will have to happen," Dr Greer continues. "The media will have to call for it, or the public need to be heard asking for it, or there has to be a massive, undeniable UFO event."

WHAT IS clear is that a large number of individuals have come forward and made statements whose implications, if true, are profound. If the witnesses are who they say they are – and are found to be lying – then we should be very concerned about the type of individuals who fly our planes, control air traffic, man the missile silos and protect our communities.

If, on the other hand, the witnesses are telling the truth then – no matter how extraordinary – this is a serious issue. "If we believe them," says David Williams, "then we have to accept that we are not alone. Someone is covering up and we should want to know why.

"We may have been deceived by some of our witnesses, but not by all of them," he continues. "There are too many people who have seen something they can't explain. Those trying to keep the secrets rely upon most of us being too busy with our lives to be bothered. But more and more people are getting interested, and one day there will be enough to demand that governments tell us what they know."

● *For more information contact David Williams at disclosureproject@btinternet.com or visit the Project's website at www.disclosureproject.org*

EXHIBIT 135

DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1

From: DAS-LA-AD
Sent: 23 May 2002 09:04
To: DAS-LA-Ops+Pol
Cc: DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1
Subject: RE: UFO - Reports in Daily Star/The Sun

Importance: Low

[redacted]on 40
Thanks. Strangely, I did not react adversely to this story. I just took it to be a tabloid interpretation of the syllabus (I presume there is discussion as part of the teaching process about bright lights etc that aircrew might experience). But as we say: "we believe that rational ....."
[redacted]40

-----Original Message-----
From: DAS-LA-Ops+Pol
Sent: 22 May 2002 09:41
To: DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1
Cc: DAS-LA-AD; DASDD
Subject: UFO - Reports in Daily Star/The Sun
Importance: Low

DD/LA AD/Ops Pol1:
A photocopy of a page in the press cuttings (sent in to OpsPol offices by [redacted]on 40 alleged that officer cadets at Cranwell were being given a UFO briefing.

I have spoken with the CRO's office at Cranwell to find out what their line was and whether there had been any press contact.

Their line is that there is no truth in the story; officer cadets are not being given lessons on UFO and their identification.

The only enquiry they received following the printing of the two articles was from BFBS (Forces Broadcasting Service) who wanted to run a piece - if the story was correct.
[redacted]n 40

[redacted]

file

Financial Times
16 May 2002
Page 2

RAF forced to employ private helpers

By James Mackintosh

The Royal Air Force is so stretched it is having to hire private cooks and truck drivers to give support staff at its forward bases a chance to see their families.

The RAF has hired locals in the Balkans and Sierra Leone to assist military chefs as it struggles to cope with its new role as support for rapid reaction forces around the world. In the Gulf it has hired local haulage contractors.

"The thing is that when new operations come up, the old operations don't seem to go away," said one senior officer. "If only operations would stop when new ones come up things would be easier."

The RAF has used private caterers in the Falklands for several years, but the multiplicity of missions recently has increased the focus on contracting out support services.

It has also launched a recruitment campaign focused on what the RAF calls "enablers" – cooks, firefighters, air transport staff, technicians and medics.

Geoff Hoon, defence secretary, warned last month that the military was "at the limit of our commitments", a statement widely regarded as a pre-Budget pitch for more cash.

But the RAF's staff shortages have been caused by the need to keep forward bases functioning while giving support staff time off in the UK to see their families and undergo training.

The problems have been exacerbated by requests from allies for British support staff to remain even after UK aircraft are pulled out. Apart from Britain, only the US and France are thought to have appropriately trained support staff for rapid reaction.

Officers were keen to play down talk of a crisis yesterday, saying that the level of stretch was "under control".

The UK has aircrews stationed in the Falklands, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Turkey and Gulf countries from which aircraft are patrolling the Iraqi southern no-fly zone.

The threat from Iraqi air defences has intensified in past weeks after a shake-up of the way Iraq runs its anti-aircraft units. According to officers at RAF Strike Command, there have been several near-misses since Iraq gave more autonomy to operators of anti-aircraft missiles.

Daily Star
16 May 2002

UFO lesson for pilots

RAF pilots are being taught how to identify and report UFOs.

All new officer cadets at the RAF College in Cranwell, Lincs now learn about all types of aerial phenomena, including UFOs.

The reason why the subject is on the curriculum is because RAF pilots are continuing to report sightings of strange objects.

One sighting by RAF pilots of a UFO features in the aerial phenomena lectures.

It happened in 1990 when three Tornado jets encountered an object over the North Sea.

Video footage showed a long cigar shaped object flying parallel to the aircraft at a distance of about two miles. It then shot off upwards at 6,000mph.

The Sun
16 May 2002

RAF learn to spot 'aliens'

NEW RAF pilots are being taught how to spot and report UFOs.

Cadets at the RAF College in Cranwell, Lincs, are shown video footage of a 1990 sighting.

Tornado pilots watched a cigar-shaped object for six minutes near the Dutch border.

The Daily Telegraph
16 May 2002
Page 25

Letters to the Editor

Show me the light

SIR – Denis Plunkett writes: "[It] requires just one sighting to be proved genuine for us to realise that we are not alone in the cosmos" (letter, May 14). Quite. In view of the tremendous amount of man- and instrument-power devoted towards that end, one wonders why no such sighting has taken place.

In fact, I suspect that, 50 years ago, far more people believed in flying saucers than do so today, with the RAF and the USAF charged to investigate every sighting. The ever-present "conspiracy theorists" tell us that military pilots were told to keep any such sightings "secret". As a Royal Navy fighter pilot of that era, I can assure you that I received no such instructions and have confirmed with colleagues that they also did not.

In a sense, we all wanted to believe in "flying saucers" and looked for them avidly. We saw many meteorites and other wonderful natural phenomena. The only flying saucer I and my colleagues saw was on the stage of *Salad Days*.

Geoffrey Sherman
Commander, RN
Kilgetty, Pembrokeshire

Classification
Caveat
Covering

F Sigs 927
(int.9/92)

134

Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Transmission Details		Document Details
Serial Number:	Date and time of transmission: **25 April 02**	Reference(s): **DI SEC/ 10/8/3**
From: [redacted] **DI Sec 4**	Fax Number: [redacted]	Tel no. [redacted]
To: [redacted] **DAS**	Fax Number: [redacted]	Subject: **Unclass: Britain's x files**
	Total Number of pages including this cover sheet	**3**

Authorising Officer	Transmit Operators
Rank, Name and Appointment: [redacted] **DI Sec 4**	Rank/grade and Name:
Signature:	Signature:

Message/Remarks:

[redacted] 40

Hi! I attach the article from today's Express – it gives a flavour of the Radio 4 programme tonight.

[redacted]

[redacted] Thanks DI Sec sent me this article from today's Express. The Press office have also had some questions from the Western Daily Press who have seen this article. After a long discussion with [redacted] D News HEO, he thought he could answer their questions but I have sent him some info anyway, as attached.

DI are going to record the Radio 4 programme tonight and let us have a copy.

[redacted] 25/4/2002

Covering
Caveat
Classification

The Express
25 April 2002

Revealed: The spook truth abou Britain's own X File

The X Files may be seem to be just Hollywood fantasy but two historians will reveal on a Radio 4 programme tonight that the British government set up its own shadowy team to discover the truth about flying saucers in the Fifties. SALLY EYDEN unearths the details about the government's search for UFOs and finds that fact is stranger than fiction

IN THE years after the Second World War, the skies above were buzzing – not just with aircraft but also flying saucers. Ever since the phrase had been coined by a US airman in 1947, sightings were being reported up and down the country. In Clacton-On-Sea in Essex people reported seeing silvery discs skidding across the sky and in Putney, South-west London, another object was spotted whizzing between the clouds. People wanted answers.

The government was so concerned about these strange, disc-like craft that seemingly performed impossible manoeuvres and travelled at incomprehensible speeds that it set up a top secret department in 1950 to try to discover the truth about UFOs. This X Files-style unit, called the Working Party on Flying Saucers, contained the best scientific and military minds in Britain. Yet its very existence was denied by the Ministry of Defence for almost 50 years.

Now, two social historians have seen documents released from the the Public Record Office which prove that the department existed. Dr David Clarke and Andy Roberts will detail their findings on a Radio 4 programme tonight. Dr Clarke says: "After years of searching for something we only suspected existed, we found this incredible six-page document and the minutes of the original meeting to set the unit up."

The secret research into the sightings began in 1950 but ended a year later, concluding that what had been seen were nothing more than mirages, optical illusions or psychological delusions on the part of the witnesses. The case on the subject apparently seemed closed.

But despite these findings the sightings continued during the Fifties and people were still asking questions. Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill, worried at rumours of UFOs flying over Washington DC, sent a memo to the War Ministry asking: "What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to? What can it mean?" He was told not to worry and shown the findings of the report, detailed in Clarke and Roberts's new book called Out Of The Shadows: UFOs, The Establishment And The Official Cover-Up. Clarke believes that the cover-up was nothing to do with the existence of little green men, but everything to do with the Cold War. "This was a time of great paranoia and fear," he says. "The government took the decision to say as little about the sightings as possible because of fears about the inadequacy of our radar system."

Declassified government documents from June 1965 show that it was "official MoD policy to play down the subject of unidentified flying objects and to avoid attaching undue public attention or publicity to the subject, as a result we have never had any political pressure to mount a large-scale investigation". Another document states: "The press are never to be given information about unusual radar sightings, and unusual visual sightings are in no circumstances to be disclosed in the press."

Clarke is sceptical over the existence of alien crafts but throughout his four years of research, interviewing high-ranking military personnel in command at the time of this UFO activity, he has come across evidence that his theory of mass paranoia cannot explain.

In 1952, pilots Air Commodore Mick Swiney and Royal Navy Lieutenant Commander David Crofts were flying in a Meteor Seven advanced aircraft when they saw three flying saucers near Gloucester.

THE UFOs were also spotted on the RAF radar and other fighter planes were scrambled to assess the threat. The pilots were so unnerved by what they saw that they recorded it in the flight log book. The pair, now retired, recounted their experiences to Clarke and Roberts. Both have tried to find out more about what happened on that day but the Ministry of Defence denies that the event ever happened.

The MoD has always claimed that it has never actively investigated UFOs. A spokesperson says: "We remain totally open-minded but we have no interest in UFOs unless they constitute a threat to national security. It is not the X Files – we do have reports of sightings and almost all of them are explained and it is not our role to establish those that aren't."

But despite this claim, the MoD continues to look into the 300 sightings reported each year to a little-known department called the Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a. This is the X Files of the British government, which would make Nick Pope – who worked on the desk during the Nineties – the British version of Fox Mulder.

Pope joined the department as a sceptic about UFOs but when he left in 1994 he was a believer in the existence of alien craft. One event in particular changed his perception.

Looking back through the archives one day, he came across documentation of what he believes is Britain's first UFO landing. On December 27, 1980 two security patrolmen reported seeing unusual lights in Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk to Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt, Commander of US Air Force base Bentwaters near Woodbridge.

The men reported seeing "a strange glowing object, metallic in appearance and triangular in shape". It had a "pulsing red light on top and a bank of blue lights underneath". Lt Col Halt wrote in a memo sent to the MoD that this "object was hovering, or on legs. As the patrolmen approached, it manoeuvred through the trees and disappears. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went in to a frenzy".

The next day depressions were found in the forest and significant radiation readings were discovered in the immediate area. This incident was not only revealed in US documents, unearthed by researchers,

The Express
25 April 2002

but also in MoD reports. One of the officials who has seen this report is Lord Hill-Norton, former Chief of Defence. He is convinced that the incident is proof of the existence of extra-terrestrials.

He says: "There is a serious possibility that we are being visited - and have been visited for many years - by people from outer space, from other civilisations; that it behoves us to find out who they are, where they come from and what they want."

It seems that these sightings are not random but occur in hotspots, many in areas with a military significance. Pope was called in to investigate an incident in the early hours of March 31, 1993. "There had been lots of sightings that night," he says. "The UFOs were seen passing over two military bases in Shropshire, RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury. It was described by one military witness as being a vast, triangular craft, only slightly smaller that a jumbo jet. It flew slowly over the bases, travelling at a height of 200ft, firing a narrow beam of light at the ground, before flying off at high speed."

At the same base 24 years earlier a UFO was tracked on radar systems and two RAF jets were scrambled to intercept the craft. The pilots recounted how they engaged in a game of cat and mouse, with the UFO accelerating just before the planes were able to lock on to the target. The mysterious craft was too quick for the jets.

But it is not just Air Force bases that have been visited by UFOs. More than 60,000 sightings have been made in Bonnybridge, near Falkirk in central Scotland, since 1991. And only yesterday there was yet another sighting of mysterious objects in the sky over Bonsall Moor, Derbyshire.

Pope has suggested that 95 per cent of all sightings can be explained by natural phenomena. Dr Jacqueline Milton of the Royal Astronomical Society says: "Many people see meteors, shooting stars, even the bright planet Venus and think it is a UFO. People have looked up to the sky throughout history and interpreted what they saw as being supernatural or not of this Earth. However, in the past it was dragons or witches. Now we are living in an age where space travel could be possible – so people now see UFOs instead."

SO IF This accounts for the 95 per cent, what of the elusive five per cent? Lionel Fanthorpe, President of the British UFO Research Association, believes these sightings prove we are not alone. He says: "If only one star in a thousand has a planet system and only one planet system in a thousand can support life, then statistically, we are not alone in the universe."

Pope, who still works for the MoD, says: "You have to consider that the committee members liaised with the Americans about UFO research in the Fifties. The conclusions the British government made seemed to exactly mirror what the American's were telling its public. I believe that the truth is still out there."

● *Britain's X Files, BBC Radio 4, tonight, 8pm.*

The Express
25 April 2002

A blow for wind farms

DEFENCE chiefs are blocking government plans to use more green energy by building wind farms – because they threaten national security. The Government backs proposals to erect 18 new wind farms on hillsides to meet its target of generating 10 per cent of electricity from infinite resources such as wind, wave and solar power by 2010.

Ministry of Defence officials are opposing five of the farms, all near RAF bases, as they say they interfere with air traffic control and could provide cover for enemy aircraft. Experts say the wind turbines create a radar shadow behind them. However, A Friends of the Earth spokesman said: "Other countries have overcome similar problems."

DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1

To: D News HEO
Subject: Press Enquires about UFOs

[redacted]0

Following our discussions earlier today about the enquiries from the Western Daily Press, I have now seen The Express article and attach a few paragraphs that might help with any further enquiries you may receive. I have included something on our change of title as you asked about this. Please give me a call if you need any more information. I would appreciate it if you could also keep me informed if there is any more press or media interest in this.

PRESS-THE
EXPRESS 25 April 200...

[redacted]
DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1
MT6/73 [redacted]

- 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 air 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 reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

- The integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous surveillance of the UK Air Policing Area by the RAF. 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 Policing Area 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. The vast majority of reports we receive are very sketchy and vague. Only a handful of reports in recent years have warranted further investigation and none revealed any evidence of a threat.

- In August 1950 a Working Party was set up (at the suggestion of Sir Henry Tizard) who thought "flying saucers should be investigated". Records show that the 11th meeting of the Joint Technical Intelligence Committee (June 1951) received the Chairman's Report of the "Flying Saucer Working Party". The Committee decided that "the document should be regarded as the final report and, in view of the conclusions the Working Party should be dissolved". The Chairman (Mr. G. L. Turney DS13) went on to say that, "following the lead given by the Americans on this subject, the report should have as little publicity as possible and outside circulation should be confined to one copy, for Sir Henry Tizard".

Files containing minutes of the JTIC have been available at the Public Record Office for a number of years. The report mentioned above was not on these files and it was thought that a copy had not survived. However, last year, during a routine review of files which had been retained in the Department, a copy of this report was found on an unrelated file. The report was removed from the file, downgraded, and has been released to the PRO.

- Following the merger of Directorate of Air Staff and Secretariat (Air Staff) last year, the section Secretariat (Air Staff)2a is now known as Directorate of Air Staff (Lower Airspace) Operations and Policy 1. This is still the focal point within the MOD for UFO correspondence and there has been no change in the way in which UFO reports and correspondence are handled.

- 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. However, to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

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CLOSE OF THE

The Mail opens the Buckingham Palace X-Files and finds that Prince Philip (an avid reader of Flying Saucer Review) appointed his own investigator into visitors from space . . .

THE alien craft was shaped like a cross between an upturned saucepan and a child's spinning top. It was 20 to 30 feet in diameter, the colour of aluminium, with portholes around the side. And it was hovering over the home of Lord Louis Mountbatten, one of the most senior members of the British Royal Family.

The remarkable apparition was reported in February 1955 by a bricklayer called Briggs. In a signed statement, he told how he had spotted the flying saucer while on his way to work at Broadlands, Mountbatten's country residence in Hampshire.

Briggs described how he had dismounted from his bicycle as the saucer hovered, and was amazed to see a tube descend from its centre. A platform appeared in the tube, containing a man. He was wearing a dark suit or overalls and a close-fitting helmet.

As he watched, Briggs was suddenly overcome by an 'unseen force' which caused him to stumble. The tube retracted into the flying saucer, which suddenly shot straight up into the sky and disappeared.

Later, the flying saucer and its occupant returned. Communicating via telepathy, the alien being invited Briggs on board and whisked him off to see the Egyptian pyramids — a round trip that lasted just ten minutes.

Before he was returned to Hampshire, the aliens told the bricklayer: 'If Lord Mountbatten met us, he could change the world.'

Sceptics might have their own view of this tale, but Mountbatten himself was fascinated. His personal records show that he questioned his employee closely. Then, accompanied by another of his workers, he visited the scene of the sighting.

They found marks in the snow consistent with Briggs' account of his movements, but there was no evidence of the UFO's visit.

But the very fact that Mountbatten took so much trouble to check out the story speaks volumes about the seriousness with which he — and other members of the Royal Family and military elite — took the whole strange subject of extra-terrestrial activity.

As we will see, those who came to share his interest included the Battle of Britain mastermind Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, the British Army general Sir Frederick 'Boy' Browning, and — most astonishingly of all — Mountbatten's nephew, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

By the early Fifties, a significant number of this discreet 'gentleman's club' had become convinced that Earth was under observation by aliens.

To this day, Prince Philip has every issue of the magazine Flying Saucer Review sent to him at Buckingham Palace — and once appointed an equerry as his personal UFO investigator.

by **David Clarke** and **Andrew Roberts**

THE story of the British Establishment's interest in UFOs really begins in World War II, when pilots first began to report what became known as 'foo-fighters' — mysterious lights in the sky that resembled unknown enemy craft.

For years, however, the question was hushed up and UFO investigators could find no official documentation.

It was only in 1986 that proof of RAF sightings emerged when the late Goon Show star Michael Bentine, a former intelligence officer with Bomber Command, spoke of debriefing crews who told of lights which were 'pulsating and had flown round the aircraft'.

In fact, such reports had long been taken with great seriousness within military circles — particularly in the years after the war, as fears grew about the threat from the Soviet Union. Some experts believed the saucers could be advanced Soviet aircraft.

Mountbatten belonged to a small group of high-ranking military personnel who believed flying saucers were from another world. He began collecting reports of sightings using his contacts in the armed services.

His theories about their origins were clear in letters he wrote to his friend Charles Eade, editor of the Sunday Dispatch, one of the popular newspapers of the day.

'These extraordinary things have now been seen in almost every part of the world: Scandinavia, North America, South America, Central Europe,' he wrote.

'It seems clear that the overwhelming weight of opinion from every part of the world will show that some new thing definitely exists which is capable of flying at very slow speed, or even perhaps of hovering and accelerating at an unheard-of speed several times the speed of sound.

'The available evidence will show that they are not of human agency, that is to say they do not come from Earth. If that is so, then presumably they must come from some heavenly body, probably a planet.'

Mountbatten believed that the UFOs should be seen as the intergalactic equivalent of contemporary aircraft. 'Maybe it is the Shackletons or Scotts of Venus or Mars who are making their first exploration of our Earth,' he mused.

But he also suggested that the flying saucers might be the alien life-forms themselves — 'not a form of aeroplane from another planet but the actual inhabitants of that planet!'

Sensing the media headlines which sensational statements such as these would produce, Mountbatten asked Eade to keep his private opinions out of the newspapers.

'I know this sounds ridiculous and I am relying on you as a very old and loyal friend not to make any capital out of the fact that I have put forward such a far-fetched explanation.

SUCH an explanation, however, would apparently fill all known cases in which the flying saucer has so far been seen.'

Despite his desire to conceal his own beliefs, Mountbatten was keen to persuade the public to take the subject seriously. He urged Eade to publish weekly articles about UFOs in order to gauge the popular reaction.

Eade obliged with a series of sensational reports and a long editorial describing UFOs as 'the story that may be bigger than the atom bomb wars'.

The editorial went on to describe how the subject had been dismissed as nonsense, but 'many intelligent and distinguished people in all parts of the world are intensely interested, and treat such reports very seriously indeed'.

Eade quoted from a letter he had received 'from one of the most famous men alive today', whom he could not name but who 'commands universal respect and admiration'.

It was a discussion with this mystery man, Eade said, which led to his decision 'to place before the readers of the Sunday Dispatch all that is known about the flying saucers and all the theories about them, no matter how sensational and fantastic'.

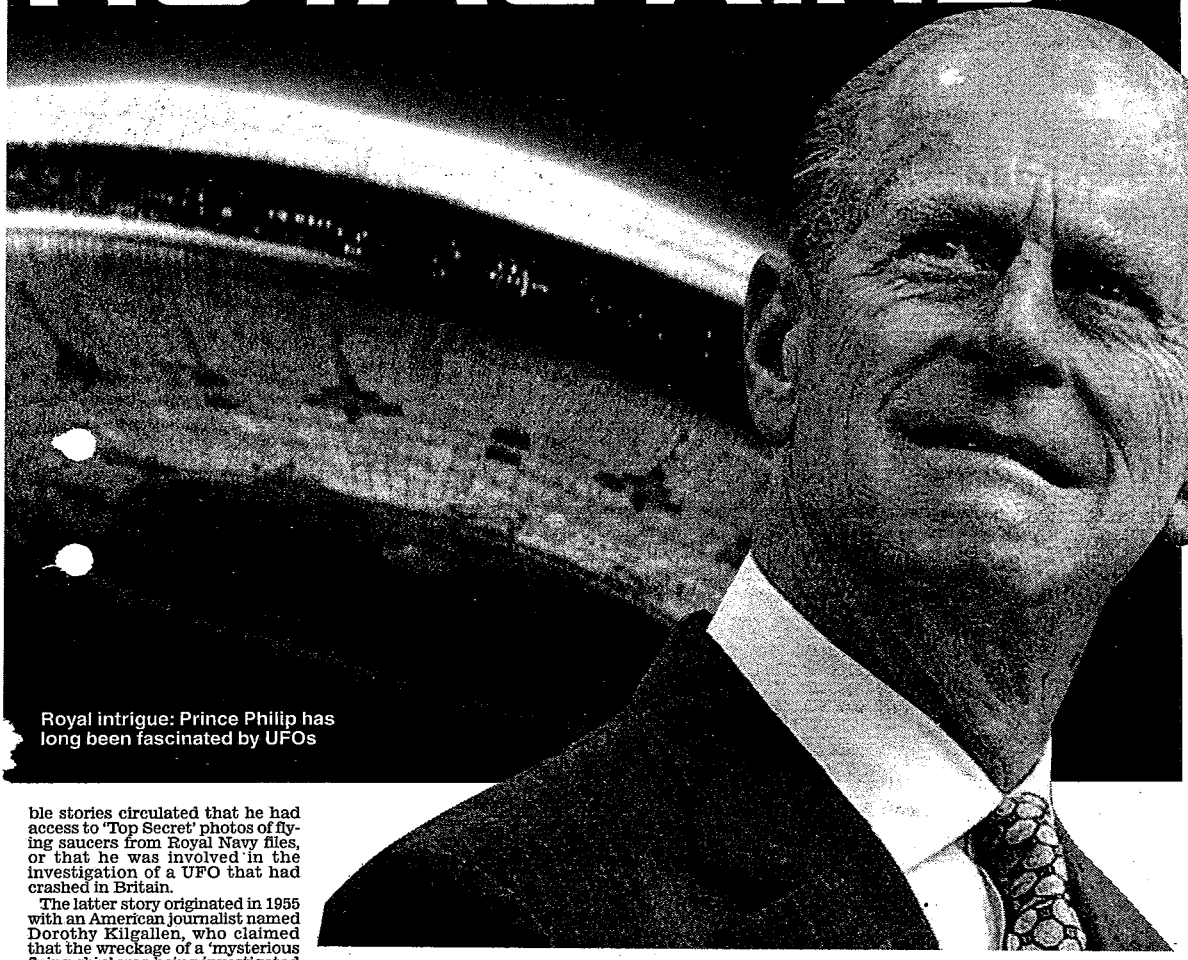
We now know that the 'mystery man' was Lord Mountbatten — and the effect of his intervention was to prove dramatic.

Following publication of these stories in the Dispatch, accounts of UFOs poured into newspaper offices across the British Isles.

In hindsight, it is clear that the aggressive newspaper campaign played a huge part in creating the fascination with UFOs that was to grip the country for decades to come.

OVER the years, rumours of Mountbatten's role leaked out to UFO enthusiasts. Improba-

ENCOUNTERS ROYAL KIND



Royal intrigue: Prince Philip has long been fascinated by UFOs

ble stories circulated that he had access to 'Top Secret' photos of flying saucers from Royal Navy files, or that he was involved in the investigation of a UFO that had crashed in Britain.

The latter story originated in 1955 with an American journalist named Dorothy Kilgallen, who claimed that the wreckage of a 'mysterious flying ship' was being investigated by scientists. The tale was later embroidered with claims that the saucer was crewed by 'small men, probably under four feet tall'.

Kilgallen said the Government was holding back from issuing an official statement because 'it does not want to frighten the public'. She claimed her source was 'a British official of Cabinet rank' who wished to remain anonymous.

Rumours went around that it was Mountbatten. Since Kilgallen was a well-known figure at high-society parties where she mixed with royalty and aristocrats, this was not totally implausible — although it seems unlikely that Mountbatten would have let slip state secrets to a gossip columnist over cocktails.

After Kilgallen refused to elaborate on her story, UFO enthusiasts became convinced that she had been 'silenced' by the Establishment. Her sudden — and some claim mysterious — death in 1965 added to their suspicions that there was a conspiracy to hide the truth about UFOs.

Years later, Margaret Thatcher would fuel these cover-up theories. At a cocktail party in 1997, author Georgina Bruni claimed she discussed alien technology with the former Prime Minister. Baroness Thatcher was said to have treated the matter with utmost seriousness, twice repeating the comment: 'UFOs? You must get your facts right, and you can't tell the people.'

She then abruptly changed the subject.

Details of Prince Philip's interest in UFOs have been given by one of his equerries, the late Sir Peter Horsley.

He confirmed that Philip 'was open to the immense possibilities of new technology leading to space exploration, while at the same time not discounting that, just as we were on the fringe of breaking out into space, so other older civilisations in the universe might already have done so'.

By one account, later denied by royal sources, the Duke requested that all flying saucer reports received by the Air Ministry should be copied to him.

He was once reported to have told a dinner party guest: 'I'm sure they exist. All the evidence points to it. So many people say they have seen them.'

Horsley's autobiography revealed how reports of flying saucers were enthusiastically discussed among the staff at Buckingham Palace throughout his time as equerry.

Most intriguingly, Horsley recounts how Philip 'agreed that I could investigate the more credible reports, provided I kept it all in perspective and did not involve his office in any kind of publicity'.

BY VIRTUE of this unofficial role as royal UFO investigator, Horsley was given carte blanche to read any reports of UFO sightings by the RAF, and to interview the pilots concerned.

The case which impressed him most involved two pilots from 25 Squadron, who observed a flying saucer while on patrol in a Vampire jet from RAF West Malling, Kent, one afternoon in November, 1953.

Horsley investigated the sighting as thoroughly as he could, visiting the base and quizzing both airmen. He submitted a report to the Duke of Edinburgh, saying that he was 'satisfied that the Vampire crew was perfectly reliable' and the two airmen had seen 'a genuine UFO'.

A number of UFO witnesses were invited to the Palace, including James Howard, captain of a British airliner who, with his passengers and crew, reported seeing a formation of UFOs over the Atlantic.

The most unusual visitor was 11-year-old Stephen Darbishire from the Lake District, who had taken photographs of a 'saucer-shaped' object hovering over the slopes of Coniston Old Man in 1954.

In both these instances, it was the equerry who sent out invitations to Buckingham Palace. There can be no doubt, however, that he was encouraged to do so by the Duke of Edinburgh and that his reports detailing these sightings are still preserved in the royal archives.

Horsley says he invited UFO witnesses to the Palace partly to 'put them on the spot' and test their honesty in the presence of royalty — a ploy that may indeed have been as effective as any truth serum in those deferential times.

One of Sir Peter's strangest contacts was a mysterious General Martin, who believed UFOs were visitors from an alien civilisation which wanted to warn us of the dangers posed by atomic war.

Martin arranged for Sir Peter to meet an equally enigmatic woman named Mrs Markham at a flat in Chelsea. Arriving from Buckingham Palace one night in 1955, he was ushered into a second-floor drawing-room on Smith Street occupied by a man referred to only as 'Mr Janus'.

Janus asked Sir Peter to tell him everything he knew about UFOs. Sir Peter asked what was his interest in the subject. The answer was simple: 'I would like to meet the Duke of Edinburgh.'

Sir Peter and Mr Janus proceeded to discuss a variety of esoteric subjects, including how the flying saucers were trying to save the Earth, and the perils which faced mankind as a result of technological progress.

He recalled that although Mr Janus never claimed to be from another planet, he gave the impression that he was visiting Earth as 'an observer'. Throughout the meeting, the equerry was given the strange impression that his thoughts were being read via telepathy.

Horsley was acutely aware of his responsibility to report any evidence of plots against the Royal Family to the security services. However, he was sufficiently swayed by Mr Janus's otherworldly presence not to take this seemingly obvious step.

Instead, he handed his report to another UFO enthusiast at the Palace, 'Boy' Browning, a renowned soldier who had led the airborne forces at Arnhem and was now Controller of the Royal Household.

Browning, along with the retired RAF chief Lord Dowding, was one of a number of war veterans convinced that UFOs were a reality. They believed that the saucer occupants were peace-loving and fiercely opposed the idea that the airforce should attempt to shoot them down.

In Dowding's words: 'We should be guilty of criminal folly if we were to do anything to hinder a contact which may well bring untold blessings to a distraught humanity.'

NATURALLY, 'Boy' Browning wished to arrange his own personal audience with Mr Janus. But the already surreal story took a further step into the twilight zone.

For when Sir Peter tried to contact Mrs Markham, he found she had vanished and his other contact, General Martin, 'suddenly became distant and evasive'.

Puzzled, Sir Peter retraced his steps to the Smith Street address where he had met Mr Janus — and found it empty. Neighbours said its occupant had 'left in a hurry'.

Had he been the victim of an elaborate hoax designed to ensnare the Royals? Sir Peter remained convinced that he might actually have made contact with a visitor from another world.

On one level, this and other accounts of royal and aristocratic involvement with the early development of the flying saucer myth may be read as just celebrity gossip.

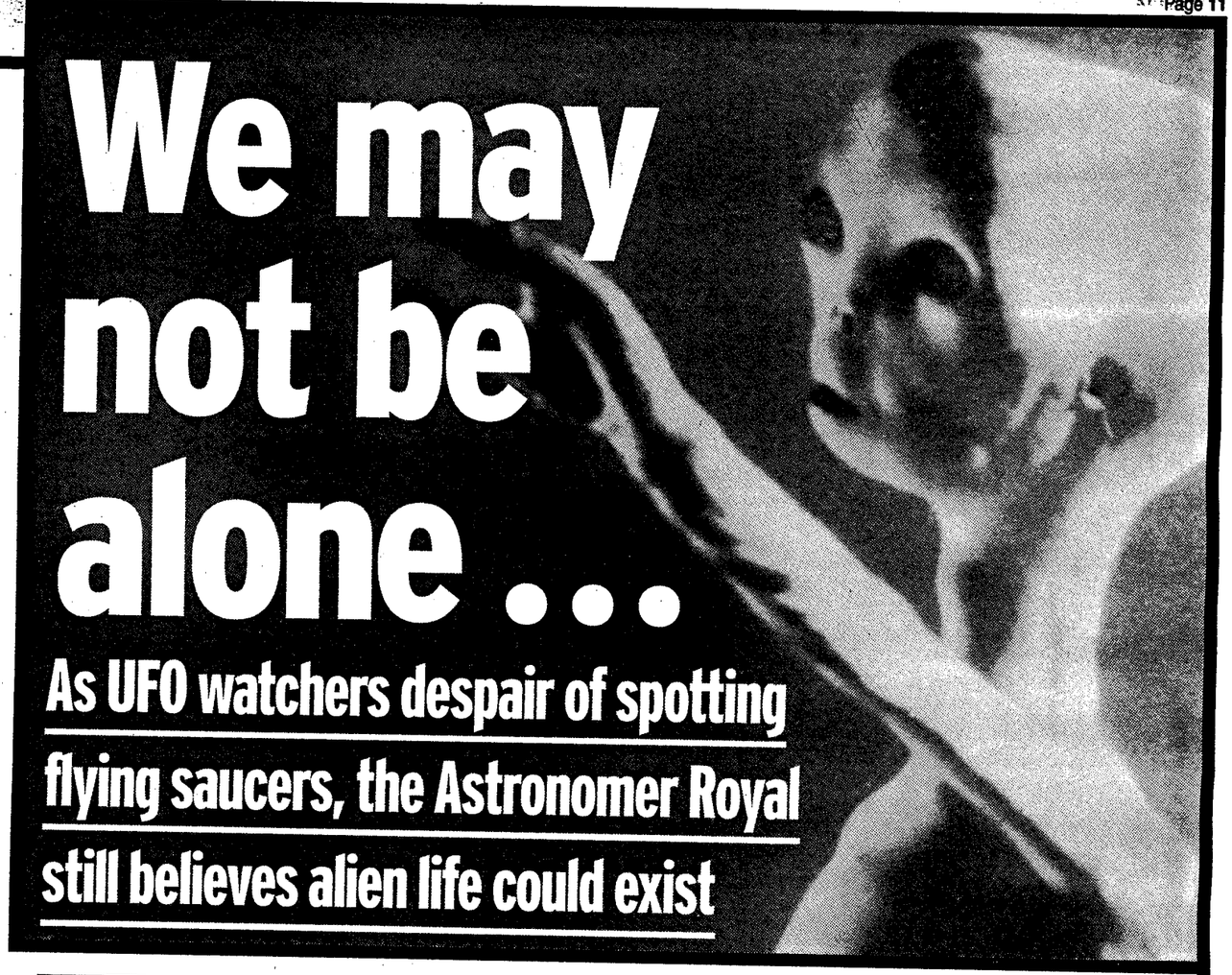
But the influence of the British Establishment upon the formation of public opinion during the Fifties was immense, and should not be underestimated.

Rightly or wrongly, their endorsement put the stamp of authority on UFO sightings and belief in visitors from space.

■ *EXTRACTED from Out Of The Shadows by Dr David Clarke and Andy Roberts, to be published by Piatkus Books on May 9 at £17.99.* *Copyright © 2002, Dr David Clarke and Andy Roberts. To order a copy for £15.99 (p&p free), please call 01476 541-001*

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We may not be alone...



As UFO watchers despair of spotting flying saucers, the Astronomer Royal still believes alien life could exist



by **Sir Martin Rees**

ASTRONOMER ROYAL

FOR the past 50 years, there have been sporadic claims of UFOs — 'flying saucers' — transporting alien visitors to Earth.

Some of these aliens are claimed to have come to a bad end, such as in Roswell in the U.S. where their dummy-like corpses were allegedly photographed. On the other hand, people have sometimes claimed to have been abducted by aliens.

In the 1990s, their favoured 'visiting card' was a pattern of 'crop circles' in cornfields — mainly in southern England. But scepticism is now in the ascendant. Even former believers say that UFO sightings have become rarer, and now Fortean Times, the journal of the unexplained, has declared 'ufology' dead.

It appears that the aliens have seen as much of humans as they want and have decided to leave us alone.

I don't believe in alien visitations any more than I believe in ghosts. Along with most scientists who have studied these reports, I'm utterly unconvinced by them. Extraordinary claims need to be supported by extraordinary evidence — and the evidence is flimsy in every case.

If aliens really had the brainpower and technology to reach the Earth, would they merely despoil a few cornfields? Or would they content themselves with briefly abducting a few well-known cranks?

Their manifestations are as banal and unconvincing as the messages from the dead that used to be reported in the heyday of spiritualism 100 years ago.

We should, perhaps, be thankful to be left alone. An alien invasion might have the same devastating effect on humanity as the white man had on North American Indians and some islands of the South Pacific. The film Independence Day may be a truer depiction than E.T.

But I'm open-minded about the existence of aliens, even though I don't believe we've found them yet. Most scientists would, I suspect, be amazed if life were unique to our Earth.

How life began, and whether it exists elsewhere, remains one of the most fascinating questions in the whole of science — indeed, you don't need to be a scientist to wonder about this.

But we still don't know the answer.

The question 'Are we alone in the universe?' has fascinated people for centuries.

MORE than 400 years ago, Giordano Bruno, an Italian monk, was burnt at the stake for various heresies, including the belief that 'in space, there are numberless earths circling round other suns' and that some of them harboured creatures that were 'fully the equal of those on our human Earth'.

In the 18th century, many believed that the Moon and even the Sun were inhabited. In the late 19th century, the science fiction of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells further popularised the idea of alien life.

Percival Lowell, a wealthy American, built his own observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona, primarily to study Mars. He believed that its surface was criss-crossed by 'canals', dug by an advanced civilisation to channel water from the frozen polar caps to the 'deserts' near the Red Planet's Equator.

Then in 1900, a French foundation offered the Guzman Prize of 100,000 francs for the first contact with an extra-terrestrial species; but prudence led them to exclude Mars — detecting Martians was thought to be too easy!

In the 1930s, an American radio dramatisation of Wells's War Of The Worlds was so compelling that many, in panic, thought it was a news flash and that a real Martian invasion had begun.

We're less optimistic about Mars than our forbears were 100 years ago, since there is certainly nothing on Mars like the 'Martians' of popular fiction.

But it would be important to discover life there, even if it were only primitive 'bugs'.

So long as we know about life only on our own planet, we can't rule out the possibility that it was caused by a chain of accidents so improbable that nothing remotely like it could have happened anywhere else in the universe. But if life *did* exist on Mars as well, it couldn't be a fluke.

During the coming years, an armada of space probes is being launched toward the Red Planet to analyse its surface, to fly over it, and (in later missions) to return samples to Earth.

Life could also exist in the ice-covered oceans of Jupiter's frozen moon, Europa, and there are plans to land a submersible probe that could explore beneath the ice.

Indeed, if life had emerged twice within our Solar System — an issue which could be settled in less than 20 years — this would suggest that the entire Galaxy would be teeming with life, at least in simple forms.

But our Sun is just one star among billions. And in the vastness of space far beyond our own Solar System we can rule out nothing.

Astronomers have discovered that the Italian monk Gordiano Bruno was right in one respect: other stars *do* have their own retinue of planets circling around them, just as the Earth, Mars and Jupiter circle around our own star, the Sun.

But was Bruno also right in his second conjecture that some of these planets, orbiting other stars, harbour life-forms far more interesting and exotic than anything we might find on Mars? Could they even be inhabited by beings we could recognise as intelligent?

If intelligent aliens were common, shouldn't they have visited us already?

Some astronomers cite the lack of absolutely certain UFO detections as evidence that aliens are rare.

They note that some stars are billions of years older than our Sun, and point out that if life were common, its emergence should have had a 'head start' on their planets.

So why shouldn't they have got here first, and why aren't their artefacts staring us in the face?

However, the fact that we haven't been visited doesn't, in my view, imply that aliens don't exist. It would be far harder to traverse the mind-boggling distances of interstellar space than to transmit a signal.

THAT'S perhaps how aliens would reveal themselves first. (Aliens equipped with large radio antennae could in any case pick up the combined output of all our TV transmitters — if they could decode them, it's hard to think what they might conclude about 'intelligent' life on Earth.)

Searches for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI) are being spearheaded by scientists at the SETI Institute in Mountain View, California, and are bankrolled by Paul Allen, the Microsoft billionaire, and by other private benefactors.

Using various large radio telescopes, they have concentrated on searches for radio transmissions that could be artificial in origin. But radio is not the only conceivable channel: narrowly-beamed lasers could span interstellar distances with a modest power consumption.

We already have the technology, if we so wish, to proclaim our presence many light years away by either of these methods.

The nearest potential sites are so far away that signals would take many years in transit. For this reason alone, transmission would be primarily one-way — there would be time to send a measured response, but no scope for quick repartee!

Short stretches of data from the SETI searches have been downloaded by three million people to use as screen savers on their home computers — each hoping to be the first to detect ET.

I wouldn't hold my breath for success. Even if these searches fail, that doesn't mean that we are alone. The brains and senses of the aliens may be so different from ours that we couldn't recognise any patterns in their signals. Or they may not be transmitting at all.

Super-intelligent dolphins could be enjoying a contemplative life on some other water-covered planet without our even knowing. There may be a lot more life out there than we could ever detect — absence of evidence isn't evidence of absence.

But I'm enthusiastic about these searches, because of the import of any manifestly artificial signal. Even if we couldn't make much sense of it, we'd have learnt that 'intelligence' wasn't unique and had emerged elsewhere.

Our cosmos would seem far more interesting; we would look at a distant star with renewed interest if we knew it was another Sun, shining on a world as intricate and complex as our own.

We have no idea what intelligent aliens would look like — in any case, their appearances would depend on the habitat of their 'home planet'.

They could be balloon-like creatures floating in dense atmospheres; they could be the size of insects on a big planet where gravity pulled strongly. Or they may be freely floating in space.

They could even, as some science fiction reminds us, be super-intelligent computers, created by a race of alien beings that had died out millions of years ago.

If we ever established contact with aliens, what could we discuss with them? This is the theme of my new book, and I think we'd belong to the same universe of stars and planets, all made of similar atoms and governed by universal laws.

We'd all trace our origins back to a single 'genesis event' — the so-called 'big bang', which happened about 12 billion years ago.

It would in some ways be disappointing if searches for alien intelligence were doomed to fail. We might then feel alone in a vast, uncaring cosmos. On the other hand, it would boost our 'cosmic' self-esteem.

If our Earth were a unique abode of intelligence, a unique spark of life in the cosmos, then — tiny though it is on a cosmic scale — we could view it in a less humble perspective than it would merit if the cosmos already teemed with complex life.

Moreover, astronomy teaches us something else: the time lying ahead is even longer than the 13 billion years that has elapsed since our universe began.

WE might think we are the culmination of evolution. But we may not be, any more than the first fish-like brute was that crawled on to dry land about 200 million years ago.

We may be still near the beginning of an evolution that takes our remote descendants far beyond the Earth, spreading life through the Galaxy.

So, if we turned out to be alone in the cosmos, we'd have even stronger motives to cherish this 'pale blue dot' in the Universe on which we live and not foreclose life's future — a future that could be even longer than the timespan over which simple life has evolved into humans.

The entire cosmos, not just the Earth, could be our eventual habitat.

■ *Sir Martin Rees's book on alien life, Our Cosmic Habitat, was recently published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson.*

We ARE alone



MULDER and Scully may have to look for new jobs – the existence of UFOs has been officially dismissed as pure fantasy by the bible of the extraterrestrial.

A decline in sightings, which have inspired countless films and TV series such as The X-Files, has led paranormal journal Fortean Times to declare the science of ufology dead.

The world's oldest UFO society, the British Flying Saucer Bureau, has also suspended its activities after 50 years owing to lack of evidence.

Experts and amateur enthusiasts began researching unidentified flying objects in earnest following the 1947 Roswell incident, when aliens allegedly crashed in New Mexico.

BY DANIELLE WRATE

The incident triggered numerous conspiracy theories and many believe the US government tried to cover up the existence of extra-terrestrials.

Aliens were held responsible for the disappearance of ships and aircraft which mysteriously vanished in the so-called Bermuda Triangle.

But Fortean Times editor Bob Rickard, who hosted the magazine's annual ufology convention in London at the weekend, said: 'UFOs driven by real aliens don't appear to exist. Over the past decade, there has been a slump in sightings.

'We had hoped advances in technology and the wider use of camcorders would lead to more concrete evidence of alien life but that just hasn't happened.

'The Star Trek idea of being visited by aliens just isn't going to happen.'

Thousands of people throughout the world have reported sightings and scores of blurry images have been captured on film.

Former US President Jimmy Carter claims to have spotted a UFO when he was governor of Georgia in 1969 – and even filed an official report.

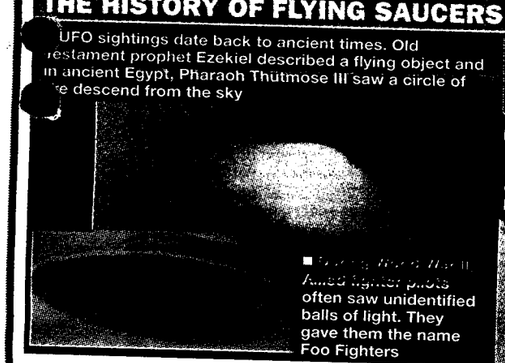
More recently, alien craft were blamed for the appearance of crop circles in cornfields across the UK.

But, according to Mr Rickard, all the evidence points to overactive minds rather than cold facts.

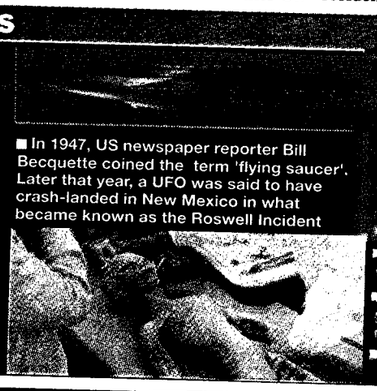
'Reports of alien abductions and encounters spring from an entirely different phenomenon. They are in people's minds,' he said. 'The image of UFOs is so much a part of modern day culture that sightings are no longer innocent or spontaneous.'

THE HISTORY OF FLYING SAUCERS

UFO sightings date back to ancient times. Old Testament prophet Ezekiel described a flying object and in ancient Egypt, Pharaoh Thutmose III saw a circle of fire descend from the sky



■ In 1947, US newspaper reporter Bill Becquette coined the term 'flying saucer'. Later that year, a UFO was said to have crash-landed in New Mexico in what became known as the Roswell Incident



■ Residents of Bonnybridge, Stirlingshire, claim to have been visited by 500 UFOs since 1992

■ In 1980, three security patrolmen saw a strange, glowing, triangular object over Rendlesham Forest, near the US Air Force base at Woodbridge, Suffolk

■ In March 1990, 13,500 people reported seeing a UFO in Belgium. The case is considered the best-ever sighting

Bombshell ends soccer match

A TEAM of football losers were minutes from their first victory in two years when the game had to be abandoned – because of an unexploded World War II bomb.

Edinburgh Asians FC were 2-0 up with 20 minutes to go in a match which could have lifted them off the bottom of their league.

Manager and right-back Jim Chaudry, 32, said: 'It was unbelievable. We thought it was some sort of joke. We have been playing for a couple of years now and have never won.

'When the police showed up, we thought people in the houses round about had complained about bad language or something.

'Then the ref told us the game was abandoned.'

Army bomb disposal experts carried out a controlled explosion of the shell, found by a homeowner under his shed in Roseburn, Edinburgh.

METRO FACTFILE

In February 1942, former actress Nita Ward was found dead in her flat at No.152 Wardour Street, W1. Her throat was slashed and her body mutilated with a tin-opener. Within a few days, two more women were found strangled in the West End, prompting fears of another Jack the Ripper. Eventually, police linked RAF cadet George Cummins to the crimes. He was executed for four murders on June 25, 1942.

Star Wars was a dud, says Ewan

EWAN McGREGOR has admitted what audiences and critics knew all along about Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace – it was a dud.

The Scottish actor, who played the young Obi Wan Kenobi in the first 'prequel' of the space saga, said he thought it 'disappointing' and 'flat' – despite the fact it became the third most successful movie of all time.

It is the first time the 31-year-old has publicly criticised the film, which did not impress dedicated followers of the series. However, McGregor said the next instalment, to be previewed next month, is much better. He added: 'I think there's much more humour and there's much more colour in Episode II: Attack Of The Clones. It's more reminiscent of the original three Star Wars films than Episode I was.'

METRO weather

Be prepared whatever the weather. To receive regional weather forecasts to your Orange phone, call 277

London Today

It will be a pretty murky start but the cloud will break during the morning to leave plenty of sunshine again. There will still be a chilly north-easterly breeze. High 12-14°C (54-57°F).

Monday AM	10°
Monday PM	14°
Tuesday AM	10°
Tuesday PM	14°

Outlook

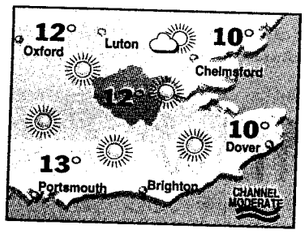
The fine weather looks set to carry on for a few more days. There will continue to be periods of sunshine but a little more cloud around.

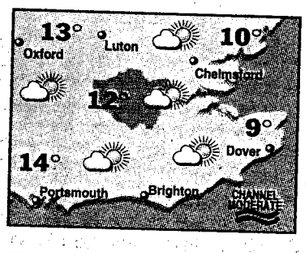
Air pollution today .....Moderate

South-East

Today

A dull start to the day for most areas. However, the cloud will break through during the morning to leave it dry and bright for the rest of the day. There will be plenty of sunshine. A light to moderate north-easterly wind. High 12-15°C (54-59°F).





Tomorrow

The region will have a dry day with plenty of sunny periods. However, there will be more patchy cloud around during the day than there has been of late. There will continue to be a chill in the air with a north-easterly breeze. High 12-15°C (54-59°F).

Britain Today (Max)

North	11°	South	16°
N.West	13°	S.Wales	14°
Yorks	12°	N.Wales	13°
W.Mids	13°	Scotland	14°
E Mids	13°	N.Ireland	14°

Around Britain yesterday

Aberdeen	9 Cloudy	Jersey	12 Fair
Belfast	11 Sunny	Leeds	10 Sunny
Birmingham	11 Fair	Liverpool	10 Fair
B'mouth	14 Fair	London	12 Sunny
Brighton	11 Fair	Manchester	11 Sunny
Bristol	11 Fair	Newcastle	9 Fair
Cardiff	11 Sunny	Norwich	8 Fair
Dover	9 Fair	Nottingham	9 Fair
Edinburgh	12 Sunny	Plymouth	12 Fair
Glasgow	13 Sunny	York	10 Fair

Europe Today (Max)

Athens	19°	Geneva	13°
Barcelona	21°	Madrid	16°
Berlin	10°	Moscow	10°
Brussels	15°	Paris	17°
Dublin	13°	Rome	22°

Around the World yesterday

Amsterdam	10 Sunny	Madrid	11 Cloudy
Athens	20 Sunny	Malaga	16 Cloudy
Barbados	28 Fair	Miami	24 Cloudy
B Aires	25 Thndr	New York	6 Cloudy
Cape Town	28 Sunny	Paris	14 Cloudy
Hong Kong	26 Fair	Rome	17 Cloudy
Ibiza	17 Cloudy	Seychelles	30 Cloudy
Istanbul	11 Cloudy	Sydney	22 Fair
Lisbon	11 Cloudy	Tokyo	12 Cloudy
L Angeles	17 Fair	Venice	12 Cloudy

Pros. 64/5

DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1

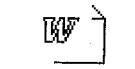
To: D News Proj
Subject: Press Information

131

[redacted] 40

Further to our conversation last week about the Flying Saucer Working Party, please find attached details supplied by DIS which they are happy to release to the TV company. As discussed even though we are the focal point for correspondence and enquires about 'UFOs' the FSWP was part of the Defence Intelligence organisation so it was important that we consulted them. The report referred to at the end of para 2 is the one which I gave you a copy of. As far as DI are aware papers relating to the FSWP are open for viewing at the Public Record Office and there are no other records retained in DIS.

I would be grateful if you could inform me when this programme is going to be broadcast if you are told.



Flying Saucer Working Party - ...

[redacted]
DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1
6/73MT [redacted]0

DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1

To: DI ISEC SEC4
Subject: RE: FLYING SAUCER WORKING PARTY

-----Original Message-----
From: DI ISEC SEC4
Sent: 22 February 2002 16:30
To: DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1
Cc: AD DI 55
Subject: FLYING SAUCER WORKING PARTY
Importance: High

Dear [redacted]0
<< File: UFO study - summary - for release.doc >>

I attach an **updated** version of the summary which describes the DIS involvement in UAPs, including the Flying Saucer Working Party. We are happy for this to be released to the TV company. As far as we are aware, there are no other records relating to the FSWP in the DIS and nobody here has anything more to add!

[redacted]n 40 please pass to [redacted]Thanks
[redacted]
DI ISEC Sec 4
[redacted]306WH

UNEXPLAINED AERIAL PHENOMENA (UAP)

Since the 1950s, reports of unidentified aerial phenomena from within UK airspace alone number thousands. These report objects which were not identifiable at the time of observation. UAPs have increased since the 1950s in line with the beginning of manned flight, the advent of outdoor laser displays, space flight, weather balloons, and so on. It has been recent MOD practice to refer to such phenomena, in the absence of rational explanation, as Unexplained Aerial Phenomena (UAP). MOD interest in UAP is only necessary as an assurance that any such object is not a threat to UK airspace or assets.

In August 1950 a Working Party was set up (at the suggestion of Sir Henry Tizard) who thought "flying saucers should be investigated". Records show that the 11th meeting of the Joint Technical Intelligence Committee (Ref. DSI/JTIC(51) Item 8 (1951)) received the Chairman's Report of the "Flying Saucer Working Party". The Committee decided that "the document should be regarded as the final report and, in view of the conclusions the Working Party should be dissolved". The Chairman (Mr. G. L. Turney DS13) went on to say that, "following the lead given by the Americans on this subject, the report should have as little publicity as possible and outside circulation should be confined to one copy, for Sir Henry Tizard". The report has been released to the PRO. The UK was happy to allow the US studies to answer any outstanding questions.

The United States Air Force had started to take an official interest in 1948 with PROJECT SIGN, later changed to PROJECT GRUDGE and then to PROJECT BLUE BOOK. Such was the concern in the US that by 1952 the CIA instigated a covert study group to investigate the "10% of incredible reports from credible witnesses". In fact over 10,000 reports, spanning 19 years, were processed by 1965 (of which it was reported that only about 7% were unexplained). The covertness of this investigation subsequently contributed greatly to charges of a government 'cover-up'.

In 1952-3 the US set up the Robertson Panel (Intelligence Scientific Advisory Panel). Meanwhile, the possibility of the USSR using a UFO scare as a means of jamming communication channels, while simultaneously attacking the West was considered a serious possibility by the US – even though the investigation team had dismissed sightings of 'UFOs' as 'explainable'. In 1953, USAF began a more detailed collection of sighting information which, according to US Government statements, ceased in 1958 with no proof of extra-terrestrial origin.

The topic would not go away, however, and by 1966 the USA's CONDON Report had studied and reported on 59 events in detail. The report concluded "While we do not think, at present, anything worthwhile is likely to come out of research [into UFOs] each individual case should be considered on its merits. No (separate) US Agency is required - but this may not be the case for all time". The UK took no part in this USAF study, and there is no record of the Air Ministry requesting or receiving this report.

In the 1950s, the Air Ministry, produced a 'minimum format', a one page, 'UFO' reporting procedure for both public and military reporting of the phenomena. Reports of sightings from either military or civilian sources were sent to Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) from the Air Staff in case they contained any information which was of value in DIS's task of analysing the performance and threat of foreign weapons systems, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programmes and technologies and emerging technologies. However, none of the reports received over a period of 30 years have yielded any valuable information whatsoever. DIS therefore decided in December 2000, not to receive these reports any longer.

[redacted]

DNews Project - DGCC

[redacted]

approach from TV co making a documentary on flying saucer working Gp party in 50's
(they retained room at 8th of Metropole in connection with this)

- would like MOD Policy
- Copy of document? (Report No 7)
- any other relevant info

UFOs.

Room.

DNews Prog.

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

Tony Barrell



Guy Fawkes' Night wasn't a big deal for me at the age of 18. As I ambled home from work on November 5, 1976, I was probably looking forward to a pub crawl with my friends rather than a few damp squibs in the garden with my parents. More likely, I suspect my mind was virtually a blank, the kind of meditative state that often precedes a ghostly experience or a religious vision. I certainly wouldn't have been thinking about work: I was a trainee computer programmer at Crawley Borough Council, a job I was happy to abandon at 5.20pm every evening – or 4.25pm, weirdly, on Fridays like this – for my 10-minute stroll home.

A jovial careers adviser had suggested the job – based, I thought then, on an inspired reading of the unique potential displayed by my O-levels in English, Latin, French, maths and art. All too late, I now realise he saw me as an archetypal nerd, a misshapen peg for a slightly off-square hole. I had rampaging acne, long hair spilling dandruff down my slouching shoulders, an addiction to prog-rock records and pints of lager-and-blackcurrant. I was one of those irritating fools who memorise whole Monty Python sketches. Girlfriends were something other people had. In my spare time, I laboured over a shapeless novel about a sinister lobster recipe that was taking over the world, though most of the action was confined to my home town of Crawley, West Sussex. I was a Hobbit in all but name. What other choice of employment could anyone have suggested?

But as I turned the corner into my home territory of Buckmans Road in the district of West Green, destiny was about to deal me a new role. A mission. A pointer for the future that I had consistently failed to visualise for myself.

It was floating above the rooftops of my road – an assemblage of mysterious lights. It didn't seem to be travelling in a linear way but wobbling from side to side in the darkness, without making a sound. I stopped and watched it, dumbfounded. Then I remembered it was Guy Fawkes' Night. Oh, it's a rocket, I remember thinking. Or an Air Bomb. Or some other firework that goes up in the air. But when the lights continued to wink and hover for several minutes, I discounted that theory.

No, this was an unidentified flying object, possibly a spacecraft piloted by aliens. People see them all the time; it's just that it hadn't happened to me before. I was excited beyond intelligent thought. I was trembling so much, I almost shook myself out of my tank top and oxford bags.

There was fear in the excitement, because I was dealing with the unknown. Who's to say, I remember thinking, that this isn't the start of a full-scale invasion? It could be The War of the Worlds or, at best, The Day the Earth Stood Still. People could be massacred; the whole planet could be destroyed in a flash. It was the kind of day when anything could have happened – indeed, I have since discovered that on this very same day, a former member of the band Steps was born.

I hurried home and gibbered to my mother that there was a UFO outside, just down the road. I was disappointed that she wasn't that bothered; instead of rushing outside to see it for herself, she suggested I call nearby Gatwick Airport to see if they had spotted anything on their radar. So I checked the telephone directory, picked up the receiver ⟶

ILLUSTRATIONS: JACKIE PARSONS

on our green Trimphone and dialled. "Why do you young man?" an urbane aviation official asked me. "What have you seen?" I could almost hear his regulation RAF moustache twitching.

"A UFO," I replied, helpfully.

"Well, we haven't picked up anything unidentified here. Are you sure?"

"I think so."

"Don't worry, young man, we'll keep a lookout."

"Oh. Okay. Thanks."

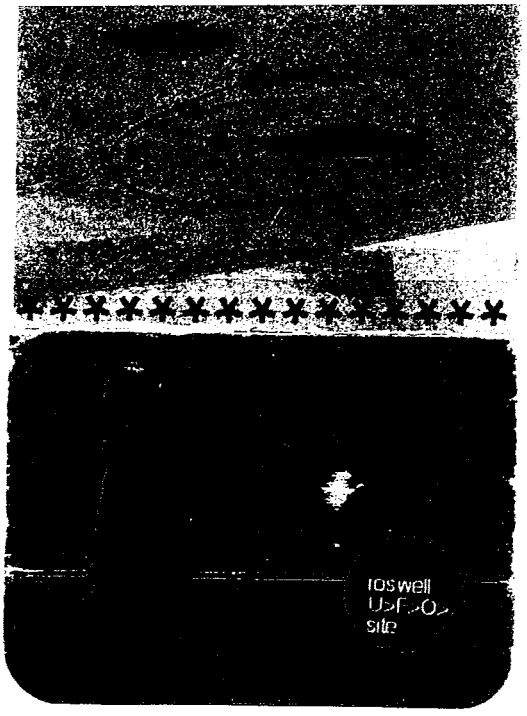
When I went back outside to check on the progress of the object, it had gone. For some reason, my dear old mum thought it would be a good idea to get in touch with the local paper, the Crawley Observer. Possibly for the same reason, I agreed, without considering the consequences. A friendly reporter chap sounded mildly interested and said someone might get back to me. He didn't say, "if we don't have any better news this week", but that's what the cynical, grown-up part of me hears now when I recall the conversation.

There was a call for me at the office the following week. Was I the youngster who'd seen the flying saucer? Yes, I said, if that's what it was. In the cold light of day, I was on the point of disowning the experience and starting to clutch at rational explanations. I also wished that I hadn't phoned the paper. I gave a half-hearted and not terribly articulate interview, mumbling into the receiver lest my story be heard by my work colleagues, many of whom held diplomas in the art of mickey-taking.

The reporter asked if a photographer could call and take a picture. "No," I said, "the UFO's not there any more. It disappeared after several minutes." No, a picture of *me*, the local hack patiently explained. "Oh, okay then," I must have said, because a snapper duly turned up on the doorstep one evening. As a Sunday Times writer I have had the pleasure of working with some fine photographers since, but this guy had an imagination like no other. "Could you pick up something round?" he asked. "Like a saucer? And look at it?" The nearest such object was a cheap ashtray with a photograph of Blackpool Tower in its centre, a souvenir from a distant holiday. I held it up and smiled, and the flash went off.

"That UFO was no firework," trumpeted the Observer, above the picture of me and the ashtray. The anonymous reporter had had some easy fun with the story: "Air traffic control at Gatwick missed the scoop of a lifetime on Friday, when a UFO hovered over West Green..." My age was omitted, giving me an enigmatic village-idiot quality. Friends and co-workers went through the whole pantomime of ridicule, the most repeated jest being that I must have "had a few". (I still have a problem with this cliché that alcohol is a potent hallucinogenic. When was the last time you "saw things" after having one beer too many?) One of my mother's female office colleagues looked at my photo and commented that I was a "nice-looking lad", blithely ignoring the terrible threat of alien invasion implicit in the story.

The sighting "has certainly increased my interest in these things", I had told my interviewer. "Now I would like to find out more about it." True to my word, for months afterwards I read every trashy paperback about UFOs and aliens I could get my hands on. The more I read, the more I was prepared to believe that not only were we just one of a myriad of intelligent races in the universe, but also that Stonehenge, the Egyptian pyramids and, in all



Roswell was packed with nutters wearing alien suits

probability, the Hanger Lane gyratory system had been built by extra-terrestrial visitors. The movie Close Encounters of the Third Kind came out in 1977, and I gorged on that as well.

But like many adolescent enthusiasms, my obsession inevitably waned. I put away childish things, grew up, switched my career to journalism, and eventually joined The Sunday Times. In 1997, the editor of this magazine, unaware of my former life, spontaneously decided I was just the person to fly to Roswell, New Mexico, to cover the 50th anniversary of the legendary UFO crash there.

Roswell was the assignment I was born for. I had already done half of the research, unwittingly, in my teens. The town was packed with nutters in alien suits, and earnest ufologists arguing the toss about spaceships and weather balloons, and I could never go far without meeting someone who wanted to discuss how alien technology was secretly used by modern stealth bombers, or who needed to offload their own stories of alien abduction. Some of these tales made The X Files look like Bob the Builder. And not only did I get to interview the celebrity abductee Whitley Strieber, author of Communion, but we had an enjoyable if abstruse argument about time travel after he suggested that the Roswell craft had come from the far future of our own world.

This was also my first visit to America. Imagine that – your first impression of the good ol' US of A isn't Manhattan, Disneyland or the Golden Gate Bridge but a southern hick town in the desert, with pictures of black-eyed "greys" gazing out from most of the shop windows.

Subsequent assignments have seen me hunting for ghosts at the site of the Battle of Gettysburg, attending pagan rituals in Britain, hanging out with Monster Raving Loonies, and joining an alien-loving religious group for nude meditation in Canada. Why, people frequently ask me, do I fixate on the unusual, the offbeat, the unexplained, the paranormal? Let me lie on this couch awhile and tell you. Well, maybe it makes me feel like a child again. There is also the possibility that the very experience of November 5, 1976 – the sight and the humiliation that followed it – intensified my ability to empathise with people whom many others would dismiss as crackpots. I've been there, bought the T-shirt: I know what it's like to cling to unusual beliefs and to suffer mockery for them.

I'm sure that some of the more out-there ufologists I've met would have another hypothesis that the craft I saw landed in my street and I was abducted by the aliens on board, that they programmed me with a mission to enlighten the world about all kinds of weird and wacky stuff and then erased my memory. Perhaps I should have my head examined: it may contain an elaborate implant fashioned from an otherworldly metal.

But I really don't think so. You see, although the experience was a defining moment, even perhaps a passport to an unusual career, I have grave doubts about its authenticity. I have tried over and over again to replay that memory, clean it up, bring it to something approaching DVD quality, so that I can determine exactly what I saw. I've tried to return to those moments through meditation, and I've been back there in dreams. I can't make myself 18 again, even with a lengthy series of hormone injections – it's a tough one. But what follows is the best I can do.

It is already quite dark. The air is heavy with smoke from early bonfires and fireworks. I can hear them popping and fizzing at regular intervals. My attention is attracted by lights in the sky, above the rooftops. There is at least one red light, at least one white light, and they are glowing and winking eerily. The lights aren't self-contained dots, but seem to be in the air. If whatever is responsible for the lights is making a noise, I can't hear it over the sound of the bangers and rockets and roman candles. (This may explain why I told the local paper that the object was hovering "absolutely silently".) One of my neighbours is standing outside one of the houses nearby, but I can't bring myself to speak to him or her; my memory doesn't make it entirely clear who they are or what sex they are. (My reluctance to speak to this neighbour may be based on uncertainty as well as shock: I don't want to share this experience until I have established that it really *is* an experience. I am also very shy.)

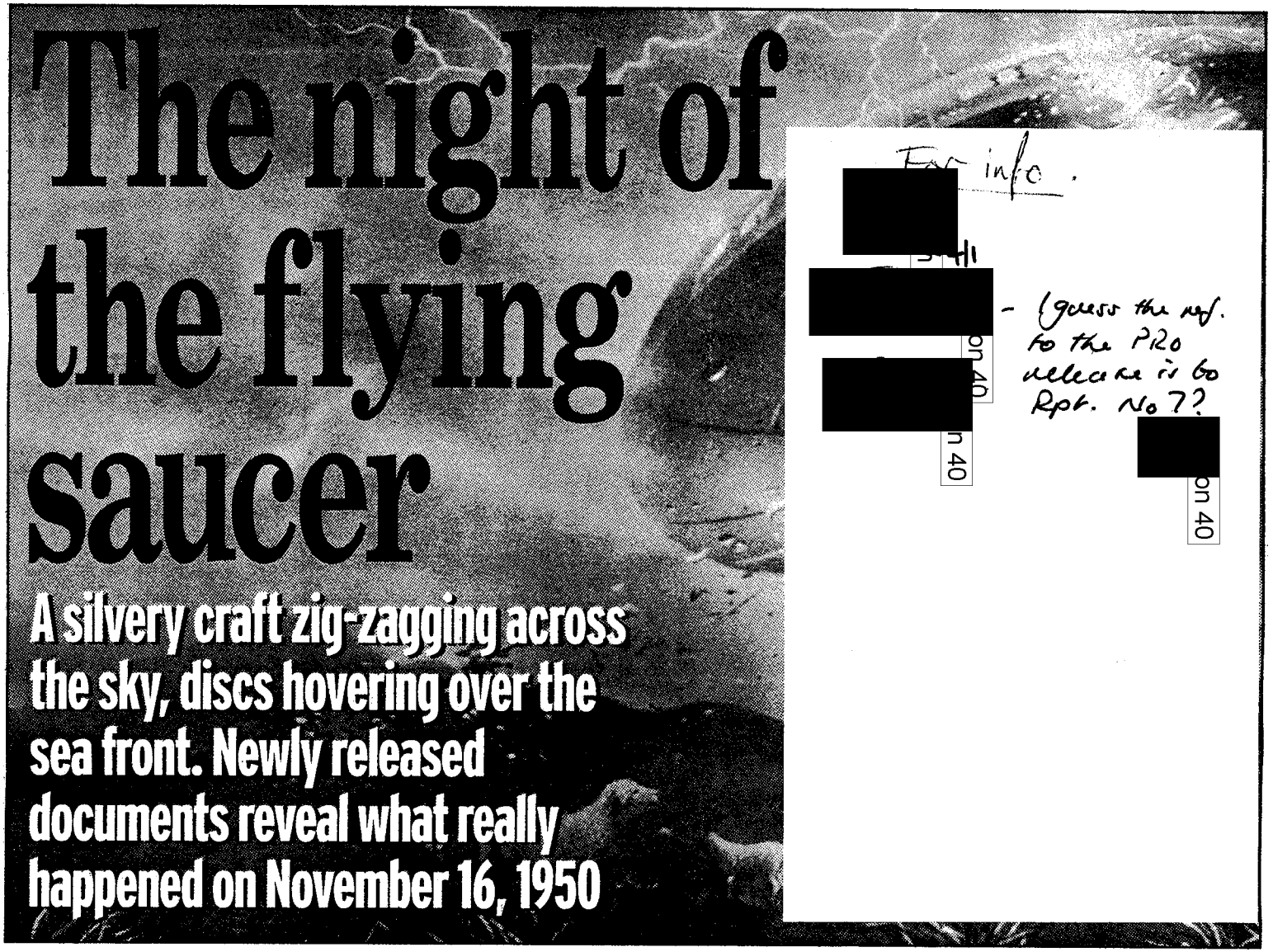
I continue to watch the object for a few minutes. It doesn't seem to be moving away from me or towards me, but hovering and wobbling from side to side. It is at this point that I realise – or rather believe – that I am seeing something very special. I begin to worry about alien landings. It has been a tough week at work, I hate programming computers and I need a break. Yippee, this is it, and my life will never be the same again.

As special-effects designers know, ordinary objects can appear extraordinary when they are filtered through smoke. And, as good UFO investigators are aware, everyday objects may appear alien when they are viewed from unusual angles, and their trajectory may not be perceived correctly. If a flying machine were travelling away from me, it might seem to be static or wobbling from side to side.

The answer is so obvious. But I think I've been in denial for a long time, because I so wanted the experience to be truly supernatural. Reader, I'm really sorry. I think it was an aeroplane ■

The night of the flying saucer

A silvery craft zig-zagging across the sky, discs hovering over the sea front. Newly released documents reveal what really happened on November 16, 1950



[redacted]
For info.
[redacted] on 40
[redacted] on 40
- I guess the ref. to the PRO release is to Rpt. No 7?
[redacted] on 40

FIFTY years ago, in that austere era when food was still rationed and new cars were for export only, the skies above Britain were alive with strange and exotic flying machines.

Since World War II ended, the Press had been full of reports of sightings of a new phenomenon — the Unidentified Flying Object (UFO). Suddenly, the firmament, which had all-too-recently been buzzing with Heinkels and V2 rockets, was home to fantastic craft capable of travelling at several thousand miles per hour.

Some were shaped like cigars, but most were disc-shaped. Usually, the UFOs were made of shiny, polished metal and could perform fantastic aerobatics — the ability to turn on a sixpence at 900mph was noted by one RAF pilot who saw a UFO whizzing past his Meteor jet.

At 4pm on November 16, 1950, residents of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, saw several discs hovering over the seafront. And in Putney, London, citizens had witnessed a silvery craft zig-zagging across the sky far faster than any plane.

There was so much concern that in 1951 the British Government set up its own 'X-Files' unit within the Ministry of Defence, to investigate the UFO phenomenon.

Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister, hardly a man to be swayed by the latest fad, was worried. 'What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to?' he asked in a memo to the War Ministry. 'What can it mean?'

The truth, Churchill was told, was nothing to worry about. Documents, newly released from the Public Record Office under the 50-year rule, reveal that the boffins employed by the Ministry found no evidence that the UFOs had anything to do with aliens.

Instead, they were dismissed as 'optical illusions and psychological delusions', birds and



by **Michael Hanlon**

horizon. Birds, too, are a source of many UFO sightings. Jacqueline Mitton of the Royal Astronomical Society thinks that large flocks of migrating birds can, in the right circumstances, reflect sunlight like burnished metal.

The only UFO I have seen was even more dramatic: a vivid



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weather balloons, or just plain hoaxes. After five years of investigation, the UFO phenomenon was dismissed as fantasy.

Case closed. Or so it seemed.

The flying saucer craze had begun on June 24, 1947. U.S. pilot Kenneth Arnold, 32, was flying alone through the Cascade Mountains in Washington State. He claimed that nine mysterious objects, each as big as a large passenger aircraft, flashed into view about 25 miles in front of his plane, near Mt Rainier.

They travelled over the mountains with a peculiar weaving motion, 'like the tail of a Chinese kite,' he told reporters, and were crescent-shaped. They flew 'like a saucer would if you skipped it across water'. Thus the term 'flying saucers' entered the popular vocabulary, though the objects Arnold said he saw were not saucer-shaped at all.

UNIDENTIFIED flying objects had been reported before — in World War II, American bomber crews had claimed to see odd lights in the sky they called 'foo fighters' — but in the jittery post-war age, Arnold's sighting quickly became legendary.

One theory was that his UFOs were secret military aircraft on test, another that they were a natural phenomenon. Arnold himself suspected at first that they could be a flock of geese. But the theory which took hold was that the UFOs were alien spacecraft.

Then the floodgates opened. Within a couple of years, people were seeing strange objects in the sky all over the world — notably in the U.S., Britain and Sweden. Most were, inevitably, saucer-shaped — the sightings taking their cue from Arnold's misquoted description.

But UFOs were not all the same; a common description was of 'cigar-shaped' objects. What they were and where they came from remained a mystery.

By the 1950s, millions were convinced that Earth was being visited regularly by alien spacecraft. The American and British governments began their investigations.

One of the cases the British team looked at was a claim by a Flight Lieutenant Hubbard to have twice seen a flat disc, light pearl grey in colour, about 50ft in diameter flying over Farnborough in Hampshire.

The task force wryly concluded that in an 'air minded' district it was unlikely that a revolutionary flying machine could have gone unnoticed by so many people. Hubbard was the victim of an optical illusion, they reported.

Soon people were seeing more than just lights and flying discs: a large number were claiming to have been 'abducted' by aliens and returned.

There is often a strong sexual element to the abductions. Men report being forced to mate with female aliens, usually blonde and beautiful. Many American women claim erotic encounters with 'godlike' male aliens.

Ever since, interest in UFOs has waxed and waned. There are currently so few sightings over the UK that the British UFO society has been wound up.

But in 1989 and 1990, when the Soviet empire was collapsing, any visiting aliens would have found the skies over Eastern Europe very crowded indeed.

Extraterrestrials, it seems, visit during times of political upheaval — there was a rash of sightings during the Cuban missile crisis and the invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

So what is going on? Nearly 50 years after Churchill's plaintive request, are we any nearer to answering his questions?

First, UFOs, by definition, do exist. The night sky is full of strange lights and moving objects that cannot easily be explained. But the vast majority turn out to be natural phenomena.

Sometimes the planet Venus appears to be extremely large and bright against the western the sky emitting smoke and sparks, and a sonic boom. What I saw was almost certainly a large meteorite about to burn up.

Then there are man-made explanations. Weather balloons are the cause of an estimated 10 per cent of UFO sightings.

SECRET aircraft are tested in the western states of America. The American Mach 5 Aurora spyplane is also rumoured occasionally to fly over Britain — and may be the source of the mysterious sonic booms heard off the coasts of south-west England even when Concorde isn't flying.

Such explanations account for perhaps 95pc of reported UFO sightings.

But the remaining 5pc? No one knows. They could be alien spacecraft, but then again they could be some new and unexpected phenomenon. They could also, of course, be clever hoaxes.

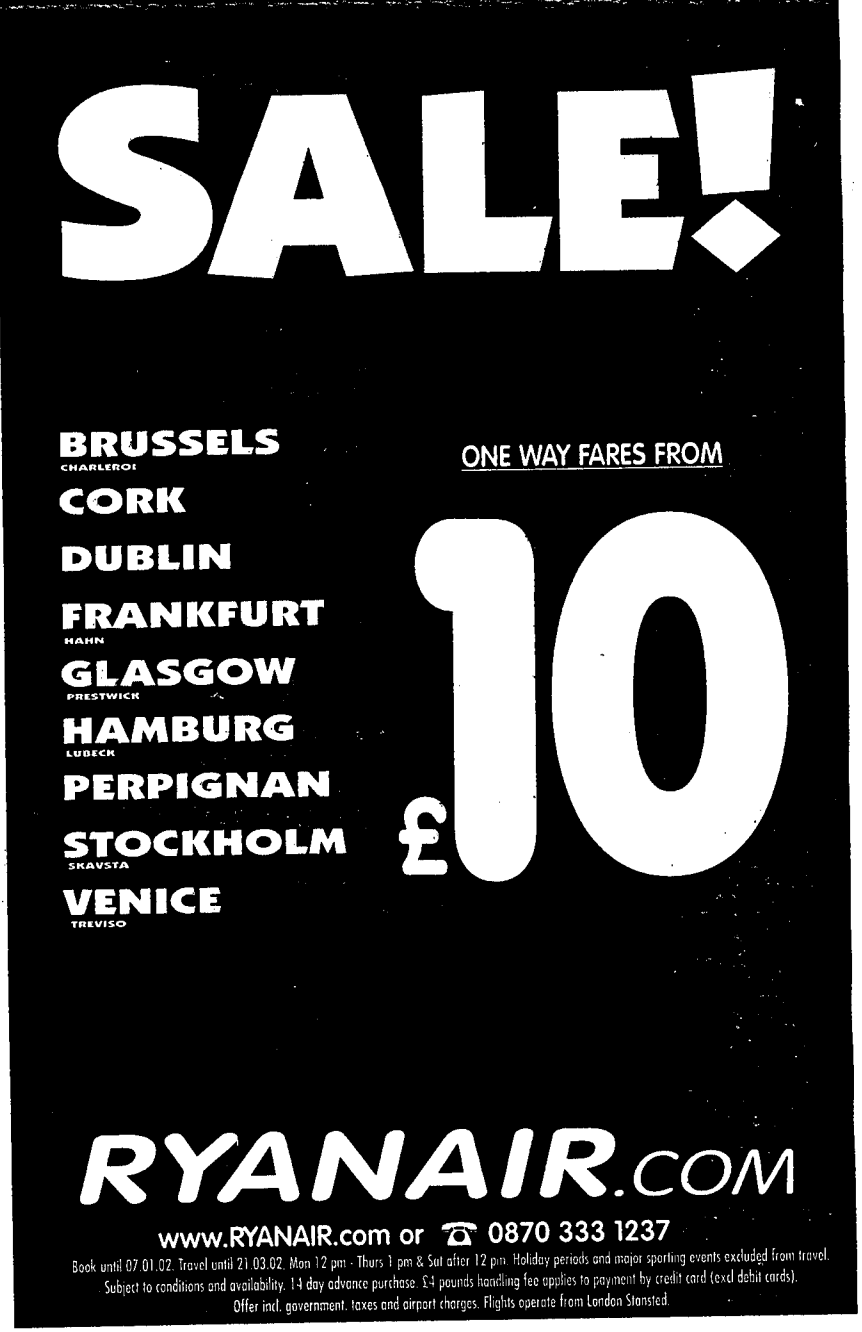
Some people believe UFOs have always been with us. Dick Taylor, secretary of the British Interplanetary Society, believes the UFO phenomenon is no more than the modern continuation of an ancient myth — that of angels and other creatures from the skies.

'We have always wanted to believe that we are not alone,' he says. Previously, these lights were thought to be manifestations of the divine. Now, in a technological society, they must have a technical explanation.

The working party was officially wound up in 1956, but the MoD continued to investigate UFOs.

Nick Pope, an MoD mandarin who until the 1990s was Britain's answer to the X-Files' Fox Mulder, maintains that although most of the cases he investigated could easily be explained, many could not.

The truth, it seems, is still out there — and Churchill's questions are no closer to being answered today than in 1951.



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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF

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INFORMATION (EXPLOITATION) RECORDS 1

DAS (Low Airspace) Ops PD

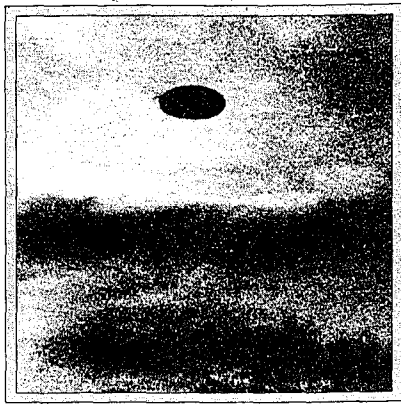
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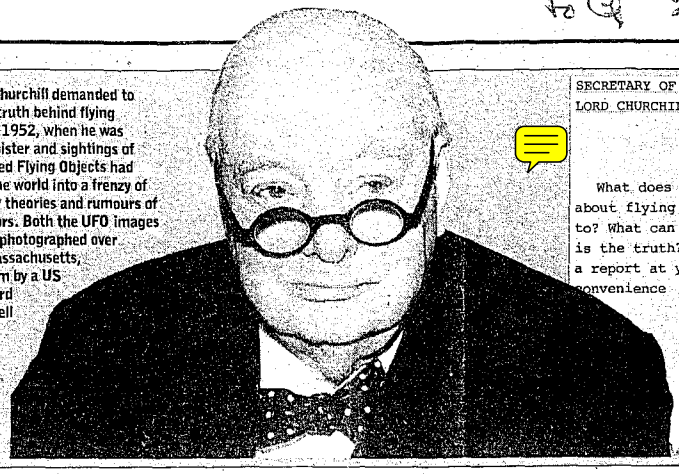
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MEZZANINE 2, 3-5 GREAT SCOTLAND YARD, LONDON SW1A 2HW

21 October 2001 The Observer

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Winston Churchill demanded to know the truth behind flying saucers in 1952, when he was Prime Minister and sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects had plunged the world into a frenzy of conspiracy theories and rumours of alien visitors. Both the UFO images here were photographed over Salem, Massachusetts, one of them by a US Coast Guard named Shell Alpert.

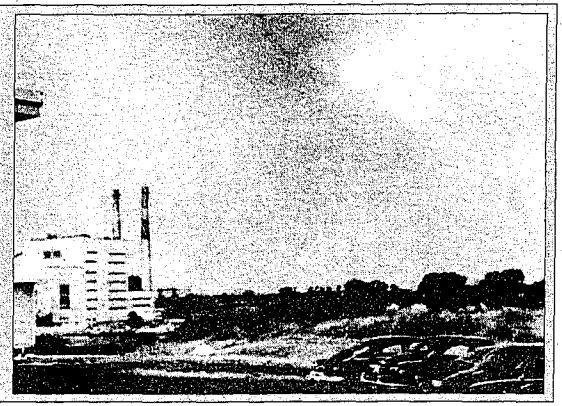
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SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AIR
LORD CHURCHILL

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

W.S.C

28 July 1952



How Churchill chased flying saucers

by Paul Harris

SCIENTISTS and generals drew up a top secret report on Unidentified Flying Objects and then decided to cover up a wave of rumours and sightings that swept Britain in the 1950s, *The Observer* can reveal.

The existence of the UFO report, written in 1951 and later used to brief Prime Minister Winston Churchill, was denied by the Ministry of Defence for almost 50 years.

But the six-page document has recently been unearthed by UFO historians Andy Roberts and David Clarke as they researched a book on UFOs and the Cold War. The report has been a 'holy grail' of British 'ufology' and details the conclusions of a shadowy panel called the Working Party on Flying Saucers. This group was the idea of Sir Henry Tizard, one of Churchill's most trusted scientific advisers during World War II and a key figure behind the development of radar.

But anyone looking for an elusive 'X-file' that confirms the existence of aliens will be disappointed. The report concludes that all sightings were explainable by natural events, such as the weather or meteors, or were of normal aircraft.

But it does speak volumes about the scale of paranoia in Britain at the start of the Cold War. From 1950 onwards, hundreds of UFO sightings were reported across Britain and were regular front page news. Leading public figures, including Lord Louis Mountbatten, came out with their belief that Earth was being visited by aliens.

The phenomenon terrified the top brass on both sides of the Atlantic. Generals were worried that reports of flying saucers could be used by the Soviet Union to disguise an earthly attack or that the sightings were giving the Russians a clue that Britain's radar network was faulty and easy to penetrate – which was actually true but unknown within the Soviet bloc.

'This was a time of great paranoia and fear. The Government took a decision to throw a blanket over the UFO scare and say as little as possible about it,' said Clarke.

'There certainly was a cover-up, but what was being covered up was Cold War paranoia and our fears over our radar system. It was nothing to do with aliens.'

Despite the official silence, the UFO scares did not die down. In 1952 Churchill fired off a memo to his advisers in the wake of fresh UFO sightings in the United States. 'What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to? What can it mean? What is the truth?' Churchill wrote.

Tizard's report was then used to brief the Prime Minister on the perceived lack of real threat from UFOs in August of that year. A few months later an order went out expressly banning all RAF personnel from discussing sightings with anyone not from the military.

In trying to underplay the sightings, Britain was following the lead of the United States, which had conducted several studies into its own UFO sightings and also adopted a policy of official secrecy. When the British report was presented, a top CIA scientist travelled over to the meeting to make sure the conclusions of America's closest ally fitted in.

Even today, the report is unlikely to dispel the convictions of thousands of British UFO-believers, despite a collapse in the number of sightings and the closure earlier this year of the British Flying Saucer Bureau. 'Believers will say that this report is fake or a decoy and that the Government is still hiding something. You cannot win,' said Roberts.

The explanation Roberts and Clarke offer for UFOs is more prosaic than the conspiracy theories of secret alien contact. It lies in mass hysteria. They believe the true importance of the UFO phenomenon lies in the fact that it was an urban myth that gained enough public power to panic the highest echelons of British government – all the way to Winston Churchill.

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Yours 'friend'

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– ϕ nothing has changed then...!!

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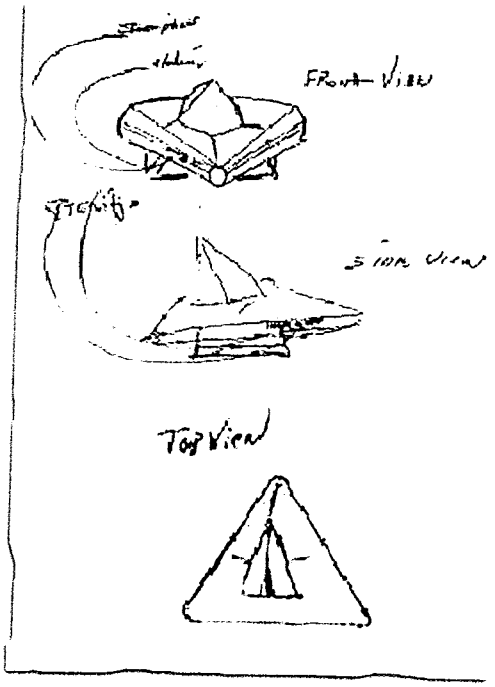
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Rendlesham revealed

BRITAIN'S MOST FAMOUS UFO CASE OCCURRED ONE NIGHT IN 1980 WHEN SOME AMERICAN AIRMEN ENCOUNTERED A GLOWING CRAFT IN A SUFFOLK WOOD. **JAMES EASTON** BELIEVES THAT RECENTLY RELEASED GOVERNMENT PAPERS SHOW THE UFO BELIEVERS WERE WAY OFF THE MARK ABOUT RENDLESHAM.

SUSPICIONS WERE THAT THE MOD NOT ONLY KNEW THE TRUTH BUT WAS COVERING IT UP



Jim Penniston claims he drew these UFO sketches at the time of the incident.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

JAMES EASTON

has reinvestigated many classic UFO cases, including the Kenneth Arnold sighting (***FT137:34-39***), and runs the Internet-based discussion forum - the 'UFO Research List' - focusing on military black projects.

On two nights in December 1980, just after Christmas, strange lights were seen in Rendlesham forest, Suffolk, adjacent to the RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge airbases. The twin-base complex was operated by the American military as part of NATO's front-line defences. On both occasions, American personnel left the Bentwaters base to investigate the mysterious lights in the belief that an aircraft might have crashed. Disoriented and puzzled, their testimony, given sometime afterwards, has contributed to a widespread belief that the airmen had a close encounter with a UFO.

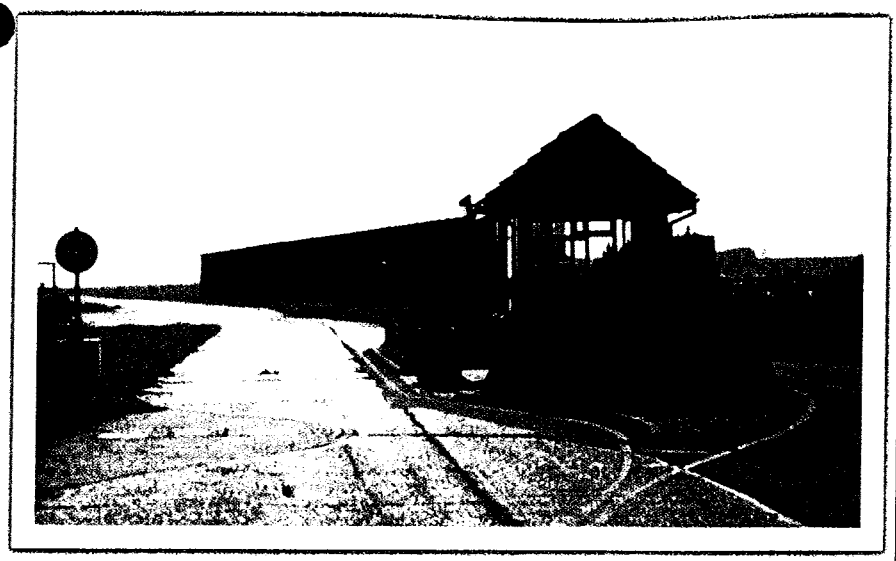
While it was known that the Deputy Base Commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Halt, had sent a memo to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) about the disturbing incidents, he never received any official reply and the Ministry's subsequent denial of – or at least silence on – the incidents fuelled suspicions among UFO believers that the MoD not only knew the truth about UFOs but was covering up prominent cases. The Rendlesham encounters and Col Halt's memo, they argued, established that definitively.

At long last, the Ministry of Defence has released its file on Rendlesham; in 155 pages, it chronicles the Ministry's own investigations of what happened on those two December nights 21 years ago. Unfortunately, for both conspiracy aficionados and UFO buffs, what is revealed by the MoD's internal documents could not be further removed from the 'cover up' of an alien visitation.

The 'close encounter' first made headlines in 1983 when American researcher Robert Todd discovered the existence of Col Halt's memo to the MoD and informed the UFO community. In the United States – where ufologists have had a long and successful run of requesting the release of government and military documents under their Freedom of Information Act – Todd decided, in 1983, to make a speculative enquiry about the Rendlesham incidents. In time, he received a response from the 513th Combat Support Group (CSG), which provided document management services to the Third Air Force; they had located a copy of the 'Halt memo'. As the USAF's own copy had been "properly disposed of in accordance with Air Force Regulations," the copy now provided to Todd had been obtained by the CSG directly from the British government. [1]

In April 1983, when British ufologist Jenny Randles and fellow investigators put questions to MoD department DS8, it was confirmed to them that "USAF personnel did see unusual lights" at RAF Woodbridge, but they were ambivalent about the existence of the memo from the commander of an American base on British soil – a document whose existence DS8 could not confirm or give Jenny permission to view, and yet here was Jenny in the MoD waving a copy she had obtained from Todd. This silence – or at least, reticence – was interpreted as a denial, giving rise to the view that 'something' was being concealed.

However, the MoD was indeed keeping a file on Rendlesham and now, thanks to the diligence of UFO historian and fortean researcher Dr David Clarke, it was released to him in May 2001. Clarke explains: "Towards the end of the year 2000, an application was made under the present Code of Practice on Access to Government Information for a copy of the file, assembled by



JAMES EASTON

EAST GATE: The guardhouse. Below: Col. Halt

A RED, SUN-LIKE LIGHT WAS SEEN THROUGH THE TREES

Secretariat Air Staff 2a (the successor to DS8) on the Rendlesham Forest UFO incident. In addition, a search was requested of other files that might contain documents relevant to the report from RAF Bentwaters."

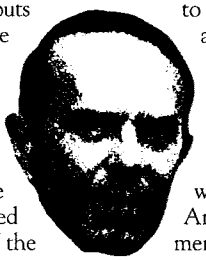
"According to the Ministry, the majority of the papers contained within came from one file that was assembled some time after the alleged event that opened with Halt's memo and largely consisted of correspondence. Because the file appeared incomplete, the MoD carried out a search to identify any other relevant papers from 'UFO' files covering the same period, 1981-2. This search located a number of other documents relating to the incident that have now been placed within the original file opened in 1982."

In his memo, Halt describes the two events from his own recollection. On the first occasion, he writes, three patrolmen were given permission to investigate a possible aircrash "outside the back gate" of the Bentwaters base, adjacent to Rendlesham Forest. The patrolmen, Halt says, reported encountering a "strange glowing object in the forest," which was "metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three metres (7-10ft) across the base and approximately two metres high." The object, according to Halt, "had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath" and was "hovering or on legs." As the patrolmen approached, the object "manoeuvred through the trees and disappeared."

The next night, Halt and others witnessed more "strange lights" they could not explain. "A red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed," he wrote. As both incidents centred on Rendlesham Forest and as this was outside the jurisdiction of the US Air Force, Halt says it had been deemed a matter for the Ministry to investigate. Halt never received any confirmation of receipt or further instructions.

In the following years, the Rendlesham case received enormous publicity, being endlessly cited in a stream of books and TV documentaries as a 'double whammy', evidence of both the existence of UFOs and of a high-level cover-up. However, as time went by, a growing number of ufologists became convinced this 'most famous British UFO case' was fundamentally flawed.

The first impression given by the newly-released MoD file is that it puts paid to the accusation that the British government was engaged in a 'UFO cover-up'. This historic, official 'UFO' file – containing over 150 'secret' documents, demonstrates that the MoD did in fact spend some time investigating those purported 'Rendlesham forest UFOs' even if the results seem pretty lacklustre.



COURTESY QUEST INTERNATIONAL

One of the first and most important results is independent confirmation of the dates of the two 'UFO' incidents: the first beginning at around 0300 on the morning of 26 December and the second in night/early morning of 27/28 December. (Halt erroneously records these as 27 and 29/30 December respectively.) Astonishingly, the file includes a letter from science writer and astronomer Ian Ridpath to DS8 in 1983 alerting them to the fact that Col Halt had recorded erroneous dates in his memo – dates that could have been confirmed, as Ridpath had found, from local police records. When DS8 wrote to an RAF officer at the base to check Ridpath's claim, the officer chose to accept Halt's dates over Ridpath's. As Dr Clarke notes: "The MoD's assessment that the UFO events reported to them by Lt Col Halt were of "no defence significance" was flawed because their analysis of radar data was concentrated upon incorrect dates!"

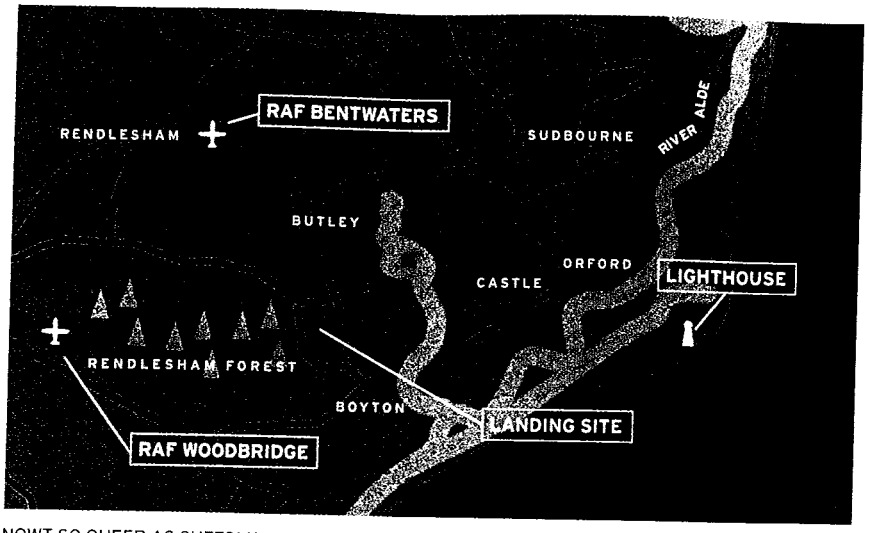
How could Halt have been so mistaken? It's a question which I may be the only person ever to have raised, albeit by proxy. On 13 May 1997, American journalist Salley Rayl interviewed Halt and kindly asked on my behalf: "We received an e-mail earlier in the day from a fellow by the name of James Easton who lives in Scotland and apparently has been researching this case during recent months. One thing that he mentioned, and a question that I would like to pass on to you, is why have there been variances in the dates given for both incidents? Your memo claims that the dates were on the evening/early morning of the 26th/ 27th and 29th/30th of December, respectively. But elsewhere, in interviews, the dates have been given as 25 to 26 and 28 to 29, he says. So why, why are there differences in those dates?"

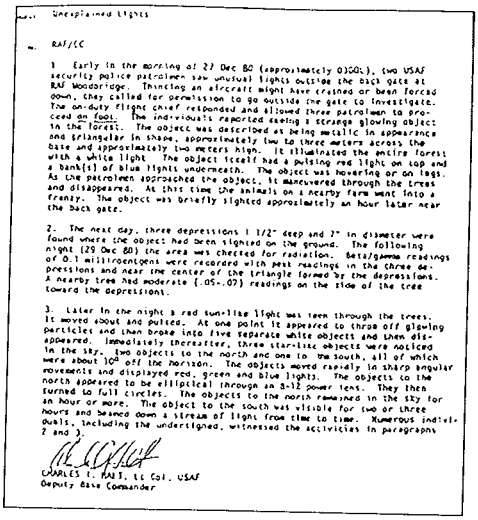
Halt replied: "Well, I tried to go back and recover the police blotter and the security blotter – I think I mentioned to you earlier – to reaffirm the dates. Keep in mind, I wrote the memo several weeks later. And it was not a really important memo. The date was not critical. The critical portion was, you know, what happened and are you interested? And how about getting involved and let's investigate this. It's possible that I, I put the date down wrong. But I don't believe so. I tried to verify later and the police blotters had been taken



JAMES EASTON

ALIEN HIGHWAY: The main road through Rendlesham forest just before it reaches 'East gate'.





Unexplained Lights

RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0130L), 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 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 pest 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° 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

NOWT SO QUEER AS SUFFOLK : a map indicating the various locations involved in the Rendlesham incident. Right: The 'Halt memo'. Below: Staff- Sergeant Jim Penniston, the patrolman who claimed he saw a 'metallic object'

from the repository, probably by a, how shall I say, curiosity seeker..."

Halt didn't take statements from any of the witnesses until a full week after the events. He told Sally Rayl that this delay was due to the holiday period: "Around New Year's Eve, I took statements and interviewed the men who had taken part in the initial incident." I acquired these statements in 1998 and revealed them first, exclusively, on the Internet. [2] Four of the five statements agree and verify the date of the first incident as 26 December, so there should never have been any confusion. If, as Halt stated to Rayl, he attempted to substantiate the correct dates before sending his memo, why did he not refer to the testimonies he had personally obtained from the witnesses?

In his memo, Halt informed the Ministry that following a sighting of "unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge" a patrol was allowed off-base to "check it out." He wrote: "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."



JIM PENNISTON

According to the statement of one of the three patrolmen, Airman Ed Cabansag, it seems the "strange glowing object" was a farmhouse, . The group had entered the forest thinking "it had to be an aircraft accident" and walked at least two miles (3.2km), trying to get to a vantage point that would clarify this light in the distance. "Our route through the forest and field was a direct one, straight towards the light," he continues. "We figured the lights were coming from past the forest, since nothing was visible as we passed through the woody forest. We could see a glowing near the beacon light, but as we got closer we found it to be a lit-up farmhouse."

Indeed, it was the same 'glowing farmhouse' at Capel Green which alarmed Halt during the second incident. When the 'UFO' was reported again the next night, he ventured into Rendlesham forest in search of

THE WINDOWS WERE ALL BRIGHT RED AND FLICKERING

it. As he recalled in the interview with Salley Rayl: "We had also noticed that the farmer's house appeared to be glowing, as though there were a fire inside. All the windows were bright red and sort of flickering and I was quite concerned for the occupants of the house."

During the past year, local researcher Robert McLean managed to retrace, on more than one occasion, Halt's route from the microcassette notes Halt made in the forest that night. McLean easily located the same farmhouse and was able to see for himself the 'house on fire effect'. It is, he says, "quite an effective illusion" but is only a result of local lighting conditions.

Halt's memo goes on to describe the "beacon light": "The object was described as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three metres across the base and approximately two metres 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 manœuvred 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."

The testimony of the three security patrolmen seems be at odds with Halt's account. Not one of them describes a 'triangular-shaped' object in their statements. Staff-Sergeant Jim Penniston was the only one who claimed to have seen what he believed to be a metallic object, associated with the 'lights'. His original written account describes how he was never able to get closer than 50 metres (160f) to the elusive source, which his accompanying sketch clearly showed to be 'box-shaped'. Penniston's account changed radically after he underwent 'regressive hypnosis'. Contrary to his earlier testimony, he began to claim the 'object' was 'triangular-shaped'.

Significantly, however, the final member of that patrol, Airman First Class John Burroughs, was adamant they never observed a 'craft', merely some lights which implied an object was there. Cabansag's statement refers only to some unfamiliar lights, the origin of which was never resolved, except for the "beacon light" – quite a different scenario from the one outlined in Halt's memo. (When I contacted him recently, John Burroughs still maintains they saw only some anomalous lights.)

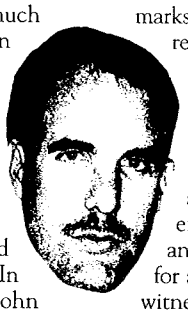
In popular retellings of the Rendlesham encounters, the lights are said to manœuvre through the trees before disappearing. But, as explained in Burroughs' statement, the patrolmen saw the lights next to a farmhouse before they were lost from sight: "We got up to a fence that separated the trees from the open field and you could see the lights down by a farmer's house. We climbed over the fence and started heading towards the red and blue lights and they just disappeared. Once we reached the farmer's house we could see a beacon going around, so we went towards it. We followed it for about two miles before we could see it was coming from a lighthouse." Then, said Burroughs, "We had just crossed a creek and were told to come back when we saw a blue light to our left in the trees. It was only there for a minute and it just streaked away. After that, we didn't see anything so we returned to the truck."

Conspicuously absent in Halt's memo is the story of how that lighthouse played a role in those first and formative 'UFO' perceptions. The "blue light" which seemed to "streak away" is the sole basis for Halt's contention that, "The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate." If the Ministry had also been advised by Halt that the tiny pulsating light (confirmed by Halt to Sally Rayl) he personally observed within Rendlesham forest, was seen again "clear off to the coast" (documented in his microcassette recording), the entire context

of these 'UFO' alarms might have become more evident.

In the memo, Halt also drew attention to radiation readings taken at what was believed to be the first night's 'UFO landing site'. We can now see from the MoD's file that they wasted time on this. It's long been demonstrated that the levels were minuscule. In fact, Halt himself records incidental 'radiation readings' from a nearby field which were higher than most of the 'landing site' readings.

Understandably, Halt's 'official UFO report' created much excitement and optimism in the 'UFO community'. Ostensibly, it threatened to blow apart the MoD 'UFO conspiracy', and the speculation was fuelled by Penniston's increasingly elaborate recollections under 'hypnotic regression'. He now claimed to have examined a landed 'craft' at his leisure for 20 minutes. In contrast, his fellow patrolman John Burroughs resolutely maintains: "I never saw anything metallic or anything hard." Again: "We did not see a structured 'craft'... all we saw were lights that seemed to imply a structure of some kind."



COURTESY QUEST INTERNATIONAL

This divergence in the eyewitness testimony rarely featured in the more enthusiastic media reports. The story's factual genesis was confused further by the publication of *Left at East Gate* (1997) by ex-USAF airman Larry Warren, who claimed to have been directly involved with others in a dramatic 'close encounter' during the UFO incursions. Halt and Penniston were, however, scathing of Warren's assertions; in Warren's original account he claimed only that he had heard about the 'UFO' tales while stationed on the base, but later, after 'hypnotic regression' he too was claiming a closer contact.

Warren referred to his designated UFO 'landing site' as momentous physical evidence of UFO visitation. The photographs in his book describe the location as: "Capel Green, site of the incident. Craft's point of contact clearly visible as discolored area..." and "Capel Green, 1995, showing landing site still blighted 15 years after Larry Warren's experience."

Robert McLean has been able to locate Larry Warren's purported landing area, using the visual clues in Warren's CD, also called *Left at East Gate*. McLean also obtained aerial shots of the locale and one of these, taken by the RAF, depicts Warren's 'UFO landing site' in detail. It shows some discoloured areas – one of which appears to be circular – in the field. However, this RAF aerial photograph was taken in 1953 (27 years earlier) and the marks are interpreted by experienced aerial reconnaissance folk as typical patterns in crops caused by underground ruins... not evidence of an alien spaceship landing.

In a new development, there's a possible explanation which seems to account for UFO-like impressions experienced by Burroughs, Cabansag and Penniston. Ultimately, the catalyst for all that followed was the 'UFO' they witnessed, and the source of those enigmatic lights was found near a farmhouse. Recall Burroughs' statement: "We got up to a fence that separated the trees from the open field and you could see the lights down by a farmers house. We climbed over the fence and started heading towards the red and blue lights and they just disappeared."

In a sketch which depicted the triangular-shaped light formation, Burroughs clarified that the top red light, which resembled a beacon, was "red and orange." Especially prominent was white light which projected downwards from the source. It occurred to me that I had seen something similar... the field lights used by a tractor at night. As it moved around a large field, delivering food to cattle in an otherwise dark landscape, the numerous top and side lights created a spectacular display and on top was an amber beacon 'warning' light.

IT WASN'T UNTIL IT MOVED OFF THAT WE SAW IT WAS A TRACTOR

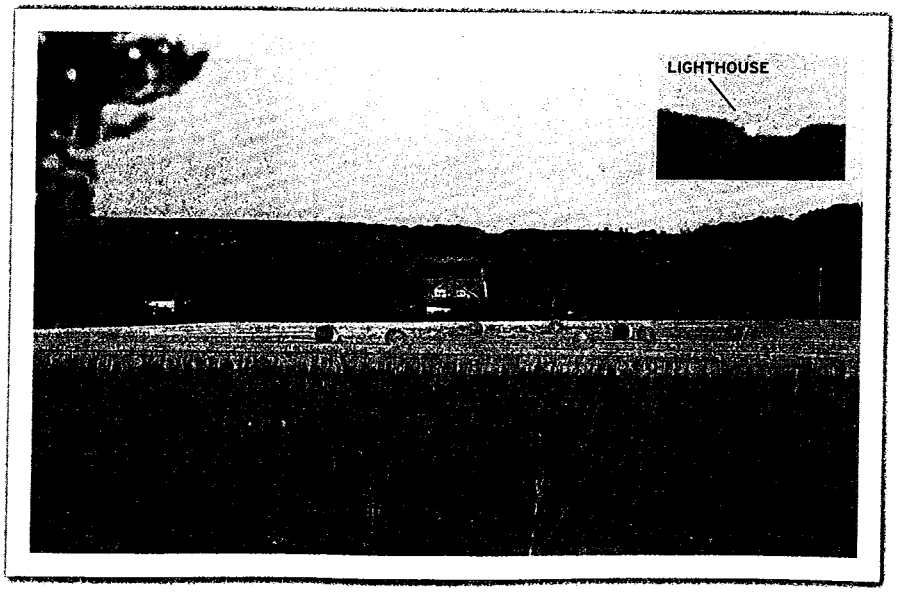
Former Senior Airman Kenneth Greene, stationed at RAF Bentwaters, recently told me about the 'UFO' which he and a fellow servicemen encountered, in 1978, on their way to Bentwaters one night for the midnight shift. "I was living off base at the time in a small town called Darsham, near Saxmundham, Suffolk. My room mate and I were on a small country road and as we came round a curve there was a small triangular object, about eight feet (2.4m) in height, stopped in middle of the road. This object had a small flashing orange beacon on top and bright white lights emanating from it at various points."

"Our immediate thought was that it was a UFO, but it turned out to be a very small farm tractor. The top width was shorter than the bottom width and the two sides slightly angled up toward the top. This shape was actually the operator's compartment. However, viewing this at night when the white lights were on created an initial impression of a 'triangle'. It wasn't until the operator extinguished some of the lights and moved off the road that we realized it was a tractor."

Could this have been what was witnessed by the USAF patrol, stressed after their long chase through the dark forest, by the glowing farm, sparking off the UK's most famous 'UFO' affair?

We may never know for sure. However, in the first book written about this case – *Sky Crash* (1984) co-authored by Jenny Randles, Brenda Butler and Dot Street – Jenny writes of Butler and Street's visit to the site, within a couple of months of the UFO events: "Brenda and Dot were directed to see a Mr Brown, who owns a house about three quarters of a mile [1,200m] further down the path which skirts the field... He had a large pink house with plenty of old huts around the back, and a tractor standing idle... He abruptly pointed out that he knew nothing about a UFO." [3]

In fact, he might have known a lot more about it than he realised! FT



IAN RIDPATH

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE: A view from the forest edge near where Col. Halt saw a flashing 'UFO'. Top: John F Burroughs - saw anomalous lights.

NOTES

1. Larry Fawcett & Barry Greenwood, *Clear Intent* (Prentice Hall, 1984, pp 217-218).

2. James Easton, *Rendlesham Unravelled* (1998). See: **www.rendlesham.com**

3. Jenny Randles, Brenda Butler & Dot Street, *Sky Crash* (Neville Spearman, 1984, p 47.

RESOURCES

● RECOMMENDED READING

SKY CRASH: A COSMIC CONSPIRACY (1984)
Brenda Butler, Dot Street and Jenny Randles

AND NOT SO RECOMMENDED...
LEFT AT EAST GATE (1997)
Larry Warren

■ RECOMMENDED SURFING

www.rendlesham.com
James Easton's definitive website on the subject

TELLING THE PEOPLE

THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE RENDLESHAM CASE HAVE SPLIT THE UFO COMMUNITY. WHILE JAMES EASTON REPRESENTS A PRAGMATIC VIEWPOINT BASED UPON THE FACE VALUE OF WHAT FEW FACTS CAN BE ESTABLISHED, THERE IS A THRIVING OPPOSITION WHICH BELIEVES THE SAME DATA SUPPORTS THE THEORY THAT UFOS HOVERED OVER THE NATO INSTALLATIONS FOR ALMOST FIVE HOURS AND LANDED IN THE NEARBY FOREST. GEORGINA BRUNI BELIEVES THAT MEMBERS OF THE USAF, STATIONED AT THE TWIN RAF BASES IN SUFFOLK, DID ENCOUNTER UFOS DURING THAT CHRISTMAS WEEK IN 1980.

Unlike most UFO reports, there is official evidence in the public domain to prove that the Rendlesham Forest incident was genuine. The first real evidence emerged in 1983, when an American research group obtained a document released through the Freedom of Information Act. This was a memorandum authored by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt, the Deputy Base Commander, himself a witness to one of the events. The document, which was sent to the MoD soon after the incident, described how military witnesses encountered a triangular-shaped object in Rendlesham Forest, on the perimeter of RAF Woodbridge, and explained that radiation readings were taken at the landing site.

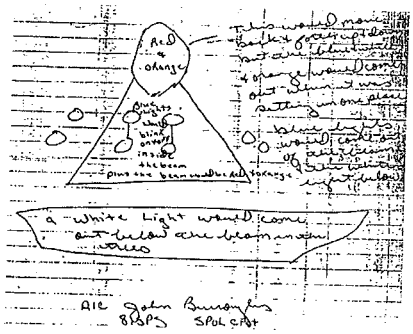
More evidence surfaced in 1984 when Colonel Sam Morgan, the then base commander, sent copies of a tape recording to British researchers. The tape, which was made by Halt during one of the events, confirmed that radiation readings were taken at the landing site, that indentations were found in the ground where an object was said to have landed, and that the patrol encountered UFOs. During research for my book *You Can't Tell The People: The Definitive Account of the Rendlesham Forest UFO Incident* (Sidgwick & Jackson, 2000), I located USAF photographs taken at the landing site the morning after the initial event. These photographs feature USAF personnel and British police examining the ground indentations as described in Halt's recording.

I've worked on this case for five years and have been frustrated by the way in which the MoD and USAF have played down the incident, claiming it was of "no defence significance". I'm not alone in my frustration. Former Chief of the Defence Staff Lord Hill-Norton (below) has been trying to get answers since 1983. He has tabled 16 Questions in Parliament this year: Questions that concern the case as presented in my book. The answers were not convincing, even though great pressure was put on Baroness Symons, Minister of State for Defence Procurement, to release information on the case. But Lord Hill-Norton did not give up and, earlier this year, his persistence paid off when the MoD's file on this case was released under the 'Code of Practice on Access to Government Information'.

There are numerous documents in the file, the most important of which are the internal exchanges of correspondence between departments of the RAF and Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS). These documents offer some idea of what transpired after the MoD received Halt's memorandum and, contrary to the official line that the incident was of "no defence significance", show that the report was, indeed, taken seriously.



COURTESY RAY GULYAS



SCORCHED EARTH: A Police officer and Capt. Mike Verrano examine the landing site. Bottom: John Burroughs' UFO drawing.

TAPE RECORDED EVIDENCE WAS HANDED TO THE CHIEF OF THE USAF IN EUROPE

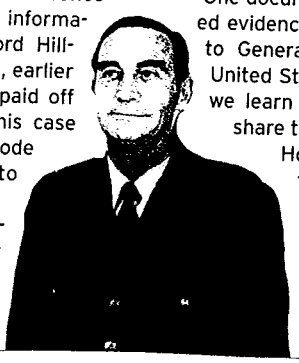
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The documents make it clear that there was concern over the above average radiation readings, as reported in Halt's memorandum. We also learn that RAF Watton had found fault with film of the reported sighting (the RAF routinely take film of its radar screens) for the night in question. It was later discovered that film on the days prior to and after the reported phenomena were also faulty.

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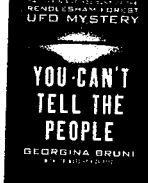
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It's unlikely there will ever be a Public Inquiry, but efforts are being made to obtain more information, both from the MoD and the USAF.



BIG CHIEF: Hill-Norton

COMPETITION



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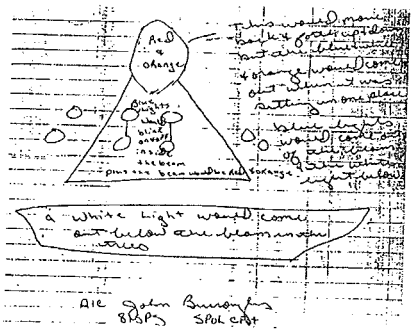
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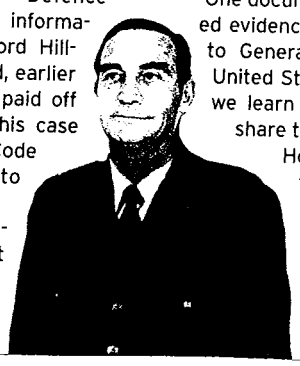
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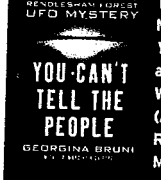
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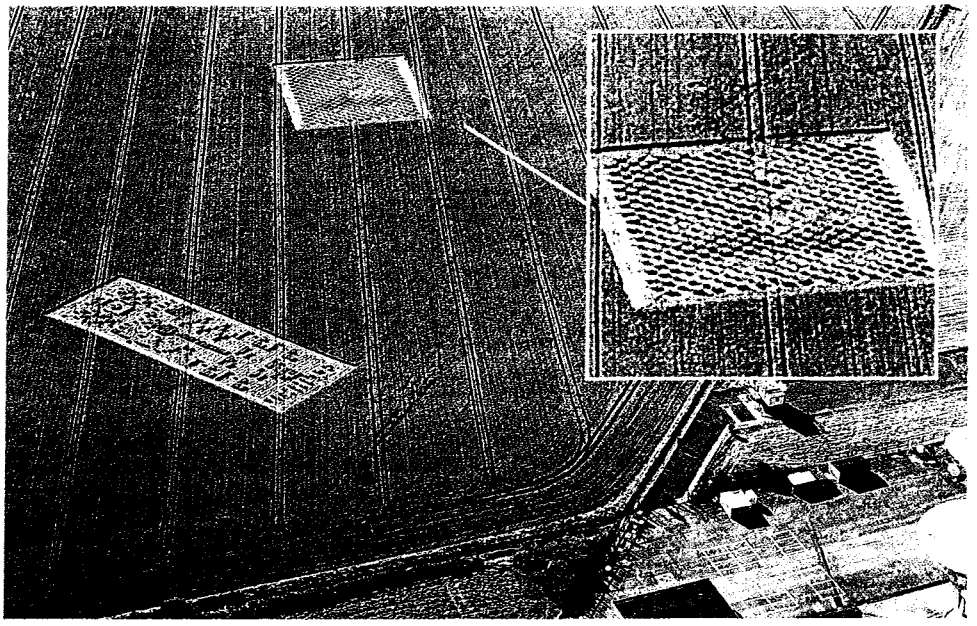


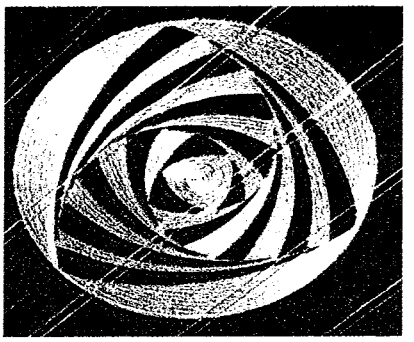
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AHEAD OF THE FIELD...

MARK PILKINGTON REVIEWS THE PICK OF THIS SUMMER'S LATE CROP OF CIRCLES. PHOTOS BY **STEVE ALEXANDER.**





Above - BARROWDEN, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: One of the year's other impresssive creations.

Left - CHILBOLTON, HAMPSHIRE: The Aricebo formation sent the nation's press into a circle frenzy.

Right - MILK HILL, WILTSHIRE: The megaglyph, also known as the Galaxy. It has been called the "mother and father of all crop circles" and is almost a thousand feet in diameter.

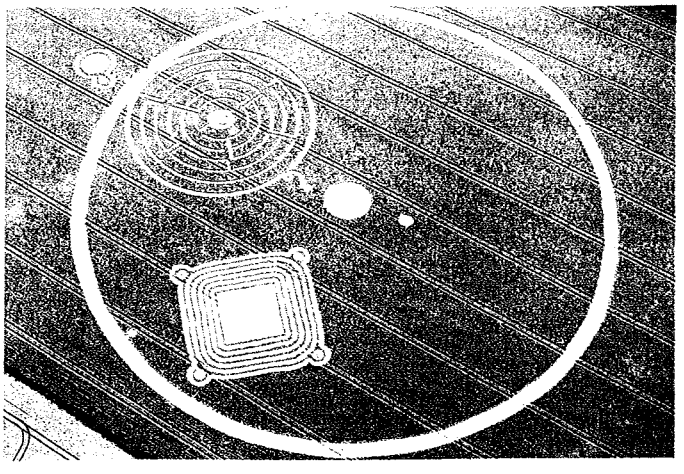
As another summer fades, so another crop circle-making season closes. This year, however, things have been rather different, with initial apathy turning to awe and a resulting media frenzy not seen since the heady days of the early 1990s.

Things got off to a fairly bleak start. Restrictions imposed due to the Foot and Mouth epidemic saw any determined circle artistes facing fines of several thousand pounds – a deterrent considerably more potent than the £100 paid by Matthew Williams, who exposed himself to the law last year. Compounding the situation was the month-long delay in planting crops after one of the wettest winters on record. April, usually the month in which the season's first daubings appear, was formation-free.

The year's first circle, an impressive six-fold flower, appeared not in Wiltshire, but in a field of oil-seed rape outside Zierenberg in central Germany on 15 May. As if in immediate response, a simple concentric circle design appeared in Hampshire the next day – at last the season had begun! 25 May saw F&M restrictions lifted in Wiltshire and Hampshire, with a few relatively straightforward creations popping up in the usual places, as well as one in Bournemouth, Dorset, conveniently situated between a theme park and the local airport.

The year's first dazzlers, a Meso-American-style maze and an intriguing, curved pyramid lens, landed in Barrowden Northamptonshire, and Berwick Bassett, Wiltshire, in the first few days of June. From then on it was a circle summer much like any other until, on the torrential night of 11-12 August, something incredible appeared on the top of Milk Hill – at 900 ft (247m) up, the highest point in the surrounding area – the first time it had been visited by the circlemakers.

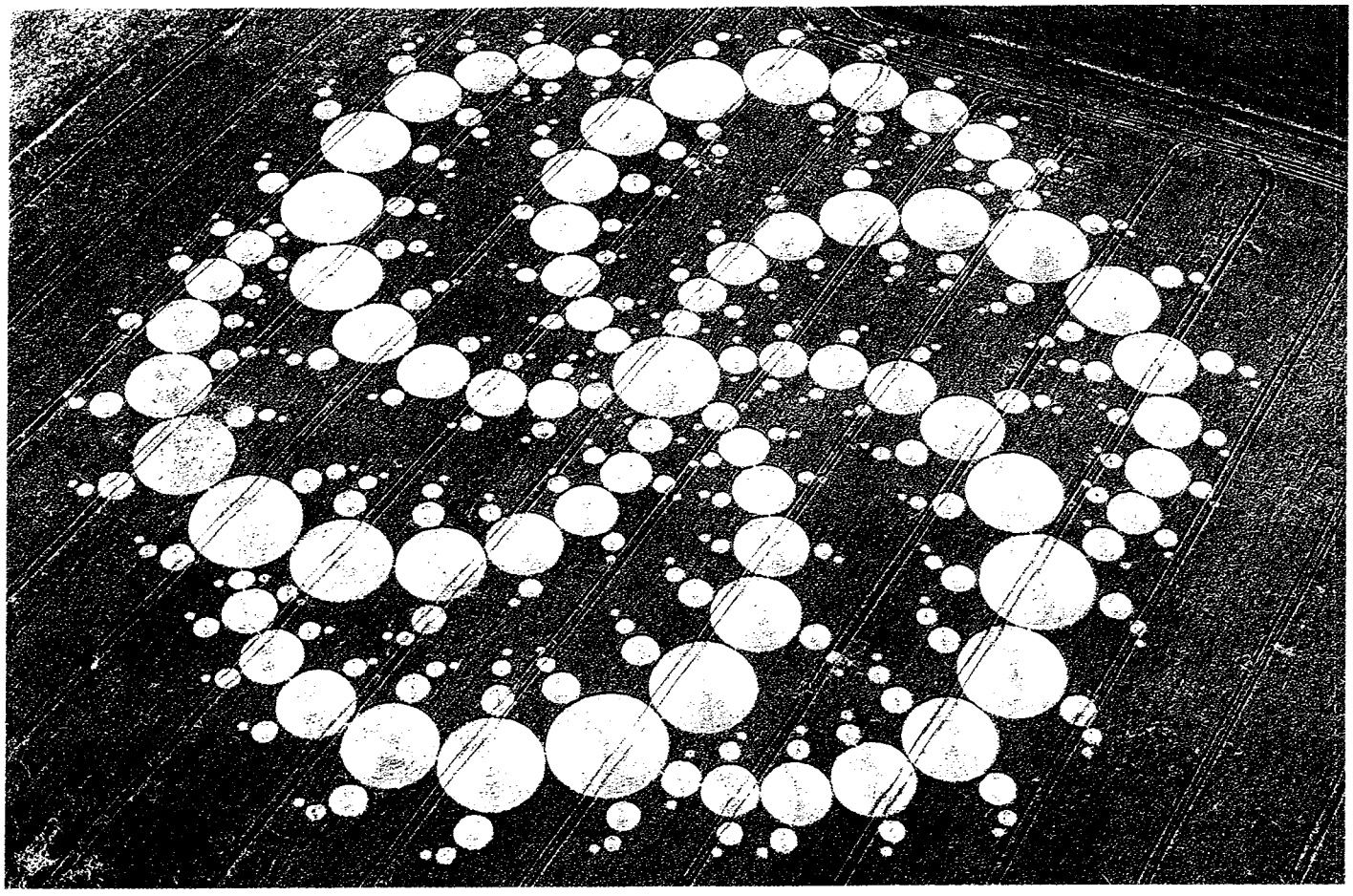
The formation, known as the 'Megaglyph', was a relatively straightforward fractal spiral but was, at around 900 ft (274m) across, simply enormous, consisting of over 400 individual circles, some of them over 70ft (21m) in diameter. Writing in the *Guardian*, John Vidal called it "boring and predictable", but the croppy community was ecstatic. "The formation that has brought the phenomenon back to the people," cried Stuart Dike on *Crop Circle Connector*, the croppies' online focal point, "it is the mother of all crop circles." Even veteran circlemaker John Lundberg was blown away: "I was well and truly godsmacked, I just kept returning to the image and staring at it. The size of the formation was unlike anything else we'd seen in the fields before, if was off the scale!"



GREAT SHELFORD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE: An asymetrical formation in wheat.

Perhaps the design's somewhat "retro" flavour, which harked back to the heyday of 1995/6, had something to do with the hero's welcome it received. The print and TV news media, which had ignored the phenomenon until now, were clearly overjoyed at being able to fill pages with new circle speculation. It was almost as if the past few years had never happened.

As the media onslaught continued throughout the following week, someone – or something – laid down a perfect riposte, this time in Chibolton, Hampshire, beside a radio telescope that has hosted formations several times before. One showed a humanoid face, not unlike the 'Face on Mars'. The other, dubbed the 'Aricebo Response', almost replicated the binary signal designed by astronomers Frank Drake and Carl Sagan and beamed to the star cluster M13 in 1974, from the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico. The key differences were the humanoid figure's enlarged head – perhaps a reference to its supposed ET origins – and a few misplaced pieces of DNA. Naturally



these served as cues for intensely detailed analyses from croppies, even one self-professed geneticist, and, more surprisingly, a bemused response from SETI astronomer Seth Shostak. Shostak admitted to admiring the circlemakers' work, but pointed out several problems with the image, and one with the notion of a reply in itself. "M13 is 25,000 light-years distant, which means that the message will not reach its target for another 250 centuries... The crop circles are decorative, impressive, and provocative, but not informative. We can expect better from true extraterrestrial intelligence."

These formations also drew the admiration of John Michell, fortean author and ex-editor of *The Cerealogist*, who pointed out the delightful proximityof the 'Aricebo Response' to the nearby interstellar observatory at Chilbolton, where some SETI programmes are carried out. "By my standards," Michell told *FT*, "the 'Face' is a great work of art, beautiful, subtle, witty, enigmatic, provocative, awesome and wonderful. It outclasses everything done by modern artists in the medium of landscape, including Smithson, Fulton, Christo, Long and Goldsworthy."

Such was the excitement surrounding these new formations that several websites had to close down as bandwidth demand far exceeded the limits of their service providers. Even the mighty Crop Circle Connector was forced to close its doors temporarily, upping its allowance from 50MB to a costly 150MB for August.

After a slowish start, it's been a remarkable year in circlemaking, with a respectable 88 formations in the UK (compared to 134 last year) and another 30 as far afield as Poland, Serbia and Israel. Veteran researcher Colin Andrews was clearly moved as he appeared on Art Bell's radio show: "There's never been a better season, this is by far the pinnacle of the last 20 years... there have been times in my work where I have privately cried to myself; it sounds extraordinary I know, but it's just so special." Thank you Colin. The phenomenon has, it seems, come full circle.

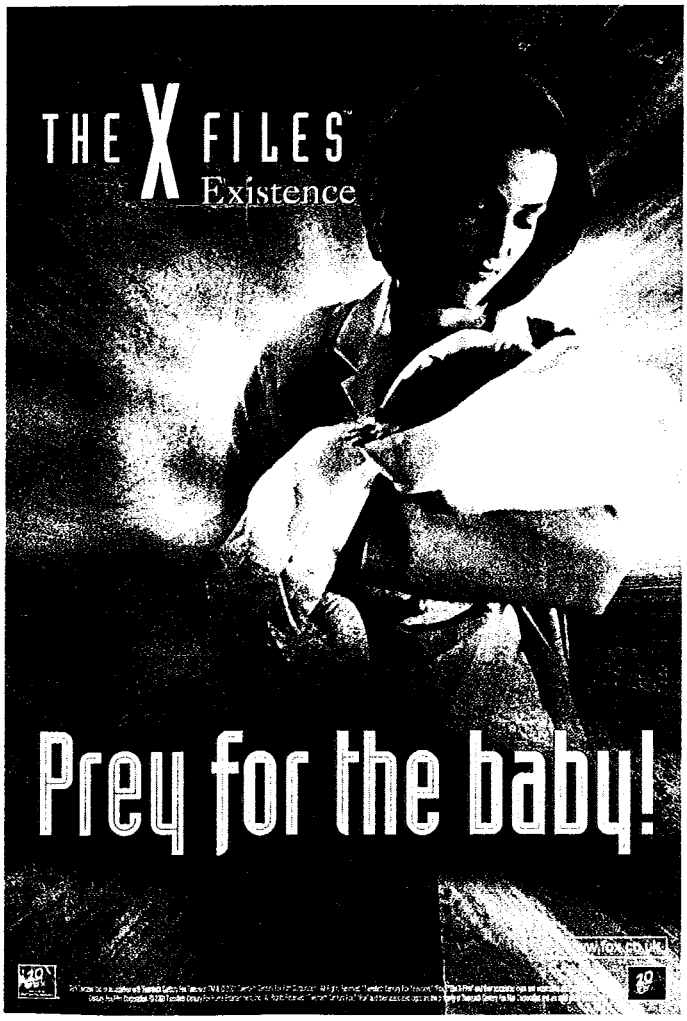
SOURCES

The Guardian, 21 Aug; *The Independent*, 26 Aug 2001;

Crop Circle Connector
www.cropcircleconnector.com

Circlemakers
www.circlemakers.org

SETI Statement
www.seti.org/general/ao_message_crop.html



126

Loose Minute

D Info(Exp)R/3/7/8

3 September 2001

DAS(Lower Airspace) (Ops & Plans) – [redacted]

EASTERN DAILY PRESS: RENDLESHAM

1. One of my record reviewers, now retired, has sent me these pages from the Eastern Daily Press.

2. It may be of interest!

[redacted]

[redacted]40 Thanks

For your info. This is what the Eastern Daily Press had to say about the release of the Rendlesham Forest file.

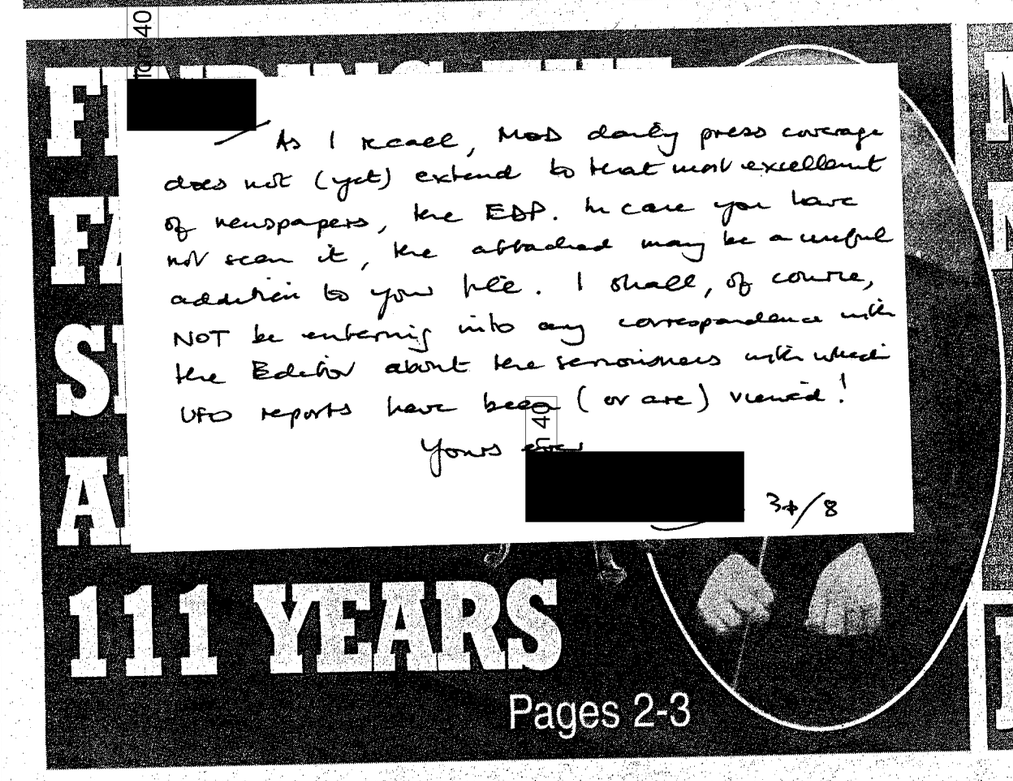
[redacted]

Eastern Daily Press

TODAY'S PULL-OUTS: TV & RADIO GUIDE, JOBSEARCH

Thursday, August 30, 2001 45p

THE COUNTRY'S TOP-SELLING REGIONAL MORNING NEWSPAPER www.EDP24.co.uk



[redacted]

As I recall, MoD daily press coverage does not (yet) extend to that most excellent of newspapers, the EDP. In case you have not seen it, the attached may be a useful addition to your file. I shall, of course, NOT be entering into any correspondence with the Editor about the seriousness with which UFO reports have been (or are) viewed!

Yours etc,

[redacted]

3/4/8



JOBS GUIDE 16 pages inside

SECRET REPORT ON UFO OPENED

MoD files reveal US military inquiry into East Anglia sighting

A top-level investigation was ordered by British and US military experts into East Anglia's most famous UFO sighting, documents released by the Government reveal.

Contrary to the official line that the sighting in Rendlesham Forest 21 years ago was "not taken seriously", the United States Air Force and the Ministry of Defence both began full inquiries into the incident.

But some taped evidence gathered by the Americans was passed direct to senior personnel and not shared with British officials, the newly-released documents show.

Problems were also recorded on equipment at RAF Watton in Norfolk, more than 40 miles away from the alleged incident.

The MoD this week bowed to sustained pressure and finally opened the official file on the sighting – prompted by claims from American servicemen that they saw a UFO near Woodbridge air base in 1980.

The file has been made public nine years earlier than planned and was unveiled after the Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton asked 16 questions in the House of Lords since January.

Lord Hill-Norton demanded answers to issues raised by author Georgina Bruni in her book You Can't Tell The People, billed as the definitive account of the unidentified flying object mystery.

Lord Hill-Norton has been campaigning for several years to persuade the Ministry of Defence to give more details on the object, allegedly seen by Americans near the east gate of Woodbridge air base just after Christmas 1980.

Colonel Charles Halt was deputy commander at Bentwaters air base and his memo detailed the sighting of "unusual lights".

Two patrolmen who investigated saw a metallic triangular object hovering or on legs with a pulsing red light on top and a bank of blue lights underneath.

It then reportedly disappeared through the forest and animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy.

The next day, three depressions 1.5in deep and 7in in diameter were found where the object had allegedly been sighted on the ground.

Since the sighting, there has been worldwide interest in the incident, and scores of attempts to explain what the servicemen claimed to have seen.

Sceptics claim the main object was probably a brilliant meteor, the radiation readings were caused by natural sources and that the other lights were stars.

In 1997, Lord Hill-Norton wrote to the then defence minister Lord Gilbert saying: "My position, both privately and publicly expressed over the last dozen years or more, is that there are only two possibilities.

"Either an intrusion into our air space and a landing by unidentified craft took place at Rendlesham, as described.

"Or 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."

After the government file was opened, Ms Bruni said: "The official view has always been that the US Air Force and MoD did not take the UFOs seriously and that

■ TURN TO PAGE 10

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Martin Mears

IN MY VIEW

A new weapon for the censor

Over the years the English libel laws have enabled every kind of crook and con-man to flourish with impunity. These laws have received powerful reinforcement from the courts in a recent ruling on the 1997 Protection from Harassment Act. This Act provides a remedy in damages to a person who claims to be the victim of a "course of conduct which amounts to harassment".

The complainant can also apply for a restraining injunction and for the issue of a warrant of arrest. Finally, harassment constitutes a criminal offence carrying a fine or a possible six-month prison sentence.

The Act does not define harassment but says that "harassing a person includes alarming the person or causing the person distress".

It is important to remember the context in which the Harassment Act was passed. Its particular purpose was to deter and punish stalkers. As worded, however, it would cover most situations where one person was conducting a personal vendetta against another (by, for instance, anonymous letters). So far so good.

Neither the sponsors of the Act nor anyone else imagined that the Act might be directed at comments made in the Press. In this area, God knows, the law already provides sufficient deterrents. In the case of Esther Thomas v News Group Newspapers, the Court of Appeal has now ruled in effect that Britain's uniquely restrictive libel laws do not go far enough.

Ms Thomas was a civilian clerk employed by the City of London Police. She had made a complaint about alleged racist behaviour by police officers towards a Somali woman asylum-seeker. This complaint resulted in the demotion of two police sergeants and a fine on a police constable.

When these facts became public The Sun newspaper took against Ms Thomas presenting her (wholly unfairly for all I know) as an unattractive whistle-blower who from an excess of zeal had shopped her colleagues to their politically correct superiors. The paper also mentioned (gratuitously, as it appears) the fact that Ms Thomas is black.

Subsequently, The Sun published a number of critical readers' letters with an editorial comment. There followed a further article which reported that colleagues had tried to organise a whip-round to pay the constable's fine.

All this, argued Ms Thomas, amounted to "harassment" within the meaning of the 1997 Act. If Ms Thomas had consulted libel lawyers their first question would have been: "Are these allegations true or false?" If false, could they be justified as legitimate "fair comment"? If neither true nor fair comment, Ms Thomas could expect to join the crowded ranks of recipients of libel largesse. Juries, as is well known, do not like the tabloids. But, as it appears, she was advised to bring her claim under the Harassment Act, an Act never intended to apply to cases like hers. She is now seeking damages for "distress and anxiety".

The newspaper applied to have her case struck out. This application failed in the Lambeth County Court and it has now failed in the Court of Appeal. The Sun's Counsel, Desmond Browne QC, has described the Appeal Court's ruling as making the judges "censors or licensors of the Press". This is no exaggeration.

Under the libel laws The Sun would have a complete defence to Ms Thomas' claim simply by showing that its criticisms were true (if indeed they were). Failing that, it would have to convince a jury that her actions were of public interest and that it was entitled to comment adversely on them provided it was not actuated by malice.

Under the Harassment Act, however, truth as such is no defence. Neither is fair comment. The defendant has to show that "in the particular circumstances the pursuit of the course of conduct (ie the alleged harassment) was reasonable".

Who is to decide what is "reasonable"? Not a jury (as in a libel trial) but the trial judge. It is, of course, the classic role of a censor to decide what is "reasonable" to be published. And in the context of press treatment of individuals what concept is more subjective than reasonableness? Think, for instance, of Mary Archer – could she not argue that all the press coverage of the past few weeks amounted to harassment?

The Human Rights Act of 1998 was passed in the expectation that the courts would be a more powerful protector of basic rights (including freedom of expression) than the politicians. Some hope!

Mystery

The mystery of the famous UFO 'sighting' in Rendlesham Forest in 1980 has fascinated UFO investigators for years and generated many theories over whether it was a hoax, a hallucination or an elaborate cover-up. Now, 21 years on, the release of new MoD files reveals officials took the case seriously enough to investigate it.
JO GREEN asks 'are we any closer to solving the mystery?'

The story of three American airmen's close encounter with a UFO in Rendlesham Forest in December 1980 has become the stuff of legend.

And in the 21 years since the story first broke, scores of experts have attempted to explain what really happened in the early hours of December 26 and 27 when lights were seen hovering in woodland between the airbases at Bentwaters and Woodbridge.

The lights were first spotted at about 11pm by a local resident and then at 2am by two airmen on security duty at the east gate at Woodbridge, John Burroughs and Budd Parker.

Concerned that a plane could have crashed, they got permission to go off-base and investigate with their patrol sergeant, Jim Penniston.

But on entering the forest, which separates Woodbridge from Bentwaters, they found a metallic object, about the size of a car, hovering among the trees and giving off a bright white light.

In accounts written afterwards, one airman said he saw little green men hovering underneath the craft, as if they were carrying out repairs, before the object moved away and disappeared.

The others reported symbols on the side of the craft and said the air crackled with electricity so that their hair stood on end.

The next morning, three depressions, about 7in across and 1.5in deep, were found on the ground where the object was seen. The trees were reported as scorched, with their tops broken off, as if something had smashed into them. Locals also reported seeing lights in the sky.

Amazingly, the UFO returned the next night, and on this occasion, Col Charles Halt, of Bentwaters airbase, was sent to look into it. He recorded the search on audio tape and led a party out into the forest with Geiger counters and high-powered arc lights that continually failed, leaving him and his colleagues literally in the dark. Then at one stage, "all hell broke loose" and his tape recording says: "Now we observe what appears to be a beam of light coming down towards the ground – this is unreal."



Afterwards, he said: "I'm certainly glad we made the tape, because if we hadn't made the tape, even I would have trouble believing what happened that night . . . It appeared to have molten metal dripping off it, just like falling to the ground, but I didn't see any evidence of anything on the ground. I just couldn't believe what I was seeing, none of us could. Here I am, a senior official that routinely denies this sort of thing and diligently works to debunk them and I'm involved in the middle of something I can't explain."

Col Halt reported his findings but heard nothing to suggest the case was being taken further, although he and other officers noticed unusual levels of activity on the airbase. "To this day I'm very puzzled why no one ever came back and asked for additional information, asked questions, or even interviewed me. It doesn't really add up," he said in 1994.

When the story broke, there was excitement worldwide and the Rendlesham Forest Incident was splashed across every newspaper.

And today it remains one of the best-known and most perplexing UFO mysteries, on a par with the famous Roswell case, where aliens alleged to have crash landed in the American desert were believed to have been picked up by the military and held secretly for experiments and observation.

Scores of investigators have studied Rendlesham's UFO story, each coming up with a different theory, and it was this huge interest that prompted Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton to demand the MoD open their case files to the public and tell people what happened.

Unfortunately, the opening of the files earlier this week doesn't do that – and five crucial files remain locked away on the grounds that releasing them would damage Anglo-American relations.

Much of what the opened files reveal simply confirms what many experts already suspected – for example, that British and American military experts took it seriously enough to launch a top-level investigation and that radar problems were recorded on equipment at RAF Watton, 40 miles away.

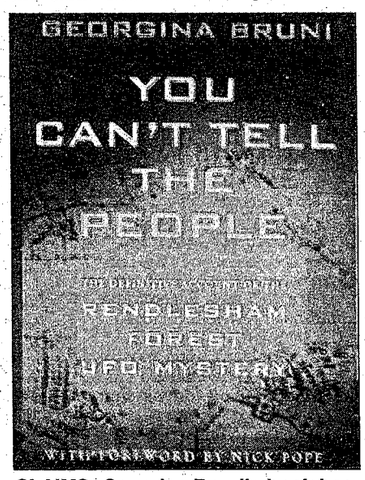
What they don't do is answer the question everyone wants to know – what caused the Rendlesham Forest Incident?

One person who thinks he knows is journalist and sceptic Simon Hoggart, who has co-written a book, Bizarre Beliefs. In it he claims the Rendlesham "UFO" was nothing more than the pulsing lights of Orford Ness lighthouse.

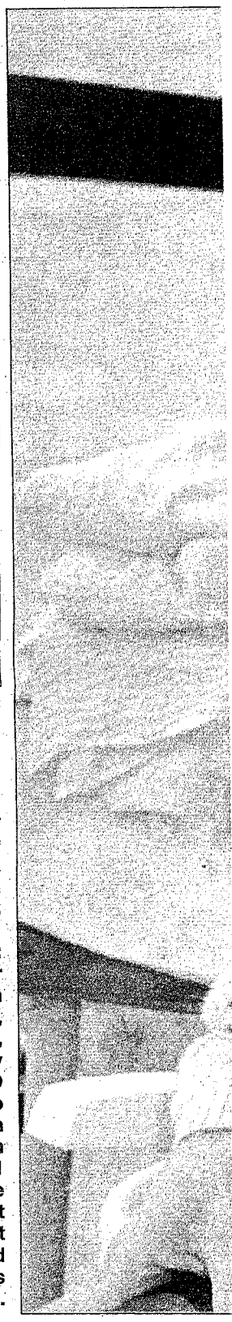
"Local people are not baffled, they know about the lighthouse," he said.

"The lights of the lighthouse come from exactly the same direction as those seen by the airmen and when a BBC crew went to the site with investigator Ian Ridpath, who researched our book, they found that the forest is actually on a higher level than the coastline.

"This means when you stand there, the lighthouse looks like it's just 100 yards away and the lights look as though they're in the forest. The timings for the UFO lights are the same as they are for the pulsing lights of the lighthouse and



CLAIMS: Georgina Bruni's book has led to pressure for the early release of official papers on the case.



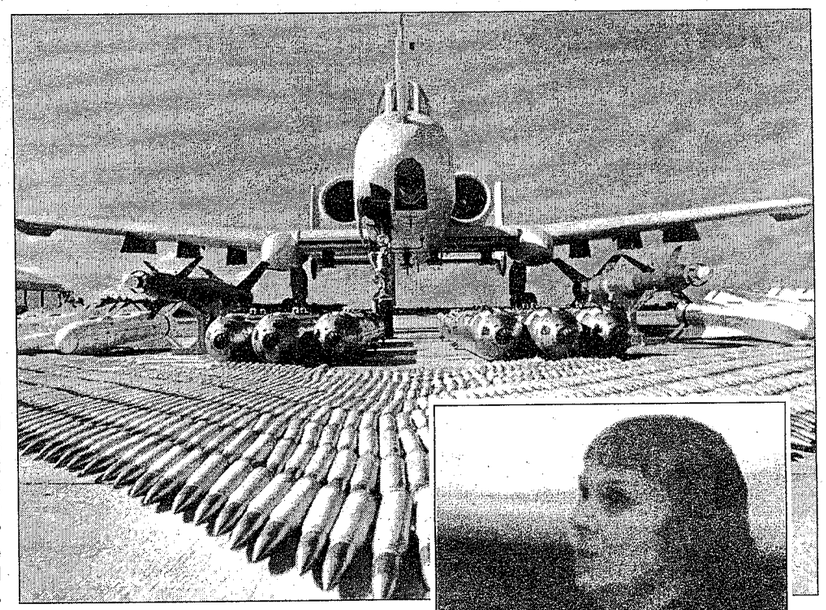
ABOVE: Red Rose Chain Theatre Company during rehearsals for UFO Bentwaters, a play based on the incident.

RIGHT: Former policeman David King, from Trimley, was on duty when a UFO was alleged to have landed in Rendlesham Forest 21 years ago. He believes it was the light from Orford Ness lighthouse.

in the forest



Pictures: EDP LIBRARY



RIGHT: An A10 and its payload of shells and missiles pictured at Bentwaters airbase in 1979, a year before the alleged sighting.



CAMPAIGN: Author Jenny Randles – pictured speaking at Woodbridge in 1998 – has made a strong case that the airmen did see a UFO, and that the authorities tried to cover up the report.

the lighthouse beam appears to move between the trees, exactly the way the airmen describe it.

"Ian met a local forester, Vince Thirkettle, who said he had gone into the forest the day after the alleged sighting and looked at the depressions in the ground. He said they did not make an exact triangle and they were actually old rabbit diggings which had been covered up with pine needles. And the burn marks on the trees were cuts done deliberately to show foresters which trees needed to be felled. The cuts had just filled up with resin and looked burned.

"Also, the dates Col Halt recorded were wrong and he's admitted that. The first sighting actually happened on December 26, not the 27, as he said, and this was the night a very bright meteorite was seen in the sky over East Anglia, giving off a bright white light. What we have here is a number of completely separate items strung together in hindsight to fit the story.

"Even the fact that RAF Watton's radar 40 miles away had problems doesn't prove anything. That's like saying someone's toaster broke 40 miles away so it must be linked to the UFO."

Mr Hoggart has studied several UFO sightings and says there is always a pattern. By chance, several odd things happen and all these are brought together to build up a mystery.

"It's exactly the same with Roswell, that turned out to be a USAF balloon to detect radiation but nobody who believes in UFOs accepts that. They run them together and say there must be a cover-up and when the military then refuses to release its files, that adds to the mystery. I suspect that in the Rendlesham case the files probably say something stupid about the 'bloody Yanks' and that's why they won't release them. Nothing we say will change some people's minds, of course, but I think it's right to provide some rational alternatives."

There are other theories, including the suggestion that the spacecraft was a Russian rocket burning up in the atmosphere or a meteor falling to earth.

Trees in the area where the sightings were made were felled shortly afterwards – some said it was because of the high radiation, others that it was simply coincidence. Other theories say the craft could have been a spy satellite coming to earth. Woodbridge was home to the 67th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, says one UFO website, and as such answered directly to the Department of Defence in Washington and was one of a few equipped with satellite-recovery aircraft.

But dedicated UFO investigators have other views. Author Jenny Randles leads the field in UFO literature and has made a strong case to support the airmen's claims that an alien craft did land in Suffolk and the MoD and American military covered it up. Similarly, author Georgina Bruni believes there is more to the case than coincidence and it was issues raised in her book, You Can't Tell the People, that prompted Lord Hill-Norton to pressure the MoD into releasing their case files nine years early.

In 1997, he said he believed there were only two possible explanations for the Rendlesham Incident.

"Either an intrusion into our airspace and a landing by unidentified craft took place at Rendlesham, as described.

"Or the deputy commander of an operational, nuclear-armed US Air Force base and a large number of his enlisted men were either hallucinating or lying," he said.

With little new evidence likely to surface on the case, the mystery of Rendlesham is as puzzling as ever and there seems little hope of a breakthrough while the MoD continues to keep some information top secret.

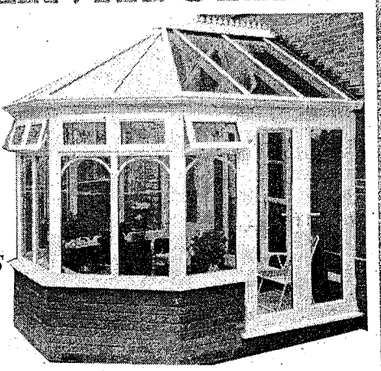
The question for researchers, of course, is are the files closed to keep us from finding the answer – or is the ministry also as much in the dark?

The truth is out there.

■ **COMMENT – Page 28**

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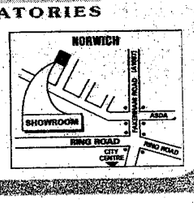
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Files on UFO sighting reveal top-level investigation

■ FROM PAGE ONE

they were of no defence significance."

"For 21 years the Ministry of Defence has claimed that the only report in their file was Colonel Halt's memorandum, that the incident was of no defence significance and that no UFOs were tracked on radar."

But Ms Bruni has read the official file and she said it revealed:

■ Vital evidence which proves that those at higher levels in the air force and Government did take the Rendlesham Forest incident seriously enough to begin an investigation.

■ Taped evidence was handed to General Gabriel, chief of the United States Air Force in Europe and was not shared with Britain's MoD.

■ Several departments in the MoD were involved in an investigation, including defence intelligence staff.

■ That problems arose with equipment at RAF Watton during the incident.

■ Defence intelligence staff considered radiation readings to be significantly higher than normal.

■ The United States Air Force did carry out its own investigation.

■ The MoD considered sanitising Col Halt's memorandum prior to its release due to concern over intelligence and national security.

David Clarke, a researcher at Sheffield University who is writing a book on UFOs, has asked for five more files to be released.

They are being withheld on the grounds that they contain confidential briefings to ministers, relate to national security, or affect Britain's relations with the United States.

Main picture: STEVE ADAMS

PLANS ■ Meeting at Carrow Road

Complex 'could be seven storeys'

By **RICHARD BALLS**
Public Affairs Correspondent

Apartments and a hotel planned for land beside Norwich City's ground could rise to seven storeys – the height of the stadium's tallest stand.

Last night, people already living in the shadow of Carrow Road protested over the club's planned development and called for The Maltings – a row of historic houses behind the South Stand – not to be demolished to make way for a 330-space decked car park.

They vented their anger at a public meeting at the football club last night at which the club's planning consultant sought to assure them that efforts were being made to incorporate the buildings into the scheme.

But their fears about the impact of the apartments, hotel, fitness and leisure centre, car parks and rebuilt South Stand were not eased by the news that some of the apartment complexes could be seven storeys high.

"The hope is that on this river frontage scheme we can go to a fairly high level," said planning consultant Mike Carpenter.

"The reason we think we can do this is because of the height of the buildings that already exist. The Norwich and Peterborough Stand is frankly an ugly building from the back and we think that we may get up to seven storeys."

Mr Carpenter agreed that The Maltings – built in 1824 – was an attractive building which should remain if it were possible, but said they were not listed.

He had asked the architects if there was any way they could form part of the development and that was still being looked at.

"I am not saying we are going to demolish them come what may, but it certainly has its major difficulties and I make no bones about that," he said.

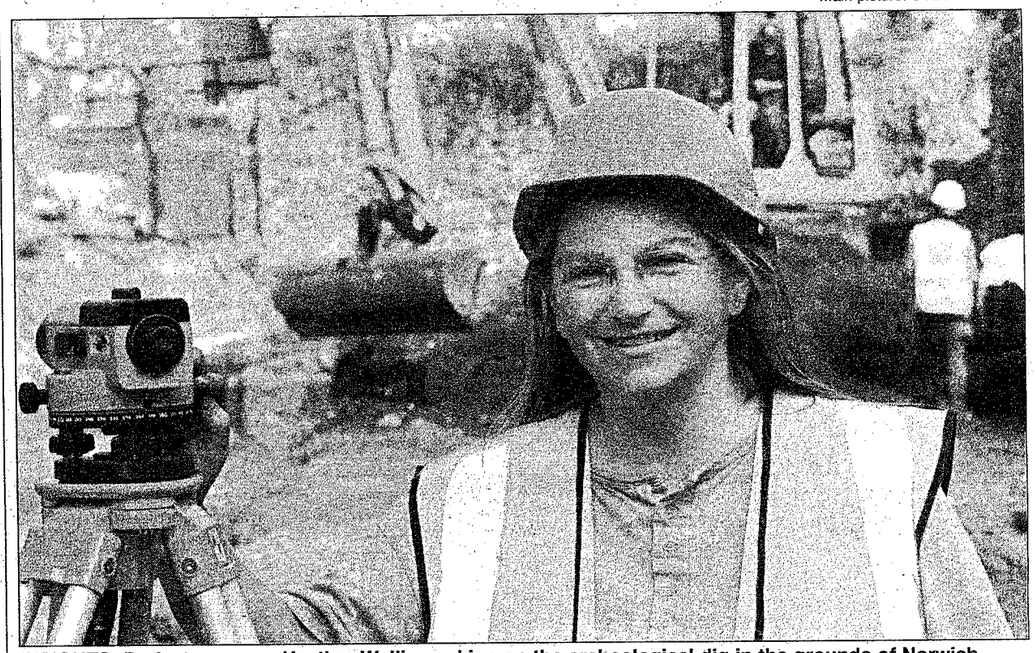
The Harbour Triangle Residents' Association is campaigning to save The Maltings. The row of houses is expected to be knocked down to make space for a large car park and a children's play area next to the site is to become part of a fitness and leisure centre.

As well as a new 6000-seat South Stand, the club wants to build a 120-150-bedroom hotel on the corner of Carrow Road.

The land to the rear of the South Stand was bought by former Norwich City chairman Robert Chase from Anglia Maltings and has since been used a car park.

Molly Barrett, a member of the residents' association, said after the meeting: "It is fairly obvious the football club, while they are not looking to extract every single penny from the site, are looking to make the best financial advantage that they can.

"I just hope that promises that have been made about more consultation with people are kept."



INSIGHTS: Project manager Heather Wallis working on the archeological dig in the grounds of Norwich Cathedral which has revealed medieval trading links with Europe.

Dig reveals ancient trade links

Nowadays, many people balk at the thought of closer trade relations with Europe.

But an archaeological dig at Norwich Cathedral has unearthed some fascinating evidence of the close links that Norfolk forged with its overseas partners some 500 years ago.

A collection of small decorative cloth seals have been discovered during the excavation of the site, to the south side of the cathedral's cloisters.

Heather Wallis, project manager for Norfolk Archaeology Unit, said: "They are lead seals which were used in the European textile industry.

"They are attached to individual pieces of cloth as a way of quality control. They indicated where the cloth came from, it is almost like a modern day kite mark.

"The nicest one we have found has got a pinecone on one side and the letter A on the other. It is from Augsburg in Germany.

"The pinecone would have been the city's heraldic badge and the letter A, the first letter of its name," she said. "It proves that we had trade links with Germany all those years ago."

She said that they had found more than 100 metal and glass objects during the dig so far.

It is hoped that the artefacts will give archaeologists an insight into the living and working history of Norwich Cathedral.

The team has also unearthed the remains of garden features, a water drainage system and lead from the windows dating back to the 1500s.

Archaeologists started the dig on July 23 and it is expected to last another month before building work begins on the site to create a new restaurant and kitchen for the cathedral.

The area, which is 40 metres by 12 metres in size, was once the site of the monks' refectory.

During the second phase of the dig, which is likely to start next February, experts are hoping to find the old floor surface of the refectory, along with the dias at one end for the high table, and the pulpit used for readings.



CLUES: A post-medieval drainage system emerging from the soil.

£6m aid package for trawlermen gets cautious welcome

A scheme is under way to help fishermen who are faced with diminishing catches to decommission their trawlers – but you wouldn't have thought such an initiative was needed in Lowestoft yesterday.

The £6 million aid package was announced earlier this year by fisheries minister Elliot Morley to help the industry restructure itself, enabling struggling trawlermen to receive financial support for decommissioning their vessels.

But the irony at Britain's most easterly point yesterday was that two trawlers remained docked, unable to go out to sea because of a lack of crew.

"This sort of thing happens from time to time," said Hugh Sims, chief executive of the Lowestoft Fish Producers' Organisation.

There are only about 200 fishermen in the town today, as opposed to about 1000 just 20 years ago.

"There are barely enough fishermen in Lowestoft nowadays, and when some of them take a holiday – which, of course, is their right – it makes it very, very difficult to find crew to take the boats out," Mr Sims said.

The £6 million is part of a £22.5 million package that also includes £11 million worth of grants aimed at improving the quality and value of the fish caught.

But although Mr Sims said he supported the Fishing Vessel Decommissioning Scheme, he criticised the fact that only £6 million had been made available for it.

Mr Sims said that £25 million had been made available to Scottish fishermen for decommissioning in a similar programme

He said he felt that the same sum should have been made available south of the border.

Eastern Daily Press

Friday, August 31, 2001 **No 40,601**

Erosion of trust in our doctors

After Dr Harold Shipman had been convicted last year of murdering 15 patients, a relative of a victim asked: "If you can't trust your doctor, whom can you trust?"

The same question will have been put by many people with regard to the Alder Hey children's hospital in Liverpool and the Bristol Royal Infirmary. And it can also be asked about Loughborough GP Peter Green who was given an eight-year jail sentence last year for indecently assaulting five male patients.

Other questions spring to mind. Principally – and in each of these stories – why did it take so long for the truth to come out? An official review concluded there were as many as 345 suspicious deaths in Shipman's 24-year career.

At Alder Hey Professor Dick van Velzen ordered the systematic and illegal stripping of organs from the bodies of children over a seven-year period. The death rate among babies undergoing open heart surgery in the Bristol hospital was abnormally high over a four-year stretch. And concerns about Green were voiced for 12 years before he was referred to the General Medical Council.

A common theme in these scandals is that of inadequate monitoring of the work of doctors and insufficient safeguards for patients and relatives.

Health Secretary Alan Milburn – who must be anxious about the rate at which he is having to deal with reports on aspects of the NHS which have gone wrong – emphasised last month that there must be a cultural change which results in the health service being run for the benefit of patients rather than doctors.

His point has been heavily underlined by the experiences of the long-ignored victims of Green. Incompetent and malign doctors are, of course, a tiny exception. But they exist, and our trust in the NHS must not be eroded by them.

Still unidentified

The truth is out there. But are we any closer to it now that the Ministry of Defence has opened one of its real-life X-files on the alleged sighting of a UFO in Rendlesham Forest, near Woodbridge, in 1980? No, we are not.

What we do now know is that the MoD and the United States Air Force did take reports of the incident seriously, and that they both began full inquiries into what happened.

But what conclusions did they reach? Did they actually find anything to support the idea that a UFO was taking a close look at the Woodbridge and Bentwaters air bases? We still don't know, and a number of other official files on the subject remain closed on grounds of national security and the wish to keep advice to ministers confidential.

The continuing secrecy encourages those who suspect that there was something sinister which the authorities still wish to hide – possibly a UFO or perhaps a military incident originating in the old Soviet Union.

Don't expect much more to be revealed in 2010 under the 30-year rule. The probability is that we shall never find out. As fans of Mulder and Scully are well aware, that is part of the lure.

Cross purposes

Beautiful objects can be put to bad use, and the symbol of the cross has certainly been identified on countless occasions over the centuries with fanaticism and oppression rather than peace and love.

Notwithstanding this background, the assault on the Bury Cross by American historian Thomas Hoving is extraordinary. It was used, he says, to incite a massacre of Jews in Bury St Edmunds in 1190, and it was as if "Hitler and Michelangelo got together".

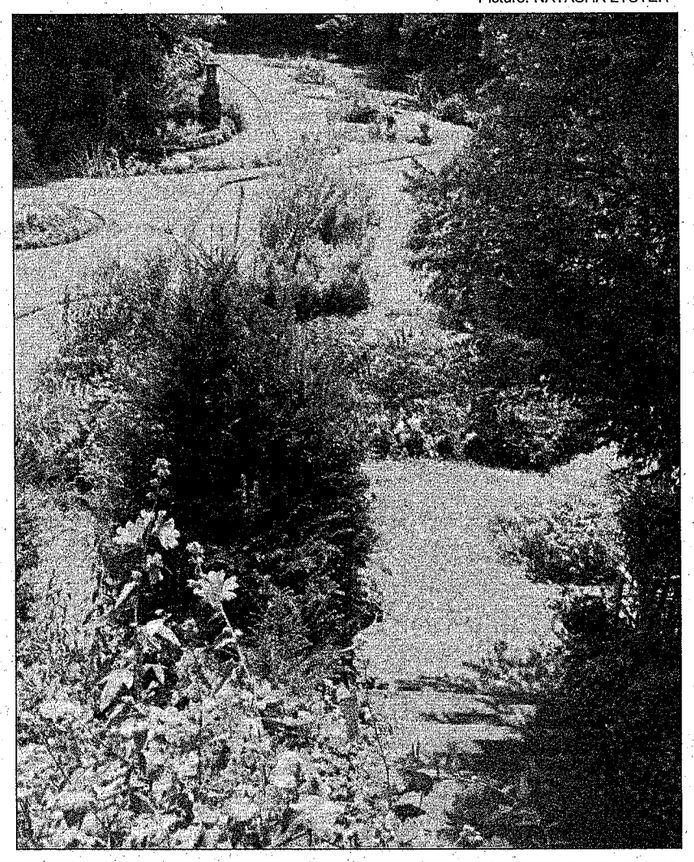
To paraphrase Mr Hoving, Goebbels would have loved such vivid phraseology. The historical linkage is no less dubious. And his case invites the question: what's the point?

▼ BIBLE TEXT

The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

– Psalm 145, 20

Picture: NATASHA LYSTER



GREEN ELEGANCE: A three-acre Victorian town garden in the centre of Norwich, which is undergoing restoration by volunteers, is open in aid of National Gardens Scheme on Sunday afternoon. The Plantation Garden, off Earlham Road, which is near St John's Roman Catholic Cathedral, was created between 1895 and 1897 in a former medieval chalk quarry. It has many remarkable architectural features including a 30ft-high Gothic fountain. Admission £2, children free, between 2pm and 5pm.

Finding home is tough task

BRENDA ANDREWS,
Glebe Avenue,
Hunstanton.

I am employed full time, working on average 45 hours a week as a waitress in a local hotel. I am loving every minute of it! I am earning more than the average minimum wage for somebody of my age.

Next September my fiancé and I are to be married. Now for us the daunting task of finding somewhere to live lies ahead. We have been told by various banks and building societies that as my fiancé is a student his wages from his part-time job will not be taken into account. So we start looking for houses to buy with our £26,000 we were quoted for a mortgage.

After getting nowhere with several estate agents we are becoming very worried for our future. To be able to get a house within our price range we have to move at least 15 miles away, leave our jobs and families and the area in which we both grew up and move into an area which is troubled with arson, car crime, burglaries and drug-related offences.

It was suggested to us that we apply for council housing. This is only available to people if they get enough points on their system. We don't even have enough points to be eligible to apply, let alone move into one!

Yet despite this we have been told that we would be in a better position if we were unemployed, claiming benefits and/or had children.

Neither of us has been in trouble with the police or has claimed benefits and we don't have children. So what do we do now?

People have suggested we rent somewhere, but there again we can't afford the rent in this area.

To us the problem is quite clear. We are being forced out of the housing market by people buying second homes.

For three-quarters of the year we watch them stand empty with a sickening feeling knowing that we will eventually be losing our entire area to people living the other end of the country – and there seems to be nothing we can do to stop it.

My family were born and bred in Burnham Market and the surrounding villages.

Unfortunately we had to move 14 miles away when we outgrew the house we lived in due to it being "the place to be seen in". That was 13 years ago. Now the situation is getting worse.

All we want is a chance to have a positive future living near our nearest and dearest in an area which isn't just "trendy" and "quaint". It's our home!

School will take fresh approach to learning

DIANA STEPHENSON,
School Lane, Sprowston.

Congratulations to the authors of Let Our Children Learn for highlighting not only the shortcomings of our education system, but the way forward.

Surely the Government must learn to listen to teachers and parents who want to encourage their children to be lifelong learners.

The Norwich Small School Group is committed to opening, in September 2002, an alternative school that plans to be a learning community that encourages all its members to embrace "the world etched in wondrous colours" and to "reach for them with autonomy, joy and choice".

Some of our members are home-educators; many are teachers and parents who do not want to subject another generation to a rigid, prescriptive curriculum that does not give children the space to grow socially, emotionally and spiritually.

Learning is for life, and life in the 21st century needs both new flexibility and a child-centred approach that encourages excellence through enthusiasm.

Our next meeting on Wednesday, September 5, at 7pm for 7.30-9.30pm, is at the Friends' Meeting House, Upper Goat Lane, Norwich. All are welcome. Contact me on Norwich 416452 for details.

Extra hours are essential

Mrs C NURSE,
Sydney Dye Court, Sporle.

David Sawtell writes (EDP, August 28) that British working hours are too long and the holidays are too short.

Is it not more important to make sure workers can earn a realistic basic wage before trying to cut the amount of hours people are working.

Does he not realise that many people who work above 48 hours each week do so because their rate of pay means that if they do not work the extra hours they can not take home a living wage?

There is not much point in working fewer hours and having longer holidays if you cannot earn enough money in those hours to keep a roof over your head and feed your family, not to mention run your car, so that it is possible to get away from the house occasionally (if you still have one!).

Good use for waste tyres

G and A VIGRASS,
Bexwell Road,
Downham Market.

Most German cities incinerate their tyres. The heat they generate is phenomenal. They cut them up into small pieces, about the size of your fist. They burn to almost nothing.

They use the heat generated for the good of the city. The gases are reburnt so that nothing poisonous is emitted.

Not only that but they incinerate practically all their household waste as well, giving benefits not harmful to the environment.

The enormous dump of tyres in Norfolk (EDP, August 27) need not be a problem – if only someone would take responsibility.

Poster image of Salisbury

ALAN WEYMAN,
Ballygate, Beccles.

Nice to see all those British Railways posters (EDP, August 30), though I would point out that the cathedral image depicted Salisbury rather than Norwich Cathedral.

I won't query the appropriateness of describing what was perhaps a second world war exhortation as an "echo" of the Countryside Alliance's current struggles.

HAVE YOUR SAY: Write to: The Letters Editor, Eastern Daily Press, Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich, NR1 1RE. Or fax: 01603 612930. Or e-mail to: EDPLetters@ecn.co.uk Give a full address, and a phone number if available. All letters must be signed. Please keep letters short and write on one side of the paper only.

DAILY STAR
30/08/01

125

DON'T TELL ANYONE, BUT THE ALIENS HAVE LANDED

■ by JOHN DORAN

6

TOP SECRET documents could prove that aliens have LANDED on Earth, it was claimed last night.

But MOD officials are still refusing to release the papers, which UFO-hunters say may show that extra-terrestrials have actually touched down.

The documents relate to the sighting, by high-ranking Royal Air Force officers, of a mysterious flying craft – "metallic in appearance and triangular in shape" – which was spotted landing in a Suffolk forest.

According to the witnesses: "The strange, glowing object had a pulsing, red light on top and a bank of blue lights underneath it," and caused local farm animals to go into a frenzy as it passed over.



COVER-UP: Could it be ET?

Shocked

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt, Commander of the US Air Force Bentwaters base near Woodbridge, Suffolk, said that originally it was thought that an aeroplane had crash-landed, after "unusual lights" had been seen in the forest.

But after racing with three other servicemen to the woods, Halt saw something that looked like a "large, winking eye".

And when his men went to investigate the next day, they were shocked to find three indentations in the ground and traces of radiation. An RAF big-wig, Squadron Leader Donald Moreland, also confirmed that there had been "some mysterious sightings".

Now university researcher Dr David Clarke has discovered five top secret documents, which could prove there really WERE aliens on English soil.

But he says publishing the reports was blocked by worried defence top brass. Dr Clarke demanded that the papers should be released immediately.

Revealing

He said: "We had US servicemen at a Nato base chasing UFOs in a forest in the middle of the night."

The sighting, which happened in December 1980, was the subject of a book called You Can't Tell The People, by Georgina Bruni. The author even got hold of a tape recording of Lt Col Halt during the sighting.

On it, he can be heard whispering: "No doubt about it – there's some kind of flashing, red light. It's like the pupil of an eye looking at you, winking."

He said later: "I thought we were dealing with an extra-terrestrial visitation. I can't say I saw beings – I saw outlines of something."



CLOSE ENCOUNTER: Are our intergalactic neighbours dropping in?

Telefax

To: [redacted]
Fax:
From:
Date: Pages:

for your info

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAS/64/1

29 August 2001

APS/Min(DP)

ARTICLE IN UFO MAGAZINE

1. As discussed earlier today, please find enclosed a copy of an article which has appeared in the September issue of *UFO Magazine* concerning a well known UFO incident at Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk, in December 1980. As you will recall, the former CDS, Lord Hill-Norton has taken a personal interest in these events and this article may prompt him to write again to Lord Bach.

2. The file referred to in the article is a compilation of papers put together over a number of years. Some of the papers are contemporary with the incident, others concern public correspondence and MOD staff efforts to summarise the chain of events since the incident was reported to have occurred. A member of the public recently requested access to these papers and they were released under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Some were sanitised to protect the privacy of those who corresponded with the Department and five documents were withheld, as some contained internal briefing to Ministers and others were of a classified nature.

3. Given Lord Hill-Norton's interest in this incident and the release into the public domain of these papers, we thought it advisable to also send them to him. They were included with our draft letter from Lord Bach dated 17 May 2001. Subsequently, Georgina Bruni requested a copy of the papers that we had sent to Lord Hill-Norton and these were sent to her on 18 July.

4. I understand Ms Bruni contacted several newspapers with her story of the release of these papers. We were informed a few weeks ago that The Sunday Telegraph had written an article, but they have not yet published it. The Guardian also published a feature and today there has been an enquiry from the Eastern Morning Star, a small local paper in East Anglia. I enclose copies of the Guardian article and the press brief we have prepared following the approach from the Eastern Morning Star.

5. In view of the many PQs and PEs Lord Hill-Norton has raised on UFOs in general and Rendlesham Forest in particular, it seems likely that he will write to Lord Bach again soon. You may therefore wish to advise Lord Bach of these articles.

[redacted]

DAS(Lower Airspace)Operations & Policy 1
MT6/73 [redacted]

Guardian 28 Aug.

US base's report of UFO crash 'had MoD in a panic'

Richard Norton-Taylor

A report by the deputy commander of a US nuclear base in East Anglia of an unidentified flying object provoked panic in the Ministry of Defence, newly-released documents have revealed.

In what was claimed to be Britain's first UFO landing, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt, commander of the US Bentwaters base near Woodbridge in Suffolk, reported that two of his security patrolmen had seen "unusual lights" early in the morning of December 27 1980.

Thinking that an aircraft had crashed, they reported seeing "a strange glowing object in the Rendlesham forest". The object was described as being "metallic in appearance and triangular in shape".

It had a "pulsing red light on top and bank of blue lights underneath".

Animals on a nearby farm were said to have gone into a "frenzy". The following day three depressions were found as well as traces of radiation, Col Halt reported.

His report was released under the US freedom of information act two years later. What has not been disclosed until now is the MoD's response to it.

British papers on the incident have been discovered by David Clarke, a researcher at Sheffield University who is writing a book on UFOs.

The Halt report was sent to the MoD with a covering letter by Squadron Leader Donald Moreland, an RAF liaison officer who referred to "some mysterious sightings". The ministry's scientists said they could offer "no explanation for the phenomena", or the radiation. Radar tapes from the night in question were impounded from nearby RAF bases to see if there was any evidence that British airspace had been invaded.

The papers make clear the MoD was concerned more about protecting the base from unwelcome publicity than about the alleged UFO sightings.

The ministry was worried about rumours being spread suggesting that the "alien landing" was a clever cover story for an accident involving nuclear weapons, the crash of a prototype Stealth aircraft, or even the secret recovery of part of a Soviet satellite.

It was also worried that anti-nuclear campaigners would be alerted to the presence of nuclear bombs at Bentwaters.

Yet it had something else to hide. Five documents are being withheld on the grounds that they contain confidential briefings to ministers, relate to national security, or affect Britain's relations with the US.

Dr Clarke, of Sheffield University's centre for English cultural tradition, and whose book is due to be published by Piatkus next year, has asked the MoD to release them.

He said: "Here we had USAF servicemen at a highly sensitive Nato base chasing UFOs around a forest in the middle of the night."

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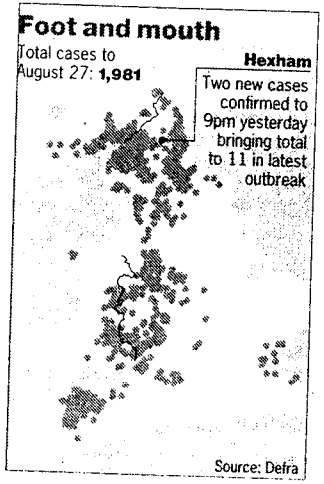
The Scottish meat industry had been planning to apply for export applications on Thursday, when the necessary three month quarantine since the last foot and mouth case is reached. If the disease jumps the 50-odd miles north, the deadline will be delayed by at least another three months.

James Withers, spokesman for the National Farmers' Union of Scotland, said there was concern at the latest outbreaks but no reason why Scotland could not stay free of the disease. "What the Northumberland outbreaks show for people north of the border is that they cannot afford to let their guard drop.

"Scotland will remain free as long everyone remains vigilant to the risk of possible new cases. The message has to be that there's no room for complacency. In order for us to regain export markets we have to prove to the [European] commission that there is no risk of foot and mouth coming back in the country."

Arthur Griffiths, the government's senior vet in the north east, said that the total number of cases looked set to rise, with two "highly suspicious" incidents being checked in Allendale. But he added that Hexham market was ruled out as the source of the outbreak, after checks on records of animal movements from two of the affected farms.

With 1,000 cattle and 5,500 sheep now slaughtered in the 400sq mile "blue box" biosecurity zone centred on Allendale, Mr Griffiths said: "We are still looking for the source. It's very much like a CID oper-



period of 24 hours on infected premises and 48 hours on contiguous premises."

Northumberland had seen what observers believed to be the last of the recent foot and mouth cases, on May 22. The restrictions had been due to be lifted this week.

The chairman of the National Sheep Association, David Smith, whose farm is inside the Allendale blue box, said: "Everybody is aware that the infection is still out there, and yet it seems to have caught us out once again. We wonder now how far the disease has spread."

The outbreak also returned foot and mouth disease to its role as a political football, with the Conservative leadership contender Kenneth Clarke, while attending a countryside show near Nottingham, calling on John Prescott to "come out of hiding and deal with foot and mouth".

The Tory environment spokesman, Damian Green, warned: "None of the recovery programmes the government has trumpeted will mean anything if the disease continues to spread through the autumn and the winter."

Meanwhile, the reaction in Ireland to the disease's outbreak in northern England,

Belfast drug deaths spark funding row

Steven Morris

The deaths of three young men who had apparently taken a cocktail of prescription drugs and alcohol provoked a row in Belfast yesterday.

Local politicians called for more money to tackle the city's drugs problem which has grown since the ceasefire.

Eamon McCoubrey, 22, and Jim O'Connor, 20, were found dead at a house in the nationalist area of Ballymurphy, west Belfast, on Sunday morning.

An hour later the body of 18, was found at his home in the Andersonstown area.

The night before they had been to a pub on the Falls Road and possibly to a club before. Friends said they thought the men were simply drunk.

Police warned others who had taken morphine and/or diazepam that had not been prescribed to seek advice.

Sue Ramsey, Sinn Fein assembly member for west Belfast, said that projects aimed at alerting youngsters to the dangers of drugs had

funding. She demanded to meet the newly-appointed drugs strategy coordinator for Northern Ireland, Jo Daykin.

Ms Ramsey said: "We're talking about the heart being ripped out of a community. The community as a whole has to be involved."

She also accused the RUC of using drug dealers as informers and allowing them to operate "with impunity".

Ms Daykin said more had to be done to tackle the problem and that young people had to

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continuous payment method. These offers cannot be
year of membership and subject to level of cover. Star
RAC web ranked

[redacted]

6415

PRESS STATEMENT

DATE: 30 August 2001

SUBJECT: Statement on the Rendlesham Forest File

SOURCE: DAS(LA)Ops + Pol Desk Officer: [redacted]

PRESS OFFICER: Sqn Ldr [redacted]

BACKGROUND

Following contact by the press, including an approach by a journalist from the Eastern Morning Star, a request was made for a statement on the contents of the file on the alleged incident in Rendelsham Forest in December 1980.

KEY MESSAGE

- A memorandum from the Deputy Base Commander RAF Woodbridge, dated 13 January 1981, covering events said to have occurred at Rendlesham Forest/RAF Woodbridge in December 1980, was forwarded to the Ministry of Defence two days after it was written. Records indicate that, in accordance with normal procedures, all available information was looked at by air defence experts who were satisfied that nothing had occurred to suggest that the UK Air Defence Region had been breached by unauthorised foreign military activity. In the absence of corroborating evidence, and in the light of the Department's air defence remit, no further action was deemed necessary.

- Although a number of allegations have been made since about the reported events, nothing has emerged over the intervening years which has given us reason to believe that the Department's original assessment was incorrect.

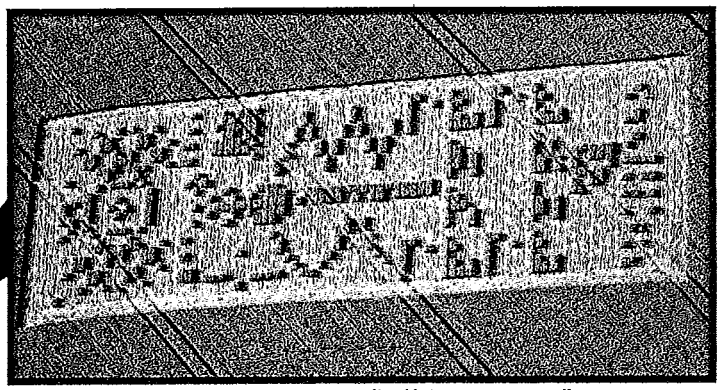
- The MOD's only interest in reports of 'unexplained' aerial sighting is to establish whether there is anything that might be of defence concern, such as unauthorised air activity in UK airspace.

Returning your call

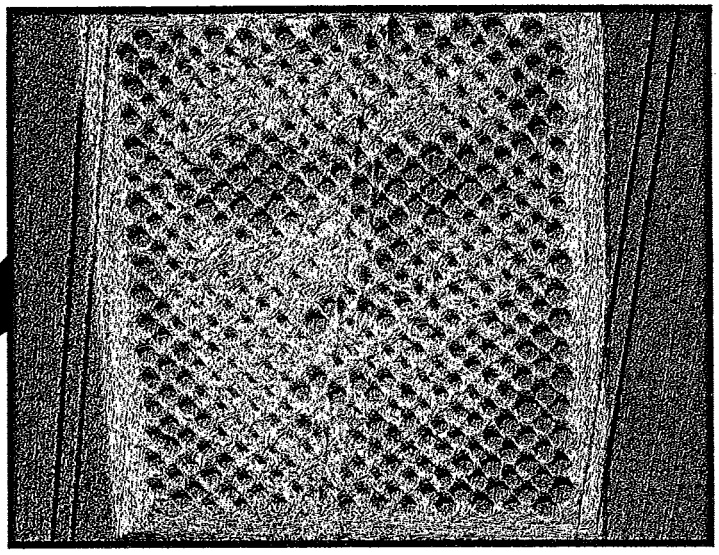
Are these intricate crop patterns a reply to the radio message we beamed out into space in 1974?



Field of dreams: An aerial view of the two patterns formed in the wheat



Binary code: The same pattern was transmitted into space as a radio message



Three-dimensional effect: The face is made up of hundreds of individual circles

By **James Chapman** and **James Mills**

VIEWED from the air they are a pair of extraordinarily intricate patterns stretching across a Hampshire wheat field.

To sceptics they are just an elaborate hoax.

But crop circle believers are hailing them as a message from outer space.

The first image – when seen from above – emerges as a brooding face. Alongside is an intricate copy of a binary radio message beamed into deep space by Nasa scientists in the 1970s in an attempt to contact alien civilisations.

Crop circle enthusiasts describe the patterns as among the most spectacular examples yet of a seasonal mystery that has been going on for more than 25 years.

Lucy Pringle, who has written books about the phenomenon, said the face was made up of hundreds of individual circles of standing crop which combined to produce a spectacular 3D effect.

'It's really rather spooky,' she said. 'There's a humanoid face looking out from a wheat field.'

The binary message in the second formation includes digits from one to 10 and the formulae for sugar and DNA.

Mrs Pringle said it had been recognised as a pattern transmitted as a radio message in the direction of a star cluster in 1974 from the world's largest radio telescope in Puerto Rico.

It was sent in the direction of so-called cluster M13, some 25,000 light years from Earth, as part of Nasa's Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) project.

'We did send that message out as a means of communication with another intelligence,' said Mrs Pringle. 'And here, in a wheat field, is some sort of reply.'

She added: 'My personal belief is that there is an intelligence behind the phenomenon that is also using these glyphs as a means of communication.'

But circle investigator Andy Thomas was more sceptical. He pointed out that the radio message would not reach the M13 star cluster for more than 20,000 years.

The formations appeared under cover of darkness six nights apart in the field alongside an observatory at Chilbolton, Hants.

Karen Douglas, another circle investigator, said: 'I find it fascinating that we beam all this information out into space and then this appears to bounce back in a field next to a giant telescope.

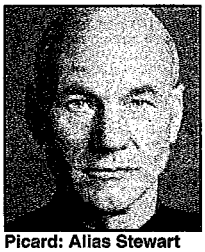
'Could this be our reply or some strange intergalactic echo?

j.chapman@dailymail.co.uk

Captain of the Enterprise, but not as we know him



Kirk: Alias Shatner



Picard: Alias Stewart



Archer: Alias Bakula

THE Starship Enterprise is about to go back to the future with a new captain at the helm.

The new series of Star Trek, called Enterprise, will be set in the 22nd Century – light years before the previous four.

Scott Bakula is to play Captain Jonathan Archer, the first Starfleet captain to explore outer space. He will be a predecessor of James T. Kirk, played by William Shatner and Jean-Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart).

By **Susie Boniface**

Bakula, best-known as time-travelling Sam Beckett in BBC2's Quantum Leap, said the new show – which will be seen in the U.S. this autumn – aimed to return to the feel of the early programmes, which were first aired in 1966.

He said it would be 'more about the relationship between the crew, the captain and his officers as opposed to a relationship to the universe'.

He added: 'I'm fulfilling a lifelong dream to captain a starship.

'Being an avid fan of the original Star Trek series, to get an opportunity to go before, and do all the things that they were talking about, was a big carrot.'

His character, described as an 'emotional renegade', will be exploring new star systems a hundred years before Kirk left Earth.

Guardian 28 Aug.

US base's report of UFO crash 'had MoD in a panic'

Richard Norton-Taylor

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The Halt report was sent to the MoD with a covering letter by Squadron Leader Donald Moreland, an RAF liaison officer, who referred to "some mysterious sightings". The ministry's scientists said they could offer "no explanation for the phenomena", or the radiation. Radar tapes from the night in question were impounded from nearby RAF bases to see if there was any evidence that British airspace had been invaded.

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reaches herds and flocks on Scottish farms contiguous to the sparsely populated parts of northern Northumberland.

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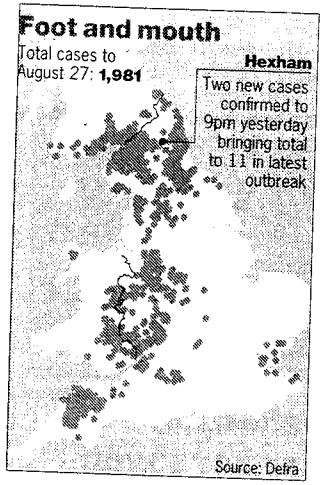
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DAILY STAR
30/08/01

DON'T TELL ANYONE, BUT THE ALIENS HAVE LANDED



CLOSE ENCOUNTER: Are our intergalactic neighbours dropping in?

■ by JOHN DORAN

TOP SECRET documents could prove that aliens have LANDED on Earth, it was claimed last night.

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Revealing

He said: "We had US servicemen at a Nato base chasing UFOs in a forest in the middle of the night."

The sighting, which happened in December 1980, was the subject of a book called You Can't Tell The People, by Georgina Bruni. The author even got hold of a tape recording of Lt Col Halt during the sighting.

On it, he can be heard whispering: "No doubt about it – there's some kind of flashing, red light. It's like the pupil of an eye looking at you, winking."

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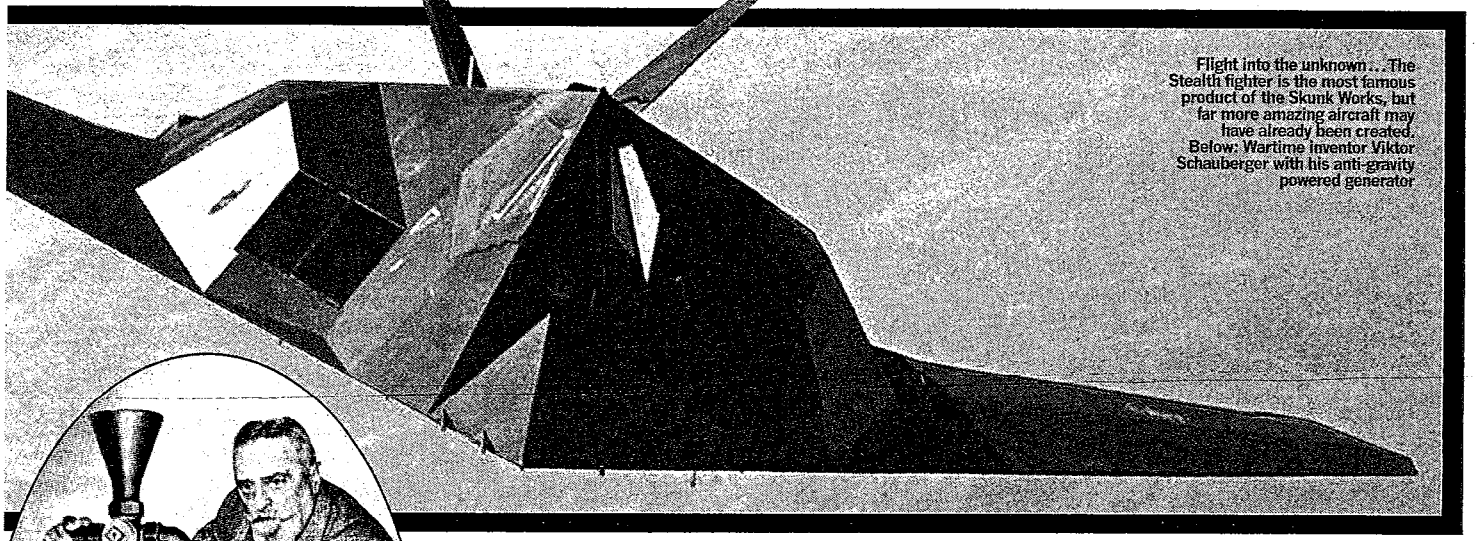
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Flight into the unknown... The Stealth fighter is the most famous product of the Skunk Works, but far more amazing aircraft may have already been created. Below: Wartime inventor Viktor Schauberger with his anti-gravity powered generator



and told me more about what had happened in those fateful days when Germany was collapsing.

One of the five machines Schauberger was engineering was dubbed the 'flying saucer'. And it was this which the Americans seized upon when the war ended. They seemed to know what they were looking for – a radical form of aeroengine which sucked rather than pushed its way through the atmosphere.

Had Schauberger created an 'anti-gravity' device? And had the Americans got wind of it? The conquering Americans held Schauberger under house arrest and debriefed him thoroughly.

Now the Americans, in 1946, had the rudiments of an entirely new propulsion medium: one which 18 months later would have Nathan Twining, a US Air Force general in charge of technology secrets, saying that the US had the knowledge and the ability to construct a piloted aircraft with the operating characteristics of a UFO within the foreseeable future. A craft that seemingly defied the laws of physics.

But what happened to this knowledge? Why, nowadays, do we not travel in aircraft capable of phenomenal speeds and no longer dependent on jet engines? American scientists were predicting a golden age of anti-gravity for the Sixties. A fuelless propulsion source was on the horizon. But it didn't happen. Why?

For the most simple and deadliest of reasons: the fear that anti-gravity could not only be used to revolutionise the world of aerospace, but could also become a destructive force so powerful that it had the potential to destroy the world. Their discoveries struck terror into the hearts of the keepers of the secrets of anti-gravity.

They realised that if you fiddled with the building blocks of nature in a way that they could not fully understand, then you might set off a chain reaction like a nuclear explosion, but hundreds of times more severe. And worse, if America could do it, then so could any rogue state.

It simply wasn't a risk worth taking. No wonder that someone, somewhere, took the view that anti-gravity should be kept a secret for a very long time.

● *Extract from The Hunt For Zero Point: One Man's Journey To Discover The Biggest Secret Since The Invention Of The Atom Bomb, by Nick Cook, to be published by Century on September 16 at £17.99. To order a copy for £16.99 (free p&p), telephone 01206 255800.*

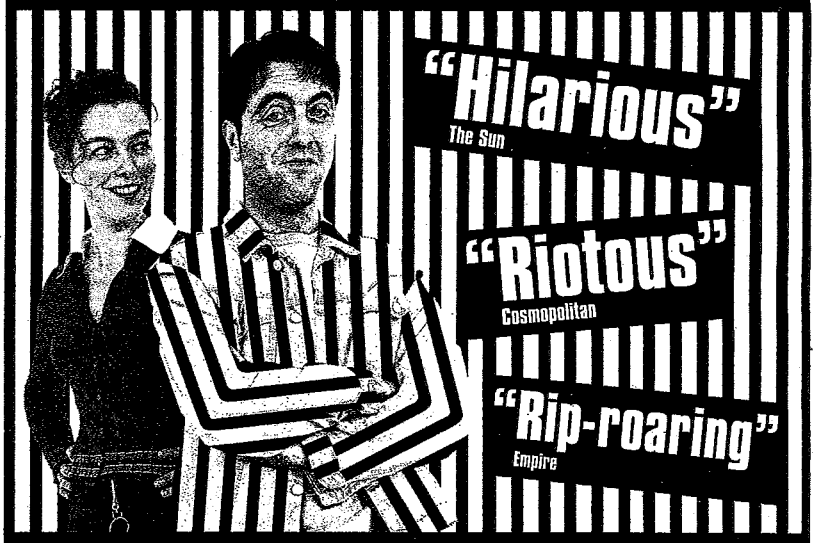
are round

circular shape would be ideal for moving in any direction at the flick of a switch. Nazi researchers are said to have believed the round shape was ideal for carrying a jet engine to generate the electricity needed to charge the flying saucer.

The danger in creating anti-gravity is that any method used has to tap into the infinite power of sub-atomic particles. This power could be deliberately or accidentally released in an uncontainable sub-atomic reaction that could create an explosion big enough to destroy half of Europe.

This may only be a theory – but so was the atomic bomb just a few years before one was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

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The dark secret of

Is the solution to the UFO riddle linked to a power source that could destroy us all? In the second extract from his book, Nick Cook goes to the heart of a mysterious desert factory that may hold the answers

By **Nick Cook**
AEROSPACE CONSULTANT FOR JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY

One of the world's foremost aviation and aerospace scientists once told me about a place – a 'virtual warehouse' – where ideas that were too dangerous to develop into hardware were locked away for ever, like the Ark of the Covenant in the Harrison Ford film Raiders Of The Lost Ark.

At the time, I dismissed it as one of the more fanciful chapters from the wilder shores of science fiction. Not any more.

I am now convinced, after ten years of research, that one of these discoveries, locked away for half a century, is the biggest secret since the invention of the atomic bomb. A source of energy so great that it offers the world a limitless supply of power: anti-gravity. So great that, in the wrong hands, it could destroy the world.

Occasionally, the hardware emerges from the layers of security designed to keep these secrets from public scrutiny. Take, for example, the strange craft spotted from the mid-Eighties onwards in a triangle bordered by New Mexico to the south, California to the west and Nevada to the north-east.

Nearby, on the edge of the desert, is Palmdale, home of the Skunk Works, a legendary aircraft-manufacturing facility. So-called because, in the Forties, foul-smelling chemicals emanated from its secret facilities on the edge of the main Lockheed aircraft plant. Other factory workers, not knowing what was going on there, joked that it was being used to make moonshine, or

Did they make a plane that flies at 5,300mph?

'skunk juice' as it was referred to in the L'il Abner cartoon strip of the day.

Skunk Works employees work on top-secret projects and are highly skilled engineers. They are recruited from the works' parent company, Lockheed, which today builds everything from Stealth fighters to space launchers and satellites. Could a team from its 4,000 employees have had something to do with the 'airquakes' reported by the US Geological Survey as having been caused by an unknown craft as it flew over California?

If anti-gravity was real, where better to look for it than in the Skunk Works, ostensibly hugely profitable and crammed with workers, but with little to show the public for its efforts. What technologies were being pursued there?

The Skunk Works was founded in 1943 in response to an urgent US requirement for a jet fighter to counter the threat of the Messerschmitt 262, a revolutionary twin-jet fighter-bomber being developed by the German Luftwaffe. The result, the XP-80, built in great secrecy, under budget and on time in just 143 days, became an aviation classic.

It set the standard for everything that followed. Ten years later, when the CIA demanded a spyplane to overfly the Soviet Union, the Skunk Works delivered the answer – the graceful Mach 3 A-12 Blackbird. It developed into the fastest operational aircraft in the world until its retirement in 1990.

But what else had been happening at the Skunk Works? Because of its track record in developing top-secret aircraft projects such as the U-2 spyplane and the F-117A Stealth fighter, it was my belief that this was the logical place to look for anti-gravity development in the United States.

My request for an interview with Jack Gordon, the head of the Skunk Works, was eventually granted. It took place in his office at the heart of his empire – a hangar which dominated the desert for miles. In his 23 years with the company, he said, he had worked on 15 'real flying aircraft' – but significantly, he could only talk about 12 of them.

I asked how many of the remaining three had anything to do with anti-gravity?

Gordon was admitting nothing, but there was informed speculation within the industry that one was Aurora, the 'fast mover' people said they had seen as a pulsating light flying over the south-western United States. Aurora was also linked to a dark, triangular shape that had been spotted over the North Sea by trained observers in 1989.

Since the late Eighties, there had been talk of a secret replacement for the revolutionary Blackbird: a mythical plane that supposedly flew twice as fast and on the edges of space. The prognosis was that it was a massive leap forward in aerospace terms, powered by a new form of engine that gave it a cruising speed of anything up to Mach 8 – that is 5,300 mph.

There were also rumours that the Reagan administration had embarked on a massive programme of aerospace and defence research. If you know how to interpret the Pentagon's annual defence budget, and calculate the difference between unclassified expenditure for the three armed services and the grand total, you can work out what is allocated to the so-called 'black budget'.

In 1988, the sum was worked out to be $30 billion for research, development and secret weapons programmes – more than Britain's entire defence budget. If Aurora existed – or research into anti-gravity was taking place – this is where the funding came from.

A lot of the expertise on anti-gravity dated from decades earlier, and Nazi Germany in particular. Much of what formed the basis of the Skunk Works' projects came from the German technology and expertise plundered by the Allies at the end of the Second World War. Germany was a treasure trove of desirable technology, covering everything from weaponry and electronics to textiles and medicine.

It was a magnet for the Allies, including the British. Ian Fleming, who was later to write the James Bond novels, set up what was virtually a private army tasked with 'tech-plunder'. But the British were ill-prepared to take advantage of the opportunities which faced them.

Not so the Americans. They simply removed the paperwork for hundreds of thousands of patents and shipped them home. According to the US Office of

They stole all the Nazis' discoveries

Technical Services – the body set up to ensure that German technology was moved rapidly into American industry – the documents contained a wealth of material which 'very likely contained practically all the scientific, industrial and military secrets of Nazi Germany'.

I became convinced that hidden away among the tens of thousands of tons of paperwork were the revolutionary anti-gravity experiments of Viktor Schauberger, an Austrian inventor enlisted by the Nazis at gunpoint. He actually produced an anti-gravity machine which flew – and I tracked down his grandson, Jeorg, who has devoted much of his life to researching his grandfather's work.

Viktor Schauberger, said Jeorg, was a forester and engineer who had been working on an energy device. As the war drew to a close, the Nazis chanced upon his secrets and ordered him to devote himself to the German war effort, on pain of death.

What appealed to them was a machine of his that had a dual purpose – it could be both an energy generator and a power plant for an aerospace vehicle of saucer-like appearance.

One of Schauberger's colleagues later said that the first time they tried to run the machine – which had a diameter of 5ft and weighed 300lb – 'the flying saucer rose unexpectedly to the ceiling and then was wrecked. It rose upwards, trailing a blue-green and then silver-coloured glow.'

It was a process Schauberger called 'implosion' – at its simplest, a three-dimensional energy pattern channelled inwards, not outwards – which generated phenomenal force levels. His grandson Jeorg showed me the rusting remains of the machine

Why flying saucers

The idea of anti-gravity is the holy grail of aviation. It is based on quantum physicists' belief that gravity is actually created by little-known forces working at a sub-atomic level all around us. The theory is that if these minute forces can be manipulated, anti-gravity could be created to make an object 'lose' its weight.

One idea for how this could be done is 'electrogravitics'. At its most simple level, the theory is based on magnetism: if a metal plate is given a positive electric charge on one side and a negative charge on the other, goes the theory, it will 'exhibit thrust' towards the positive pole. If it is horizontal, the plate will lose weight because it will rise as the negative underside pushes up towards the positive top side.

But, say believers, it's more than just pushing up and down: charging different parts of the plate will make it move in any direction. Because the power of gravity is so great, using it in this way would mean the object could move at incredible speeds.

If this idea works, there is one shape of aircraft ideal for using the electrogravitics force: a flying saucer. The rounded top and bottom would make the most of the lifting force while the

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Did this Nazi killer teach America how to build UFOs?

For ten years a leading writer on Britain's most authoritative military journal has conducted an extraordinary investigation into aviation's greatest mystery: anti-gravity. Now he reveals why he believes he has uncovered an incredible secret – the truth about flying saucers



Cruel genius...SS General Hans Kammler is believed to have struck a deal with the Americans after the war

By **Nick Cook**

AVIATION EDITOR OF JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY

Deputy Sheriff Amelia Lopez led me into the distant scrub of the Sierra Nevada mountains, scratched the soil and said: 'They sieved the dirt for a thousand yards from the impact point. A few weeks after they left, it was like nothing ever happened.'

Whatever happened – or not – took place back in July 1986. Lopez, after partying until dawn on a camping trip with friends, was settling into her sleeping bag when the crash occurred just a dozen miles from Bakersfield, California. A supersonic jet roared overhead with a sonic boom like a clap of thunder. Then the horizon was flashlit by an enormous explosion, flames shooting skywards as the jet ploughed into a desert canyon nearby.

Lopez and her friends, like others in the area, were determined to find out what had happened. They had not gone more than half-a-dozen miles towards the point of impact before her face was forced into the dirt, a boot was in her back and a gun was at her head. These were not ordinary soldiers, but SWAT-types brandishing Colt Commandos, wearing night-vision goggles and issuing threats about government property and national security.

It was not until 1988 that the outgoing Reagan administration admitted the plane, strictly classified even though it had been in service for three years, was an F-117A Stealth fighter. The troops at the crash site were part of a Pentagon 'red team' helicoptered in to secure the area – and to keep the secret of the Stealth's highly classified technology.

It was a measure of the lengths the US military goes to guard its secrets. But I was to discover there is an even greater secret which is no less than the aerospace equivalent of the Holy Grail – anti-gravity. In other words,

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He vanished along

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the action of levitation where gravity's force is more than overcome by electrostatic or other propulsion.

For some time I had regarded an anti-gravity system as the ultimate quantum leap in aircraft design. Something dreamed about, but beyond reach and likely to remain so.

It was the stuff of science fiction. Or so I thought until my investigations, undertaken over the last ten years, led me to change my mind. I am now convinced it is one of the last century's most breath-taking – and most closely guarded – discoveries.

Anti-gravity is a discovery born of the Nazis' desire to conquer the world. And it could also explain the thousands of sightings of UFOs that have occurred since the Second World War. In the light of anti-gravity, the notion of X-Files-type flying saucers does not seem so strange.

The draconian measures applied at the Californian crash site were among the final pieces in a jigsaw I had been putting together ever since photocopied pages of an old popular science journal had been placed anonymously on my desk at Jane's Defence Weekly, the British magazine which documents the day-to-day dealings of the multi-billion-dollar global defence industry.

I have worked there for 14 years as aviation editor and aerospace consultant, covering everything from Chinese combat engines to radar systems. But this was way off my usual beat. The cutting, about revolutionary US military research, was dated 1956. The headline ran: 'The G-Engines Are Coming!' It contained a drawing of a US airman stepping out of an aircraft that had no wings and no visible means of propulsion. The article proclaimed: 'By far the most potent source of energy is gravity. Using it as power, future aircraft will attain the speed of light. Scientists, designers and engineers are perfecting a way to control gravity – a force infinitely more powerful than the mighty atom. The result of their labours will be anti-gravity engines working without fuel – weightless airliners and space ships able to travel to 170,000 miles per second.'

On any other day, this article would have been consigned to the bin as sheer fantasy. But something in the next paragraph caught my eye.

This gravity research, it said, had been supported by Glenn L. Martin Aircraft Company, Bell Aircraft, Lear and 'several other American aircraft manufacturers who would not spend millions of dollars on science fiction'.

It quoted Lawrence D. Bell, founder of the plane company that was the first to break the sound barrier: 'We're already working on nuclear fuels and equipment to cancel out gravity.' George S. Trimble, head of Advanced Programs at Martin Aircraft, added: 'The conquest of gravity could be done in about the time it took to build the first atomic bomb.'

They were openly predicting a golden age of anti-gravity in the Sixties. They set out the notion of a fuelless propulsion source, one that could deliver phenomenal performance gains over a jet – perhaps including the ability to accelerate rapidly, to pull hairpin turns without crushing the pilot and to achieve speeds that defied imagination. In short, something that resembled a UFO.

I began to research the subject of anti-gravity – and discovered that the seeds of the technology were sown by German scientists in the dying days of the Second World War – and appropriated by the conquering Americans under the noses of their allies.

The key man was a German engineer and administrator, Hans Kammler, who began as a civil servant with the Reich Air Ministry but whose ambition led him to the SS, where he became head of the Building and Works divisions that masterminded the concentration camps.

Albert Speer, Hitler's Minister for Armaments, noted that Kammler was 'blond, blue-eyed, long-headed, always neatly dressed and well bred ...capable of unexpected decisions at any minute.' It was the SS, not the Luftwaffe, that controlled Hitler's secret weapons programme – and Kammler, a qualified engineer, soon became deeply involved.

He was clever and cruel – 20,000 slave workers died creating the vast galleried complex hacked out under the Harz Mountains in Germany, where Kammler oversaw production of V1 rockets. One day in March 1945, the guards hanged 52 people in Gallery 41, tying a dozen at a time to a beam which was then pulled up by a crane. Those next in line were forced to watch. These were Kammler's hallmarks.

Kammler rose to the rank of SS General, in charge not only of all aircraft and missile programmes but also his own high-powered research and development think-tank. He set up his secret operation in the vast Skoda industrial complex in Czechoslovakia, a country which t regarded as its own private dc

According to my researches, tists there were working on we systems so futuristic that they Germany's V1 and V2 rocket look pedestrian. Among these nuclear power plants for rocke aircraft, highly sophisticated weapons and anti-aircraft lase

But there was more. A Polish told me the extraordinary st 'The Bell'. Experiments had be ing place in a mine close to the border. They involved feedin doses of electricity into an

What a

What is a ity – a does it Gravity field wh be com magnetism, a power which metallic object to a magnet. cisely what causes it is still a

Einstein believed that whe object sits in space its mass the space around it and this distortion causes gravity. B

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with his secrets...



Alien nation... The US has led the world in aerospace technology, thanks to its Stealth fighter, left. Inset: A 'victim' of the Roswell 'UFO' crash in 1947. Above: The Avro project was bought by the US

ground chamber where a bell-shaped device emitted a pale blue light. Five scientists exposed to the device had died of side-effects. Word had it that they were investigating some kind of anti-gravitational effect. The Bell,

Experiments took place below ground

which was about the height of a man and glowed during testing, was made of hard, heavy metal, filled with a violet mercury-like substance. This metallic liquid was stored in a flask, encased in lead three centimetres thick.

Experiments always took place under a thick ceramic cover and involved the rapid spinning of two cylinders in opposite directions. The chamber in which the experiments took place was deep below ground. Only The Bell itself was preserved after a series of tests, each lasting about one minute. Even the room was destroyed and rebuilt.

Various plants, and animals such as frogs, mice and rats, were exposed to The Bell's sphere of influence. Rapid decay set in and people who helped conduct the experiments suffered from sleep problems, memory loss and muscle spasms. One of the terms used was 'vortex compression'. Another was 'magnetic fields separation'. Both were associated with anti-gravity.

These secrets were undoubtedly Kammler's ticket to safety once war had ended. By mid-April of 1945 Kammler had dropped off the map. He was a leading Nazi, implicated in the Final Solution – yet protracted searches in the US National Archives yielded not a single mention.

How could this monster, the most powerful individual outside Hitler's inner circle, be so easily forgotten?

It was only as I gazed at the single wartime picture that exists of Kammler – in his general's uniform, striding for the camera, his cap with death's head badge enough to one side to betray more than a hint of vanity – that I began to understand. Kammler was fair. Take away the uniform, and he could have been any 40-year-old European male. In the chaos of the collapsing Reich, Kammler could have gone any-

Five scientists died of side-effects

where, assumed any persona and no one would have noticed.

Kammler, who had moved his HQ to Munich, told Albert Speer he would offer the Americans 'jet planes and rockets'. He also let slip he had 'other developments' up his sleeve.

He probably went east, back to his 'special projects group' in Czechoslovakia, rather than simply wait for the Americans to arrive in Munich. He had a two-fold purpose in making his dangerous journey. First, to retrieve the mother lode of documentation and blueprints. And second, to hide it prior to setting up the deal which would buy his freedom.

Although the Skoda Works were in the Soviet zone of occupation, my research shows that US forces had the run of the place for six days before the Red Army turned up.

Plenty of time to remove something you want if you know it is there. Or ignore it, if you have it already.

The Americans appeared indifferent to any pointers towards Kammler. Had he already done a deal with the Americans? The answer must be yes.

The Bell was removed by a special SS evacuation team just before the Russians arrived. More than 60 scientists working on the experiment were then ruthlessly killed to preserve the secrets of the mine. The Bell was shipped out – but to where?

One possibility was using one of the northern Adriatic ports that remained in German hands. A U-boat commander could conceivably have run the gauntlet of the Allies to evacuate cargo and personnel by sea. Another possibility was a heavy transport plane used by a special German air force wing and flown under an enemy or neutral flag. Either way, Kammler had the means to move thousands of tons of documentation, equipment and personnel pretty much where he wanted.

At the end of the Second World War, via captured technology from Germany that has never seen the light of day, America acquired knowledge of the most dangerous kind.

Whatever the secrets of The Bell and other technology, the German secret weapons programme had yielded the ability to design a radically different form of aircraft. A craft that was 'circular or elliptical', made no sound and could turn on a sixpence. And one involving a process which could also be harnessed to create a weapon more destructive than the hydrogen bomb.

With the help of German-derived science, America's technological lead over the rest of the world accelerated after the war. Kammler's secrets from the Skoda Works had moved 4,000 miles to the west and somehow, I just knew, Kammler had come with it. The extensive US recruitment programme would have bent over backwards to accommodate Kammler, keeper of the Third Reich's most exotic military secrets. There is evidence that the Americans did pro-

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gravity is – and what it does

theory gaining more credence is that gravity is caused by little-known forces within atoms – just as magnetism is caused by forces within a magnet's atomic structure.

Master science fiction writer H. G. Wells came up with an idea 100 years ago for a spacecraft to use a substance called Cavorite which shielded the forces of gravity, allowing craft and their occupants to escape Earth's pull and fly to the Moon. Since then, scientists have dreamed of building such a machine. In Moscow last week, scientist Evgeny Podkletnov said he had perfected a machine to push objects away from the pull of Earth's gravity, using super-conducting magnets. He has called this anti-gravity effect a 'gravity shield' – rather like Wells's Cavorite.

Then there are rapidly spinning gyroscopes. Scots inventor Sandy Kidd was inspired by an experience he had walking down a Vulcan bomber's steps when he was an RAF technician in the Eighties carrying a still-spinning heavy gyroscope he had just removed. When he stepped on the ground he was flattened by a blow to his back... transmitted from the gyroscope.

After three years, he built an anti-gravity machine with two gyroscopes at each end of a flexible arm. When he switched it on he was amazed to see it levitate and settle three inches above the workbench.

It proved flying saucers exist

From Page 45

duce such technology. A memo I found in the archives of the Imperial War Museum, written by Lieutenant General Nathan Twining, head of US Army Air Forces' Air Material Command, a brigadier in USAAF intelligence in September 1947, stated that objects 'approximating the shape of a disc, of such appreciable size as to be as large as a manmade aircraft' were neither 'visionary nor fictitious'.

Twining went on to write that it was possible 'within the present US knowledge – provided extensive detailed development is undertaken – to construct a piloted aircraft which has the general description of the object above which would be capable of an approximate range of 7,000 miles...' His memo was written just three months after the supposed crash of a UFO at Roswell, New Mexico, in July 1947; the period many people tout as the real start of the modern UFO sightings.

Not all attempts to produce disc technology were successful. It emerged, during the 1959 hearings of the Space Committee of the US Congress, that the US Department of Defense had been working with the Avro Canada company to develop a 'flying saucer'.

The Avrocar, as it was called, was the brainchild of gifted British engineer John Frost, who had moved to Canada after the war. News leaked as early as 1953, when a Canadian newspaper revealed plans for it to take off and land vertically, and fly at 1,500 mph.

It was easy to see why Avro played down reports of the Avrocar. One look at the prototype, underpowered and unstable, was enough to confirm it would never achieve supersonic flight. It became an aviation joke which drifted into obscurity. Yet, that may have been the intention.

Silent craft were spotted over Belgium

Recently declassified papers show that Avro was working on a range of flying saucers capable of eclipsing existing jet-fighters. And the US air force had bought Avro's disc-shaped designs for craft called Project Silverbug, capable of almost instant high-speed turns in any direction.

Were the Americans using the Canadians to perfect the aerodynamics of a flying saucer? Or had the disastrous Avro programme been hushed up to avoid embarrassment? Either way, it showed that man-made flying saucers existed.

There was no golden age, as 'The G-Engines Are Coming!' had predicted. At least, not in the open. But I discovered evidence of mysterious aircraft which chimed with reduced gravity systems.

Since the Eighties, there has been speculation about the existence of a mythical plane called Aurora that supposedly flew on the edges of space. In 1992, there was a detailed sighting of a massive triangular-shaped aircraft spotted flying in formation with US air force bombers above the North Sea.

In Belgium, in 1989 and again a year later, hundreds of people reported seeing silent triangular-shaped craft all over the country. They were tracked by Belgian radar and pulled turns of about 20G-40G – enough to kill a human pilot. The Belgian air force confirmed their existence in a government report.

I also discovered evidence of the Pentagon's enormous 'black budgets' which finance deeply classified defence programmes.

Huge amounts of money have been spent, often in areas of the US where UFO reports are most common. What happened to Kammler's secrets, and was anti-gravity among them? My research would soon take me to the deserts of America, home of the strange Stealth fighters, the leading edge of aeronautical science – and much more.

● *Extract from The Hunt For Zero Point: One Man's Journey To Discover The Biggest Secret Since The Invention Of The Atom Bomb by Nick Cook, to be published by Century on September 6 at £17.99. © Nick Cook 2001. To order a copy for £16.99 (free p&p), telephone 01206 255800.*

NEXT WEEK: *How I got inside America's top secret Skunk works*

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together Disclosure

Don't tell the CIA but generals have proof ET exists and wants to make contact

A UNIQUE event will take place in Washington DC next Wednesday. More than 20 witnesses from respected professions are joining forces to reveal to the world's media what they claim to be the deception of elected governments by unaccountable but powerful self-interest groups.

In any other field, such as pollution scares or political scandals, these witnesses – senior military officers from the US, UK and Russia, decorated pilots and astronauts, reputable scientists, and even a Cardinal from the Vatican



By Beverley Glick

– would be taken seriously. People would be clamouring for an open inquiry.

But the subject of this press conference will stretch the imagination of many. The witnesses will claim that not only does life exist beyond this planet, but that there has been contact between us and them. They will allege that this knowledge has been suppressed even though the advanced technologies could benefit mankind.

And they will claim that agencies – operating outside the constitutional chain of command in the US, UK and other countries – have been frustrating the inquiries of elected heads-of-state, leaders of the armed forces and the United Nations. It sounds like a case from The X-Files.

That these claims are taken seriously and properly investigated is the hope of Dr Steven Greer, director of the Disclosure Project, who is hosting the event. Dr Greer is the international director of the Centre for the Study of Extraterrestrial Intelligence (CSETI), a non-profit scientific research organisation that was set up in 1990 to "establish peaceful and sustainable relations with extraterrestrial life forms".

Several years ago, the Disclosure Project invited experts from "military, government or government contractor personnel" who were witnesses to UFO events and projects to make statements about what they know. Around 400 came forward and more than 100 have had their testimonies videotaped by Dr Greer, who says they will establish once and for all that we are not alone.

ONE key witness attending the event is a former Division Chief of the Accidents and Investigations Branch of the US Federal Aviation Authority. In his testimony John Callahan tells about a 1986 Japanese Airlines 747 flight that was followed by a UFO for 31 minutes over the Alaskan skies. The UFO also trailed a United Airlines flight until the flight landed. There was visual confirmation as well as air-based and ground-based radar confirmation.

This event was significant enough for the then FAA Administrator, Admiral Engen, to hold a briefing the next day attended by the FBI, CIA, and President Reagan's Scientific Study Team. Videotape radar evidence, air traffic voice communications and paper reports were compiled and presented.

At the end of the meeting, a CIA member instructed everyone present that "the meeting never took place" and that "this incident was never recorded".

"At the time I said, 'Well I don't know why you are saying this'," remembers Callahan. "'There was something there and if it's not a stealth bomber, then you know it's a UFO. And if it's a UFO, why wouldn't you want the people to know?' They got all excited over that – 'You don't even want to say those words'. He said this is the first time they ever had 30 minutes of radar data on a UFO. He said if they came out and told the American public that they ran into a UFO out there, it would cause panic across the country.

But as far as I'm concerned, I saw a UFO chase a Japanese 747 across the sky for over half an hour on radar. And it's faster than anything that I know of in our government."

Project director Dr Greer claims that "technologies related to extraterrestrial phenomena are capable of providing solutions to the global energy crisis". His aim is to persuade the US Congress to hold open hearings at which a further group of "deep cover" witnesses could testify with official government protection. During his investigations, Dr Greer and his team have briefed the Clinton administration, including former CIA director James Woolsey, senior military officials at the Pentagon, and selected members of Congress.

Whether any of these sensational claims are true or whether it's a conspiracy theorist's version of the Hitler Diaries remains to be seen. The provenance of the witnesses will certainly be verifiable.

EXPRESS ON SUNDAY
06/05/01

BUT who is Greer? He is a 45-year-old medical doctor from Virginia who has spent eight years and $5million of his own money putting together the evidence the Disclosure Project will begin to unveil next week.

It started for him at the age of eight, when he claims to have seen a UFO in broad daylight. His interest further developed when his uncle became a senior project engineer on the lunar module that took Neil Armstrong to the Moon. This gave him the insider knowledge he needed to pursue a lifetime of study into the possibility of extraterrestrial life.

Dr Greer and his small research team have spoken to witnesses all over the world, many of them high-ranking military personnel who have stated unequivocally that they have seen UFOs.

"Sceptics say they are deluded, or liars. But in any other circumstances they would be considered heroes of their country," Greer said.

"These are individuals in whose hands rest the nuclear arsenals of the world – launch control officers who we trust with the safety or destruction of our planet. Either these military men were hallucinating, or they saw what they saw."

The chilling truth, as Dr Greer sees it, is that the testimony of his military witnesses will show that the US and other countries have engaged "extraterrestrial vehicles" in armed attack.

"If there is even a 10 per cent chance that this is true, then this constitutes the gravest threat to world peace in human history," he says.

His witnesses are impressive. They include Britain's former Chief of Defence Staff, Admiral Lord Hill Norton, who states in his testimony, "...that there is a serious possibility that we are being visited – and have been visited for many years – by people from outer space, from other civilisations; that it behoves us to find out who they are, where they come from, and what they want. This should be the subject of rigorous scientific investigation."

The consensus among those in the know, says Greer, is that we are not facing hostility from extraterrestrials. He is extremely concerned, therefore, about President Bush's announcement that he is going ahead with NMDS, the National Missile Defence System, a hi-tech space defence shield.

"Our visitors may be quite neutral but they may not be so happy about our military adventures," he says.

ACCORDING to Dr Greer, secrecy is preventing the world from entering into an informed debate about NMDS, not to mention environmental and energy issues. And he's talking about levels of secrecy that have even removed presidents from the loop.

"The buck supposedly stops at the Oval office, but it seems like it doesn't. Carter and Clinton were deliberately deceived – it's explosive, but we know this to be the case."

Dr Greer is aware he is making serious allegations. Why should anyone believe him? "I'm a licensed MD in two states. If I were perpetrating a hoax I would lose those licences and my livelihood. We have three attorneys here too – if they were hoaxers they would be disbarred. There's a lot at stake here."

A sceptic, Professor Archie Roy, Professor Emeritus of Astronomy at the University of Glasgow, says that although 80 per cent of UFO sightings can be identified as astronomical objects, satellites or conjunctions of planets, about 20 per cent cannot be explained away. "The whole UFO thing has developed very much but has been muddied by hoaxes," he says. "I'm not saying all cases are hoaxes but the Roswell mythology has made it pretty much impossible to get to the truth now."

So, just as the British Flying Saucer Bureau closes its doors, leaving more than 100 similar UK groups to carry on, some experienced eyes will be turning to the USA this week.

Nick Pope, former UFO desk officer at the Ministry of Defence, says: "Those people who have genuinely been involved in government or military UFO projects undoubtedly have fascinating stories to tell. I hope people will pay attention and realise that the UFO phenomenon raises some serious defence and national security issues."

Dr Greer hopes that "serious media interest" will provide the impetus politicians need to lobby for an official inquiry.

"All I'm asking is that we spend a fraction of the time on this that we did on Monica Lewinsky. If only one of these witnesses is telling the truth, it's the biggest story in history."

There will be a live web cast of the press conference from 2pm on Wednesday, May 9 on www.connectlive.com/events/disclosureproject.

●*Additional reporting by Hamish MacKenzie.*

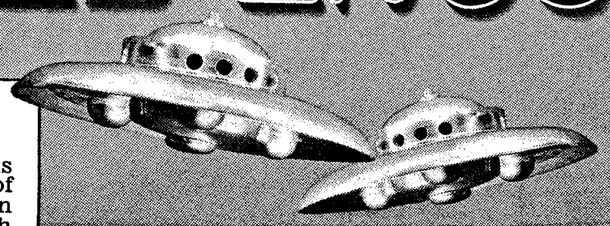
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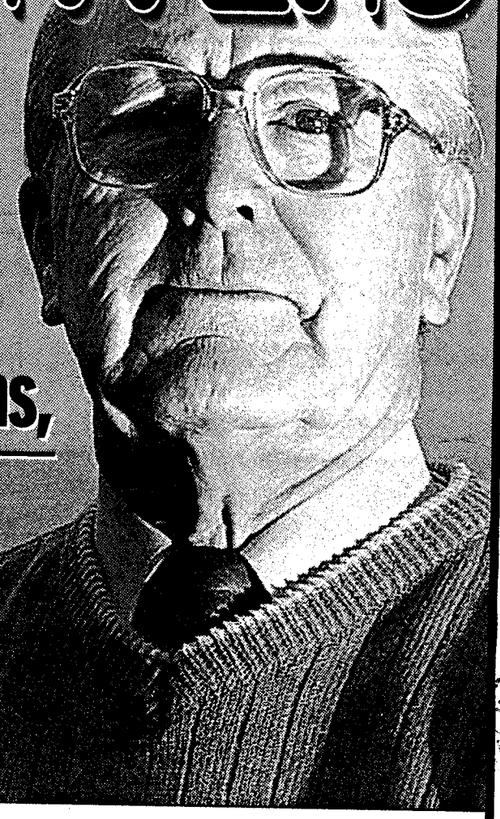
Invasion of 600 UFOs

MORE than SIX HUNDRED flying saucers have been spotted in Britain's skies over the past three years.

Latest Ministry of Defence figures show that, in 1998, 193 UFOs were reported – with another 229 in 1998 and 210 last year.

CLOSED ENCOUNTERS





Or why, after 49 years of dedicating his life to aliens, Denis Plunkett has now shut down the British Bureau for UFOs



by **Jane Kelly**

SUSPICIOUSLY, it all looks terribly normal — an estate of Sixties houses and bungalows in a Bristol suburb, mostly with new plastic windows and porches. In his home, Denis Plunkett, 70, looks like an average pensioner. Neat grey hair, grey sweater, neutral trousers and brown lace-ups.

'Looking normal is all part of a facade,' he says laughing, but it's partly true.

Denis, who once taught computer skills to the unemployed, has dedicated his life to tracking unidentified flying objects — UFOs. Outer space, to him, is as well charted as his own back garden. He is certain that aliens exist and pay us visits. In fact, he is desperate for them to visit more often.

In 1952, aged 21, he founded in Britain what is now the world's oldest UFO society. However, yesterday he announced that it is closing due to lack of members prepared to turn out to meetings. They'd rather join UFO clubs on the internet than sit in draughty halls watching slides and, worse still, there's a lack of flying saucers to spot.

'We are in a trough,' he says. 'Sightings are half what they were in the Sixties. They just aren't coming here any more.' He means club members *and* aliens.

He takes me to his 'den', a narrow section of room next to the kitchen, where he records sightings and organised meetings. Book shelves are lined with titles such as: Flying Saucers Top Secret, We Are Not Alone, and 1956 UFO Arrival. This has chapters with headings such as **White Discs At Windsor, Crab-like Machine Over Long Island, Fish-shaped Object Over England, and Flying Bottle Over Kabul.**

There are plastic models of aliens with the huge slanting eyes and tiny noses who rather resemble Ally McBeal, and a few brightly-coloured paper spaceships made by some of his six grandchildren.

As he talks, his wife Maureen, 67, makes coffee. 'I've just lived with it,' she says smiling wanly. 'It's his hobby. I've got my three daughters and their children to see to.'

His phone keeps ringing. As he asks: 'Where are you speaking from?' you almost expect the reply to be Alpha Centauri or Sirius, the Dog Star.

WHILE I was there, he received distressed calls from Bolivia, Belgium, Australia and Wales. The whole world seems to be distraught that his little group, with its weekly gatherings in a Quaker meeting hall, is about to disappear.

The closing of those hall doors marks the end of an epoch, even if it is one that many of us were unaware of.

After World War II, flying saucers were suddenly as common as magpies. They got their name in 1947 after an American airforce pilot reportedly saw 'skipping discs' — saucer-like shapes — in the sky.

When the U.S. tested the hydrogen bomb a couple of years later, sightings increased again because, according to Ufologists, the blast could be seen from Mars, which alerted our extraterrestrial cousins to look at us more closely.

Between 1950 and 1960, particularly during the Korean War, and throughout the later Vietnam conflict, the U.S. airforce couldn't handle the thousands of reports of UFOs. There were more than 100,000 sightings, from 140 countries.

'The aliens came as observers over the battlefields,' says Denis.

In 1989, especially when the Soviet empire began to implode, there was another surge of sightings. But now the Cold War is over the terrestrials, it seems being slightly voyeuristic, have buzzed off in their interstellar craft to view better scenes of death and destruction.

Indeed, there seem to be many possibilities why the little green men are now being so standoffish, or have 'reasons for non-contact', as Denis puts it.

'It could be just that their surveillance programme has ended. There might be a communication problem or they're afraid of destroying us,' he says.

It's impossible to argue with any of those theories, and particularly his idea that they might also, with good reason, be reluctant to visit Earth in case they catch a disease. 'But,' he says hopefully, 'when the time comes, they'll be back.'

He started his UFO group after seeing an advertisement in the Daily Mail placed by a man called Al Bender, who ran the International Flying Saucer Bureau in Connecticut. He wanted to establish representatives around the world.

Denis answered his request and set up a group, but only just in time. Sinister forces were at work.

'A few months later, Al was visited by three men wearing black,' he says. 'They could have been aliens or men from the CIA. I don't know why, but Al lost interest overnight.'

Bravely, Denis's branch of the Flying Saucer Bureau carried on meeting, at first in pubs, then in a hall at Bishopstone, near Bristol, every Thursday night, £2 at the door with tea and custard creams inclusive.

While Denis was away on National Service, his father Edgar took over.

Strangely, the 'men in black' never once attempted to stop the meetings. 'We were a bit nervous, but too enthusiastic to stop,' he says.

For 50 years all went well. 'We used to have very good evenings,' he says sadly. 'They'd come by bus, even on wet nights, sometimes more than 400 a time. We couldn't get them all into the hall.

'Meetings were meant to last until 10 pm, but they would go on and on, which annoyed the caretaker.'

It is easy to imagine some of the members inside the hall going 'on and on'.

'Members were mostly men, between 16 and 80,' he says. 'We did have a few people in duffel coats who'd sit with their hoods up all evening.

'In the Seventies, there was a chap who used to wear cardboard ears to ridicule us. But when he actually saw a UFO he took them off and apologised.'

MEETINGS were addressed by such luminaries as American George Adamski, co-author of the 1953 book, The Flying Saucers Have Landed.

Adamski claimed to have been visited by two 'space brothers' from Venus, who invited him aboard their craft. 'He was the first man to take photos inside a mother ship,' says Denis.

Following Denis's lead, more groups sprouted. 'There was rivalry,' he says. 'The Welsh groups always claimed that their sightings were better than ours.'

Denis's father had to reply to more than 30 letters a week from all over the world, bashing out lengthy replies on his old typewriter. He helped to run the group for 40 years until his death in 1992.

Denis believes he has seen a distinct change of attitude towards aliens over the past 50 years.

'In the Fifties, about 11 pc of people believed in them and thought they were bug-eyed monsters with tentacles.

'But now more like 60 pc of people accept that they exist, particularly the young, and so they have a better image. This is reflected in films such as Star Wars and ET.'

DENIS has only ever had one sighting himself. In the summer of 1966 he was just going to bed when he saw through his window nine lights hovering for an hour in the sky at the end of his garden, changing position slightly, but so quickly that he couldn't see them do it.

'I didn't take a photo as I was scared that if I looked away they would immediately disappear,' he says. 'And I was really quite transfixed.'

His obsession with UFOs really began on August 8, 1947, when his cousin Denis Harmer, a radio operator on an aircraft, disappeared over the Andes 'in mysterious circumstances'.

His final message sent twice in Morse Code was 'Stendec'.

Denis has interpreted this to be a corruption of the word St Elmo, meaning St Elmo's Fire, referring to glowing balls of electrical fire — or alien activity.

'That summer, UFOs had been seen in Chilean airspace at speeds in excess of 3,000 mph or 45 G-force,' he says.

'The idea that my cousin's death was to do with UFOs gave me the impetus to set up the club. I know that there are extraterrestrials and one day I will be proved right.'

'The funny thing is,' he says, 'I've spent years quietly working away and now that I announce I am closing down I get more world-wide attention than ever before.

'Perhaps we should start up again. After all, for £2, you can have as much tea, talk and good company as you like — you can't get that on the internet, can you?'

Where have all the aliens gone? After a lifetime tracking them, Britain's chief UFO spotter, Denis Plunkett (above), is calling off the hunt

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From the week Magazine 24 Feb 2001 issue

Best properties on the market

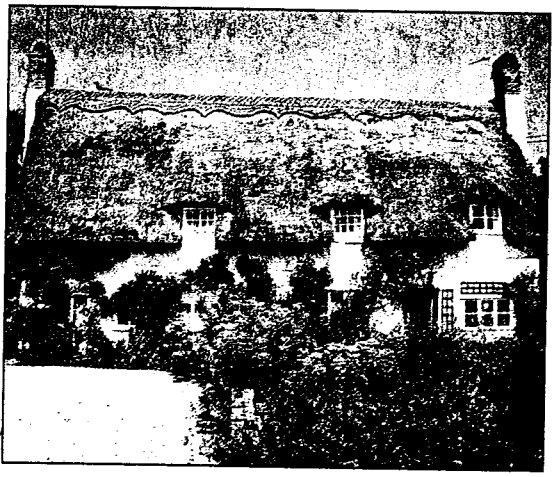
This week: houses within 90 miles of London

120



◀ **The Old Vicarage**, Kelvedon, Essex. A Grade II 18th century former vicarage, requiring some modernisation, standing in secluded gardens on the edge of the village. 6 beds, bath, 2 dressing rooms, 3 receps, kitchen, study, laundry, scullery, cloakroom, cellars, coach house, stables, outbuildings, paddocks, 4.18 acres. £450,000 Strutt & Parker 01245-258201.

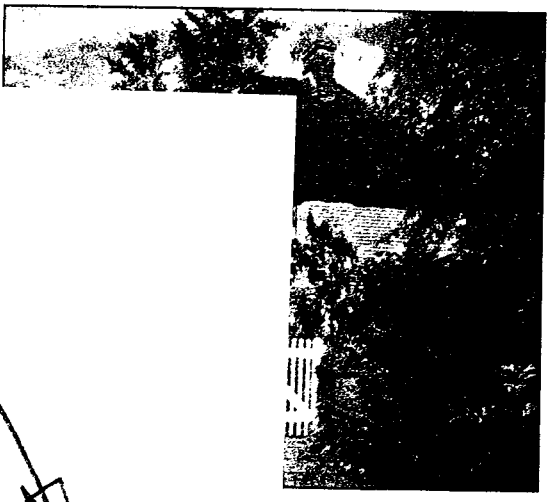
▼ **Wayside Cottage**, Higham Hill, Lower Raydon, Suffolk. A Grade II country cottage dating back to the 15th century, situated in a preservation area within the Brett Valley. 4 beds, bath, shower room, drawing room, dining room with stone-flagged floor and fireplace, kitchen/breakfast room, study, gardens. £325,000 FPD Savills 01473-234800.







▲ **Bushy Lawn Lodge**, Brigstock, Northants. A Grade II Georgian house situated on an old drover's road within a private deer park. 5 beds, bath, dressing room, 2 receps, kitchen, cellar, outbuildings, listed barn with planning permission for residential conversion, 1 acre. £325,000 (whole) Strutt & Parker 01858-433123.





on, Kent. A Grade II
ıning landscaped gardens
m, and views to the
:eps, kitchen, utility room,
ding with games room,
vation, stabling, 21 acres.
227-451123.

Country Matters



The golden eagle is set to return to the Republic of Ireland for the first time in a century, reports The Sunday Telegraph. This June, conservationists plan to transplant chicks from their nests in Scotland to Glenveagh National Park, Co Donegal, in the hope of re-establishing a breeding population. Once there, they will be fed animal carcasses, before being released into the wild six weeks later. Ireland is the only country where the golden eagle has become extinct, due to shooting and egg collecting; the last breeding pair died in Co Mayo in 1912. Experts with the Irish Raptor Study Group hope that the birds will move into abandoned, century-old nest sites, and plan to transplant 15 eaglets from Scotland every year until 2005.

The Scottish town of Bonnybridge has become the UFO capital of Britain, says the Sunday Express, after 60,000 sightings of the flying objects were reported here in the last decade. Last week local councillor Bill Buchanan spoke with the mayor of Roswell, New Mexico, the American town synonymous with UFOs, about twinning this small Stirlingshire town with it. There are also plans for a hi-tech UFO theme park, said Buchanan.

[redacted] → file

[redacted] gave me this copy of an article on UFO's which appeared in Metro this morning. It looks like something is due to appear in Pilot Magazine this month as well.

[redacted]

My close encounter of the blurred kind

BY PRAVIN CHAR

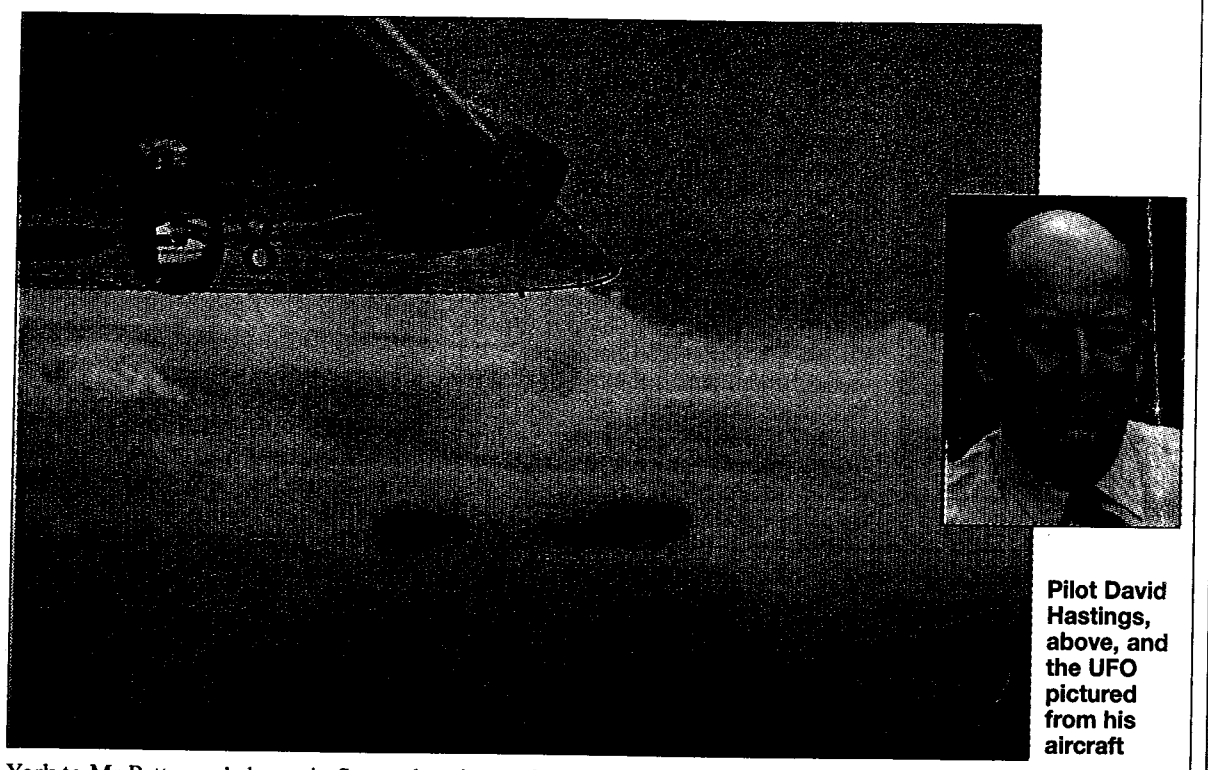
IT may seem like pie in the sky. But a pilot is convinced that this blurred image is a UFO that nearly crashed into his light aircraft.

David Hastings, 67, and his co-pilot David Patterson said they thought they were going to die when a mysterious black shape headed straight for them and then veered overhead.

Seconds later they became aware of an object moving on the port side of their six-seater aircraft.

Mr Hastings from Salhouse, Norfolk, grabbed his camera and took two pictures out of the window of his twin-engined Cessna Skymaster.

When he got the film developed he was astonished to see the cigar-shaped object hovering clearly in one of the snaps. Mr Hastings who has been



Pilot David Hastings, above, and the UFO pictured from his aircraft

'All of a sudden the cockpit went black'

flying for 40 years said: 'There is no doubt in my mind that we had an encounter with a UFO – and I have got the picture to prove it.

'It appears to have heat coming out of it because it was creating an air flux in the same way that you get a distorted wavy view of a road on a hot day.'

The incident happened as Mr Hastings and Mr Patterson, a former World War II pilot, were flying at 10,500ft over the Mojave Desert in California.

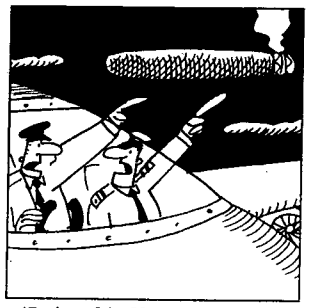
The pair were on the way from New York to Mr Patterson's home in San Francisco after attending a convention for veterans of the US Army Air Force Second Air Division.

Mr Hastings, chairman of the division's memorial library in Norwich, Norfolk, said: 'We realised there was something heading straight for us. All of a sudden the cockpit went black as the object appeared to fly overhead, blocking out the sun.'

He showed the print to US Navy officers and said: 'They asked to keep the picture for a while and when I picked it up a few days ago I asked them what they thought it was.

'They refused to say anything and simply answered: "No comment".'

Mr Hastings took the picture in June 1998 but only allowed it to be published when he was interviewed for this month's edition of Pilot magazine. He said: 'Quite a few airline pilots see UFOs while they are flying – but I have never heard of one being photographed like this.'



'Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it a slim panatella?'

The two greatest shows on Earth?

TWO neighbouring freak shows are going shrunken head to shrunken head in a bitter battle to pull in the punters. It began when Bobby Reynolds, curator of the Believe It You're Nuts exhibition, installed a two-headed baby – at 30p a peep – at the building where Dick Zigun's Sideshows by the Seashore museum is based. Soon after, Mr Reynolds' red-and-yellow tent was put up nearby, amid colourful giant banners touting Siamese twins, a miniature frog band and a fire-eater. Mr Zigun claimed that his rival was stealing his customers on New York's Coney Island with a second-rate exhibition made up of waxworks and toys.
In response he poached Mr Reynolds' nephew to perform as a sword-swallower. Mr Reynolds now plans to hit back by displaying the body of a dead alien he claims to have bought from the government.

LONDON FACTFILE

In the 18th century Green Park, SW1, was a popular place for duels. It was here that Count Alfieri fought his mistress's husband Lord Ligonier. After the fight, the count returned to the Haymarket Theatre with a sword wound in his arm and sat through the last act. The park was also much frequented by highwaymen.

Cybersex and the City – by e-mail

THE creator of racy TV show Sex and the City is to turn her talents to cybersex and the computer.
Candace Bushnell is to write a set of new stories under the title The Morning After which will be sent to subscribers through their e-mails.
Deborah Davis, vice-president of US company Email Shows, which is producing the project, said Ms Bushnell's 'notoriously dishy' writing style was considered a perfect match for the medium of e-mail literature because it provided 'a voyeuristic reading experience'.
The show will consist of e-mails written by Ms Bushnell and her manager, Clifford Streit, about their lives. The writer's book, Sex and the City, inspired the US show which is shown on Channel 4.



Dury: Love, fame and drink

Dury leaves ten reasons to be cheerful

**IAN DURY'S musical career is to continue from beyond the grave. Ten previously unknown songs recorded by Dury shortly before his death from cancer in March will be released as an album early next year. Pop star Robbie Williams is also bidding to record an unfinished love song written by Dury called You're The Why. Williams was a friend of Dury's and has taken up his mantle as a celebrity ambassador for Unicef. The revelation that Dury had a stockpile of unpublished material has surprised many of his fans. All of the tracks were written and sung by Dury in the months prior to his death. Dury's manager Andrew King said: 'They are very up, funny and full of life even though he knew he was near death. They all have Ian's vocals.' The tracks include songs about love, fame, getting drunk and children. Dury, who caught polio when he was seven, battled with cancer for several years. He is best-known for his hits with The Blockheads, including Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick and Reasons To Be Cheerful.
Dury's life will also be celebrated in a memorial concert featuring Madness, Kirsty MacColl, Kathy Burke and Mark Lamarr in London this week.**

METRO weather

FAO [redacted]

• Britain's UFO sec

118

Scientist's pressure for information opens up hidden government files on strange sightings in the sky

by Antony Barnett
Public Affairs Editor

ON 15 February 1999 an air traffic controller in Scotland noticed something strange on his radar screen. A bright blip on his screen suggested there was a very large object travelling at 3,000mph over the Scottish coastline heading south-west to Belfast.

The size of the blip suggested the object was 10 miles long and two miles wide. Two minutes later the object disappeared from the radar screen.

Three months earlier, MoD documents record that a commercial pilot flying over the Midlands reported an unusual object travelling at 'very high speed' with a very bright strobe light flashing once every 20 seconds.

Although the two incidents were unrelated, both were reported to a little-known department in the Ministry of Defence, known as Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a. This is the secretive section in Whitehall which collates reports of unidentified flying objects that cross British airspace.

Whitehall has traditionally treated reports of UFO sightings as highly classified and only released information to the public after 30 years. But the parliamentary Ombudsman insisted that the MoD hand this information to Colin Ridyard, a research chemist from Wales.

Dr Ridyard had been seeking information relating to UFO sightings by pilots or radar operators between July 1995 and July 1999. Initially the MoD refused on the ground it would be too expensive. But after the intervention of the ombudsman, Michael Buckley, the MoD agreed to release the information as a one-off exercise for £75. The Ministry handed two reports to Ridyard, yet official information from the Civil Aviation Authority suggests there had been additional sightings. During the same period the CAA said it reported two more UFO sightings to the MoD, neither of which the Ministry disclosed.

According to official CAA reports, in the same month that a radar picked up an enormous object flying across Scotland, a pilot flying over the North Sea became star- ...tled when ...illuminate... ...cent' ligh... ...craft in th... ...ing a ball ... ...high spee... ...trollers re... ...no stran...



At the insistence of the parliamentary Ombudsman, the Ministry of Defence has relea...

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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) secrets revealed



nan, the Ministry of Defence has released classified details of 'close encounters' reported recently.

ne MoD, neither of Ministry disclosed. ling to official CAA n the same month adar picked up an object flying across , a pilot flying over h Sea became star- tled when his aircraft became illuminated by an 'incandescent' light. Three other aircraft in the area reported seeing a ball of light moving at high speed. Air traffic controllers reported there were no strange aircraft in the area, but five minutes later an operator at a weather station picked up a fast-moving object on his radar.

The other incident which CAA reported to the MoD occurred in June 1999 when the pilot of a B757 flying over the North Sea reported an unidentified military-looking aircraft passing close by in the opposite direction. Nothing was seen on the plane's radar or by air traffic controllers. The MoD told the Authority that there were no military aircraft known to be in that area at the time.

Although an MoD spokeswoman would not discuss individual sightings, she said all these events had perfectly normal explanations. 'Sometimes radars have spurious readings caused by military aircraft in the vicinity, and radar-jamming facilities and bright lights on the underside of aircraft can be caused by events on the ground.'

In a letter to one of Ridyard's local MPs, Defence Minister John Spellar said: 'My department has no interest or role with respect to UFO/flying saucer matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial life forms – about which we remain open-minded.'

However, declassified government documents in the Public Records Office from June 1965 reveal that 'it was official MoD policy to play down the subject of unidentified flying objects and to avoid attaching undue public attention or publicity to the subject... as a result we have never had any political pressure to mount a large-scale investigation'. Other documents from that time state: 'The press are never to be given information about unusual radar sightings... and [unusual visual] sightings are in no circumstances to be disclosed to the press.'

But Ridyard said: 'This is not about little green men, but about freedom of information. It is clear there are many strange incidents that happen in the British skies that are kept secret. There may be issues of aircraft safety or natural phenomena, but by keeping this information secret these incidents cannot be scrutinised by the public or the scientific community.'

One of the most infamous incidents relating to a UFO sighting in Britain only came to light through US freedom of information legislation. This revealed that in December 1980 three security patrolmen investigating a potential air crash near the US Air Force base in Suffolk saw a strange glowing triangular object hovering in the forest near the base which had a 'pulsing red light on top and blue lights underneath'.

An official report by Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Halt, the deputy base commander, included a description of the events and stated that the next day three depressions were found in the forest where the object was discovered which showed radiation readings. Later that night three star-like objects were seen in the sky moving 'rapidly in sharp angular movements'.

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you get.

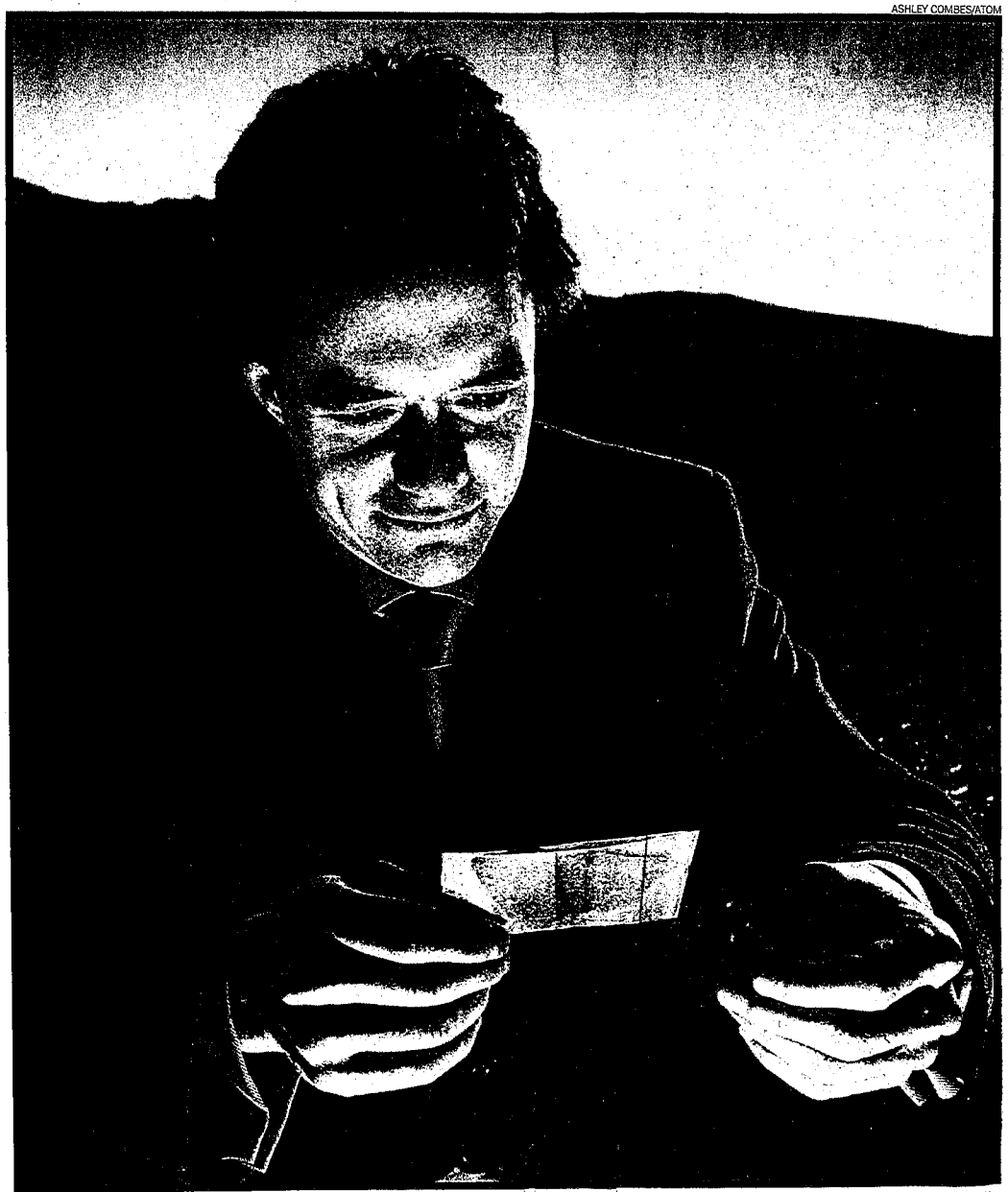
The great Scottish UFO mystery

A piece of 'alien' cloth, strange lights in the sky, a rock from outer space; all the ingredients of an extraterrestrial mystery. But what is really going on in a Scottish village? **Ann Treneman** finds out



The Templar Lodge Hotel: a place of ghosts, knights and other strange, unworldly sights

ASHLEY COMBES/ATOM



Hotel researcher Richard Taylor and the 'alien' material: "It is very delicate. Definitely not synthetic. Like a puffball but not like a puffball"

I had come to Scotland to investigate a UFO mystery. Flashing lights had been seen over two extinct volcanoes in East Lothian. Japanese tourists were amazed to see a ball of fire hovering in the air. An American golfer had seen a similar lightshow and, after going to investigate, uncovered the strangest piece of material. This was now being called a possible alien artefact and the Japanese were going to mount a six-month, non-stop UFO watch of the Lothian sky. And, to top it all off, there were reports of a rock falling to earth from outer space.

I am not making this up. There have been stories, some of them lengthy, about this in national and Scottish newspapers and radio and television coverage too. But there was something hazy about it all, including Muirfield, near by. People here probably think extraterrestrial is a special kind of sandtrap. I ask a few people walking down the street about UFOs. "You know, I don't know any Martians myself and so haven't been able to discuss that," said one man without a smile. Had he heard about the alien artefact? "No," he said.

The Templar Lodge Hotel is a white and rather grand looking building that stretches along Gullane's main road. Until two years ago it was called the Queen's Hotel and was thought to have dated from the 18th century. The only conspiracy theories discussed then were those that involved little white

> The cloth is very weird, like the

fellrunner. This explains why we more or less ran up that mountain. I was gasping but Mr Taylor, who is very engaging if a bit hard to follow, had more than enough breath for his tales.

The first was about the artefact. Last autumn an American and his wife came to Templar Lodge for a golfing holiday. He was a middle-aged businessman who had been in the military. He and his wife had an early supper at the hotel and went for a walk. They saw some sort of strange lightshow on top of Berwick Law and drove over to investigate. They climbed to the top and, at the back of a derelict stone hut, found a piece of material. Later, they gave the cloth to Stephen Prior because they were embarrassed to take it home. They insist on anonymity.

By this time we are at the top and camera on the hotel roof. The hotel said it will not charge and the crew is to arrive in March. The cameras will monitor for UFOs 24 hours a day and provide a live feed to the Internet. The filming will continue for

see that you have no way of triangulating your facts," he adds. What? He laughs and says he has an academic background. At about this point what had been a strange day became bizarre as he starts talking

formation must have been lifted from the Templar Lodge site. But it is much more complex than that. Pharo says that its investigation into alien visitations is just one part

(though all attempts to reach Pharo have failed). Mr Prior says there is no link other than that he has asked Pharo to handle the artefact. And who was Pharo? He says it is a

Templar Lodge in Gullane. Its marketing manager, Stephen Prior, was quoted. "The cloth is what really fascinates me. It is very weird, like the softest kid leather but with spores that come out when you tap it. It's like nothing I've ever seen."

Mr Prior was also going to be the host for the Japanese film crew. Traditionally, Bonnybridge had been the main site in Scotland for UFO sightings. Now, it seemed, that could change. One headline described Lothian as a "UFO hotspot". Mr Prior confirmed there had been many sightings of lights over the hills. "There is a long Celtic tradition of fairies on the hills. Traditionally, you wouldn't take your baby up there for fear of it being turned into a changeling." But since space became fashionable, he said, people attributed it more to UFOs.

I went with a sceptical but open mind. The stories seemed fantastical, but also amusing. Plus, unusually for these kind of tales, there was something real to be reckoned with. In fact there were three real things: a Japanese television company, a piece of material, and a rock. So it really was a mystery and an interesting one too. Everyone makes fun of UFOs but there is a huge curiosity. The Internet is full of it: one count shows 414,055 web pages on the subject. Clearly we are intrigued. But it wasn't long before I began to feel uneasy about this particular UFO mystery. This was not a wacky walk on the wild side; it was complicated and almost creepy. At one point I even wondered if it was all linked to a fledgling cult.

It was cold when I arrived in Gullane in the south shore of the Firth of Forth. It was also lunchtime and so everything was shut. It is that kind of place. Gullane is devoted to golf and there are five courses, in-

softest kid leather but with spores that come out when you tap it

balls. But then it acquired a new (and absent) owner. Renovations revealed 12th century stonework and it was reported that the Knights Templar may have once lived here. Ghosts started coming out of the woodwork and there is even a knightly one. Esoteric groups started holding conferences here. For example, the Templar Lodge was the venue for a lecture series and launch of the Stargate Conspiracy, a book that details links between ancient Egypt and modern military intelligence. The book is now displayed in the hotel foyer.

I had wanted to see Stephen Prior but he was now back home in Surrey. So instead I interviewed Richard Taylor, who describes himself as the hotel researcher. What was that? Mr Taylor said he was putting together an historical exhibit for Templar Lodge and that topics included who really discovered America, Charles I's lost fortune and Rudolph Hess's Iron Cross. And the alien artefact? Yes, he thought that might be worth exhibiting now too.

Mr Taylor said the artefact was in his pocket as we head out to Berwick Law. This is an extinct volcano that rises without preliminaries out of the Lothian flatlands. In the car park there is a pink mallow that is still blooming despite the cold. "Legend has it that this hill is hollow," says Mr Taylor. He is not wearing a coat and says he doesn't need one because he is part Latvian, part Welsh and part Swedish. Later I would find out he was also a

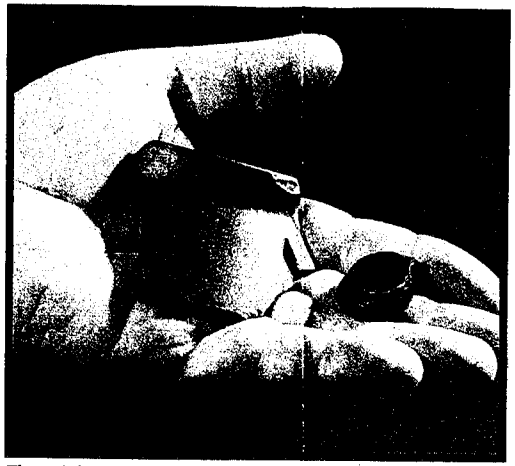
now?" I shout. We huddle in a corner of the stone ruin. He produces a CD case and inside is a small and ragged yellow piece of material. It looks like a supple kind of parchment. "It is very delicate. Definitely not synthetic. Like a puffball but not like a puffball," he shouts. Mr Taylor says a national newspaper was having the cloth analysed at Heriot-Watt University.

We head back. Running down a mountain turns out to be harder than running up one. I ask about the Japanese. He says this is completely separate event. Last autumn a group of Japanese tourists saw a ball of light over nearby Traprain Law. Mr Taylor says the Japanese love both aliens and golf and so it only seemed natural when a Japanese film company called to ask how much it would cost to put a

if the music isn't any good," says Mr Taylor.

The Japanese also insist on anonymity. This is becoming a theme. Mr Taylor says the publicity is all an accident: it stemmed from a chance comment to a local reporter and the news story was then picked up nationally. It wasn't until a talk show last week on Radio 5 Live that the final alien connection was made. On air it was revealed that in 1994 a piece of metal had fallen out of the sky and landed next to a man standing at the foot of Traprain Law. The metal, which was C-shaped, was hot to touch. Mr Taylor said it was analysed at a university and was designated to be "no known metal".

So how could any of this be verified? Mr Taylor says he could understand my frustrations. "I can



The rock from outer space: analysis revealed it to be iron and barium

grassroots movement which is also known as the Cultural Millennium Bug and that he had been "tracking it" since 1994. "It is all about post-post modernism," he said.

The movement is two-pronged, taking in revelations both as in the Bible and as in Oprah Winfrey. The words "fire without flame or smoke" sum it up. I have no idea what Mr Taylor is talking about. Later, back at the hotel, he hands me a two-page brief called *What is Revelationism?* This includes 16 separate entries, written in rather elegant gobbledegook, including this: "Revelationism has a strong comic element which incorporates irony and self-referencing beyond post-modernism. For example, the Revelationist mantra "I Hate Bigots" pokes the finger at political correctness. In a similar manner, oxymoronic statements such as "I Love Bigots" are a part of the enjoyment of paradoxes."

Mr Taylor, who is 34, is tremendously earnest about this. He says it is linked to something called Apocryphal History, which seems to be historical fact stripped of politics and propaganda. This is what his exhibition is all about. He sees the artefact as just such a fact. It seemed to me that the artefact was somehow linked with Revelationism. What is really going on here?

The answer can be found on the Net. Mr Taylor had said the Japanese were represented in the UK by something called Pharo and that I should have a look at its website. I do and find a series of inter-linked articles on the Berwick alien artefacts, the filming, Templar Lodge, and Revelationism. Pharo is even selling "I Hate Bigot" bumper stickers for $5.50 or £3.50 each.

What is the connection here? "I just think they were looking for a theory to hang their documentary on," says Mr Taylor. He says the in-

The site adds: "As part of an investigation into Revelationism — the new and popular mood more commonly known as the Cultural Millennium Bug — our production team would like you to provide us with your views on a wide range of subjects and, if possible, make yourself available for interview." Website visitors are urged to send in their names, addresses and further details.

The website includes two catalogues. "Since an important aspect of this television production involves the co-operation and recogni-

Earlier I had asked Mr Taylor if anyone had ever said all of this was mad. He barks out a laugh

tion of its participants, Pharo is offering an exclusive range of stickers, clothing and accessories." Orders for these (T-shirts £12, polo shirts, £23, baseball caps £11, jogging pants £22 etc.) can be sent directly to Pharo.Com, Templar Lodge, Gullane, Edinburgh.

Somehow I am not surprised when Mr Taylor turns out to be Pharo's representative over the artefact. So now Pharo is representing the Japanese and the alleged alien artefact. I think it is time to talk to Stephen Prior. Mr Taylor says he is not allowed to give me the number. I say that is very strange for a marketing man but Mr Prior does ring me within the hour anyway. I note that both he and Pharo have phone numbers in Leatherhead in Surrey

much about it but thinks it is a genre.

But I think there might be another word of it. Earlier I had asked Mr Taylor if anyone had ever said all of this was mad. He barks out a laugh. "I hear you. Mad you say? I actually think this is one of the sanest projects I've ever come across." Why? "Because this is all about relating to the truth."

Well, there is truth and truth. Joyce Cook at the Heriot-Watt University textile testing laboratory says the artefact is not alien. "There is a perfectly reasonable explanation. It is an old degraded piece of leather. It had been in the water a long time," she says. Similarly, an analysis of the rock from outer space shows it to be made up of iron and barium. I have no more luck verifying the existence of the Japanese film crew.

I ask Mr Prior if the whole story is wishful thinking. "No, no, no. I find that offensive. I've told you that is not the case. It is not a story that serves us from a commercial point of view. It's too time consuming and airy-fairy quite frankly." He says he does not believe in UFOs and insists he only wants to attract golfers to Templar Lodge, not New Age types. "My fear is I'm going to get labelled as a nutcase," he says.

We discuss the artefacts. He does not agree that it is an old piece of leather and says we don't know all the facts yet. "I am the ultimate sceptic but at the same time I don't know what kind of hide of an intergalactic pig served at a restaurant at the edge of the universe looks like," he says. He says he is joking. He says that Pharo does seem to be using Templar Lodge as an address for its merchandise but there is no other link. He says that if I don't believe him, then I shouldn't write the story. But I consider my UFO mystery to have been solved.

A meteoric rise

Continued from page 37

more mundane: for five years he was a diligent collector of informers and political intelligence in a second-rank post in Dresden. It was in 1990 that Putin made his cleverest career move, accepting a job as assistant to his old professor, Sobchak. "I had to make a choice," he said — between the KGB and democratic politics.

St Petersburg was the crime capital of Russia in the early 1990s and under Sobchak, Putin attracted his fair share of scandal. A bid to investigate his allocation of export licences was dropped, but he was able to build a $500,000 "cottage" outside the city. It burnt down in 1996, and he personally rescued his two daughters, Masha and Katya, from the flames. Now 13 and 14, they attend a private German school in Moscow. His wife, Lyudmila, survived too, but image-makers wary of Russians' distrust of women in public life have kept all three strictly in his shadow.

Putin has never run for elective office, but he has a sure and ruthless politician's touch. Yeltsin's daughter, Tatyana, and Pavel Borodin, who hired him, have been ousted from their offices. As first deputy prime minister he has appointed a former finance minister, Mikhail Kasyanov, well-known in the West, and yesterday he urged the Duma to pass long-delayed land reforms.

Some have cast Putin as an authoritarian child of the KGB — an enemy of press freedom at best and a nuclear sabre-rattler at worst. He will probably prove far less alarming, but the truth is no one knows.

● **Leading article, page 23**

That'll do thanks

There are some things in life that we can happily do without. Here is this week's selection

Frank Skinner

It is so depressing it is hard to know where to start. After Chris Tarrant's £1.5 million, Carol Vorderman and Cilla Black's £2 million each and, of course, the trillions recently netted by Chris Evans, Frank Skinner, the moderately amusing West Bromwich wag, has scooped a £3 million deal from ITV. Three million pounds! Just to sit on a sofa next to David Baddiel dropping double-entendres and rolling your eyes. He will also be getting £6 million for a chat show. It is rather sad to think of those chat-show greats such as Michael Parkinson and Russell Hartyin the Seventies, with their brown suits and flimsy sets being terribly polite to their guests for a normal wage, and then to think of a new century that pays six million quid to an idiot to be rude to Spice Girls and make fart jokes.

Mike Tyson

The celebrity rapist and ear-biter touched down this week in our green and pleasant land, and how nice it is to have him here. We are now the proud hosts to the world's two nicest men — Mr Tyson and General Pinochet. Tyson's arrival was particularly charming, with his entourage including Steve Crocodile Fitch, the minder who has done time for manslaughter and threatened to cut Frank Bruno's throat, and Darryl Francis who has done time for assault. Francis is Tyson's best buddy and is employed to relieve his boredom, which is presumably what he was doing when he killed a ferret at Tyson's home and upset animal welfare groups. As Tyson punches bags and prays and spits bile and venom in the run up to the fight in a few days time it is just possible that we will get sick of him. Do you want to tell him or shall I?

Celebrity Drug Confessions

If the media went out to investigate every single famous person in the world to see if they had ever sucked on a joint, they would have to publish separate supplements just to get all the names in. Mo Mowlam was a student when she smoked this notorious spliff. She probably not only smoked joints but got drunk, told fibs to disguise the fact that she hadn't done her essay, lived exclusively on pasta, and didn't wash her clothes much except when she went home. But it would make a nice change if these celebs stopped pretending that they hadn't enjoyed their drug experiences. Whether it is the coke busts of Tom Parker Bowles and Freddie Windsor or the joint smoking of Jack Straw's son, Bill Clinton or Mo Mowlam, they always claim that they didn't like it. Why not be honest, say that they won't do it any more because of their careers?

Dome Grumbling

From the very moment this project was announced it was going to be rubbish. There was never any other possible outcome. It had that whiff of school outings on rainy Wednesday afternoons to an expo centre in Telford or Slough. It was always going to be a large municipal builders' cabin, full of things nobody cared about in a post-industrial wasteland. But there is no point grumbling now. As each new gripe is aired we get more and more fed up with the whingers. We don't need to hear how stupid it is. Those of us who do not live in Greenwich can just forget about it. The rest of you can move.

AS MINISTERS PLEDGE TO RELEASE TOP SECRET UFO RESEARCH . . .

Britain's X-Files (and yes, the truth is on this page)



DOCUMENTS and photographs detailing UFO investigations in Britain over 50 years are at last being made available for public scrutiny under New Labour's policy of greater openness in Government, according to reports at the weekend. Here, NICK POPE, the Ministry of Defence official formerly responsible for investigating extra-terrestrial visitations, previews the eagerly awaited contents.



by NICK POPE

OFFICIAL interest in UFOs has always had more to do with the Russians than any impending visit from Martians.

But in keeping an eye out for the Soviet aircraft that routinely probed our air defences during the Cold War, it soon became clear that there were other more exotic craft operating in British airspace.

There has been a steady stream of UFO reports sent to the Ministry of Defence over the past 50 years — between 200 to 300 each year. They fill more than 200 files, files to which I have had access. If, and when, they are made available publicly, I can promise some exciting revelations.

For three years it was my job in Secretariat (Air Staff) 2A at the MoD to investigate such reports, to determine any potential threat to the UK. I found explanations for 90 pc of sightings, which turned out to be misidentifications of ordinary objects or phenomena; aircraft lights, satellites, meteors and airships.

However, there has always been a hard core of sightings that couldn't be explained in conventional terms, where trained observers such as police officers and pilots have seen unidentified craft doing speeds and manoeuvres way beyond our capabilities.

Britain's most sensational UFO case occurred in 1980 in Rendlesham Forest, near the USAF/RAF airbase at Woodbridge in Suffolk. UFO activity was witnessed over a series of nights, then on December 26 at 2am two patrolmen on a tour of the camp perimeter saw bright lights among the trees and went to investigate.

Initially, they thought an aircraft had overshot the runway, although there was no accompanying noise. But what they saw was like no aircraft they had ever encountered before; a large metallic, triangular object which they chased before losing it among the trees.

JUST two nights later, there was a similar sighting. This time the deputy base commander, USAF Lt-Col Charles Halt, led a team out to investigate. He submitted a report to the MoD, describing the UFO as 'metallic in appearance and triangular in shape'.

There is also an eerie 18-minute tape, which reveals conversations between Halt and his men as they moved to within 150 yards of the moving red and yellow lights.

The report says that suddenly the lights appeared to 'explode' in fragments of white light. Immediately, Lt-Col Halt observed three objects in the sky, like stars, but giving off red, green and blue lights, darting off in all directions in sharp, angular movements.

The objects were visible for two to three hours, occasionally flashing down beams of light or energy. Radiation readings were subsequently taken from the landing site in the forest and were found to peak in the three indentations where the craft had touched down in a clearing.

There are a number of intriguing aerial encounters in Britain's so-called X-files, too. One of the earliest took place in August 1956, when a UFO was tracked on radar systems at RAF Bentwaters and RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk.

Two RAF jets were scrambled to intercept the mystery craft, and an energetic game of cat and mouse ensued as the pilots attempted to lock-on to the target. But the UFO was too quick and agile, and managed to elude the pilots, who eventually ran low on fuel and were forced to return to base.

Almost 40 years later, a number of RAF Tornado jets were overtaken by a UFO over the North Sea in November 1990. No adequate explanation was ever forthcoming.

Last year, also over the North Sea, a 900ft UFO was pursued by two fighter jets before it took off at 17,000mph.

More disturbing are the reports to the MoD that detail near-misses between UFOs and civil aircraft. There were two such cases in 1991, both over Kent.

In 1995, the pilots of a Boeing 737 encountered what they described as a brightly lit UFO while on their approach to Manchester Airport, and believed that it had passed only yards from their aircraft. This incident was investigated by the Civil Aviation Authority but remains a mystery.

One of the most fascinating cases that I investigated related to an incident that occurred in the early hours of March 31, 1993.

There had been a wave of UFO sightings that night, culminating in the direct overflight of two military bases, RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury in Shropshire.

The UFO was described by one of the military witnesses as being a vast, triangular craft only marginally smaller than a jumbo jet. It flew slowly over the base at a height of 200ft, firing a narrow beam of light at the ground, before flying off at high speed.

These then, are the sorts of incidents to be found in the MoD's UFO files.

But the files also contain reports of alien abductions, the appearance of crop circles and animal mutilations, all of which have been linked with UFOs.

THE MoD was drawn into the crop-circle debate in 1985 — five years after they first started appearing — when a farmer in Middle Wallop, Hampshire, found a quintuplet of crop circles and blamed the local Army air corps base.

A Lt-Col Edgecombe investigated and submitted photographs and reports to the MoD, a routine procedure but one which gave credence to the UFO link and allegations that then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had asked for a report on the phenomemon.

I have reviewed all the theories about crop circles and, while many are hoaxes, there are those which have yet to be explained; for example, why do crop samples taken from these 'genuine' circles show distinct cellular changes.

Some details of UFO sighting in Britain have, of course, aiready been made public under the 30-year rule which applies to sensitive documents, but by releasing files from more recent years the Government clearly hopes to end speculation that it has been covering up the truth about the phenomenon.

Unfortunately, releasing the files is a tactic that some people think could backfire.

A similar initiative in the U.S. simply fuelled interest in the subject, and led to accusations that other more highly classified papers were still being withheld.

The U.S. government's denial was not helped by the claims of a former U.S. army colonel, Philip Corso, who said that the so-called Roswell incident from 1947 — in which alien corpses were allegedly seen at an air force base in New Mexico — really did involve the crash of a UFO.

Colonel Corso claimed that he'd seen the bodies, and that his job at the Pentagon involved finding ways to use the technological secrets gleaned from the debris of the craft. He died of a heart attack shortly after going public with these claims, so took the secrets to his grave.

Conspiracy theorists love this sort of thing, and are unlikely to be satisfied by any release of papers that doesn't support their own theories.

But there really isn't any cover-up in the UK, although a letter sent from the MoD to the U.S. government in 1965 admits that MoD policy 'is to play down the subject of UFOs'.

My three years of official research into the UFO phenomenon changed my life for ever. I'd come into the job as a sceptic, but came to believe that some UFOs might well be extra-terrestrial.

If these files are to be made public, I think people are in for a big surprise, and I believe that, like me, they will come to see that this is a serious subject which raises important national security issues.

As far as these files are concerned . . . the truth is in there!

■ *NICK POPE's latest book is Operation Thunder Child (Simon & Schuster, £9.99).*



KIDNAP TERROR

A YOUNG mystery woman was at the centre of a kidnap scare last night after a blood-stained van she was bundled into was found abandoned.

Two men had earlier roughly draggged her screaming across a garage forecourt at Reading, Berks, during the rush-hour.

She was viciously beaten and thrown into the van.

A witness told police the woman, aged about 20, suffered facial injuries.

Detective Superintendent Trevor Davies said: "We are extremely worried. If this woman can get in touch with us she should."

A team of detectives were trying to identify the woman and scouring missing person reports. The CCTV footage from the garage has been seen by police.

WEIRD

LEE Si Chung, 26, who tried to save his Beijing-to-London fare by POSTING himself, got caught short in the sorting office and was jailed for four weeks.

WORLD

MODEL ROBBED

A GANG of Rolex robbers pounced on Andrea Foulkes, the QVC Shopping channel model, as she parked her car in the early hours.

The 29-year-old blonde was grabbed by the throat by one man while another snatched her £2,500 Cartier watch and a £200 necklace.

Then they flung her to the ground and made off in a silver car with her bag containing £300 in cash.

The attackers, said to be black and in their 20s, struck as Andrea pulled up in Sloane Square, London.

WEIRD

COPS smashed into a car in Lyons, France, to rescue a man collapsed inside—and discovered a blow-up dummy used to fool car-jackers.

WORLD

MURDER OF BABY

AN eight-week-old boy was murdered in his home yesterday by a frenzied attacker.

Police found little Bradley George being cradled by his sobbing mother. He died four hours later in hospital from head injuries.

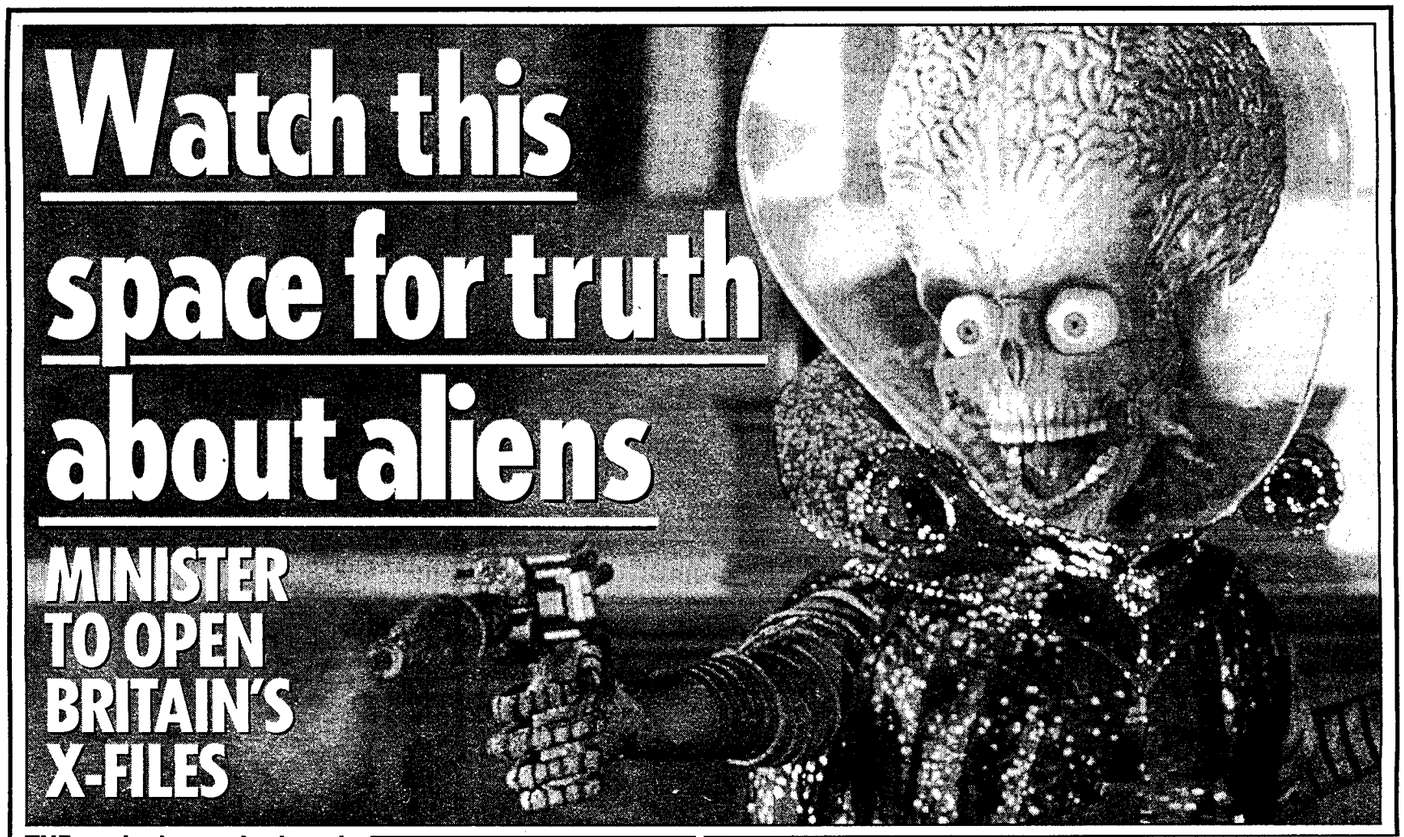
The tot's mum Samantha George, 20, and brother Christopher, five, also suffered head injuries in the attack at the two-bed council house in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales.

Neighbour Jeannette Hussey said: "I heard a woman screaming and a young boy crying. Samantha came out with her face covered in blood and was taken away in an ambulance."

A 26-year-old man was arrested by police at the house and was being questioned yesterday.

Watch this space for truth about aliens

MINISTER TO OPEN BRITAIN'S X-FILES



THE truth about whether aliens have ever visited Britain is to be revealed at last.

Top secret government X-Files on thousands of 'spaceship' riddles will be opened up to public gaze by Defence Minister Peter Kilfoyle.

They will include photos and details of every UFO investigation in the past 30 years. Every year, around 300 alien sightings are reported.

Plans by military experts for action in the event of an alien invasion of London will also be unveiled.

The files, stored in a nuclear bomb-proof bunker deep below Whitehall, should be released in three months.

The move, part of a government drive to end unnecessary secrecy, is sure to send UFO spotters into a frenzy. They will hope to learn secrets about:

●**A MASSIVE** craft spotted flying in zig-zags off Britain's North Sea coast last year. The 900ft UFO shot off at 17,000mph when pursued by two fighter jets.

●**CLAIMS** that seven UFOs have crashed in Britain since World War II.

●**SIGHTINGS** of a triangular three-legged spaceship in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk, in 1980.



SIGHTED: Flying saucer



DUMMY: Roswell 'alien'



RIDDLE: Space invader

Hover

US airmen from two nearby bases claim the object rose hovering out of the trees, then blasted into space at an incredible speed. RAF investigators cordoned off the area, but their findings are still a closely-guarded secret.

Some details of UFO sightings in the Fifties and Sixties have already been made public under the Thirty-Year Rule appled to sensitive documents.

Among them is the famous 1962 incident in which 16-year-old Anne Heston was sworn to secrecy after she reported seeing a star-like object shooting out red and green flames above her home in Taunton, Somerset.

Ten years earlier, RAF Flight Lieutenant John Kilburn saw a shining object in the sky above a West Yorks air base. When jets were scrambled to investigate, the UFO took off at an incredible speed. But the facts about most later mysteries are still locked away.

EXCLUSIVE

BY **IAN KIRBY**

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

They include the truth about claims by former defence chief Lord Hill-Norton that RAF Feltwell in Suffolk uses its space-age radar, built by the US Air Force, to track UFOs.

He quizzed ministers about the base, but never got a satisfactory answer. Several sightings in 1990 of a bright light above the Thames in London could also be explained.

The pledge to open up our X-Files follows similar moves in America.

The Yanks recently released a report of the notorious Roswell incident in 1947, in which alien corpses were allegedly seen at a secret New Mexico air base.

They explained the "bodies" were dummies from a secret weather balloon, but UFO theorists still believe there has been a cover-up.

Crank

Britain's files were prepared by the MoD's hush-hush Aircraft Secretariat, set up to investigate UFOs. Amazingly, its one-time boss Nick Pope believes **HE** was abducted by aliens while driving in Florida.

He kept mum while in his job for fear of being labelled a crank.

But after leaving the secret unit, he wrote a series of bestsellers about alien incidents.

He said: "My experiences convinced me that UFOs are a real and threatening phenomenon. We are not alone.

"Since 1959, the MoD has heard of 9,000 UFO sightings, though that's probably only the tip of the iceberg."

Defence Minister Mr Kilfoyle has told colleagues that, after a careful review of the files, he is "not convinced" about the existence of aliens.

But MoD staff say he wants people to be able to make up their own minds.

A source said: "These files are of huge public interest. They paint a fascinating picture of how UFO reports were investigated—and what would happen if aliens ever did land in Britain."

Our View: Page 22



W... are the most urgent problems facing Britain today?

Poor schools that aren't teaching children properly?

The crisis in our health service which means people are waiting longer and longer for treatment?

The desperate paralysis on our roads and public transport? Rising crime that makes none of us feel safe on our streets? The flood of bogus asylum seekers? The daily selling-out to Brussels on issues like British beef?

These are what I think are the urgent problems facing Britain today. You probably agree with me. If next week's Queen's Speech was setting out the programme of the next Conservative government, I'll tell you what would be in it. Education would be right at the heart of the speech.

There would be a law to guarantee to parents the power to do something about bad schools by sacking school managements. And there would be a law to turn every primary and secondary school in the country into a Free School where teachers could get on with improving standards.

Then we'd give patients in the NHS a unique guarantee. Patients with the most serious conditions would get a maximum waiting time based not on party political targets but medical need.

We would introduce a tough law to make sure unemployed people who can work take the jobs that are offered to them–or lose their unemployment benefit.

A revolution in crime-fighting would make sure criminals serve the sentence handed down in court, teaching prisoners what it's like to work, dealing out life sentences to drug dealers who sell to children, and helping police get out and on to the street.

We would help pensioners and savers by halving the startling rate of tax on savings and protect the homes and assets of people who save for their long-term care.

We would help working women who take career breaks to look after their children with Family Scholarships that will help them if they want to get back to work.

We would propose a Budget that would put an end to Labour's stealth taxes with this open and honest Tax Guarantee: we'll cut the overall burden of tax over the lifetime of a parliament. And we'd show everyone that Britain is no pushover in Europe.

So what is our Prime Minister doing about the issues? Nothing. If you don't believe me, just wait to see what the government announces in the Queen's Speech. It is likely to propose:

A NEW law about how political parties are run, a new law on the organisation of local government, a new law on motorway tolls and car park taxes, a new law creating a Right to Roam.

None of these laws will do anything to tackle the main problems that actually matter to the majority of people.

This week you will see a Labour government that is pursuing its own obscure political priorities instead of rising to the challenge of the real problems.

The next Conservative government would not duck the challenge. Our Queen's Speeches would turn the commonsense of the people into commonsense policies for the country.

'We'll stop Britain being a pushover'

WILLIAM HAGUE Opposition Leader

TODAY, on Remembrance Day, it's more important than ever to remember our debt to those who gave their lives to protect our country and the ideals we stand for.

It's important, too, that we continue repaying the debt to the whole generation who sacrificed so much.

Many pensioners feel they don't get a fair share of the nation's prosperity. We've improved things since we came to power but there's a lot more to do. Gordon Brown's announcements on free TV licences for the over-75s, the £100 winter allowance to be paid every year and raising the minimum income guarantee, went a little further in honouring our debt.

We are half way through this Parliament. We've done a lot. But there is much more to. Like getting the Health Service right. But that's why we're putting in the extra £21 billion investment over the next three years, recruiting the extra doctors and nurses, building new hospitals and introducing new services.

You didn't expect miracles from New Labour. You knew how much was wrong.

But what you wanted was a government to start moving us in the right direction. Nothing is more important for a government than running the economy well. And nothing has a great impact if the government fails. Whether Labour could be trusted on the economy was why many of you thought long and hard before voting for us.

I understand that. It's not always been the fault of past Labour governments. But memories of devaluation, of the IMF crisis and the winter of discontent still haunted those who lived through them.

I believe we have gone a very long way to burying those memories and the doubts they fuelled. And Gordon Brown, a brilliant, radical and reforming chancellor deserves credit for that. We inherited an economy devastated by the two deepest recessions since the war. Where Tory boom was all too quickly followed by Tory bust. A Government spending £28 billion a year more than it had.

Now inflation's low and on target. Government borrowing is under control. Employment is up by 700,000 since the election.

We're creating a climate where business can succeed and in turn create jobs and prosperity by boosting skills.

And we're also creating a fairer country by extending opportunities to all, tackling poverty and increasing support to families through measures like the New Deal, the minimum wage and the Working Families Tax Credit–all of which the Tories would scrap.

It's what we mean by enterprise and fairness. They are the guiding principles of this government, and the driving force behind Gordon's package.

'We'll make Britain richer and fairer'

TONY BLAIR Prime Minister

track of their movements and tipped off the law at the crucial moment.

Then the careless coppers shopped the brave pair by broadcasting their names over the police radios, from which they were picked up by the Yardies' scanners.

Now mother and son continue to live in fear of their lives, for their tormentors, released because of 'legal complications', have launched a terrifying campaign of revenge.

Thames Valley police must round up and jail the thugs.

And this time they can't expect the public to do the job for them.

Aliens - the truth

THE government is to throw open its top-secret X-Files on UFOs and aliens.

Ministers have looked at them and decided that there is nothing too sensitive to hold back.

Enthusiasts are hoping at last to learn the truth about all the incidents reported over the last 30 years.

Cynics think it will all turn out to have been pie in the sky.

Thugs mar glory

A GREAT game it wasn't. A determined first half at Hampden was followed by a dull second.

But it did manage to focus for 90 minutes or so the combined passions of soccer fans the length and breadth of Britain.

Then, despite their victory, came the pointless violence when 400 English fans went on the rampage in the streets of Glasgow.

It's a poor omen for Wembley on Wednesday.

64/5

115

...said Ma..., who
...d to reveal his surname and

Riddle of UFO at Heathrow

A PASSENGER jet's close encounter with a mysterious, fast-moving craft seconds after taking off from Heathrow had experts baffled yesterday.

The crew of an MD-81 reported an object 'like a bright light' passing within 20ft of them at 3,500ft.

Air accident investigators were unable to shed any light on the mystery as radar records show there were no other planes in the area at the time.

A dossier on last month's incident is thought to have been passed to the MoD to see if the UFO could have been a radar-invisible foreign spy plane or stray British test craft.

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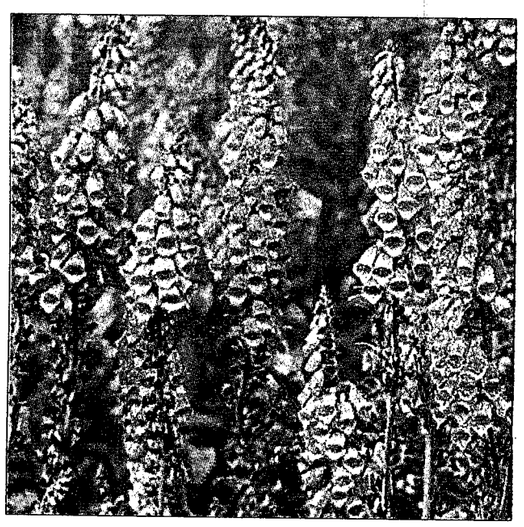
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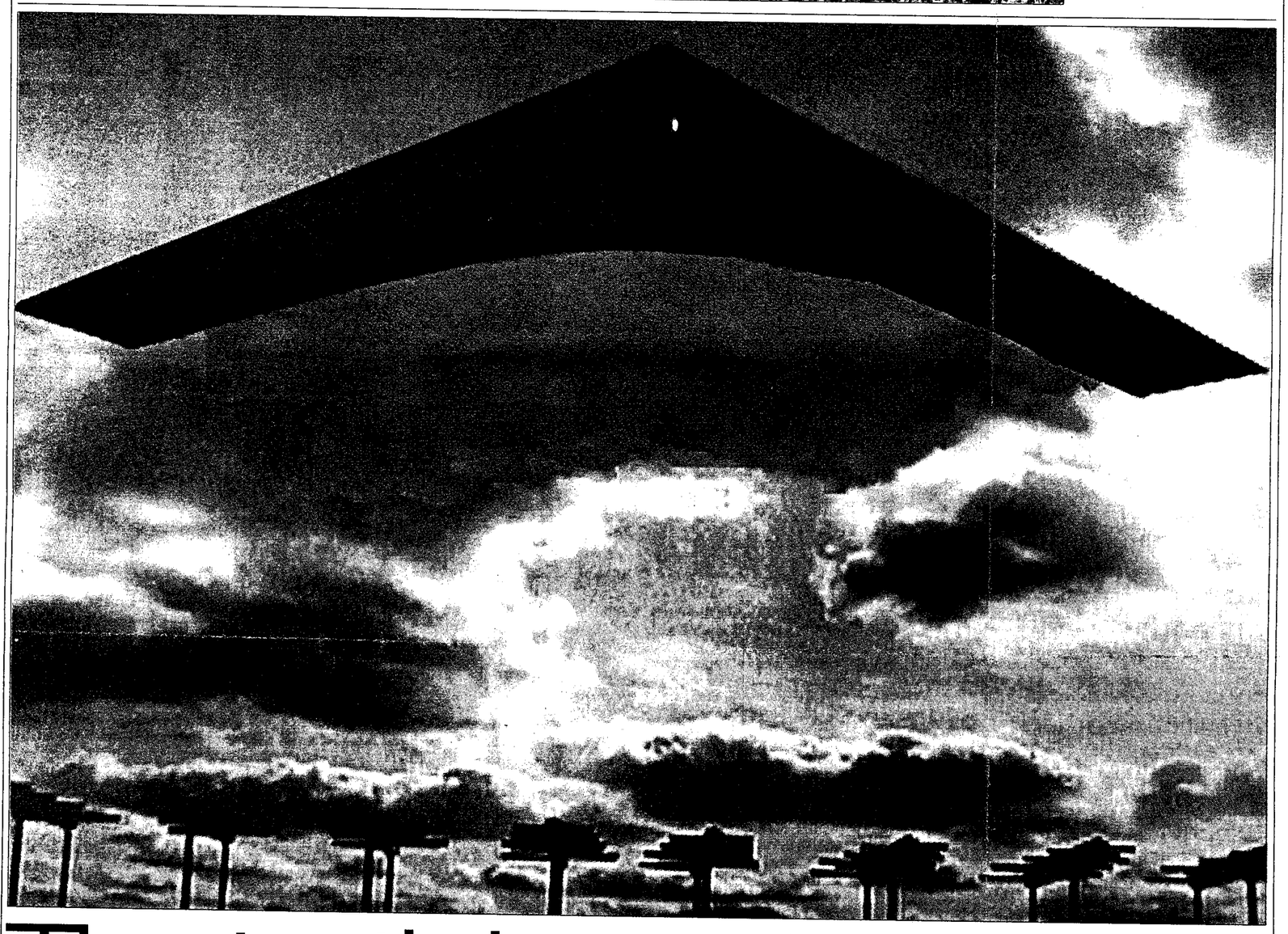
science
The Guardian Thursday September 30 1999

A rich field for study
Page S2



5 pages of classified

Lapping laptops
Page S3



The truth is up there...

There's a government cover-up over the latest wave of UFO sightings, reports **David Hambling**. However, it's not infiltration by aliens that's being disguised but America's latest flying sorcery

In the late 1950s there was a rash of sightings of silvery craft flying at extreme altitude. Many put these down to flying saucers, a belief which was not discouraged by the CIA.

This was not part of a Roswell-style cover-up, simply an effort to maintain the secrecy around the new U-2 spyplane. Changing the metallic finish to a matt one caused the sightings to tail off.

The SR-71 Blackbird, another secret plane, triggered UFO stories when it first streaked across radar screens at Mach 3; and in the 80s witnesses mistook a prototype B-2 stealth bomber for something from another world. So when there are reports of strange, silent, boomerang-shaped craft, perhaps we should start looking closer to home than Zeta Reticulus.

The reports are certainly consistent. A wave of sightings over Williamsburg included accounts from some 35 witnesses. What they described was triangular or boomerang-shaped, about 60 metres across and flew silently or with a low rumbling sound. It was very slow — some thought it paused to hover — and after some minutes it seemed to melt into the night sky.

This would all be quite inexplicable, except for a trail of evidence leading to a secret, "black" aircraft called — since nobody will admit that it exists,

page S3 ▸

plants

biotechnology industry. Since the dawn of agricultural practices 10 to 12 millennia ago, farmers have constantly tried to get the best yield from their crops. Biotechnology can be thought of as an evolution of traditional agricultural methods and can be used to overcome factors like drought, pests, weeds and wind which normally adversely affect plant productivity.

Conventional plant breeding involves the crossing of plants and "shuffling of genes" over many generations to improve certain qualities. However, while obtaining beneficial traits, toxins or allergenic proteins may be an unwanted side-effect that creeps in.

Genetic modification, on the other hand is an efficient way of precisely enhancing a specific quality. By combining modern technology with old practices, farmers will be able to produce crops more efficiently and cost effectively.

Plants have been genetically modified to produce drugs and edible vaccines. Vaccines in vegetables and fruit are being developed to reduce infant death from hepatitis, cholera or diarrhoeal disease in developing countries. Bananas are inexpensive to produce and can be eaten raw, they are native to many developing countries and are one of the first foods eaten by infants. Packaged inside the banana, the vaccine is easy to store and distribute without the need for refrigeration. Perhaps a banana a day will keep the doctor away.

Certain crops which are highly susceptible to plant viruses, such as melons, squash and cucumbers, can be given a genetic vaccine to help reduce the spread of crop disease and the need for chemical sprays.

Many foodstuffs contain allergens. Peanuts cause a severe and often fatal allergic response in some people. Rice is a major food in Asia but there is a high rate of rice allergy in the population. But biotechnologists have identified the part of the allergenic proteins causing the problem, allowing the creation of allergen-free products.

Some species of aquatic plants like duckweed naturally mop up heavy metal contaminants from their watery habitats. Furthermore, these tiny plants are able to convert the metal from a toxic to a more benign form. Plants can also be genetically engineered for bioremediation to take up pollutants and break them down into less hazardous by-products.

Worldwide, large amounts of soil and groundwater are contaminated with organic pollutants, such as the areas around ammunition production, processing and test-sites. As many of these compounds are toxic, this poses a significant potential health risk to humans and wildlife.

Dr Neil Bruce's group at the Institute of Biotechnology in Cambridge has engineered transgenic plants to produce a microbial enzyme that completely degrades explosives such as TNT into harmless compounds. This

Even nature's poisons have medicinal and cosmetic roles

technique – phytoremediation — is becoming a reality.

Plants are highly adaptable to their environment and have evolved to survive extreme environments such as the desert. They can be genetically modified to withstand low-temperatures and flooding or to be more tolerant to salt and metals in the earth.

These improvements allow crops to be grown in areas where previously they could not survive. With increasing world population and loss of suitable land for farming this is a hugely beneficial application of biotechnology.

With the global population set to reach more than 8 billion people by 2050, plant biotechnology could help to alleviate hunger world-wide through the development of crop varieties with increased yields and requiring fewer fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides.

Their contribution to the development of new drugs for human and animal health is of huge importance, particularly with the rise of the antibiotic-resistant superbugs. Plants are our green gold and have the potential to be the biofactories of the future. Surely this is food for thought.

Dr Claire Cockcroft is a molecular biologist at the Institute of Biotechnology in Cambridge.



Sun seeker: Nasa's first solar powered plane

The truth is up there

◀ page S1 we will invent a name for it — Solaris. In 1981 Solar Challenger became the first solar-powered aircraft to cross the channel.

There was little commercial interest, but the military recognised its potential. An unmanned version could stay up as long as sunlight lasts. Given rechargeable batteries it could, in principle, stay aloft indefinitely. This was the intention when Nasa secretly constructed Halsol, a solar-powered drone with a 60 metre wingspan. It flew well enough, but was shelved because of technological limitations.

Nine years later Halsol was made public and turned over to civilian use under the name Pathfinder. It now forms part of the Nasa's Environment Research and Sensor Technology program.

Lockheed assisted Nasa with another classified project, Solar Happ (High Altitude Powered Platform); the goal was a craft capable of staying in flight for a year at a time. The project shifted from Lockheed Missiles & Space to Lockheed Aeronautical Systems, the arm of the company known for black projects.

No hardware was officially built, but the end of the program coincided with the start of Magnificent which projected a very large high-endurance drone.

Then there was Raptor. Not to be confused with the F-22 aircraft which took the Raptor name later, this one was a science-fiction concept put forward by the Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation.

It was a solution to the allied failure to track down mobile Scud launchers in the Gulf War. Solar powered, Raptor would stay permanently on patrol, scanning the ground with eagle eyes and intercepting Scuds with tiny Talon missiles.

Whichever program gave rise to Solaris, what distinguishes it from its white cousins like Pathfinder is stealth. Like the B-2 bomber, it has a flying-wing configuration with the engines concealed behind radar-baffling grilles. Electrical power means there is no visible contrail to worry about, and no hot exhaust plume for infra-red seekers to spot. It's quieter than any jet too.

It can be visually stealthy as well. Flying at Pathfinder's ceiling of over 50,000 feet, Solaris might just be visible as a dot swimming in the blue on a clear day. Then again, it might not.

Austrian tests with translucent aircraft coverings in 1912 produced planes which were impossible to locate at 400 metres. These were never robust enough for use in the field.

Interestingly, Halsol's wings are also translucent: it actually benefits from sunlight reflected from below as well. The USAF has also reportedly experimented with chameleon skins that can change the luminosity of an aircraft to match the background.

Conventional batteries are too heavy for a solar sailplane, but fuel cells offer an acceptable energy-to-weight ratio. In daytime water is electrolysed and the hydrogen stored in a series of bladders in the

The goal was a craft capable of staying in flight for a year

wing. This gives additional lift, effectively making Solaris a hybrid airship.

At night the hydrogen is burned in the fuel cell with atmospheric oxygen producing electricity. Hydrogen has been considered too risky for manned aircraft since the Hindenburg, but unmanned drones are another matter.

It may even be seen as a benefit: the proposed Tier III drone was so secret that if one was lost over enemy territory extra missions would be sent to bomb the wreckage. In the event of an accident, Solaris will efficiently self-destruct leaving few clues for would-be Mulders to examine.

The design has its limitations. Solaris is painfully slow by military standards, and though it is big, it is as light as any glider and the payload does not exceed 500 kilos. This is a fraction of what spy planes like the U-2 and the Global Hawk drone carry, and not enough for most reconnaissance missions.

What Solaris can do is nocturnal snooping. By day it stays out of sight at high altitude; at night it descends to a few hundred metres. Low stall speed and quiet engines allow Solaris to loiter close to suspect installations, sniffing out trace emissions that signal nuclear, biological and chemical warfare activity.

Numerous sightings of the silent craft near nuclear power stations would suggest that equipment for detecting the presence of nuclear material is being tested, possibly by monitoring neutron emissions.

Is Solaris more than a flight of fancy? It is difficult to prove; like the U-2 and SR-71 before it, it will remain under wraps as long as it is flying clandestine missions. Apart from industry rumours, there are two reasons to believe that it is real.

One is the continuing series of sightings in the US and elsewhere of huge flying triangles. Another is the emergence of the AeroCraft in Nasa's new Revolutionary Concepts program which utilises technology from the black world to build X-Planes.

The AeroCraft is a hybrid aircraft/ airship in a flying-wing configuration, designed by Lockheed-Martins Skunk Works. It is not something they just knocked up: the advanced design points to a spin-off from an existing project.

The truth is up there, out of sight. And it won't be coming down for some time.

Science update

Crystal flips

If you hear your laptop gently lapping, don't worry, it's working fine. Physicists at Pennsylvania State University have found that the liquid crystals in the display screen can vibrate the surrounding glass, causing a quiet sloshing sound. The crystals are organic molecules that reflect different amounts of light when flipped by an electric field: when the researchers applied 30 volts to liquid crystal in a glass container, they could hear a faint click as the molecules turned over. They then tried crystals sandwiched between glass plates—as in laptop displays — and heard a faint chirping. The researchers think the finding is "very interesting", but don't envisage too many revolutionary applications.

Lucky stars

Nottingham University researchers have sent a clover into orbit. The experiment, they say, is to cast light on the mutual help plants and soil bacteria give to each other: microgravity should cause changes to the normal structure of the clover seedlings and affect the way in which bacteria colonise their roots. The research could lead to the introduction of plants as life support systems for long-distance manned flights. Ensure the clover has four leaves, however, and astronauts might be even keener to have it on board. Nasa have yet to confirm whether the replacement Mars weather probe will also carry an experiment to study the effects of microgravity on a rabbit's foot.

Fat chance

It's not a good time to be a fat molecule: there are few places left to hide. Researchers at Millennium Pharmaceuticals and the Whitehead Institute in Massachusetts have now identified a protein — labelled FATP4 — that is involved in transporting fatty acid molecules from the intestine into the body. FATP4 is abundant in the lining of the intestine, and, when added to other cells, dramatically increases the uptake of fat. But when the researchers stopped the protein working, less fat was taken up. They believe the breakthrough may lead to new treatments for obesity.

Meanwhile, Oregon Health Sciences University researchers have pinpointed a "fat thermostat" in the brain. By using tiny electrodes to trace the activity of neurons, they found two pathways that appeared to be linked with the body's control of appetite and metabolism. One pathway to the fat thermostat stimulates feeding, while the other maintains metabolic rates, and both are connected to a small area within the hypothalamus. The researchers are hoping that they will now be able to design a drug that resets the thermostat to a lower level, making weight loss easier.

Michael Brooks

G2

Interview

Sheena McDonald: back from the brink
4



In today's guide

Mark Lawson's brilliant TV column plus the best daily listings service **17-24**

Plus media

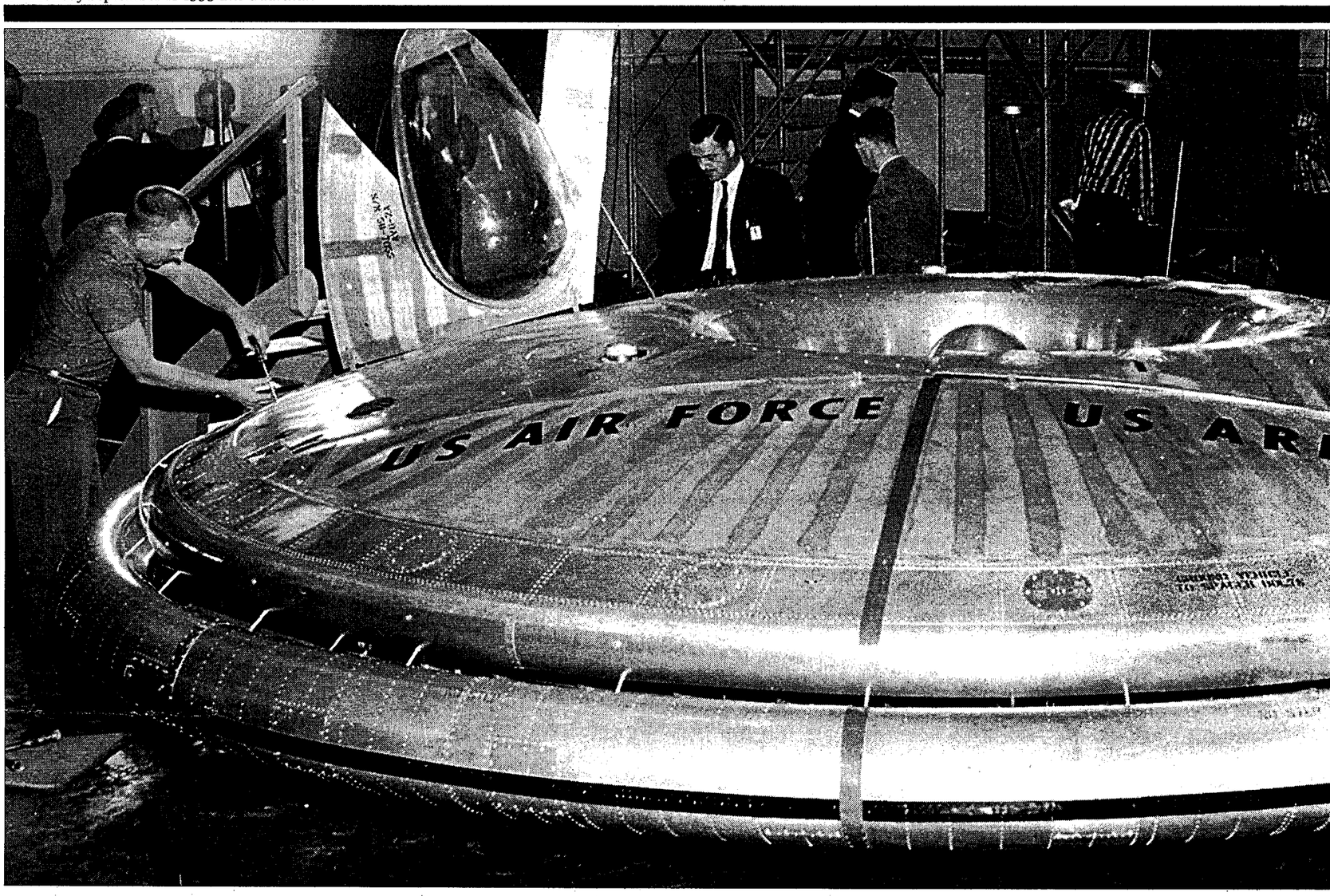
Ginny Dougary — the woman who got Portillo to talk
And hundreds of jobs

The Guardian Monday September 13 1999 ● Women 6 ● Portrait 8 ● Wheels 10 ● Arts 12-15 ● LA confidential 16 ● Crossword 23



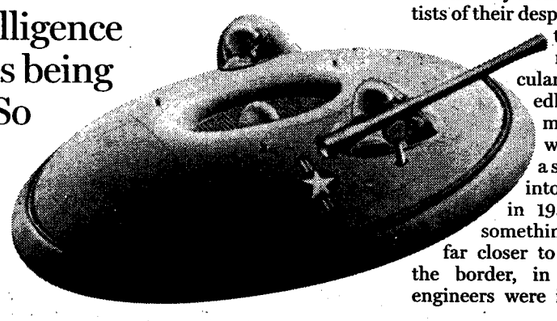
Identified Flying Object

This is a photograph of one of the strangest and most secret craft ever created, a jet-powered saucer built by a British aviation genius for the US military. Julian Borger unravels the Cold War mystery of Project Y



It came from outer Toronto

In 1954, a memo was fired off to CIA department heads demanding intelligence on new 'saucer-like' flying machines being developed by Britain and Canada. So began the race to develop the most unlikely weapon of the Cold War. **Julian Borger** on the quixotic brainchild of a British engineer



The year was 1952 and the cold war was at full chill. Joe McCarthy's Un-American Activities Committee was looking for reds under beds, and UFO sightings were spreading like an epidemic across the United States. Even air-force pilots reported being pursued by flying saucers. The sense of dread was turning to frenzy and the CIA decided something had to be done.

In one of his many memos on the subject, H Marshall Chadwell, the deputy head of the agency's Office of Scientific Intelligence, declared that "something was going on that must have immediate attention". He and others in the CIA were concerned that the Soviet Union was developing a secret weapon based on the "flying discs" the Nazis were rumoured to have constructed in the last months of the war.

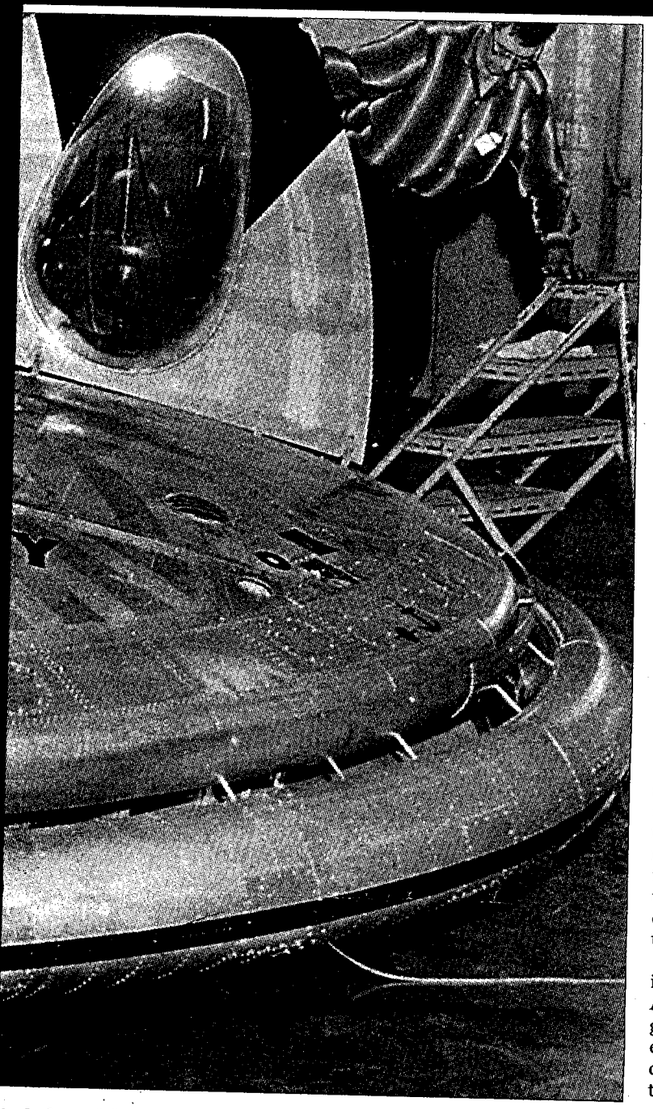
Recently released documents from the CIA archive are full of accounts by former German scientists of their desperate work to save the fatherland with revolutionary circular aircraft supposedly capable of enormous speeds. But when the CIA set up a study group to look into the phenomenon in 1952, it discovered something extraordinary far closer to home. Just over the border, in Canada, British engineers were in the process of building a flying saucer of their own.

It was called Project Y – a joint British-Canadian venture into the unknown which was, for much of the 50s, perhaps the most secret aviation project in the western world. A half-century on, the Project Y story remains a remarkable forgotten chapter in the history of aerial design, an idea that came tantalisingly close to breaking all the rules of the sky, before collapsing in bitter disappointment for lack of money and faith.

Back in the 50s, the news that British boffins were building a saucer set off alarm bells at the CIA. Was the US being left behind by its staunchest allies in the race for a technological edge? And if Britain and Canada could build a flying saucer, then surely the Soviet Union would be far ahead.

Chadwell wanted answers. The sense of urgency is tangible in a memorandum he sent in June 1954 to his department heads, demanding reports on "the use by any foreign power or nation of non-conventional types of air vehicles, such as or similar to the 'saucer-like' planes presently under development by the Anglo/British Canadian efforts".

While CIA agents were dispatched to watch eastern skies for flying saucers, US Air Force officers were paying a visit to Malton, just outside Toronto, the site of the city's airport and the research headquarters of Avro-Canada. Avro was a subsidiary of the British aircraft firm AV Roe (legend had it that there had not been space on the factory roof to



The search for the holy grail . . . early work on the flying saucer was so secret that sketches were put in special garbage bags after use

include the "e" from Roe), which was in turn part of the legendary aviation group, Hawker-Siddeley. During the war, its engineers had been famous for the Hurricane fighter and the Avro Lancaster bomber. Now, under the tension of the cold war, they were trying something completely different.

After the war, Malton was the place to be for hotshot aircraft designers fleeing Britain's doomed aviation industry. Among them was a softly spoken, supremely talented 31-year-old called John Carver Meadows Frost, who had already earned a reputation for unorthodox design with the sleek De Havilland 108, a swallow-shaped research plane and arguably one of the most beautiful aircraft of all time.

Frost was brought to Avro-Canada to work on the CF-100 fighter, an ugly pug-nosed design he never really liked. He soon became obsessed with far more radical departures from orthodoxy. It is unclear whether he drew inspiration from the increasingly widespread popular legend of alien-piloted flying saucers skimming through the post-war skies or how much he relied on previous research.

He would have known about the Coanda effect", named after a French Romanian inventor, Henri-Marie Coanda, who experimented with the first rudimentary jet engine as early as 1910. Coanda found that a turbo-jet would not only provide thrust. By sucking in air, it could also create a vacuum above the wing and thereby produce extra lift.

There is [illegible]y of evidence that in the closing stages of the second world war, as both sides threw jet fighters into the fray for the first time, the Nazis began to experiment with secret weapons built around the Coanda effect. Among the documents in the CIA's "X-file" archives is an interview given by a German aeronautical engineer called Georg Klein, who claimed to have worked on a Nazi flying saucer under the supervision of Luftwaffe designers, Rudolf Schriever and Richard Miethe.

Another document from the archives is a 1950 article written by a German emigre in Chile calling himself Dr Eduard Ludwig. The article, submitted to a Chilean magazine but apparently never published, was entitled: "The mystery of 'flying discs' – a contribution to its possible explanation". It recounted Dr Ludwig's wartime work at a Junkers research facility, helping develop a "one-piece metal wing" functioning as a "speedily rotating top" which was capable of vertical take-off and high speeds.

"The experiments turned out to be extremely difficult and involved many casualties," the professor observed drily, clearly rueful that the spinning top experiments had not come to fruition before the arrival of the Red Army.

He concluded: "The future will show whether the 'flying discs' are only the products of imagination or whether they are the results of a far-advanced German science which possibly, as well as the nearly finished atomic bombs, may have fallen into the hands of the Russians."

Some of the Luftwaffe's top engineers did indeed end up in Moscow, while a handful, such as Wernher von Braun and Dr Miethe, were spirited away to the west. Dr von Braun, of course, became the father of the US space programme. No one seems sure what became of Miethe.

In his own work at Malton, John Frost seemed to be groping his way. He was in search of the aeronautical holy grail of the age, the vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) craft, but began his research on a spade-shaped craft before settling in 1953 on a disc. The original concept called for a single flat turbo-jet to draw air in from above and force it out through nozzles around the edge of the craft. It would be kept aloft by a cushion of air and pulled upwards by the Coanda effect.

The early work was carried out in total secrecy. Only a handful of Avro workers were told what was going on, and even some of the engineers fashioning individual components were not informed what they were for.

"It was so secret that when Frost would come to the welding shop, he would sketch the piece he wanted on some paper, and when we had finished we had to put the sketch in a special garbage bag," Alex Raeburn, Avro's workshop superintendent at the time, recalled.

Verne Morse, the company photographer, was made privy to the secret only once it had already begun to take shape. "There was a stupid rumour going around the plant that we were building a flying saucer, and everybody was laughing about it," he said. "Then one day I was called in by security, and I was told I need clearance because we were building a flying saucer.

"My first impression was that this was ridiculous," he said, but when he was taken past the guards, through Project Y's double doors and saw the smooth metal disc taking shape, he was speechless. "It was a sense of 'Wow!' Just real awe."

But Project Y's first year was proving troublesome. The jet engine blew so hot it melted the steel structure of the craft, and its violent shaking would pop the rivets. When the gentlemen from the USAF arrived in September 1953, the Canadian government, having spent $400,000 on the project, was glad to hand over the reins to a bigger sponsor. AV Roe, having failed to squeeze funds out of the British government, also welcomed the Americans with open arms.

In 1955, Project Y became the US defence department weapon system 606A, and a white USAF star was painted on the prototype's fuselage. Millions were now being poured into the project, and the cult of secrecy deepened yet further.

Alex Raeburn recalled the day in 1959 that the US navy came to take the prototype away for wind tunnel tests near Los Angeles. "We loaded it on a flatbed truck in the middle of the night. The police shut off all the traffic right down to Toronto harbour, and they put it on a US tugboat. They even had one of our men sworn in to the US navy so he could go with it, along the Erie Canal, along the New York intercoastal waterway, and through the Panama Canal."

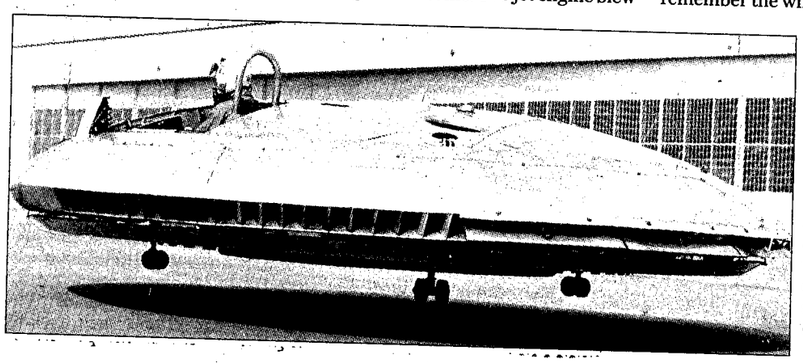
With the help of the US funding, Frost had redesigned the original concept, placing three small jet engines around a central fan which would suck the air in through a circular intake at the centre of the disc. The pilot would sit in a little oval cockpit to one side under a perspex bubble.

But the wind tunnel tests suggested that secret weapon 606A had severe stability problems and was in constant danger of flipping over like a stiff pancake once the throttles were opened on its jets. Frost and his assistants tinkered away at the problems for another year, but had still not mastered them by the winter of 1960 when Spud Potocki, a former Polish air-force flyer, took the prototype for its first flight.

Ernie Happe, another British engineer, was one of the few allowed to watch. "We were standing around it, and it was tethered with three cables to stop it flipping. It just went up a couple of feet off the ground, and Potocki was sitting in the cabin fiddling around with the controls, trying to make it do what it was supposed to."

Over the next few months, as Potocki attained a feel for the delicate controls, he was allowed to roam around the Avro compound free of his tethers, dodging in and out of the hangars. Raeburn would often look out of his workshop window and see it floating by.

"He would go up and down and hover over the concrete apron and look in the doors of the hangars. I remember the wind would **page 8 ▸**



Onwards and upwards . . . former Polish airforce flyer Spud Potocki would dodge in and out of the hangars at the Avro compound as he tried out the US defence department's secret weapon, 606A

Pass notes

No: 1480

Tom Jones



Age: 59

Appearance: If it's wearing leather and if your gran dreams about it, it's Jones.

Now that you mention it, I can't stop thinking about him: It's not unusual.

So, what's he doing at the moment? You mean what's new, pussycat?

Enough already with the lyrics. What is the grandfather of Wales up to? His new single, Burning The House Down, is out today.

Shouldn't he be hanging out in a cardigan, with his pipe and slippers, by now? Close. He's hanging out with *the* Cardigans. No word on the slippers though.

Excuse me? Fluffy Scandinavian pop group, the Cardigans, join the swivel-hipped one on the new single, a Talking Heads cover.

Speaking of covers, doesn't Jones have a bit of a reputation? I hope you're not hinting at extra-curricular activities.

Not at all. I meant musical covers, not bedtime ones. Apologies. Kiss?

That's a bit forward: No, Kiss was the cover he did with the Art of Noise, on the song by the artist formerly known as Prince.

Pants? Wondered when you'd bring that up. What Jones refers to as the Underwear Situation started in 1968 when his brow got rather hot playing at the Copacabana Club, New York. Having run out of napkins to pass her idol, one of the "ladies" in the audience removed her knickers. Which Jones used and returned. Before you could say "personal hygiene" a trend was born.

Don't mention: The tax collector. Rumours of a £4m windfall for the Inland Revenue circulated a couple of years ago when Jones, who earns an estimated £10m a year, was planning to move back to Blighty for good.

Most likely to say: "Does this come in leather?"

Least likely to say: "Pass the Viagra."

Not to be confused with: Aled Jones. Erogenous zones.

Now I'll say what I want to say...

Simon Fanshawe feels for Michael Portillo. He too has been dogged by vile rumours

All my public life I have been the victim of slurs, stories that I am sure many people took for the truth. Ugly rumours have dogged me throughout my career. There have been photographers who have claimed that I was seen in "straight" night clubs. There have been people who said that they saw me in Mothercare. Others who have claimed that I was uneasy discussing interior decoration or facial treatments. That I have,in late night conversations, expressed trenchant, pro-marriage opinions.

That when I was at Sussex University, I spent time socialising with women and was not the dashing, handsome, attractive, flamboyant, full-lipped, sexually ambiguous Flashman character that I appear today. Instead, that I was dull, unattractive and destined for a career in engineering. In other words, it has been suggested that I was of the man-on-top-get-it-over-with-quick, marrying kind.

These suggestions were vile untruths which I have been prepared to go to court to challenge. Have I ever slept with a woman? Well, I will say what I want to say. I had some heterosexual experiences as a young person. But I want to make it perfectly clear that all the time I have been in public life there has been nothing of that sort whatsoever. No women. None at all. Not even a close and prominent colleague who has been the victim of a similar whispering campaign.

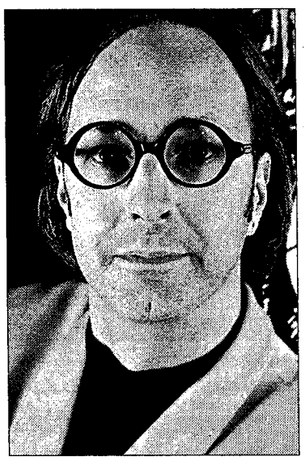
Why have I been dogged by these stories, you ask? I think that they became so widespread because people set out to pass around the most damaging stories about me that they could think of. The fact that they were true makes the rumours no less vicious. They were unfounded slurs on my character, even though they were based on fact and I never told you all about them before. They were rumours because I did not come clean about them. Of course they happened, but that's no reason for people to go round making them up.

Now is the time for truth. You may say that telling the truth is an absolute, that there is no right time and wrong time. But, believe me, if you had seen the state of the Labour party in the early Seventies, when being straight was as close to being on the management of the National Coal Board as you could get, saying I was having "experiences" with women would have been tantamount to hanging up my Save The Whale badge, packing away my dungarees, starting to eat meat again, getting off the dole and acquiring a job. I wouldn't even have got elected to the parish council, let alone fulfil my historic destiny as a radical gay comedian.

We live in more tolerant times now, times in which people are perfectly able to cope with double standards and lying about one's past. People understand that now, apart from being on television, getting elected is the only sure sign that one exists. Yes I campaigned for single parents and against marriage but I took the view that heterosexual sex was more traumatic for a young man of 16 than gay sex. It certainly was for me. But coming clean about who I am now – even though I haven't ever done it again promise, promise, cross my heart and hope to die – even though all my friends went to such great lengths to say that I was never involved with women, shows just how brave I am. Now I am prepared to stand up and fight for my values even though many open heterosexuals risked ridicule for years to make it possible for me for me to be straight with you now.

I know that for decades millions of them have put up with attacks and snide remarks that they were stiff-wristed or too masculine and always wanted to dress in dowdy and unflamboyant clothes. I have no regrets about that. I cannot believe that what happened a generation ago could be big news. After all, there are many married members of the cabinet now and some who, in a moment of madness, have even had children.

I was keen to put to rest the rumours. In my youth I was straight. But I am happily in a relationship with a man. And it's all behind me now.



Have I ever slept with a woman?All the time I've been in public life there has been nothing of that sort

Portrait He's been a comedy diver, an escape artist and Pipe Smoker of the Year. But Trevor Baylis will always be best known for his ingenious inventions. **Tim Radford** on the man and his memoirs

The father of invention

Trevor Baylis the inventor has a swimming pool just inside his front door and a hot tub on his upper deck. The Thames flows past him, just feet away. He always has a dog called either Monty or Rommel (the latest is Monty) and he has pictures of himself all over the house.

He also has a set of files marked Ego 1, Ego 2, Ego 3, and so on. He has an ego as big as a truck. "You know me," he says. "I've got an ego as big as a truck." He could talk about himself all day, but he doesn't. A conversation meant to be about him tends to turn to people less fortunate, or to people he admires – other British inventors: "The one word that seems to be common to them all is 'poverty'. Usually when the money rolls in, the inventor is rolled out. That hasn't happened to me." He certainly hasn't suffered financially, like some. Not that it made a difference to how he lived, he says. He has lived for 30 years on Eel Pie Island, an inhabited sandbank in the Thames near Twickenham. "What would I be doing in the Cayman Islands with my bucket and spade?"

As all the world should know by now – because Trevor Baylis can bend an ear with the best of them – this ebullient former stunt man with a training in structural engineering and a modest domestic swimming pool business heard some TV talk about the difficulty of issuing warnings about Aids in Africa because, without power or batteries, radios were useless. So he invented a clockwork wind-up radio: twist the handle for 60 seconds and you can hear the whole of the World At One and The Archers too. It wasn't easy, or quick, and once he had immense difficulty persuading anyone to take him seriously. But then he got mentioned in a BBC programme and suddenly the angels arrived.

The clockwork radio is being built in Africa, by disabled people. Around 120,000 machines are made every month. There was a meeting with Nelson Mandela and an OBE from the Queen. There are his spots on the Big Breakfast show on Channel 4. Believe him, though as a secondary modern schoolboy (failed) from Hendon with an estuary accent, he has had his problems with the smooth ones in suits. Turned him over like a turkey, they did, first time he thought of something to help the disabled. So he wants to do something to help all the inventors less lucky than him. He wants to create an Academy of Invention, in the form of a limited company, to help the innocent innovator through the thickets of patent law and the jungles of venture capital.

'You see,' he says returning to his theme, 'we are surrounded by spivs, crooks and vulture capitalists'

"No way José are you going to sell your product – because they are always looking at the inventor, not the invention," he says. "We do all the stuff you can't do for yourself, on the understanding that we can share in your success. Then we sell you to the highest bidder. We make sure your Ming vase hasn't got a crack in it. We will try and see that UK plc has first stab at it, but if UK plc doesn't come up with the reserve – rather like a Ming vase has a reserve on it – we can offer it overseas. We are trying to get the best for the inventor."

Bright ideas get sucked up by industry all the time, but the people who had them often end up with brass farthings. Baylis doesn't want to see the same thing happen to the lonely, frustrated men and women inventing things in Britain today. Women? Yes, like Irene White of Essex, who invented a talking potty: "Her daughter had a kiddy and potty-training was a problem, so she put a chip, literally, in the bottom of the potty. When young Tyrone sits on the pot and has a piss it goes, 'Well done, Tyrone!' There's another girl called Damini Kumar who has made a non-drip teapot. She's had all sorts of problems. She's a great woman engineer. She's all the things that an engineer is not supposed to be. An engineer is supposed to be a bloke covered in oil, and if you saw Damini, you'd think, 'Blimey!'"

Then there's Laura Wollen of Hampshire who, with her husband,

It came from outer Toronto

◂ page 3 suck the ice off the puddles and they would float around in the air like plates of glass," Raeburn said.

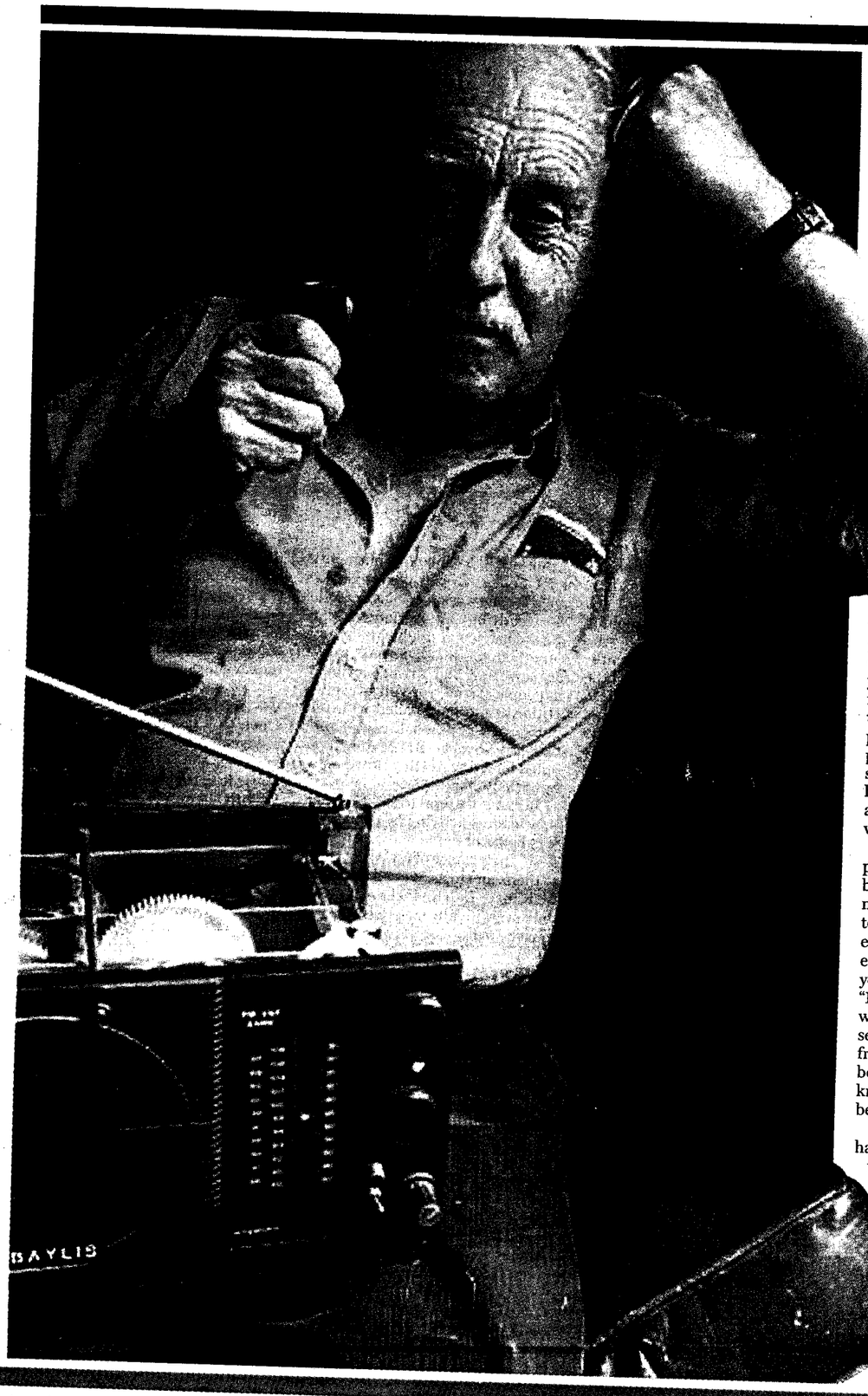
Avro's management was overjoyed to see their flying saucer take to the air. The publicity department began designing brochures to capitalise on the aircraft's boundless potential for the day when the shroud of secrecy would drop away. It was to be called the Avrocar, and it would spawn a string of civilian and military spin-offs. There would be an Avrowagon for the family of the future, an Avroangel (an air ambulance that would zip to the scene of an accident and land on the spot) and an Avropelican for air-sea rescues and anti-submarine warfare.

Ken Palfrey, a draughtsman on the project, remembers Frost's own far-reaching hopes for his project. "He was planning to make one four times as big, to move troops in and out of battle, like helicopters do now."

The giant troop carriers would lurk under the enemy radar, drop their passengers and then zip into the stratosphere before the other side even spotted them. Happe recalls Frost excitedly visualising the craft bouncing off the upper layers of the atmosphere, crossing continents in a single bound.

The reality was more mundane. The Avrocar hovered happily close to solid ground but became dangerously unstable at heights much over eight feet, however much Spud Potocki struggled with the controls. The USAF wanted to fit it with a tailplane to test whether that would correct the problem, but Frost, a design purist, refused to countenance the idea.

"He wouldn't have it. When the



Baylis . . . wants to help budding inventors, such as the woman who thought up the talking potty

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

has made a squeezebox: "It's so elegant. You have to squeeze the top to make it open, then you can put your hand in. When you drop it, it snaps closed so it stops you dropping your chips and fish pieces all over the floor. Cardboard engineering – they've been through all sorts of problems bringing it to the marketplace, because they don't have all the skills or all the connections. You see," he says, returning to his theme, "we are surrounded by spivs, crooks and vulture capitalists."

As he sees it, if you can solve a problem, you are on the way to becoming an inventor. The solution might be different enough to be protected by a patent. Doing that is expensive, and tricky. If you tell everybody about your invention, you've lost it. That's called disclosure. "Now if you can't talk to anybody, who do you talk to? You talk to yourself? The first stage of madness. The frustrations come in and then you become paranoid. You also don't know how good your invention is, because it might be crap."

He says it's a hell of a thing: you have to be an entrepreneur, you have to have ability, confidence, skills, wit, charm and the right showmanship. Not all of us have those qualities, he says, charmingly, and with the confidence of a natural showman. He grew up in wartime London, and traces his passion for making things back to a box of Meccano which he liberated from a pile of scrap.

He had a bad experience with a groping clergyman in 1943, but some pretty good experiences with his mum and dad, with his friends, with his mates in National Service, with his career, with a procession of girls, with machines, with sport (he just missed the Olympic swimming team in 1956) and he tells it all in his lively new autobiography – which, he volunteers quite frankly, is ghosted. But it's written in language which connoisseurs will recognise as pure Baylis: a mixture of unashamedly dated references and wholeheartedly awful jokes.

During the war his mum discovered a new use for stale old food, he says: "We ate it." His idea of a perfectly balanced diet? A bacon sandwich in each hand. He also had a career of sorts as a circus act. He had started doing comedy diving to sell PVC-lined swimming pools, he ended up as an underwater escapologist called Rameses II in a Berlin amphitheatre. In between, he submerged himself beneath Peter Cook and Dudley Moore in one or two of their watery acts. He persuaded the young Austin Mitchell (yes, the Labour MP) to go swimming with a killer whale called Cuddles. Once he'd got through to the right people with his wind-up radio, he dived into the media circus. This Is Your Life. The Big Breakfast. A One-2-One advertisement that paired him with Frank Whittle, jet engine inventor. Pipe Smoker Of The Year. An invitation to debate at Oxford. He loved it all. But he also uses words like "posh" and "la-di-da" as if the English class system still rankled.

"I've learned something in my 62 years," he says. "I don't mind anybody looking down on me, as long as they don't expect me to be looking up. If someone's got a problem with me, it's their problem. They say, 'You're eccentric.' Well, if being eccentric means you live in a house with an indoor swimming pool, a hot tub out the front, well, let's be eccentric. I do genuinely believe convention is an obstacle to progress. You give a conventional person a problem, they'll come up with a conventional solution. But if you look at it in a completely bizarre way, go out into your dreamworld, that's where the solutions to your problems are. But people think you are out of the trees. Conventional people can't handle unconventional behaviour."

Clock This, Trevor Bayliss's autobiography, is published by Headline, price £18.99

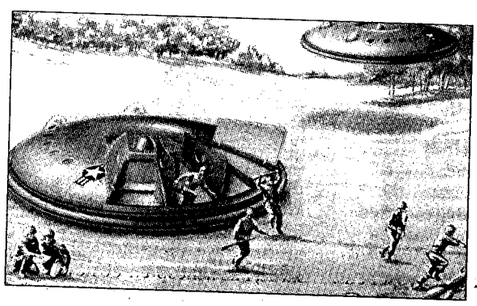
Americans suggested that, it was about the only time I ever saw him angry," Palfrey recalls.

Frost insisted he could fix the problems, but the US military was rapidly losing interest. After spending $7.5m, the defence department pulled the plug at the end of 1961, killing both the Avrocar and inflicting a final fatal blow to Avro, which struggled for a few more years before finally collapsing in 1965.

Frost left the country a bitter man in 1961. "He was completely fed up," Palfrey said. "It was a sad story. He was a fine guy. A gentleman."

The British designer ended up in Auckland, where he spent the rest of his days dreaming up gadgets for Air New Zealand, such as a hydraulic tail dock to allow engineers easy access to commercial planes. But it was small beer compared to the cosmic ambitions of Project Y, and the sense of betrayal was as keen as ever when he finally retired in May 1979.

In his valedictory interviews, Frost told the local press that he had been robbed of credit for inventing the hovercraft by Sir Christopher Cockerell. The irony was that at Malton, Frost's eyes had been so set on the skies he failed to spot the Avrocar's ground-hugging potential under his nose. Within a few days of leaving his job, he died. He was 63.



Flights of fantasy . . . the publicity department at Avro designed brochures, anticipating the day when their flying craft would become public, spawning a string of military and civilian spin-offs

The legend of Project Y lives on in the web pages of committed Ufologists. Some speculate that it had in fact been a stunning success, and the sad litany of design errors and disappointments recalled by Avro veterans was merely a cover story. Others believe the whole project was merely a smokescreen for the Pentagon's "real" flying saucer project being masterminded in secret bases such as Roswell, perhaps by mysterious superannuated Nazis like Dr Miethe.

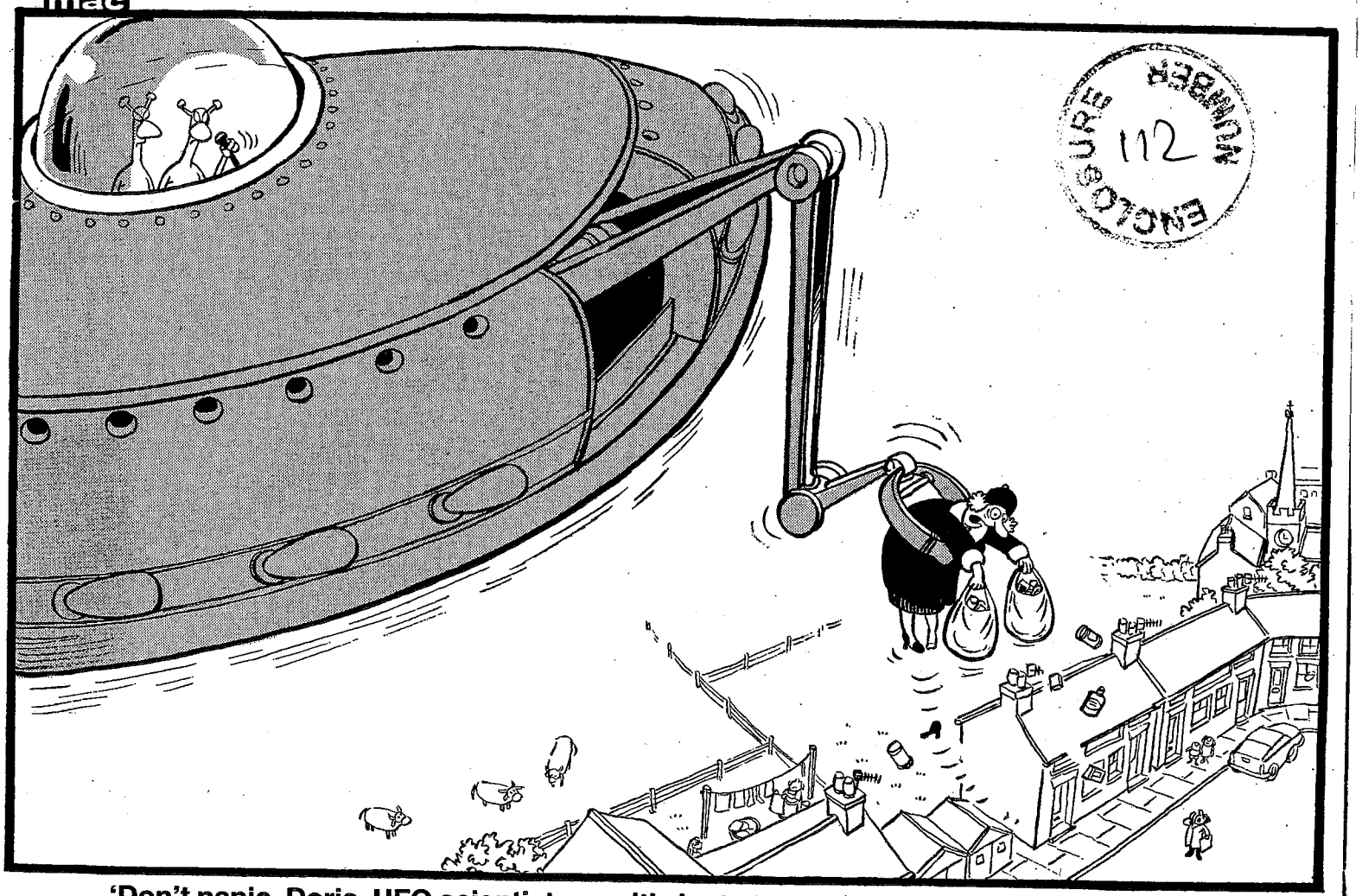
As for secret weapon 606A, the prototype is gathering dust in a corner of a Maryland warehouse which serves as a storage facility for the National Air and Space Museum. Jack Walker, a veteran pilot who shows visitors around, cannot understand why anyone would want to see it, and warns me not to get too close lest I be abducted by aliens.

The burnished metal disc, about 15 yards across, is lying unsung and forlorn under the wing of a second world war Black Widow fighter. The perspex bubble over the cabin has been removed, its instrument panel is lying in a cardboard box somewhere else. But you can still see where the edges were charred in the effort to get John Frost's flawed vision off the ground.

Jack Walker is getting impatient and shaking his head. We are lingering too long in a cul-de-sac of aviation history and there are other more important aircraft to see. "I'm not an aeronautical engineer," he shouts over his shoulder. "But no way was that ever going to fly."

Daily Mail, Thursday, September 16, 1999

mac



ENCLOSURE NUMBER 112

'Don't panic, Doris. UFO scientists say it's just something called a lenticular cloud.'

Cartoonist of the year

£5m pledge boosts British Mars bid

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

A £5 MILLION pledge from the Government has increased the chances of a British spacecraft landing on Mars early in the next century.

Lord Sainsbury, the Science Minister, yesterday committed the money to the Beagle Two spacecraft, leaving its backers — led by Colin Pillinger of the Open University — another £5 million to find.

Professor Pillinger has been promised £3 million from the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council, and £13 million from industrial companies. The mission is expected to cost between £25 million and £28 million.

Beagle Two, named after the ship on which Charles Darwin sailed to South America, is intended to form part of the European Space Agency's Mars Express mission, due to be launched in 2003. About the size of a microwave oven, the lander will drop on to the surface of Mars while the ESA vehicle orbits the planet taking pictures.

The all-British craft, designed by scientists from the Open and Leicester Universities, will deploy a robot "mole" to burrow into the Martian soil and look for chemical signs of life.

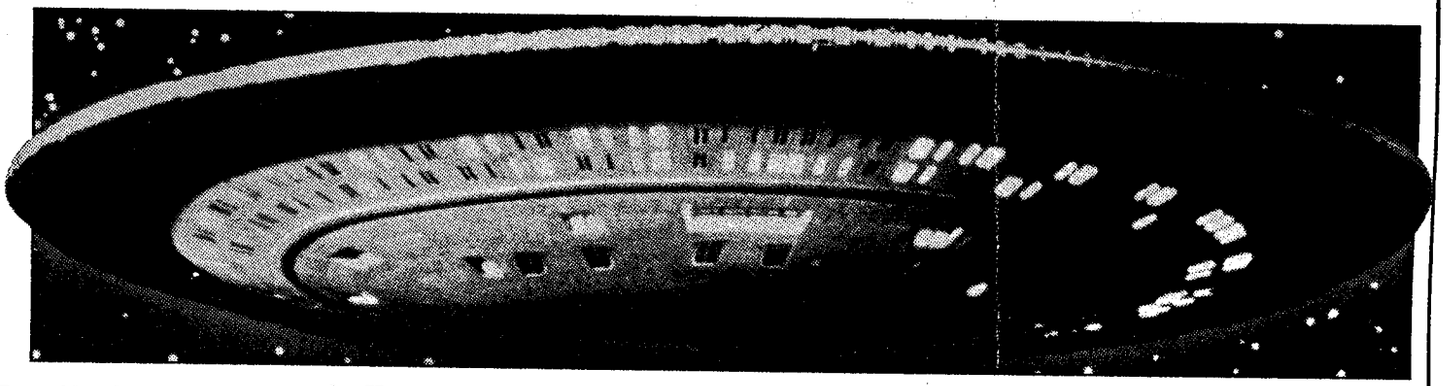
Professor Pillinger said yesterday: "The really important signal that Lord Sainsbury has sent with his contribution today is that the Government are behind us. That enables me to go to many people I had sounded out about the project, and say this is a serious and mature project that stands every chance of coming to fruition."

It forms part of a £19.5 million spending package for space science, engineering and technology which also includes a £10.5 million contribution towards Artes 4, an ESA programme developing new telecommunications technologies, and £4 million for research into advanced spacecraft design.

Britain's total commitment to space spending, including money from the research councils, Ministry of Defence, Met Office and other bodies, remains unchanged at around £180 million a year.

Goodbye, cruel world

Doomsday cult heads for hills and rendezvous with spaceship



HUNDREDS of members of a doomsday cult vanished yesterday into remote Colombian mountains saying they were off to board an alien spaceship to escape the end of the world.

Police fear the two megalomaniac leaders of the Gnostic Church Stella Maris cult may persuade their followers to commit mass suicide when the spacecraft fails to turn up on time.

'These people are no joke – they are deluded and dangerous,' said a spokesman for the Colombian state police.

'She believes a tidal wave is coming'

Former teacher Rogelio Perea and his deputy Rudolfo Perez have told disciples that the world will end in a series of massive earthquakes at midnight on December 31.

Cult members are convinced the coastal city where they live, Cartagena, will be engulfed by a tidal wave, and have sold all their belongings and taken out bank loans.

Much of the money is thought to have been handed to Perea and Perez before the duo led their followers up the ice-capped 18,000ft Sierra Nevada mountains 300 miles away.

Devotees believe they must wait there for the arrival of a second Noah's Ark, a spacecraft which will whisk them away to another world. Citing passages of the Bible as evidence, cult members say a chosen group of 140,000 humans will be saved to start another life on the new planet.

From IAN COBAIN
in New York

The Stella Maris cult, a breakaway group from another organisation called the Gnostic Church, has gripped people from all walks of life in Cartagena.

Adherents had half built their own temple in the city when the call apparently came for them to rendezvous with their alien saviours.

Doctors, accountants, motor mechanics and housewives are among those who have disappeared. The youngest is a boy of 16, while the oldest is in her 80s.

Police were last night searching for the missing cultists, but fear they may be unable to bring them to their senses and talk them into climbing down even if they find them alive.

'We think around 200 people have joined Perea and Perez, but we can't be sure how many people are involved because some are still leaving the city,' said the spokesman.

'There is not much we can do about it, because our constitution is very clear about the right to religious freedom, and about freedom of movement.' Among those missing is Sandra Herrera, a 19-year-old music student who fell under Perea's spell when she went to babysit his children.

'She came back saying we had to sell all our belongings and leave,' said her mother Aida.

'She really believes that a tidal wave is going to come and sweep us all away, and that only the aliens can save us.

'I tried to tell her that these ideas were just crazy, but she wouldn't listen. When I woke up and saw she had not slept in her bed I went to the Perea place to look for her, but it was completely empty. There was not a stick of furniture in there.'

Mariela Tovar, whose 23-year-old daughter Patricia went with the cult, said: 'I am going out of my mind with worry.'

Enrique Impidis, whose wife also fell under the influence of Perea and Perez, said: 'I had to restrain her to stop her from selling all our belongings to go on the trip.' Former cult member Gabriel Nicholls told local journalists that talk of UFOs was 'nonsense' and the devotees were simply attending a regular retreat at a cabin 16,000ft up the mountain.

'They have been there before and they always come back,' he said.

But Mrs Herrera said: 'My daughter says this trip is final – she was very definite about that.'

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The Times
Saturday 3/7/99

In America, money's no object when it comes to defence – but when $35 billion goes appear in the sky, questions must be answered. Aviation expert and supernatural sceptic that led from Washington to Nevada, and ended up asking: Is it a bird? Is it a spyplane?

the outer limits



If you're a defence journalist working in Britain, you know when you're getting dangerously close to something the Ministry of Defence would really rather remained under wraps, because you'll almost certainly get a call from the Ministry's D-Notice Committee telling you so before you rush to print. The D-Notice system is a fairly gentlemanly affair and relies on a certain amount of goodwill on both sides. Chances are, a retired rear admiral or air vice marshal will gently pull you aside and explain patiently how your story will endanger national security, or the lives of serving British military personnel, or both. The system is voluntary, but it lets you know where you stand before things get heavy and unpleasant under the Official Secrets Act. The essential point is, you're in no doubt where the line is – and you step beyond it at your peril.

Cross the Atlantic and it's a very different story. In America, deeply secret defence programmes are protected under a regime known as the "special access" system. Special access programmes – SAPs, to use the jargon – are graded white, grey and black, according to their degree of sensitivity. White programmes are relatively straightforward, usually involving hardware and technology which might be ultra-sophisticated, but which in essence has nothing secret about it. Grey programmes usually relate to a non-sensitive platform, such as an aircraft or a ship, whose innards the Pentagon wants to protect from scrutiny. But the third category, the black programme, is in a league all of its own, because it is an "unacknowledged" project. This means that someone, somewhere has deemed that its very existence must not be revealed or admitted to. The lore of the "black world" has it that there are certain military projects from which even the President is excluded – because he does not have the "need to know".

When you enter the black world, it can be a pretty mind-bending experience. Three years ago, I was granted a rare interview with Jack Gordon, the head of the Lockheed Martin "Skunk Works", at the company's top-secret facility on the edge of the high desert in Palmdale California. The Skunk Works, named after the foul-smelling chemicals used in the construction of its first secret aircraft back in the Forties, has built just about every black plane that's ever been acknowledged, and clearly a whole lot that haven't.

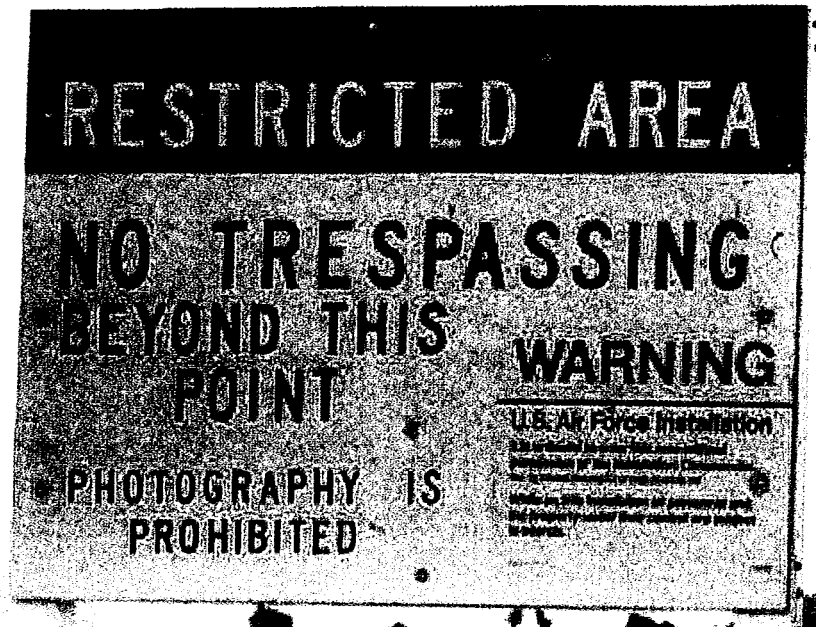
While we chatted, Gordon let slip that he had worked on 15 "real flying aircraft" in his career, adding hastily that he could only talk about 12 of them. When pressed on the missing three, he skilfully moved the subject along. When the interview concluded, I was escorted back through the tight security of the windowless building and out into the bright California sunshine. On the way, however, I'd spotted a diagram on a wall that proudly charted the lineage of every Skunk Works plane since the first one, America' s first operational jet fighter, built in 1944. Past the U-2 that secretly overflew Russia between 1956 and 1960, past the SR-71 Blackbird, the fastest plane ever built, and today's F-117A Stealth Fighter, there was something called "Astra". Astra was depicted as a sleek-looking beast, but more importantly, it was right at the top of the family tree.

The thing is, officially, the Skunk Works has built nothing since an unmanned, somewhat sedate-looking spyplane called DarkStar that had rolled out of the factory the previous year. When I registered my interest in Astra, I was

given the black world equivalent of the bum's rush: a shrug of the shoulders and a polite reminder that the interview was over. Three weeks later, and only after persistent questioning, I was told that the depiction on the chart was a mistake and that Astra was really a high-speed airliner project that had been studied in the Seventies and very quickly cancelled. My first reaction in the face of such obfuscation was to laugh. But the lingering effects of the black world are subtle and insidious. Occasionally, in the small hours of a sleepless night, I wonder whether I didn't just imagine the whole thing.

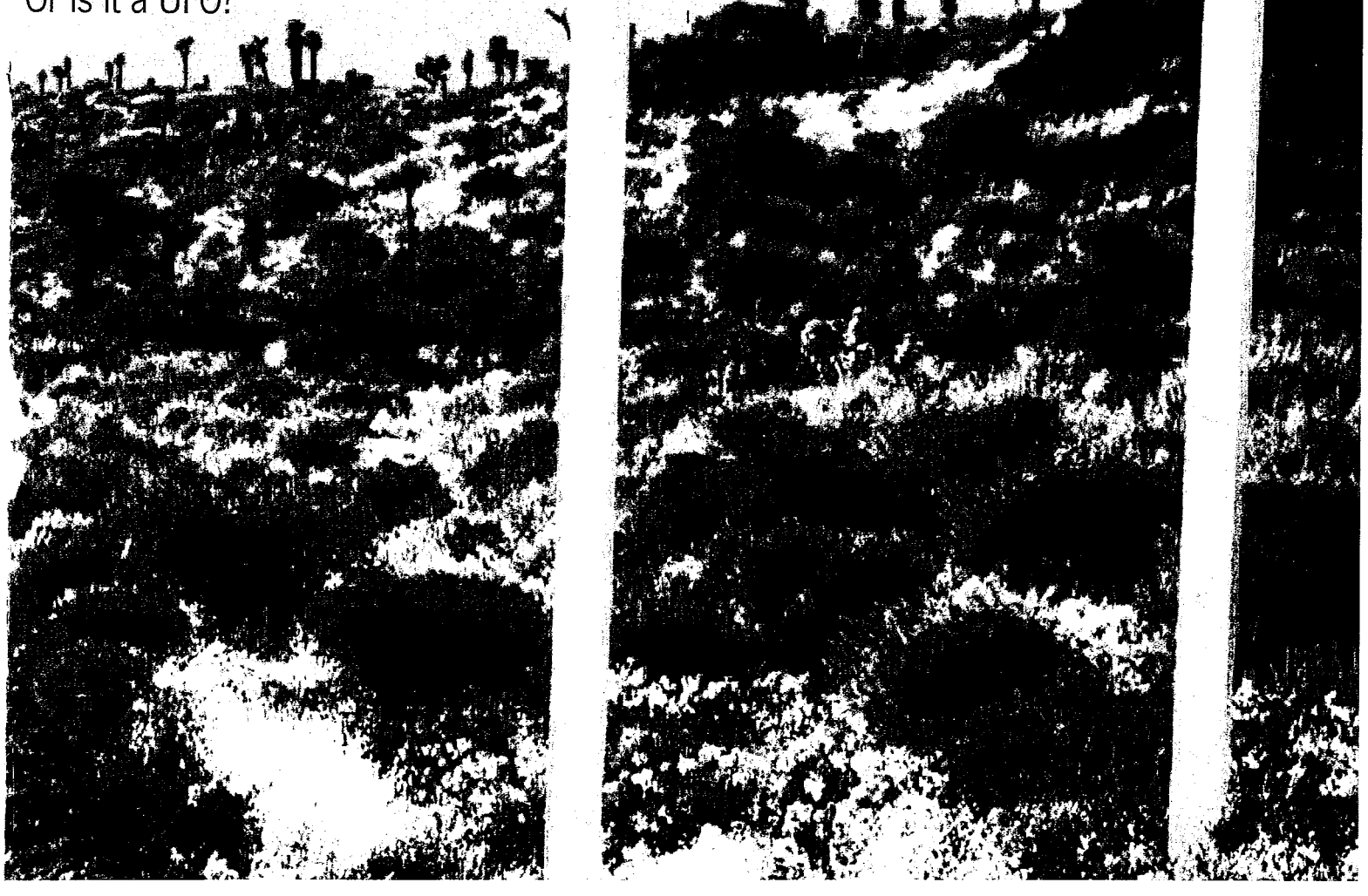
It is this fine line between fact and fiction, as well as dream and reality, that defines the character of the black world and gives it its ethereal shape. Unsurprisingly, it has given rise to a whole host of conspiracy theories over the years, ranging from Pentagon mind-control experiments to alien cadavers stored in freezers at secret locations across the country. While there seems to be no end of people, many of them weaned on Nineties *X-Files* culture, who accept these yarns at face value, the US defence and intelligence community is not beyond putting its own spin on them from time to time. Two years ago, the CIA admitted that it had encouraged reports of flying saucers in the Fifties and Sixties to obscure flight trials of its then top-secret U-2 and Blackbird spyplanes.

The overall effect is undoubtedly the desired one: when you enter this environment, you step into a looking-glass world where down is up. As Aviation Editor of *Jane's Defence Weekly*, a large part of my brief has been to report on the cutting edge of Pentagon defence technology. In *Billion Dollar Secret*, a documentary shot last year for Channel 5, I wanted to take this one step further – to see to what degree the UFO myth was rooted in very real black world technology. The result was an east-west ▶



ANDERS LOFSTEDT

missing and strange things
Nick Cook followed a trail
Or is it a UFO?



◀ journey from Washington DC to a top-secret US Air Force base in Nevada that probably owes as much to Hunter S. Thompson as it does to Mulder and Scully.

My journey began in Washington because although entry points into the black world labyrinth are few and far between, here – as is the case almost everywhere in the world – money can open doors. In a bizarre contradiction that is so often a characteristic of the deeply classified environment, the most secret thing about it – the cash that is its lifeblood – is calculable thanks to good ol' American government accounting procedures.

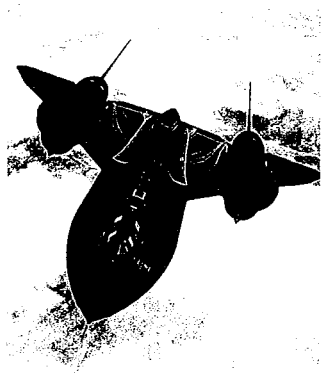
Every year, the Pentagon submits its fiscal request to Congress in the form of a number of budget books that itemise just about every nut and bolt of defence equipment the armed forces are likely to need over the coming 12 months. When you add up all the line items, however, the total does not match the grand total of the overall budget request, which today hovers around the $270 billion mark. Subtract the total for the line items from the grand total and you find a discrepancy of around $35 billion. It is this sum that makes up the black budget and, to put the figures into perspective, it almost exactly equates to the total UK defence budget.

'They do **business** differently at Area 51. We **have** constitutional **rights**, but if you **pass** that border all that ends'

During the Cold War, there were few dissenting voices on Capitol Hill over the rationale for the black budget, but lately more have been making themselves heard. This is in part because the size of the black budget, as a proportion of an overall defence budget that has been shrinking in real terms for over the past ten years, has been increasing under the Clinton administration. One of the more vociferous campaigners against black-budget secrecy has been Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, Republican chair of the influential space and aeronautics sub-committee of the House science committee. Rohrabacher's beef is that a vast quantity of American taxpayers' money is being spent on commercial aerospace projects – especially in the space field – that already have a direct, but hidden, equivalent in the black world.

"If we have a functioning technology in a black programme, we should not be spending billions of dollars on a similar programme that's visible to the public," says Rohrabacher. A likely example of this duplication, he maintains, is the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's X-33 programme.

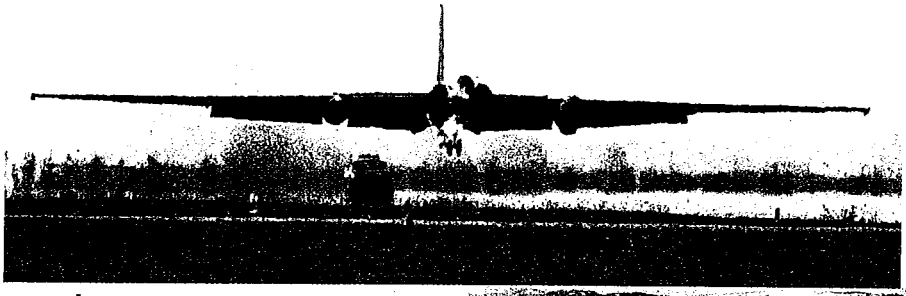
The X-33 is a demonstrator vehicle being built by Lockheed Martin for a satellite launcher that will take off like a rocket and land like a plane. If it works as advertised, its operating costs will be a fraction of the Space Shuttle's, which it is due to replace. Last year, Rohrabacher wrote to Clinton requesting that the administration de-classify secret projects that perpetuate this overlap in spending. The project which overlaps with the X-33, he believes, is "Aurora", a black programme of mythical proportions to a hard-core of "watchers" who scour budget books, as well as the skies, for evidence of top-secret defence projects.

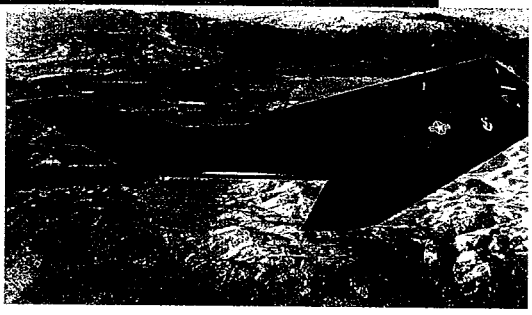


Aurora is perceived to be a "family" of very fast high-flying aircraft, the most sophisticated of which can effectively fly through space in the same way that the X-33 is designed to. It was first spotted in 1987 as a mysterious line-item, consuming several billion dollars' worth of funds in that year alone, in the reconnaissance section of the air force's budget request. Several people claim to have seen it since the late Eighties, the best apparent sighting coming from a trained Royal Observer Corps "spotter" who saw a huge wedge-shaped aircraft overflying the North Sea oil-rig on which he was working in 1989. If Aurora exists – and Congressman Rohrabacher is fairly sure that it does – it can most likely cross the Atlantic in something under 45 minutes. As yet, Rohrabacher has had no response to his letter to Clinton and, if history is anything to go by, he may have a long wait.

The trail now led west, to the vast expanses of Nevada and the mythical nexus of black world aerospace development – the US Air Force's Groom Lake testing facility, otherwise known as Area 51. For the past 45 years, Area 51 has been a test centre for top-secret aircraft such as the U-2, the Blackbird and the Stealth Fighter. In more recent times, it has also become a mecca for UFO watchers who are convinced that the US Government is testing captured alien spacecraft there.

One of the first individuals I met on the road to Area 51 was Bob Widmer, a former head of design at General Dynamics Convair, now in his eighties. In the late Fifties, Widmer worked on an extraordinary spy-plane design for the CIA





The SR-71 Blackbird supersonic reconnaissance aircraft (top), the U-2 spyplane (centre) and the F117A "stealth" fighter (above) were all tested at Area 51

that was codenamed "Fish". In the end, Fish lost out to its rival, Lockheed's Blackbird, but for a reason that has never been altogether explained, the details of Widmer's design remain top-secret, long after the Blackbird fleet was consigned to air museums across America. Could it be that Fish, whose general characteristics sound resoundingly familiar today, was actually a secret prototype for the Aurora? We may never know. Widmer was forced to burn almost all the plans for Fish and was instructed by the CIA ▶

AP/POPPERFOTO/REUTERS

Evening Standard West End Final
18 June 1999
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Cadogan Estates buys Duke of York barracks

CHELSEA'S biggest landlord is to buy the Duke of York barracks on the King's Road and turn it into a complex of shops, flats and offices, **writes Ben Leapman.**

The Ministry of Defence said today it had agreed to sell the military building to Cadogan Estates. The Territorial Army will continue to use part of the 10-acre site until 2003. No price is being announced but the value is estimated at £40 million. An MoD spokesman said officials were confident they had secured better value for the taxpayer than they would have in an open auction. The first phase of development will see the creation of 26 flats for low-earners and around 30 shops.

Daily Telegraph
19 June 1999
Page 2
WEEKEND

UFOs in Wiltshire

Bless the aliens. Of all the fascinating places in Britain they could hover over — London, Manchester, Spaghetti Junction — they always seemed most attached to Wiltshire. (In the late Seventies, the most favoured UFO location was mid-Wales, of which the ETs subsequently seemed to tire.)

For some time, a particularly popular destination for inter-planetary visitors seemed to be Salisbury Plain — on summer evenings in the Sixties, one could scarcely move for enthusiasts sitting on hills and looking up at the stars, hopefully twiddling with pointlessly elaborate radio equipment.

Any suggestion that lights in the sky might actually be connected in some way with the MoD, which does, of course, have a pronounced presence in the area, were routinely dismissed by the silly season set as mere eccentricity.

In the Seventies, the notion of ley lines was woven into UFO myths. The idea was that flying saucers would use these mystical energy channels running through the landscape as navigating signals. And the Crewe Junction of these ley lines happened to be in Wiltshire.

But one hears less of UFOs these days. The reason, most probably, is that American enthusiasts have introduced the unwelcome idea of abduction. Few would care to tramp up a Wiltshire hill on a balmy night if the end result was a zapping from a bright white light, followed by a rather personal examination on board a spaceship.

As time wears on, and clunky old retro-style UFOs find themselves having to compete with upstart corn circles, the Warminster area is none the less still the place to go if one fancies a summer's evening of lying back and dreaming of life elsewhere.

What to wear: a big anorak, nerdy as you like.
What to bring: binoculars and a not especially good camera.
What to say: "When one looks up at the vastness of the sky, one finds it impossible to imagine that we are really all alone, drifting through this cold infinity . . . "
What not to say: "It's clearly a weather balloon, but the real mystery is why we still use them."

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A lesson not learned

WHO told David Blunkett that Literacy Hour is a return to traditional, tried-and-tested teaching methods (Mail)?

Ten minutes chatting about words, 20 minutes reading a shared text (not a real book but a photocopied sheet because we can't afford books for every child), 20 minutes when children 'work' in groups, or a task which might have only tenuous links to the text, unaided by the teacher, who is busy hearing another group read, and then ten minutes given to what we've learnt — or not.

This happens five days a week, often on the same text, which might (as in the case of our seven and eight-year-olds) include a study of the wording in a legal document. This isn't traditional class teaching of English. It has been made to look like it by transferring some of the secondary school curriculum downward, but it is, in fact, 'progressive' methods by the back door.

David, you've been had.

Mrs R. WILSON, Durham.

Round in circles

AS A struggling fruit grower, I'd be very pleased to have Lawrence Rockefeller along for half a day, at a fee to be negotiated, to study the mystery of crop circles here (Mail).

These circles have appeared only since tramlines were used by farmers for accurate working measurements of their fields. This explains why most of them are found in the large fields of Hampshire and Wiltshire, among growing cereal crops and not in fields of potatoes, cabbage, strawberries, swede, etc.

Or is it perhaps that Martians haven't developed a taste for these more complex crops?

VICTOR BREACH, Tonbridge, Kent

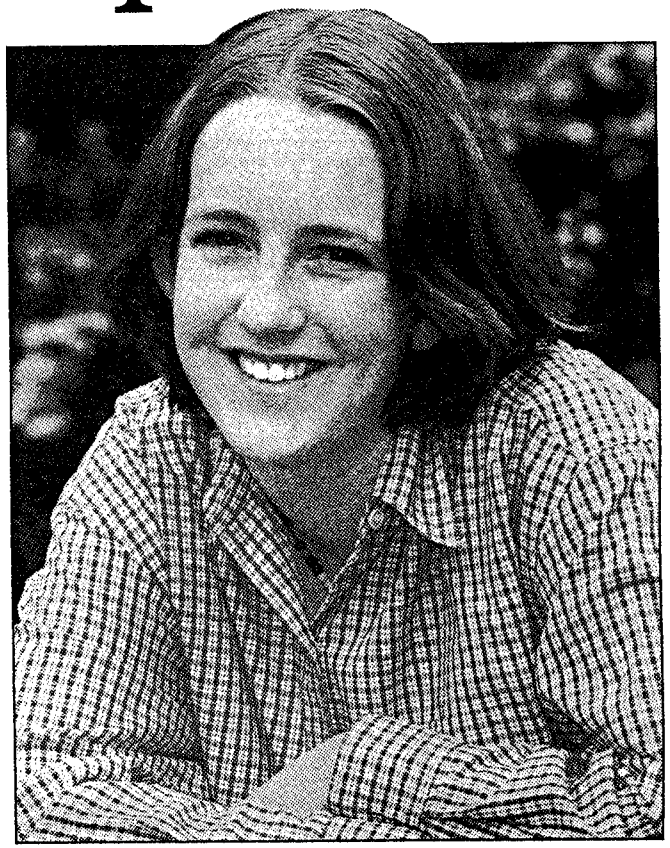
Save money and set your kids up for life

PARENTS who feel it necessary to spend £200-plus a week on their children (Mail) would be better off saving their money and giving their kids a ticket into the real world.

At 17, I consider myself lucky with the £5 a week pocket money I'm given. My Saturday job helps me save for university, and I find I can just about cope without £90 trainers and brand new clothes every week.

These children are growing up having everything handed to them. I may be considered 'poor' because I don't ship my friends off to London for my birthday but I'd rather learn to appreciate the value of money.

SUZANNE LOGAN, Canterbury, Kent.



I'M A working mother, helping my husband, a self-employed solicitor, in his office. Our two children, of nearly 12 and 16, both go to private day schools but I spend very little on my daughter.

Lizzy's worn the same school shoes for three years and has to be pushed into having money spent on her. If she wants extras she babysits for money.

I spend £80 a year on her tennis club membership and another £60 on lessons. The rest of the time she simply practises with friends. Many of her schoolfriends have extra private lessons for their GCSEs, but she's bright and motivated enough not to need them — and if she were not, I wouldn't 'throw good money after bad'. In all, I spend £500-£600 a year on Lizzy.

My son's clothes come to only between £200 and £330 a year. He's having private Bar Mitzvah lessons at £20 per week, and his cricket club fees cost £30 a year. His biggest expense is use of a football season ticket at £400 a year (much to his sister's annoyance) but her indulgence this year will be to be sent on a trip to Israel with a large group of 16-year-olds, after GCSEs, at a cost of £1,500.

My children don't feel underprivileged — in fact, they often tell me not to waste my money. Materially, I had much less as a child and want them to appreciate the cost of living.

STRAIGHT TO THE POINT

■LET'S all support Tony Blair's crusade in Kosovo. All he is saying is give war a chance.

Mr J. MASON, Barnet, Herts.

■PATSY Kensit tried to scotch reports that she's expecting a baby. Does she fear public censure because she's married?

Mrs JEAN WARREN, Sale, Cheshire.

■BRITAIN comes complete with the perfect buffer zone against GM crops — the sea. Other countries aren't so fortunate. We shouldn't sacrifice this advantage by inviting the stuff here.

STEVEN PENNY, London N16.

■ANYONE who argues against capital punishment because innocent people might be killed, but agrees with bombing Belgrade, is invited to reconcile these contradictory principles. Any thoughts, Tony?

NICHOLAS ASTLEY-COOPER, Address supplied.

■WHEN the credits roll at the end of a film involving Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Diana Rigg or Alec Guinness, that's how their names appear. So why is it always Sir David Frost and Dame Thora Hird, even in adverts?

IAN WILLIAMS, Llandudno, Gwynedd.

■LET'S not be kidded by 'protesting truckers'. They are mostly farmers who have diversified into road haulage — Tory subversives out to embarrass the Government.

AS A MILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPIST FUNDS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INTO

Mystery, miracle or

LAURENCE Rockefeller, the American millionaire and philanthropist, is funding scientific research into crop circles, it emerged yesterday. Why? After all, this is a problem that everyone thought had been solved.

The Crop Circle Mystery caused headlines and arguments nearly every summer for 20 years. Strange shapes were appearing in cornfields in Wiltshire and other counties. From the ground, the corn was seen to be beaten down, amazingly regular. From the air, the patterns appeared.

They came first as simple circles. Later, there were circles within circles, then more intricate patterns still — circles radiating spiral arms, circles joined by straight lines, circles arranged in squares, even snowflake patterns of amazing intricacy and beauty.

For 20 years arguments raged. Were they caused by circular winds? Or were mysterious forces at work? The obvious solution was human hoax. But if so, how?

In 1992, two Southampton men, Doug Bower and Dave Chorley, confessed to making corn circles: every summer night for 20 years. Their method was simple: rakes and planks of wood to bash down the crop, ropes to guide them to a perfect circle, loops of wire on hats to guide straight lines.

It began as fun but, as UFO theories snowballed, they wanted to see how credulous people could be.

Dave Chorley died in 1996. The pair had retired from circle-making some time before. That should have been the end of the mystery. Yet corn circles continued to appear.

'They are worldwide,' says Michael Green, President of the Centre for Crop Circle Studies. And this week, the first of this season's British crop, 12 of them, have been seen in fields of oil-seed rape in Hampshire and at Milk Hill, Wiltshire.

Andrew Thomas, author of the crop-circle book, Vital Signs, claims that the Bower-Chorley 'confession' was itself a hoax: 'They could not explain how they laid the stalks so perfectly; nor why the circles have continued to appear.'

And now Laurence Rockefeller, brother of the late Nelson Rockefeller, is funding a researcher to re-investigate the phenomenon.

HE IS paying Connecticut-based Colin Andrews to engage staff and they have flown reconnaissance flights over Wiltshire and Hampshire. Andrews has a database of 10,000 crop circles. With computers and satellites, the research and debate has re-opened. So what could cause them?

'First theories were circular winds, mini-cyclones or "dust-devils" [tiny tornadoes], says Montague Keen, scientific adviser to the Centre for Crop-Circle Studies for three years. 'A meteorologist devised a theory of "plasma vortexes", spiralling winds of electrically-charged air.'

Ball lightning was another possibility — again circular, again involving powerful and little-understood forces of electricity.

'But straight lines do not come from natural phenomena,' says Keen. 'The patterns became increasingly complex and no natural phenomenon can change and evolve like that. There were too many for them all to be hoaxes.'

A U.S. physicist found evidence that corn inside the circles undergoes chemical and biological changes. It takes up more nitrates than corn outside, and microscopic holes form in the stem tissue. These changes seem to argue for a sudden, sharp infusion of energy into the circle — far more than could come from men with planks or rollers.

'I was never quite convinced that his research was sufficiently rigorous' says Mr Keen, 'but there were certainly electromagnetic changes within circles. Compasses behaved strangely; people felt either distress or euphoria inside the circles; and batteries went flat unaccountably often.

'All this seems to point away from hoax towards something very strange, indeed. There is clearly some kind of intelligence behind them.'

And if it is not natural intelligence? 'Well, then you are thrown back to imagining some wholly *unnatural* intelligence.' As, for example, some form of psychic projection from human beings — dead or alive.

'Some shapes of the early Eighties seemed similar to shapes carved into rocks by Palaeolithic man,' said Michael Green, President of the Centre for Crop Circle Studies.

Were mental energies of past minds being channelled into cornfields?

The first corn-circle for which evidence is claimed appeared in Hertfordshire in 1678. A pamphlet shows a woodcut of a circle mown in a field of oats, and the devil mowing.

The pamphlet describes the sky over the field that night as being 'all of a flame'; so here, too, for those who are willing to believe, is a link with flying saucers and UFOs.

For, of course, there are the aliens as the final theory of crop circles. Michael Green does not believe that little green men are responsible — but he believes some kind of non-human intelligence is behind them.

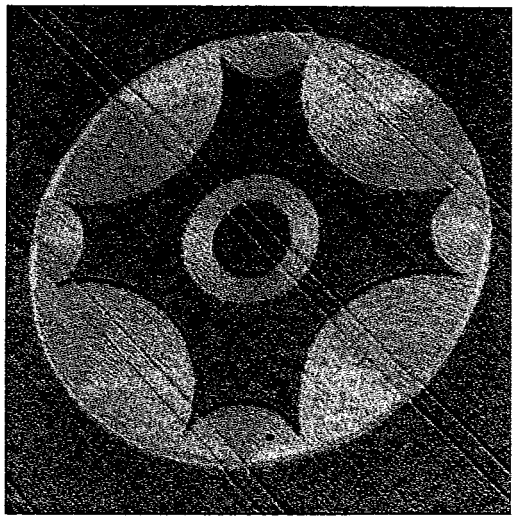
He points to a succession of shapes, from simple to complex to very complex indeed. Can these be messages to be read by all of mankind?

'These are written large on the landscape. They are there to be seen. There is a non-human intelligence behind them,' says Mr Green. 'That's what points one towards thinking the unthinkable.'

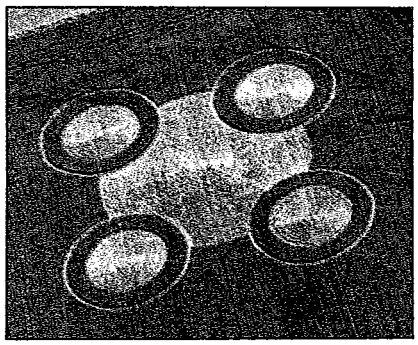
by JULIAN CHAMPKIN



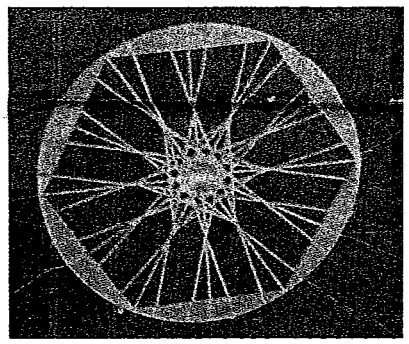
Marlborough, Wiltshire, July 11, 1997: Twelve circles, 100 yards across. Locals charged tourists £1.50 a visit



Morestead, Hampshire, 1997: A Maltese cross — an ancient symbol once worn by the Knights of Malta — 100ft across. Hundreds flocked to see it when it first appeared



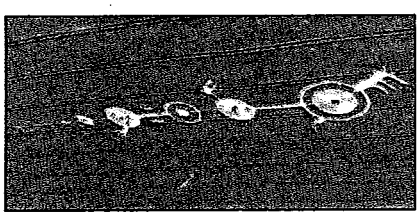
Headbourne Worthy, Hampshire, July 7, 1997: A similar but cruder crop circle design had appeared in the same field 19 years before



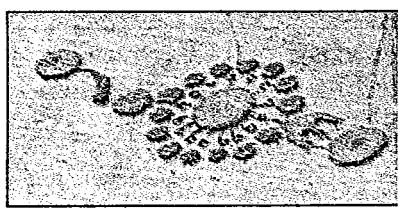
Cley Hill, Wiltshire, July 1997: Straight lines make up a hexagon — this is only the second time this shape has ever been seen in corn



Alton Barnes, Wiltshire, 1996: The 648ft chain of circles, linked in intricate mathematical beauty, are said to resemble the structure of DNA, the building block of life. If this is a fake it could only have bee carried out by someone with scientific knowledge — or a very good textbook



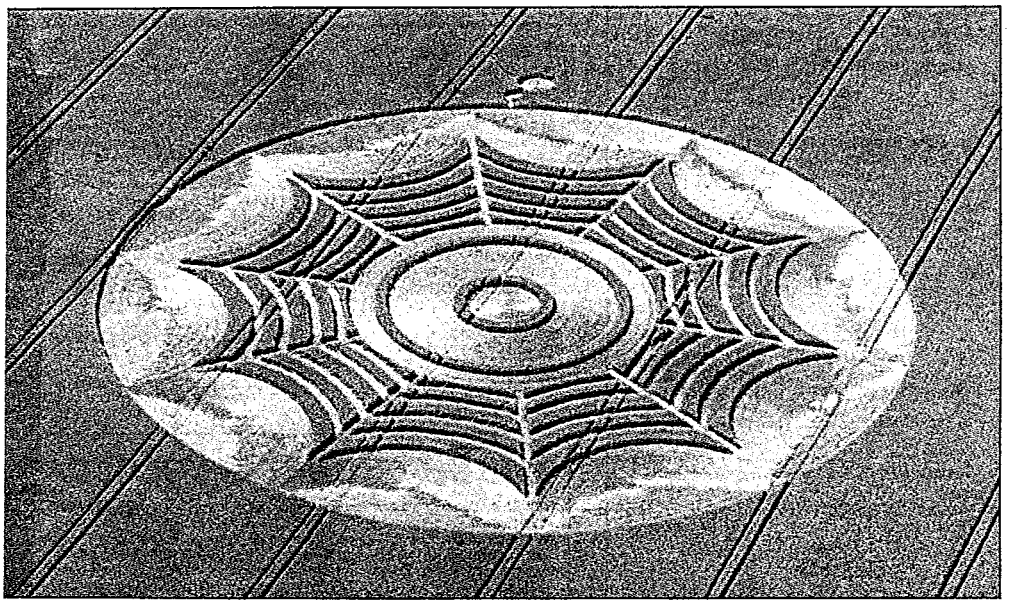
Alton Barnes, Wiltshire, July 11, 1990: The night this 555ft long design was created, there were 'strange accounts of humming sounds'



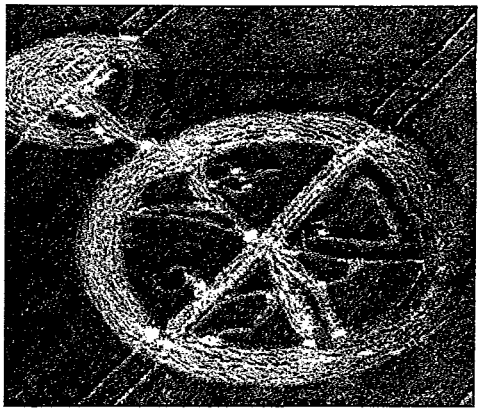
Milk Hill, Wiltshire, May 1999: Formed only days ago. 'We have evidence of a genuine phenomeno says Lucy Pringle, a leading corn circle researche

ROP CIRCLES AND A NEW BATCH APPEAR, WE ASK:

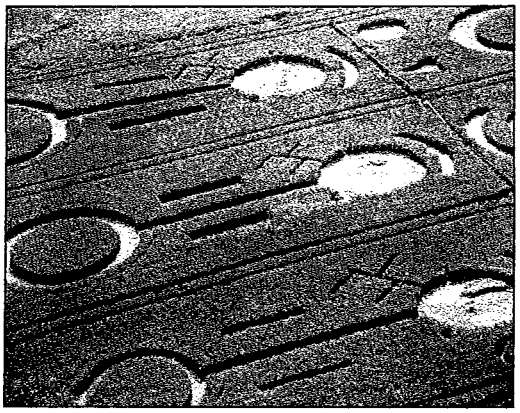
giant hoax?



/ebury, Wiltshire, August 11, 1994: What spider wove this web next to the ancient stone circle? This beautiful design ıs been nicknamed the Dreamcatcher. A hoaxer would have to be Houdini to leave no disturbance in the rest of the field



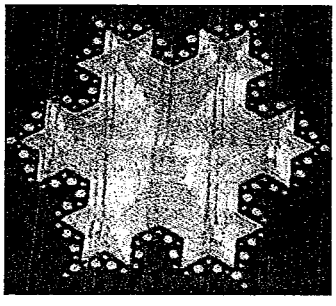
almesbury, Wiltshire, June 1998: Hamster wheel or ıcred symbol? It was 300ft across but though the wheat ıd been flattened, not a single blade of it was broken



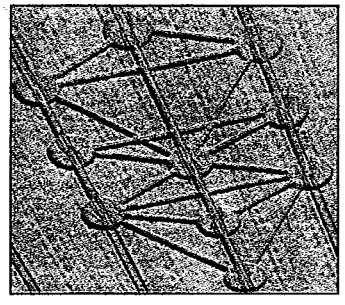
West Wycombe, Bucks, 1992: Definitely man-made. At a corn circle competition, entrants had to work overnight, without lights or noise. Tools included baseball bats and ladders



quaring the circle: Close examination ıows corn laid in perfect circles, with ɔ stems broken. From ground level, e overall effect can be difficult to see aking it even harder for hoaxers to eate a design without mistakes



Silbury Hill, Wiltshire, July 1997: Summer snow appeared in a flake 200ft across. Local farmers charged sightseers to visit —some crop circles have made more than £5,000 for their lucky owners. A motive for hoaxers?



Barbary Castle, Wiltshire, May 4, 1997: The Kabbala tree of life, an occult symbol from Hebrew mythology — laid along the field's existing tractor lines. Fascinatingly, circle watchers had prayed for just such a symbol to appear

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27 April 1999
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Riddle of UFO 'the size of a battleship'

CONSPIRACY theorists had a field day yesterday over reports that a UFO 'the size of a battleship' had been spotted 28,000ft above the North Sea.

Both the Civil Aviation Authority and the Ministry of Defence confirmed they were aware of the alleged sighting but denied they were investigating it.

'This may sound silly,' said the CAA, 'but it is a matter for the MoD.' The MoD commented: 'Our people have been looking at it but we are not investigating.' One UFO spotter declared: 'Well they would say that, wouldn't they?' The mysterious craft –said to be silver-coloured and pencil thin with square windows along the fuselage – was reported by a pilot on a private charter flight between Linkoping, in Sweden, and Humberside on February 3. The pilot, from the Luton-based airline Debonair, was flying a BAe 146 jet when the cockpit was immersed in 'incandescent light'.

The Times
27 April 1999
Page 28

Defence projects to protect jobs

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of jobs in the defence industry were protected yesterday by the Government's decision to go it alone on a frigate building programme and also to proceed with a three-country air defence project.

The Ministry of Defence said yesterday that it was withdrawing from the troubled Horizon frigate programme, which it had been working on with France and Italy, in favour of its own initiative.

Defence analysts said that the decision would bring more work to the UK on the multibillion-pound programme to replace Type 42 destroyers and that the work could start sooner.

The MoD is aiming to build 12 new vessels by 2007. Initially it had wanted a launch date of 2004 but talks between the three countries have been long and problematic, eventually foundering on the allocation of work. The building of the frigates is unlikely to generate work for the Govan shipyard on the Clyde, which has been put up for sale by its Norwegian owner, Kvaerner, as the shipyards of VSEL are more suited to warship work.

The UK Government has, however, reached agreement with France and Italy to build together the Principle Anti-Air Missile System (PAAMS) defence system for the new generation of frigates.

Matra British Aerospace Dynamics, the Anglo/French joint venture, will be the main contractor on the UK variant of PAAMS, bringing work worth about £700 million to the UK. A spokesman for BAe said: "We look forward to working closely with the Ministry of Defence to produce the world's most advanced missile defence system."

The Times
27 April 1999
Page 4

New effort to cut red tape

The Prime Minister has ordered a war on red tape after complaints that industry is struggling to cope with new regulations and laws. Government departments are to face checks to ensure that new laws do not suffocate or overburden business or the professions with bureaucratic demands.

Dr Jack Cunningham, Minister for the Cabinet Office, has been given the new enforcement role inside Whitehall to tackle ministries which clutter legislation with unnecessary regulations and paperwork. He is to outline his approach tonight in a speech to the Social Market Foundation.

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The Mirror
27 April 1999
Page 16

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Pilot tells of his close encounter with a UFO

BY SIMON BIRD

A BRITISH charter jet has had a close encounter with a UFO said to be "the size of a battleship".

The shocked pilot and crew of a Debonair BAe146 plane reported being buzzed by "a long cylindrical object" as they flew over the North Sea.

Three other pilots have also independently logged seeing the bright object 58 miles off the coast of Denmark.

Last night the Civil Aviation Authority confirmed a comprehensive report of the pilot's sighting had been received.

The report says the captain and crew first became aware of the object after the underside of the plane was immersed in "an incandescent light".

A CAA spokeswoman said: "The captain reported seeing an unnatural bright light below his aircraft while flying at 28,000ft. The area below him was illuminated for about 10 seconds by incandescent light and it was certainly not a light from another plane.

"Three other aircraft saw it moving at a high speed or static. However, air traffic control were informed and they confirmed that there were no other planes in the vicinity.

"Then, five minutes later, there was a brief radar return from a spot 75 miles away. We believe there was no danger involved."

The Luton-based 96-seater plane was flying company executives from Linkoping, Sweden, to Humberside airport. A spokesman for Debonair, which runs cut-price flights throughout Europe, said chief executive Franco Mancassola had been informed that a "great red light in the sky" had been spotted near one of the company's planes.

At one stage, the report says, the object came to an abrupt halt before accelerating past the airliner at thousands of miles an hour.

A CAA source says the object was tracked by a military radar station in Yorkshire after it entered UK air space.

A spokesman for the 6,000 member British Pilots Association said: "We get reports of this nature from our members but they are few and far between.

"In the past 10 years or so I would say there have been around six cases of UFO's being sighted.

"Many pilots are reluctant to make such claims because it tends to lay them open to ridicule. So when they do go as far as making a report we do expect it to be given credence."

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence insisted there were no military aircraft in the area adding: "We saw nothing."

The Broadcast Monitoring Company. The contents of the publication

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pril 1999
ge 6

Verger guilty of harassing Army captain

By Michael Fleet

A LOVESTRUCK verger who fell for a woman captain at the Army base where he worked was found guilty yesterday of harassing her with letters signed to "Dear Boo".

Peter Parkinson, 52, from St Leonards, East Sussex, became besotted with Capt Angharad Crew after meeting her for the first time at All Saints Church on the Pirbright Army Camp in Surrey.

He wrote telling her of his love for her and calling her by her nickname of Boo but was sacked after she became distressed by the letters and military police were called in.

Parkinson, who was a civilian employed to assist the padre at the base, told magistrates at Guildford: "I was in love with her and that's a fact of life. I wanted to show my feelings towards her."

Sentence was adjourned for reports.

The Mirror
28 April 1999
Page 19

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Shame of Army cleric

A CHURCH verger who bombarded a young woman Army officer with bizarre love letters was found guilty of harassment yesterday.

Peter Parkinson, 52, sent 27-year-old Captain Angharad Crew a series of passionate notes, addressed to her barrack-room nickname of "Boo."

She called in military police and Parkinson was dismissed from his post at the Training Regiment in Pirbright, Surrey.

He then sent hate mail to the regiment's commanding officer, saying he would be going to hell.

Parkinson was convicted of harassing both at Guildford, Surrey. He will be sentenced in June.

The Mirror
28 April 1999
Page 18

Jet crew tell of close encounter with UFO

A PASSENGER jet's crew have reported a close encounter with an unidentified flying object.

They said that they noticed an "incandescent" light below their Debonair BAe 146 as it headed over the North Sea from Sweden to Humberside.

Then, they added, a long cylindrical silver-coloured object the size of a battleship flew alongside. The British plane's shocked captain saw what seemed to be rows of square portholes on the UFO before it vanished at "enormous speed".

The crew told the Defence Ministry about their sighting. An RAF radar station tracked the object, which was seen from three other planes.

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Daily Mail, Thursday, April 29, 1999

Raising the alarm in 1555

QUATRAIN X, 72, of Nostradamus's 1555 book of prophecies translates from the French as:

The year one thousand and nine hundreds
ninety-nine seven months,
From the sky will come a Great King of alarm,
To bring back to life the Great King of
Angoulmois,
Before after, Mars to reign by good fortune.

This hardly squares with political science professor Willie Breytenbach's suggestion (Mail). Is the U.S.-led Nato the 'Great King of alarm'? Who is the 'Great King of Angoulmois'?

A 'Great King of alarm' suggests an evil being. Some interpret this as an alien invasion, occurring in July or August. Others consider 'angoulmois' an anagram of 'mongolois', suggesting the people of Mongolia.

Author Nigel Kerner points out that graves containing Cro-Magnon skeletal remains were unearthed earlier this century in Angoumois, western France.

Cro-Magnon arrived on the scene around 60,000 years ago. From where did Cro-Magnon appear? And why did the well-built Neanderthals become extinct after his arrival?

Kerner claims Cro-Magnon man is a hybrid of Earth people, engineered by alien 'greys', and that the hybrid's superior intelligence and aggression enabled them to displace Neanderthal.

The MoD has declined to investigate the battleship-sized UFO seen over the North Sea on February 3. It has little choice, since similar objects in the past have easily out-paced our fastest aircraft.

I sometimes wonder if these craft are inflicting invisible damage on our Earth. A craft this size could certainly transport a large community — but from what and to where?

MICHAEL JOYCE,
St. Osyth, Essex.

NATO keeps on apologising and trying to find excuses when it makes a mistake: Milosevic must think its nerve will crack. Had it started by carpet-bombing Serbia, the conflict would have been over in seven days.

BILL GROVER,
Plymouth, Devon.

AS NAVIGATOR of a bomber, I 'bought it' fairly early in World War II and spent four-and-a-half years as a PoW.

Some years ago, a gathering of ex-prisoners from all over the world was held in Warwick and the organisers sought the permission of Coventry Cathedral to hold a service of thanksgiving for our safe return. The reply was that the cathedral wouldn't care to be associated with a body consisting mainly of bomber crews. Not long after the end of the war, public opinion consolidated its attitude towards ex-airmen: Fighter crews = Battle of Britain = Heroes. Bomber crews = Dresden = Scum (despite the death toll among bomber crews being the heaviest of any of the fighting services).

So I say to those flying sorties over Serbia, soak up all the adoration you can get. It won't last long. When people such as Tony Blair and Bill Clinton look back on the war and its civilian death toll, they will have forgotten who first ordered the bombing: it will be the fault of those belligerent bomber boys.

WALTER BRADLEY,
Gawthorpe, W. Yorks.

IN MY family, there is a soldier who has been a full-time professional since he was 18. The Ministry of Defence has fed him, clothed him, provided him with a house when he married and flown his children, during their holidays, from their English boarding school to wherever their father was stationed.

All this to leave the soldier free to practise killing our enemies, with the consequent risk of being killed himself.

Why is there such a fuss whenever this risk arises? What does the taxpayer pay the soldier for?

J. EDMONDS,
Chepstow, S. Wales.

GRAVE INSULT

IT'S the custom for members of our Armed Forces who are killed in battle to be laid to rest in the country in which they fought and died. The exception to this rule seems to be Moslem countries because no infidel can be buried on Islamic soil.

Perhaps those clamouring for 'our' lads to get themselves killed for Islamic Albanians will remember this when the bodies start arriving home for burial.

Mrs P. O'NEILL,
London NW6.

supermarket. She realised how important time is to everybody.

The break-up had nothing to do with anybody else. Miss

'He has been amazing'

Hunter also dismissed speculation, rife after the split, that she was angry about the amount of time the 54-year-old rock star was devoting to football and his other hobby, model trains.

'He is not a fuddy-duddy and I've never had anything to say about his trains and his football,' she told the Australian magazine New Idea.

'There was no fighting with Rod and I couldn't say there was any particular reason. I think it's just immaturity on my part.' She said she had no intention of going off partying. She just had 'a lot of things to figure out'. Her estranged husband was being extremely understanding and had been amazing throughout the past three months, she said.

Miss Hunter remains in touch with Stewart, speaking to him every other day and sharing their children, Renee, six, and four-year-old Liam, who she said have accepted the change.

She told the magazine the children have lived in an 'unconventional world anyway' surrounded by all of Stewart's other children. Divorce was a reality of the day and age, she added.

On the couple's age gap, she said there might have been moments when it mattered, but wouldn't elaborate because it was a private matter.

She added: 'He is a wonderful man. He has an incredible love for life and is very strong, very funny and a very sensitive person. He's going to be in my life for ever and I adore and admire him.'

She told the magazine they remained close friends and added: 'I may be doing the most stupid thing in my life right now, but it feels right and I mean to go through with it. There is no urge to run "home".'

She said she was too young when she married but was swept along by the fairytale.

Turning to her reported relationship with her son's soccer coach, Mark Clay, she said she had never laughed so much as when she saw stories linking them. Miss Hunter has also been linked with American actor Michael Weatherly, 30. She said the media automatically made a romantic connection with anyone she was seen with in public.

She wants to have at least one more child, but not for about another five years, she said.

Miss Hunter also wants to pursue her acting career after appearing in seven films in the last 16 months. One of her projects, Winding Road, in which she plays an alcoholic, is earmarked for screening at the Cannes Film Festival.

Her profile was raised earlier this month when it emerged that she had reportedly been paid £300,000 to pose nude for Playboy. The pictures will be published late this summer.

She also appears in a 24-page photo spread in this week's edition of Hello! She maintained, however, that her life now is not very different from the time she was with Stewart.

She had never seen her life as that of a rock star's wife, she added.



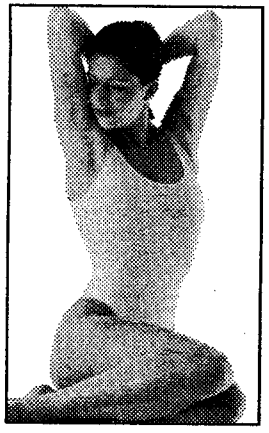
Rachel Hunter: The 30-year-old model denies she found Stewart a 'fuddy-duddy'

Riddle of UFO 'the size of a battleship'

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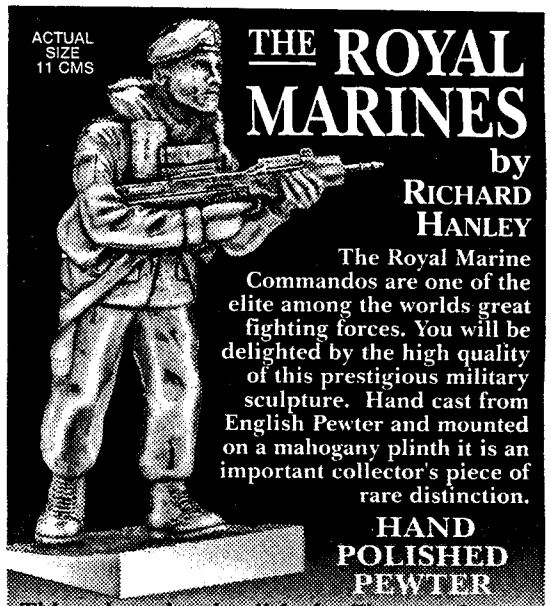
Marathon man runs out of luck

A MARATHON runner was arrested as he crossed the finishing line when a fellow athlete identified him as a bicycle thief.

After being taken to the police station in Gosport, Hampshire, for questioning in his vest and shorts, he astonished officers by asking to use the exercise yard.

Police said the man admitted taking the bike at nearby Hayling Island. But the owner offered to drop charges if he agreed to pay her £75 compensation.

Subsequent investigations revealed, however, that two warrants were outstanding for failing to appear in court at Folkestone, Kent, on charges of criminal damage, and he was kept in custody.



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by RICHARD HANLEY

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DAILY MAIL 27 APRIL '99



MIRACLE: Sharon with Sarah Alice, the baby she never expected

rushed into hospital with crippling back pain, she thought her problems had returned.

But hours later, instead of receiving the organ transplant she was expecting, Sharon was holding the baby she longed for after giving birth to 6lb 3oz Sarah Alice.

"She's my little miracle," said Sharon, of Elswick, Newcastle

back pains at home mum took me to hosp gave me a scan that was pregnant – and w ly in labour – I thou been my kidneys agai

"I couldn't believe i had been no indicatio side effects at all. W finally managed to co I burst into tears of

Pilot's close encounter with UFO

BY SIMON BIRD

A BRITISH charter jet has had a close encounter with a UFO said to be "the size of a battleship".

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Battleship-sized craft 'buzzed jet'

spotted near a company plane. At one stage, the report says, the UFO came to an abrupt halt before accelerating past the jet at thousands of miles an hour. A CAA source says the object was tracked by a military radar station in Yorkshire after it entered UK air space.

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"Many pilots are reluctant to make such claims because it tends to lay them open to ridicule. So when they do go as far as making a report we do expect it to be given credence."

A Ministry of Defence spokesman insisted there were no military aircraft in the area adding: "We saw nothing."

●A councillor in the Stirlingshire village of Bonnybridge has recorded a CD about the thousands of UFO sightings witnessed there in the past decade.

Billy Buchanan plans to send his songs to Roswell in America, scene of the world's most famous UFO incident in 1947.

His accompanying message says: "I believe our two areas have an affinity and I give you greetings from my area to your area. My quest for the truth goes on."

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Times Friday 23 Apr 99

CLOSURE

Radical college sets up chair of aliens

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

IF ANYBODY'S out there, Berkeley would like to know: the university that invented gender studies in the 1960s has appointed the first Professor of Extra-terrestrial Intelligence.

Dr William Welch will supervise the building of a three-acre field of telescopes in Northern California in a renewed attempt to answer what most scientists consider the Big One: are we alone in the universe? He does not expect a quick answer.

Using giant dishes pointed at deep space from New Mexico and Puerto Rico, the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (Seti) has been seeking signals from alien life for decades, without success.

"Will we find intelligent life in space in my lifetime?" Dr Welch mused in an interview with *The New York Times* at Berkeley's Hat Creek Observatory. "It's a very remote possibility."

Seti researchers concentrate on a band of microwave radiation considered the best hunting ground. Such signals could take aeons to get here, though. In 1974 a message about our solar system was beamed from Puerto Rico to a star cluster 25,000 light years away. A prompt reply would not be back for 50,000 years.

Dr Welch's job is at least a sign that Seti is about science, not little green men. Endowed to the tune of $500,000 (£311,000) by two Seti volunteers, the professorship is a much-needed injection of money for a search stripped of most of its Nasa funding in 1993, as depicted in *Contact*, the film starring Jodi Foster.

Jill Tarter, on whom Foster's character was based, then sought private backing. She happens to be Dr



Sophia Lore
The 64-y

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Sat 24/4/99
Times Colour Supp.

CLOSURE

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● **The *Fortean Times*** holds its sixth annual convention of the bizarre and paranormal this weekend. Called the *Fortean Times* "Unconvention", it consists of speeches, demonstrations and public participation experiments on such preposterous topics as The Poltergeist of Humpty Doo and Flying Saucers of the Apocalypse. However, the biggest mystery — and probably one that won't be solved — is how people can be gullible enough to pay £25 to listen to this old rubbish.

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Matthew Perry and Courtney Cox in TV's Friends

their emotional stamina.

It has become known as the 'Friends' syndrome – named after the hit show in which a small group of professionals stick together and regard their parents as unhelpful hinder-ers – and appears in research released this week from Britain and the US.

Even Posh Spice and David Beckham suffer from the 'Friends' syndrome. Posh, Spice Girl Victoria Adams, said last week the celebrity couple moved in such small circles 'we could have our wedding in a postbox'.

A British researcher into social circles, Dr Geoff Collee, has conducted studies in the US and in England to find most people only 'bonded' with three people even though they

money? Would a conversatio
without hesitation after a yea
Do they remember all the sm
you, and vice versa? Are yo
with them in all moods and pla
work or in a sport?
net Askham, sociolog
s College London, said
people had deeper roots and
circles of friends than middl
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She added: 'Now, as middle
become the norm, we move a
jobs and the family fragment
marrying later and more divo
for friendship has never been

Career threat to sex

INCREASING numbers of successful professionals are finding the pursuit of promotion and riches is seriously damaging their sex lives – just like the TV lawyer, played by Calista Flockhart.

An investigation into private health clinic attendance found high earners regularly suffer more sex-related problems than their less-ambitious colleagues.

One specialist said: 'The high-flying businessman might be big in the boardroom but lots were bored in the bedroom.

'More than 90 per cent of the high earners – those with incomes of between £80,000-£100,000 – have the words 'sexual difficulties' on their forms.'

Warwick University's Andrew Oswald said his research showed those with a relaxed attitude to their careers usually enjoyed life more.



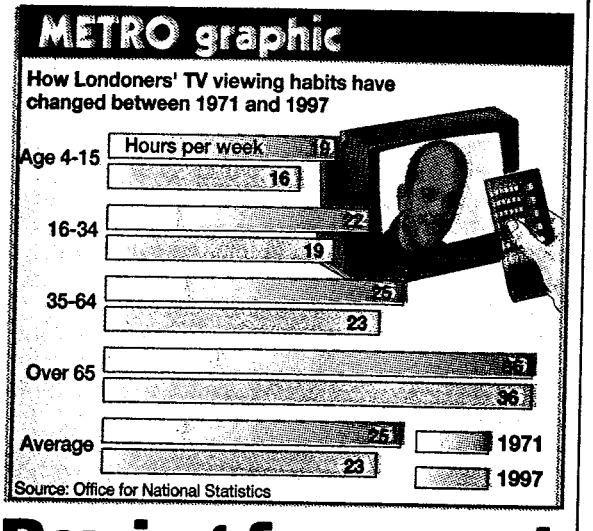
Ally

Break for UFO fans

TOURISTS are being offered weekend breaks to indulge in a little UFO-spotting.

The sci-fi holidays are planned for the autumn in Bonnybridge, near Falkirk, Scotland, where more than 350 UFO sightings have been reported since 1992.

Organisers say they will charge UFO-spotters from as far away as Japan and Australia £180 each for a place on the trips – which include sky-watching nights complete with midnight picnics.



Rowing for record

A TEAM of 16 adventurers are hoping to set a new speed record for rowing non-stop from London to Paris.

They will start on the Thames, cross the Channel and finish on the Seine, close to the Eiffel Tower.

The record attempt – due to take place in May – will be made in a replica of a 180-year-old Thames workboat and the team will be led by yachtsman Jock Wishart.

The current record for the 430-mile route is five-and-a-half days, set in 1990 by a Metropolitan Police crew.



Saturday 24th April is London's Territorial A
York's HQ in the Kings Road, Chelsea (5 mins fro
Meet the soldiers and see the kit and equipment th

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Gates open at 11.00am and close at 3.30pm.
For more information call 0171-414 5555

Metro (free newspaper)
19 April 1999.

Sunday Times
7 February 1999
Page 3

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UFO hunter at MoD 'kidnapped by aliens'

by Mark Macaskill

THE Ministry of Defence official who once headed investigations into unidentified flying objects believes he was abducted by aliens. Nick Pope, who ran the ministry's top secret Airstaff Secretariat office during the early 1990s, believes that he, his girlfriend and their car were abducted from a deserted toll road in Florida.

He has described how he was lifted aboard an alien spacecraft and then wandered around its corridors — without, however, meeting any aliens.

It was following this incident that he applied for the job heading the defence ministry department which collects all reported sightings of UFOs and related phenomena. He did not, however, enter details of his experience on the files since he was uncertain exactly what had happened to him and because he was worried he would be labelled a crank.

Pope is still employed by the ministry, but a routine transfer in 1994 means he now works for the finance policy department as a higher executive officer.

He has alluded to the incident in his bestselling book The Uninvited, which claimed to expose the phenomenon of alien abductions. But only now has it emerged that one of the detailed descriptions of the several abductions was based on his own experience rather than on that of someone called Peter.

This weekend, Pope refused to confirm or deny the claim that he was the "Peter" in the book. He said he was unable to speak because he had since broken up with his girlfriend and did not want to involve her.

According to the book, the incident happened while "Peter and Jenny" were travelling along a Florida turnpike. Suddenly, they realised they were no longer on the same road and had jumped several miles closer to their destination, even though no time seemed to have elapsed.

He described the experience as the "strangest" event in his life. In the book he went on to explain that he only recovered his memory of what happened when, some time later, he underwent hypnosis. He then "recalled" how he and his girlfriend had been lifted from the ground in their car and how he had then walked on air into a metallic corridor in what seemed to be some sort of spacecraft. Shortly after, the experience ended with him returning to his car with "no immediate recollection" of what had happened.

The book makes it clear that he accepts that such recollections are not 100% reliable and he cannot say for certain that he was actually abducted. He says, however, that he believes it is highly likely. The book adds: "If the event occurred as Peter remembers then he was taken without consent and subjected to some truly bizarre experience."

His latest revelation will come as a further surprise for the ministry, where officials were amazed when he announced that his time collating their "X files" had convinced him that Earth was being visited by aliens.

They were sufficiently relaxed about his claims, however, to allow him to publish his first book, Open Skies, Closed Minds in 1995. Its success illustrates the huge interest generated by the subject of aliens visiting Earth, with hundreds of people claiming to have been abducted by travellers from space.

Jenny Randles, the former head of investigations at the British UFO Research Association, who remains one of Britain's leading "ufologists", said: "When I discovered that Nick had had an experience I was mildly surprised given his position as the government expert on UFOs.

"What surprised me more, though, is why he has never admitted to it before and why he chose to describe the incident as happening to somebody else.

"Clearly, the truth really is out there."

13

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● ***Some places on the trip may still be available. If you are interested in taking part contact Sarah Clarke at CARE International on: 0171 379 5247 or e-mail: clarke@uk.care.org***

PHOTOS: Ian Nelson, CS(



Wally Hunter.

. . . I don't think people have a raw deal here. The building does, however, need modernising, especially the heating system.

"I don't think open-plan offices are a very good idea because of the noise factor. It's





Brief Encounter

NAME:

Nick Pope

POSITION:

HEO in Fin Pol (Repayment) 2, Main Building

He's been described as MOD's answer to Fox Mulder. Here, Nick Pope, author of two best-selling books on alien encounters, turns his attention to the mysteries of the* Focus *questionnaire

1. What's the best advice you have ever received?
Stand up for your beliefs.

2. Name the historical character you most admire.
Winston Churchill.

3. What are you reading at the moment?
Dr Strangelove, I Presume by Michael Foot.

4. Is there one piece of criticism that sticks in your mind?
People tell me I speak too loudly.

5. Describe yourself in six words.
The real life Agent Fox Mulder.

6. What's your favourite piece of music?
Any relaxing, New Age Music.

7. Which career would you have followed if you hadn't pursued your current profession?
Journalism... or maybe the police.

8. Which part of your job gives you the most pleasure?
Making judgement calls.

9. And the least?
Simply having to refer people to a set of regulations.

10. What can you see from your window?
Part of the boiler system. Yuk!

11. What do you always carry with you to work?
My mobile phone (switched off in the building, of course!)

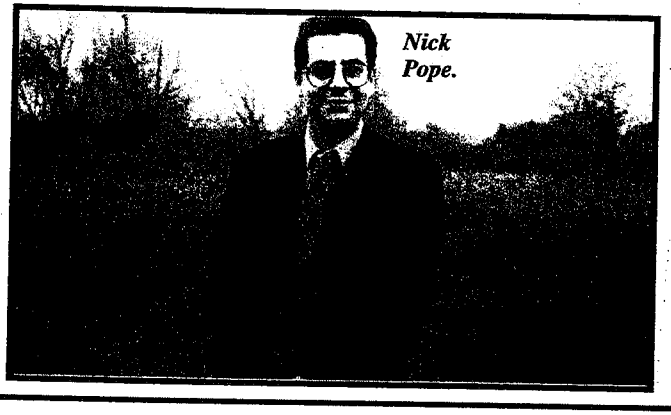
12. What's your pet hate?
People with closed minds.

13. How do you want to spend New Year's Eve 1999?
At the mother of all parties.

14. Who would you nominate as Man or Woman of the Millennium?
Stephen Hawking.

● Is there anyone you would like to see featured in Brief Encounter — or do you want to nominate yourself?

Write to Brief Encounter, Focus, Room 0316, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB, or telephone us on 82341MB; CHOTS: DICMT(FOCUS)2.



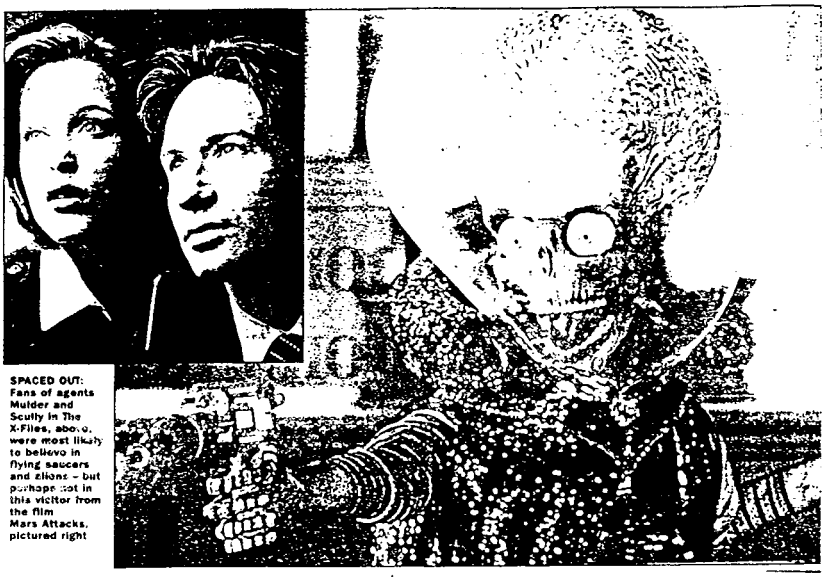
Nick Pope.

The Express
12 January 1999
Page 17

ENCLOSURE 94 NUMBER

You're a little green, men

58 per cent of males believe in aliens



SPACED OUT: Fans of agents Mulder and Scully in The X-Files, above, were most likely to believe in flying saucers and aliens – but perhaps not in this victim from the film Mars Attacks, pictured right

BY MICHAEL HANLON
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

FOX MULDER'S suspicion that the truth is out there is shared by the public, it seems.

More than half of us believe that alien intelligence exists – with more men than women showing their gullibility over little green visitors from far-off galaxies.

And nearly everyone thinks that if extra-terrestrials were visiting us our Government would do everything in its power to cover it up, according to a new survey.

Unsurprisingly, sci-fi fans, particularly enthusiasts of the TV series The X-Files, are most likely to assume a conspiracy, with 86 per cent expecting the Government to lie.

"Even people who do not believe in UFOs believe the Government wouldn't tell the truth if they knew there was alien life," said Paul Simpson, editor of Focus magazine, which polled more than 1,000 people.

Overall, more than 50 per cent of the UK population believes there is intelligent life on other worlds, while 14 per cent don't know. And while 58 per cent of men believe there is alien intelligence, the figure for women is just 43 per cent. "This was a finding we could not explain. Men tend to be slightly more cynical, so this is a bit contradictory," said Mr Simpson.

There were also marked differences in belief in aliens by age, and geographically. The biggest believers in alien intelligence live in the South West, where more than two-thirds think that we are not alone, while Londoners are the most sceptical. Pensioners were the least likely to accept the idea of extra-terrestrials. "A lot of scientists are coming to the view that alien life is out there," said Mr Simpson. "Our poll shows that belief in alien life is no longer only the preserve of the lunatic fringe."

Britain's own Fox Mulder is Nick Pope, a Ministry of Defence civil servant who investigated UFO sightings from 1991 to 1994. He says that in about "90 to 95 per cent of cases" he could explain away the alleged UFO sighting. But a small number of sightings "were really interesting, as far as I was concerned there was definitely an intelligence at work".

However, unlike agent Mulder, Mr Pope never had anyone trying to suppress his findings. "I never got anyone trying to shut me up. Never once did anyone have a quiet word with me to cover up a mysterious sighting. Never once did a witness say that mysterious men in black had turned up at their house after a sighting. There's a lot of paranoia out there.

"Of course, I have been accused of being part of the conspiracy myself, but you just can't win with these people."

Most scientists accept that alien life is almost a certainty, but point out that sending crewed spacecraft across interstellar space is so difficult, time-consuming and expensive that it is much more likely that aliens will choose to communicate with us using radio signals.

Meanwhile, American computer tycoon Joe Firmage has abandoned his £1.2billion business to search for UFOs.

He believes that recent advances in technology, from silicon chips, fibre optics and lasers can be traced back to alien hardware recovered from a spacecraft which allegedly crashed near Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947.

1

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EXPOSURE

Daily Mail, Thursday, January 21, 1999

After dinner, say cheese to keep a bright smile



Better bite: Cheese course of treatment

ROUNDING off dinner with the cheeseboard not only prolongs the meal — it could do the same for your smile.

A spot of stilton or cheddar, or whatever cheese you prefer, is just the thing to fight off tooth decay especially after a sugary dessert, according to the latest dental research.

The 'Wensleydale effect' stops those filling mouthfuls causing a mouth full of fillings by preventing bacteria around the gums turning sugar into acids that attack the teeth's enamel, a conference was told yesterday. Cheese is close to perfect because it contains fat and salt to stimulate acid-neutralising saliva and a combination of calcium and a milk protein which speed up natural repairs to the surface of the teeth.

By JENNY HOPE
Medical Correspondent

It is equally effective against acid from fruit, juices and soft drinks.

Scientific support for the cheeseboard was part of the British Nutrition Foundation's latest report, Oral Health: Diet and Other Factors, produced by a team of dental and nutrition experts and launched yesterday.

They also found that how frequently sugary foods were eaten was the most important factor in decay.

'What this means is that it is less what you eat, and more when you eat that affects the risk of tooth decay,' said Sarah Schenker, nutrition scientist at the foundation.

So the advice included a warning to keep away from the snack bar and concentrate eating at meal times. 'If you are eating sugar continually throughout the day there is little chance of your mouth returning to a neutral balance.'

Tucking into a stick of celery or a few grapes with the cheese will also help produce saliva and prevent decay, she said.

For those eating on the run a simple stick of chewing gum will bring down the dangerous acid levels.

Surprisingly, she suggests another perfect end to a good meal are chocolates , which have the same saliva-producing effect as cheese.

Zap go the space invaders

MYSTERIOUS explosions in space may be wiping out alien lifeforms before they have a chance to explore worlds such as Earth, a scientist claimed yesterday.

Gamma ray bursts, or GRBs, unleash devastating amounts of radiation in seconds. Many experts think they may occur when the remnants of dead stars, or black holes, collide.

James Annis, from the Fermilab U.S. Government laboratory in Chicago, told New Scientist magazine that these cataclysmic explosions may sterilise whole star systems, wiping out alien species before they have a chance to leave their home planets.

The rate of GRBs, about one per galaxy every few hundred million years, is believed to be slower than in the past, raising the intriguing possibility that aliens may at last have time to develop space travel.

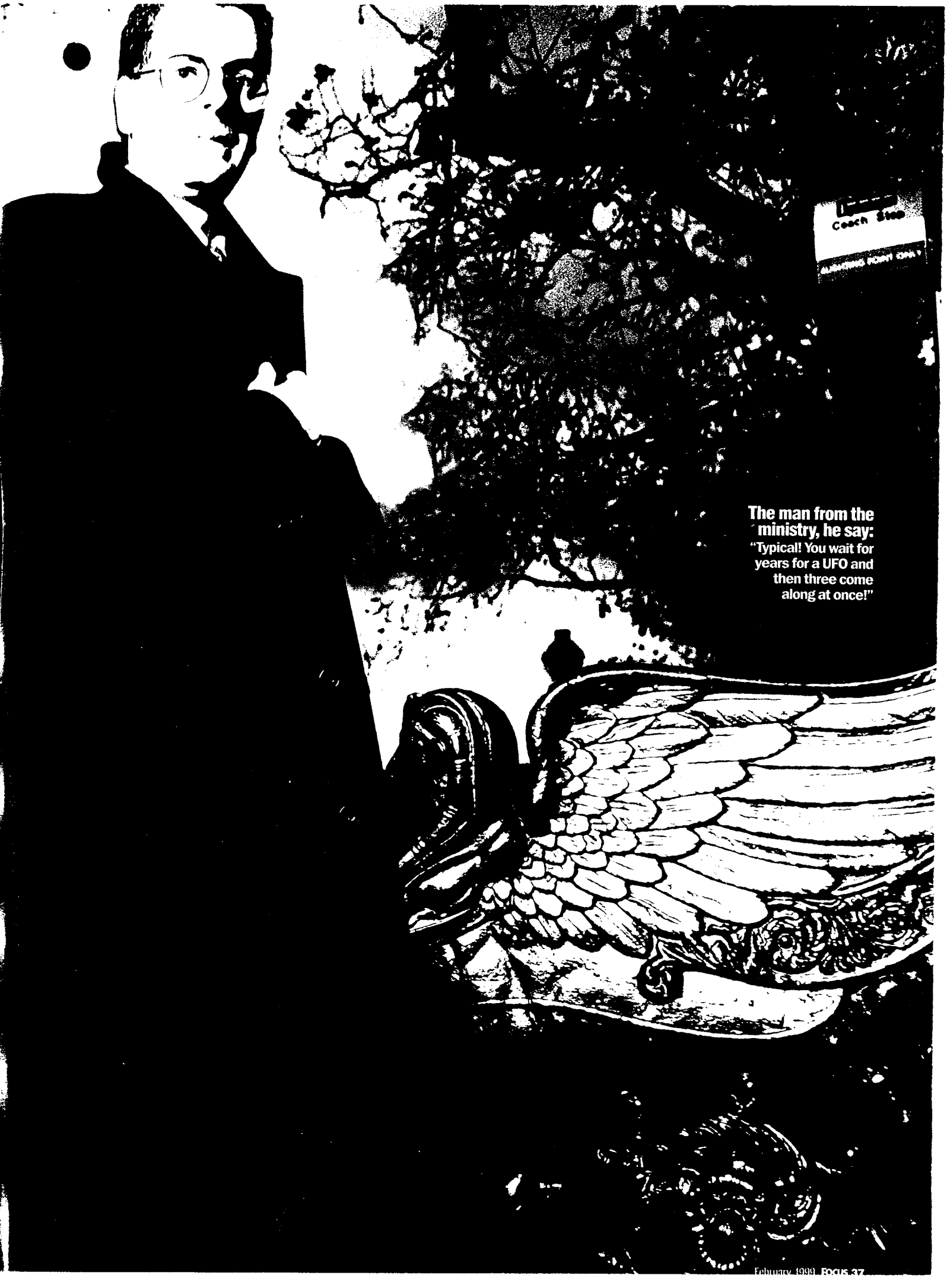
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Aliens exist! Official

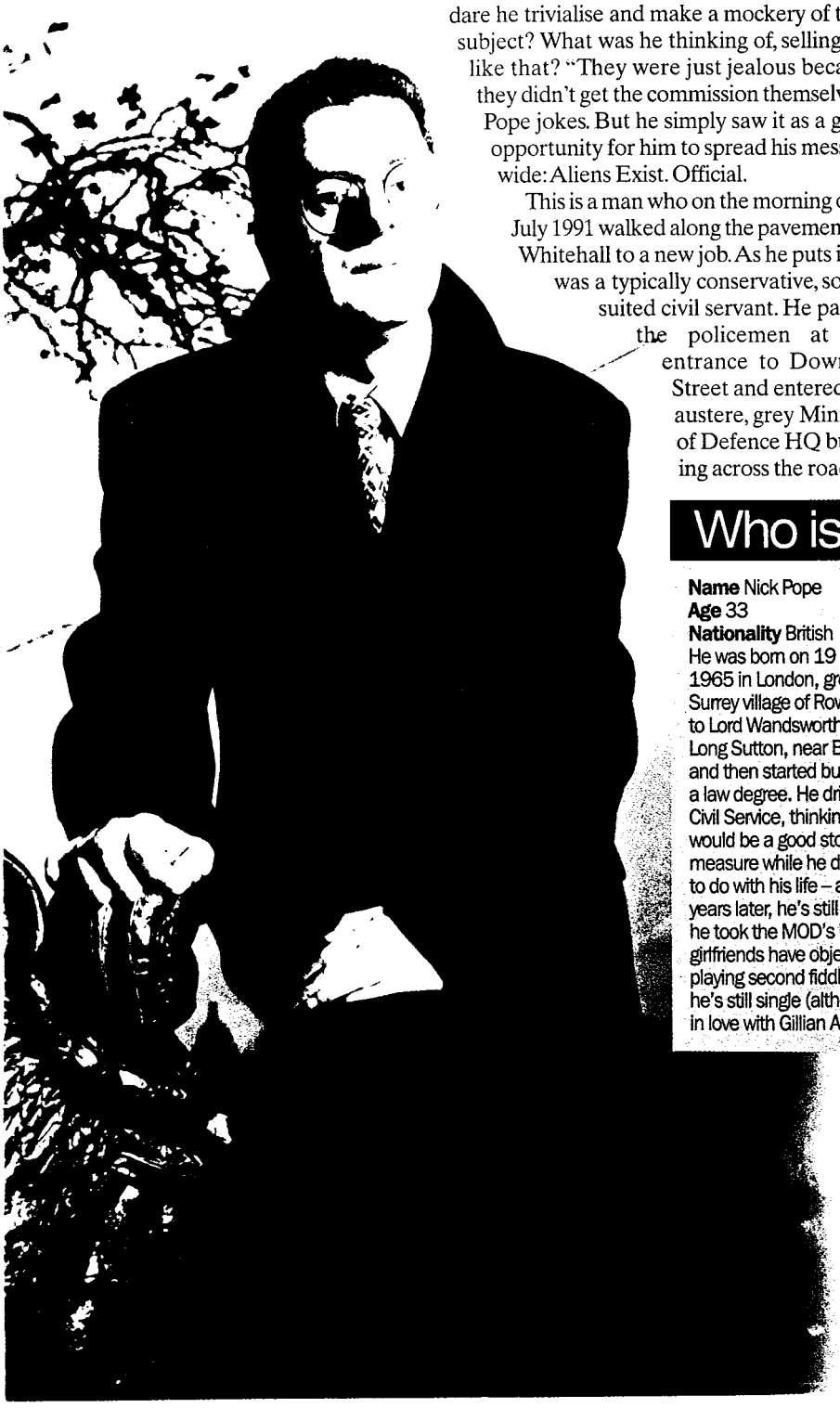
When Nick Pope was put in charge of investigating UFO sightings and alien abductions for the Ministry of Defence, he thought flying saucer buffs were mad. That is, until he turned into one. Emma Bayley meets Britain's real Fox Mulder





The man from the ministry, he say: "Typical! You wait for years for a UFO and then three come along at once!"

liens xist!



"Oh, I see. You've got me under the light so it looks like I have a UFO over my head," says Nick Pope as we take his picture on London's Embankment under a twilight sky. "Fine."

Kate Moss may have said she'd like to have a "one2one" with Elvis. But this guy decided that, despite being sorely tempted by Gillian Anderson, it would have to be with an alien. When the mobile phone radio ad aired, listeners heard Pope declare that he would ask the extraterrestrial creature where it was from, how long it had been here and what it wanted.

The UFO lobby were furious with him. How dare he trivialise and make a mockery of their subject? What was he thinking of, selling out like that? "They were just jealous because they didn't get the commission themselves," Pope jokes. But he simply saw it as a great opportunity for him to spread his message wide: Aliens Exist. Official.

This is a man who on the morning of 29 July 1991 walked along the pavements of Whitehall to a new job. As he puts it, he was a typically conservative, sober-suited civil servant. He passed the policemen at the entrance to Downing Street and entered the austere, grey Ministry of Defence HQ building across the road.

He had been working at the MOD for six years. But on this particular day he was moving within the department known as Secretariat (Air Staff) to the UFO desk (the only official post worldwide looking into sightings, a job he ended up doing for three years). He was pleased to have landed the position, even though he had no particular interest in UFOs.

"I thought it would involve dealing with a lot of strange people," he says. "I thought I would spend my days writing letters like: 'Dear Mr Smith, thank you for your letter concerning the strange lights you saw in the sky recently. I'm sure it's nothing to worry about. Now run along...' I could not have been more wrong."

We duck out of the rain and enter a bar called Walkers on a dimly lit backstreet off Whitehall. Pope tells me that this is where many MOD employees come drinking. We pass candlelit booths and huddles of suited folk engaged in earnest conversation (highly classified defence secrets perhaps?) and settle ourselves at a table.

Nick Pope is 33 years old, 5ft 8in tall, dark-haired and seems like an easy-going, down-to-earth guy. Dressed in a blue and white striped shirt and dark suit, he loosens the tie around his neck, takes a slug of his white wine, nudges a pair of dark-rimmed glasses up the bridge of his nose and begins the account of his conversion.

"My predecessors at the UFO Desk mainly replied to people who reported sightings by suggesting a conventional explanation like aircraft lights," he says. "But I decided to be more proactive than them.

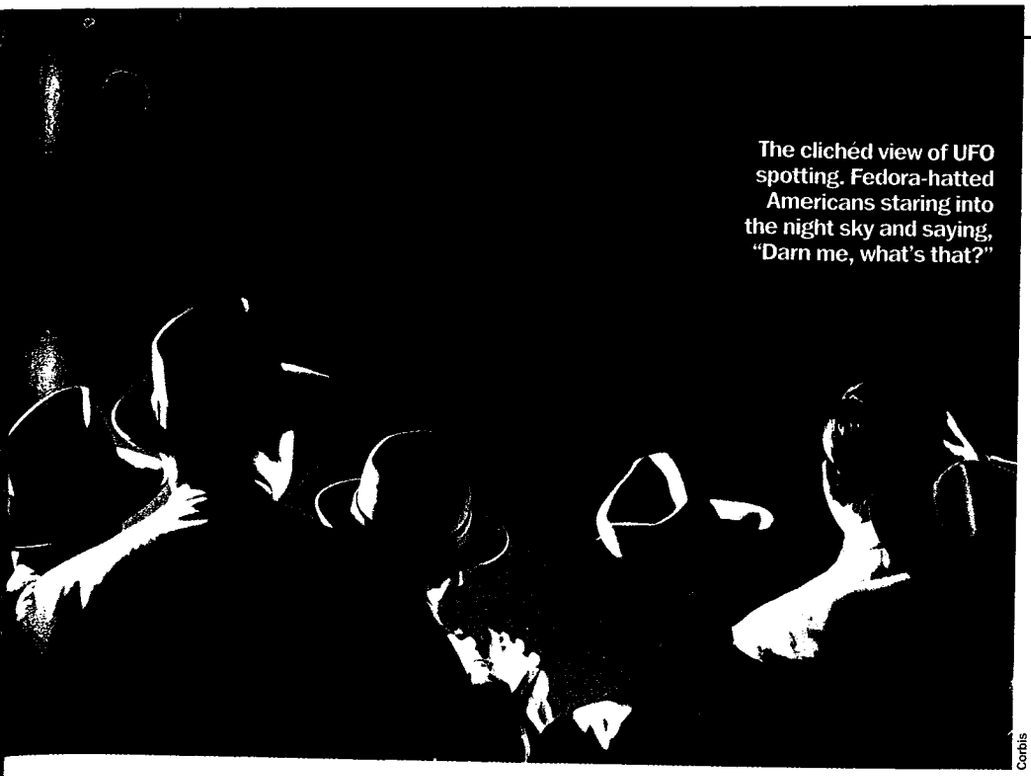
"Initially, this involved gathering information on, say, when and where Richard Branson flew his Virgin airships, or when and where military exercises, weather balloon launches, laser light displays or meteor events were due to take place." Amazingly, nobody in the job had done this before. This meant he could do more than suggest conventional explanations to UFO sightings, he could confirm 95 per cent of them.

But that still left five per cent unexplained. Considering 13 million people worldwide were reported to have seen 'something', 650,000 sightings were unaccounted for. Pope, being a methodical chap, felt he wouldn't be doing his job of protecting the defence of the realm properly unless he checked out at least the British incidents.

Earning a few raised eyebrows from fellow officials, he immersed himself in the literature on the subject – every book, report, paper and wacky UFO magazine he could lay his hands on. He made contact with every researcher and investigator who had ever touched on the phenomenon. "I wasn't swayed from my scepticism by others," he says. "What changed my mind were the cases I personally investigated."

Who is he?

Name Nick Pope
Age 33
Nationality British
He was born on 19 September 1965 in London, grew up in the Surrey village of Rowledge, went to Lord Wandsworth College in Long Sutton, near Basingstoke and then started but didn't finish a law degree. He drifted into the Civil Service, thinking that it would be a good stop-gap measure while he decided what to do with his life – almost 14 years later, he's still there. Since he took the MOD's UFO job, his girlfriends have objected to playing second fiddle to aliens so he's still single (although utterly in love with Gillian Anderson).



The clichéd view of UFO spotting. Fedora-hatted Americans staring into the night sky and saying, "Darn me, what's that?"

Corbis

There were two famous historic sightings which paved the way for his change of heart. The first one, known as Britain's Roswell, was the Rendelsham Forest incident.

At 3am on 27 December 1980, two security patrolmen, from the joint RAF/USAF airbase at Woodbridge in Suffolk, witnessed a 3x2m triangular metallic-looking object illuminating the coniferous woods with red and blue lights. When a team led by the deputy base commander, Lieut-Colonel Charles Halt, went to investigate the next day, they found dents in the ground and scorch marks up trees. But, most importantly, they saw the strange object for themselves. It conveniently returned for several hours before disappearing in a flurry of multicoloured pulsating lights into the blackness of space.

The team submitted a report to the MOD but it was never investigated in detail. Despite the object being seen by a number of trained military observers, it was judged to be of no defence significance. Case closed.

"It was a tragic missed opportunity," claims Pope. "Here was one of the most important sightings anywhere in the world and nobody interviewed witnesses or checked radar and radiation data. So I decided to reopen the investigation." When he checked the radiation taken by Halt and his team with the Defence Radiological Protection Service, he found that where the object had pressed into the ground, readings were ten times higher than normal.

Pope was a only few months into his job and already he was scratching his head. Could there be more to the UFO mystery than he thought? "I had not expected to find reports of military personnel seeing these things," he says. "It sounds patronising but I thought it was only people who'd had one too many down the pub."

The other well-known case that intrigued him was the wave of sightings over Belgium on the night of 30-31 March 1990. Both the Belgian gendarmerie and Nato picked up the object on their radar screens. Nato authorised the scrambling of two F-16 fighters. These jets, capable of 1,100mph, were airborne in minutes. But as fast as they locked the object onto their radar, it broke away at unbelievable speed. After a 75-minute aerial chase, it vanished completely.

A combination of public, police and pilot eyewitness accounts described a triangular formation of coloured lights on the underside of a huge craft. The Belgian government admitted it had no idea what it was.

"How can the same establishment that prints 'In God We Trust' on its banknotes close down a UFO research project for want of evidence?"

Exactly three years later, a similar wave of sightings occurred over Britain. When Pope came into work at 9am on 31 March 1993 he was inundated with witness reports. The most extraordinary account came from a meteorological officer at RAF Shawbury in Shropshire.

This man, who clearly knew his airships from his meteors, saw a triangular object the size of a Jumbo jet flying erratically towards him at several hundred miles an hour. It swept a beam of light over the ground as if looking for something and then shot off at high speed, moving from about 30mph to a speed several times that of an RAF jet in an instant.

"What was I meant to say to the man?" asks Pope, waving his wine glass. "I could hardly suggest he might have seen Branson's airship."

Perhaps it was a secret American aircraft, I venture. "Nonsense," he snaps. "You do not fly into another nation's airspace, undermining diplomatic relations and the whole fabric of Nato, and risking engagement by that country's air defence network just to try out a shiny new toy. As an insider, I can tell you, it simply does not happen like that."

So what did he think it was then? "A real UFO. It was a bit of kit a quantum leap ahead of anything even on our drawing boards. Cases like this convinced me that an extraterrestrial explanation best fits the facts. There was simply nothing else it could be."

Pope conducted a two-week investigation and sent a report to the assistant chief of air staff. MOD officials agreed with him – the case could not be explained. But they did not agree that it constituted a defence threat.

"To me, that was so wrong-headed, it was laughable," he says. "These people had their heads in the sand. They just repeated parrot-fashion: 'UFOs – no defence significance,' giving no thought to how ridiculous that made them sound. It's a nonsense to write this off as being of no defence significance."

Conspiracy theorists may suggest shady dealings but Pope has no time for suggestions of cover-ups. "Several officials thought I was digging in areas best left untouched," he says. "But this was not because they were hiding a secret. It comes down to ignorance, prejudice and belief systems. People find it frightening to have research which suggests we are not alone, shattering their cosy view of the world."

Although Pope is adamant that there has not been any cover-up activity in Britain, he cannot be so sure about the States: "I'm more inclined to believe there are things which haven't emerged there. But I don't want to level any direct accusations of a cover-up because I have not been involved on an official level."

Does Roswell not make him suspicious? "Roswell has turned into something of an industry. But there's no getting away from the fact an awful lot of eyewitnesses saw something very strange there. The trouble is, now the case is 50 years old, the number of witnesses who are still alive is small and declining. So it's incredibly difficult to be certain about it."

There used to be an official line of inquiry in the States similar to that managed by Pope in Britain. From 1948, Dr J Allen Hynek, Professor of Astronomy at Northwestern ▶

lens kist!



Portraits by Steve Orino

Pope claims masses of RAF personnel have secretly told him they have seen UFOs, but fear they'd be ridiculed

▶ University, Illinois, was employed by the US Air Force over a 20-year period to head up two research projects into UFOs – 'Sign' and 'Blue Book'. Hynek too became convinced that the phenomenon was genuine.

But in 1969, Blue Book was closed down due to lack of proof of UFOs. Pope is withering about this: "I don't mean to be blasphemous, but how can the same establishment that prints 'In God We Trust' on its banknotes close down Project Blue Book for the want of evidence? Excuse me! Am I the only person who thinks that's a little bit hypocritical?"

It becomes clear how Nick Pope earned his nickname of the real Fox Mulder (which, he says, half-flatters, half-irritates him because it trivialises the serious side of his work). Not only did this sceptic, employed by the government to investigate UFOs, start believing in the phenomenon, but he became widely regarded as an outspoken maverick on the subject.

But if he was sceptical about UFO sightings at first, he was plain annoyed with people who suggested they had been inside them. How was he meant to do serious, respectable research into unexplained craft when there were nutters bringing the subject into disrepute with their half-baked notions of alien abductions and intergalactic breeding programmes?

Realising that there could be something in UFOs changed all that. Suddenly Pope realised that 'transport' was a secondary concern. As he puts it, if the Queen's motor drives up outside your house, you don't faff around examining her wheels, you find out what the hell's she's doing there. Horrified at how dismissive he had been of reports of alien abductions before his UFO revelation in 1993, he set about trying to make amends with these victims. Slowly, wor got out that the man from the ministry was now prepared to hear your tale, however bizarre.

He spent hours with hundreds of individuals, listening carefully while they unravelled their

UFOs? Three unexplained British sightings

Reports of strange craft with weird lights are not so easily dismissed when observers include crowds in traffic jams, civilian aircraft pilots and the military. As the RAF station commander said, "Most unusual..."

December 1993

A large triangular craft with weird lights was spotted by a number of people in Lincolnshire over an area near the sea which afterwards became known as the Louth Triangle. A huge traffic jam formed along the coast road caused by people getting out of their cars to stare at the strange object. The station commander of the local RAF base was one of them. He later reported: "I tried to be rational with the situation but certainly could not say what it was. Most unusual. Most unusual."

21 April, 15 July 1991

On both these dates pilots flying civilian aircraft over Kent experienced near misses with unidentified objects. The first pilot, flying an Italian MD80 out of Lydd airport near Romney, reported that a grey, missile-like object flashed past his plane at 22,000ft. A radar blip confirmed they had come within a few feet of being blasted out of the sky. The second pilot, flying a Boeing 737, saw a black 'lozenge-shape' object virtually scrape his wing tip.

6 January 1995

A British Airways passenger jet on its way from Milan to Manchester, was overtaken by a wedge-shaped craft just above the clouds when visibility was ten miles. The object, which was covered with small white lights and possibly a black stripe down its side, flashed silently past at such a speed that the co-pilot ducked as it went by. A year-long investigation could not explain the incident.



strange stories. They were often so traumatised by the memories that they broke down, sobbing hysterically on his shoulder. As he emphasises, each case is unique (don't think all aliens are grey, one was reported as being pink) but there are marked similarities between them.

Many experiences take place on a lonely road at night where an instant of disorientation and sleepiness is followed by the realisation that the journey has taken a good few hours longer than it should have done. Sleep is haunted by nightmares of insects with huge black eyes. Reports later emerge, sometimes through hypnosis, of being taken onto a spacecraft and subjected to medical procedures often sexual in nature, with physical scars to show for it.

Particularly interesting to Pope are city reports. He tells the story of Patsy (a pseudonym) who was sunbathing in a London park one afternoon when suddenly she found herself floating above her body. "Sure, it could have been a dream or a hallucination," Pope admits. "But she came away from the event with a huge scar on her inner thigh which left her unable to walk without sticks and left doctors baffled."

The scars do indicate that something has happened in the physical rather than the purely psychological realm. But it seems incredibly far-fetched to suggest that this is due to alien intervention. Perhaps, hysteria – where hidden psychological traumas manifest themselves physically – could be the key. Or some sort of instability in the brain. Canadian psychologist, Michael Persinger, has shown that stimulation of the temporal lobes can create a fearful impression of a strange presence along with sensations of ascending into the air.

Pope admits that, unlike the UFO phenomenon, there are no videos, photos, radar or radiation reports to back up the accounts. But he is quick to emphasise the straightforward nature of these people, who rarely have any history of mental disorders. He quotes an experiment conducted by Dr Elizabeth Slater in 1983 who after testing a group of abductees against a control group, concluded they showed no signs of psychopathology.



PA News

Manchester Airport: curiously a UFO was reported as heading at high speed in the opposite direction

The general consensus today (including the views of astronomers and astrophysicists) is that with potentially millions of habitable planets out there, life must exist elsewhere in the universe. But few of us honestly believe it has paid Earth a visit, let alone carried out abductions. Perhaps, as Pope suggests with the titles of his two books on the subject, *Open Skies, Closed Minds* and *The Uninvited*, we are in collective denial because we simply cannot get our heads around the reality of extraterrestrial visitors.

Pope claims that huge numbers of RAF personnel have secretly told him they have seen UFOs – he's very envious of them, as he's never seen one ("yet," he adds optimistically). But they fear the ridicule of going public. As one said to him: "I don't fancy being known as Flying Saucer Fred for the rest of my career." But apparently awareness in the higher echelons of power is on the increase. "In the last two years, there have been 30-40 questions tabled in parliament about UFOs. Look in *Hansard*," he says.

In a face-to-face situation Pope presents some convincing arguments. But one concern is that he has become so involved in the subject, it is hard for him to remain objective. "I suppose that's a fair point," he replies. "But you might as well say Stephen Hawking is so involved in black holes that he can't write any further papers on them." Fair point.



May we see your licence?
Mankind's first line of defence against aliens isn't a missile system, it's the sphere of electromagnetic radiation from TV and radio signals surrounding the Earth. Already 50 light-years in radius, it's expanding at the speed of light. Any aliens heading for Earth will, if they reach Alpha Centauri now, be bombarded with digital images of a pink-and-yellow monster saying "Blobby, blobby, blobby". If that doesn't convince them to turn back, nothing will.

Steve Cross for Focus

Pope does a different job at the MOD now (he can't say what, only that it is a promotion), but still spends many hours every week dealing with cases of alien abduction in his spare time, listening and helping the 'victims' to overcome their trauma. He's also writing a technothriller, *Operation Thunder Child*, about how the government reacts to a proven alien presence on Earth. It's due to be published in the autumn.

Whilst pointing out that we have a lot more evidence for the existence of aliens than the existence of God – "How many radar readings of God are there?" – Pope admits that until they land on the White House lawn ("Imagine the fights over first interviews and exclusive book deals"), the jury will remain out.

He's not trying to shovel his views down our throats, just challenge us to take note of the facts. "Like a jury on a borderline case, you must weigh up the evidence. That's all I ask. Weigh up the evidence for UFOs and alien abductions and tell me: How likely does this sound?" ■

Truckers target Cabinet in 'gridlock' fuel protest

By Vincent Moss
Political Reporter

PROTESTING lorry drivers will bring chaos to Britain's roads by parking their trucks outside the offices of more than 50 MPs.

Prime Minister Tony Blair, Chancellor Gordon Brown and Transport and Environment Secretary John Prescott will be among those targeted in the demonstration against rises in fuel tax.

Hauliers plan to leave their vehicles outside the constituency headquarters of senior Ministers and MPs in marginal seats to highlight their case.

The protest will leave dozens of town centres gridlocked as drivers refuse to move their lorries until they have made their point.

The move comes amid angry complaints from hauliers that the 'excessive' level of fuel duty is driving many of their businesses to the wall.

A full tank of diesel costs a British driver an average of £255 — but just £156 in France and £150 in Germany.

Not only can Continental drivers fill up before handling deliveries in southern Britain, but their lower operating costs at home make for a healthy industry while British rivals struggle.

No date has been fixed yet for the nationwide protests, but they are scheduled to take place before the Chancellor's Spring Budget.

The Road Haulage Association, which represents 100,000 drivers, has predicted that Mr Brown's intention to raise fuel by three times the rate of inflation will cost thousands of British jobs.

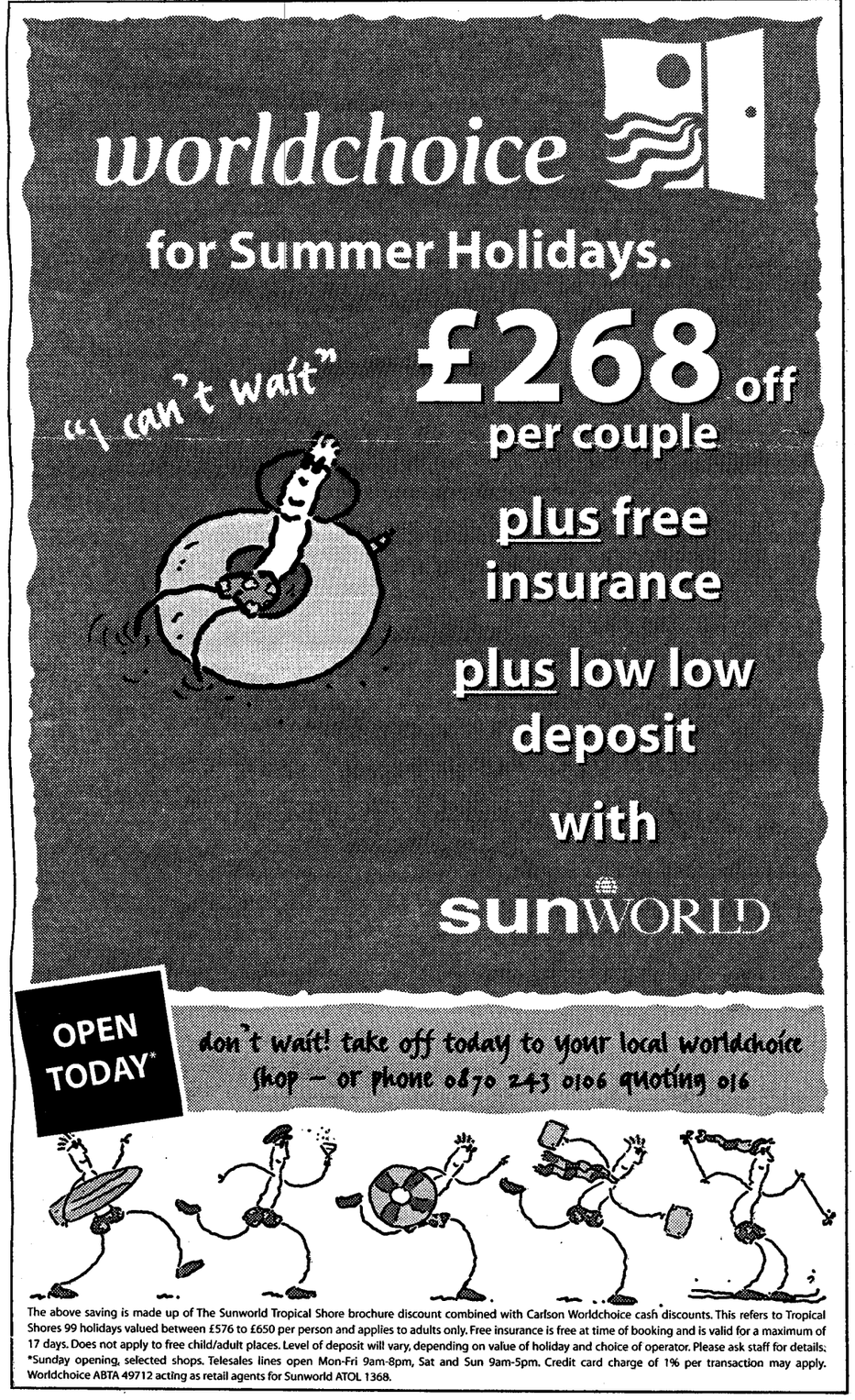
Apart from hitting a handful of Cabinet Ministers, the protests will focus on MPs with a majority of fewer than 1,500 — the number of lorry drivers estimated to live in every constituency.

RHA spokesman Dan Hodges said: 'Our protest will remind MPs that hauliers don't just provide a vital service, they keep many politicians in their jobs.

'We want to know what MPs are prepared to do to help the haulage industry.

'We are not frightened of fair competition.

'But the Government's policy of hiking up fuel duty means our members are being forced to compete against foreign drivers with one hand tied behind their backs.'



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How we

It was the world's most convincing evidence of UFOs. Now The Mail on Sunday can reveal this film was made in a Bedfordshire barn by two Milton Keynes karaoke video producers

By Nick Fielding
Chief Investigative Reporter

THE figures are hazy, the light poor, but there appears to be no doubt. Lying on a table, covered in a white fabric, is an alien, its skin grey and staring black eyes expressionless.

Two people hover around the extra-terrestrial and one of them begins to cut the fabric and remove handfuls of innards. Another, dressed in a long coat, appears fleetingly. This, according to those in the know, was US President Harry Truman.

And then, after little more than a minute and a half, the grainy black and white film ends. Some versions contain a security coding in a corner: 'Restricted Access. AO1 Classification. Subject 1 of 2. July 30th 1947'.

The so-called 'tent footage' purports to be an examination of an alien recovered from a spacecraft which crashed near the isolated New Mexico town of Roswell in 1947.

These few seconds of video, which first appeared in 1994, and another better-known segment of film – the 'alien autopsy' footage which appeared a year later – have intrigued UFO enthusiasts and generated lengthy debate on the Internet.

They have been shown on countless TV stations and subjected to every conceivable test to discredit them. Yet despite detailed analysis – down to the types of table lamps and clocks on the walls – no one has been able to crack the mystery of where they came from. Until now.

For we can reveal that the Roswell tent footage was shot in a barn in Bedfordshire by two men whose previous claims to fame included karaoke videos and another which featured animals singing nursery rhymes.

The official story, promoted by London-based video producer Ray Santilli, is that both films were shot by an anonymous former US army cameraman. Santilli claimed he had been offered the footage by the cameraman when he had been searching in the US for early film of Elvis Presley.

'We could hardly stop laughing'

The truth, according to video producers Keith Bateman and Andy Price-Watts, is somewhat different.

Bateman and Price-Watts, whose company, AK Music, is based in Milton Keynes, say that in the summer of 1994 they were approached by Santilli, who they had known for many years and who occasionally bought some of their bizarre videos.

Santilli told them he had a video of aliens, but it was of poor quality. Could they enhance it?

They tried, but could get nothing from the film. Santilli was disappointed and the matter was dropped. But knowing Santilli was in the market for this kind of material, Bateman and Price-Watts decided to try to make their own version.

Their research led them to a story already well established in UFO mythology – of how, after a spacecraft had supposedly crashed at Roswell, an alien had been taken to a barn nearby where a medical examination had taken place. President Truman was rumoured to have visited during the operation.

'We found a barn in the quiet village of Ridgmont, Bedfordshire, through a farmer I knew,' says Andy Price-Watts. 'I had an old paraffin lamp and we brought along a table, some sheets, overalls and rubber gloves.

'We filmed it in the evening to make it look as if it had been shot in the dark. The gloves – Marigolds – looked too modern so we had to discard them. We tried to get a mannequin from a local store, but it was impossible. Elstree Studios offered to make us one for £25,000, which was ludicrous.

'In the end we used a wig holder we bought for a few quid, which Elliot Willis, our tape operator, transformed using painted orange peel for the eyes. Elliot and the local butcher, Roger Baker, played the two medical staff. Roger got the part because he could supply the chicken guts we used as the alien's innards.

'We were thinking of using pig guts, but they looked too human.'

As they were filming, the farmer walked in to see what they were doing. 'I suddenly thought we could use him,' says Bateman. 'There was an old scarecrow in the corner of the barn and we got the coat from it, put it on him and he had a little cameo role as President Truman. We could hardly stop ourselves laughing as we shot the video, which took about an hour and a half to complete.'

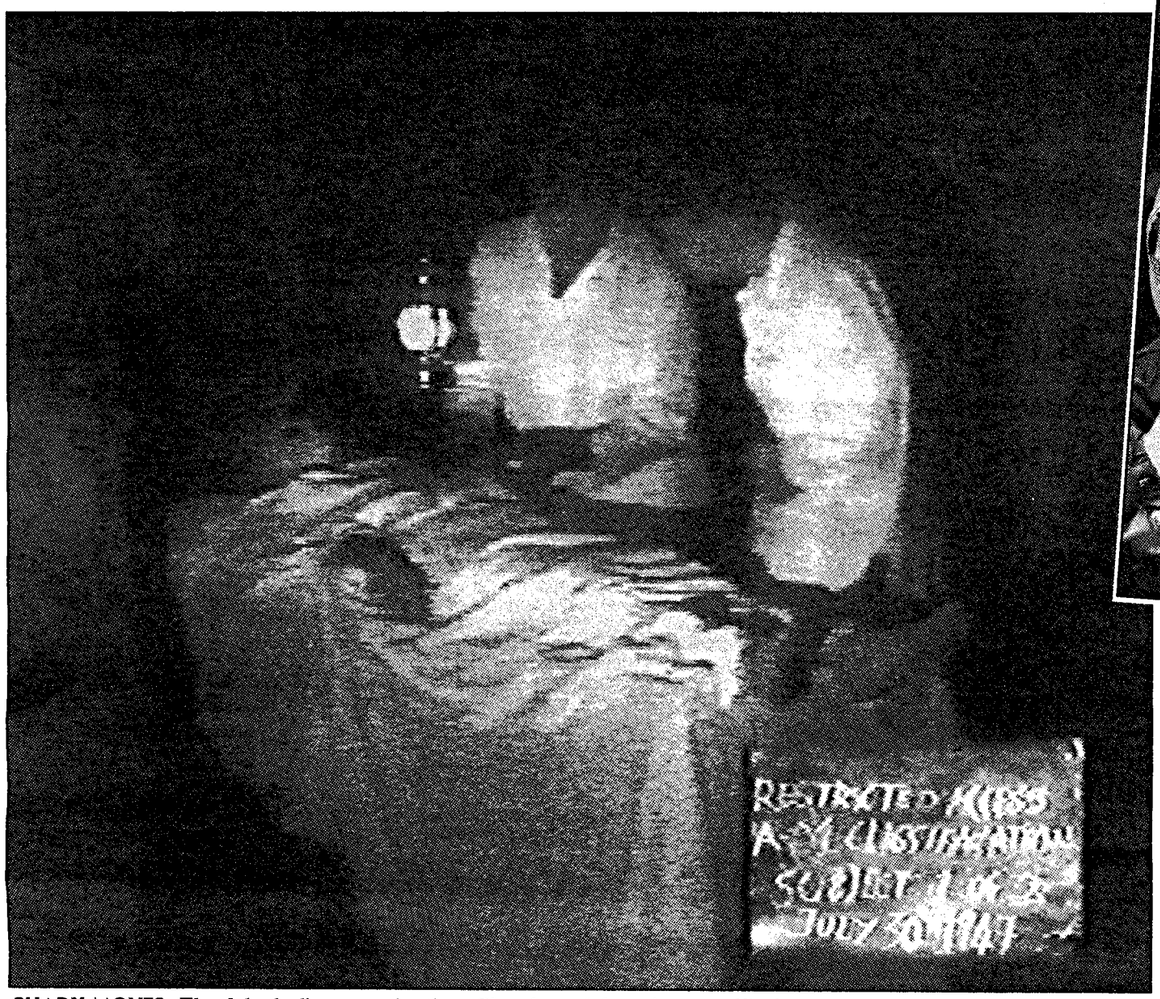
Andy Price-Watts's 12-year-old son played the alien, with his head covered by the sheet and the dummy head placed on top.

'We used a Sony video camera on a tripod and kept jogging it to give the impression it was being held,' says Andy. 'The strange camera angles added to the veracity of the film'.

The resulting film was edited down to six minutes. Shot in colour, it was processed to black and white and animators in the studio drew scratch lines on computer and overlaid this on to the film. It was then transferred between different video formats to make it as grainy as possible.

'We then went to see Santilli and told him we had some alien footage which we had bought in the States,' says Bateman. 'He told us we had been

faked alien autopsy

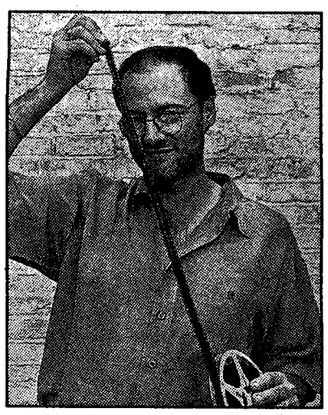


SHADY MOVES: The faked alien examination, filmed at night using paraffin lamps and a scarecrow's coat as props



BARRY BEATTIE

UNMASKED: Bateman with the 'alien' head made from a wig holder



FILM LAUNCH: Ray Santilli



UNDERCOVER OPERATION: Scene of the 'alien' encounter

conned and didn't think it was very good. He said it should have been clearer and should also have had a restricted notice on it.'

Bateman got the film back, superimposed the bogus classification message and sent it back to Santilli, who told the two men he could not use it.

Early in 1995, Bateman says, he was surprised to hear Santilli's friend and UFO enthusiast Reg Presley of Sixties pop group The Troggs mention the tent footage in an interview.

Despite having rejected their film, Santilli refused at this time to criticise it in public.

That summer, Bateman and Price-Watts decided to put their film out on a video being made by producer Bruce Barlow called Penetrating The Web 2. 'In the meantime Santilli had apparently acquired his alien autopsy film and, unknown to us, was planning a huge media launch in about a dozen different countries,' says Price-Watts.

'I had already got a slot on GMTV to talk about our film and when Ray heard about this he was not pleased. He flew back from a holiday in America and came straight to our offices, telling us our film would mess up his launch.

'He offered to pay us if we agreed not to promote the film for 10 weeks, which we agreed to.'

With his potential competitors out of the way, Santilli launched the main autopsy film around the world. Of much better quality than the tent footage, it purports to show an autopsy taking place in an operating theatre.

Despite knowing the background to the tent footage, Santilli adopted an ambiguous attitude to it.

'The first piece of film I saw at Santilli's office was the tent footage', says independent UFO researcher Philip Mantle. 'He said it came from a "scrap reel" from the army cameraman. It had been processed by some friends of his, but when he had taken it to America and shown it to the cameraman after processing, the man said he did not recognise segments of it.

'Only later did he admit it had been tampered with, although it now appears it was shot entirely in the UK.'

On numerous other occasions Santilli failed to state the truth about the tent footage, namely that it had been faked by people he knew.

In June 1995, for example, when asked during an Internet UFO conference if the people in the tent footage had been identified as actors or military personnel, he replied: 'Those seen in the tent footage have not yet been identified, but in time I am sure they will.'

The story resurfaced last year when a former colleague of Bateman and Price-Watts published some details on the Internet.

Bateman says the pair were pestered with calls, letters and e-mails after their names and addresses were published on the Internet and he even moved home after becoming worried about the safety of his family.

'That is why we have decided to talk now. We are fed up with the crazy UFO nuts for whom this story is the centre of their lives.'

Graham Birdsall, editor of UFO magazine, said most UFO researchers would be unsurprised to learn the tent footage had been faked.

He added: 'It clearly casts even more doubt on the so-called alien autopsy footage. It may only be a matter of time before the whole story comes out.'

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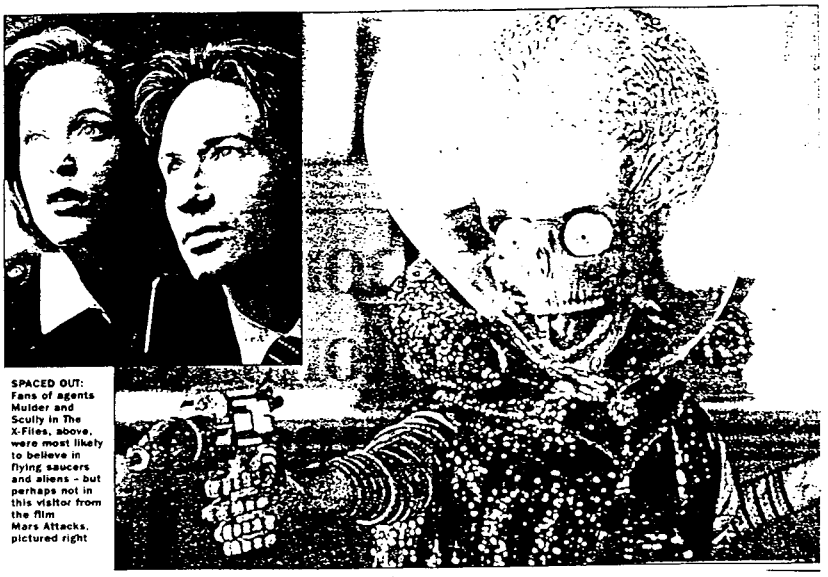
The Express
12 January 1999
Page 17

6415

ENCLOSURE 90 NUMBER

You're a little green, men

58 per cent of males believe in aliens



SPACED OUT: Fans of agents Mulder and Scully in The X-Files, above, were most likely to believe in flying saucers and aliens - but perhaps not in this visitor from the film Mars Attacks, pictured right

BY MICHAEL HANLON
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

FOX MULDER'S suspicion that the truth is out there is shared by the public, it seems.

More than half of us believe that alien intelligence exists – with more men than women showing their gullibility over little green visitors from far-off galaxies.

And nearly everyone thinks that if extra-terrestrials were visiting us our Government would do everything in its power to cover it up, according to a new survey.

Unsurprisingly, sci-fi fans, particularly enthusiasts of the TV series The X-Files, are most likely to assume a conspiracy, with 86 per cent expecting the Government to lie.

"Even people who do not believe in UFOs believe the Government wouldn't tell the truth if they knew there was alien life," said Paul Simpson, editor of Focus magazine, which polled more than 1,000 people.

Overall, more than 50 per cent of the UK population believes there is intelligent life on other worlds, while 14 per cent don't know. And while 58 per cent of men believe there is alien intelligence, the figure for women is just 43 per cent. "This was a finding we could not explain. Men tend to be slightly more cynical, so this is a bit contradictory," said Mr Simpson.

There were also marked differences in belief in aliens by age, and geographically. The biggest believers in alien intelligence live in the South West, where more than two-thirds think that we are not alone, while Londoners are the most sceptical. Pensioners were the least likely to accept the idea of extra-terrestrials. "A lot of scientists are coming to the view that alien life is out there," said Mr Simpson. "Our poll shows that belief in alien life is no longer only the preserve of the lunatic fringe."

Britain's own Fox Mulder is Nick Pope, a Ministry of Defence civil servant who investigated UFO sightings from 1991 to 1994. He says that in about "90 to 95 per cent of cases" he could explain away the alleged UFO sighting. But a small number of sightings "were really interesting, as far as I was concerned there was definitely an intelligence at work".

However, unlike agent Mulder, Mr Pope never had anyone trying to suppress his findings. "I never got anyone trying to shut me up. Never once did anyone have a quiet word with me to cover up a mysterious sighting. Never once did a witness say that mysterious men in black had turned up at their house after a sighting. There's a lot of paranoia out there.

"Of course, I have been accused of being part of the conspiracy myself, but you just can't win with these people."

Most scientists accept that alien life is almost a certainty, but point out that sending crewed spacecraft across interstellar space is so difficult, time-consuming and expensive that it is much more likely that aliens will choose to communicate with us using radio signals.

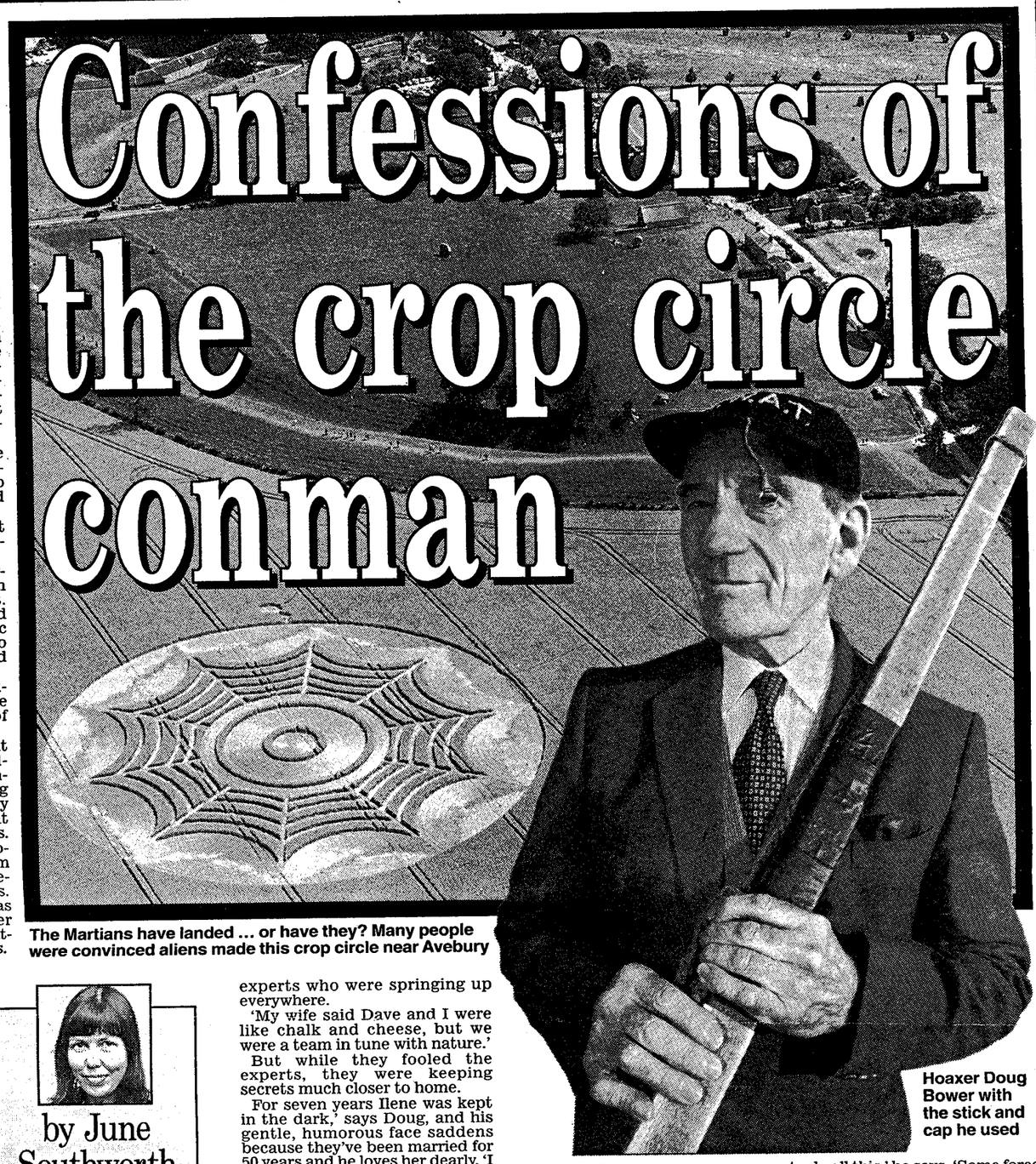
Meanwhile, American computer tycoon Joe Firmage has abandoned his £1.2billion business to search for UFOs.

He believes that recent advances in technology, from silicon chips, fibre optics and lasers can be traced back to alien hardware recovered from a spacecraft which allegedly crashed near Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947.

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Confessions of the crop circle conman



The Martians have landed ... or have they? Many people were convinced aliens made this crop circle near Avebury

Hoaxer Doug Bower with the stick and cap he used

by June Southworth

THE TWO middle-aged likely lads used to meet every Friday at the Percy Hobbs pub near Winchester to sit in their usual corner, sipping ale and showing each other their latest watercolours.

But, on a lovely summer day 20 years ago, they changed the routine. Clutching their cheese rolls and pints of ale, they strode out to look at the surrounding cornfields.

And that was when Doug Bower and Dave Chorley became two of the most successful con artists the world has ever seen.

Doug looked at the rolling fields of corn and recalled a story he had read when he and his wife Ilene had emigrated to Australia in 1958, staying for eight years. Mysterious circles had appeared like alien graffiti in a field of corn in Queensland, and it had started speculation of spacecraft landings and UFOs.

'How would you like a bit of a laugh,' he asked Dave. They went to Doug's picture-framing shop in Southampton, picked up the iron bar he used to secure the door and returned in the night to the cornfields.

While Dave stood on one end of the 5ft bar, Doug pulled it around in a circle, bending the corn carefully as he went.

For two years the growing number of circles — usually 80ft across — appearing in these flat fields excited little comment. Dave wanted to quit but Doug promised him that, one day, there would be traffic jams and hundreds of people lined up to see their crop circles while policemen tried to hold them back.

He was right. Today, there are still credulous people who believe that Martians have landed, leaving behind the evidence of their arrival engraved in the corn.

Some 40 books have been written about the phenomenon, notably Patrick Delgado's bestseller Circular Evidence. Farmers have made small fortunes charging enthusiasts from all over the world entry fees to see the latest manifestation that time-travellers have left their calling-cards.

Explanations of the increasingly elaborate geometric patterns have ranged from spiralling wind vortices to rutting hedgehogs dementedly running round in circles.

For 13 years, Doug and Dave laughed as the experts stepped deeper and deeper into the mire 'explaining' the beautiful patterns to an ever-growing army of pilgrims.

For the first seven years Doug and Dave didn't even tell their wives that they were responsible for a craze that had gripped the nation.

Dave died two years ago and Doug, now 74, stands alone, looking out over the Devil's Punchbowl at Cheesefoot Head, a 200ft green hollow in an area of outstanding natural beauty near Winchester in Hampshire.

AFTER two years of obscurity this was the turning point for us ,' he says, a fond light in his eyes, his calm centre quickening with excitement.

'I realised that for people to really take note of our circles we needed a site with a viewpoint, so people could sit having picnics and look down in wonder on our work.

One day I was driving past with Ilene and I noticed that corn was being planted here for the first time. Dave and I couldn't wait for the crop to grow. One summer night we came here and made a crop circle.

'Twenty-four hours later it was on the television news.'

Along came the 'experts'. It became an obsession for them, for the public and for the two likely lads.

'Eventually,' says Doug, 'we found ourselves shoulder-to-shoulder with the experts as thousands of people lay down in the circles to absorb the "cosmic energy".

'I've been making nature recordings at night for 25 years, so I offered to keep my eyes open for more circles. We'd make a circle at night, then I'd ring up the experts the next morning to say I'd spotted another one. We did 200, mostly around Warminster in Wiltshire because it was a well-known centre for UFO sightings.'

When an Oxford meteorologist came up with a theory that downward-spiralling winds were creating a vortex that flattened crops with its circular movement they were pushed into more elaborate designs, with dead straight passages linking circles and decorative 'ladders' that, coincidentally, resembled designs made by the Hopi Indians of North America.

Doug used to sketch them out in his studio workshop, then they would take their plank and rope to a cornfield. Doug would walk around with the rope in ever-increasing circles and make a passageway leading to another identical circle.

To keep the passage line straight, Doug used a baseball cap with a hole in the visor. A wire, twisted so that it formed a circle, dangled over his left eye. He would look through this 'sight' to help him move in a straight line to where the pair would repeat the first circle.

Unlike the copy-cat pranksters who would use stilts to avoid leaving tell-tale access tracks, they simply moved in a high-stepping, loping course that left no trace.

Any Martian watching them at work would have been sorely bemused. For Doug and Dave, they were magical nights.

'It was just pure enjoyment,' he recalls, 'on those beautiful summer nights for two artistic people under the stars amid all those cornfields. We were both 19th-century people really. We were in another world.

'I don't consider being on a planet for 60 years is much use if you don't leave your mark. We didn't want to make publicity. We just wanted to make fools of the experts who were springing up everywhere.

'My wife said Dave and I were like chalk and cheese, but we were a team in tune with nature.'

But while they fooled the experts, they were keeping secrets much closer to home.

For seven years Ilene was kept in the dark,' says Doug, and his gentle, humorous face saddens because they've been married for 50 years and he loves her dearly. 'I was such a perfectionist you see, and keeping the secret was all a part of that.'

Doug and Ilene had met at a village wedding party in 1948 and he had wooed her with bunches of sweet peas he had grown himself and gifts of his lovely watercolour paintings.

At first Ilene had been surprised, and then delighted to find the rich sense of humour behind Doug's serious face. but over the years of their happy but childless marriage, she had grown used to the twinkle in his eye and accepted those 'boys-night-out Fridays'.

SHE never for a moment thought he could be seeing another woman, but she was his bookkeeper and became increasingly puzzled by the frequency with which his car needed servicing. When she realised there was 26,000 miles a year on the clock at a time when their Saturday picnic excursions were getting shorter and shorter, she asked for an explanation.

It was then he confessed that he was the strictly earthbound creator of the now famous crop circles. She was unconvinced. It just didn't seem possible. He dumped an enormous pile of crop circle cuttings in front of her together with his original designs. When that didn't work he persuaded her to design a crop circle and took her with him while he created it in a cornfield. It became their shared secret for another six years until Doug and Dave attempted to confess to the world in 1991 through a newspaper series.

By then he had even created a crop circle next to the home of former Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey. The great man photographed it and the picture was used in the Daily Mail under the headline 'Healey's Comet'.

The day before his confession, Doug had the good grace to go round to Patrick Delgado to warn him. It was the worst day of Delgado's life, but he accepted defeat well.

Enough was enough, and it was time to come clean. What Doug didn't reckon on was the dogged persistence of the crop-circle fanatics. When he confessed some branded him a liar and went on looking for UFOs as imitators continued to create crop circles at the rate of 50 every summer.

When Dave was in hospital dying of cancer, Doug promised him that he would never stop trying to convince the world that they had been responsible for the world-famous cereal hoax.

Last Sunday, true to his word, he appeared on a BBC1 TV Country File Special on Crop Circles, telling the world once again that the only aliens, as the corn grew as high as an elephant's eye, were Doug and Dave.

Yet there is a curious twist to this engaging tale. Doug Bower, the man who debunked the UFO hunters and made monkeys out of the self-appointed experts, believes we have been visited by aliens. 'I think I was programmed to do all this,' he says. 'Some force made me sit down and plan these designs. When I went to my village school as a boy in Upham, ten miles from Southampton, there was a local man who'd go to the pub every night and on his way home he'd take off every garden gate and leave it further up the lane.

HE WAS known to all as a practical joker and it rubbed off on me. He was my hero. The circles were my chance to emulate him.

'But, if you ask me do I believe in UFOs, I'd have to say yes. I've seen one. I was out in the forest when I saw five lights stationary in the sky and bright as car headlamps.

'It's obvious that in all those millions of planets we saw out there in the night sky there must be people out there.

'I think a planet died millions of years ago and we had a visit from its former inhabitants. There must be spacecraft buried in the sand somewhere.'

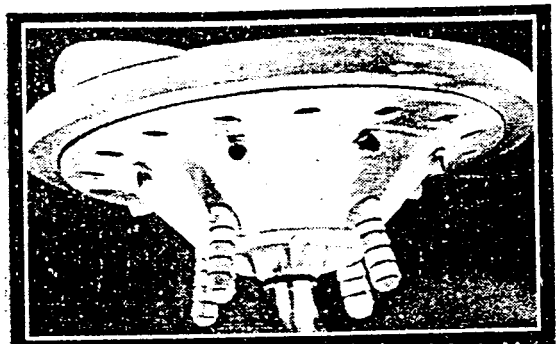
It is impossible to decide if he is joking. 'Other people made money out of the corn circles,' he smiles. 'The experts, the farmers who charged entry, but all Dave and I got really was a big laugh.

'But it's been a wonderful experience and I wouldn't have missed it for the world.'

This world and all those out there presumably.

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 88

Daily Star
13 November 1998
Page 22



SEEN a flying saucer lately? Been abducted by aliens? For those of you who have, the Ministry of Defence in London has thoughtfully provided an answering machine so that you can phone in the details.

But hang on... from the House of Lords this week came a request that the machine is switched on round the clock, and not just during office hours.

The suggestion was made by none other than Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton, former Chief of the Defence Staff and chairman of the Nato Military Committee.

Does he know something that the rest of us don't?

Independent On Sunday
22 November 1998
Page 11

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 87

Police open their X-files on UFO encounters

A GROUP of retired and serving police officers are risking ridicule by coming forward to tell all about their alleged encounters with UFOs.

More than 20 officers have responded to an advertisement in *Police Review* inviting them to recount their close encounters of the third kind. These include stories of alien abduction and gigantic blocks of light hovering above their squad cars.

At least two former officers claim to have photographic evidence of their meetings with extra-terrestrials.

Their extraordinary stories are to be collected in a new book *Policing the UFO*, to include interviews with at least 20 former and serving police officers and as many as 200 recorded incidents involving police from around the world. Many of the examples from the second category will be taken from previously unreleased Ministry of Defence papers.

The book's author, Irene Bott, has chosen to concentrate on

BY JASON BENNETTO

police officers because of their relative position of trust in society. "They are less likely to be written off as cranks, loonies or anoraks," she explained.

Others may, however, think they are boldly going beyond the call of duty and risking ridicule and professional suicide.

For this reason, many officers appear to have waited until they have left the police service before speaking out, although others who contacted the researchers feel so strongly about what they have witnessed that they are prepared to be named.

The reported encounters include:

■ An officer who claims to have been abducted and medically examined by aliens in the 1980s. The former officer, who has yet to give the full details of his case, is said to have been out driving when he experienced disturbances to his vehicle followed by memory loss. He later recalled, via hypnosis, being taken aboard a space craft and examined by aliens.

■ A police officer says he took five photographs of a UFO while on duty in the West Midlands in the 1980s, but that the MoD confiscated them.

■ A policeman and woman were out on patrol in the countryside and saw lights and a cylindrical object in the sky.

■ An officer who saw a disc shaped object hovering 20ft above the road.

■ A police officer who, in the 1970s while on duty, saw a wedge-shaped object in the sky that was about four storeys high and 50ft long.

■ Declassified MoD papers from the 1950s to the 1970s that report investigations into reported sightings by police officers and incidents at military bases. The files name police officers involved and allegedly include accounts of helicopters being sent after UFOs.

There have also been several reports from officers in Sussex – one as recently as last month – an area which is considered a fruitful zone for UFO sightings.

While the majority of the police officers who have been in contact are retired, some are serving and include an Inspector.

Ms Bott said: "In a court of law the person who is most believed is usually a policeman. Also, these people are out day and night observing things around them so they are excellent witnesses.

"A UFO is simply an unidentified flying object, it's not little green men.

"Many officers do not want to talk about it openly while they are still serving because they can kiss their promotion chances goodbye."

So far she has been in touch with about 20 serving and former officers – two serving officers contacted her a couple of weeks ago and claim to have seen UFOs in the past month.

Nick Redfern, an author of several books on UFOs, who is assisting Ms Bott with her project, added: "These people are willing to fly in the face of potential ridicule, which shows how strongly they feel about what they have witnessed – these are strong, credible witnesses."

One of those to come forward was former Pc John Hanson. His encounter with a UFO took place on the evening of 14 June 1995.

Mr Hanson, 52, who retired from the West Midlands police force in 1994, after 27 years service, was at his home near Redditch, Worcestershire, when he looked out of his bedroom window.

"I saw a silver pear-shaped ball of light hovering over a tree," he recalled. "It was about 40ft off the ground, and about 20ft long and 5ft wide.

"Immediately opposite was a red cigar-shaped object, about 30ft tall.

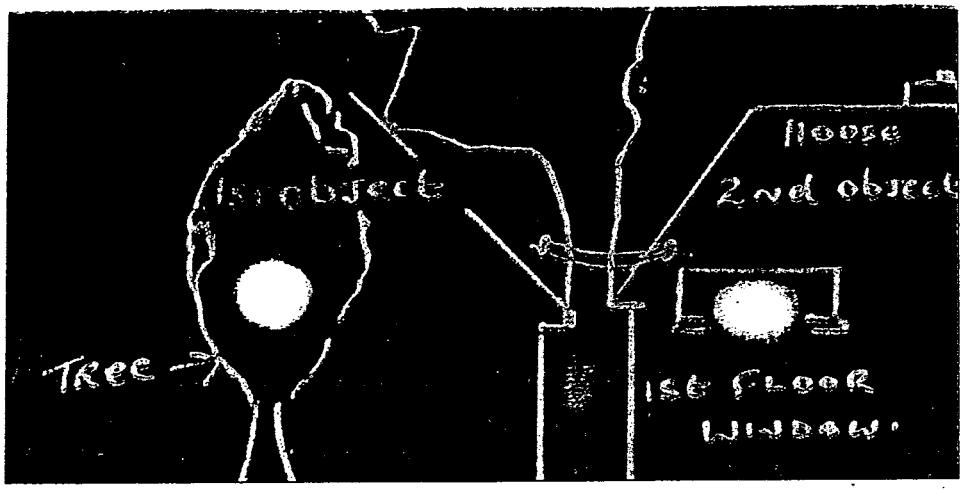
"The pear ball suddenly moved and there was a piece cut out of it like a wedge of cheese. It then changed into the shape of a jelly bean and jumped onto the cigar shaped object. The two objects then fused together, produced a rippling light and were gone."

He said the whole episode lasted about five minutes and took place at 10.35pm, and that a similar sighting took place 20 miles away on the same night.

"I am not talking about flying saucers or space men, but an unidentified object – some form of energy source," he added.

continues

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Flying squad: former police officer John Hanson (right) and part of the video he claims shows a UFO near his home ANDREW FOX

ends.

A Sun CUT-OUT-AND-KEEP GUIDE

HOW TO AVOID BEING ABDUCTED BY ALIENS

ARE you worried about being abducted by aliens? Are the ETs giving you the DTs?

Fear not. The Sun's five-point plan will help you avoid being kidnapped by a Klingon or spirited away by an outer space spook.

No, we haven't been watching too many episodes of the X Files. A flying saucer dropped off a mystical new book at our Wapping HQ called How To Defend Yourself Against Alien Abduction. And we feel it is our duty to pass on its message.

Yes, the truth is in there... apparently.

Author Ann Druffel has spoken to more than 250 abductees and has come up with some alien-zapping tips.

Here Sun writer DAVID GARFINKEL picks the best – with his ratings out of ten.

How To Defend Yourself Against Alien Abduction (Piatkus, £8.99).

MENTAL STRUGGLE

USE IT: In the first stages of abduction (symptoms: paralysis and a general feeling of terror), or when your mind is still able to function – although you may not be able to move.

WHAT YOU NEED: Confidence that the technique will work.

HOW TO DO IT: Concentrate all your energy on moving one small part of the body – preferably a finger or a toe.

It comes down to willpower, patience and a high IQ.

RESULT: When movement occurs paralysis is broken and the visitor vanishes – supposedly scared off by your finger pointing.

SUN RATING: *3 – Who can be bothered thinking that much at 3.30am? Probably better to go back to sleep and let the aliens do what they came for.*

Besides, any ET who has travelled to faraway galaxies is hardly likely to be afraid of some toe-waggling.

PHYSICAL STRUGGLE

USE IT: Before you can't move. There is a belief that aliens travel on light and their bodies are very fragile.

WHAT YOU NEED: To feel your rights are being violated, a good left-hook, or a heavy kitchen appliance.

HOW TO DO IT: The urge to fight should be swift and instinctive. It can be used when the aliens are present or seen approaching outdoors. Get angry and lunge at them.

RESULT: The intent should never be to kill the intruder, but to warn them you like your privacy.

SUN RATING: *5 – Dancing around like Prince Naseem should be enough to scare away any unearthly being.*

This worked for Will Smith in Independence Day. But avoid the technique if the alien has a ray gun. Being zapped hurts, so just say sorry and offer to buy it a pint.

RIGHTEOUS ANGER

USE IT: Before paralysis sets in or combined with Mental Struggle. This technique is best used after repeated visits or abductions by aliens.

WHAT YOU NEED: To be awake, fearless and believe that all humans have a right to life and liberty – very American.

HOW TO DO IT: Take up a threatening stance and just shout strong commands at the alien like: "Go away" or "Leave me alone".

RESULT: Shows the visitor you are not going quietly. But the anger must be focused towards asserting rights rather than hating the aliens. It's a purely emotional technique.

SUN RATING: *1 – What self-respecting alien monster is going to be worried about a human in pyjamas shouting: "Go away"?*

Instead, blast out a few Max Bygraves hits – if that doesn't work, nothing will



SPACE SPOOK... artist's impression of enemy alien

PROTECTIVE RAGE

USE IT: To protect other members of your household – children and those who cannot look after themselves.

It is even effective after an abduction, helping prevent future UFO visits.

WHAT YOU NEED: Strong assertive voice and a good knowledge of rude words.

HOW TO DO IT: Focus on the intruder. Think of the family members you love and then curse to your heart's content.

But remember the "anger" cannot be rooted in fear or despair – try and be positive.

RESULT: If you hold no grudge or hatred, then the ET should get the message – it's a bit similar to exorcism.

SUN RATING: *9 – If nothing else the alien should break down in fits of laughter. Then jump in with Physical Struggle and give it a good bashing.*

But if you use this technique after the aliens have gone, make sure your neighbours understand you're not swearing at them.

APPEAL TO SPIRITUAL

WHEN TO USE IT: Effective whether you are asleep, on the toilet, or in any kind of "altered state" – such as after visiting the pub.

The most powerful technique yet discovered, since it can be readily used by most people.

WHAT YOU NEED: Faith in a spiritual realm, after-life or angels. Basically, anything remotely religious.

HOW TO DO IT: Crouch down in front of the alien and start praying or waving the Bible.

If the sky doesn't open up and strike the alien down, call a priest to come and help out.

RESULT: As long as the alien isn't an atheist then it will get back on board its UFO and bother someone else.

SUN RATING: *6 – Praying for a miracle may seem a good idea, but so is running away.*

Ask yourself this question: "Have any of my prayers ever come true?" If not, quickly move onto the other techniques as someone up there obviously doesn't like you.

The Times
11 November 1998
Page 1

Whitehall slow to take own advice over bug

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT
WHITEHALL EDITOR

NINE Whitehall departments and agencies will be named today as the worst prepared inside the Government to cope with the millennium bug.

Topping the "high-risk" list of those whose computer systems may not recognise the date change from 1999 to 2000, are the Department of Trade and Industry, the Home Office, the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence, the Northern Ireland Office, the Environment Agency, the Medicines Control Agency, the NHS Estates and the Office of National Statistics.

According to analysis of the departments' own plans, computer experts believe the nine are struggling to meet their own targets, are slipping behind deadlines and have not even started programmes of spot checks on their systems.

Delays are likely to cost a total of up to £10 billion, as opposed to the £3 billion forecast by Tony Blair last March.

But Taskforce 2000, an independent company which has analysed information published by Whitehall, fears the picture could be even worse in the wider public sector, with emergency services under threat, and possible disruption of nuclear power stations, the Post Office, broadcasting and the utility companies.

In a separate report yesterday the Audit Commission also warned that a number of local authorities and NHS Trusts were lagging behind in their preparations to deal with the bug. Andrew Foster, the director, said he would publish a league table of the offending bodies in the spring if action was not taken.

0415

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The Independent
11 November 1998
Page 8

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Defence head

The Prime Minister has appointed the businessman Tony Edwards as the Head of Defence Export Services, Defence Secretary George Robertson announced.

The Independent
11 November 1998
Page 4
Wednesday Review

PANDORA

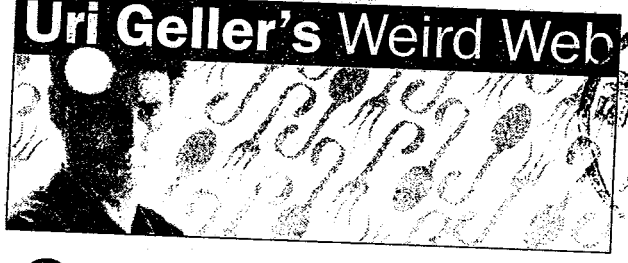
YOU CAN scoff at the House of Lords, but then a moment comes along that makes you wonder how we could ever do without the old duffers. Such a moment arrived recently when the following question was addressed to Her Majesty's Government: "Whether they will ensure that the answering-machine that the Ministry 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."

Scoff if you want, but you'll be deriding Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton, one of this nation's foremost military minds and former Chief of the Defence Staff and chairman of the Nato Military Committee. He must know something.

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Uri Geller's Weird Web



Screen out alien communications

Finally, someone has invented a screensaver that does more than turn your monitor into a virtual fishtank. The sky-watchers at SETI — the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence — are designing software to enable PC-users to analyse data from distant galaxies.

Scientists at the SETI Institute hope to involve a million computer enthusiasts by the millennium. "You can participate by running a screensaver program that downloads and analyses radio telescope data," the online mission statement explains. "There's a small but captivating possibility that your computer will detect the faint murmur of a civilisation beyond Earth."

> 'Your computer could detect civilisation beyond Earth'

The project echoes Jodie Foster's alien-spotting role in the movie *Contact*, and is set to begin in April. If you wish to apply, send your email address to *http://www.setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu/* and wait for the first Arecibo radio telescope data to be released.

Arecibo in Puerto Rico is the world's largest and most sensitive stargazer. Though it sees only a small percentage of the sky at any one time, the incoming noise from space is incalculably deafening. Up to now, SETI's best efforts, scanning millions of frequencies simultaneously, have analysed only a fraction of the noise. What have they missed?

If 50,000 PCs worldwide combine to sift data downloads using the SETI screensaver, they will match the scale of the Institute's current megabuck experiment, Project Phoenix.

If 500,000 PCs combine, the home PC users will become the biggest scientific machine in the known universe. And who knows, one of us may find a regular, artificial, electronic whisper, pulsing in the chaos of space.

Check out the main SETI site at *http://www.seti-inst.edu/* which features a great site for school students. And before you switch on your alien-finder, spare a thought for Aaron Blosser. He was a US West telecommunications contractor who programmed his bosses', 2,500 computers to search for million-digit prime numbers as part of an Internet project.

As a result, says company spokesman David Beigie, US West's databases were slowed to a quarter of their usual speed. Blosser could now face a prison sentence.

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File 64/5.

THE TIMES. 26 OCT 98.

ROYAL AIR FORCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
RAF COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER (WALES)

Room 2-04 New Dolanog House
Severn Road Welshpool Powys SY21 7DA

Tel : [redacted]
GPTN & Fax: Worcester MOD [redacted]

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET

To: [redacted] SEC(AS) 2b.

From: [redacted]

Date: 28 OCT 98

Number of Pages Sent (Including Cover Sheet): 2.

Message/Subject:

[redacted]

This is the story you are looking for. I'm sorry it is a poor quality copy, but it reached us via many faxes. If you can't read it, please let me know. Regards,

[redacted]

PLEASE ADVISE PROMPTLY IF TRANSMISSION IS ILLEGIBLE OR INCOMPLETE

South Wales Evening Post 14 Oct 98 83

Mystery caller says jets involved in aerobatics

UFO sightings are blamed on aircraft

By PAUL TURNER

TWO jets doing high altitude aerobatics ... claimed to be behind some of the supposed UFO sightings in Swansea.

But mystery still surrounds sightings of helicopters seen in the area at the same time.

The claim about the jets was made by an anonymous caller who said they were flying between Swansea and Cardiff.

He said the jets, which were painted silver, were practising knife-edge flying at high altitudes, where they travel with their wings in a vertical position.

"From the ground this would give you the concept of something flying without wings," said the caller, who refused to identify himself.

Exercises

He said the Sea King helicopters seen in the area were on exercises from Sennybridge Barracks.

Aircraft controller at Swansea Airport, David Healey confirmed two de Havilland aircraft had returned there from Cardiff.

Their return was at around dusk last Thursday — when many of the UFO sightings took place, he added.

"They are silver and they are quite unusually shaped aeroplanes because they have a short wing span and quite a large tail area," said Mr Healey.

He could not comment on whether the De Havillands had been involved in aerobatics.

The source of the helicopters remains unknown.

RAF Chivenor and Sennybridge Barracks have both denied they came from there.

END

one seeking help from RAF Valley, the other from RAF Chivenor. They had permission to both land at Swansea airport to swap a piece of equipment. They landed there after the airport had closed. Also in the area were old 'Vampire' planes (now 8 oct 98. out of service) + these could have been mistaken for the 'UFO'.

[redacted]

28 oct 98

Date of incident: 8 oct 98

ENCLOSURE 62 NUMBER

6415.

Look out for the night of the meteor

GAZE upwards tonight and brace yourselves for one of the most spectacular displays ever to light up the skies over Britain.

Astronomers say a dramatic meteor storm should occur between 6pm and midnight as the Earth passes through debris from an enormous comet.

This band of rocky material has already produced two of the greatest shows of shooting stars this century, in 1933 and 1947.

And tonight the conditions are right for another appearance of these blazing meteors, the Giacobinids. British observers may see more than one meteor a second streaking across the northern sky.

Last night Robin Scagell, vice-president of the Society for Popular Astronomy, said: 'You can never be quite sure what's going to happen with meteors.

'It depends whether we plough through a particular concentration of meteor particles. But the chances of it are rather better than winning £10 on the National Lottery, and it's well worth going out to have a look in the evening. It will be clearly visible.'

A spokesman for the Royal Astronomical Society said that if the meteors appeared, they would be seen in the direction of the constellation of Draco. The best viewing time should be at about 10pm.

'Roughly speaking, you should face north, but if it does kick off they will be streaking all over the place,' he said, adding that the display could be partially obscured by cloud. Even if the Giacobinids meteors make an appearance, they will be feeble in comparison with another meteor family, the Leonids, expected next month. They are predicted to produce a full-scale celestial storm of nearly 2,000 meteors a minute.

Unfortunately Britain is unlikely to experience the full, dazzling effect. Asia is expected to be on the side of the Earth heading into the Leonid meteor swarm. But in Britain the Leonids are expected to put on some kind of show on November 17 and 18.

Tired Denise quits the Big Breakfast for the big sleep



Threat the Do Tube li over pa

THE Millennium D facing a fresh cri night over a vital T

Labour's decision ment Euro-rules im maximum 48-hour wor is behind the loomin for its prestige project

About 500 electri threatening to disru mile Jubilee Line exte should carry thousan tors to the Dome site wich, South-East Lon

The men, some earn a-week, are demanc money in return for a work longer than th maximum, laid dov working time directiv

The long-delayed li be fully operational September – close to opening on Decembe

Yesterday, co experts said any mo would almost certain £2.7billion spur wo ready until late in Ja

That would emb Government, and T tary Peter Mandels all but staked his re its success. Withou roads would jam soli

The electricians a putting in 66 hours, unless they get eig for seven days' wo down tools after 48

Marty

Sunday People
13 September 1998
Page 20

64/5

News Of The World
13 September 1998
Page 11

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 81

WEIRD

MACON the black eagle, an RAF mascot, needed treatment after a flight from a Wiltshire base to Scotland–for airsickness.

WORLD

GS-F.i.

EXPOSED

TOP-SECRET BASE SPIES ON ALIENS

EXCLUSIVE by NIGEL NELSON

THIS is the top secret airforce base which a former defence chief believes is used to spy on alien activity above Britain.

Lord Hill-Norton, chief of the defence staff in the Seventies, is convinced that a United States Air Force squadron in Suffolk is tracking UFOs which may threaten Earth.

"There's something fishy at the base and I am puzzled," he told me. "I have asked a number of questions about the base and never get a satisfactory answer."

The Ministry of Defence did admit that RAF Feltwell has a special US unit "tracking man-made objects in deep space".

But it refused to answer Hill-Norton's question about how many objects "remain unidentified and how many of these were transmitting a signal" citing the need for secrecy.



PUZZLED: Hill-Norton

Entitled

An MoD spokesman said: "We are entitled to refuse certain information on topics which we consider to be sensitive."

But he did admit that UFOs would be tracked if they were spotted.

"They need to catalogue everything up in space," he added.

Officially, the US 5th Space Surveillance Squadron is part of Britain's early warning system to protect against missile attack from space.

But Lord Hill-Norton will not accept that it is there purely to defend us against earthling enemies.

"For a start, there are no man-made objects in interstellar space. So I want to know what they are really doing.

"And I want to know what the Government is doing about the UFO problem.

"There are things flying about in our atmosphere and we don't know what they are, who directs them or what their purpose might be. We ought to know."

Lord Hill-Norton believes that UFOs are the product of "extra-terrestrial intelligences".

He added: "There is overwhleming evidence that there are physical objects in Earth's atmosphere and they are not man-made."

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ENCLOSURE NUMBER 8

The light way to track an alien

Scientists have a new way of contacting extraterrestrials, says Nicholas Booth

If ET is trying to contact us, he won't be phoning — he will use the powerful flashlights that are lasers to draw our attention. Like lighthouses on the unexplored seas of space, these unique flashes of laser light, which astronomers can detect with simple equipment, will soon tell us whether any stars are harbouring advanced civilisations.

That is the startling claim of the American inventor of the laser, Charles Townes, who has long urged his colleagues to look for such tell-tale signs of alien intelligence. All scientific searches to date have involved listening for radio signals from alien civilisations; now a team from the University of California at Berkeley will use a simple, antiquated telescope to try to spot the laser flashes.

At 83, Professor Townes, a Nobel prize-winner, is delighted to be vindicated. "I proposed this idea in the Sixties," he says. "Now a group of astronomers will start to make a search this autumn. I am very pleased."

This attempt is the start of a new era of astronomy. The method is, according to the astronomer in charge, "embarrassingly simple". Embarrassing because it could have been undertaken at any time in the past four decades, but Professor Townes's notion of looking, rather than listening, was largely ignored.

"If there are aliens sending us messages by laser, we will see them," says Dan Werthimer, the director of Berkeley's Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) programme.

Unlike the aliens in movies, who frequently speak English, the real ones would probably not use Morse code. "They would send very short, powerful pulses of laser light that would be unmistakable. It doesn't require that much energy to do," Dr Werthimer says.

> The Berkeley group will look at 2,500 stars

Later this autumn, he and his colleagues will use a 30in telescope — modest by professional standards — at Mount Leuschner, about 20 miles east of Berkeley, to look for laser flashes. Light captured by the telescope will be split into two and fall on to photo-multiplier tubes, which will amplify the signal. If both see unusual flashes at specific wavelengths — lasting perhaps a few billionths of a second, with a power output greater than that of the stars they are looking at — they will have hit the jackpot.

Seeing signals in the two separate halves of the beam means that they could not be artefacts of the detection process.

Lasers are the only way that bursts of light could be sufficiently concentrated. As with the powerful search beams of a lighthouse, they could be directed to specific stars such as our Sun. Lasers work by exciting gas atoms and forcing them to give up their energy in the form of an intense flash of light.

"We could easily send a message into space to other civilisations," Professor Townes says. His Berkeley colleagues agree. According to Dr Werthimer, you could attach a simple laser to an optical telescope and direct it to nearby stars and send messages. "You could do that with a laser that transmits one megawatt," Dr Werthimer says. "That's about the same power as a television station."

But that is far into the future. For the moment, the Berkeley team is starting its own modest search; improbably, this optical work will cost just $20,000 (£11,400) a year, a sign of the times for SETI research. Searching for aliens has been criticised by some as a kind of wishful thinking, a subject without a science. And American legislators certainly agree: Nasa's ambitious program of SETI research using radio telescopes was cancelled in 1993.

However, with private funding from supporters such as the science fiction author Arthur C. Clarke and the film director Steven Spielberg, SETI struggles on.

Others have said that finding evidence for alien civilisation will be impossible. A similar thing was said to Professor Townes during the late 1940s after he proposed the forerunner of the laser, the maser (which produces microwave radiation rather than light). As a researcher at Bell Labs in New Jersey, he was a world expert on microwave spectroscopy, the probing of gases using radio waves. He realised that by using molecules to amplify signals, he could generate a powerful source of radiation. After he discussed the method in a scientific journal 50 years ago, "more than one Nobel laureate said it would never work. It was viewed as a crazy, cute idea and there wasn't much to it."

Early one spring morning in 1951, while sitting on a park bench in Washington, Professor Townes had what he calls "divine inspiration" of how to make a maser work and its possible applications. "I recognised that it could be a sensitive amplifier or atomic clock," he says.

Throughout the 1950s, the wavelengths used to probe gases were made progressively shorter — so much so that he could get down to optical wavelengths. Together with his brother-in-law, Arthur Schawlow, he developed the laser. Accordingly, Townes won the Nobel Prize in 1964 (along with two Russians who had independently come across the same principle). Lasers can now be found everywhere, from supermarkets to home CD players to hospitals.

"It comes home to me when I hear of friends who have had their sight restored," Professor Townes says. "To me, it was clear that the most important uses would come from connecting up optics and electronics."

Proof positive comes from the telescope now being used by Dr Werthimer's team (it is normally used to train Berkeley undergraduates). In 1959 — the same year in which a workable maser was developed — two radio astronomers declared that detecting radio signals would be the only way to find aliens. As a result, the scientific community tended to dismiss any other wavelengths that could be used to send messages.

By the mid-1960s, Professor Townes had moved to Berkeley and was working at the Space Science lab. By then, his idea was bolstered by the discovery of naturally existing masers in space. There are vast clouds of gas between the stars which can act as masers. Their constituent molecules are naturally excited to such an extent that they amplify microwaves across the vast firmament of the heavens.

Any sufficiently advanced alien civilisation would be well aware of that and could emulate the process. Professor Townes points out that these clouds have been emitting intense radiation in all directions, but it was only recently that humanity has acknowledged their existence.

"If we'd have found them earlier, then we could have developed the laser sooner," Professor Townes says. "We didn't look. Other civilisations might have taken their cue from natural masers in space."

This autumn, the Berkeley group will systematically look at 2,500 nearby stars. The criterion is fairly simple: they will be Sun-like stars, around which planets like ours — and corresponding civilisations — could have evolved.

All involved agree that the search is a long shot, with truly astronomical odds against it.

But the final word goes to Professor Townes, who insists that, as with the invention of the laser, the discovery of life in space is simply a matter of looking hard enough.

"We don't know what we will find, so we must keep looking."

SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY



Is alien life out there? A simple laser can be attached to an optical telescope to transmit messages into space

n a rate of £4.61 instead of the

should follow the practice adopted by the last five Labour leaders.

re: BBC

Uncle Tom of the Archers dies at 87

By Daniel Waddell

THE actor Bob Arnold, known to millions of radio listeners as Tom Forrest in *The Archers*, died yesterday. He was 87.

He had played the part of "Uncle" Tom Forrest in the BBC Radio 4 soap opera since 1951. He died at his daughter's home in Salisbury, Wilts, from liver failure.

A spokesman for the BBC said the cast was "devastated" by the news of his death.

"They are in mourning. Bob played Uncle Tom in the series, but was also an uncle to the cast in real life. He was exceptionally popular," he said.

Vanessa Whitburn, the programme's editor, paid tribute to the contribution Arnold made to the programme, which attracts four million regular listeners.

"For nearly half a century Bob Arnold delighted millions of Archers fans with his portrayal of Tom Forrest," she said.

"Bob was an original — a true countryman who turned out also to be an extremely talented actor."

Arnold was born in Asthall, Oxon, in 1910, the son of a village publican.

When the series was launched on Jan 1, 1951, its founder Godfrey Baseley thought Arnold's regional accent was "too recognisable" but he relented and, three months later, Tom Forrest made his first appearance that March.

For 30 years his character preceded the show's omnibus edition with a short introduction called Nature Notes.

During his time in the show the character enjoyed a long and happy marriage to the formidable Pru. Her voice was featured in the programme during the Fifties but did not appear for several years afterwards until Dame Judi Dench guested as Pru in the 10,000th episode in 1989.

The Archers is Britain's longest running drama serial. People who have played themselves in the series include the Duke of Westminster, Terry Wogan, Anneka Rice, Dame Edna Everage and Britt Ekland. Princess Margaret played herself in 8,715th episode in 1984, when she visited an Ambridge fashion show.

a fatigue, poll finds

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good and she was much loved by the nation.

"I think that on this anniversary I will pray for her soul. And I would like to think now that we can get on with life and leave the kind of hype of the thing behind."

His remarks were supported by the Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt Rev Mark Santer, who said: "It is time to let Diana rest in peace."

Tony Blair will attend a service of prayer with the Prince of Wales and his sons and other members of the Royal Family at Balmoral.

A Downing Street spokesman said that his presence did not make the occasion a national event.

Nigel Evans, the Conservatives' constitutional affairs spokesman, said he believed that the public would increasingly focus on the Princess's causes rather than "dwelling unhealthily" on her death.

It acknowledges that in an ideal world, children would be placed with parents of the same background. But these factors should not be allowed to stop what may be the child's best chance of a happy and secure future, it says.

Paul Boateng, the

children for adoption because one of the prospective parents is 40-plus, or is deemed the wrong colour, or smokes, or because of the belief that the family must be kept together no matter what, even at the expense of the child's best interests," he said.

DISCLOSURE NUMBER 79

Sacked smoker's tribunal fight

A SMOKER plans to take his former employer to an industrial tribunal, claiming he was sacked for allegedly lighting a cigarette in his car after work.

John Dixon, 54, lost his job as a supervisor at Parkside Flexible Packaging in Leeds, which has a no-smoking policy, after managers videoed a flash in his car as he drove off at the end of his shift.

Mr Dixon, of Outwood, near Wakefield, West Yorks, said he was shown the video nine weeks later and told the "most reasonable conclusion" for the flash was that he was lighting a cigarette. He denied smoking.

RSC may demolish theatre

The Royal Shakespeare Company may demolish its theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, which it says is unsuited to modern productions.

Adrian Noble, the RSC director, has reportedly approached an architect to design a new building to replace the 1932 Art Deco riverside theatre as part of an £80 million redevelopment plan.

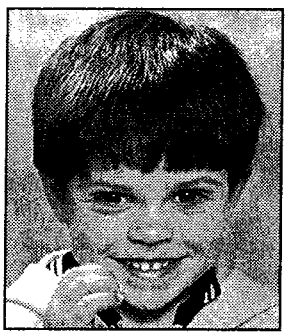
Ian Rowley, an RSC spokesman, said the brick building's stage was increasingly unsuitable for modern drama and seating and front-of-house facilities were also desperately in need of refurbishment.

However, the Art Deco frontage is listed Grade 2 starred and may be preserved in the redevelopment plan, partly funded by National Lottery cash.

Boy, four, died in holiday pool

A four-year-old boy drowned in a pool at the start of a family holiday after his parents took their eyes off him for a moment, an inquest in Woking, Surrey, heard.

Elliot Ribi, of Frimley, may have tripped at La Manga complex, near Alicante, Spain. He was found without his armbands which he always wore in the water. Verdict: accidental death.



Elliot Ribi: drowned

Watch out for a green sky

A spectacular auroral display was predicted all over Britain last night and tonight. The aurora is the result of a major blast of wind released after a huge coronal mass ejection from the Sun. Satellite and power line operators braced themselves for possible damage.

"You are looking for a green and reddish glow," Dr Andrew Coates, of the Mullard space science laboratory, said yesterday. "The best time is a couple of hours before midnight and a little bit after midnight."

DAILY TELEGRAPH 28/8/98.

For a mortgage that won't go up,†
come this way.



Reports of UFOs vanish mysteriously into space

SECRET 78 NUMBER 64/5

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

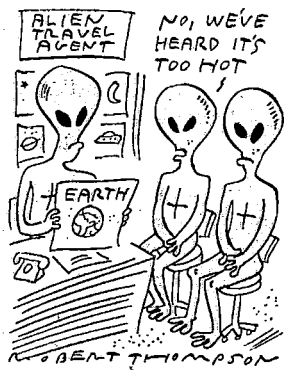
THE little green men from outer space have packed their bags, fired up their flying saucers and headed home. Or perhaps we have just become a little less credulous.

Reported sightings of UFOs have fallen dramatically in Britain in the past year, according to the Ministry of Defence. In 1996, 609 people told the ministry that they had seen an unidentified flying object. Last year, the figure dropped to 425. In the first six months of this year only 88 people reported sightings.

Ministry officials differed from UFO experts yesterday in explaining the decline. A ministry spokesman suggested that Hollywood was to blame. The unusually high 1996 figures had, he said, been prompted by the film *Independence Day*, with its story of aliens trying to destroy Earth. This was compounded by *Men in Black*, last year's film about aliens living on our planet. Similarly high numbers occurred after *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* in the late 1970s, when sightings rocketed from 435 to 750.

The spokesman added that the Hale-Bopp comet and last year's 50th anniversary of an American pilot coining the term "flying saucer" had contributed to the figures. "There was a series of films and events in 1996 and 1997 which triggered off a spate of reports from the public," he said. "In contrast, this year we have had the World Cup."

His theory has a flaw: UFO sightings dropped from 600 to 250 after *ET* hit the screens in 1982. Nick Pope, a UFO expert and civil servant who investigated sightings for the ministry between 1991 and 1994, was sceptical of the films theory: "The idea of a link is an attempt to try to trivialise the UFO project."



Graham Birdsall, editor of *UFO Magazine*, said official reports of sightings had declined because the ministry decided last year to stop taking them in person over the telephone, installing an answering machine instead. This put people off making a report.

He claimed that the official figures represented only 10 per cent of UFO sightings, most of which went unreported because observers were afraid of being mocked. Many other reports, made to the police and airports, did not reach the ministry.

The official figures were given in a written parliamentary answer to Lord Hill-Norton, the 83-year-old former First Sea Lord and UFO aficionado. His only comment yesterday was that he did not think the number of sightings had dropped.

TIMES
SAT 15 AUG 98

Financial Times
06 August 1998
Page 25



Anyone there?

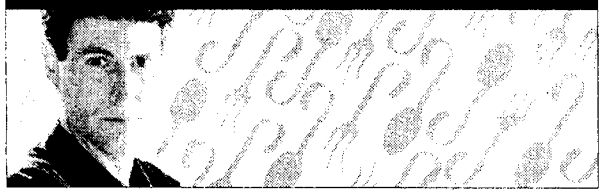
It seems not everyone's impressed with Tony Blair's Britain. If news of his ascendancy has reached far-flung galaxies there's precious little interest among aliens in taking a closer look.

One of defence minister Lord Gilbert's last jobs before his summer holidays was to report on sightings of unidentified flying objects. The 1996 total of 609 fell to 425 last year – and only 88 were recorded in the first six months of this year.

Gilbert says the Ministry of Defence has only "limited interest" in UFOs – and none at all if they're friendly. But the MoD still has a special telephone line to handle matters intergalactic. What's more, they've even installed an answering machine – presumably to make sure they don't miss any calls from Alpha Centauri while the earthlings are in Chiantishire.

CLOSURE
APPEAL

Uri Geller's Weird Web



Here's something to try at home. Take a handful of wheat seeds, and plant them. In another pot, sow more seeds — taken from a crop circle. See which grow faster.

If crop circle investigator Paul Vigay is right, the mysterious force which creates intricate patterns in fields doesn't just flatten corn — it genetically improves it.

To find a crop circle near you, turn to *http://www.interalpha.net/customer/pvigay/circles.html* and get e-mail alerts to every fresh formation. You can expect your mailbox to be busy — there have been about 200 circles every year this decade.

Can all these be hoaxes? Last month a series of circles on Milk Hill in Wiltshire was blamed on the BBC's *Country File* team, and a national newspaper is believed to have commissioned another fraud at nearby Silbury Hill. But these are just two — out of scores.

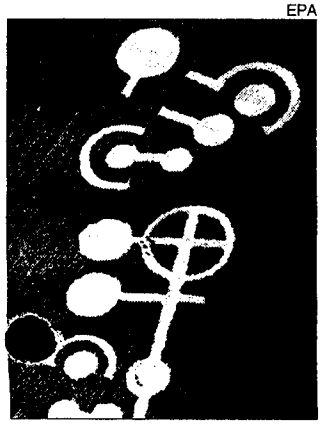
How could hoaxers generate the high radioactive levels Vigay says he found at some circles? Why would radio interference increase? Why do dowsers' rods start twitching inside the corn formations? Why does electronic apparatus such as mobile phones suddenly go haywire?

UFO spotters have been flocking to the East Field at Alton Barnes, near Devizes, since a snowflake design was etched into the corn last month.

One woman believes she has caught on video three silver globes moving inside the crop circle. Army helicopters have been seen in profusion, and many witnesses insist they watched a helicopter chasing a sphere across the field. Crop circle researcher Colin Andrews says a Japanese film crew there are delighted — they have filmed bizarre occurrences seven nights running.

Hoax or otherwise, crop circles are great artworks. The best images online are at *http://cropcircleconnector.com/anasazi/connect.html* .

EPA



A crop circle, or a prank?

Play your cards right

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1. Computer Basics
2. Brands to buy
3. The Internet
4. Upgrades
5. Data
6. Transfers
7. Security
8. Where to buy

Q: The reader refused a refund by Dixons for Windows 98 software should contact his credit card company if he paid by card. I bought some software by mail order last year. It came without any written instructions so I loaded it and tried to run the Tour on the Help menu. This caused my computer to crash every time. I had enormous difficulty in contacting the helpdesk of the company that sold me it, so eventually I e-mailed it (several times) asking for a refund. All of my e-mails were ignored. I then wrote to my credit card provider who told me to return the software to the computer company by recorded delivery. However, the package was returned to me marked "Refused". When I told the credit card company what had happened, it refunded my money and presumably obtained a

A: I assume that your Control-colon shortcut comes from a previous installation of Word. There are a number of ways to achieve this; a macro is probably the easiest. Record your Insert Date macro and assign your Control-colon shortcut to it via the Tools/Customise menu. As for your other problem, click on Tools/Options/Edit and make sure the "Typing replaces selection" box is ticked.

Q: I work for an industry-related technical magazine which needs me to interview people who work in that industry anywhere in the world and prepare copy in Word 7. Interviews are taped verbally for anglophones, written questionnaires for other languages. Phone, fax and e-mail are ideal for typescript copy. My problems arise when they need to send me pictures — mugshots, diagrams, whatever. At present these come as e-mail attachments in graphic formats which are totally unfamiliar to me. I am not a graphic expert and though I do my best, I often lose "face" with Asian correspondents. Can you point me towards a website or a publication which draws together the widest possible range of graphic formats and offers assistance in (a) getting them up on screen and (b) converting them into other formats to help the printers at this end?

A: Unless you have some very unusual correspondents, you'll find their attachments are in some fairly standard formats (the letters in brackets show the letters which will probably come after the file names): TIFF (.tif), JPEG (.jpg), GIF (.gif) or BMP (.bmp). I recommend you start using the graphics manipulation program PaintShop Pro, which you can download from *http://www.shareware.com* and use to resize and change graphics formats at will.

FOR ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS

● THIS week sees a new regular section where I look at more basic issues. Many of the questions I receive now are

Q: In answer to a question last week you suggested that an old 286 could be used for e-mail. I have a 33MHz 386 laptop with 4Mb of Ram, operating Windows 3.1 and a 28.8k external modem. How could this be used for e-mail as attempts to use AOL fail and its phone advice is that the equipment is inadequate for its service?

A: You need to find an ISP (Internet Service Provider) which provides software for Windows 3.1 which, I have to say, I thought AOL did. My mistake, obviously. Direct Connection (*http://www.dircon.net*), Demon (*http://www.demon.co.uk*), CompuServe (*http://www.compuserve.co.uk*) and others all do have such



software. Have a look at their Web pages and see which one suits you best.

Q: I am severely disabled following major neurosurgery and unable to speak. I have

Revealed – secrets of Britain's Men in Black

By PETER ALLEN

IN the comedy film, soberly-suited Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones erased the memories of people who had encountered aliens.

But real Men In Black do exist in Britain – and they are hushing up serious UFO sightings, a conference heard yesterday.

Governments since World War II have tried to ensure that reports of extra-terrestrials are withheld from the public for 'national security reasons', researchers claimed.

Author Nick Redfern said sinister investigators had been knocking on doors for years making sure people kept quiet about their alien experiences.

'The truth is a bit closer to home than we previously thought and it is up to us to uncover it,' he told the conference in Hertford.

Specialist military groups, including the RAF's Provost and Security Services, had tracked down civilians who had experienced close encounters, he said. The authorities were happy to let 'dotty' sightings be reported, but those by credible witnesses were invariably hushed up.

'It's easy to laugh at the thought of Men in Black travelling around the country investigating these sightings but there is little doubt that they exist,' said Mr Redfern, author of the bestseller A Covert Agenda and one of the most respected UFO researchers in Britain. 'The Government has its own high-level agenda on this matter, and all the work is being done in the utmost secrecy,' he told the audience of around 300.

'It may be that some of the sightings are of new military aircraft being developed and that is one of the main reasons for the secrecy, but that does not make it entirely justified.'

Mr Redfern produced a Government document recently made public which describes how 16-year-old Anne Henson saw a star-like object shooting out red and green flames above her home near Taunton, Devon, in August 1962.

She reported it to the authorities. Mr Redfern said: 'Within a few hours a big, black car had pulled up outside her house and a man dressed entirely in black interviewed her at length. These sightings are often relegated to myth but in this instance the authorities were taking matters very seriously. Anne was overawed by what happened and she was told to keep quiet. It is only recently that she has had the courage to speak.'

The document about Miss Henson's sighting was made public under the Thirty Year Rule, but much of the work which is being done will be kept secret for much longer. The Directorate of Scientific Intelligence investigates radar sightings by RAF personnel.

In September 1952 Flight Lieutenant John Kilburn saw a glistening object 'swinging in a pendular motion' above his West Yorkshire base.

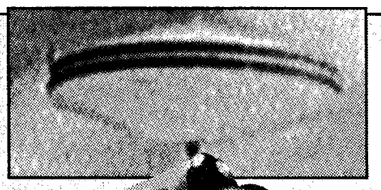
When RAF jets took off to intercept it, the UFO disappeared at an incredible speed. Mr Redfern said: 'There is no doubt that there is a major cover-up.' Michael Hesemann, Germany's leading UFO researcher, showed videos of a craft circling Mexico City last August and 'the best sightings' in the U.S. this decade.

Conference organiser Tony Spurrier said there were 40 UFO reports in Hertfordshire alone in 1995.

He asked: 'What else is happening in the world?'



Fiction or fact? Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones as the Men In Black





Out of this world: Pictures of UFOs shown to yesterday's conference

Last week the Lords threw out New Labour's plans to lower the age of consent for gay sex. Now you have your say . . .

READERS' LETTERS SPECIAL: Page 44

The model wreckers

A MODEL village has been forced to install surveillance cameras to protect its miniature cobbled streets.

The 1:20 scale village, built in 1953 at Ramsgate, Kent, has been repeatedly vandalised and its tiny carved inhabitants stolen.

Male nurse faces deaths quiz

DETECTIVES investigating the deaths of five hospital patients are to question a male nurse.

All the patients were middle-aged or elderly and are alleged to have died at Birch Hill Hospital, Rochdale, after receiving initial treatment from the same man. The investigation follows allegations by junior colleagues that he 'misused' drugs on people in his care.

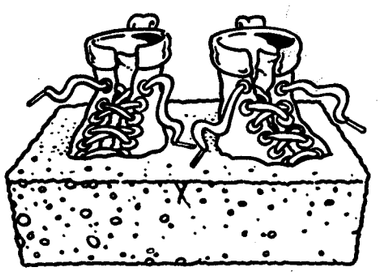
Police officers are conducting an audit of the hospital's pharmacy and the senior nurse has been suspended.

Detective Superintendent Bob Huntbach, leading inquiries, confirmed last night: 'Concern has been shown over the deaths of some patients.' A 12-officer incident room has been set up and more than 70 medical and nursing staff so far interviewed.

Allegations against the nurse date back to January, 1997.

A spokesman for the Royal College of Nursing, which represents the suspended man, said he denies any wrong-doing.

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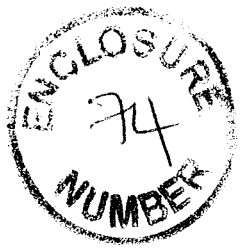
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The company may monitor telephone conversations with the aim of improving its service.

Sunday Mirror
12 July 1998
Page 22



Lights in sky leave Britain in grip of the 'Z Files'

By LEO SPALL

WEIRD "Z" shapes lighting up the sky over Britain sparked hundreds of calls in an X Files-type riddle yesterday.

People from Cornwall to Scotland reported the huge dazzling display.

One aircraft pilot called in to say he'd seen what appeared to be an explosion in the sky above the Isle of Man.

Teesside air traffic control tower, near Newcastle upon Tyne, also reported a sighting.

A Department Of Transport spokesman said: "We had sightings from the Clyde and west to Belfast and east to Leeds."

Belfast coastguard Rowlston Williams watched for more than an hour when the sky lit up around midnight on Friday

He said: "I have never seen anything like it. When we first saw the object, it was not completely dark.

"Whatever it was, it appeared to be moving very slowly westwards.

"It seemed larger than the moon and higher than the clouds."

UFO researcher Ron Barrett said: "There have been numerous people who have seen these lights but not in these sort of shapes."

Defence officials at RAF Fylingdales, the Yorkshire-based early-warning station, reported no undue activity.

But a pilot flying from France to the Midlands solved the mystery when he reported a meteorite.

A spokesman for the Coastguard Agency said: "It was very spectacular but can be explained.

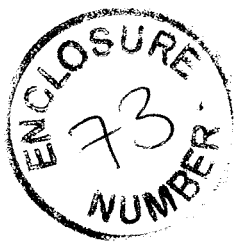
"The lights that so many people saw were caused by a meteorite breaking up as it entered the Earth's atmosphere.

"The big 'Z' vapour trail was hanging there for a while. It was a mystery at the time – but it was not an alien craft."

The boulder disintegrated as it entered the Earth's atmosphere, leaving a bright trail of strange shapes.

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64/5



The Independent
30 June 1998
Page 11

Scientists see serious side to UFO sightings

THERE IS "compelling physical evidence" that sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) have some basis in reality, an independent group of scientists has concluded – though they reckon alien spacecraft are probably not involved.

The finding was welcomed by UFO groups, despite the sceptical tone of the scientists, who hinted that natural phenomena are probably at the root of many reports.

"The fact that a number of scientists from different countries and credible backgrounds have been prepared to look seriously at the data is amazing. It wouldn't have happened 10 years ago," said Graham Birdsall, editor of *UFO* magazine, a British publication with a worldwide circulation of 140,000.

A nine-member panel led by a physicist from the august Stanford University in California declared yesterday that some of the thousands of UFO sightings reported over the past decades merit further study.

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

But Peter Sturrock, the panel's director, said: "If there is an interest in trying to get serious answers to the UFO problem, it would be sensible for scientists to focus on the physical evidence as opposed to witness testimony."

Phenomena such as "ball lightning" are believed by many scientists to be at the heart of many of the more credible sightings of UFOs. More recently, neuroscientists have found a means of recreating the sensations described by people claiming to have been abducted by aliens – such as a memory of grey visitors and a feeling of paralysis on waking up.

But the scientists added that some of the physical evidence remained unexplained and researchers might learn something new in evaluating purported UFO sightings.

The panel's report is the first independent review of UFO phenomena since 1966, when the US Air Force commissioned Colorado University to conduct a scientific study of UFOs headed by Dr Edward Condon.

Sturrock's panel examined evidence including photographs of purported UFOs, radar data and reports of soil damage near supposed UFO landing sites. Some of the reports could have been explained by rare natural phenomena such as electrical activity above thunderstorms. Other reports were produced by secret military activities, the report concluded.

The study was the brainchild of Laurance Rockefeller, Henry Diamond and Sturrock, who felt the field of UFO study "is in a very unsatisfactory state of ignorance and confusion". The panel was financed by the LSR Fund, chaired by Rockefeller.

Comprised of astronomers, physicists and experts in other scientific disciplines, the panel met last year in New York to discuss the data and in San Francisco to finalise the report.

The Guardian
30 June 1998
Page 9

Drive for quango sex balance

David Hencke
Westminster Correspondent

THE Government is to search out 7,000 women to replace men to serve on 1,100 quangos and public bodies, David Clark, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, announced yesterday.

Women are to be given parity with men in future appointments for government bodies as part of a move to make the bodies more accountable and representative of society. There is also to be a drive to increase the number of ethnic minority members serving on quangos.

The ambitious target of from 12,200 to 19,000 — and to cut the number of men from 26,000 to 19,000.

Four ministries — the Department of Education and Employment, the Scottish Office, the Department of Social Security and Department of Health appointments to NHS boards — aim to reach parity within three years.

Two other ministries — the Northern Ireland Office (45 per cent) and the Department of Environment, Transport and Regions (40 per cent) — will just miss the parity target for 2001.

The least progress comes from ministries with the worst records. The Ministry of Defence, whose quangos woman who chairs an advisory body and fewer than five people from ethnic minorities advising the ministry.

The Foreign Office is planning to increase its proportion of women on its quangos by 5 per cent, to 30 per cent, by 2001 — but says it is hampered in making progress as only 41 appointments fall vacant over the next three years.

The Treasury aims at an increase in the proportion of women on its quangos from 20 per cent to 25 per cent by the year 2003.

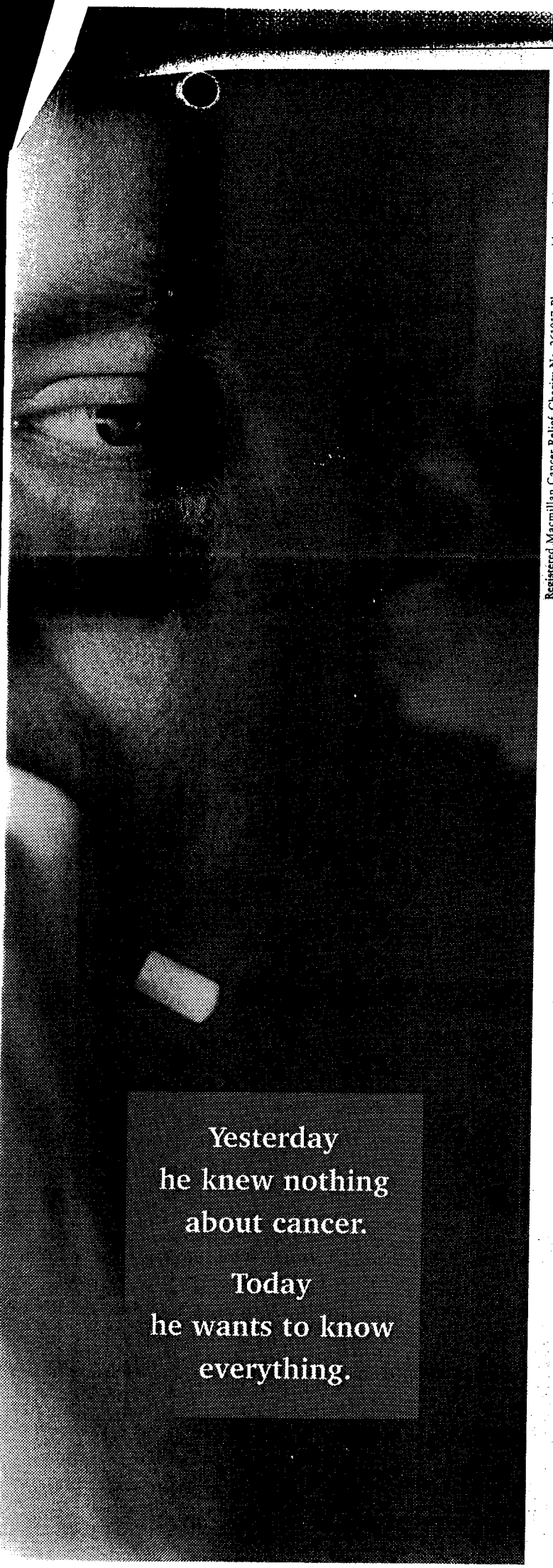
All ministries have accepted the parity figure as a goal, although two — the Home Office and the Ministry targets on how they will achieve this.

Mr Clark said the present situation was unacceptable, adding: "People will look back and wonder how on earth women were so unrepresented."

To attract the extra women to apply he has instructed officials to look out for people with non-conventional career patterns for the post, and to scrap unnecessary requirements which would discourage applicants. Appointments would be by merit and not quotas.

Ironically, both ministers responsible for women, Harriet Harman and Joan Ruddock, missed the launch of the

3



Registered Macmillan Cancer Relief. Charity No. 261017. Photo posed by model to protect privacy.

Scientists agree to open X-files on UFO data

64/5
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TIMES 30/6/98

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

UNIDENTIFIED flying objects are worth studying in the hope of learning something new, a scientific panel in America has concluded.

They are not evidence of life elsewhere in space, nor do they disprove any known physical laws. But some are accompanied by compelling physical evidence that merits greater investigation.

The nine-member panel, organised by Peter Sturrock, of Stanford University, and backed by the philanthropist and businessman Laurance Rockefeller, asked eight UFO investigators to present the strongest data they had for the existence of UFOs. The panel's report was published yesterday in the *Journal of Scientific Exploration*.

"If there is an interest in trying to get serious answers to the UFO problem, it would be sensible for scientists to focus on the physical evidence as opposed to witness testimony," Professor Sturrock said.

Such evidence includes photographs, radar reflections, traces left on the ground or in vegetation, physiological effects on witnesses and debris. Some could be explained by rare natural phenomena such as electrical activity above thunderstorms, or "radar ducting" — the trapping of radar waves by atmospheric channels. But others defied such explanation, the panel said.

Further examination of the same evidence is unlikely to provide any fresh light. Most UFO investigations lack the rigour required by the scientific community. But new data, scientifically acquired and analysed, could yield better explanations.

The new report differs from the most comprehensive yet carried out, by Edward Condon in 1968. He concluded that further UFO investigation was a waste of time. The Sturrock panel, by contrast, says that further work would be useful, and should be carried out.

Graham Birdsall, editor of *UFO Magazine*, said yesterday: "It is clearly very encouraging from our standpoint that any group of scientists is prepared to give up time and energy to study the whole UFO question. The fact that they acknowledge there are phenomena worthy of study is something we have been arguing for years."

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Daily Mail
13 June 1998
Page 25

Blinding trail from a shower of meteors

By JAMES GOLDEN

IT started with a ball of blue light flashing across the night skies.

The dazzling flame-like phenomenon hurtled across Cornwall and Devon, then on over Sussex, the Thames Valley and Staffordshire.

It lit a trail over Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Shropshire before disappearing in a flash over North Wales.

There were 288 calls to police and coastguards in a 90-minute period from 11.02pm on Thursday night with reports ranging from a flying saucer and a blazing aircraft to the end of the world. There were even comparisons to the film Deep Impact in which the Earth is threatened by a comet.

But as imaginations ran riot experts dismissed it as nothing more sinister than a shower of meteors – probably little bigger than pebbles. Because of the incredible speed they travel at they create a spectacular dazzling effect as they burn up on impact with the earth's atmosphere.

'It was as if night had turned into day,' said businessman Alan Lester who witnessed the fireball on Thursday night as he walked his dog in Eastbourne, East Sussex. He said yesterday: 'My eyes are still hurting now because the light was so bright.'

Janet Troop, 50, an environmental health technician of nearby Lewes, said: 'I saw an exceptionally bright light, so large it lit up the sky. It was as if something was burning up.'

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: 'We are satisfied this was a meteor shower which broke up on entering the Earth's atmosphere, causing the bright glow which people saw. There was no impact on the ground and therefore there is no cause for concern and no further action will be taken by us.

'Initial reports suggest it was an unusually large meteor shower which takes place when material and debris from outer space comes through the upper atmosphere.

'When the material passes from a zero-gravity zone into the gravity of the upper atmosphere, it burns up because of the friction. It is not unusual on a smaller scale, but last night's shower seems to have been quite big.'

Dr Robin Catchpole, a research astronomer at the Royal Greenwich Observatory in Cambridge, said: 'The piece or pieces of rock were probably quite small in size, like a pebble or small stone.

'But they can travel at speeds of 45,000mph and given that sort of velocity, generate huge kinetic energy on hitting the atmosphere.

'This accounts for the vivid bright light which can be seen so clearly with the naked eye. It is almost certain the debris vaporised on contact with the atmosphere and all that would be left would be dust.'

- **Meteors may have carried the seeds of life to the Earth, according to one theory. An American scientist examining a meteor was startled to find it contained the well-preserved spore of a fern similar to ones that existed on Earth 100million years ago.**
- **An estimated 14million meteors enter the atmosphere every day weighing a total five tons but indivdually they are mostly the size of a grain of sand.**
- **Research suggests that one in 100 could come from beyond the solar system.**
- **On an average clear, dark night an observer will see five to ten meteors an hour.**
- **Meteors can be used in radio communications to bounce brief messages up to 1,200 miles from station to station.**

Daily Telegraph
13 June 1998
Page 7

Speeding meteor sparks UFO alert

By Sally Pook

A METEOR speeding across the night sky prompted a UFO alert across England yesterday.

Police forces in at least eight counties received calls from hundreds of onlookers who saw bright blue lights travelling in a north-easterly direction from Devon to the Midlands.

The British Astronomical Association confirmed that the speeding object was a meteor, the result of cosmic debris burning up in the Earth's atmosphere.

Howard Miles, spokesman, said: "It was quite spectacular, crossing the sky at about midnight and fragmenting as it burnt up in the atmosphere, causing bright sparks.

"From our reports, it appears to have been a single object, a piece of inter-planetary material called a meteor, which burned up completely before it reached the ground."

It was seen across Shropshire, Worcestershire, Derbyshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Sussex, Hampshire, Gloucestershire and Caernarvon in North Wales.

A spokesman for Staffordshire Police said: "People told us they had seen a single, blue light that was bigger than a car. Some people described a tail behind the light, while others said it looked like it was burning or flaming."

Callers to police in Dorset, Hampshire and Sussex described flares and a bright object breaking up and flames shooting across the sky.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "We are satisfied this was a meteor which broke up on entering the Earth's atmosphere, causing the bright glow which people saw.

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 70

The Sun
13 June 1998
Page 6

HELP! WE'VE BEEN HIT BY ALIENS

By ADAM LEE-POTTER

EMERGENCY services were put on red alert yesterday after hundreds of callers claimed we were being invaded by a fleet of flying saucers.

Panicking Brits dialled 999 to warn the night sky was alive with hovering UFOs.

But the mystery blue lights turned out to be a huge **METEOR** shower.

David Kyte, 51, saw one plunge into the sea at Eastbourne, Sussex.

He said: "I was on the beach fishing when a fireball the size of a fridge flew over my head and landed in the sea half a mile offshore.

"It was very spectacular – blinding.

"I thought it was a spaceship. If it had hit the ground, it would have caused mayhem."

Flash

Finance consultant Carl Bennett saw one flash over his head – moments after seeing movie Deep Impact, about a comet hitting Earth.

Carl, 28, of Bracknell, Berks, said: "There was a bright green flash and a huge bang like a bomb."

Sightings were reported as far apart as Devon and Staffordshire.

Thames Valley Police contacted Heathrow air traffic control after receiving a call that a burning plane had been seen coming into land.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "Civilian aircraft and members of the public reported a large number of blue lights in the sky.

"Initial reports suggest it was an unusually large meteor shower.

"It is not unusual on a smaller scale but this shower seems to have been quite big."

The Guardian
13 June 1998
Page 11

Phone lines buzz as meteor streaks across sky

Ruaridh Nicoll

FOR romantics wandering the hills and valleys of Wales and southern England, the air turned blue late on Thursday night when a particularly bright shooting star sliced through the sky.

"We had more than a dozen calls around midnight from people who had seen a single blue light that was bigger than a car," said Sergeant John Drake of Staffordshire police.

Many callers thought they had seen a flying saucer, but it was more likely a meteor: cosmic debris burning up in the atmosphere.

The first to see it were pilots of airliners. "It would seem to be one very bright meteor entering the atmosphere somewhere over the Channel," said Robin Catchpole of the Royal Greenwich Observatory.

Soon after 11pm police in Cornwall, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Derbyshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Sussex, Hampshire, Gloucestershire and north Wales were taking calls. The fireball had travelled north-east.

Thames Valley Police contacted Air Traffic Control at Heathrow after they received a caller from High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, who told them a burning plane had come into land. Drivers on the M4 near Reading in Berkshire quickly got on their mobile phones when they saw the flash overhead.

"Some people described a tail behind the light, while others said it looked like it was burning or flaming," said Sergeant Drake.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "Initial reports suggest it was an unusually large meteor."

Its colour suggests it contained iron, which in turn suggests it was the remains of a small planet which broke up when the solar system was formed 4,500 million years ago.

This year a meteor shower called the Leonids is expected when Earth passes near the debris-filled route of comet Tempel-Tuttle. "We might even lose a satellite," said Dr Catchpole.

LONDON FEATURES



The words to Bohemian Rhapsody, with its Galileo reference, came from the late Freddie Mercury, seen here onstage with May

technology has raced ahead in the past decade they have also been used at the Midi mixing stage.

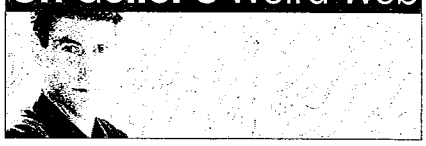
May bought a Sony Digital Multi-Trax system which was used for Queen albums from *The Miracle* onwards. The original machine could mix 20 channels and was used on his first solo album. Since then, the snooker room of his mansion in Sunningdale has been turned over to a "dream desk" capable of mixing 60 channels and recording directly on to hard disk.

"If we hadn't had digital technology, we couldn't have made the last Queen album," says May. This was because Mercury's health was fading fast towards the end, and it was a race against time to get that last album finished. "Freddie would record scraps whenever he could, while we'd be writing at full pelt," May adds.

After spending 18 months in front of a Pro Logic machine, mixing the fragments together, May is most proud of the track *I Was Born To Love You* because it sounds like a spontaneous jamming session. "We didn't tell anybody at the time how it was really made," he says.

● *Another World is released this week on Parlophone. Browse http://queen-fip.com*

Uri Geller's Weird Web



There are many strange people on the Internet. But at least most of them are human. Eddie Page says he isn't. This Vietnam veteran claims he is one of 32 extra-terrestrial hybrids manufactured by cloning technology between 1953 and 1955.

Of the 21 females and 11 males, Eddie believes three-quarters are already dead.

The experiment, he says, was sanctioned by US government officials in exchange for alien science secrets.

What makes Eddie's story stand out is not only the extraordinary detail — medical records, government documents, witnesses — but the way he tells it.

His pages at *www.world-famous.com* are an extended advertisement for three videos.

The first features Eddie, alone and conscious, talking to camera. The second records a hypno-regression experiment with Eddie in a trance recalling 11 days aboard a spaceship. The third, with Eddie in still deeper trance, shows him apparently communicating with the beings who created him.

He is not, it's fair to say, a totally credible character. He was accused of desertion in Vietnam, abandoned by his first wife immediately after the birth of their child and rejected by his adopted parents. No one, alien or not, could survive all those experiences unscarred.

But I would trust his testimony still less if he was always lucid and unscrambled instead of jittery and paranoid. Being half-alien would make anyone paranoid.

He appears much more anxious to tell his story than sell his wares. After you have downloaded the four long summaries a full picture emerges.

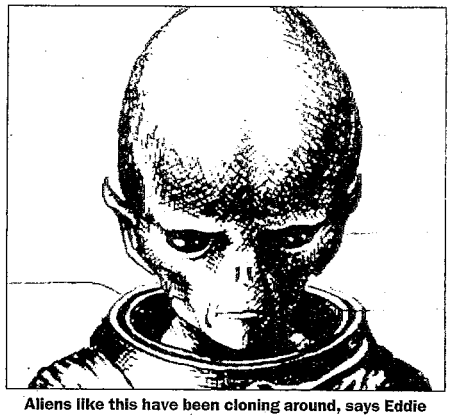
His description of a battlefield abduction and the military investigation that followed are classics of their kind.

The details from hypnotherapy, including science fiction-style names for the aliens and their planet, are less convincing. But inevitably the imagination supplies extra information to fill gaping holes in conscious memories.

The medical reports including probes into Eddie's non-human internal organs and the removal of unknown metals from his brain are apparently not imaginary.

Can you open your mind wide enough to accept any of this? The evidence is there. Judge for yourself.

● *Uri Geller's Web site is at http://www.urigeller.com*



Aliens like this have been cloning around, says Eddie

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E3 adds 3-D to equation . . . to the power of X

The venue and the stars may have been American — but most of the talent was British. **Tim Wapshott** in Atlanta reports from the world's biggest gaming show

One phrase more than any other summed up the fare on offer at this year's E3 gaming trade show in Atlanta — "next generation 3-D".

The world's largest event of its kind, the three-day show attracted more than 30,000 visitors anxious for a sneak preview of 1,600 new titles.

The market is booming, largely thanks to the trend of titles being released simultaneously on several or all formats, for both PCs and consoles. But the consensus at E3 was one of disappointment at the lack of original product, with sequels and copycat titles dominating. While most large games companies are American or Japanese, Britain still plays a vigorous part in development. Probably a third or more of the titles on show at the cavernous Georgian World Congress Center are the brainchildren of British design teams.

At American-owned Electronic Arts, it was Guildford-based Bullfrog Productions which created some of the keenest interest with its follow-up to the hugely popular *Dungeon Keeper*. Lead programmer Shaun Cooper said of *Dungeon Keeper 2*: "The sequel brings more depth and humour to the game. Now you must positively encourage rats and bats to inhabit your dungeon. You can even tickle your creatures and, after you've paid them, let them go to the casino to unwind, then fix the odds and grab back your money — although this doesn't make them very happy."



John Romero of Ion Storm, his Anachronox is hot property

At the stand for Fox Interactive, a News Corporation company, the lead title is a unique gaming episode of the cult television series *The X-Files*. The spin-off game stars David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson as FBI agents Mulder and Scully in a specially-commissioned adventure.

But it was one of Fox's other titles, *Aliens Vs Predator*, which many dubbed the game of the show. Made by Oxford's Rebellion, this is a blast-feast where players adopt one of three roles — Alien, Predator or Colonial Marine — and one weapon is loaded with lethal acid spit.

Among many titles from Hasbro Interactive was a colourful children's game emanating from Interactive Studios in Leamington Spa. *Glover* is a 3-D fantasy platform game with two glove-like characters roaming mirrored worlds, one good the other evil.

Scotland, too, was making its mark. Affectionately nicknamed Scotsoft, the Scottish Games Alliance last year drummed up £20 million worth of development contracts and this year many of those came to fruition at the show, including the 3-D makeover of the popular Earthworm Jim series. *Earthworm Jim 3D*, developed for Interplay by Vis Interactive.

Another money-spinning 2-D platform game now back with a good-looking 3-D makeover is *Prince of Persia 3D* from Surrey-based Broderbund's games arm, Red Orb. The original dominated sales charts first time round on the older consoles, and the masterful update is clearly destined for massive repeat business.

The big three console giants — Sony, Nintendo and Sega — easily dominated the show with the biggest stands. The remarkable success of the PlayStation in the past few years has been put down to the extensive range of software available. Sony tipped Namco's *Tekken 3* as its winter bestseller while Nintendo is putting its money on *The Legend of Zelda* for its N64 machines.

While a lack of software for the 32-bit Sega Saturn console has seen performance falter, the company was making much of its Dreamcast console, due to debut in Japan in November and in America and Britain next year. Promising ambitious 128-bit capabilities, it will be twice as powerful as the N64 and four times faster than the PlayStation.

Hardware peripherals were also in evidence. Nintendo will continue to squeeze profits from its C whi can orig Gai use ture stic prir new mat



Daikatana, the latest game from Romero who designed standards such as Quake and Doom



Gillian Anderson aka agent Scully with David Duchovny as the FBI's

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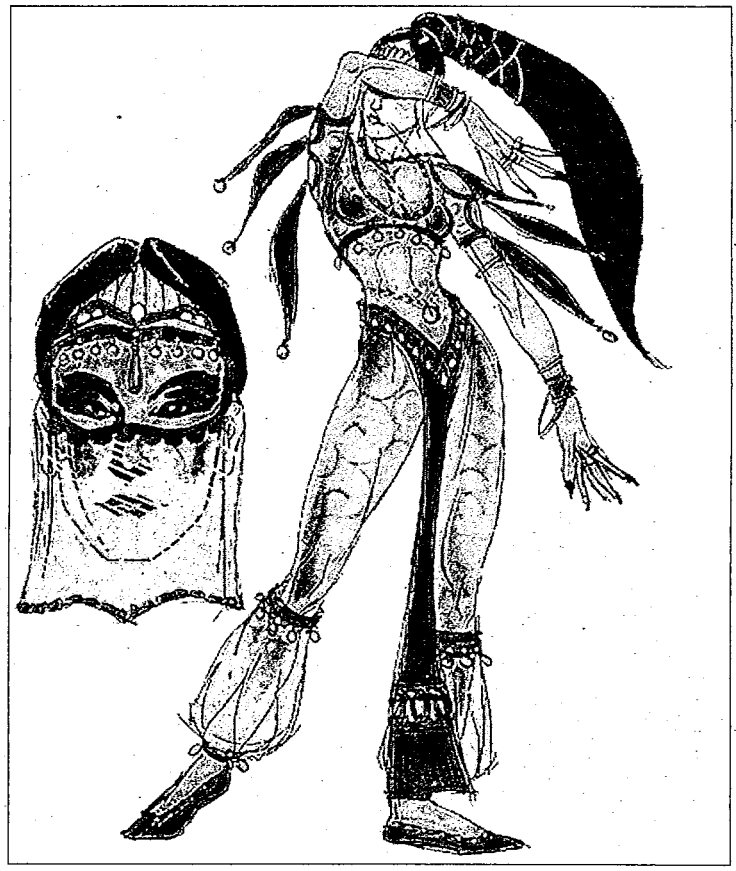
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lulder. She has yet to play the new X-Files game, preferring to concentrate on motherhood



The Bellydancer from Prince of Persia, one of many favourite titles to get a 3-D makeover

ame Boy handheld business
n now boasts a mono digital
ra that works with the
ıal Game Boy and Pocket
e Boy models, allowing
to take low-resolution pic-
then print them out as
ers with a tiny plug-in
er. More innovative is the
Game Boy model with a
finish colour screen.

Microsoft revealed two revolutionary plug-ins. The SideWinder Freestyle s a motion-sensing game-controller which tilts to ı action.

e out by Christmas, it will with *Motorcross Madness*, perb motorbike racer that shows off the performance of the pad.

The second new plug-in is the SideWinder Force Feedback Wheel, a steering wheel for driving games which re-creates realistic driving experiences with atmospheric vibrations.

Two other software titles creating excitement at the Microsoft stand were *Urban Assault* — best described as a 3-D Command & Conquer, due to hit shops this year — and *Age of Empires II: The Age of Kings*, the sequel to the superb empire-building game. This will be released next year.

The hottest title at the show was seen by fewer than 300 visitors. In a small office inside the Eidos stand, Ion Storm's Tom Hall offered the chosen few previews of *Anachronox*, a John Romero game in its earliest stages of development. This stunningly beautiful game to go on sale next year, will be one of the biggest titles of 1999.

Hall explained: "It is going to be very cinematic and about as non-linear as you can get. Some levels will be bigger than anything ever seen in a 3-D environment. We are really pushing the engine for this, with loads of textures."

The lucky few witnessed some of the most superb effects ever seen in a computer game, including rippling water, stunning laser lights and shadow effects.

For those who can't wait, among other Eidos titles was *Daikatana* also from Romero, who brought the gaming world *Quake* and *Doom*. One of the more unusual Eidos titles is the smart and good-looking top-down business caper *Gangsters: Organisers Crime* from Bristol's Hothouse.

Director Peter Moreland explained: "It is all about control, extortion and gang warfare as four underworld gangs fight it out for domination of a Chicago-like city.

"Once you have built an empire by bullying you retire, go legitimate then run for public office by buying businesses to launder your ill-gotten gains. If you are not intimidating enough, however, the straight businessmen squeal to the police."

Another sure-fire winner is the futuristic *Omikron: The Nomad Soul*, developed by Eidos France with a decidedly naughty French feel. You have the freedom to explore every inch of the animated 3-D world — including a seedy red-light district complete with peep-show and lap dancers.

SCULLY STEALS THE SHOW

THE BRIGHTEST star to visit E3 triggered a queue of autograph-hunters stretching the length of the main exhibition hall. Gillian Anderson, better known as FBI agent Scully in *The X-Files*, arrived on Saturday to help promote Fox Interactive's spin-off game, and spoke of a lapsed love of computer games.

She said: "Many years ago I played *Tetris*, *Tortured Souls* and *Myst*. Just a bit though — I am terrified of delving into some other reality that I am not able to come out of, and forgetting I am a mother with responsibilities in my life.

"Now, the only time I take my laptop out is when we play *Arthur Goes to School* or *Green Eggs and Ham*. I have requested a lot of CD-Roms — educational, dictionaries and encyclopedias. They are there when I have some time."

Anderson filmed her inserts for the *X-Files* CD-Rom over six days, between working on the series and the spin-off movie. Will she do another game? "If this is successful I will be more than happy to. And if the movie is successful I'll do another one." "I hope to god I'm not in a position later in life where I am praying for people to recognise me as Scully on the street. I am not Scully, and I approach life in a much more spontaneous and intuitive way than she does."

She has yet to play the finished game — and even then it won't be for long. "I will probably play it for 15 or 20 minutes," she admitted.

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ENCLOSURE 64/5 NUMBER 68

ll's surviving myth



The Munich air disaster (above) and (right) John Lukic

gery in Britain, carried fessor Archibald McIn- nily was awarded funds sent flowers to them in

a common Yugoslav

ott-Samuel, London NW2.

KIC is forever being nfirm this 'urban myth': ound for every time I'm e says. Now 37, he was t 'nursery of goalkeep- erfield, and signed by d as a schoolboy. nd youth international r roots in the former Lukic left Leeds when relegated in 1982 and rsenal. derstudying Pat Jen- ecame the undisputed No. 1 under Don Howe and George Graham.

He returned to Leeds when Graham signed David Seaman but is back at Highbury as third-string goalkeeper.

Peter Manning, Chesterfield.

QUESTION

Is there any place where Germans do not go on holiday in large numbers?

THE Germans are the world's greatest tourists. According to the World Tourism Organisation, in 1996, of the 593 million tourist arrivals around the world, 75 million were Germans.

Their most popular destination is France (13 million visitors a year), followed by Spain (10m), Austria (9.8m), Italy (8.4m), Poland (5.6m), Hungary (3.2m), the UK (2.9m), Holland (2.2m), the U.S. (2m), Switzerland (1.9m) and Greece (1.9m). Least favoured destinations include Belgium and Portugal. Even Israel gets almost 250,000 German visitors annually.

Rashid Ahmed, Flightseekers, London W1.

QUESTION

If the UFO the RAF [illegible] station at Ryling- dales spotted over the North Sea two years ago was travelling at 24,000mph (Mail), where might it be now?

FURTHER to the earlier answer, I'm tempted to say cloud-cuckoo- land, from whence it came.

We at the British UFO Research Association have learned that this triangular object, the size of a battleship, was, in the opinion of the MoD's 'UFO desk' (known as Air Staff 2A) the invention of an ex-employee with a grudge.

It seems too much of a coinci- dence that the BBC's new drama series, Invasion: Earth, begins with the interception of a UFO over the UK by a military jet. The writer did research with the RAF and MoD.

That said, there have been radar intercepts and jet pursuits over the North Sea. My book, Something In The Air, reveals radar and visual intercept cases. I interviewed the RAF crew involved, all named and on the record.

Some had kept their logs of the event — useful when the files are mysteriously missing from the Public Record Office. One senior officer who reached the rank of Air Commodore told me, on the record, that he has seen film of UFOs made by RAF jets over the UK. None of this footage has been released to the public.

Since 1991, there have been more than 30 mid-air conflicts over Britain between UFOs and civilian passenger aircraft. Several objects have been tracked on radar; some involving 'air miss' inquiries.

In at least two instances, air traffic control has ordered passen- ger aircraft to take action to avoid a UFO heading towards them, and a cargo aircraft has been struck and lost an engine in mid-flight.

Jenny Randles, Robert Hale Publishers, London.

QUESTION

Does anyone know an example of how, by omitting a comma, the meaning of a written sentence — and therefore of a judicial sentence — was reversed?

FURTHER to earlier answers, having been convicted of high trea- son in a trial before three judges following his part in the Easter Rising in Ireland in 1916, Sir Roger Casement challenged the ruling in the Court of Criminal Appeal.

The appeal, heard by five judges, involved complex discussion of ancient statutes concerning treason, dating back to the reign of Edward III. Much was made of the exact interpretation of the punctu- ation of these statutes, and the judges scrutinised the ancient texts with a magnifying glass.

Leading defence counsel A. M. Sullivan told the court: 'If a crime depends on a comma, the matter should be determined in favour of the accused, not the Crown.' But Casement's appeal was dismissed.

Attorney General F. E. Smith, who led the prosecution, refused to allow the case to go to the Law Lords, and Casement was hanged.

Martin Maloney, Birkenhead.

QUESTIONS

Q: I read 40 years ago that the Albert Hall had been booked for New Year's Eve, 1999. Does this booking still stand?

Fanny Elliot, Tonbridge, Kent.

Q: Is there an ending to the joke: 'There were two old men sitting in deckchairs...' — often started but never finished by Morecambe and Wise?

Mrs A. Stafford, Hailsham, E. Sussex.

Q: Twenty years ago, I bought a tuner/amplifier with four speakers on the promise that quadrophony was on the way. What happened to it?

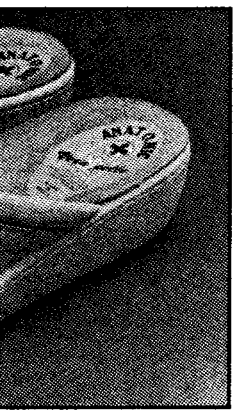
Bill Robbins, Oswestry, Shropshire.

■ DO YOU have a question you've always wanted answered? Or do you know the answer to a question raised here? Send your questions and answers to: James Black, Answers To Correspondents, Readers' Letters Department, Daily Mail, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT, or fax them to 01862 871 888. A selection will be published but we are not able to enter into individual correspondence.

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ACROSS

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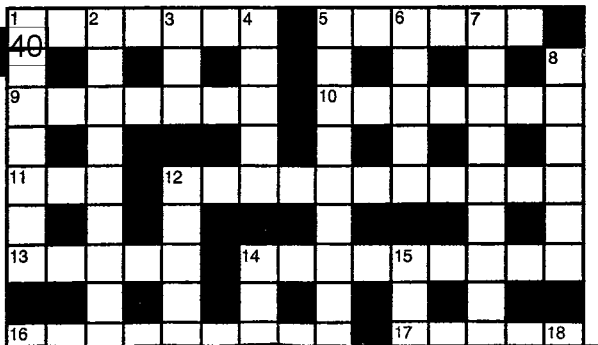
5 Lets everybody sow confusion (6)

9 Malign language used by Cleo's killer (7)

10 Correct number to be taken on by Prince shortly (7)

11 Vehicle with inferior reverse (3)

12 The old chap may stand for some time (11)



DOWN

1 Room to give church warning of a stoppage (7)

2 One can be seen to be in danger here (7,8)

3 Interfering input (3)

4 Near a break where there's fighting (5)

5 What nobody intends will happen (9)

6 Animal left with a priest (5)

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3 May 1998
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ARE UFOs HAUNTING SKIES OVER SUFFOLK?

EXCLUSIVE

By PHIL TAYLOR and TIM LUCKETT

THESE are the most astonishing UFO pictures ever taken in Britain.

The stills come from an incredible 35-minute video filmed in Suffolk and passed exclusively to the News of the World, showing:

- **THREE** flying saucers shooting past in a blaze of lights in three separate incidents.
- **A CIGAR-SHAPED** craft accelerating at incredible speed, and
- **HUGE** triangular objects engaged in a mock dogfight.

We showed the full 35-minute video to acknowledged UFO experts–and they were stunned.

Graham Birdsall, editor of UFO Magazine, said after analysing it: "It is absolutely amazing, the most striking UK footage I have seen."

Nicholas Redfern, author of acclaimed UFO study A Covert Agenda, agreed and added: "It's on a par with anything filmed anywhere in the world. I firmly believe this is extra-terrestrial."

Convinced

The video was compiled over five months last year by UFO spotter David Spoor, 54, who said: "I still can't believe what I filmed.

"Now I am convinced there is another life out there. I'm **SURE** they are from another planet."

His wife, Labour district councillor Jean, 49, said: "I know of no earthly craft that could have behaved in this manner."

David said he filmed the first UFO last August from his three-bedroom bungalow in the village of Oulton Broad, near Lowestoft, Suffolk. He explained:

"I was just closing my garage door about 7.45pm when I looked up and saw a bright cigar-shaped object flying slowly through the sky.

I was so excited I grabbed my video camera from the house and started filming it.

I propped the camera on the fence and filmed it as it went towards the coast.

After about 30 seconds it suddenly accelerated at incredible speed–far faster that a jet plane ever could–and just vanished. I couldn't believe what I had seen.

And when I popped it in my video to analyse it, I saw these little strobe lights flashing on either side.

The most amazing thing was they weren't attached to the craft.

Since then I have had the film analysed by experts from UFO Magazine and they say it is an extraordinary sight. They cannot explain it.

Now I've found other people who also saw the UFO that night and were equally amazed.

I am just thrilled I caught it on video because I fear people would not have believed me otherwise."

But that was just the opening shot of the extraordinary X-File film.

A month later his camera caught the first flying saucer. Recalls David: "It was just after 9pm when I looked out of the window and saw a very bright object in the sky. I grabbed the camera and rushed into the garden.

"I filmed this amazing saucer-shaped craft slowly moving from the East. It was very bright and had a shimmering appearance.

"I called Jean and she stood there open-mouthed in wonder alongside me.

Excited

"There was no sound and as it slowly moved towards me I saw a light on one side.

"We shouted out to our neighbours to witness it but they were too busy watching TV!"

Jean said: "It didn't spook me. It excited me. And it was exactly how I imagined a flying saucer would look."

On October 7 last year, David rushed for his camera again...

He revealed: "This one was almost identical to the last craft.

"I was in the garden and saw these amazing flashing lights towards the sea.

"I was so intrigued I jumped on my bicycle and rode towards the coast.

"There I saw this saucer-shaped object hovering over the sea and I filmed it for several minutes. Then it just vanished as though a light had been switched off."

In December came the third saucer. Said David: "This one arrived just before 4pm.

"When I started filming the saucer–which was emitting loads of light–it looked like it was still.

"Then it slowly moved behind a tree to the west.

"I went towards the front of the house to try and pick it up on camera again and it went behind my house. Then I lost it."

Jean said: "I loved watching it. I could even see what appeared like little portholes. There is no way it was a plane."

In November David also filmed what he described as "large black triangles" flying over a decommissioned MoD site on the coast at Lowestoft.

He said: "They were doing aerobatic manoeuvres at high speed. I have no idea what they were.

"Everything I have caught on video completely baffles me."

Last month it was reported the RAF tracked a triangular-shaped UFO "as big as a battleship" off the South-east coast.

Two Dutch air force jets scrambled to intercept the object but could not keep up, it was reported.

RAF officials were themselves baffled by the bizarre sighting.

One source said: "It was definitely under control, judging by the manoeuvres it executed." But some UFO watchers believe the military deliberately releases such stories as a smokescreen to explain sightings of top-secret experimental craft.

Yesterday, as UFO experts from throughout Britain congregated in Southend, Essex, to discuss the latest findings, Graham Birdsall said: "The fact that we are having these kind of strange phenomena filmed over our shores is quite amazing."

Aware

Nicholas Redfern said: "In my opinion, David's video is the most important UFO footage ever filmed in Britain.

"It is important that people get to see it as they should know what is going on over their heads in our airspace."

The 32-year-old West Midlands author added: "I am not aware of anything the military has anything flying which even remotely resembles the objects in David's footage. And I would question the wisdom of any military agency which would risk flying classified experimental aircraft over built-up areas.

"I firmly believe that what has been filmed by David is extra-terrestial," he added.

To research his distubing book, Mr Redfern was granted unprecedented access to thousands of previously classified Ministry of Defence files on UFOs.

In A Covert Agenda, he claims: "Rationally-controlled machines from beyond Earth are routinely penetrating UK airspace.

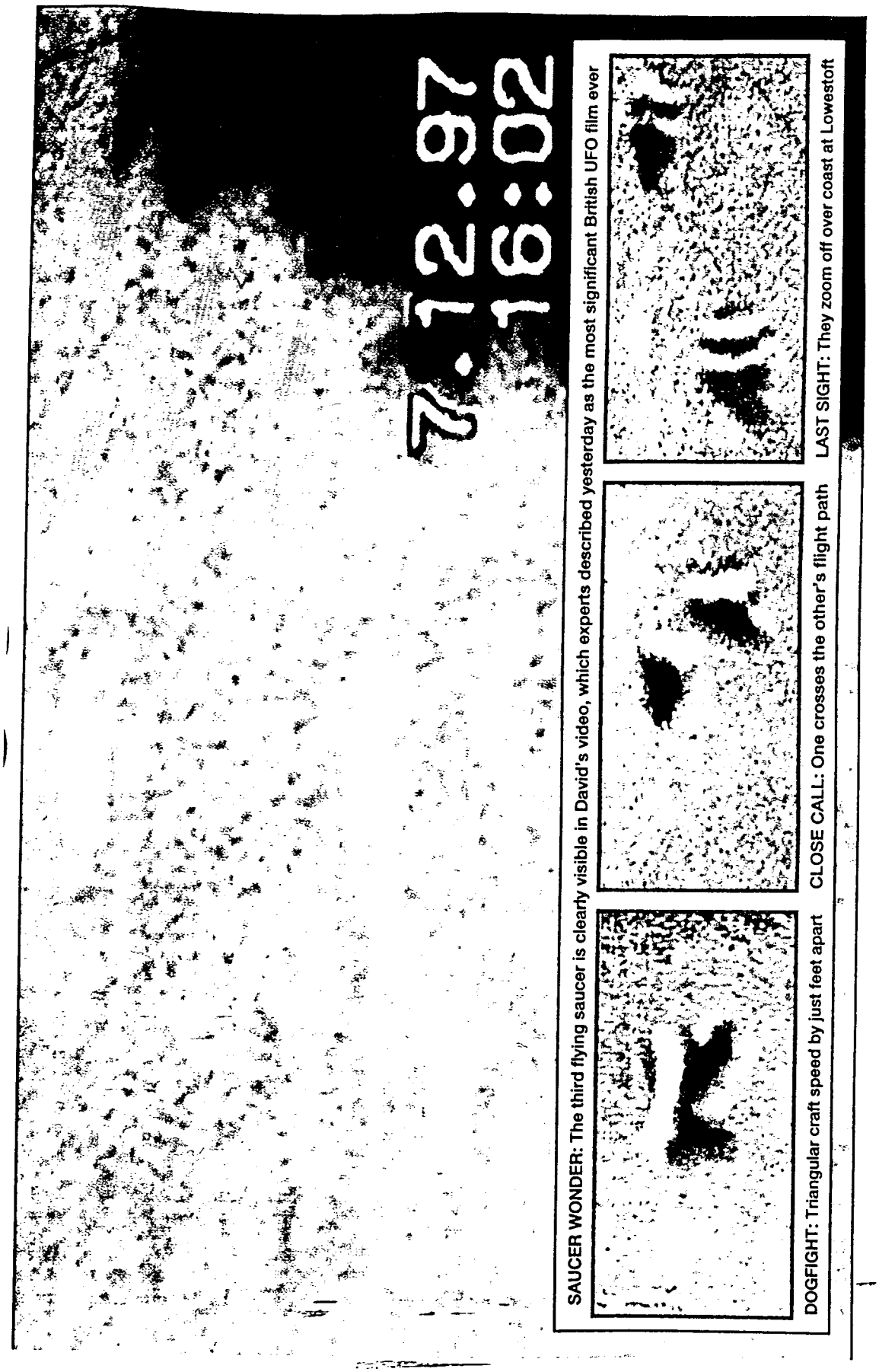
"The military infrastructure has little or no control over the violation.

"Despite this, evidence is now being uncovered which shows that there has been an official shift in policy.

"There is now a desire to disseminate to the public hitherto top-secret UFO data collected over the past 50 years."

continues

continues.



ends

Independent On Sunday
3 May 1998
Page 13

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Ministry has those UFO reports taped

Andrew Buncombe on the official view of unexplained phenomena

IN ROOM 8245, deep in the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall, sits a telephone answering machine containing messages from the mad, the misguided and, perhaps occasionally, the privileged.

The machine, in the office of the MoD Secretariat (Air Staff), is the one conduit where the public can pass on sightings of UFOs to the Government.

Even believers admit that the vast majority of UFOs reported turn out to be IFOs – identifiable flying objects. But for some people there remain sightings that cannot be explained by reference only to the terrestrial. In 1997 the machine took 250 calls. There have been 56 so far this year.

"We check the machine every hour," said an MoD spokesman. "It is easier to have the answer machine because otherwise we would find ourselves having all sorts of people who claim they have seen all sorts of things."

The position of the MoD is that it is only interested in UFOs if they constitute a threat to national safety, as the answering machine message makes clear.

But most of the reports are made hours, days or even weeks after the alleged sightings, by which time any threat would be long gone.

In any case, the MoD remains confident that any genuine threat would be picked up by its huge pyramid radar at RAF Fylingdales in North Yorkshire, which constantly monitors the skies.

UFO interest groups say the number of sightings reported to them is steadily rising. Between September 1996 and August 1997, the British UFO Research Association (Bufora) received reports of 386 sightings.

Glenda Dixon, the association's director of investigations, said that up to 95 per cent of sightings could be explained. She said that most sightings were actually ordinary aircraft, laser lights, or even bright planets viewed through binoculars. Satellites, weather balloons, birds, kites and reflections also accounted for some false alarms. Bufora also believes that many sightings are of test flights of new, secret, military aircraft.

The number of reports of "close encounter experiences" is also increasing, Mrs Dixon said. "The close encounter experience is a problem, as although it is interpreted as being like a UFO encounter this may not be the case. These extraordinary events could be linked to other anomalies such as paranormal events which may or may not include encounters with UFOs and aliens."

One reason for the increase in reports is the huge amount of coverage that UFO and associated matters now receive in the media and on television programmes such as *The X Files*. The opening programme of a new BBC television series of *Everyman* on 24 May will include the testimonies of people who claim to have been abducted.

Malcolm Robinson of Strange Phenomenon Investigations, which has offices in London and Scotland, said: "People are becoming more prepared to report their sightings."

He agreed that around 95 per cent of all reported sightings can be explained. It is the remaining five per cent that interest him.

"I got into all of this in an effort to disprove it," he said, "but you realise that, once you have swept away all of the debris, there is a hard core of cases which cannot be simply explained."

He recalls the case of two men from Edinburgh who claimed to have been abducted by aliens as they drove home one evening. "They had no interest in UFOs at all," he said. "I spoke to them at length. They are genuine people. They believe they had a close encounter and I believe them as well."

Anyone else believing they have had a close encounter, or wishing to report a sighting, can leave a message with the MoD on 0171-218 2140.

22

TIMES - INTERFACE - WED 6 MAY 98

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 65/7

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Carol Vorderman: "Computers are very entertaining now"

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campaign. This year's is very much bigger.

Although computers have been around for a long time now, I think over the last two years people have suddenly become aware of just how much they can do."

Vorderman's own experience of computers goes back to schooldays in the mid-Seventies when she was one of the first students to take an O-level in computer studies.

An engineering degree at Cambridge and a spell trying to sell Tandys followed, which was when she first encountered technophobia.

"I think in the early 1980s some of the stuff was being overhyped. You still had to use a cassette to record data and I think that put some people off," she says.

Her own life now runs via a powerful Compaq Presario at home and a Psion 5 Organiser. "I used to have a laptop but that was too heavy," she says.

"This is really neat and fits in a handbag. It's ideal for me because I want to take notes of things all the time. My next step is to get it hooked up to the Internet."

Much of *Computers Don't Bite*, although far from all of it, is aimed at children. "Sometimes I feel like a broadcasting teacher," says Vorderman. The latest user for her home computer is her five-year-old daughter, Katie.

"She uses CD-Roms. there are some really great titles around. It's why I am so excited by it all still.

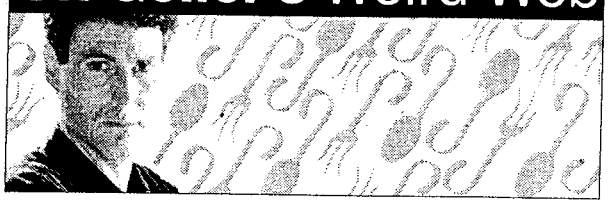
"I think we have gone through another pain barrier with computers. They are very entertaining now."

computers

doubts about. The main information is
matter-of-fact but accompanied by
ugh colourful graphics and on-screen
uctions to keep even the most sceptical
rtained. And after each section there's
e game to prove you've been paying
tion.
u've never experienced multimedia, the
r session is a great opportunity. It's
le, witty and entertaining: apart from
ing the World Cup, I helped Dr Who out of
nt spot and, in the cause of learning
to drag 'n' drop, assembled (wrongly as it
d out) a photofit picture of Grant from
Enders. "Nearly, nearly," said Carol's on-
en voice encouragingly, or was it
airingly? How was she to know I prefer
nation Street.

r details of your nearest taster sessions,
earning Direct on 0800 100 900. You need
l and book a session in advance. This
ne will also provide details of the free
puters Don't Bite magazine that includes
ernet guide for beginners and help for
ers. Or visit
//www.bbc.co.uk/education/cdb

Uri Geller's Weird Web



Official UFO

Introducing a new column in which the world's most celebrated paranormal investigator explores the wilder shores of the Internet.

EVEN the Ministry of Defence had to admit it saw the latest UFO.

The men from the ministry are mostly sceptical when inexplicable lights and craft appear in our skies. They believe any extra-terrestrials will be sighted on their pyramid radar at RAF Fylingdales in north Yorkshire, long before mere civilians see anything.

So civil servants manning the Whitehall UFO hotline (0171-218 2140) have their rebuttals ready. "It must have been a balloon, sir. Or the planet Venus. Perhaps it was a scratch on your spectacles?"

But the object tracked off East Anglia and revealed a few days ago was 300 yards long. And it did show up at Fylingdales, so it wasn't Venus or a scratched lens.

"It was definitely under control, judging by the various manouevres executed," admitted the ministry. "It appeared to be triangular and was around the size of a battleship (about 900ft long)."

The Dutch airforce despatched F-16 fighters to investigate but, since the object was moving fast enough to circle the globe in 60 minutes, the jets lost their quarry. So far the radar images have not been released.

Even more intriguing are the video pictures shot by UFO watcher David Spoor from the garden of his bungalow in Oulton Broad, near Lowestoft, Suffolk. He didn't see the flying battleship but did film glittering triangular craft playing tag over the North Sea.

If you want to video UFOs yourself, visit *www.blackvault.com* — run by a group called John Bro. Their simple method of filming into the sun's corona has generated thousands of UFO sightings from around the world.

And to make a UFO detector from an old coat hanger, a magnet and a doorbell, go to *www.thealienz.com/parazone/pageunderscor1.htm*

The apparatus reacts to changes in electromagnetic activity, a foolproof indicator of UFO presence. If you live in East Anglia it could be essential.

● *Visit Uri Geller's web site at www.urigeller.com*

Uri Geller's paranormal novel, Ella, is published by Headline at £9.99

Fun zone

Test for Success: Maths (DK Acacia, £19.99): This study aid for students at Key Stage 3 (11 to 14 years) was prepared by teachers and heads of department to ensure maximum relevance. The 1,300 questions are accompanied by 2,000 graphics to encourage a fuller understanding of the subject. 0171-836 5411

Snow Racer 98 (Ocean, £34.99): Snowboarders have 15 slopes to perfect the 20 or so stunts featured in this game. For the mainstream snow adventurer, a skiing component offers some tortuous slalom courses. Available for the PC and the PlayStation. 0121-625 3388

Textease Multimedia (Softease, from £85 single user to £375 secondary school licence): Teachers and pupils of all ages and abilities can learn to use word-processors, desktop publishing and multimedia projects with this integrated package. The computer can read back text as it is typed in Windows 3.11 & 95 or Acorn. 01332 204911

ENCLOSURE 64 NUMBER

Daily Star
28 April 1998
Page 8

Close encounter with a 900ft UFO

RAF chiefs are to open their "X-Files" to reveal new evidence that alien spacecraft regularly fly over Britain, it was claimed yesterday.

World experts will study top secret UFO tapes during a special two-day conference, it was said.

The most extraordinary discovery for discussion will be a craft spotted by both the Dutch and British military flying over the North Sea.

Missile

Measured at 900ft long, it zig-zagged at 17,000mph for 15 minutes before zooming off towards the Atlantic at 24,000mph.

At these speeds it could have flown the length of Britain in a few seconds.

Yesterday the Ministry of Defence denied they are hosting an international UFO summit at the RAF College, Cranwell, Lincs, in June.

A spokesman said: "There is a conference about ballistic missile defence and how warfare might be fought in the future." But a source with close links to the RAF insisted tapes of inexplicable sightings will be analysed at the gathering.

He maintained Britain's most sophisticated radar station at Fylingdales, North Yorks, has spotted several mystery craft over the past two years. Operators have watched in amazement as solid objects have been seen changing shape in mid-air and travelling at more than 30 times the speed of sound.

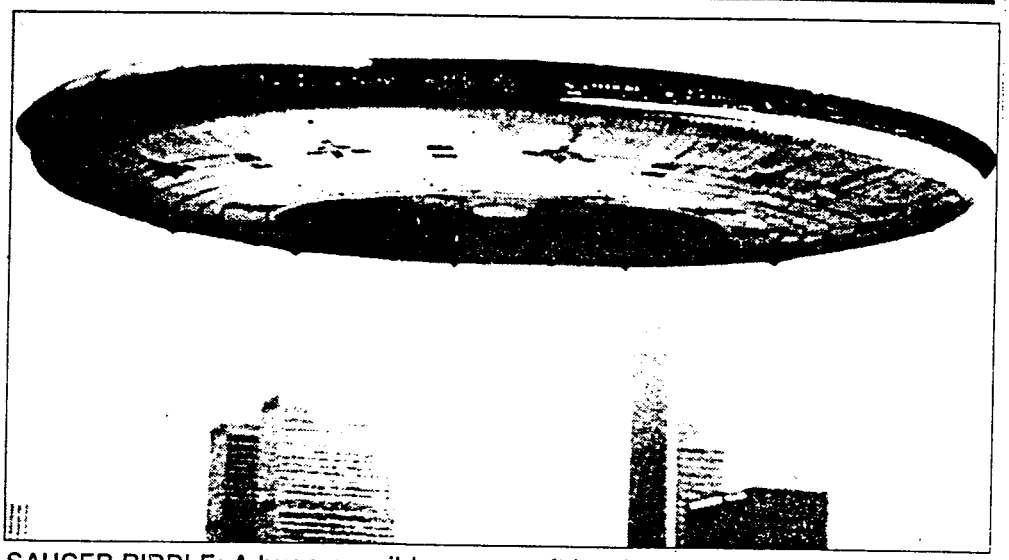
The source added: "These spaceships do not appear to be advanced, secret weapons — they are way beyond our technical knowledge." Two Dutch air force fighters tried to intercept the 17,000mph object but couldn't keep up.

"No man-made plane could have travelled as fast as that object — it should have disintegrated," said the source.

"It was definitely under control, judging by the manoeuvres it executed. And it appeared to be triangular in shape and around the size of a battleship."

Other tapes reportedly show 12 UFOs flying in close formation.

There's also evidence of a giant craft moving up and down the mid-Atlantic at impossibly high speeds.



SAUCER RIDDLE: A huge possible spacecraft has been tracked across the skies

By JOHN McJANNET

[redacted] /see P20

Do we know enough about this conference at Cranwell in June? I hope that there won't be any silliness there about UFOs.

[redacted] informed & contents & enc. 63.

[redacted]

20

[redacted]

Please file → 64/5

For info

ENCLOSURE 5 NUMBER

[redacted]

Thank you. A good minute.

[redacted]

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/5

30 Apr 98

APS/USofS
(thro [redacted]

Copy to:

DPO(RAF)
ADGE1
AD OR(ICS)1
PSO/ACAS

UFO ARTICLES - DAILY MAIL AND DAILY EXPRESS - 27 APRIL 1998

ISSUE

1. To provide advice following the Daily Mail and Daily Express articles of 27 April alleging a 'UFO' sighting over the North Sea.

RECOMMENDATION

2. To note.

BACKGROUND

3. On Sunday 26 April the MOD Press Office received calls from the Daily Mail and Daily Express about an alleged 'UFO' sighting over the North Sea involving an object 'the size of a battleship' travelling at around '17,000 mph' (the published articles subsequently alleged 24,000 mph). No additional information about the date of this alleged incident was provided at the time or has been since. A further 20 phonecalls from the print and broadcast media have now been received.

Source of the Story

4. The Daily Mail has said that [redacted] was the source of the story. [redacted], is believed to have left the paper under a cloud and has, we understand, been contributing material to the national Press on a freelance basis since that time. [redacted] is known to be rather inventive of the facts.

RAF Fylingdales, Yorkshire

5. The Fylingdales radar is tasked only to detect and track objects in orbit and those with a ballistic trajectory. The Officer Commanding at RAF Fylingdales has confirmed that for the

35 years it has operated, no 'UFOs' have been tracked. It is the case that the radar is not configured to track such objects, particularly in the reported areas, and there is therefore no substance to the claim that recorded data of this nature is held at RAF Fylingdales.

6. OC Fylingdales also confirmed that the station has not been approached to provide supporting information for the Space Symposium at RAF Cranwell in June. The RAF Fylingdales Crew Commander received a call from a journalist on Sunday but was asked only about RAF Fylingdales' involvement with the Symposium. The Crew Commander denied all knowledge of any involvement and referred the journalist to the MOD Press desk.

Symposium at RAF Cranwell

7. The Air Warfare Centre and the MOD branch Operational Requirements (Information & Communication Services) are jointly hosting a *'Military Exploitation of Space'* Symposium on 3-4 June at RAF Cranwell. It is open to Service and MOD civilian personnel and industrialists with an interest in this subject and is mentioned on the Internet.

8. The newspaper articles allege plans for one of the speakers at the Symposium to present radar tapes from RAF Fylingdales to substantiate the 'UFO' claims. Neither the Air Warfare Centre's focal point for this event, nor OR(ICS) staff, have knowledge of any material of this nature on the agenda and have confirmed that the Symposium has nothing whatsoever to do with 'UFOs'. A copy of a brochure about the Symposium is attached for information.

Conclusion

9. All enquiries indicate that there is nothing of substance in the claims made by the media.

[redacted]

Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 [redacted]0
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A1

28 APR '97 13:27 FROM D E F PRESS OFFICE PAGE.02
28 APR '97 09:03 P.03/03

Administration Office,
OD & T
RAFC Cranwell,
Sleaford,
Lincs.
NG34 8HB

TO [redacted]ction 40

[redacted]tion 40

Please fill in the reverse of this form and send to the above address by 18th May 1998

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The Air Force Board

ROYAL AIR FORCE

AIR WARFARE CENTRE

OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE & TRAINING
RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL
UNITED KINGDOM
NG34 8HB

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WITHIN UK 01400-261201 EXT 6474
OUTSIDE UK 44-1400-261201 EXT 6474
Internet Mail Address: ASCM@OD-T.demon.co.uk
www.raf.mod.uk/awc/asd

1998 Aries Symposium
Military Exploitation of Space

A 2-day operational and technical symposium on the military exploitation of space, sponsored by the Air Force Board, will be held at RAFC Cranwell, UK, on Thur 4 - Fri 5 June. The aim of the symposium is to raise the profile of Space within the defence community, both military and industrial at 3 levels: very senior officers, who are already well aware of MOD space policy but probably less aware of future technological trends; middle-ranking MOD personnel, whose professional knowledge would benefit significantly from greater exposure to the potential benefits of space exploitation; and industry, who wish to be informed about MOD interest in space as an operational environment and are keen to gain an opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities and concepts they may offer in support of space objectives. All the briefings at the symposium will be presented at an unclassified level; however, arrangements can be made for participants to discuss technology issues at a classified level. The symposium is being run jointly by the Air Warfare Centre (AWC) at RAFC Cranwell and OR(ICS) staff from MOD. The AWC point of contact for the symposium is Mr J West, RAFC Cranwell (01400-261201) Ext 6474.



** TOTAL PAGE.03 **
28/04/1998 08:01
[redacted]ction 40
OD&T RAF CRANWELL PAGE 02

P.02/03 PAGE 03
TO RAF CRANWELL
28 APR '97 13:27 FROM D E F PRESS OFFICE
PAGE.03
28 APR '97 09:04

Thursday 4 June

1030 Registration & coffee in Whittle Hall

1100 Welcome and Opening Remarks
Chairman

1110 Keynote Opening address
DGICS

Section 40

Concepts

1125 Space Technology and Concepts
OD Space AWC

1215 **Lunch in College Hall**

1330 UK Space Policy and Programmes
AD OR(ICS)1

Trends

1415 Future Developments and Trends - UK MOD *DERA*

Section 40 **1500** **Tea in College hall**

1530 Future Developments and Trends - UK/European Industry *BNSC*

1615 View from the Pentagon
US DoD

1700 Close

1930 Pre-Dinner Drinks at The Lawns

2000 Symposium Dinner at The Lawns

Friday 5 June

0900 Introductory Remarks
Chairman

Communications

0905 Teledesic *Boeing*

0945 Celestri *MMS*

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Boeing

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Launch Systems

1430 TSTO/Re-usables
US Industry

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1545 Sea Launch
Boeing/Krunichev

1630 Closing Address *ACAS*

1645 Discussion *Chairman*

1700 Close

(Contents may change due to the availability of speakers)



Day 1 *Day 2*

Registration Form

Please register the following delegate for:

The Military Exploitation of Space Symposium

RAFC Cranwell 4 and 5 June 1998

Surname: .....

First Name: .....

Title/Position/Function: .....

Organisation: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....Postcode: .....

Phone: ..... Fax .....

Signature: .....

Fee per Delegate: Non MOD employee £220 ☐
MOD employee £20 ☐

The fees include tea/coffee and buffet lunches for both days

Symposium Dinner: I would like to attend the dinner on the night of Thursday 4 June 1998 to be held at The Lawns, Lincoln and enclose an additional cheque for £30. YES ☐ NO ☐

Because of the large numbers expected to attend you are advised to book early. All applications must be received by 18 May. Cheques will be refunded if over-subscribed.

Dress: Uniform/jacket and tie for symposium, lounge suit for dinner.

Method of payment: By Cheque(s) Sterling made payable to Nempss RAF Cranwell.

To: Aerosystems Course Manager,
OD&T, RAFC Cranwell,
Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 8HB.

Tel: 01400 261201 Ext. 6474/6425/6410

Accommodation: Due to the reorganisation of Cranwell Messes there will be no Service accommodation available at RAF Cranwell. Neighbouring stations at Waddington, Digby & Coningsby will be able to offer some accommodation if requested early and booked direct, quoting Space Symposium. A list of local hotels and maps are enclosed.

RESTRICTED/~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

RESTRICTED/~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

MOD Form 174D

ENCLOSURE NUMBER 63

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D/SEC(AS) 6415

Enclosure Jacket No. 1

DATE OPENED 30.4.98

DIVISION/DIRECTORATE/BRANCH:

SEC(AS)2A

SUBJECT:

UFO ARTICLES
DAILY MAIL + DAILY EXPRESS
27 APRIL 1998

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~~

RESTRICTED/~~UNCLASSIFIED~~



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/5

30 Apr 98

APS/USofS
(thro [redacted]

Copy to:

DPO(RAF)
ADGE1
AD OR(ICS)1
PSO/ACAS

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35 years it has operated, no 'UFOs' have been tracked. It is the case that the radar is not configured to track such objects, particularly in the reported areas, and there is therefore no substance to the claim that recorded data of this nature is held at RAF Fylingdales.

6. OC Fylingdales also confirmed that the station has not been approached to provide supporting information for the Space Symposium at RAF Cranwell in June. The RAF Fylingdales Crew Commander received a call from a journalist on Sunday but was asked only about RAF Fylingdales' involvement with the Symposium. The Crew Commander denied all knowledge of any involvement and referred the journalist to the MOD Press desk.

Symposium at RAF Cranwell

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[redacted]

Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 [redacted]0
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A1

28 APR '97 13:27 FROM D E F PRESS OFFICE PAGE.02
28 APR '97 09:03 P.03/03
TO [redacted]tion 40
[redacted]tion 40
28/04/1998 08:01 ** TOTAL PAGE.03 **
[redacted]tion 40

Administration Office,
OD & T
RAFC Cranwell,
Sleaford.
Lincs.
NG34 8HB

Please fill in the reverse of this form and send to the above address by 18th May 1998

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ROYAL AIR FORCE

AIR WARFARE CENTRE

OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE & TRAINING
RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL
UNITED KINGDOM
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P.02/03 PAGE 03
TO RAF CRANWELL
28 APR '97 13:27 FROM D E F PRESS OFFICE
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ction 40

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Chairman

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RAFC Cranwell 4 and 5 June 1998

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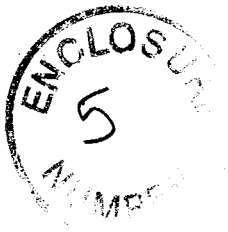
Method of payment: By Cheque(s) Sterling made payable to Nempss RAF Cranwell.

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OD&T, RAFC Cranwell,
Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 8HB.

Tel: 01400 261201 Ext. 6474/6425/6410

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PAGE.03
ction 40
28 APR '97 09:04



LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAO/1/13

29 Apr 98

Sec(AS)2a1

UFO ARTICLES - 27 APR 98

References:

A. D/Sec(AS)/64/5 dated 28 Apr 98.
B. FYD/2401/10/1/Org dated 28 Apr 98.

1. At Reference A you asked me investigate the involvement of Fylingdales in events quoted in recent press articles on alleged UFO's.

2. As you will read in Fylingdale's reply at Reference B (attached), they have no knowledge of the alleged `sighting', have no tapes or any other recorded data and have no involvement in the forthcoming Military Space Symposium at Cranwell.

3. The Fylingdales radar is tasked only to detect and track objects in orbit and those with a ballistic trajectory.

[redacted]

Wg Cdr
ADGE 1
MB4227 [redacted]
CHOtS: ADGE1

Attachment: FYD/2401/10/1/Org dated 28 Apr 98.

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

LOOSE MINUTE

FYD/2401/10/1/Org

28 Apr 98

MOD(DAO) ADGE 1

Copy to:

HQ 11/18 Gp (Wg Cdr AD C2 Ops)

ALLEGED UFO SIGHTINGS - RAF FYLINGDALES

Reference:

A. Telecon [redacted] 28 Apr 98.
B. Fax Ref D/DAO/1/13 dated 28 Apr 98.

1. Reference A requested RAF Fylingdales' response to 2 tabloid newspaper articles from 27 Apr 98 concerning alleged UFO activity.

2. Both the newspaper articles forwarded under Reference B are pure fantasy and contain no element of truth. Over 35 years of operations at RAF Fylingdales, **no** UFOs have been tracked; indeed, the radar is not configured to track any such objects, particularly in the reported areas. It follows, therefore, that there is no recorded data on UFOs held at the Station.

3. We have no knowledge of a 'Space' conference at RAF Cranwell in June, nor have we been approached to provide any supporting information of such an event. On 26 Apr 98, the Fylingdales Crew Commander was telephoned by [redacted] who asked about our involvement with the Cranwell conference. The Commander denied all knowledge of it and referred the caller back to the MOD Press Desk.

4. Interestingly enough, as is always the case with these reports, the military source remains unnamed, lending weight to the fact that the reports are a fabrication.

[redacted]
Wg Cdr
OC

RESTRICTED
UNCLASSIFIED

ENCLOSURE 4 NUMBER

From: [redacted]

DPO(RAF)
Room 0389
MOD Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

Ext [redacted]40

Your Reference:

Our Reference:

Sec (AS) 2a1

April 1998

MEDIA REPORTS - UFOS

1. You asked for briefing on the Daily Mail and Daily Express reports of UFOs and the conference at RAF Cranwell. You might want to be aware that we have had perhaps 20 further calls from the print and broadcast media, following-up these pieces. It has become quite tiresome.

2. Through the Daily Mail, we confirmed (as you suspected) that [redacted] is behind the reports. [redacted] you might recall, is [redacted] who had difficulties with the financial management of the paper and departed under a cloud claiming some of mental breakdown. Subsequently he has been contributing material to the national press on a freelance basis. His MO appears to be to search out a kernel of information in one of the Service papers, which are freely available on news stands, and invent a sensationalist story around them.

3. The Air Warfare Centre is holding a seminar titled 'Military Exploitation of the Upper Atmosphere and Beyond' on June 3 - 4. It is open to military and civilians with an interest in this area. It is mentioned on the Internet and, I understand, may have had a paragraph in RAF News. It has nothing whatsoever to do with UFOs. A fax copy of the explanatory brochure is attached.

4. The Press Office has been knocking down this report since Sunday. Regrettably, some parts of the media have not let the facts stand on the way of a "good story."

[redacted]0

DPO has confirmed [redacted] of the Air Warfare Centre confirmed no knowledge of any Delegate to the conference billed to present radar tapes confirming this story.

DOCUMENT4

28 APR '97 13:27 FROM D E F PRESS OFFICE PAGE.02
TO [redacted]tion 40
P.03/03 28 APR '97 09:03
28/04/1998 08:01 ** TOTAL PAGE.03 **
S[redacted]n 40

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Lincs.
NG34 8HB

Please fill in the reverse of this form and send to the above address by 18th May 1998

Sponsored by
The Air Force Board

ROYAL AIR FORCE

AIR WARFARE CENTRE

OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE & TRAINING
RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL
UNITED KINGDOM
NG34 8HB

COMMERCIAL
WITHIN UK 01400-261201 EXT 6474
OUTSIDE UK 44-1400-261201 EXT 6474
Internet Mail Address: ASCM@OD-T.demon.co.uk
www.raf.mod.uk/awc/asd

1998 Aries Symposium
Military Exploitation of Space

A 2-day operational and technical symposium on the military exploitation of space, sponsored by the Air Force Board, will be held at RAFC Cranwell, UK, on Thur 4 - Fri 5 June. The aim of the symposium is to raise the profile of Space within the defence community, both military and industrial at 3 'levels': very senior officers, who are already well aware of MOD space policy but probably less aware of future technological trends; middle-ranking MOD personnel, whose professional knowledge would benefit significantly from greater exposure to the potential benefits of space exploitation; and industry, who wish to be informed about MOD interest in space as an operational environment and are keen to gain an opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities and concepts they may offer in support of space objectives. All the briefings at the symposium will be presented at an unclassified level; however, arrangements can be made for participants to discuss technology issues at a classified level. The symposium is being run jointly by the Air Warfare Centre (AWC) at RAFC Cranwell and OR(ICS) staff from MOD. The AWC point of contact for the symposium is Mr J West, RAFC Cranwell (01400-261201) Ext 6474.



P.02/03 PAGE 03
TO RAF CRANWELL
28 APR '97 13:27 FROM D E F PRESS OFFICE

Thursday 4 June

1030 Registration & coffee in Whittle Hall

1100 Welcome and Opening Remarks
Chairman

1110 Keynote Opening address
DGICS

<u>Concepts</u>

1125 Space Technology and Concepts
OD Space AWC

1215 **Lunch in College Hall**

1330 UK Space Policy and Programmes
AD OR(ICS)1

<u>Trends</u>

1415 Future Developments and Trends - UK MOD *DERA*

1500 **Tea in College hall**

1530 Future Developments and Trends - UK/European Industry *BNSC*

1615 View from the Pentagon
US DoD

1700 Close

1930 Pre-Dinner Drinks at The Lawns

2000 Symposium Dinner at The Lawns

Friday 5 June

0900 Introductory Remarks
Chairman

<u>Communications</u>

0905 Teledesic *Boeing*

0945 Celestri *MMS*

1030 **Coffee in College Hall**

<u>Remote Observation</u>

1100 Spaceborne AWACS
Boeing

1145 EOSAT *LM Space Imaging*

1230 **Lunch in College Hall**

1345 SBIRS *LM/TRW*

<u>Launch Systems</u>

1430 TSTO/Re-usables
US Industry

1515 **Tea in College Hall**

1545 Sea Launch
Boeing/Krunichev

1630 Closing Address *ACAS*

1645 Discussion *Chairman*

1700 Close

(Contents may change due to the availability of speakers)

Registration Form

Please register the following delegate for:

The Military Exploitation of Space Symposium

RAFC Cranwell 4 and 5 June 1998

Surname: .....

First Name: .....

Title/Position/Function: .....

Organisation: .....

Address: .....

.....

..... Postcode: .....

Phone: ..... Fax: .....

Signature: .....

Fee per Delegate: Non MOD employee £220 ☐
MOD employee £20 ☐

The fees include tea/coffee and buffet lunches for both days

Symposium Dinner: I would like to attend the dinner on the night of Thursday 4 June 1998 to be held at The Lawns, Lincoln and enclose an additional cheque for £30. YES ☐ NO ☐

Because of the large numbers expected to attend you are advised to book early. All applications must be received by 18 May. Cheques will be refunded if over-subscribed.

Dress: Uniform/jacket and tie for symposium, lounge suit for dinner.

Method of payment: By Cheque(s) Sterling made payable to Nompas RAF Cranwell.

To: Aerosystems Course Manager,
OD&T, RAFC Cranwell,
Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 8HB.

Tel: 01400 261201 Ext. 6474/6425/6410

Accommodation: Due to the reorganisation of Cranwell Messes there will be no Service accommodation available at RAF Cranwell. Neighbouring stations at Waddington, Digby & Coningsby will be able to offer some accommodation if requested early and booked direct, quoting Space Symposium. A list of local hotels and maps are enclosed.

PAGE.03
28 APR '97 09:04



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/5

28 Apr 98

DPO(RAF)

UFO ARTICLES: DAILY MAIL AND DAILY EXPRESS - 27 APRIL 1998

1. USofS is seeking an urgent background briefing on the substance of the two tabloid articles on "UFOs" on 27 April (see attached).

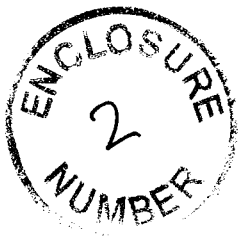
2. I shall be coordinating the brief and should be grateful if you could send me background lines on the likely source of the article ([redacted]) and information you have obtained about the Space Symposium to be held at Cranwell in June, and whether the organisers know anything about details of this alleged incident being presented to the Symposium. I am seeking formal lines from RAF Fylingdales on their knowledge of this alleged incident in parallel.

3. In order to meet the Private Office deadline I should be most grateful if you could let me have something by **COP WED 29 APR** please. Thanks for your assistance.

[redacted]

Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 [redacted]40
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A1

Enc.



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/5

28 Apr 98

ADGE1

UFO ARTICLES: DAILY MAIL AND DAILY EXPRESS - 27 APRIL 1998

1. You discussed informally with someone at RAF Fylingdales the background to the Daily Mail article of yesterday.

2. As you will see from the attached, USofS has seen this article (and another from the Daily Express) and has asked for a background briefing on the Department's knowledge of this matter. In the light of this formal request from the Minister's office I should be grateful if you would approach RAF Fylingdales and seek a formal line from them on their knowledge of this alleged event.

3. May I ask for something by close of play tomorrow please.

[redacted]

Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 [redacted]0
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A1





PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

[redacted]

For info.
Asked DPO(RAF) + AOGE1 to provide me with formal guidance. Agreed with [redacted] we'd let him have something by 1400hrs on Thursday.

[redacted] 40
28/4

LOOSE MINUTE

D/USofS/JS/28/1/0

28 April 1998

Sec(AS)2a1

Copy to:
DPR/RAF

UFO ARTICLES: DAILY MAIL AND DAILY EXPRESS, 27 APRIL 1998

The Under Secretary of State has seen the above articles (copies attached) and has requested an urgent brief on the reports.

2. The Minister would also like to know all the details of the Space Symposium to be held at the RAF College, Cranwell in June, including information on the taped radar records that will be presented.

3. I would be grateful for an early response.

[redacted]
APS/USofS
MB6215 [redacted]
USofS/Mailbox

Recycled Paper

The Express
27 April 1998
Page 27

RAF spots speeding UFOs with new radar

BRITAIN'S X-Files may be opened up amid claims of stunning evidence that UFOs fly over Britain.

Tapes to be shown to British and American experts are said to show objects which change shape in mid-air and a battleship-sized aircraft travelling at 33 times the speed of sound.

The details are due to be revealed in early June at a Space Symposium at the RAF's Cranwell staff college.

A senior RAF source claims the mystery craft have been picked up by the latest Phased Array radar at the Cold War listening post at Fylingdales in North Yorkshire.

One senior officer said: "What we have seen are not secret weapons. They are craft

BY JOHN INGHAM

of which we have no technical knowledge. We know their shape, speeds and height but cannot explain what they are."

The most spectacular discovery is a craft spotted by Fylingdales and the Dutch Air Force over the North Sea. Described as "the size of a battleship", it zig-zagged at up to 24,000mph for 15 minutes, "as if it wanted to be spotted".

Another tape shows a group of 12 oval objects seemingly change shape, to the amazement of observers.

But the RAF is expected to withhold some X-Files. It is feared they could reveal how sophisticated their new radars are.

What is all this about?

Daily Mail
27 April 1998
Page 17

RAF TRACKS MYSTERY CRAFT OVER NORTH SEA ... AND FIGHTERS CAN'T CATCH IT

24,000mph UFO buzzes Britain

By DAVID DERBYSHIRE
Science Correspondent

THE RAF has tracked a UFO 'as big as a battleship' off the coast of Britain, military sources revealed yesterday.

They said the massive craft was tracked flying in a zig-zag pattern at 17,000mph over the North Sea. It then accelerated to 24,000mph and zoomed off towards the Atlantic.

The Dutch air force also tracked the UFO, but two F-16 fighters scrambled to intercept the object were unable to keep up, it is claimed.

RAF officials are said to be baffled by the object, spotted by the Ministry of Defence long-range listening station on Fylingdales moor in North Yorkshire.

'It was definitely under control, judging by the various manoeuvres executed,' said a source. 'It appeared to be triangular and was around the size of a battleship (*about 900ft long*).'

Radar records of the craft are due to be presented to science and military experts from around the world, who will examine how to exploit space for military purposes at a conference at RAF College, Cranwell, Lincolnshire, in June. Other tapes of the UFO – thought to have been made during the last two years – are being withheld because they give too much information about the radar base's scanning ability.

However, military chiefs may release a second series of tapes, reported to show 12 UFOs changing shape in mid-flight.

While the 'battleship' UFO is most likely to be an experimental aircraft or a sighting caused by a freak weather effect, UFO watchers believe it is further evidence that the Earth is being visited by alien craft.

The popularity of TV series such as the X-Files has rekindled interest in flying saucers and conspiracy theories in recent years.

A spokesman for the Fortean Times, the journal devoted to UFOs, psychic phenomena and the paranormal, said: 'The vast majority of strange objects seen in the sky have a more down-to-earth explanation. But most UFO investigators would be very interested in seeing these tapes.' The latest theory gaining popularity among some dedicated UFO watchers is that the military deliberately release stories about UFOs as a 'smokescreen' – and that witnesses are really seeing top-secret experimental aircraft.

The base at RAF Fylingdales has been watching the skies since the end of the Cold War. A large pyramid-shaped, 360-degree radar has now replaced the gigantic landmark 'golf balls' tracking system.

The base has concentrated on tracking satellites and pieces of space junk circling the Earth.

Head of Sec (AS). [redacted] Thank you! [redacted]

You might wish to be aware. The Air Staff have checked with Fylingdales and they have no idea what this is about

I do not know what the Cranwell Conference is about - we are endeavouring to make further enquiries (the Air Warfare Centre has [redacted] same interest).

PTO

Daily Mail, Monday, April 27, 1998

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By DAVID DERBYSHIRE
Science Correspondent



A UFO in science fiction: But are they secretly science fact?

Nurofen Advance

ENCLOSURE 4/5

Head of Sec(AS)
Thank you. How could I have missed this!
It's a pity this doesn't make clear he's not the MOD UFO spokesperson.
In case you haven't yet seen February FOCUS
CLOSURE NUMBER 61

Never mind the saucers, what about the occupants?



PHOTO: Michele Kaczynski

Nick Pope.

Mark Ottowell talks to Nick Pope, "the real Fox Mulder"

IT would be difficult not to have come across MOD civil servant Nick Pope in the media of late. Dubbed by the Press as "the real Fox Mulder" after the phlegmatic hero of cult TV series *The X-Files*, Nick came to fame in the UFO field, having worked for Sec(AS) where much of his time was spent researching claims of UFO sightings of one kind or another.

Once he had amassed enough information, and felt the environment was receptive enough, he published *Open Skies, Closed Minds* (Simon and Schuster, £5.99), a candid look at some of the quite astounding cases he studied while working in the branch which deals with investigating UFO sightings.

Before interest had even waned on *Open Skies*, he followed it up with his latest book, *The Uninvited* (Simon and Schuster, £ 15.99).

"With the publication of *Open Skies* I found myself very much at the centre of the UFO controversy in this country. I was in huge demand by the media," Nick said. In fact he has acquired quite a few commitments from his first book.

Daunting

"I write a regular column for a UFO magazine called *Sightings* and also have a column on the Internet magazine *Hot Gossip UK*."

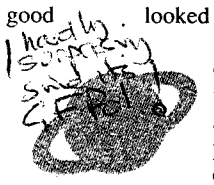
He is also asked to write occasional pieces for newspapers and to provide quotes for the media.

"I effectively found myself doing two jobs — my usual one at MOD, then going home to a pile of correspondence, requests for interviews, letters from the public, and children doing school projects on UFOs.

"It can be daunting. I regularly find myself getting to bed at around 2am."

Nick has been crusading to win the subject of UFOs some long overdue respectability. "People come up to me in the street and say 'well done, you're doing a good job'. My activities have fuelled interest even with those who don't believe in the subject, and there are a lot more believers at MOD than you'd imagine."

Nick said he has a good relationship with colleagues in his department. And it is not unusual for complete strangers to invite him to lunch! "People are starting to believe for the same reasons that convinced me when I was doing the job officially — it is not just about lights in the sky. It is the testimonies of pilots, radar evidence and abnormally high radiation levels without explanation. There is a good science behind it and people are beginning to wake up to that"



The Uninvited addresses the phenomenon of alien abductions. Nick explained: "I wanted to deal with these extraordinary claims from people who profess to have been abducted by extraterrestrials, and also to focus on the occupants of the craft."

Unlike other books about alien abductions, *The Uninvited* is not just about case studies. It attempts to give an overview of the entire subject, tracing the history of the phenomenon right up to date, drawing parallels between folklore and modern accounts of alien abductions.

It also gives the accounts of six people speaking out for the first time about their experiences of abduction. "I do have cases that fit into the traditional mould, of people being drawn up in a beam of light and finding themselves in a craft where a medical procedure of some sort is carried out. But the six cases I looked at in detail move away from that and show experiences where there may be parallels with all sorts of other intriguing phenomenon such as out of body and near death experiences," Nick said.

"This subject has huge diversity — it is not just clear cut as some researchers like to imply. There is not going to be one neat solution to the abduction mystery, just as I am convinced that there is not going to be one single definitive answer to the UFO mystery."

His book differs from most of the others about the subject because it contains first-hand accounts unaltered by the author or the publishers.

Nick said: "I made a conscious decision that I would give the 'abductees' editorial control over their accounts. Far too many times I came across people who were extremely angry at the way their accounts had been twisted to fit a particular investigator's belief."

He continued: "I am the first to admit that I viewed the 'abductees' with extreme scepticism when I first came across them.

"But one of the main reasons why I wrote *The Uninvited* was to reach out to the world of science and offer a challenge to prove or disprove it."

Extraordinary

The implications of abductions are far-reaching. Even if the phenomenon does not involve extraterrestrials, there can be no denying its extraordinary nature.

"One of the most interesting things I have come across in my case load is the transformative nature of these experiences that have resulted in some curious life changes.

"I have encountered people who have developed numerous talents and interest in fields such as art, painting and poetry. But the illogical nature of the radical life changes these people have experienced has led me to conclude that they might have been induced by an external source."

The release of *The Uninvited* deliberately coincided with the 50th Anniversary of the famous Roswell crash in America, where it is alleged that a flying saucer crashed in the desert and the bodies of its occupants were spirited away by the US Government.

It also ties in with the 50th anniversary of the expression "flying saucer" – a misnomer.

On 24 June 1947, light aircraft pilot Kenneth Arnold was flying over the Cascade mountains in Washington State when he was overtaken by nine boomerang-shaped craft moving at double the speed of any contemporary aircraft.

He described their movement as "like a saucer would if you skipped it across the water". The media misinterpreted this and described the craft as "flying saucers".

Phenomenon

For those who believe in the extraterrestrial hypothesis, the burning question is why are aliens coming here? And how are they interacting with humans?

UFO activity certainly seems to be on the increase. But could it be just a case of PMT — Pre-Millennium Tension?

Nick replied: "That's almost impossible to say. My perception as an investigator is that we are seeing an acceleration of the phenomenon.

"As we approach the millennium it is possible that hysteria might lead to well meaning but essentially fraudulent claims as people get drawn into the subject for some sort of psychological reason. But if you asked me to come down on one side or the other I would have to say that the pace is hotting up..."



PHOTO: RAF Akrotiri

MOD rugby team meets Cyprus challenge

MOD's representative rugby side flew to Larnaka recently to take up a two game challenge from RAF Akrotiri —the first match was against a Joint Service Side and the second against an RAF Akrotiri team, ***writes Heather Arnold, DSRA Secretary.***

Conscious of the climate change, the squad acclimatised around the hotel pool, followed by a serious training session in the heat of the day.

Fully match fit and rising to the challenge, the team was ready to meet the might of the Combined Services squad.

The first 15 minutes proved that the opposition was well acclimatised to the conditions, as they scored a super try after running the ball the whole length of the pitch. A reasonable sized number of supporters saw the MOD side slowly take control of the game, winning every Line Out Ball and scrum. The weight of the MOD pack was proving to be superior, and their persistence paid off with MOD eventually winning a fine match 22-18.

Confidence riding high, MOD was anxious to take on RAF Akrotiri. Fortunately it was quite a cool day by Cypriot standards, and the MOD team was raring to go!

Confidence

The first half saw MOD run in nine tries preventing the opposition from getting any sight of the ball. Heads high and confidence flowing MOD increased its lead in the second half with some marvellous individual performances from team members. A flowing, swift game ended with a magnificent score of 50-12.

Squad members: M Scott (Captain), J Ingham, K Park, T Miller, P Hodge, P Emmerson, L Oman, S Hulme, J Senchall, A Williams, H Phillips, S Thomas, V de Miceli, R Matthews, N Turner, G Ashford, R Williams, T Broome, S Wallace, K Pollard, M Phillips. Officials: H Arnold (DSRA), I Anderson and M Chalk (coaches), L Thwaites (physio).

DSRA is indebted to all the staff involved at RAF Akrotiri for their hospitality, time and management of arrangements, ensuring that MOD had a wonderful tour.

Caption competition



PHOTO: Capt James Anderson

Win prizes!

SOLDIERS on the Falkland Islands came up with a novel way of raising £500 for charity recently. Gnomes were for hire for £5 to harass anyone gnominated. The gnome stayed with the victim, continually pestering until he was given £5 to lift the curse.

The idea was the brainchild of Flt Lt Jon Baber, OC the Physical Education Flight, who had a team of Army volunteers to help him. The gnomes are gnome-ally Physical Training Instructors from Mount Pleasant Airfield, but were willing to lead a double life for a week to raise money — not for the gnomeless — but for Wireless for the Blind. Pictured above is Falklands gnome LCpl Paul Watson RE, taking time out from frenetic fund-raising for a spot of fishing.

Can you come up with a witty caption for this picture? The sender of the most amusing suggestion will win a copy of ***Dad's Army, A Celebration*** by Richard Webber (Virgin, £14.99), with *Dad's Army* creators Jimmy Perry and David Croft, and a foreword by Michael Palin. Runners-up win sturdy *Focus* mugs. Send your entries to: Gnome Caption Competition, Focus, at the address on page 3 by **9 March**. The Editor's decision is final.

ave ... retire gracefully, those
ıior passed over ... are left to
indulge their idiosyncracies."

send costs out of sight."

Law Report page 41

1 THE TIMES, 2 FEB 98

Britain lends an ear to the search for ET

BY ROBIN YOUNG

IF ET is phoning Earth, British radio astronomers could shortly be listening in to his calls.

Scientists at Jodrell Bank in Cheshire are to play a key role in the most intensive search yet for evidence of extra-terrestrial intelligence. And if there are radio hams striving to make contact from distant galaxies we might be on their wavelength within a decade.

The plan is to link two of the world's largest radio telescopes so that they can jointly scour the skies in search of signals from alien civilisations.

The 250 ft Lovell Telescope operated by the University of Manchester will be linked to the vast 1,000 ft instrument at Arecibo in Puerto Rico.

Working together over a ten-year period, they will listen for artificial radio messages from 2,000 Sun-like stars within a range of 150 light years from the Earth. State-of-the-art computer technology will allow the scientists to scan and sift 50 million frequency channels at the same time.

The move marks a turning point in the Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence (Seti). An American scientist at the forefront of the project said he would be surprised if ET failed to make contact.

At present the California-based Seti Institute operates from a relatively small 140 ft radio telescope at Greenbank, West Virginia. But this summer the whole scale of Project Phoenix, the Seti programme launched by the institute in the 1970s, will be transformed when it switches to Puerto Rico.

Arecibo, the largest single-dish radio telescope in the world, is built in the natural hollow of a mountain and uses the rotation of the Earth to scan the sky.

Richard Davis, senior lecturer in physics and astronomy at Manchester University, who was chiefly responsible for bringing Seti to Jodrell Bank, said: "People often wonder why Seti hasn't been successful, but a serious search has not been made to date. This is the first time we've had a system that's really up to the job. If there are any transmissions out there, we'll find them."

ENCLOSURE 59 NUMBER

Sunday Times
18 January 1998
Page 1.3

Tories hid Howard's 'alien visitation'

by Sebastian Hamilton
Westminster Correspondent

PERHAPS they were illegal aliens. Michael Howard, the former home secretary, was visited by extraterrestrial beings in the run-up to the last election, according to UFO-watchers near his home in Kent.

In a case worthy of The X Files, the claims were apparently covered up by a Conservative party media machine desperate to avoid embarrassing headlines and cartoons.

Senior Tory spin doctors say they were aware of the story, which appeared in a local newspaper, while Howard's agent has admitted halting publication of further detailed reports about the incident in the paper by complaining to the editor.

The bizarre story began on the night of March 8, 1997, a week before John Major announced the date of the general election but with all the parties already firmly in campaign mode. At 3am Sarah Hall, a reporter on the Folkestone Herald, was driving along Donkey Street in Lympne, near Hythe, when she heard a strange humming and stopped her car.

Ahead of her she saw a huge triangular craft hovering over a field. "It had a large dome at one end and lots of bright lights around the sides and looked quite shiny. I had no idea what it was. I felt the hairs stand up on the back of my neck," she said.

"After a few seconds it shot off and stopped 500 metres away. It then moved and stopped four times before flying off."

Her sighting was confirmed by Chris Rolfe, a local UFO spotter. "This tallies with an unofficial account I was given that it was seen by two firemen hovering above Mr Howard's house at the same time," he said.

Eight separate reports were filed with local UFO-spotters of a triangular craft, grey in colour, hovering in an area 15 miles around Howard's home.



Hall wrote up her experience for her paper but was astonished to find that when it appeared, the location had been moved from near Howard's home to the other side of the marshes at New Romney.

"Events seemed to have been relocated several miles away. I don't know how this came about; I have asked but have not been given an explanation."

When Hall attempted to suggest in a later article that Howard's home had been the real site of the visit, the Tories began to fight back. Michael Buxton, Howard's agent, telephoned the paper to complain: the stories stopped.

Neither the local police nor the Ministry of Defence have any record of an incident that evening, despite the series of sightings. A police spokesman, however, said it might have been dealt with by Howard's own police protection team.

Sheila Gunn, John Major's press secretary, said last week she was aware of reports at the time of an extraterrestrial sighting, but the Tories had managed to keep them out of the national papers. "It was all rather strange," she said, "but then, that election campaign was pretty strange all round, wasn't it?"

The case is now being pressed by Mark Watts, the Labour MEP for Kent East, who is asking the European parliament to investigate. "There have been so many sightings from reliable witnesses — people can't be suffering from mass hysteria," he said.

Howard, who was last year described as having "something of the night about him" by Ann Widdecombe, the former prisons minister, was last week unavailable for comment. A senior Tory party spokesman said he knew nothing about the story; nor could he confirm the exact movements that day of John Redwood, the shadow trade secretary, nicknamed "the Vulcan" because of his vaguely extraterrestrial appearance.

64/5

RIDDLE OF UFO SIGHTED OVER HOWARD'S HOUSE



Above: How a UFO landing at the Howard home might have looked. Right: Mr Howard and wife Sandra

Take us to your leader

AS the minister in charge of immigration, he was used to dealing with illegal aliens.

But it seems that some visitors to Michael Howard's country retreat were far more alien than those queueing hopefully at the Home Office.

At least eight witnesses claim that a UFO hovered near the then Home Secretary's Kent home a few weeks before the General Election.

The close encounter was taken so seriously that spin doctors at Conservative Central Party Office were alerted, it emerged yesterday.

It is still unclear why aliens would want a face-to-tentacle chat with a minister once described as having 'something of the night about him'. Maybe they

By DAVID DERBYSHIRE

were after some advice about inter-planetary border controls. Or perhaps they simply got Mr Howard mixed up with John Redwood, the one-time Tory leadership contender known as The Vulcan for his Mr Spock-like analytical style.

The UFO was spotted on March 8 last year, a week before John Major announced the election date.

One witness, local newspaper reporter Sarah Hall, was driving through Lympne, near Hythe at 3am when she noticed an unusual humming. She stopped and watched a craft floating over a nearby field, close to Michael Howard's home. It was shiny, with a dome at one end and bright lights around its side. 'I had no idea what it was,' she said. 'I felt the hairs stand up on the back on my neck.'

Local UFO expert Chris Rolfe said other witnesses, including two firemen, saw the craft that night in a 15-mile radius of Mr Howard's home.

The Tory chiefs were alerted after Miss Hall wrote a first-hand account for the Folkestone Herald, where she had worked for 18 months. Yesterday advisers who worked closely with Mr Howard during the election campaign confirmed that the UFO story was well known in Westminster but denied there had been a 'Men in Black'-style cover up.

They did admit, however, that the party had been keen to play down the sighting because of the risk of embarrassing headlines.

'Mr Howard had more important matters to deal with than UFOs,' one source said yesterday. 'He knew about the reports, but I doubt whether he was very concerned about them.'

John Major's press secretary Sheila Gunn also confirmed that Party Central Office knew about the UFO in the run-up to the election. 'There were calls about it because the local paper had done something,' she said. 'But while we take calls seriously, there are some that we'd rather ignore.'

Although the sighting is well documented, the police and Ministry of Defence say they have no records. Sceptics say the craft was probably a helicopter or jet. But some locals say the true story has not come out and believe the local paper came under pressure to play down the incident. Kent UFO expert Derek Sheffield said the Government was obsessed with hushing up UFO reports. 'There's one hell of a cover-up going on here,' he said.

But Melody Foreman, who took over as acting editor shortly after the sighting, denied that the paper had come under pressure to suppress the story.

Mark Watts, the Labour MEP for Kent East and a self-confessed sceptic, is campaigning for an end to the secrecy surrounding UFOs.

'If someone like the Home Secretary — one of the most protected people in Britain — is subjected to a close encounter, you would expect there to be a comment from someone,' he said. 'The whole thing is very mysterious.'

On the hook, the ones that got away

WHEN Louis Jones failed to appear after a day-long sea fishing trip with his stepson Matthew, his wife became increasingly worried.

They had promised to telephone if they would not be home by 10pm on Saturday.

But the hours ticked by and at 11am yesterday a frantic Mrs Jones reported them missing.

The result was a full-scale air and sea search which cost the taxpayer £35,000. An RAF helicopter was scrambled, two lifeboats

By KATE GINN

launched, and 35 volunteer coastguards summoned. South Glamorgan police drafted in officers to help, leaving some rural regions with no officer at all.

As the weather worsened, with 50mph winds and torrential rain, the rescue teams feared the worst, imagining the men clinging to a cliff or swept away to sea.

In fact Mr Jones, 46, and his 24-year-old stepson Matthew Dodds were celebrating their catches in the safety and warmth of a pub.

Rather the worse for wear, Mr Jones forgot to phone his wife and come closing time, the pair decided to stay the night.

Yesterday, while the rescue attempt was in full swing, Mrs Jones began to conduct her own search by calling friends and relatives.

It was a friend who mentioned a sighting of the errant fishermen in a pub in Maesteg, near Bridgend, 30 miles from their home. The rescue was finally called off almost four hours after it began.

Last night the men, perhaps not looking forward to their welcome, had still not made it home to Porth in Rhondda.

Rescue teams involved in the search were furious. 'It was an incredible waste of manpower and a danger to the crews, both on the land and sea,' said Gerry Adams, of Barry Dock lifeboat station.

Watchman Lee Haigh of Swansea Coastguard, who co-ordinated the search, said: 'The wife was beside herself with worry and did the right thing raising the alarm. The thousands of pounds it cost could have been avoided with just a 10p telephone call.'

Launching a lifeboat costs £5,400 a time, while the helicopter from RAF Chivenor in Devon, with a four-man crew, costs £6,000 an hour.

An RAF spokesman said: 'While the helicopter was being used on this, it was taken away from other things. Someone's life could well have been put at risk.'

With Compliments



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More sightings in Solway UFO mystery

DUMFRIES COURIER & ANNANDALE OBSERVER 5/12/97

by Bryan Armstrong

THE MYSTERY of the so-called 'Solway UFO triangle' deepened this week when two Kirtlebridge women described an encounter with a silvery coloured 'craft'.

Effie Gow and Betty Williamson broke their silence over the incident after reading reports of similar sightings in the Dumfriesshire Newspapers Group.

The women were on the final leg of a car journey from Dumfries to Annan when their attention was drawn to a bright "tangerine-coloured ball" in the sky which vanished within seconds.

More significantly, they described that over the next two minutes an arrow-shaped silver coloured object plunged out of the same area of sky towards the Solway Firth.

Mrs Gow, a former Ministry of Defence worker of Tilekilns Cottage, and Mrs Williamson, who farms with her son at Jockstown, admitted that the widely held scepticism of UFOs initially made them reluctant to go public with their experience.

"We were both stunned by what we saw and literally gasped", recalled Mrs Gow, who said the incident was around 4.05 pm on Sunday 23rd November.

"I do not know what the tangerine ball was but it seemed to disappear into thin air.

"The silvery object came from the Langholm direction and slowly descended westwards until it disappeared behind the rooftops of Annan. I think it must have come down in the Solway, off Dornock or Eastriggs.

"I'm fairly certain it was not a conventional aircraft although it looked solid and could have been some kind of craft.

"I am not one of these people who goes chasing flying saucers but I do not think we have the technology to develop something like this.

"The only explanation I could come up with is that there is something top secret being tested by the MOD at RAF Spadeadam. If that's the case I think people should know if these things are landing in the Solway" !

Mrs Williamson, who was driving, revealed she was equally mystified by what they witnessed.

She commented: "I've never seen anything like this before. The orange object was dazzling and very distinctive but soon vanished.

"The silver shaped one was also clear and was visible for fully two minutes. It was hard to estimate its size but it travelled for a while at the height of a low flying jet".

She added that it was a fairly bright afternoon with good visibility.

The women said they did not contact the emergency services at the time because there was no obvious indication of a crash and they felt sure the spectacle would have also been witnessed by other people.

Both are certain, however, that what they saw was unconnected with electrical storms in the west of Dumfries and Galloway over the same weekend.

A spokesman at the H.M. Coastguard control centre at Liverpool said that no specific incident had been logged in the Annan area of the Solway at that time.

He said: "We did receive reports of unusual lights in the sky over Dumfries and Galloway from the Cumbrian coast and through police on the Isle of Man but that was eventually put down to the lightning".

But he added: "There seems to be a lot going on in the sky over the Southern Scotland coast as we get more reports of unusual sightings there than anywhere else".

An RAF spokesman in London said last night that the role of the former rocket-testing base at Spadeadam was now primarily ground level weapons testing and as a target in air attack exercises.

He added: "Nothing is launched into the air from the station".

56

The People
2 November 1997
Page 14

UFO attacked our nukes

BRITAIN'S former military supremo is asking the Government to investigate whether aliens fired LASER BEAMS at our nuclear arsenal.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton, retired chief of the defence staff, wants the probe to be launched into the sighting of a UFO hovering over RAF Woodbridge in Suffolk. He has now tabled questions to the Ministry of Defence asking whether nuclear weapons stored at Woodbridge were struck by light beams fired from an unidentified craft.

He claims that US air force personnel who saw the "attack" filed reports which are being covered up by the MoD.

He said: "The Ministry has doggedly denied that anything untoward happened and I simply don't believe them." Defence minister Lord Gilbert refused to confirm or deny whether the base was equipped with nuclear missiles.

He added: "There is no evidence to suggest that the Ministry of Defence received any such reports."

The mysterious sighting happened in December 1980 and was picked up on RAF radar. Phantom jets were scrambled and pilots reported intense, bright lights in the sky.

55

Daily Telegraph
24 September 1997
Page 8

Satellite may have caused fireball in sky

By Richard Savill and Aisling Irwin

BRIGHT orange fireballs in the sky, explosions and "wooshing" sounds which panicked people across Scotland yesterday may have been a broken-up satellite re-entering the atmosphere, the Ministry of Defence said.

Coastguards, police and the RAF received many calls from people who saw or heard a flaming object crash, rattling windows from the north-east of England to the Western Isles.

The British Geological Survey in Edinburgh said that its seismometers, planted at 40-mile intervals across Britain, had picked up an impact that broke the sound barrier.

RAF chiefs contacted Nasa, the American space agency, which said it was not aware of any incidents involving satellite re-entry into the atmosphere that could have been responsible.

After hours of checking data, scientists in Edinburgh said the cause was likely to be a meteor.

But the MoD said last night that the flashes were most likely to be from "an old satellite which broke up in space last week".

The Independent
24 September 1997
Page 8

Mystery lights, file under X

Reports from a wide stretch of northern England and Scotland of strange glowing lights in the sky and a possible explosion left emergency services baffled yesterday.

Coastguards, police and the RAF began receiving calls from worried members of the public at 9am. The descriptions varied but included yellow, orange and white trails in the sky sometimes accompanied by the sound of whooshing or a loud explosion.

Sensors at the Geological Survey team in Edinburgh recorded some form of "sonic event" in the Moray Firth area. But extensive searches by RAF search and rescue helicopters, checks by coastguard and discussions with the experts at the American space agency Nasa failed to produce any explanation. No civilian or military aircraft were reported missing or overdue and the Royal Astronomical Society and Nasa could not explain the phenomena. They were not aware of any stray matter in space heading towards the Earth.

Bill McFadyen, of Aberdeen Coastguard, said the calls came from Tyne Tees up along the Scottish coast to the southern tip of the Outer Hebrides and from well inland. "It's very unusual to have something on this scale all the way up the northern coast of Britain. It's a complete mystery to us. I get the feeling that there was a series of events. I would be surprised if it was just one large event."

A spokesman for RAF Kinloss said they had searched an area between Duns and Greenlaw in the Borders after a suggestion that the lights were an aircraft, but found nothing. He added that there were similar reports from the Continent - in particular around Brussels - yesterday morning.

David Galloway, of the Geological Survey in Edinburgh, said a "sonic event" had registered on six of its seismometers at 9am. This would be caused normally by an aeroplane going supersonic or a meteorite or a satellite burning up. He suspected that the lights were a meteorite coming down, but which had vaporised on entering the Earth's atmosphere. He said reports of lights were probably exaggerated by atmospheric conditions which were amplifying whatever was out there.

— *Louise Jury*

The Mirror
24 September 1997
Page 17

'Jet disaster' was meteor

A DAZZLING meteor has been blamed for hundreds of reports of a mid-air crash.

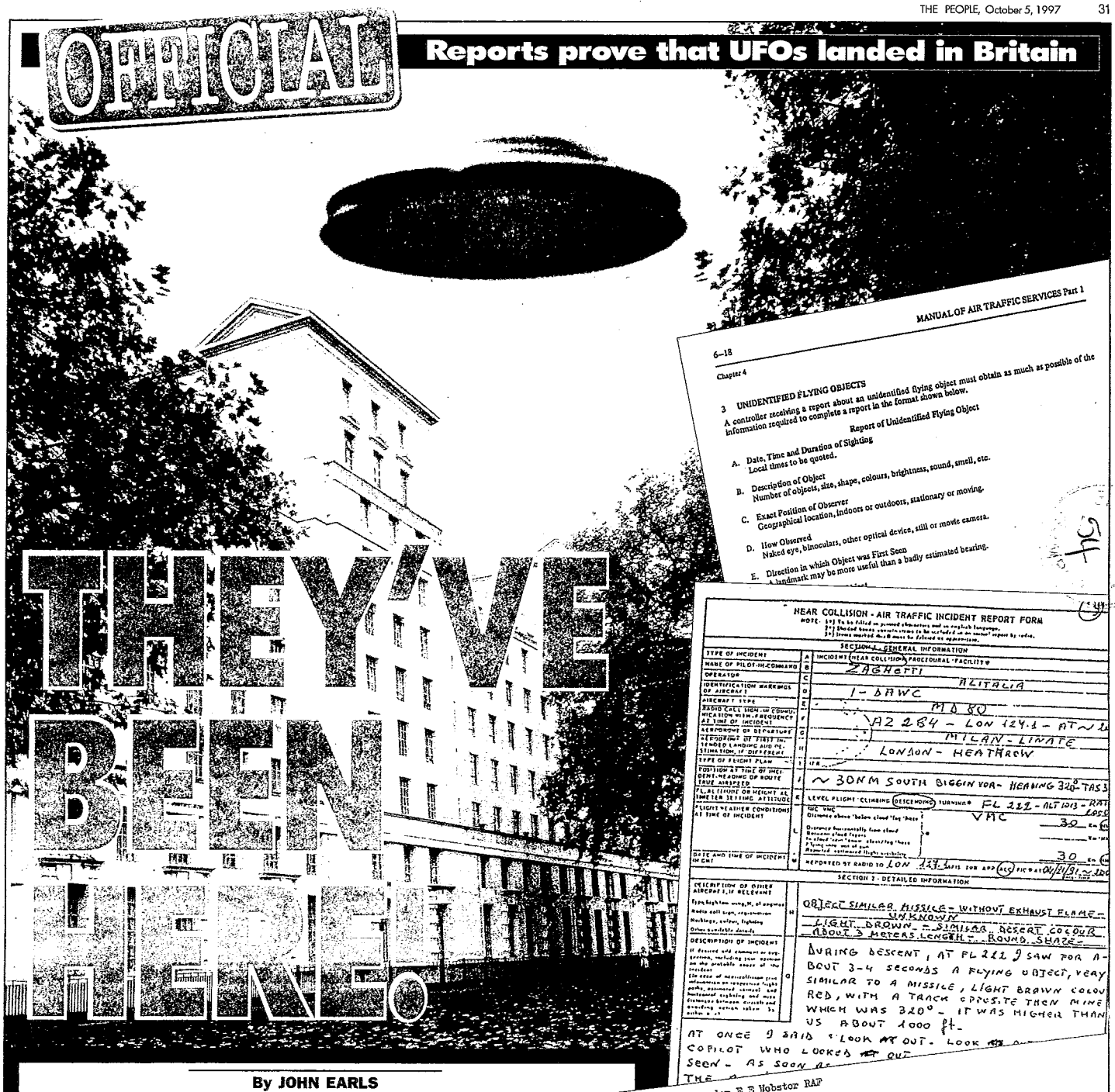
Countless people in Scotland and north-east England thought a plane had blown up as a series of flashes lit up the night sky.

An RAF helicopter was even scrambled from Boulmer, Northumberland, after a woman reported an air disaster.

Now it is believed that the spectacular firework display was caused by a meteor's dying moments as it plunged to earth.

OFFICIAL

Reports prove that UFOs landed in Britain



THEY'VE BEEN HERE

By JOHN EARLS

ALIENS have been visiting Britain for more than 50 years – and that's official.

Secret Government documents reveal that some spacecraft have even crash-landed here.

But the details have been kept hidden from all of us in a giant cover-up similar to that in TV's The X Files.

That is until now. A sensational new book A Covert Agenda reveals that the alien visits are fact and not fiction.

The author, full-time UFO researcher Nicholas Redfern, maintains that the Ministry of Defence and the RAF have known for half a century about spacecraft which have crash-landed throughout Britain.

At least SEVEN UFOs have crashed in Britain since the end of the Second World War. Hundreds more UFOs have been sighted since the 1940s. Redfern, 33, from Walsall, West Midlands, also reveals details of a secret MoD base where reports of crashed UFOs are compiled.

He has spent years investigating official memos and uncovered top-secret documents which prove that the Government does not want us to know how much it knows about aliens.

And in the book he describes how dozens of spacecraft have flown over military bases, by-passing flight security systems.

At the height of the Cold War, the Government was so concerned about UFOs that it contacted the Soviet Union to establish a joint task force to examine the security implications of alien craft.

But it is the evidence that UFOs have ALREADY landed in Britain which is the most scandalous cover-up in British UFO history.

Now turn the page for the full amazing story...

MANUAL OF AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES Part 1

6–18

Chapter 4

3 UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

A controller receiving a report about an unidentified flying object must obtain as much as possible of the information required to complete a report in the format shown below.

Report of Unidentified Flying Object

A. Date, Time and Duration of Sighting
Local times to be quoted.

B. Description of Object
Number of objects, size, shape, colours, brightness, sound, smell, etc.

C. Exact Position of Observer
Geographical location, indoors or outdoors, stationary or moving.

D. How Observed
Naked eye, binoculars, other optical device, still or movie camera.

E. Direction in which Object was First Seen
A landmark may be more useful than a badly estimated bearing.

NEAR COLLISION - AIR TRAFFIC INCIDENT REPORT FORM

SECTION 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

TYPE OF INCIDENT: A — INCIDENT (NEAR COLLISION) PROCEDURAL FACILITY
NAME OF PILOT-IN-COMMAND: B — ZAGHETTI
OPERATOR: C — ALITALIA
IDENTIFICATION MARKINGS OF AIRCRAFT: D — I-DAWC
AIRCRAFT TYPE: E — MD 80
RADIO CALL SIGN OF COMMUNICATION WITH FREQUENCY AT TIME OF INCIDENT: F — AZ 284 - LON 124.1 - ATW
AERODROME OF DEPARTURE: G — MILAN - LINATE
DESTINATION OF FIRST INTENDED LANDING AND ESTIMATION, IF DIFFERENT: H — LONDON - HEATHROW
TYPE OF FLIGHT PLAN: I — IFR
POSITION AT TIME OF INCIDENT, HEADING OF ROUTE AND TRUE AIRSPEED: J — ~ 30NM SOUTH BIGGIN VOR - HEADING 320° TAS
FLIGHT LEVEL OR HEIGHT AS SHOWN BY ALTIMETER SETTING AND ATTITUDE: K — LEVEL FLIGHT / CLIMBING / DESCENDING / TURNING — FL 222 - ALTIM - RAT
FLIGHT AND WEATHER CONDITIONS AT TIME OF INCIDENT: L — VMC
Distance horizontally from cloud / Distance above / below cloud / fog / haze: 30
DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT: M — REPORTED BY RADIO TO LON 124.1 DATE FOR APP (ACC) FIC 04/21/31 ~ 120

SECTION 2 - DETAILED INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION OF OTHER AIRCRAFT, IF RELEVANT: N — OBJECT SIMILAR MISSILE - WITHOUT EXHAUST FLAME - UNKNOWN
DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT: O — LIGHT BROWN - SIMILAR DESERT COLOUR - ABOUT 3 METERS LENGTH - ROUND SHAPE -
DURING DESCENT, AT FL 222 I SAW FOR A-BOUT 3-4 SECONDS A FLYING OBJECT, VERY SIMILAR TO A MISSILE, LIGHT BRAWN COLOUR RED, WITH A TRACH OPPOSITE THEN MINE WHICH WAS 320° - IT WAS HIGHER THAN US ABOUT 1000 ft.
AT ONCE I SAID "LOOK AT OUT - LOOK AT ...
COPILOT WHO LOOKED AT OUT
SEEN - AS SOON AS
THE

From Squadron Leader E S Webster RAF

ROYAL AIR FORCE
Eastern Radar Watton Thetford Norfolk

Telephone Watton 881691 Ext 223

Please reply to The Officer Commanding
Your reference
Our reference ERD/205/1/Org
Date 16 January 1989

Mr M Redfern
20 Paradise Lane
Pelsall
WALSALL
West Midlands
WS3 4HH

Dear Mr Redfern

Thank you for your letter requesting further information about the UFO report on 28 December 1980.

I am afraid that we are not able to provide you with copies of our log books. However, I can offer you a verbatim statement of the only entry regarding the subject incident in the log for that period. The entry is timed at 0325 on 28 December 1980 and states:

... Boat contacted Eastern Radar and requested information ... Delta southbound FI370 - UFO sightings

REVEALED: SECRET

CASE HISTORY No 1: The British Roswell

SIGHTINGS of strange flying objects – later known as Foo Fighters – were reported throughout the latter part of the Second World War by both Allied and Nazi servicemen.

The reports certainly went through official channels.

American journalist Dorothy Kilgallen was told by "a British official of Cabinet rank" about a Foo Fighter which had crashed in Britain – a case similar to the famous Roswell incident in New Mexico 50 years ago when alien corpses were recovered.

Kilgallen was told: "British scientists and airmen examined the wreck of one mysterious flying ship and are convinced these strange aerial objects are not optical illusions or Soviet inventions but are flying saucers which originate on another planet."

Retired diplomat and intelligence officer Gordon Creighton said he believed Kilgallen's source was Lord Louis Mountbatten.

Kilgallen's story was backed up by Dr Olavo Fontes, a Brazilian UFO researcher of the 1950s.

In 1958, Fontes – already known to Brazil's government – was visited by two men who said they were from Naval Intelligence.

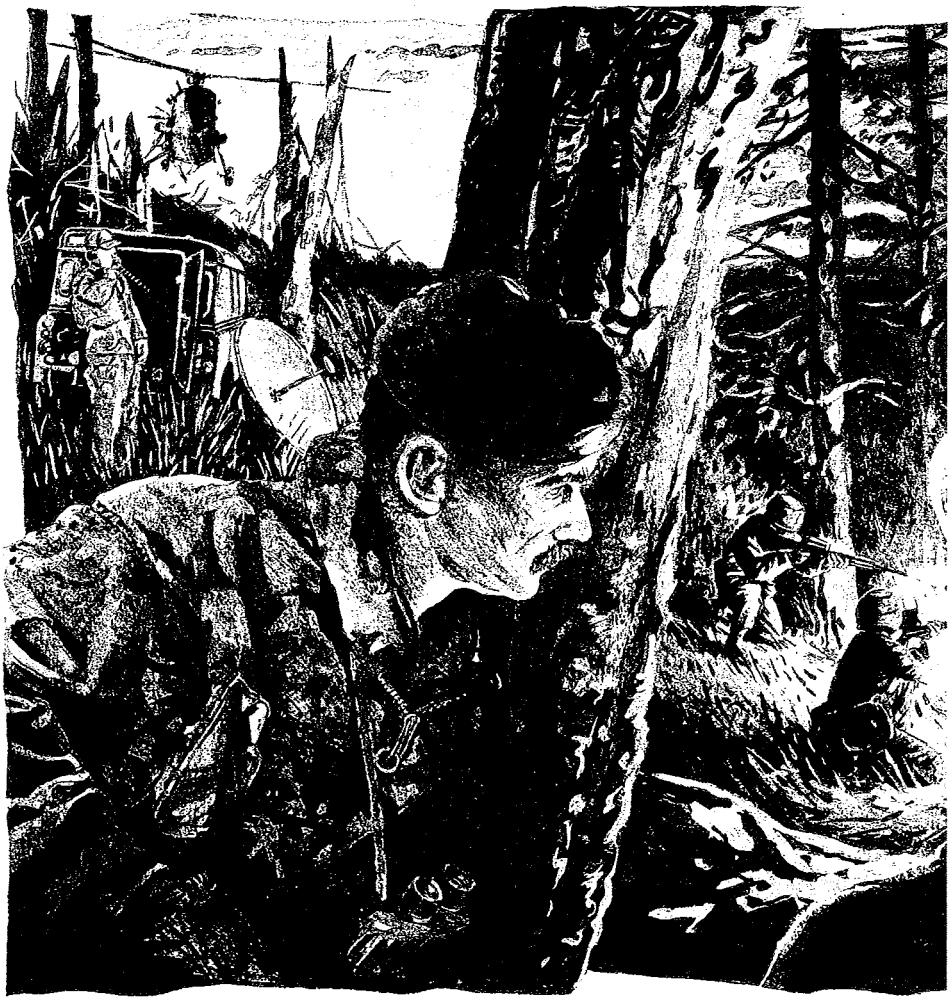
Fontes claimed that, after initially trying to persuade him to give up his work, the officers revealed that six UFOs had crashed throughout the world during the Second World War.

Three were in North America, one in the Sahara Desert, one in Scandinavia – and one in Britain.

Fontes wrote in a letter to the Aerial Phenomena Research Organisation: "I was told all these discs were small craft – 32, 77 or 99ft in diameter. In all of them were found crew members' bodies.

"They were 'little men' and ranged in height from 32 to 46in. They were dead in all cases, killed in the crashes.

"The examination of the bodies showed they were definitely humanoid, but obviously not from this planet."



CASE HISTORY No 2: Penkridge, Staffs, 1965

SPECIAL snatch teams appear to be on stand-by, ready to go into action to retrieve wreckage from UFO crashes.

Just before he died in 1994, retired US Air Force intelligence officer Leonard Stringfield told Redfern: "Some time in 1964, a specially-rigged naval flagship received a coded radio message.

"Artefacts had been recovered with three dead personnel."

According to his informant, the decoded report stated that a UFO had crashed in two parts: the main section was in Penkridge, Staffordshire, the remainder in West Germany.

Wreckage and the bodies were shipped to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in the States.

The informant added that there was more to the incident, involving coded information, that he preferred to keep confidential.

Redfern said: "The disclosure, while sketchy, may spotlight only the tip of the iceberg as to the scope of military crash-retrieval operations in foreign lands.

"It is my suspicion that US special retrieval teams have been, and still are, prepared to go into action into any crash location within its sphere of military or economic influence such as was exercised with NATO in the artefact retrievals in England and West Germany."

CASE HISTORY No 3: Corwen, North Wales, 1974

A WAVE of phantom helicopters – black with no identifying markings – were sighted in areas of Britain where UFOs were reported in 1973-74.

They were probably rapid deployment teams sent to investigate UFOs, according to Redfern.

One such event happened at 8.30pm on January 23, 1974. A UFO crashed into Cader Bronwen, a 2,000ft peak in the Berwyn Mountains near Corwen, North Wales.

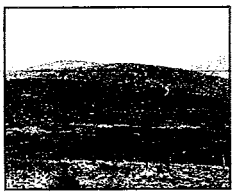
One witness, Anne Williams, said: "I saw a bright light in the sky. It had a long, fiery tail which went dim and then very brilliant – like an electric fire which keeps coming to life.

"It was like an electric bulb in shape, with rough edges. The object fell behind the hills at the back of my bungalow and the earth shook."

Off-duty police officer Gwilym Owen was drinking in The Dudley Arms pub when there was a roar, a bang and glasses in the pub shook. The sky was lit up over the mountains.

Police stations as far away as 60 miles received phone calls reporting the tremor.

At the Institute Of Geological Sciences in Edinburgh, the crash measured four on the Richter



Scale. They told journalists that a meteorite had come down on Cader Bronwen.

Witness Ken Haughton saw a "luminous sphere" 90 minutes after the crash in the area. He said the sphere was 400ft across and travelling at a height of about 15,000ft.

Army personnel were quickly dispatched to the scene.

The next day, a mountain rescue team went to investigate, while the RAF carried out a photographic survey of the area. No trace of a craft or any meteorite was found.

"One can only assume," said Redfern, "that unless the UFO exited on its own volition, it was removed by the Army."

Yet another UFO was seen in the area at 7.15pm that day.

"I believe it may have been searching for the remains of the vehicle which struck the Berwyn mountains," said Redfern.

CASE HISTORY No 4: Lake District, 1977

A UFO which was sighted over the Lake District wasn't witnessed by just members of the public – 10 police officers saw this extraordinary sight too.

Shortly after midnight on August 28, 1977, a large object described either as triangular or diamond-shaped was seen over the Windermere area of Cumbria.

As officers reported seeing the craft, colleagues along the UFO's path also confirmed the sighting. After 20 minutes, as the ship hovered above the A592 at Bowness, PC David Wild spotted it at a height he estimated to be 1,500ft.

It eventually vanished, witnessed by two other officers, at sea over Morecambe.

The most detailed description was given by John Platt. He said: "I was looking up into what appeared to be a giant ocean-going catamaran with twin hulls.

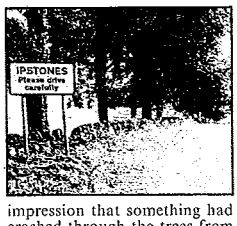
"A large structure at the front supported what appeared to be two giant lights. Its surface was a dull, shadowy, charcoal colour."

CASE HISTORY No 5: Ipstones, Staffs, 1991

A WITNESS known only as Mr M L was visiting friends in the Churnet Valley, Staffs, on July 19, 1991, when he saw an object fall from the sky at nearby Ipstones.

The time was 10pm. M L described the object as metallic – like aluminium – 10ft long, cigar-shaped and very bright. He immediately contacted police.

They searched the woodland. A helicopter was used as well. No object was located but an area of newly-broken branches was found which gave the impression that something had crashed through the trees from above. The search was eventually abandoned.



CASE HISTORY No 6: RAF Boscombe Down, 1994

A SMALL twin-tailed aircraft crash-landed on the runway at RAF Boscombe Down, on Salisbury Plain four miles from Stonehenge, at about 11pm on September 26, 1994.

Several aviation enthusiasts listening on airband radios drove to the air base the next day. They were stopped by police at roadblocks.

Before being ushered away, several enthusiasts saw a disabled craft at the end of the runway covered by tarpaulins.

Two days later, the wreck was flown to a California military base. Although the craft was initially believed to be a then-secret US military plane known as TR-3A, one witness said the crashed craft was completely silent and was able to hover vertically – abilities the TR-3A didn't possess.

A month before the crash, a lorry driver reported seeing a UFO over Salisbury. Its description matched that of the crashed craft.

CASE HISTORY No 7: He

VILLAGERS in the Cotswolds reported seeing a barrel shaped craft fall into an isolate field on the evening o Hallowe'en in 1994.

But they were later told it wa a bale of straw.

The incident happened a Hepton Hill in Wiltshire near th villages of Church Lench an Norton.

The strange object wa described by one witness Pau Brooke as resembling 40-gallon drum.

Police sealed off the field an people were warned to kee

CASE HISTORY No 8: Ed

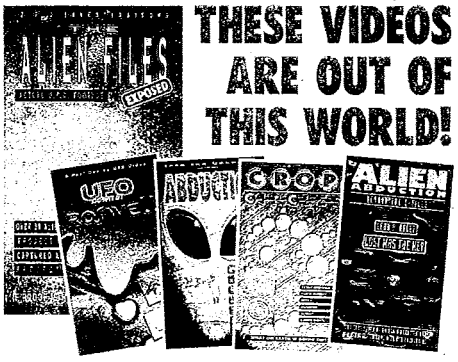
BUS driver Bob Fall was drivin the 123 bus from Walthamsto to Tottenham when he had narrow escape with a UFO.

He told a reporter: "I ju glanced into the sky and sa something coming towards m very, very fast. It flew straigl across the road and, had I bee a few yards further, it woul have hit the top deck of the bu

"There was a loud crash as struck the bank of the River Le and a big splash in the wate

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n Hill, Wilts, 1994



way. The object was loaded on
) a Royal Navy lorry and taken
way.
Residents raised the matter

ondon, 1964

'he craft was at least 9ft long,
igar-shaped and silver."
As soon as Fall reported the
ncident, police arrived and
'redged the river – but the object
ad vanished.
An MoD wing-commander
'as appraised of the details of
'all's encounter – implying that
he MoD took his initial report
eriously.
The MoD files available now
re scant and Redfern believes
he full story is buried some-
'here in Whitehall.

with both the Fleet Air Arm and the RAF, each of whom later denied any knowledge of the incident.

A police spokesman said: "Our investigations reveal it was a bale of straw that was on fire and which the fire brigade put out.

"Reports of something falling from the sky are either hoaxes or somebody has said something and come to the wrong conclusion."

Brooke replied: "What do the police think – that we are all mad around here?"

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Secret base's cover is blown

UFO enthusiasts have long believed that highly-classified investigations into UFO activity take place at Rudloe Manor in Wiltshire.

Redfern offers proof. It is officially acknowledged that Rudloe Manor is the headquarters of the RAF's Provost and Security Services (P&SS), where investigators are trained in counter-intelligence.

But Rudloe Manor is also the base of the Flying Complaints Flight, which investigates cases of low-flying military aircraft.

A former special RAF investigator said: "I'm sure that all investigations into UFOs are carried out by P&SS investigators serving in a small secret unit with Flying Complaints Flight."

A report of one sighting in 1962, in Taunton, Somerset, was forwarded by the RAF straight to P&SS.

The report was not forwarded to the Air Ministry for nearly two months. Redfern said: "Given that department S6 at the Air Ministry was supposedly the focal point for receiving UFO reports, it seems odd that P&SS would neglect to inform S6 of the details for almost two months.

"Unless, as seems to be the case, P&SS have a mandate to conduct their own independent inquiries."

A letter received by Redfern written by Air Commodore J L Uprichard, the P&SS director, confirms that they have investigated UFO sightings.

He wrote: "The 1962 report is a rare example of an alleged UFO sighting being treated as a low-flying incident and investigated accordingly."

Redfern said: "The importance of this letter cannot be over-emphasised. Although such investigations are rare, this is documented proof from the director of P&SS himself that UFO encounters have been treated as low-flying incidents."

Retired RAF medic Jonathan Turner told Redfern: "UFO sightings by military pilots were never recorded in their flight logs.

"The station commander would be advised of the situation and, from there, all information would be forwarded to P&SS.

"If national security was considered an issue, the pilots and crews would be advised to keep quiet and reminded they were bound by the Official Secrets Act."

The Ministry of Defence has admitted P&SS involvement in UFO sightings. A spokesman said: "Rudloe Manor is the headquarters of RAF Police.

"In the past it was indeed the RAF co-ordination point for reports of unexplained aerial sightings. This role came to an end in 1992."

How they tried to hush it up

AN alarming number of UFOs were sighted around military bases in 1957.

One sighting at RAF West Freugh, Wigtownshire, was published by several newspapers.

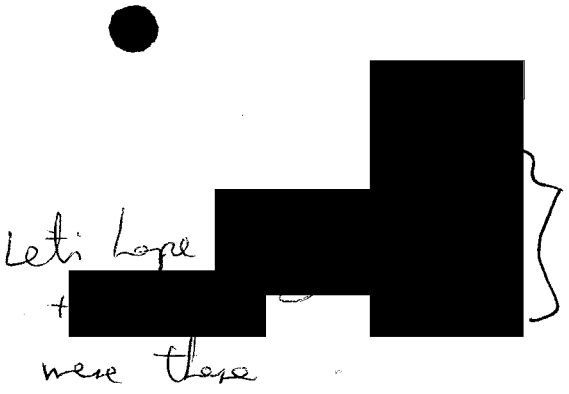
A secret Air Ministry report declassified after 30 years, reads: "It is unfortunate that the Wigtownshire radar incident fell into the hands of the Press.

"We suggest that the Secretary of State does not specifically refer to these incidents as sightings on radar.'"

Six years later, after another batch of sightings, the Air Ministry tried to dampen speculation but they failed to point out that many reports were by RAF pilots and radar operators.

One of the most controversial sightings took place in Belfast eight years ago. The following is an extract from a report in official Civil Aviation Authority files about an incident on November 11, 1989.

"UFO passed above aircraft at 11,200ft and burst into a cascade of lights. Heading due west. Proximity of cloud intensified brightness of light. Sighting confirmed by another aircraft and tower."



Oh how I'd have loved to be there!!

53

The police are out there

TO those eavesdropping on the police radio messages, it sounded like something out of The X-Files.

Officers had requested assistance at a remote beauty spot where a UFO was apparently preparing to land.

Reinforcements were being ordered to the field after a patrol car had confirmed sightings of strange bright lights descending from the clouds.

'It's amazing, they're different colours, swirling . . . I've never seen this before. They're getting closer,' the patrolman said.

Within minutes, 15 cars full of police radio eavesdroppers and UFO seekers were speeding through the night, wanting to know if the truth really was out there.

The rotating blue, orange, red and yellow lights grew brighter as they drove up the winding road towards the final bend at Butts Brown on the South Downs in East Sussex.

But there were no little green men or men in black waiting for them – just the boys in blue, who had concocted an elaborate hoax.

Officers searched their cars and confiscated scanning equipment used to listen in on police frequencies, while overhead, bright lights continued to hover as officers aimed their halogen lamps at the sky in an attempt to fool more people who had been scanning the airwaves.

UFO enthusiasts, alerted by citizens' band radio and not the police radio, were told to leave. Others were given a warning.

Inspector Martin Stevens, of Eastbourne police, said many of those tricked by the false alert, last March, were too stunned to speak. 'They couldn't believe they'd been set up.'

Equipment belonging to two scanners was confiscated and destroyed, but the real value of the operation was the warning it sent to others, said Mr Stevens.

'Police need to keep radio conversations secret. Scanning is a serious matter and illegal.'

Scanners scam

Police put out hoax messages about aliens over the South Downs to trap people illegally tuning in to police radio frequencies. When carloads of people turned up to see the extraterrestrials, officers confiscated scanning equipment and warned against its use.

Times 13/9/97

6415.

52

The People
17 August 1997
Page 13

Riddle of the Black Triangle

By FIONA MAY

AN Independence Day-style UFO has been spotted hovering menacingly over a British city.

The dark triangle-shaped craft was completely motionless before racing away.

Many reports have described the colossal craft as at least twice the size of a jumbo jet and possibly 500 yards wide – like the UFO which hovered over Washington in the hit Will Smith Hollywood film Independence Day.

The craft, nicknamed the "Black Triangle", has been appearing for months in the Lancaster area.

Sometimes it emits three blinding flashes of white light from each corner.

It flies frequently over nuclear plants at Heysham and Sellafield. Some UFO experts think it may be a new war-plane being developed by British Aerospace at Warton, Lancs.

There have been reports of a triangle-shaped British equivalent of the US Stealth Fighter known as HALO – the High Altitude Low Observability aircraft.

But a BAe spokesman denied there was a HALO project and said the only test aircraft being flown in the Lancaster area was the 1,300mph Eurofighter.

He added: "Viewed from underneath it does look triangle-shaped – perhaps that is where the reports stem from."

But Simon Lewis, of the North Lancashire UFO Investigation Group who has pictures of the craft, said: "I would not like to say for sure it is extra-terrestrial but that has to be a possibility."

Daily Telegraph
17 August 1997
Page 6
Business

■ DIRECTORS at GKN, the engineering and automotive group, no doubt cringed last week when the National Audit Office published its report on problems with the country's defence procurement programme, including delays in the delivery of the its own Westland Merlin helicopter. But all this is a diversion from a growing order book at Westland and GKN's strong performance across its range of businesses. The recent bullish results have sent the shares upwards to £12·65 but the group still trades at a small discount to the sector. GKN has demonstrated an impressive ability to avoid the worst ravages of the strong pound and under C K Chow, the new chief executive, there are plans for expansion and the mood is upbeat.

The Observer
17 August 1997
Page 19

Fury at 'sell-out' on jets for Jakarta

A FURIOUS parliamentary row has erupted over Ministers' refusal to answer further questions on the controversy over Britain's sale of 16 Hawk jets to Indonesia, *writes Patrick Wintour.*

The Government claims commercial confidentiality over the £160 million deal, and says further disclosures can only be given with the agreement of British Aerospace, which makes the Hawk. Opponents of the deal are furious about the refusal. They say the jets, earmarked for training pilots, will be fitted with ground attack weapons to suppress rebels in East Timor.

Labour backbencher Ann Clywd, writing in *Tribune*, says Foreign Secretary Robin Cook has failed in the first test of his new ethical foreign policy. 'He has done what he had constantly criticised the previous government for doing by refusing to make a statement on the floor of the Commons so that some of the 148 Labour MPs who had signed a Commons motion calling for an end to arms sales to Indonesia could question him over his apparent volte-face.'

There is special anger because suspicions have been raised at the way in which the Department of Trade and Industry announced in a written answer on 11 July that — contrary to earlier information given to Parliament — export licences had, in fact, already been granted by the previous government. Previously Parliament had been told — incorrectly — that this was not the case.

Left-wing Labour MPs are suspicious that Ministers are being misled by officials eager to protect valuable defence contracts.

41

with the compliments of

Ministry of Defence

[redacted]

As promised [redacted] contribute to the 'UFO' saga!

[redacted]

27 Aug 97

MOD Form 195 (7/94)

WE PRINT THE TRUTH ABOUT UFOS, ARE YOU READY TO READ IT?

ALIEN ENCOUNTERS

ISSUE 16 SEPTEMBER 1997

£2.99

UFO COVER-UP EXPOSED

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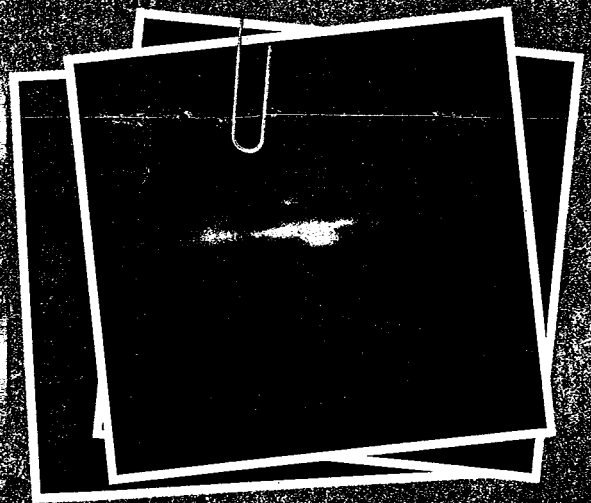
64/5

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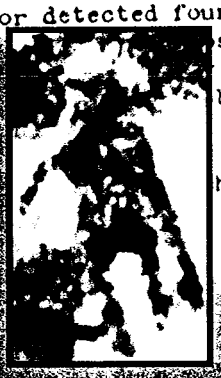
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Aliens Terrorise Ramblers

Ex-policeman photographs alien being whilst out for a stroll on Ilkley Moor





UFO investigator nets the Ministry of Defence in a web of deceit



Tadpoles in Space!

Are biological beings drifting through the galaxy?

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Editorial

Big Brother's Watching You...

This issue hits the shelves at a time when conspiracy theorists the world over are jumping up and down shouting, "We told you so! We're not just paranoid! The government really is hiding the truth about UFOs! Read it for yourself!" And read all about it you can, here in the one and only ALIEN ENCOUNTERS.

Our leading article this month focuses on the desperate (but not very successful) attempts by the MoD to deny all involvement in UFO investigations. Luckily from our point of view, persistent pressure from our intrepid investigator has resulted in the MoD being trapped quite neatly in its own web of lies. Turn to page 16 for a more in-depth report.

Recent news suggests that it's not just the British Government making anti-UFO noises, but the Americans as well. A newly declassified CIA document goes to great lengths to prove that reported UFO sightings were in fact merely American military spy planes such as the SR71 Blackbird and the Lockheed U2A. Ufologists have naturally risen up in arms over the publication, convinced that it is merely a ploy to discredit real UFO sightings and bury links between the CIA and UFOs. They do have a point - if the CIA were innocent, why bother going to such lengths to prove their point?

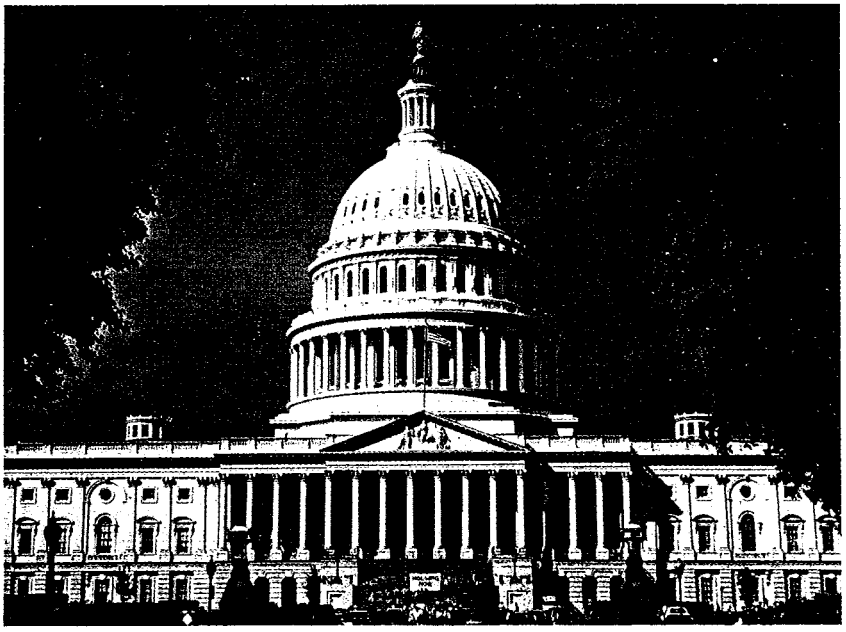
Sticking with the factual side of ufology, we've also got a smashing article written by Australian anti-gravity engineer, Ted Roach. Roach explains the science behind anti-gravity powered flying vehicles, proving that the technology to built these craft is firmly in our grasp. The ramifications of this discovery are huge - imagine the sudden worthlessness of fuel-powered aircraft, resulting in a new independence from fossil fuels.

Topics like this should really be public knowledge, yet they are consistently ignored by the media at large. It seems that George Orwell's fictional Big Brother scenario is rapidly becoming fact.

It only remains for ALIEN ENCOUNTERS to rise above these political silences, and attempt to inform as many members of the public as possible.

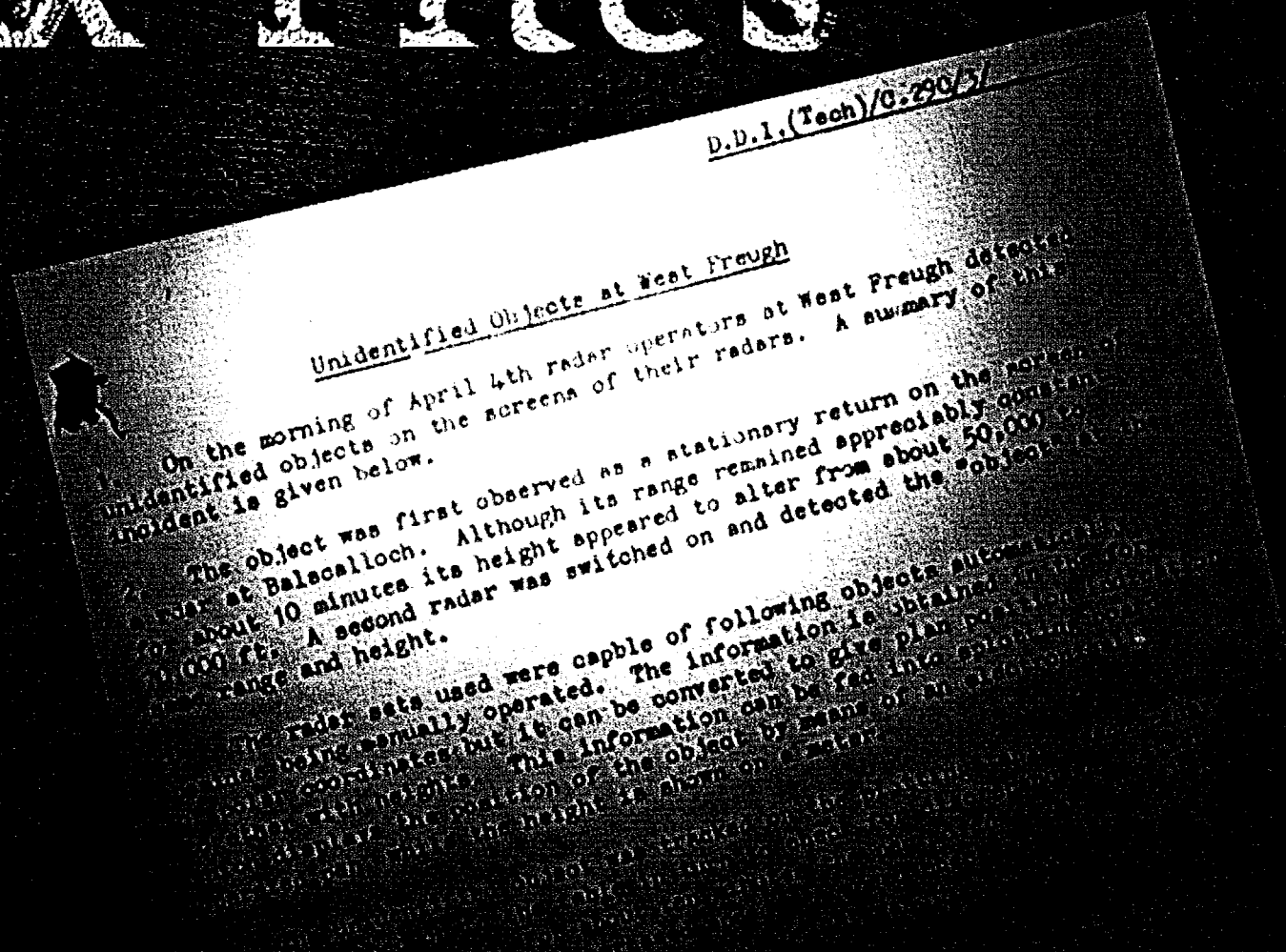
We haven't been silenced by the powers that be as yet, and hopefully we never will.

Nina Pendred, Editor



the mod and ufos

The Military X Files



D.D.I.(Tech)/C.290/7

Unidentified Objects at West Freugh

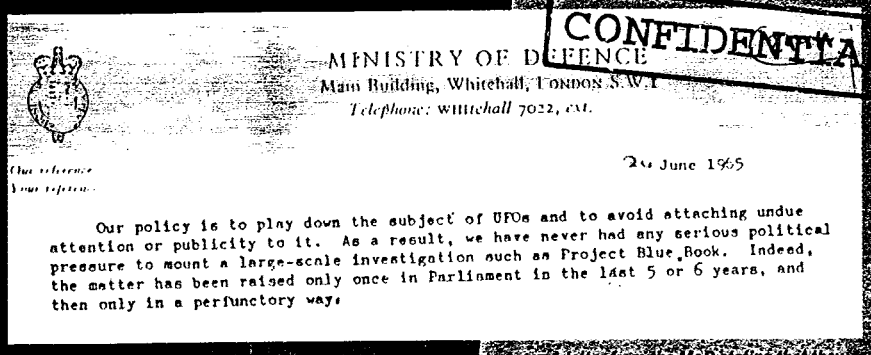
On the morning of April 4th radar operators at West Freugh detected unidentified objects on the screens of their radars. A summary of this incident is given below.

The object was first observed as a stationary return on the north... at Balecalloch. Although its range remained appreciably constant... about 10 minutes its height appeared to alter from about 50,000 ... 1,000 ft. A second radar was switched on and detected the object ... range and height.

The radar sets used were capable of following objects automatically ... being manually operated. The information is obtained in the form ... co-ordinates but it can be converted to give plan position ... heights. This information can be fed into ... the position of the object by means of ...

Do we now have proof of a military UFO cover-up?

Matthew Williams has managed to get the Ministry of Defence to unwittingly admit that they knew the whereabouts of UFO files which were previously listed as missing.



CONFIDENTIAL

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Main Building, Whitehall, LONDON S.W.1
Telephone: WHItehall 7022, ext.

Your reference
Our reference

24 June 1965

Our policy is to play down the subject of UFOs and to avoid attaching undue attention or publicity to it. As a result, we have never had any serious political pressure to mount a large-scale investigation such as Project Blue Book. Indeed, the matter has been raised only once in Parliament in the last 5 or 6 years, and then only in a perfunctory way.

Above: A letter from the MoD stating that they have never undertaken serious investigations into the UFO phenomenon.

The following information may to the uninitiated seem complex or trivial so it must be clearly pointed out that the reasons for providing this information are simple. The MoD states that there is no cover-up over UFO information and also that there have been no secret or covert departments investigating UFOs.

This we have managed to disprove along with uncovering a policy of downplaying the UFO subject. The story gets even more interesting when you learn that, after we found out these facts in a MoD file, the MoD removed the incriminating file from public view. This file implicated Provost & Security Services (based at RAF Rudloe Manor), which is a department that I have been researching for some years, and I believe has been investigating the UFO phenomena – a point which they deny.

I have supplied snippets from the original government documents which back up the claims we are making. If anyone wishes to get hold of copies of the original documents they can do so by visiting the Public Records Office in Kew, London where the files can be booked out and photocopied.

The Thirty-Year Rule

File number AIR 2/16918 provides the best evidence to show that in the 1960's there were no fewer than seven secret government departments within the Ministry of Defence that were investigating UFOs.

Former UFO public office investigator Nick Pope claimed that in his experience there were no other departments investigating UFOs. We have a problem with this statement in light of new files which show otherwise. Could it be that Nick Pope, in his low ranking position of Executive Officer (an entry level grade), was not aware of these departments, or is he simply covering them up?

When questioned, Nick Pope assured me that he did not know of these departments when he was working in the MoD and had no dealings with them.

When researching UFO files you encounter the thirty-year rule problem. This means that any information which is released through official channels is subject to a thirty-year filing rule (sometimes longer). Meaning that by the time the files reach the general public, the departments which dealt with the information have probably closed down or had their names changed, so we cannot find out their current status, check their records, or even make complaints.

The departments clearly named within the file have no other documentation or references within the Public Records Office. Consequently we suspect that this file was probably not meant to reach the Public Records Office. Are we going a bit far in stating this? Perhaps not when you learn that after researchers exposed the file it was then removed from view at the Public Records Office and only returned after questions were raised in the House Of Commons by the Rt Hon Ieuan Wyn Jones, MP for Anglesey North.

For heaven's Sake! Rt Hon!

File 1

Project Blue Book was the USAF public project designed to investigate UFOs through the use of air force resources. The project leader, Dr. Allen Hynek, left Blue Book in disgust claiming that the best and most unexplained records were kept away from the Blue Book files.

Subsequently, Hynek stated that the conclusions of the report – which were that most sightings could be explained and that no evidence of extraterrestrial life could be determined – was at the very best a cover-up of the highest order (there were secret level investigations going on behind Project Blue Book which we now know of as Projects Sign and Grudge).

In an MoD letter, written to Project Blue Book, it was stated that UFO investigations were carried out as part of the MoD Air Force Technical Intelligence Department.

Obviously the MoD, whilst writing to another Military unit, were prepared to admit their UFO investigations to a high level agency, but at this point they would not admit to it publicly. This then shows that investigations went on at a higher level than those of Airstaff 2a, the former office of Nick Pope.

The MoD admit to a policy of playing down the subject of UFOs. In doing this they avoid public or political pressure to mount a large scale – probably public – investigation on UFOs. It is not the military's right to make decisions that will affect politics. The military are supposed to be under the control of government and not be in a position to dictate parliamentary policy.

File 2

Nick Pope was asked directly about Provost and Security Service and RAF Rudloe Manor's involvement in UFO investigations.

He denied any knowledge of these facts although he was in office at a time when Barry Philpott (Nick Pope's successor) alleges that they did reports to him. Work out!

➔

A file letter that I have provided for this article shows that Provost & Security Service were investigating UFOs and that the files were classified as Confidential (a little hard to see on the photocopy).

We also see that the MoD sent out officers to interview witnesses, perhaps giving rise to certain cases of Men in Black or Men from the Ministry, which have been reported over the years. The MoD have denied that they ever sent out officers to visit witnesses. Nick Pope, in his book *Open Skies Closed Minds*, very firmly states the opinion that no MoD officers went out to visit witnesses. He believes that these MIB were just oddball 'Walter Mitty' characters who 'dressed up' to scare witnesses and were nothing at all to do with the MoD.

In fact this file gives the name of the officer who went out to interview the witness, and page 2 of the report (which is not included in this file) goes even further into the fact that officers visited her on a few occasions. The witness, Mrs Ann Henson, has now been visited by UFO researchers who confirmed that she was advised by the MoD to not talk about her sighting to press or public and not to discuss the MoD investigation. She kept silent for 30 years before she was contacted by researchers. My question is how many witnesses have been advised not to talk by the MoD in this fashion?

Provost and Security Service is the department which has been rumoured for many years as being involved in UFO investigations and was first exposed in such a role in Timothy Good's book *Above Top Secret*. Featured my investigations into Rudloe Manor in ALIEN ENCOUNTERS #10, and it is now clear the importance of this and other departments in the whole UFO investigations network.

Provost & Security Services are based at RAF Rudloe Manor. Another interesting feature about RAF Rudloe Manor is that most of its facilities are housed underground in 35 miles of labyrinthine tunnels. I have never heard any rumours of aliens working down there, just a lot of intelligence work and war time control operations.

Below: Provost Security Service is rumoured to have been involved with UFO investigations for many years.

The Ex-File

The confirmed departments involved in UFO investigation that we know of in the 1960's are:

- AMOC (Air Ministries Operations Centre)
- AIS (Air Information Service)
- AI(Tech)4a (Air Intelligence Technical 4a)
- AI(Tech)5b (Air Intelligence Technical 5b)
- AI1 (Air Intelligence 1)
- DSTI (Department of Scientific and Technical Intelligence)
- DDI-Tech (Department of Defence Intelligence Technical)
- Public departments investigating UFOs, who were in fact simply letter writers. Fronting these other departments are DS8, Air Staff 2 and S6.
- The CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) has also conducted investigations of the UFO phenomenon, one of their more recent cases involved a near miss between a UFO and a jetliner which was making its final approach into Manchester airport.
- Extra departments rumoured to be investigating UFOs include D155 and DI64.

The files which were used for the basis of these investigations are as follows:

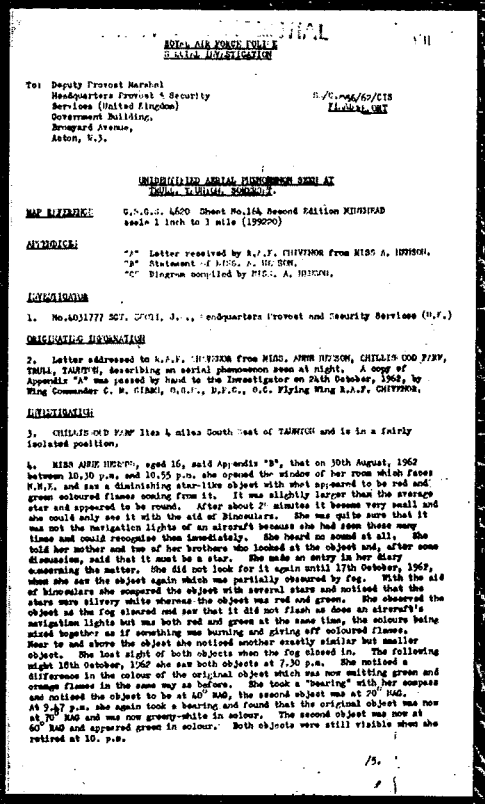
AIR 2/16918, AIR 16/1199, AIR 2/17318, AIR 20/7390, AIR 20/9320, AIR 20/9321, AIR 20/9322, AIR 20/9994, AIR 2/17318, AIR 2/17526, AIR 2/17527, AIR 2/17982, AIR 2/17983, PREM 11/855.

Of Defence Significance

We know from statements made to us by serving officers, former serving officers and officials inside the MoD, that many files exist which have never been released to the public. We also know from Lord Peter Hill Norton, Commander of the Fleet (the MoD's highest rank), that in his opinion there is a cover-up and UFOs are of defence significance. He states that films and evidence of UFOs are being withheld by the MoD.

An MoD ruling from 1967 meant that all UFO reports would be preserved in the Public Records Office for public viewing, because of the renewed interest in the subject. However, if the seven secret MoD departments were investigating UFOs back then, where are the department files relating to this? No files are available or due to be released for these departments. It is as if they didn't exist and efforts to find out if these departments moved on to have new names have proved fruitless as this information is deemed sensitive and cannot be given out to the public.

We know that documents exist which have not been released to the UK public because these documents have been copied to the US Government and have been released to US citizens under the American



ROYAL AIR FORCE POLICE
SECURITY INVESTIGATION

To: Deputy Provost Marshal
Headquarters Provost & Security
Services (United Kingdom)
Government Building,
Brownyard Avenue,
Acton, W.3.

S/C.256/62/CIS
FLIMSY ONLY

UNIDENTIFIED AERIAL PHENOMENON SEEN AT
TAUNTON, SOMERSET.

MAP REFERENCE: G.S.G.S. 4620 Sheet No.164 Second Edition MODIFIED
scale 1 inch to 3 miles (1950)

ANNEXURES:
"A" Letter received by R.A.F. CHIVENOR from MISS A. HENSON.
"B" Statement of MISS. A. HENSON.
"C" Diagram compiled by MISS. A. HENSON.

INVESTIGATOR

1. No.4031777 SGT. SMITH, J., Headquarters Provost and Security Services (H.Q.)

ORIGINATING INFORMATION

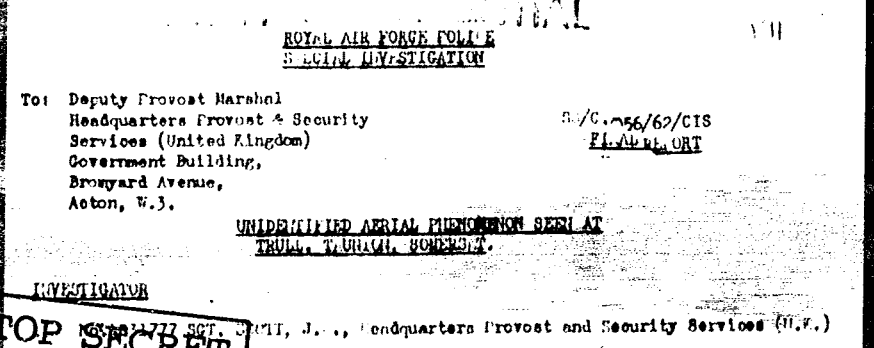
2. Letter addressed to R.A.F. CHIVENOR from MISS. ANNE HENSON, CHILLIS COD FARM, TAUNTON, describing an aerial phenomenon seen at night. A copy of Appendix "A" was passed by hand to the Investigator on 24th October, 1962, by Wing Commander C. W. GIBBS, O.B.E., D.F.C., O.C. Flying Wing R.A.F. CHIVENOR.

INVESTIGATION

3. CHILLIS COD FARM lies 4 miles South West of TAUNTON and is in a fairly isolated position.

4. MISS ANNE HENSON, aged 16, said Appendix "B", that on 30th August, 1962 between 10.30 p.m. and 10.55 p.m. she opened the window of her room which faces N.N.E. and saw a diminishing star-like object with what appeared to be red and green coloured flames coming from it. It was slightly larger than the average star and appeared to be round. After about 2' minutes it became very small and she could only see it with the aid of Binoculars. She was quite sure that it was not the navigation lights of an aircraft because she had seen these many times and could recognise them immediately. She heard no sound at all. She told her mother and two of her brothers who looked at the object and, after some discussion, said that it must be a star. She made an entry in her diary concerning the matter. She did not look for it again until 17th October, 1962, when she saw the object again which was partially obscured by fog. With the aid of binoculars she compared the object with several stars and noticed that the stars were silvery white whereas the object was red and green. She observed the object as the fog cleared and saw that it did not flash as does an aircraft's navigation lights but was both red and green at the same time, the colours being mixed together as if something was burning and giving off coloured flames. Near to and above the object she noticed another exactly similar but smaller object. She lost sight of both objects when the fog closed in. The following night 18th October, 1962 she saw both objects at 7.30 p.m. She noticed a difference in the colour of the original object which was now emitting green and orange flames in the same way as before. She took a "bearing" with her compass and noticed the object to be at 40° MAG, the second object was at 70° MAG. At 9.47 p.m. she again took a bearing and found that the original object was now at 330° MAG and was now greeny-white in colour. The second object was now at 60° MAG and appeared green in colour. Both objects were still visible when she retired at 10. p.m.

/S.



ROYAL AIR FORCE POLICE
SECURITY INVESTIGATION

To: Deputy Provost Marshal
Headquarters Provost & Security
Services (United Kingdom)
Government Building,
Brownyard Avenue,
Acton, W.3.

S/C.256/62/CIS
FLIMSY ONLY

UNIDENTIFIED AERIAL PHENOMENON SEEN AT
TAUNTON, SOMERSET.

INVESTIGATOR

No.4031777 SGT. SMITH, J., Headquarters Provost and Security Services (H.Q.)

TOP SECRET

Freedom of Information Act. This release circumvented UK secrecy laws. Some of these documents show that UFO incidents have taken place on UK soil, involving American airbases.

We also know that some of these bases have had overflights of UFOs, which subsequently interfered and rendered some of the nuclear weapons stored on the base inoperable, eg the 1980 Woodbridge/Bentwaters incidents. The mere fact that these weapons were stored in a US airbase on British soil is still classified top-secret. (Proof of the nuclear aspect of this case is available in a new book *Left At East Gate* published by Michael O'Mara books.)

I have secured my own evidence of the nuclear aspect at Bentwaters, by secretly visiting the site with a team of UFO investigators, including Richard Conway and two original witnesses. We visited the nuclear bunkers and will be releasing this proof soon.

An Unacceptable Situation

Readers should take note that the proposals for a UK Freedom of Information act clearly state the MoD need not take part (although it is my understanding that some MoD departments feel that they may be included anyway).

I feel that this is an unacceptable situation and would personally only support a government and military-wide Freedom of Information act.

When the MoD have been questioned on the subject of UFOs they have given a statement that they are of 'No Defence Significance'. Clearly the files did show that UFOs were of defence significance otherwise they would not be investigating them at such a high level.

What we have here is clear evidence of the Ministry of Defence being involved in playing down and covering up UFO sightings. UFO reports were classified as secret, and the details probably were not meant to be released to the public. Procedures were put in place to allow the secret departments to lie to the public about conclusions of their investigations, through the front of the Whitehall civil servant departments.

We also know that the enormity of the sightings that were being reported back then show that UFOs were of an extreme defence significance. Lastly, we now know that the MoD were sending out officers to interview witnesses and these self same officers were trying to silence witnesses. It all fits together nicely.

What we now need to know is where did these departments go and where do they operate from today. We also need to know where all of the investigation files, from the many years of UFO research, are now. We are preparing to find these departments, ask them for their files, and bring you further updates from any information we gather.

Lord Peter Hill Norton states that films and evidence of UFOs are being withheld by the MoD.

Below: Hasn't the time now come for the MoD to fully disclose its investigations into UFOs?

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Main Building, Whitehall, LONDON S.W.1
Telephone: WHItehall 7022, ext.

Our reference
Your reference

21st June 1965

Mr Langton has shown us your letter of the 15th June about Project Blue Book.

In the United Kingdom, the Air Force Department of the Ministry of Defence has the primary responsibility for investigating reports of UFOs., and the reasons for this allocation of responsibility are exactly the same as in your case.

We investigate every case reported to us, and we use every assistance, civilian as well as military, available to us to identify a particular object. For example, we have frequently used the resources of Kodak Ltd., to examine photographs, films and equipment submitted to us. We do not, however maintain a special scientific staff for this purpose. It is normally handled as part of the routine work of our Air Force Technical Intelligence department. Unlike you, however, we do investigate single-observer sightings. Our results over the years are in line with yours viz. in some 90% of cases investigated, we are able to make a positive, rational identification, in 10% we are unable to do so because of insufficient data, and in no case have we unearthed any evidence of extra-terrestrial origin.

Our policy is to play down the subject of UFOs and to avoid attaching undue attention or publicity to it. As a result, we have never had any serious political pressure to mount a large-scale investigation such as Project Blue Book. Indeed, the matter has been raised only once in Parliament in the last 5 or 6 years, and then only in a perfunctory way.

The specific answers to your questions are as follows:-

a. No

b. No

c. Yes, a considerable number

d. We investigate about 70 case a year but there are others which are not reported to us, although sometimes reported in the newspapers.

We should be delighted to discuss the matter with Dr Hynek when he comes to London and no doubt you will let us know in due course when he will be here.

Lieutenant Colonel John F. Spaulding,
Civil Branch,
Community Relations Division,
Office of Information,
Department of the Air Force,
Washington DC
U.S.A.

File 3

The Missing File

The file which contained so many revelations about departments in the MoD investigating UFOs went missing after Nick Redfern was filmed for a documentary called *Out Of This World*, around March 1995. The official explanation for the missing file was that it has been 'misfiled'.

We suspected otherwise, but it took the intervention of MP Ieuan Wyn Jones, who asked a question in the House Of Commons, to bring the file back. The file was returned two days after the question being tabled, but still the excuse given was that it had been misfiled - this was after one year of looking for it and one major file search (known as a census).

In a visit to the Public Records Office in 1996, myself, Richard Conway and Chris Fowler were told by Vivian Bales that the file was probably with the MoD as they often recalled sensitive files which they may have released information in by mistake. It was her opinion that this is possibly what had happened. We did not prompt her for this explanation and she gave it to us as an unofficial comment.

I didn't buy the official missing file story so went on my own search for who might have had the file at the MoD. I used contacts I have in government to point me toward the relevant MoD department, where I might find an answer. I was given the details of a small department which is housed inside the Metropole Building in Northumberland Avenue. After speaking to the staff there I was put onto the Deputy Departmental Records Officer, Mr I D Goode.

Official Clamp-Down

The Central Records Management checked their records and confirmed that records the file being inside the MoD in November 1996. This proved that an MP and members of the public were being lied to about the whereabouts of this file. Both the MoD and Public Records Office had assured us that they had carried out proper checks on the whereabouts of the file. However, if they had then surely they would have discovered that it was booked out to the MoD?

The final part of the saga is that an official clamp-down has come into force. We were told by the MoD that Central Records Management had made a clerical error, and that the records should have read November 1995.

One thing is now clear, we have the ammunition to fight the government over the files of these seven secret departments who files do not appear in the Public Records Office. It has even been hinted to me by one insider that if any files for these departments did exist, then they would not become public because most of these files are Defence Intelligence orientated. These types of files rarely get released, if at all!

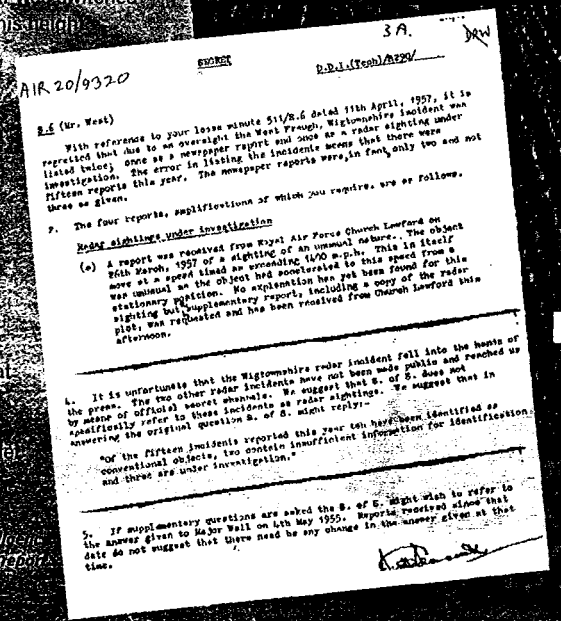
Other Facts

Some of the other documents available in the UFO files include radar tracking of objects by the military. One incident which occurred in West Freugh was forwarded to secret department DDI Tech. It describes radar of five objects, estimated to be as big as ships which proceeded from 50,000ft to 70,000ft. A second radar was switched on and confirmed the objects at this height.

The considered expert opinion of the military was that these objects were indeed unidentified and of an unknown type and origin. The radar operators [illegible] the possibility of [illegible] interference or that they may have [illegible] charged clouds etc. [illegible] the incident [illegible] daily worthy of note.

Other incidents include similar radar tracks of objects travelling at speeds in excess of 4,000mph [illegible]

[illegible] (DDI (Tech))



AIR 20/9320

SECRET

D.D.I.(Tech)/Army

S.A.

S.6 (Mr. West)

With reference to your loose minute S11/S.6 dated 11th April, 1957, it is regretted that due to an oversight the West Freugh, Wigtownshire incident was listed twice; one as a newspaper report and once as a radar sighting under investigation. The error in listing the incidents means that there were fifteen reports this year. The newspaper reports were, in fact, only two and not three as given.

2. The four reports, amplifications of which you require, are as follows.

Radar sightings under investigation

(a) A report was received from Royal Air Force Church Lawford on 26th March, 1957 of a sighting of an unusual nature. The object was at a speed stead ar exceeding 4,000 m.p.h. This in itself was unusual as the object had accelerated to this speed from a stationary position. No explanation has yet been found for the sighting but supplementary report, including a copy of the radar plot, was requested and has been received from Church Lawford this afternoon.

4. It is unfortunate that the Wigtownshire radar incident fell into the hands of the press. The two other radar incidents have not been made public and reached us by means of official secret channels. We suggest that S. of S. does not specifically refer to these incidents as radar sightings. We suggest that in answering the original question S. of S. might reply:-

"Of the fifteen incidents reported this year ten have been identified as conventional objects, two contain insufficient information for identification and three are under investigation."

5. If supplementary questions are asked the S. of S. might wish to refer to the answer given to Major Wall on 4th May 1955. Reports received since that date do not suggest that there need be any change in the answer given at that time.

Secret investigators would pass on recommendations to civil servants in the publicly known UFO reporting departments.

Who Is Matthew Williams?

Matthew Williams is a former civil servant who worked for HM Customs & Excise Criminal Investigations department. Following his own UFO sighting back in 1990, Matthew now investigates the UFO enigma full-time.

For Your Information

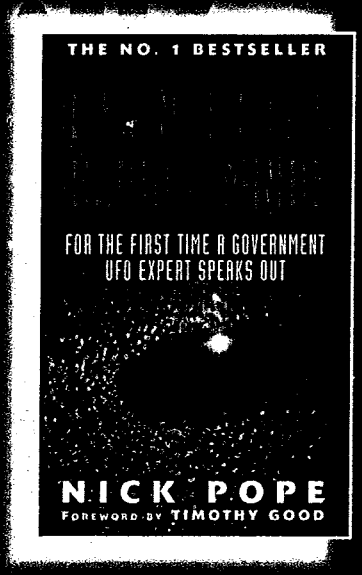
Space restrictions mean that we cannot include all the papers which make up the MoD file bundle, but if anyone requires the full documents they are available for public viewing in *Truthseekers Magazine*.

For a copy, please send a cheque payable to *Truthseekers Magazine* for £2.00, and you will be sent a photocopied bundle.

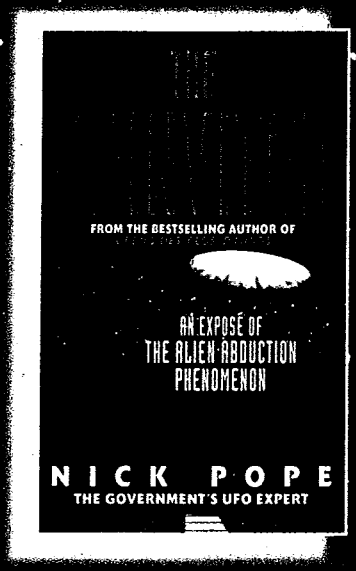
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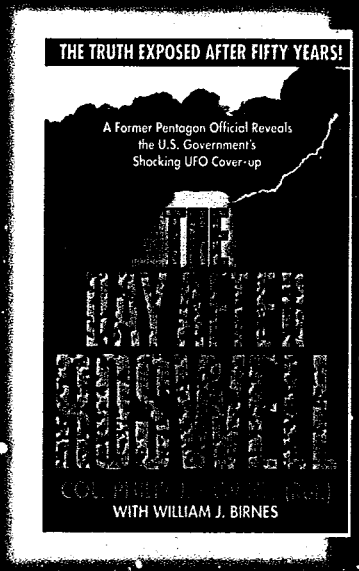
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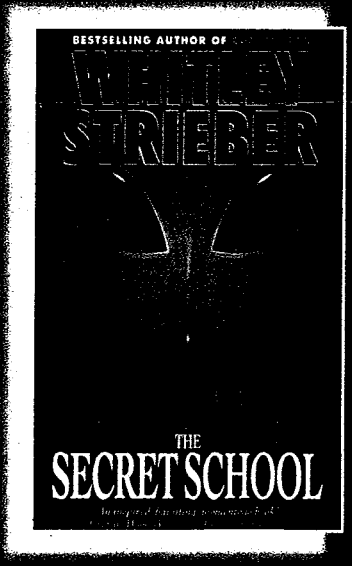


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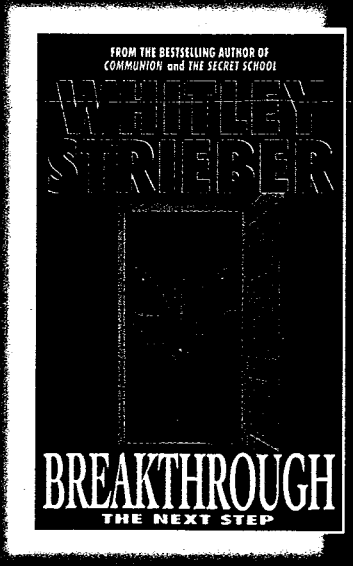


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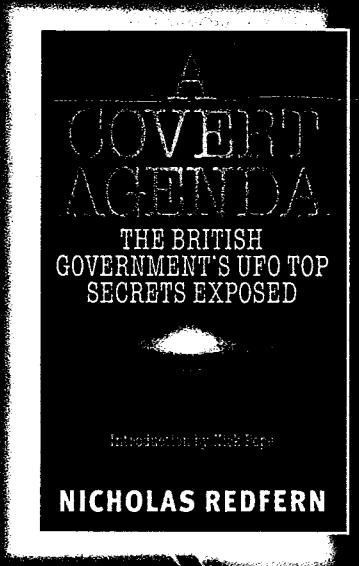
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SIMON & SCHUSTER
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Reading is believing...

Unidentified Flying Subjects



The rational explanation for the media's obsession with the paranormal — ratings figures — doesn't explain the phenomenon, says JOHN DIAMOND



Please believe me ... (clockwise from bottom left): bent spoons, dead "aliens", crop circles, flying saucers, ghosts and TV hypnotism — the media hype them all

AS the final hour of the final day of the millennium approaches, we can see them gathering. They are shadowy men and women clad in outlandish garments, speaking an ancient, moaning language; they are the true believers. Call them what you will — The Elect, The Faithful, The Blessed — they know each other by simpler titles; often they are the Credulous Feature Writers, occasionally the Cynically Accepting TV Producers, sometimes the Ill-Researched Prophetic Book Publishers.

They are the men and women who, as more and more becomes certain about the way the world works, contrive to convince us that we live in a random and irrational dimension, a place where any thesis, however unlikely, can be propped up with a suitably bold headline and underpinned by the petulant battle cry: "Well, you prove it's *not* true, then."

And these are the men and women whose influence will be discussed next week at the ICA, when the entirely rational ad agency Ogilvy and Mather and the supremely level-headed European Business News TV give out the details of futura.com — "a major study designed to explore, understand and explain changes in British society".

The leading question, according to the invitation, is a simple one: "How many people believe in flying saucers?" I'd be amazed if the answer revealed at the conference — sponsored, among others, by media organisations like Carlton Communications, Telewest and Flextech — isn't that most of us do. Just as most of us believe in horoscopes, dowsing, Nostradamus, crop circles, numerology, reflexology and that Paul McKenna's subjects don't know what they're doing when they howl like a dog.

WE believe these things, depending on your point of view, either because your Johnny human being is an open-minded sort of cove or because in a complicated world full of imponderables it's easier and more comforting to believe in Russell Grant's astrological certainties than in the nothingness of rationality. Science, in trying to understand everything, admits that there are things we don't yet know and may never know; it is the antiscience which is flooding our media which says that everything not explained by science is explicable by non-science — and usually in a four-minute studio segment or across two tabloid pages of newsprint.

The traditional media defence to the charge that programmes like The World of Paul McKenna and the various fake-science series with the word "Unexplained" in the title encourage viewers not to think too carefully is that it's all just a bit of fun. The same defence, or a version of it, is used when a paper runs a serialisation of the latest prophetic best-seller which "proves" that Nostradamus got the 4.30 at Haydock Park on the nose.

And I suppose it would be a bit of fun were it not for two problems.

The first is that, for some mysterious and inexplicable reason obviously unconnected with sales, editors faced with a divine prophecy serialisation offer, or a tale of psychic derring-do, or a flying saucer story turn every journalistic principle on its head.

Phone up a newsdesk and tell them that you've witnessed a murder or a bank robbery and you'll be pummelled with the who-what-why-when-how questions which every journalist learns on his first paper. Phone up a political correspondent with a story and regardless of his or his paper's political position, he'll phone around to get the story from both sides of the political fence.

But phone up a paper and tell them that you have a book coming out which proves that corn circles are made by visiting Venusians and your thesis will go straight into the paper all but unsullied by contact with those whose job normally is to ask inconvenient questions. Papers across the intellectual gamut routinely write about ghosts and poltergeists, spiritualists and mediums, flying saucers and spoon-benders as if there is no question but that these are genuine, if not fully understood, phenomena.

There is only one other area where newspapers are happy to run stories without subjecting them to the usual journalistic scrutiny and that's the closely related one of alternative medicine. Most editors are prone to running around blindly if they see the chance of a good scare story, but look at the coverage of BSE or Aids over the years and you'll see the press capable of taking a reasonable amount of journalistic care to get both sides of the story.

Now turn to the health and beauty sections and see them fail to take the same journalistic care when it comes to non-orthodox medical stories. There is not a single loony-tune therapy which hasn't appeared on the middle-market health pages, or those of the consumer glossies, unencumbered by the suggestion that its case is, at best, unproven.

IN any other journalistic area a quote by the touter of some expensive new-age treatment would, if given house-room at all, be balanced by a quote from some expert or another who has actually done some research on the treatment. On the health pages, though, the quote passes into print untouched by doubt.

The second problem is one which more regularly concerns the TV stations which, for some years now, have been running series which purport to explain the inexplicable. Sometimes they use TV scientists — or Carol Vorderman — to do this, but as often as not the job is handed over to lay presenters like Michael Aspel.

Of course if the TV companies really wanted to explain the supposedly inexplicable they wouldn't have much of a programme, given the banal truth, which is that subjected to scientific scrutiny most mysterious phenomena are the result of hoax, lie, mistake, misunderstanding, forgetfulness, or downright trickery.

Such explanations make for tedious programming, of course. A piece on crop circles which shows that they are, every one of them, man-made isn't as gripping as one which purports to believe that there may be a mysterious explanation for them.

A bit of fun, of course. Except that, as is so often the case, one person's fun is at the expense of another — the other in this case being cash- and time-strapped serious scientific programming.

For what is most irrational of all is that just when science and technology is making most difference to our lives, and just when most of us could use some real explanations — even explanations which are sceptical of the power of science — what the media are giving us is junk science and non-science.

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where it is impinging on the nerve, has revolutionised treatment. Patients who have been so incapacitated that their activities have been seriously restricted for more than three weeks deserve full investigation, probably including an MRI scan, rather than the mere prescription of

Mr Hinkes is now back in Yorkshire and enjoying his fish and chips, although he said in a radio interview that notwithstanding the chapatis he had every intention to climb his peaks. At his next attempt he should take it all rather more steadily, and find time to take pleasure in what he is achieving.

more effective than existing tests and that it will become an important means of detecting chlamydial infections in women before their tubes have been irretrievably damaged and they suffer infertility.

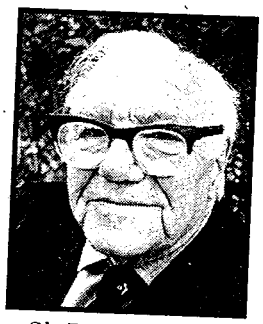
Air marshal's flight of fancy

The autobiography of Air Marshal Sir Peter Horsley, former wartime pilot and later deputy head of Strike Command, is being published in October.

There are already press and radio reports that the book contains an account of Sir Peter's conversation with an alien, who told the air marshal about life on flying saucers. One interesting feature of these travellers from outer space is that as they journey they carry with them in their luggage spare body parts.

Whatever happened in the flat in Smith Square, Westminster, where Sir Peter had his encounter in 1954, may never be unravelled but he is unlikely to convince either his RAF colleagues, or his doctors, that his informant, Janus, existed.

It is interesting that patients' auditory, visual or olfactory hallucinations, and the delusions that stem from them, are dependent on the prevailing culture. If Sir Peter had lived several centuries ago, and if the explanation for the strange happenings in Smith Square is the result of a hallucination, he might have been confronted by the Devil, or a saint. Religious imagery is now unfashionable, and people who believe they have had paranormal experiences are more likely to recount how they have met a man from outer space. And many are convinced that they have been abducted or raped by the little green men, but when pressed are characteristically short of the detail that would have made the story so fascinating, and added veracity to it. It is striking that now Mars has been explored, the aliens are apt to come from outer space. Very depressed patients may develop psychotic symptoms, including hallucinations and delusions. Many other patients suffering from schizophrenia, or its related disorders, also hear voices and may carry on long and complicated conversations with them.



Sir Peter Horsley

Until recently, the peace of the morning room of one London club was regularly disturbed by the noisy argument that one much-loved member held with his voices. Together they battled over the political points reported in the newspapers and other members were treated to a running commentary on the discussion inside his head.

Hallucinations may also be tactile so that patients not only hear the voice of the invisible stranger, but may feel them and may even complain that the hallucinatory presence has made sexual advances.

Visual hallucinations are also common in many forms of dementia as well as in psychotic conditions. Delirium tremens and Lewey body dementia, a form of senile dementia, are particularly associated with visual hallucinations.

In Lewey body dementia the vision is frequently incomplete, a phenomenon that may account for the number of ghosts which are either headless or without feet.

Perhaps Sir Peter really did meet an alien, but for those of us who don't like to think that the man in charge of a nuclear strike force was hallucinating, there is another more reassuring explanation. It is possible that Sir Peter, exhausted after his duties at Buckingham Palace where he was then posted, dropped off to sleep in the Smith Square flat and experienced a hypnagogic hallucination.

Hypnagogic hallucinations are the phenomena in which a person who is in the twilight zone between sleep and wakefulness sees, hears and even feels a hallucinatory other person. The image is very real and it can be very hard to convince the dreamer that the incident took place only in his or her mind. Hypnagogic hallucinations are comparatively common and whereas they are usually part of a continuing sleep disorder, they can occur in people who don't have a history of abnormal sleep patterns.

Jellyfish warning to holidaymakers

THE hot weather has produced the usual problems for seaside holidaymakers. This week visitors to beaches in East Anglia have been suffering from jellyfish stings.

The tentacles of jellyfish release a mild toxin when they are touched. It usually causes little more trouble than some reddening of the skin, a faint rash which is mildly irritant. The symptoms are readily alleviated by a simple painkiller — Veganin, for instance, for adults, paracetamol for children, and inflammation is reduced by the application of hydrocortisone cream. If part of the tentacle remains stuck to the skin an application of vinegar from the picnic basket will usually cause it to drop off, or it may be removed by applying sticky plaster and tearing off.

Some patients are allergic to such stings. If the reaction is very severe they may need an immediate subcutaneous injection of one in a thousand adrenalin, and in the very worst cases transfer to hospital.

Travel, page 37



Watch out for jellyfish on the beach

New drugs aid schizophrenics

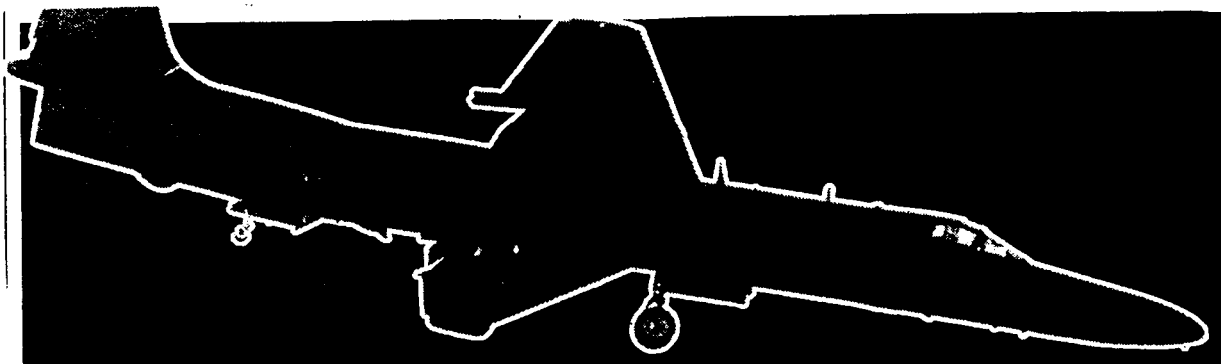
THE introduction of anti-psychotic drugs 30 years ago was a huge advance in the treatment of schizophrenia. Unfortunately 25 per cent of patients failed to respond to these drugs, and half of those treated with them relapsed within two years. Many of the drugs also have unpleasant side-effects.

Over the past year or two a new era in the treatment of schizophrenia has started with the advent of the atypical neuroleptics. The indications for the prescription of Risperdal has recently been extended. The advice to doctors to use Risperdal with caution in the elderly has been replaced with the statement that it is well tolerated in older patients.

Dr Tonmoy Sharma, senior lecturer at the Maudsley Hospital, London, said: "These new drugs offer a proven treatment with fewer side-effects than the older treatment. Patients are less likely to suffer excess tiredness, sexual dysfunction, gross weight gain, or uncontrollable movement to the face and limbs than are those taking conventional neuroleptics. The new drugs are also better at controlling a wide range of psychotic symptoms."

The Express
05 August 1997
Page 12

LO
48



Lies, spies and secret objects in the skies

BY TOBY MOORE AND IVOR KEY

HOLLYWOOD has been followed by an unlikely force — the CIA — in the rush to tell us about aliens. Interest in hit films like Men in Black and Independence Day will doubtless soar in the light of the CIA's admission that it covered up the truth behind UFOs.

CONSPIRACY theorists have reacted with typical scepticism to the "leaked" news that thousands of UFO sightings were not alien observers at all.

A historian has claimed that half of the sightings of "flying saucers" spotted in the Fifties and Sixties were in fact secret spy-plane missions which the US Government did not want to admit to at the time.

Interest in UFOs has spawned not only a multi-million dollar tourist industry in so-called "hot-spots", but the influence of hit TV programmes — notably The X-Files — has fuelled widespread claims of a cover-up of alien visits and abductions.

continues.

ontinues.

It is not, therefore, surprising that a rational explanation from a government agency infamous for subterfuge and misinformation is quickly dismissed.

UFO enthusiasts said that an admission of a cover-up by the CIA can only mean that another cover-up lurks behind its new-found honesty.

"They're still lying," said Richard Hall, chairman of the Fund for UFO Research.

"The American public is not stupid," added Walter Andrus, international director of the Mutual UFO Network.

"They've been lied to by the government so often over the years that they're not going to believe it now."

Top historian Gerald Haines, however, claimed in his research paper, The CIA's Role in the Study of UFOs 1947-90, that the "false cover story" is true.

"Over half of all UFO reports from the late 1950s through the 1960s were accounted for by manned reconnaissance flights," he said.

"This led the Air Force to make misleading and deceptive statements to the public in order to allay public fears and to protect an extraordinarily sensitive national security project."

The paper claimed that test flights by the top-secret, high-altitude U2 spy plane were mistaken for UFOs from its launch in 1954 until 1960, when the Soviets shot down Gary Powers in one.

Later, existence of the futuristic SR-71 Blackbird was also denied, as was Project Y — ironically, a prototype flying saucer developed by Western powers, including Britain, which could even hover.

The latter aircraft was kept secret, it was claimed by Mr Haines, because of "agency fears that the Soviets were testing similar devices".

The cover-up, however — if, indeed, there was one — backfired as early as 1952 when officials feared mass hysteria would soon break out because of the rash of unexplained sightings.

Mr Haines said they feared the Soviets would cash in on the panic by staging mass UFO sightings which would disrupt America's air defence systems and enable a surprise nuclear attack to be launched.

Top secret monitoring organisations discussed enlisting schools, work clubs and even Walt Disney to help prevent "hysterical mass behaviour".

Even the National Security Council was urged to "debunk UFO reports and institute a policy of public education to reassure the public of the lack of evidence behind UFOs".

As the Cold War between Russia and the US intensified, flying saucer sightings increased.

A special panel of scientists, asked to investigate the security implications of alien invasion, concluded unanimously in 1953 that there was no credible evidence of aliens, nor evidence of a direct national security threat.

Mr Haines said that by 1956, the US Air Force was able to attribute 96 per cent of all UFO sightings to the high altitude U2 and SR-71 intelligence gathering planes.

He said that the Air Force, while allowing the flights over populated areas where they might very well be seen, took care "not to reveal the cause of the sightings to the public".

In the following 20 years, all sorts of explanations were offered to a disbelieving public, including ice crystal formations, "temperature inversions" and even the sunlight reflected off seagulls.

Even Mr Haines admitted that the CIA did itself no favours by continuing with such a weak cover-up.

He wrote that by steadfastly concealing its interest in the matter, the CIA "contributed to later charges of a CIA conspiracy and cover-up".

He added: "The UFO issue will probably not go away soon, no matter what the agency does or says.

"The belief that we are not alone in the universe is too emotionally appealing and the distrust of our government is too pervasive to make the issue amenable to rational explanation and evidence."

Hardened Ufologists remain unconvinced by the CIA's admission, which closely follows several others by the US Government.

In March, the military claimed that a spate of sightings over the Arizona desert were the result of flares fired into the desert skies.

And in June, the US Air Force said that the famous Roswell UFO crash of 1947 contained crash test dummies and not dead aliens.

It has not, however, explained the truth behind a secret film — recently released to the media — which was alleged to be an autopsy of one of the alien victims. "The flying saucer community is definitely on to something in charging that the military is hiding something," said John Pike, head of space policy at the Federation of American Scientists.

The US revelations have also prompted requests that the British Government now comes clean about a 50-year spate of incidents over here.

Joe McNally, associate editor of Fortean Times, the leading journal of strange phenomenon, said that "intense secrecy" fostered by governments has simply kept the UFOs alive in the public's imagination.

"There have now been three different explanations of Roswell, first it was a rocket, then it was a balloon now it's crash test dummies, to encourage scepticism."

Typically, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday that it was not involved in any secret monitoring of UFOs spotted over Britain.

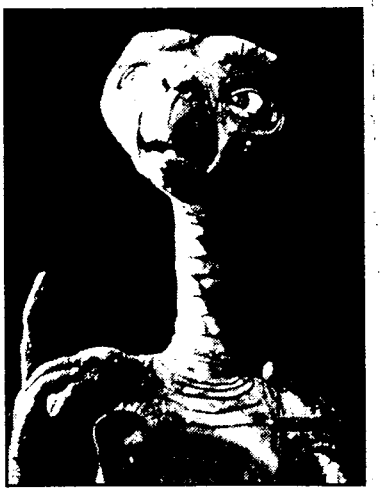
Therefore, there was absolutely no reason to reveal anything to the public about such sightings.

"We have always said that we don't believe in UFOs," said a spokesman.

"We have no competency in that area. We only take note of reported sightings to establish if there is any threat to UK airspace."

The conspiracy theorists will never believe such a seemingly rational explanation.

They also now have something else to chew on — Gerald Haines published his research in a CIA journal.



ET: UFO enthusiasts believe alien observers often visit Earth

ends.

Close encounter in a Chelsea flat

RAF chief's memoirs on a man from outer space



FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES: Sir Peter, circled, was close to the Queen and Prince Philip *Picture: DAVID O'NEILL*

MILITARY giants don't come much bigger than Air Marshal Sir Peter Horsley.

A war hero who flew Mosquitoes against the Germans, he has held one of the highest ranks in the RAF and has been an intimate adviser to the Queen and Prince Philip.

He has also, he claims, met a visitor from another galaxy.

By Fiona Barton

Sir Peter has kept his close encounter with the mysterious man he calls Mr Janus in a London flat a secret for 43 years. But now, at the age of 76, he is ready to go public.

Fixing me with a steely gaze, he says: 'We talked for hours about travelling in space and time. I don't know what or who he was. He didn't say he was a visitor from another planet but I had that impression. I believe he was here to observe us.

'I never saw him again. I have no qualms about the reaction to my experience with Mr Janus. I don't care what people think — it was what happened.'

His extraordinary testimony — in his autobiography, Sounds From Another Room*, to be published in the autumn — and his uncompromising belief in Unidentified Flying Objects will no doubt ruffle the sangfroid of the men at the Ministry. For, incredible as it seems, it is the evidence of a man who once ran the country's front line defence at RAF Strike Command, and was a Buckingham Palace aide for six years.

At his riverside cottage in Hampshire, where Christmas cards from the Royal Family hang in the lavatory, he discusses the presence of alien spacecraft with unswerving nonchalance.

'I would say they come from another planet somewhere in the universe but not in our galaxy. They are benign, not aggressive and, like us, are explorers,' he says.

His interest in UFOs began, he says, in 1952 while he was an equerry to the Duke of Edinburgh and was sparked by newspaper reports at the time.

He joined the Royal Household in 1949 as a squadron leader who had been decorated for his work as personal pilot to Major General Sir Miles Graham during the Normandy Invasion.

> 'I don't care what people think – it happened'

Sir Peter says he talked to Prince Philip of his interest in UFOs. 'He was quite interested. As always his mind was open. He agreed I should do a study on the subject in my spare time as long as I kept it in perspective and didn't bring the Palace into disrepute. He didn't want to see headlines about him believing in little green men.'

Sir Peter started by interviewing people who claimed to have seen UFOs and invited a BOAC captain to visit him at Buckingham Palace. His own encounter came in 1954. 'At the end of my tour at the Palace, I had a very strange experience,' he recalls with charming understatement.

He says he was introduced to a General Martin who arranged for him to visit the Chelsea home of a Mrs Markham.

Sir Peter cannot remember the date or the number of the flat in Smith Street — nor can he describe the man he met there — but he is adamant the encounter took place.

'Janus was there, sitting by the fire in a deep chair. He asked, "What is your interest in flying saucers?" '

And then he gave a Wellsian account of space travel at the speed of light with spare body parts in the luggage. When Sir Peter went back to the flat it was empty.

But his interest in the paranormal stayed with him during his rise through the ranks to the crucial post of Deputy Commander in Chief of RAF Strike Command in 1973.

Sir Peter insists: 'I don't think I am a crank about it at all.'

But at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall, jaws are dropping. As one former senior officer put it: 'Oh God. How unfortunate that the public will learn that the man who had his finger on the button at Strike Command was seeing little green men.'

**Sounds From Another Room is published by Leo Cooper in October.*

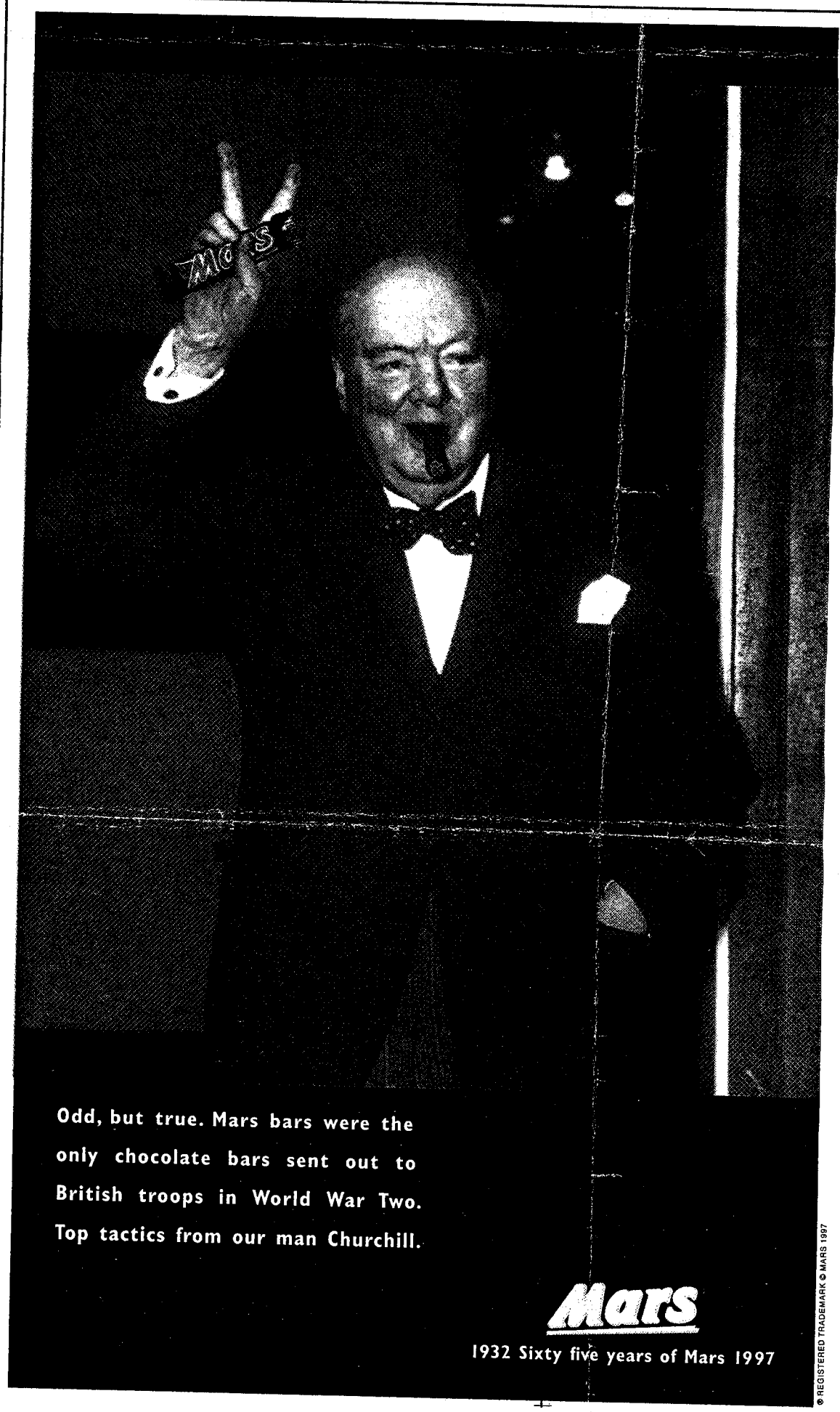
INSIDE THIS WEEK'S FINANCIAL MAIL ON SUNDAY



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Why Bill Gates is taking a bite of Apple



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US DoD: laser not cause of eye injuries

An investigation by the US Department of Defense (DoD) has decided it is unlikely that eye injuries suffered by a US Navy officer in April were caused by a laser fired from a Russian cargo ship.

The officer reported eye damage after photographing the *Kapitan Man* in US waters north of Puget Sound off Washington State. He was serving as a crew member on a Canadian Forces CH-124 Sea King helicopter.

Photographs show a red light below the port bridge on the ship and the DoD suspected it may have been a laser targeted at the helicopter to blind the occupants. After an investigation the DoD said it was a port navigational running light.

A search of the ship by US Coast Guard and Navy personnel found no evidence of a laser or modifications to the ship which would indicate the removal of a laser.

Dispenser to get jump-start after 87-day break

The US Air Force Wind Corrected Munitions Dispenser (WCMD) programme is looking "at anything we can do" to jump-start its schedule following 87 days of stopped work, WCMD programme manager Lt Col Steven Welch said.

The programme, which has been on the fast track since its inception, came to a halt when Alliant Techsystems protested against Lockheed Martin's winning of a contract to finish WCMD development and begin production. The US General Accounting Office rejected the protest.

Air force and Lockheed officials held their first post-protest meeting this month to look at the schedule and begin debating trade-offs. The upcoming milestones are critical, so trade-offs will be "scrutinised well", Col Welch said. "We won't trade quality for schedule."

BY STACEY EVERS
WASHINGTON DC

The meeting's agenda included a briefing on Lockheed-proposed technology insertions and contractor plans for how to install the Sensor Fuzed Weapon. Foreign military sales options are also an issue, as Lockheed Martin has begun looking for markets and the USAF international affairs office has started developing an export strategy.

The WCMD tail kit assembly system is expected to improve the precision of tactical munitions such as the Combined Effects Munition by providing a 'smart' guidance capability for the existing dispenser. The developmental test and evaluation flight test, which was to start in May, is scheduled to run from September to January. However, the contract award for low-rate initial production is projected to slip by only two months, to March next year.

During developmental testing, an F-16 will make seven drops at Eglin AFB, Florida, and a B-52 will make 13 drops at Edwards AFB, California. About five months of operational test and evaluation will begin in January with 20 more drops from an F-16 and B-52.

Early operational capability for the B-52, originally set for February, will now be achieved by 31 July. This is still one year ahead of the schedule set by the air force's Operational Requirements Document, Col Welch said.

The only missed opportunity will be joint testing on the B-52 with the Joint Direct Attack Munition programme, although some software development can be done in collaboration.

USAF presents 'Case Closed' over Roswell

Alien bodies supposedly recovered in New Mexico in 1947 were actually human-like dummies dropped during the mid-1950s, the US Air Force revealed in a new report on the famous Roswell UFO incident.

The USAF contends that the reported 1947 crash of an "extraterrestrial flying disc" and its "alien" occupants were debris from Project Mogul, a high-altitude balloon research project. The programme was to determine whether a sound channel exists in the upper atmosphere that could be used to detect ballistic missiles.

The mostly unclassified Project Mogul used acoustical sensors, radar reflecting targets and other devices attached to a train of weather balloons more than 180m long. In 1947 a rancher turned in the radar targets to the local sheriff, allegedly after hearing media reports of flying discs.

The first claims to have seen bodies came in the late 1970s, leading USAF officials to argue that the memories of witnesses have consolidated air force activities for a period of years into a handful of days in July 1947. The witnesses are "wrong about the 1947 date", said USAF Col John Haynes in a Pentagon briefing.

From 1953 to 1959, the Air Force Aero Medical Laboratory used anthropomorphic dummies as part of high-altitude aircraft escape projects called High Dive and Excelsior.

These programmes aimed to devise methods for returning pilots or astronauts to earth by parachute should they be forced to escape at extreme altitudes.

The dummies, transported by balloons to altitudes as high as 98,000ft (30,000m), fell freely while instruments recorded body movements and escape equipment performance. Forty-three high-altitude balloons carrying 67 dummies were launched and recovered across New Mexico between 1954 and 1959 and 30 were dropped by aircraft over White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico, in 1953.

"The dummies were sometimes transported to and from off-range locations in wooden shipping containers, similar to caskets, to prevent damage to fragile instruments mounted in and on the dummy," the report said.

In 1994 the USAF released its first Roswell report on the order of a New Mexico congressman. The USAF said it has volunteered this second Roswell report to answer "lingering questions" about sitings of alien bodies, a subject not discussed "extensively" in the 1994 paper.

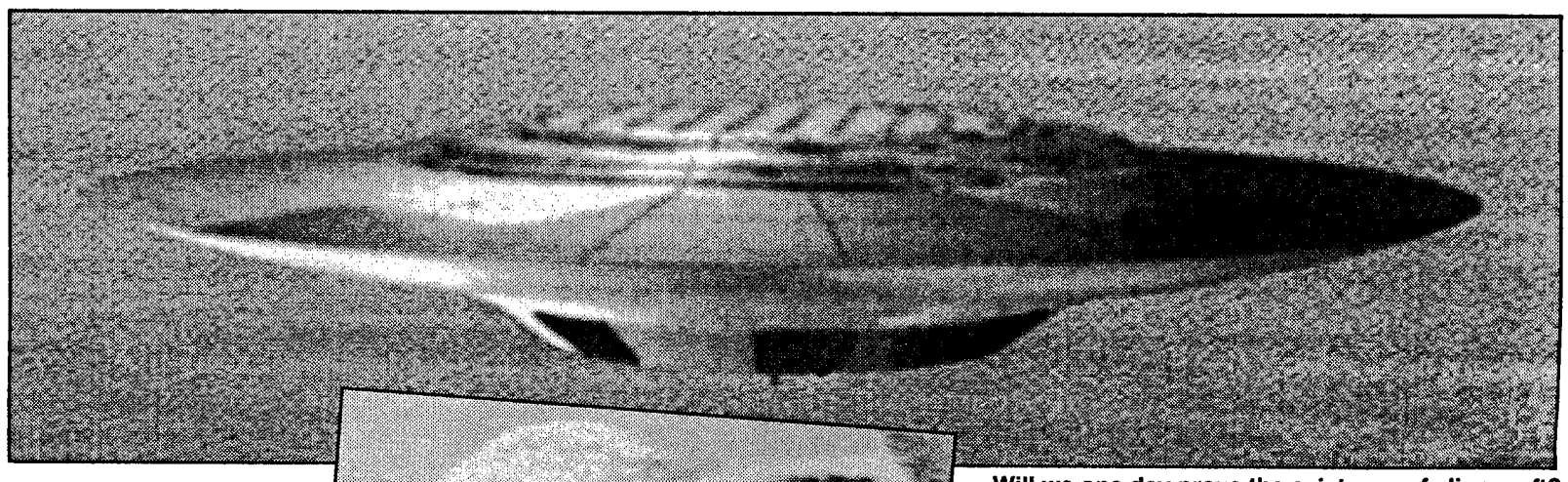
Subtitled 'Case Closed', the new document also serves as a pre-emptive strike against the publicity that is surrounding the 50th anniversary of the incident.



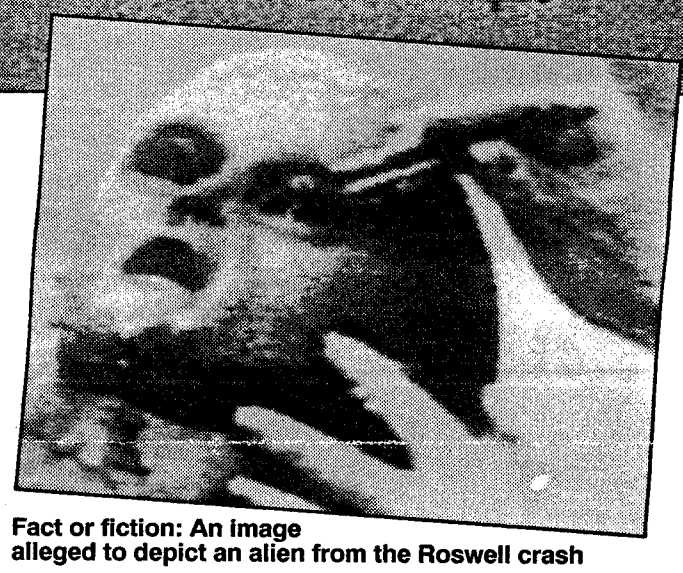
The first pictures of the USAF's high-altitude balloon experiments and (*inset*) the dummies dropped in the mid-1950s (Photo: US DoD)

AS THE CIA CLAIMS TO COME CLEAN ABOUT THE UFO PHENOMENON, THE MYSTERY STILL REMAINS

If spy planes are behind UFO sightings, what could possibly explain the five vast objects that hovered over Britain?



Will we one day prove the existence of alien craft?



Fact or fiction: An image alleged to depict an alien from the Roswell crash



from NICK HOPKINS
IN NEW YORK

TAKEN at face value, it was an attempt by the CIA to clear up a perplexing mystery. The agency admitted, albeit reluctantly, that more than half the sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects recorded in the Fifties and Sixties could be explained after all.

The darting silver objects seen in the sky and assiduously reported by members of the public were not flying saucers or alien space ships of any kind.

They were U.S. military spy planes flying top-secret reconnaissance missions from bases in Nevada and California to the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War.

The aircraft, the Lockheed U-2 and the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird, flew at very high altitudes — the latter capable of more than 2,000mph at up to 85,000ft. No wonder people squinting into the heavens thought they'd seen strange objects.

Duplicity had been necessary, the CIA reasoned, in the interests of 'national security'.

The air force had made 'misleading and deceptive statements in order to allay fears and to protect an extraordinarily sensitive project', the agency said. So the public had been fobbed off with half-hearted explanations of the sightings — weather balloons which had gone astray and atmospheric phenomena were the favoured white lies.

The optimists in the CIA hoped that this belated admission in documents published on the Internet would be another nail in the coffin of the UFO 'believers' who have been a thorn in their side for 50 years. But the realists acknowledged that far from defusing the issue, it has only added to the intrigue.

After so many years of fooling the public, why should anyone believe the CIA now? And why has the CIA suddenly come clean about a subject in which it always maintained it had no involvement?

EVEN if the report were true, what about the other UFO sightings which the CIA cannot explain? There is a strong body of respected opinion on both sides of the Atlantic that believes the CIA has panicked in the face of an enormous surge of interest in all things extra-terrestrial.

While the number of UFO sightings rises every year, the vacuous explanations and stonewalling have remained the same.

'The old cover-up stories just don't wash any more,' said John E. Pike, head of space policy at the Federation of American Scientists, based in Washington. 'The flying saucer community is definitely onto something.'

The UFO 'believers' who have dissected the report are in two camps: the radicals who don't believe a word the agency is saying; and the moderates who accept the CIA is probably telling the truth — but not the whole truth.

Walter Andrus, international director of the Mutual UFO Network, is in the radical camp. 'The public are not stupid,' he said. 'They've been lied to by the government so often over the years that they are not going to believe it.'

There are Britons, though, who are less dismissive. They think the CIA is boxing clever to try to assuage the thousands of people who believe they have seen a UFO but are still inherently sceptical.

OBVIOUSLY there is a problem of admission here,' said Nick Pope, who studied UFO sightings for the Ministry of Defence between 1991 and 1994, and still works there.

'The CIA hardly inspires confidence in what it is saying by admitting that everything it has said in the past was all lies. But even if you do believe that many of these sightings were spy planes, it does not amount to very much.

'The report does not help to explain the numerous low-altitude sightings of UFOs, or the photographs of circular-shaped objects in the sky. Hundreds of them have not been accounted for properly.'

Some of the most outstanding come from Britain and date back to the Fifties.

On April 4, 1957, three separate radar operators at West Freugh, near Stranraer in Scotland, picked up five objects at 70,000ft. The operators knew immediately they were not aircraft. First, they were stationary. More intriguingly, they were the size of 'battleships'.

The incident was filed away in a confidential report — Air 20/9321/DDItech.D/. — which has only recently seen the light of day. It concluded that the objects were not weather balloons or aircraft, and the radar soundings could not be explained by freak weather conditions either.

In the same year, personnel at the RAF base in Church Lawford, Warwickshire, saw a spherical craft accelerate from a standing start to 1,400mph. Again, the incident was filed and forgotten.

There have been other more recent developments which have stirred the imagination.

Earlier this year, an archaeologist called Jerry Freeman embarked on a 700-mile trek through restricted U.S. Air Force property in the Nevada desert looking for inscriptions made in 1849 by members of a pioneering wagon train.

Mr Freeman had badgered the military unsuccessfully for five years to allow him onto the land and, having tired of their refusals, decided to go anyway.

AFTER several days of trekking across barren landscape, he was astonished by what he found. Not the inscriptions he had sought, but a military base tucked between two valleys. He saw cars and lights, and a hangar door. But the installation was not marked on any maps, and when he returned home the military denied the base existed.

Later, he discovered he had come across what many UFO buffs have come to see as the holy grail. For years they have maintained that there is an underground hangar in the desert where an alien spacecraft is being stored.

Though Mr Freeman's discovery was hardly conclusive, at least a reliable source had confirmed there was 'something out there'.

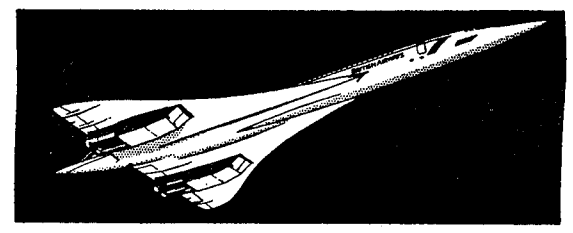
The most enduring of UFO stories was the Roswell incident, which has confused and confounded since 1947. Onlookers claimed they saw alien bodies being taken from a craft which had crashed into the desert in New Mexico. At first military sources denied everything, then they said a secret weather balloon had plunged to ground.

Finally this summer, on Roswell's 50th anniversary, the U.S. Air Force said the conspiracy theorists were wrong. Yes, they had seen bodies, but they were not aliens. They were flight-test dummies dropped from high altitude as part of an experiment. The Air Force said this was the 'final word on Roswell'. But it wasn't.

'How anyone in the U.S. military expected people to believe that explanation is beyond me,' said Dr Colin Ridyard, of the British UFO Research Organisation. 'If that was all that Roswell amounted to, they could have told us years ago.'

Nick Pope has his own theory. Governments are under more scrutiny than ever over UFOs, and they are under pressure to come up with answers. The intelligence community is being brow-beaten because it is inexorably losing the battle for 'believability'.

'There seems to be a concerted strategy to debunk the phenomenon. The problem is that the agenda is so obvious, people don't believe the authorities. What are they trying to hide?'



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Sunday, July 13, 1997
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LO 44 MOD

SAS IN ALIEN RIDDLE

Troops saw 'four little grey men' walk into ambush – then vanish

By JOE BRADY

SAS soldiers waiting to ambush IRA gunmen were stunned when ALIENS walked in front of their gun-sights, it was claimed yesterday.

The undercover troops – hiding near an arms cache on a hillside in South Armagh – say they saw up to four small grey figures.

The "aliens" and soldiers stared at each other for a minute. Then the "spacemen" disappeared – and seconds later the eight SAS troops saw a flash in the sky.

They were so disturbed by what they had seen they took the rare decision to abandon the stake-out.

Their commander was furious – and their comrades in the elite Special Air Services regiment laughed or accused them of being high on drugs.

But the eight stuck to their story and it was accepted. Now, four years later, it has been revealed to an Ulster UFO study group by a former Army intelligence officer.

Belfast-based expert Hugh O'Brien said: "We are trying to interview the soldiers even though some may be too embarrassed to come forward.

"We have learned that on that morning they were convinced they saw three, perhaps four, small grey figures in human form.

"At no stage did the soldiers feel threatened. They simply could not believe what they were seeing.

"The alien forms made no move towards them but judging from what the soldiers told their regimental priest and commanding officer, the aliens knew the soldiers were there. It was like a stand-off. Within a few minutes, probably much less, the aliens disappeared.

"All the men can recall is that in a very quick space of time they saw a brief flash of light in the sky."

Mr O'Brien added: "These men were fit, highly-trained observers and to put it down to some flight of imagination would be absurd."

The weapons cache was recovered by other soldiers.

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29 June 1997
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Dr Coleman's Casebook

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MDF

MINISTER GOES BACK ON PLEDGE TO BAN HUNTING

TWO weeks ago I asked readers to write to Tony Blair reminding him that before the election he had promised to stop hunting on Forestry Commission and Ministry of Defence land.

I then sent copies of my column and the letter I had received from Elliot Morley MP – now Minister for Fisheries and the Countryside – to every MP in Britain. Many MPs have already written to offer their support.

Here are just three of scores of supportive replies I received:

● Paul Flynn MP (Newport West): "I intend to raise this matter through a Parliamentary Question and letter and am most grateful to you for keeping me fully informed."

● Jim Cunningham MP (Coventry South): "Like you, I am greatly concerned about this matter and I appreciate receiving your thoughts. I have written to Tony Blair with a copy of your letter. I'll contact you when I receive a response."

● Dr John Marek MP (Wrexham): "I have written to Elliot Morley asking what he intends to do."

But to my horror I discovered last week that it is now far from certain that hunting on publicly-owned land will be banned after all.

Elliot Morley's pre-election letter to me said: "We are committed to an immediate suspension of licences to hunting with hounds on Forestry Commission and MoD land." This promise was unqualified.

But on June 24 Morley wrote: "Any decision will continue to be based on a proper review taking into account proper criteria in relation to the effective management of these estates and whether or not hunting with hounds is an effective method of fox and deer control."

Read that again – and read it slowly. It was written LAST WEEK by a LABOUR minister!

And who will conduct the reviews? The Government won't release the names of the officials carrying out the secret reviews.

How do we know the reviews aren't being conducted by hunters or hunt supporters?

Is there anyone left out there who still believes in Tony Blair and his wretched New Labour?

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29 June 1997
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UFO reports hushed up

THE People has obtained proof of an MoD hush-up of alien craft sightings.

Secret military papers, including advice to the Defence Secretary, contain evidence of UFOs over Britain.

The documents, dating back to the 50s and 60s, have just been released after 30 years in official archives.

They show that the RAF and other military units were involved in UFO investigations. In 1957 the Ministry received RAF reports of an object over southern Scotland, which accelerated from a dead stop to 1,400mph.

In 1962 the RAF investigated another UFO over Taunton, Somerset, and one witness claimed she was advised not to talk about her experience.

A later MoD memo to a US airforce colonel confirmed that it was policy to "play down the subject of UFOs".

UFO Research Association sleuth Matthew Williams said: "This finally proves there was a cover-up."

The Guardian
28 June 1997
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THE WEEK

Truth in the twilight zone

HEAD TO HEAD

Aliens at Roswell? As US officials switch stories again, former MoD sky watcher **Nick Pope** debates UFOs with Greenwich Observatory astronomer **Robin Catchpole**

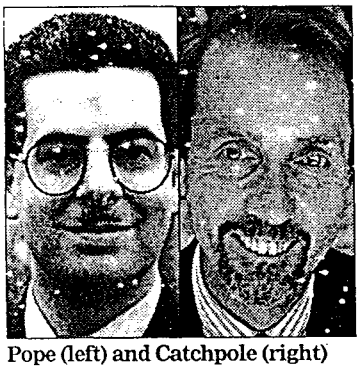
Dear Robin,

I FIRST became involved in UFO watching in 1991, as part of my government work. I am a civil servant at the Ministry of Defence, and between 1991 and 1994 I worked in a division called Secretariat (Air Staff), where my job was to investigate reports of UFO sightings. I confess to being initially sceptical. I believed UFOs were vague lights in the sky seen by people out late at night walking their dogs — perhaps on their way back from the pub! I was wrong.

I received between two and three hundred UFO reports each year, and carried out detailed investigations in attempts to correlate sightings with aircraft activity, astronomical phenomena, etc. After a rigorous investigation, between 90 and 95 percent of sightings could be explained as misidentifications of known objects and phenomena — anything from aircraft lights to weather balloons. This left what I called the *real* UFOS.

The real UFOs are structured craft of unknown origin, capable of penetrating our sophisticated air defence network with impunity. Sometimes they show up on radar, and sometimes not. They have been seen by civil and military pilots, and on occasion, RAF jets have been scrambled to try and intercept these mystery craft; we have not been able to catch them.

I accept that just because a UFO sighting remains unexplained, it is not unexplainable. But these craft display a technology which goes beyond the cutting edge of anything in our terrestrial inventories



Pope (left) and Catchpole (right)

(including prototype craft), both in terms of speed and manoeuvrability. I am convinced this technology can only be extraterrestrial.

Yours sincerely,
Nick Pope

Dear Nick,

I AM an astronomer, and in my 35 years of observation and research I have never come across anything I would describe as a UFO, although I did once call off a police car from pursuing Venus setting beneath a thunder cloud. I am glad to see that Roswell was not mentioned in your letter, even though this debate must mark its 50th anniversary.

As a scientist, I respect observations and particularly your claim that between 1991 an 1994 there were between 10 and 30 reports per year, made by qualified observers for which you had no explanation. This is, of course, a valuable body of data that should be published and made available to the scientific community. Until this is done I cannot accept your deductive jump from the observations to the existence of craft that go beyond our existing technology.

I would like to open the debate wider and, at the risk of blemishing my position as a narrow-minded scientist, indulge in a little speculation that suggests it is unlikely that we will ever make contact with another civilisation. The Earth is an ideal place for intelligent life to develop. Nevertheless it took 4500 million years for it to appear in a form capable of communication. When the Earth was born the Universe was already at least 6000 million years old. Clearly there has been enough time for a civilisation like ours to develop and spread its radio signals at the speed of light throughout our galaxy and far beyond. As we listen with some of the world's most powerful radio telescopes, we hear nothing. How much less probable it is that they are silently flying around us.

Yours sincerely,
Robin Catchpole.

Dear Robin,

I AM always pleased when scientists such as yourself get involved in the debate about UFOs, and the fact that you are an astronomer puts me in mind of one of the founding fathers of serious UFO research, the late Dr J Allen Hynek. As you may know, Hynek was Professor of Astronomy at North Western University in the US, and was scientific consultant to Project Blue Book, the US Air Force's study into the UFO phenomenon. He felt the UFO situation merited serious scientific study, and set up a study group when Blue Book was closed down.

I would love to share some of my own official findings with you, but suspect that until and unless the UK has a Freedom of Information Act, this will not be possible. What I can do is point you in the direction of some of the Ministry of Defence's old UFO files from the fifties and sixties. Now de-classified, they are available to all at the Public Record Office in Kew, and make fascinating reading.

While I understand the point about the lack of radio signals from an extraterrestrial civilisation, I will quote philosopher Terence McKenna, who said: "To search expectantly for a radio signal from an extraterrestrial source is probably as culture-bound a presumption as to search the galaxy for a good Italian restaurant".

Yours sincerely,
Nick Pope

Dear Nick,

I AM indeed familiar with the work of Dr Allen Hynek. I have his book beside me. I see he cautions us against "uninhibited theorising" in the explanation of UFOs because we must rely on anecdotal reports. Dr Hynek points out that "uninhibited theorising", the yeast of the scientific method, is appropriate only where such theories can be put to direct test, which we have failed to do in the case of UFOs.

I think we are all agreed that it is both unscientific and improper to dismiss UFO reports without due consideration. But we should all remember that the letters UFO stand for Unidentified Flying Object. They do not and should not be used to refer to a spaceship with or without "little green men", which I would call a perfect example of "uninhibited theorising".

To come to your quotation from Terence McKenna, apart from the obvious observation that there are many good Italian restaurants on Earth, which is surely part of our galaxy, I would point out that although not culture-bound, our universe is science-bound.

I know that it is both dangerous and unfashionable to imply we know the laws that govern our Universe, but the essence of a restaurant, namely the need to provide the building material for replicating life forms, would, I feel, be universal. As would the need to communicate using the fastest available means, namely electromagnetic radiation or radio waves. I therefore find the great silence out there sadly lonely, although I live in hope that we may yet hear something.

Yours sincerely,
Robin Catchpole.

Dear Robin,

IN DECEMBER 1980 numerous military personnel witnessed a UFO in Randelsham Forest in Suffolk. Radiation readings were taken from the site where a metallic craft landed, and the defence radiological protection service confirmed these were 10 times background levels.

On March 31, 1990 two Belgian F16 fighters were scrambled in an attempt to intercept a UFO that had been seen by several thousand witnesses and simultaneously detected on Belgian and Nato radar systems. The pilots locked on to the mystery craft, but it took evasive action. The Belgian air staff adjudged that it had been under intelligent control.

On November 5, 1990 a squadron of RAF Tornado jets were casually overtaken by an unidentified craft while on March 31, 1993 a UFO the size of a jumbo jet was seen by mili

8 continues

personnel, flying over RAF [illegible]rd and RAF Shawbury. Incidents such as these involve technology which extends beyond anything terrestrial. I agree with you about the universe being science bound, and if laws that govern the universe are constant, then the same factors that give rise to intelligent life on earth must have ensured that other civilisations have evolved elsewhere among the billions of stars in this infinite universe.

Yours sincerely,
Nick Pope

Dear Nick,

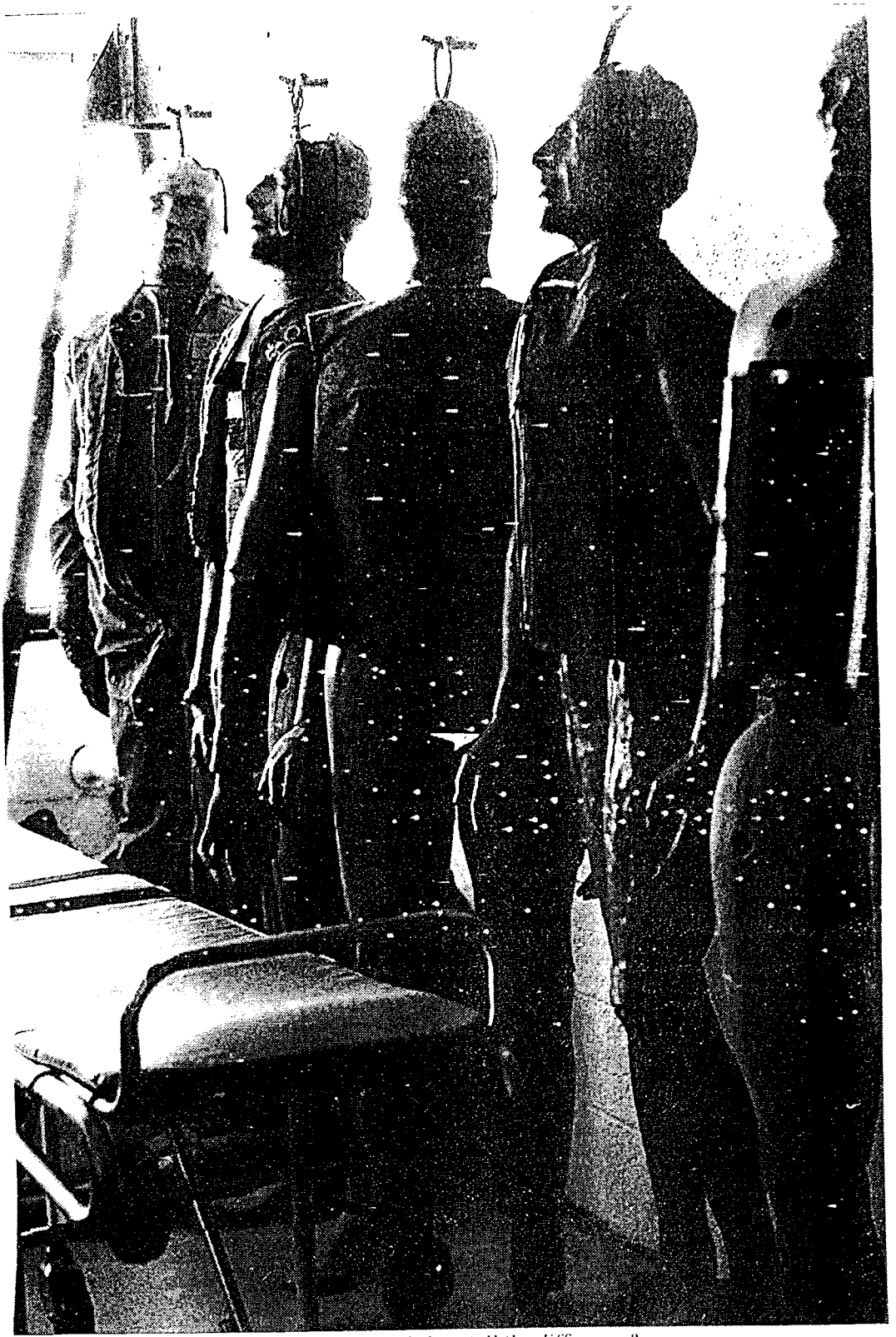
YOUR evidence is so compelling, why does it always seem to be left in splendid isolation by those for whom it has serious implications?

There is no doubt that secret military activity is often mistaken by the public and military as evidence of aliens. The need to hide this activity has led to a belief that governments conspire to hide alien contacts. If this were true, we would see vastly superior technology as governments exploited their secret knowledge. But we do not.

Although we should take UFO observations seriously, they are difficult to analyse. Astronomers have more productive ways of searching for life. These include the search for planets around other stars, investigation of organic materials on comets, the forthcoming examination of primitive life on Mars, and hopefully Ganymede and Callisto, and the search for intelligent radio signals. Although it seems lonely out there, I share your optimism that we may not be alone.

Yours sincerely,
Robin Catchpole

The Uninvited by Nick Pope is published by Simon & Schuster



Science fiction or science fact . . . how easy is it to tell the difference?

ends.

MIDWEEK MAGAZINE, 7 JULY 97.

COVER STORY

Official - we are not alone. Nick Pope, a government UFO expert, admits in a startling new book that alien abductions can - and have -taken place.. Interview: **Mark Campbell**

41



The UFO Man From The Ministry

From 1991 - 1994, Nick Pope was the man responsible for investigating UFO sightings for the Ministry of Defence. He wrote a best-selling book last year, *Open Skies, Closed Minds*, which detailed his startling findings.

Now he's got a new book out, **The Uninvited**, which looks at alien abductions. It's a sobering read, and his conclusions are a mite unsettling - he believes abductions really *do* happen and they're far more widespread than anyone previously thought.

In his early thirties, Pope scarcely seems old enough to have worked in such a prestigious job - he was, after all, the UK's only official researcher into the subject. But what he lacks in age, he more than makes up for in enthusiasm.

'I'd been in the Ministry since 1985,' he explains, 'but they move you around every two or three years to give you a broad spectrum of experience. And just out of the blue I was asked, "How would you like to look at UFOs?", so I jumped at the chance. I'd just come from a job where I'd been working in the Joint Operations Centre during the Gulf War, so you couldn't get more different.'

He was assigned to Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a, better known as the 'UFO desk'.

'I was able to look at UFO sightings and alien abductions from the inside, and I was perhaps able to put a different spin on them. I had abductees 'phone me up at the Ministry and ask for help, and that's how I first came to the subject. People may pick up my book because of my background at the MoD - they'll read it and realise they're not alone in these experiences, and then they'll come forward. I think we're going to see the floodgates open in the next year or so, and it's going to be extremely interesting to see what's going to happen.'

A key point in Pope's book is that the UFO phenomenon can be shaped by the witnesses themselves. 'Human perceptions are very important when looking at abduction reports,' he explains. 'They may play a part in shaping the phenomenon itself. Put it this way, if a religious person sees a form at the end of their bed, they might say that they've seen the Blessed Virgin Mary. If a ghost hunter saw exactly the same thing they'd say they were seeing a ghost, and if a UFO researcher saw something, they'd say "Oh my gosh, I'm being abducted." It's the belief system of the witness that's really crucial.

'In the olden days there were plenty of accounts of people being taken away by the fairies to the fairy world where time behaved in very different ways to mortal time. And it's quite striking to see the parallels between these folklore tales and the modern accounts of so-called 'missing time'. Someone's driving back down a lonely country road at night arrives back two or three hours later than they would have expected, and then it subsequently emerges that there was an abduction involving small beings.'

'Whether you call them aliens, visitors, fairies, whatever name you give these other intelligences, the evidence from folklore and legend - and all legends are rooted in some sort of fact - is that these things have been with us for a long, long time.

'A lot of people say religion and UFOs don't mix, and I think up to a point that's true. But at the end of the day those people who believe in God would presumably take the view that God is the God not just of Earth but of the entire Universe. Therefore surely a Universe full of life only enhances the majesty of God's creation. I'm not religious myself, but I have a huge amount of respect for people with religious beliefs, up to the point where they start knocking UFOs and demanding proof. At that point, I say "Well, how many photographs have you seen of God?".

And what about the aliens' motives in abducting us? Is it correct to say they're teaching us to be more compassionate?

'I wouldn't necessarily use the word 'teach', he says carefully. 'What I've found most striking in the abduction cases that I've investigated is the transformative nature of the experience, the way in which it has affected the witnesses. If somebody has been through what, at face value, is quite a traumatic experience - taken against their will and subjected to some rather strange and unpleasant procedures - you would expect there to be a great bitterness, a great anger. But I find many instances of people who take a much more positive view. Some people have developed spontaneous interests in environmental issues, some people

have become psychic, or developed skills as spiritual healers. We are perhaps being changed in some way, but the key issue is whether it's being taught or not - whether it's for our purposes or whether it's for theirs.

'The modern UFO started in 1947 with Kenneth Arnold and the Roswell crash. If we were being observed in the 40s by intelligent extra-terrestrials, what would they have seen? The Second World War with all its horror and misery, the firebombing of civilian targets, and then they would have seen us develop V2 rocket technology, which would eventually lead to the Apollo programme. They would have seen an intelligent species, but committing the most horrendous evil, even upon our own people and our own environment; and then looking as if we are about to make that jump out into space. Maybe that's worried the extra-terrestrials, and maybe they are trying to do something about it to make us less of a threat.'

Pope feels sure that there's more than one alien race behind it all. 'I think it's very unlikely that if there are intelligent extra-terrestrials elsewhere in the Universe, there's just one other planet. Even mainstream science is now coming round to the view that the Universe is probably teaming with life. Amongst the big names in the scientific community, you'd probably only find one or two who would be prepared to say that we were absolutely alone in the Universe. So if there is life elsewhere in the Universe, then there's likely to be a huge variety of it.

'When you look at the reports of the abductees, although there are common themes, there are plenty of differences too. And although a lot of people see these short grey creatures with the large heads and the huge almond-shaped black eyes, that's not to say that there aren't other types.

'I think there is still chronic under-reporting of abductions. But if you imagine how difficult it is for someone to come forward and talk about a UFO sighting, often because of their responsible position in society, imagine how much more difficult it is for them to come forward with an abduction account. I suspect that there are cases out there where the material has just not yet surfaced.

Is Pope worried about what the future may hold?

'There is the danger of cults getting involved, and tragically we saw that with the Heaven's Gate situation in America (the cult committed mass suicide when they thought aliens from the Hale-Bopp comet would beam them up), so we always have to be on our guard against that. But if you can get rid of the cults and get rid of the cranks, you're left with a hardcore of extraordinary accounts coming from very ordinary people. Many of the people spoke only on condition that pseudonyms were used. They certainly weren't interested in money or publicity, they just wanted some straight answers.

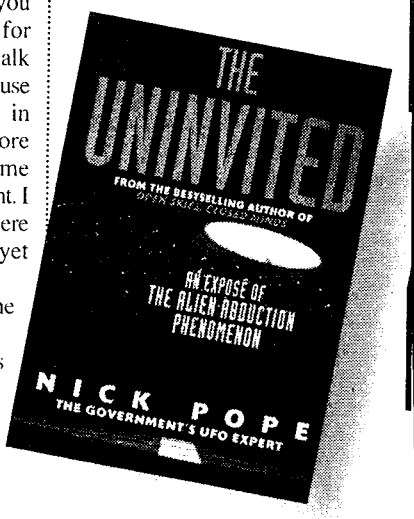
'There's a marvellous story that someone sent a letter to the MoD - after I left, I have to say - asking what their policy was on alien abductions. And the reply came back, "Abduction is a criminal offence, and as such it is a matter for the police."! Some abductees regarded that with great humour, some with great anger.

'I think it does show that there are attitudes that need to be changed and there is work still to be done, but we are much further along the road then we were five years ago. More and more good cases are coming forward, and more and more serious, mainstream people are beginning to take an interest, both in science and the media. I think the next few years are going to be very, very exciting.'

Although Pope has now left the 'UFO desk' ('To coin a phrase,' he says, 'the X FILES have been closed down'), he still works in a private capacity as a UFO researcher. If you think you've seen a UFO, or better still been abducted by an alien, you can write to him at the following address:

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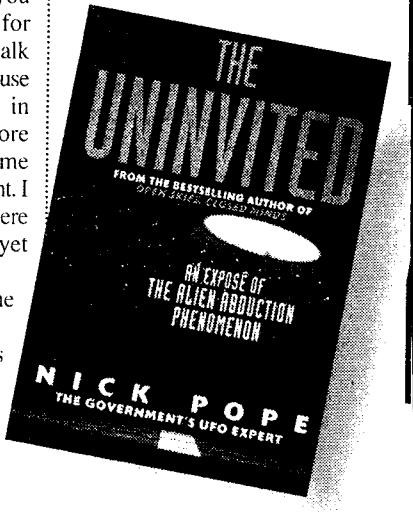
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STAR 8. 7. 97

Woman captures strange display on her camcorder

UFO puzzle over lights in the sky



Heidie Rhiann and husband Jozsef looking across to Moel Bentrych

As scientists continue to digest data from a probe on Mars, mystery surrounds strange lights witnessed in the skies above a Mid Wales community.

Several people saw strobe-like lights appear from a hillside at Llanerfyl, near Llanfair Caereinion, for several hours at the weekend, but nobody knows where they were coming from. Police at Welshpool confirmed a middle-aged couple travelling through the area saw "strange lights in the sky" and reported it to them early on Saturday.

A local woman, Heidie Rhiann, was so taken aback by the sight she recorded it on her video camera.

But Ministry of Defence and RAF officials said they had no aircraft in the region at the time and were baffled.

Mrs Rhiann, a self-confessed UFO sceptic, watched for over an hour as strange beams of light flashed from the far side of the hill.

She captured her own mysterious lights on video and watching them back has convinced her she saw something out of the ordinary.

She spotted the lights just after midnight. Three powerful beams were playing up and down the mountain and valley for over an hour.

"They were very clear, strong bright lights that seemed to be like strobes up and down the hill. There are no roads on the hill — Moel Bentych — and the lights were just too strong to have come from a Land Rover.

"I dashed off and got the camcorder and filmed the lights for about an hour. I have since been told that the postman saw them at 4.30am on Saturday and another friend saw the lights in the same place earlier."

It is not the first time the Llanerfyl area has been the centre of a UFO siting. There have been several over the years.

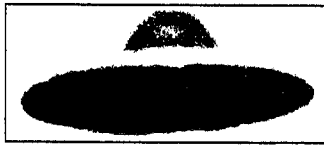
A clairvoyant has claimed she was abducted by aliens at Llanfair Caereinion, just a few miles away.

"I have heard about people seeing UFOs but have always been a bit sceptical. But having seen the tape I am even more convinced about what I saw.

"What is even more strange is that my horse flatly refused to stay out last night. She made such a fuss that I had to bring her in," said Mrs Rhiann.

END

Pentagon shoots down a UFO legend



A report aimed at silencing rumours of a UFO crash in New Mexico has failed to sway believers, **Giles Whittell** writes

THEORIES about teenage aliens, hairless chimpanzees and imported Japanese test-pilots took a serious if not fatal knock yesterday when the Pentagon published a comprehensive report aimed at silencing once and for all rumours surrounding a now legendary crash in the New Mexico desert in July 1947.

The official verdict: it was a high altitude balloon that crashed near the tiny ranching town of Roswell, not a UFO, and any bodies found next to it were life-size dummies from top-secret simulated parachute drops.

In *Roswell: Case Closed*, the result of a four-year, multi-million-dollar internal investigation, the Pentagon says a balloon trailing disc-shaped radar reflectors, used as part of the US Army's Operation Mogul to detect Soviet nuclear tests in the upper atmosphere, fell near Roswell 50 years ago next month.

As the town gears up for three days of anniversary events and an influx of 60,000 UFO enthusiasts, military officials hope their new tome will put to rest one of the century's most enduring conspiracy theories: that aliens captured after the "Roswell incident" were taken to "Area 51", an unacknowledged test site in Nevada, and have been studied there ever since.

If the myth survives, the army will only have itself to blame. On July 5, 1947, Mac Brazel, a Roswell ranch-hand, stumbled on the flimsy metallic remnants of an airborne object in a field 75 miles northwest of the town. Unable to identify them, he turned them over to the sheriff who, in turn, gave them to the Roswell Army Air Field (RAAF). Three days later an official army press release stated that the wreckage of a "flying disc" had been recovered, giving the *Roswell Daily Record* a front page now coveted and framed by "ufologists" around the world. "RAAF Captures Flying Saucer on Ranch in Roswell Region", the headline read.

A rapid correction of the July 8 press release announcing that what had crashed was, in fact, a weather balloon satisfied the media and the wider world for decades. But it never quashed speculation in the diehard UFO community. Sixty-five per cent of Americans now believe a UFO crashed near Roswell, according to a recent poll.

> ‘Any dummy knows what a dummy looks like, and those weren't dummies’

Locals claiming to have seen aliens there have come forward in droves years afterwards. W. Curry Holden, leader of an archaeological team, said he saw "a crashed airplane without wings and with a fat fuselage", and three bodies, on July 5.

Frank Kaufmann, now 81, was a civilian employee at the airfield when he was dispatched to see what had crashed. He says he got a close look at two dead aliens. "They were very good-looking people, ash-coloured faces and skin . . . about 5ft 5in tall, eyes a little more pronounced, small ears, small nose, fine features and hairless," he says, adding that he saw military personnel place five corpses into body bags.

Before his death in 1995, Jim Ragsdale, owner of the land on which the incident happened, vividly described for the first time having seen dead aliens and even trying to touch one. That year two black-and-white films, of 18 minutes and three minutes and purporting to be of military surgeons operating on dead aliens, found their way into a British documentary on Roswell. The Pentagon dismissed both films as hoaxes. No bodies fell to earth with the Operation Mogul balloon, according to *Roswell: Case Closed*, which suggests the source of alien rumours may be photographs taken of wounded military balloon pilots.

But believers will never be dissuaded. "It's just another cover-up," the army press officer who issued the July 8, 1947, release told ABC News this week. "Any dummy knows what a dummy looks like, and those weren't dummies."

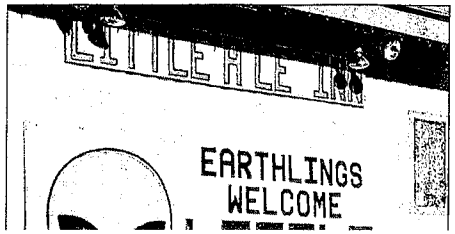
Leading article, page 21

ERIC DRAPER / AP



A model of an "alien" proves a big attraction for children visiting America's International UFO Museum and Research Centre at Roswell in New Mexico. A recent poll shows that as many as 65 per cent of Americans believe that a UFO crashed outside the small town

Profit out of this world for aliens



SNAP THIS UP FOR THE FAMILY!

Industry

By Giles Whittell

FOR just $15 (£10), you too can visit the patch of scrubby land where Hub and Sheila Corn swear a flying saucer crashed half a century ago. If their daughter, Kristin, is your guide, she will tell you it was piloted by errant alien youngsters on a joyride.

In Roswell, where the median household income is barely two thirds of the national average, aliens are big business. As the golden jubilee of the town's defining incident approaches, gift shops and museums are stocking up with T-shirts, spaceship earrings, "alien glow-pop" lollipops and reproductions of the *Roswell Daily Record's* announcement of a UFO landing.

And videos. Perhaps the hottest sellers, these go for $6.50 at the Midway Sighting UFO Museum, whose owners insist that their film of what look like flying insects is in fact of alien spacecraft. For $29.50, a local property developer sells a video of Jim Ragsdale's final sworn account of a crash on Forest Service land west of town. His early claims put the crash site further north, but the Corns own that land now.

Increasing public fascination with UFOs pumps more than $5 million a year from 90,000 tourists into Roswell's economy, according to a *Forbes* magazine investigation entitled *Unidentified Flying Dollars.*

Local people give the credit for the boom to Thomas Jennings, their new Mayor and a marketing graduate who came to the job in 1994 convinced that Roswell could be known for more than its mozzarella plant, America's biggest, and as the birthplace of the actress Demi Moore. Since then hotel tax revenues have increased by 36 per cent.

"We weren't lucky enough to have a mountain or a beach," Mr Jennings said, "so we have to go with what we've got, which is a UFO crash."

The Roswell incident has also had a big financial ripple effect 1,000 miles away at Rachel in central Nevada, where the Little A Le Inn does a brisk trade accommodating UFO fanatics who believe the visitors who crashed in Roswell are kept at a top secret Air Force base nearby.

Meanwhile 20th Century Fox is still counting the takings from last year's *Independence Day,* about an alien invasion. They are currently more than $900 million.



Nevada's Little A Le Inn whose owners reap profits from the "UFO crash" 1,000 miles away in Roswell

Libraries in US net £119m gift

New York: Bill Gates, the software magnate, has promised to install the Internet in all of America's public libraries, at a cost of $200 million (£119 million) over five years (Tunku Varadarajan writes).

Yesterday's announcement was welcomed by the American Library Association. Elizabeth Martinez, the association's executive director, said: "This is Mr Gates becoming the 21st-century's Andrew Carnegie." Carnegie, a man of no formal education who died in 1919, is regarded as the book world's greatest philanthropist, endowing more than 2,500 libraries in America and Britain.

Mr Gates's decision to create a library foundation should galvanise America's creaking public libraries, hauling them belatedly into the turn-of-the-century information age.

The computer king may have opened himself up to criticism that his generosity is self-serving: any proliferation of his technology would ultimately add to profits, to say nothing of publicity. But few can deny libraries will reap a rich reward. Strapped for cash, a majority remain mired in outdated ways.

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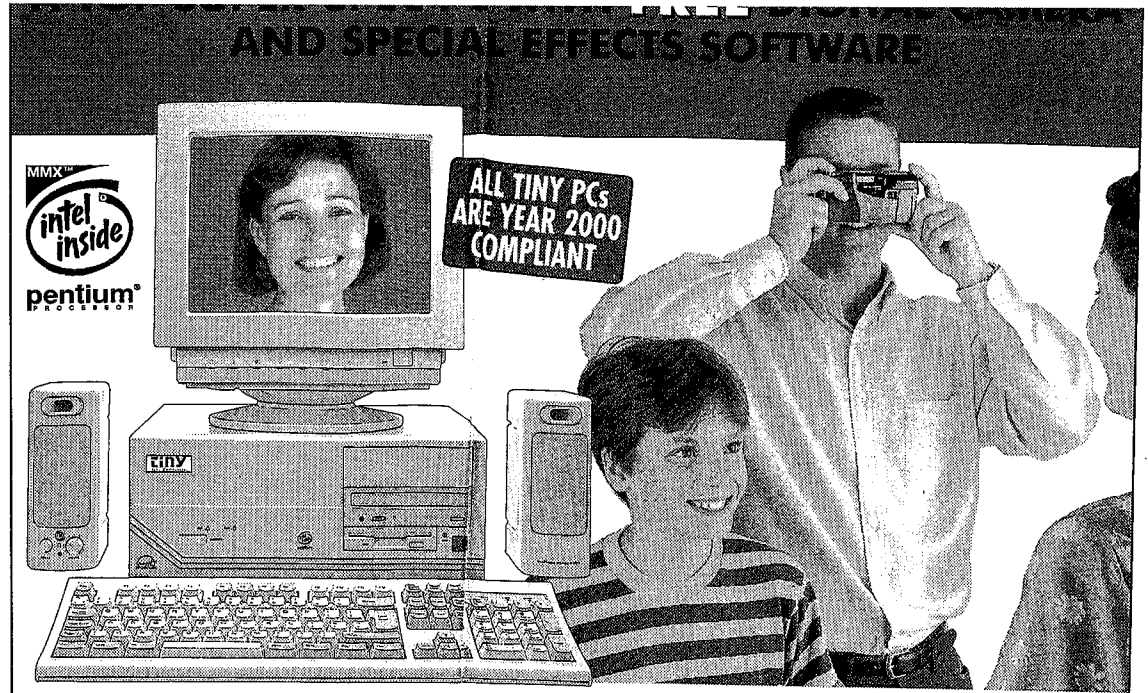
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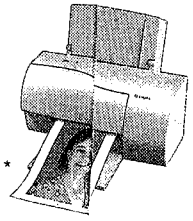


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Litigation mad

THE case of the six-year-old suing for something that happened before his birth has left me very annoyed.

I could sue the neurologist who missed the large tumour at the base of my brain, or my GP who was misled for another two years while the tumour grew to critical size. But I won't: all doctors, good or bad, do a better job than no doctor.

I could sue the driver of my bus today for being late: I could have missed an appointment. But I won't: if it was vital, I should have got an earlier bus.

Or I could sue the man who gave me wrong directions. But I won't: if it was so important that I knew my whereabouts, I should have had a map.

Maybe I could sue my fellow human beings for making my world polluted, sometimes expensive or unpleasant, even violent. But I won't, because I'm sane (unlike many in this country, it seems) and I don't believe in making someone else's life a misery just to resolve some inner grievance.

But then, should I do it just for the money? That would be selfish, wouldn't it? Bad things happen, that's life: live with it. Or you could try suing God.

JOHN HARTLEY, Surrey.

Dangerous games

SHELLY 'Fluffy' Lenz must be married or partnered in some way and thus protected by a sponsor at home if she believes you can safely employ ingenue tactics to get what you want at work (Letters). It's all a bit of a laugh for her.

But she might reflect upon us single women who are not so protected and who have to swim in her wake, exposed to a Shelly-inspired office environment of selfish demands.

The expectations she excites of office banter and sex are, sadly, for us unmitigated by the luxury of a useful bodyguard at home. We have to ride the same tube train after good

Is anyone out there?

AS FOUNDER of the oldest-established flying saucer (Unidentified Flying Object) organisation in the world, may I point out that modern UFO sightings are closely monitored and recorded by a variety of non-human means such as radar, photography, theodolites, camcorders etc. with the result that we now have a greater understanding of these craft and their performance capabilities.

With this enhanced data the mystery of these extra-terrestrial craft and the reasons and purpose of their visits to Earth will become more apparent within the next few years.

Fifty years ago, I was one of the few who believed, when many did not, so it's particularly satisfying to see how the subject has progressed.

This progression, now producing scientific results and measurable data, can only improve our knowledge and understanding of the greatest mystery this century. It only requires one sighting to be proved genuine for us to realise that we are not alone in the cosmos.

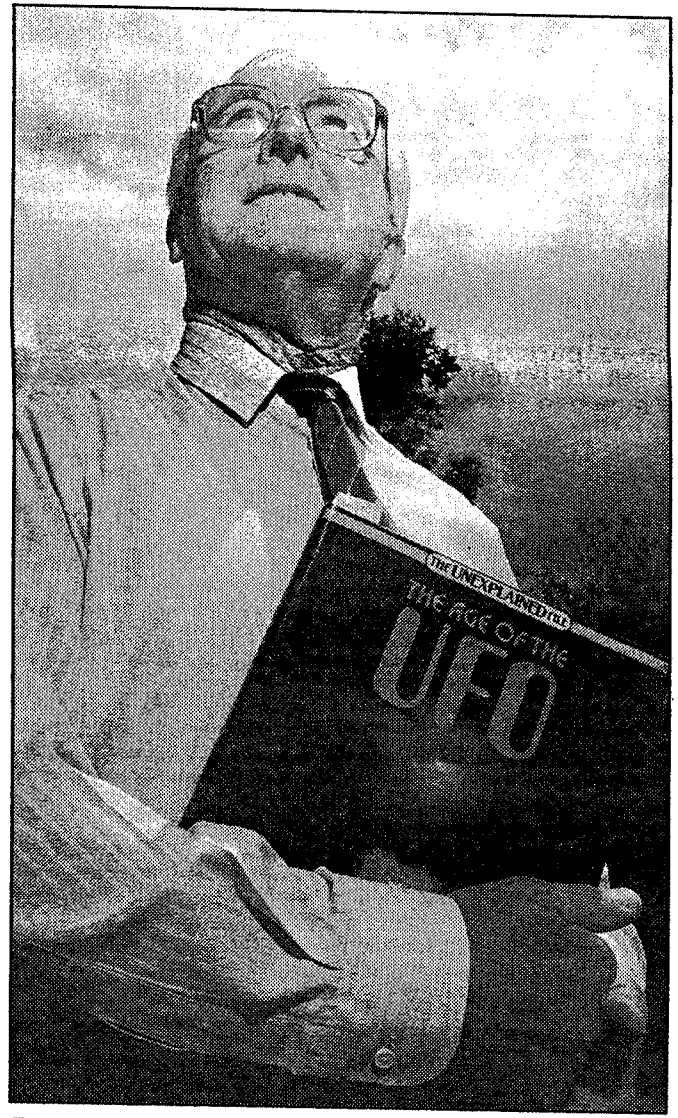
DENIS P. PLUNKETT, Bristol.

THE giant V-shaped UFO which 'blocked out the stars' one night in America is of a type which is seen all the time over Britain. I research into what these things are and who is behind them, and organisations such as my Aerial Phenomena Association work closely with other teams across the country to try to solve this kind of mystery, and I have discovered that what is going on is totally amazing.

I know what a normal aircraft looks and sounds like, and either someone has made a big breakthrough in aircraft technology or something incredible is going on.

The Ministry of Defence gives odd replies to our inquiries, which indicates to me that without doubt it knows what's going on.

SIMON LEWIS, Morecambe, Lancs.



Believer: Denis Plunkett investigates UFO sightings

STRAIGHT TO THE POINT...

■ IRONING is now a nightmare, thanks to Princess Michael who sacked her nanny for pressing 'common' creases into shirt sleeves.

HOLLY HILLS, Sevenoaks, Kent.

■ AMERICAN cartoonist Al Capp described abstract art as: 'A product of the untalented, sold by the unprincipled to the utterly bewildered.' Into which camp does the Turner Prize jury fall?

TREVOR J. ALLCOTT, Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire.

■ WHAT a disgraceful trick the brewers are attempting to pull, suggesting a full pint of beer should cost 10p more than a short measure. A barrel contains a specific number of pints; there's no head until it is poured.

MARTIN BRADLEY, Hampton, Middlesex.

■ NOISY word processing is a thing of the past, thanks to advanced inkjet technology. Leading manufacturer Brother and the Daily Mail are presenting a Brother LW-700i compact inkjet graphic word processor, for superior document presentation, to the writer of our Letter of the Week. Write to: Daily Mail Letters, Northcliffe House, 2 Derry St, London W8 5TT or fax on 0171-937 7493 or e-mail at letters@dailymail.co.uk — including postal ad

Should we mark the millennium?

FOR

THE discussion about the millennium monument leads me to suggest that if businesses invest in

AGAINST

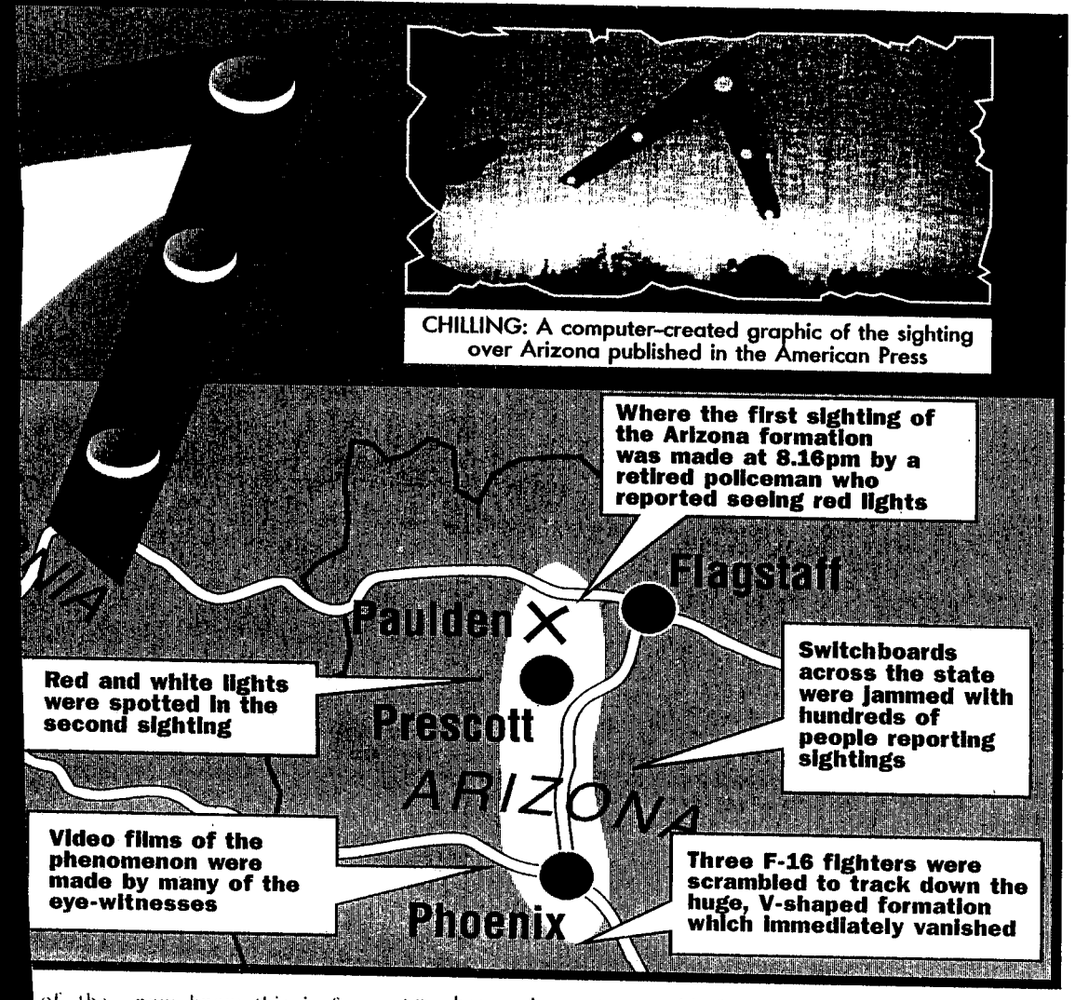
A 'MONUMENT' to mark the millennium need not cost millions of pounds. A suitable and humane

A degree less encoura

MY DAUGHTER, who is a top judo player, gave up the chance of a Masters degree course in order to

funding. So far she has received nothing while the people in charge of the paperwork seem to be earning very

...ere's the proof!



CHILLING: A computer-created graphic of the sighting over Arizona published in the American Press

...of the ...e, was ...were ...ufi that ...planet. ...s to the ...ake no ...ed that ...vas an ...hink we now know this is for real."

Walt Andrew, head of the Mutual UFO Network, said: "There is an incredible amount of activity in this part of America.

"There must be a reason for it. Perhaps the craft are drawn to the area for a reason. But we don't know what it is."

Across America there has been a desperate scramble for pictures of the spacecraft.

President Bill Clinton has been informed and major news networks have clamoured for new information, their hunger fuelled by the failure of the authorities to find a rational explanation.

Richard Motzer, the Arizona investigator in charge of the sightings probe, has still to reveal his final conclusions.

He is a cautious man. Many previous investigations have ended in disappointment as fakes, hoaxes and spoofs.

But he acknowledges that this time it is different.

"We just do not know," he said. "And after three months, if this was something ordinary, we almost certainly would."

A first contact is near

By JOHN EARLS

A FORMER Government expert officially in charge of investigating British UFO sightings claims he could provide concrete evidence of alien life forms within two years.

And he believes they might soon be about to reveal themselves to us.

Nick Pope, head of UFO investigations at the Ministry of Defence between 1991-94, claimed he was on the verge of finding conclusive proof of UFOs and abductions.

But Nick said the work he'd done was being sabotaged by his replacement.

Nick, 31, had access to top-secret documents at the MoD and has continued investigating UFOs as a civilian.

He said: "The reports I



CONVINCED: Nick

witnessed in my three years there would have convinced anyone with an open mind that UFOs have been sighted – and that aliens have abducted humans for experiments."

Nick still works for the Ministry of Defence but was moved to become head of one its financial policy units.

He added: "I don't think it was a cover-up but I was getting so close to blowing the lid on alien existence that some Ministry bosses weren't too keen."

Nick has written two best-selling books – Open Skies Closed Minds and The Uninvited.

He is convinced that aliens are becoming less secretive in how they watch over mankind.

He added: "The ever-increasing number of new cases makes me think aliens will shortly reveal themselves publicly.

"And I don't think the new millennium is co-incidental in all this."

Nick Pope's new book, The Uninvited, is published by Simon & Schuster (price £15.99).

Riddle of what the astronauts saw...

NASA chiefs have been accused of covering up amazing new evidence of alien encounters.

They are refusing to release live recordings involving space shuttle astronauts who saw UFOs.

The video recordings were of operations at NASA's mission control in Houston, Texas.

Shuttle crew members Col Mark Lee and Steve Smith had just finished a space walk when they describe seeing flashing lights.

As the men discuss seeing more lights a NASA controller can be seen cutting off the audio link and the sound goes dead.

The pictures were beamed live from NASA in February. They are to be broadcast on the ITV

By DAVID JACK

show Strange But True Live on Friday as part of a live studio debate on aliens.

Viewers will see the pictures of mission control and hear the astronauts relaying their close encounter by radio link.

Producers have asked NASA for the missing sound but have had no response.

A spokesman said: "We believe they deliberately switched off the sound. They panicked because they didn't want anyone hearing what the astronauts were saying.

"It's very suspicious. Astronauts are highly trained, rational people and when you hear the surprise in their voices it makes you wonder exactly what they saw."

The astronauts saw the flying lights as they returned to the shuttle Discovery on February 14 after carrying out repairs on the Hubble space telescope.

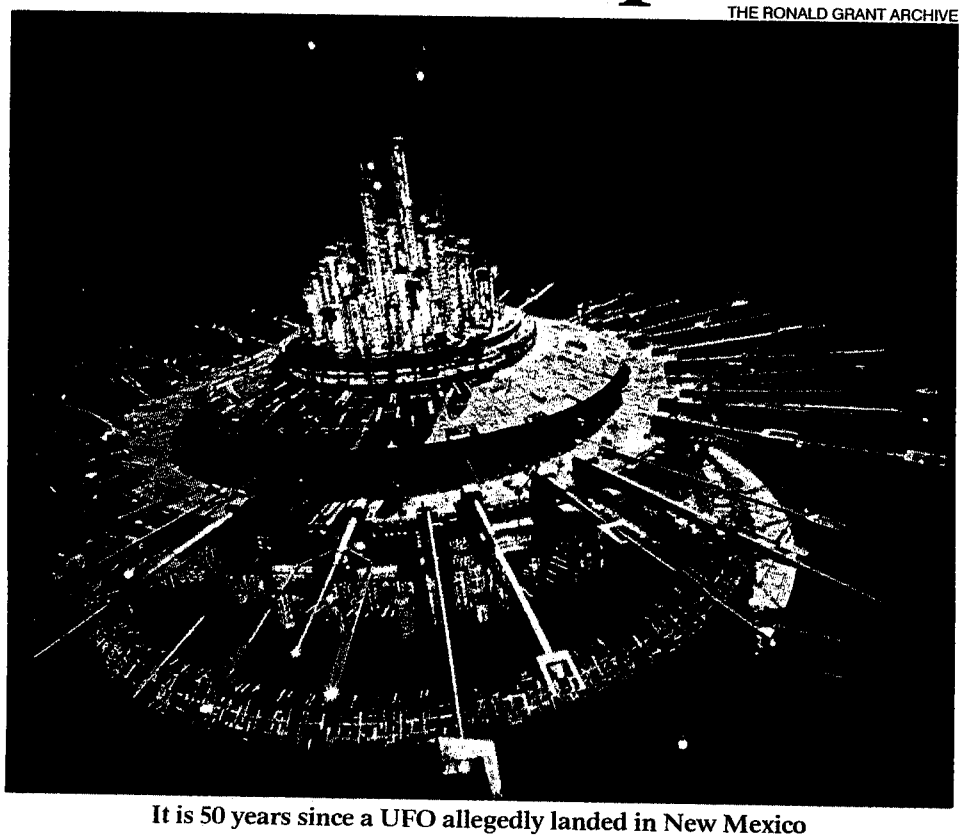
They describe bright flashes, flickering lights and at one stage one astronaut says: "What is this? It's just gone past in front of us."

Seconds later the audio is cut and all that remains are pictures of mission control.

UFO expert Tony Dodd said: "This is typical – a crude attempt at a cover-up. NASA try to appear media friendly. As soon as they come across something like this they switch off."

Anoraks who live on another planet

THE RONALD GRANT ARCHIVE



It is 50 years since a UFO allegedly landed in New Mexico

They came at great speed out of a clear, blue sky and suddenly the air was thick with them. Five of them. Five thudding tomes on flying saucers, Martians, alien abductions and cosmic voyages.

The reason for this squadron of unidentified flying books is the fiftieth anniversary of the Roswell Incident, when, it is claimed, parts of a flying saucer fell to earth in New Mexico, and in a separate incident the bodies of five aliens were also discovered. Part of this story was at first confirmed by the USAF and then denied, the local air base claiming the debris was a weather balloon.

The television producer Timothy Shawcross has written an objective and exhaustive study, **The Roswell File** (Bloomsbury, £16.99), as a follow-up to his Channel 4 documentary. Fascinating though his study is, he is struggling with a mixture of old memories, the patina of time and hoax. There is little doubt that the famous picture taken of an alien during a post-mortem is a hoax, and the most likely explanation of the crash is that the US was experimenting with something top secret. The problem for Shawcross after 50 years is that Roswell has become a tourist industry in its own right, with seven different crash sites.

The same problem faces Mike Dash in **Borderlands** (Heinemann, £16.99). This is a superbly researched and sensible encyclopaedia. It attempts to explain the unexplainable and is strong on sorting the wheat from the chaff on phenomena such as the time it rained frogs — true — to ectoplasm and spontaneous combustion — untrue.

After that, it's fantasy land. Nick Pope's **The Uninvited** (Simon and Schuster, £15.99), an exposé of the alien abduction phenomenon, is nothing of the sort. The book is a mishmash of interviews with people who claim to have had contact — some sexual — with someone from Out There. Many have been taken into spaceships, but none has managed to come out with even a cosmic coat hanger. Nonetheless, **Pope, who works for the Ministry of Defence, and in the early 1990s was responsible for carrying out official research into UFOs,** claims "careful study" of the available abduction evidence shows there is "a genuine phenomenon of some sort at work".

Jim Marr's **Alien Agenda** (HarperCollins, £16.99) is written in that earnest American style so beloved of journalist investigators who can prove nothing but manage to do it in 400 pages. Marr's is a terminal conspiracy theory case, a rampant virus which leads him to believe a colony of Martians is living underground in New Mexico.

But this has nothing on Dr Courtney Brown's **Cosmic Voyage** (Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99). Brown is associate professor of political science at Emory University in the US specialising in — wait for it — non-linear mathematical modelling of social phenomena, environmental politics and elections. He is also a time traveller, which enables him to write a chapter called "My first visit to Mars". But Cosmic Courtney can do better than that. He cues in for God, but gets Jesus. He calls up Buddha, and asks whether he should put the fact in the book: "He told me to decide for myself."

Good for Buddha, but whoever decided to publish this drivel must be living on another planet.

RICHARD STOTT

And the Word was drivel

Bernard Levin

THE BIBLE CODE
By Michael Drosnin
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20
ISBN 0 297 81995 X



Patterns reveal "secrets"

IT IS well known that there is a sucker every minute. But what about suckers who not only get sucked, but run about the land crying: "I am a sucker, I am a sucker, I am proud to be a sucker"? You think there are such people, or at least if there are, they must be a tiny few? Oh, yes? Look at the Bestseller List. What do you see? You see the third on the list (out of 20) and you see a book called *The Bible Code*. Very well, very well, it must be some kind of religious work, and we should be reverent.

But what if I tell you that *The Bible Code* is — *and I do not exaggerate* — the greatest pile of nonsense I have ever seen in a book. *Any* book.

So how did it get on to the Bestseller List? For the Bestseller List means, and is, the numbers of books being bought and sold. I have never heard of the author, Michael Drosnin, and I wish I never had, but if hundreds — perhaps thousands — of people are buying it, it behoves me to open the book and examine it.

So I did. Or, to be exact, tried to. For the book is unreadable, literally unreadable. Every page of it — *every* page — has a giant block of what I suppose is Hebrew (mind you, it might be Moon-talk for all the readers could tell), a language I regret I do not have on my tongue. Yes, but some 99 buyers out of the 100 are in the same plight. What in the names of St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke and St John are they going to do when they open the book?

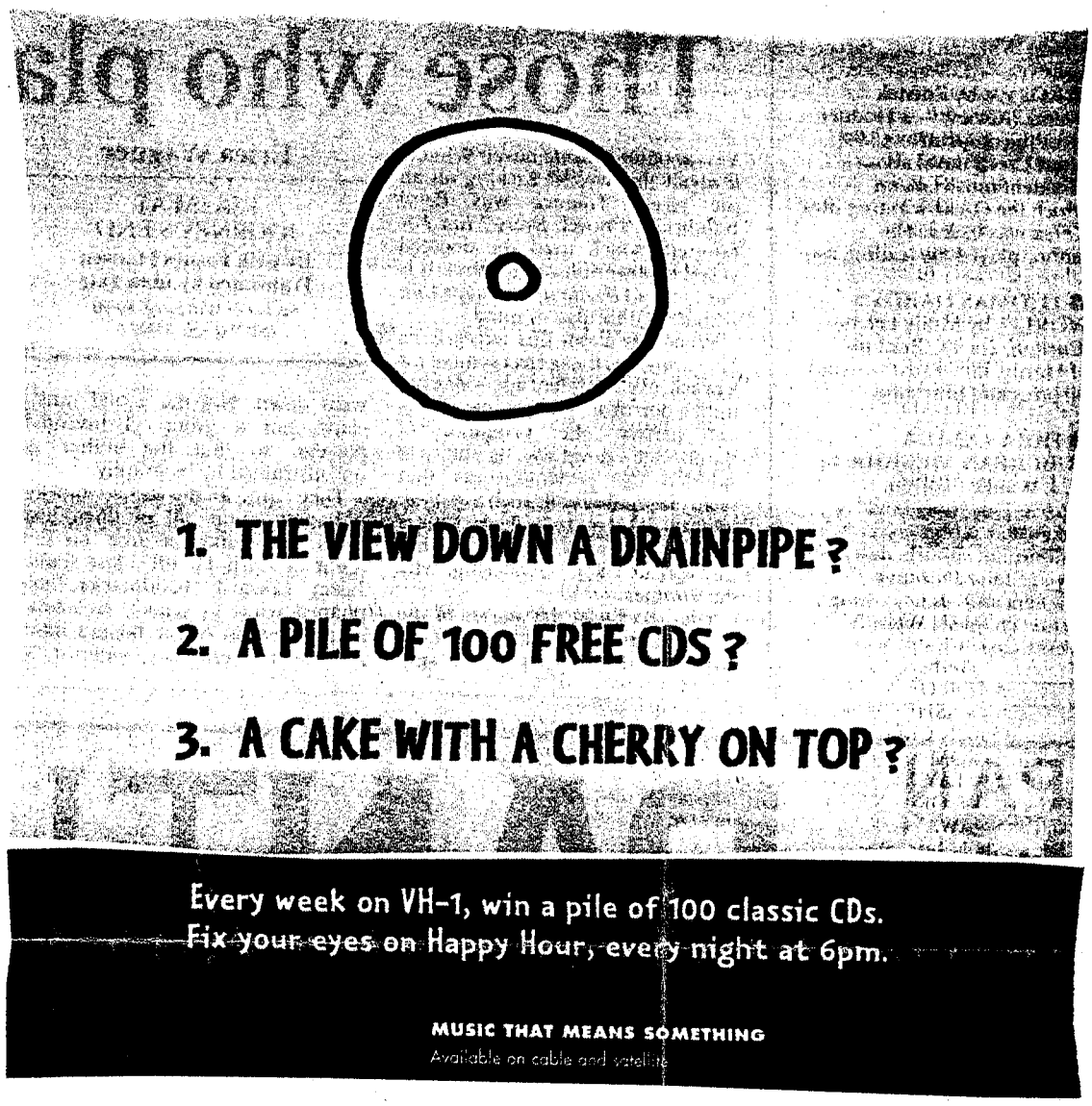
FLIP up any page, and find these burblements. But we have not got to the heart of the matter. I assume that the book is not a hoax (would that it were), and I examine the rubbish more closely. I do so, and I begin to shiver. The blocks of Hebrew are sprinkled by patterns across the blocks. Page after page does nothing that a word could elucidate; turn almost any page, and you see nothing but a pretty line at right-angles, or a pretty curve. And all this trash is supposed to tell us the secrets of the Bible which have lain quiet for 3,000 years, until Mr Drosnin came along.

You want a real version of this stuff? Something we can all understand? Right. *Right.*

Rips [the expert in mathematics] explained that each code is a case of adding every fourth or twelfth or fiftieth letter to form a word. Skip X spaces, and another X spaces, and another X spaces, and the hidden message is spelled out. As in this paragraph.

Start at the first letter of the above paragraph, skip every three letters, and the code is revealed: **Rips ExplAineD thaT eacH codE is a Case Of adDing Every fourth or twelfth or fiftieth letter to form a word. The hidden message — READ THE CODE.**

And I hope it keeps fine for you my dear good sir. But as for the book, I cannot call it one. And I think there will be many a household in which the buyers of the book had looked at it, and looked at it again, and again, and came to the conclusion that they would have preferred the £20 that the book had cost.



'Aliens are here' cry as thousands see UFO on a 60-mile sky trek

From GEORGE GORDON
in New York

IT was huge. So large that it blotted out the stars for more than a mile as it swooped silently over Arizona.

Thousands saw it and dozens videotaped it. After months of investigation, computer analysis and talks with eye-witnesses, experts have been unable to come up with any earthly explanation for the sightings.

The V-shaped formation of red and white lights passed over several towns at a steady 30mph, covering a distance of 60 miles.

Witnesses — who included pilots, air traffic controllers, doctors and lawyers — said the object glided across the sky without sound, its height ranging from 500ft to several thousand feet.

The incident has captured the imagination of America like no UFO sighting in decades. It has revived memories of the Roswell incident of 50 years ago, when the supposed crash of a flying saucer in New Mexico was allegedly covered up by the authorities. Black and white film exists which purports to show autopsies on some of the aliens recovered at the scene. Peter Davenport, of the National UFO Reporting Centre in Seattle, said the Arizona incident was the most dramatic in his experience. 'What we have here is the real thing — they are here,' he added.

The files of the UFO Centre record that the first sighting came from a retired police officer in Paulden, 60 miles north of Phoenix. He reported a cluster of red lights heading south.

The second call came from Prescott, 15 miles down the road. This time the report was of one red light and four white lights.

Within minutes the centre's switchboard was jammed with calls from Wickenburg, Glendale, Phoenix and Scottsdale. Police stations, fire departments and city halls were overwhelmed by hundreds of calls in the space of around two hours on March 13.

Bill Grava, a pilot and air traffic controller for 12 years, was on tower duty at Sky Harbor International Airport. 'I have never seen anything like that,' he said. 'It was weird — inexplicable.'

Tim Ley, a 54-year-old management consultant, had just arrived home when he saw the lights. 'They looked like gas,' he said. 'There was a distortion on the surface. The light didn't spill out or shine. I have never seen a light like that.'

Truck driver Bill Greiner, 51, said: 'Before this, if anyone told me they saw a UFO, I would say "Oh yeah, and I believe in the tooth fairy". Now I've got a whole new view. I may be just a dumb truck driver, but I've seen something that don't belong here.'

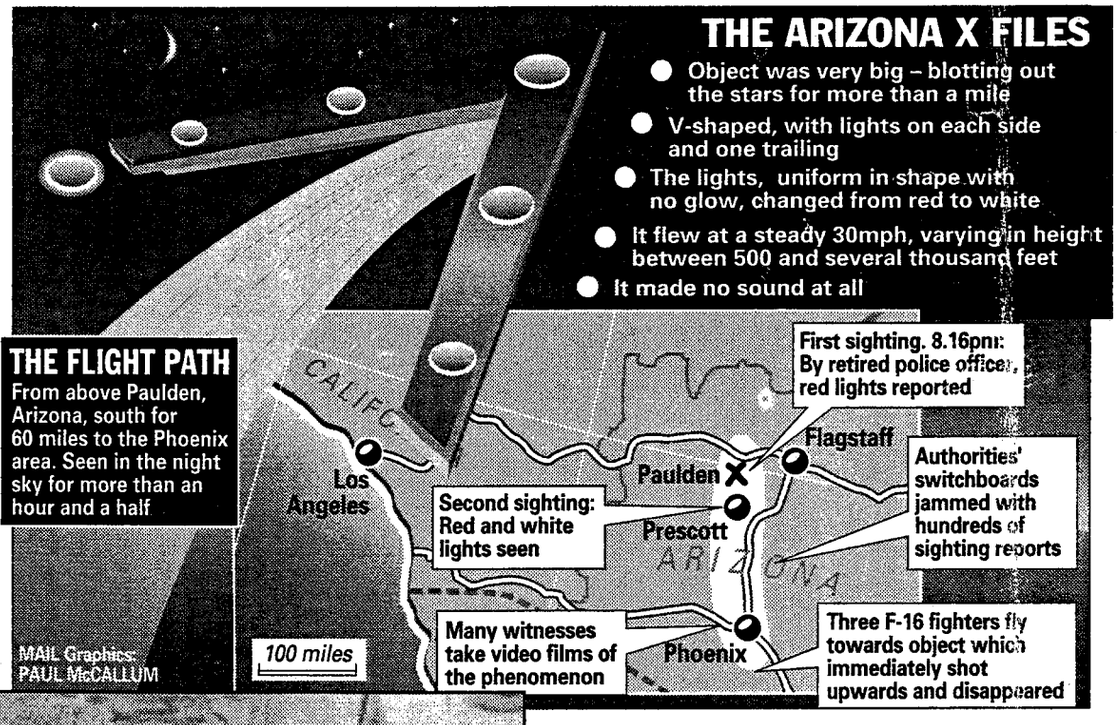
Michael Tanner and Jim Dilettosa are partners in a firm which designs computerised effects. They ran computer anaylsis of video footage and compared the lights to every other light in the Phoenix area. Nothing matched.

The Luke Air Force Base between Phoenix and Glendale has been a target for hundreds of callers who assumed that the sighting was linked to the base. Officials denied it.

Lieutenant Colonel Mike Hauser said many callers became angry and accused the Air Force of a cover-up. There were F-16 fighter jets in the air that night and one of the last sightings of the UFO was near the base.

Mr Greiner said he saw three of the jets take off and veer towards the object. 'Then it shot straight up and disappeared in the blink of an eye,' he said. 'Those pilots had to see it.'

If they did, the Air Force is not confirming it — adding to claims of a cover-up worthy of the X Files.





Left: A still from the film said to show one of the dead aliens from the Roswell incident

Daily Telegraph
13 June 1997
Page 19

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Mystery of airliner's near miss with 'UFO'

By Paul Marston
Transport Correspondent

AIR investigators are baffled by an apparent near-miss between an Aer Lingus jet and an unidentified flying object.

The BAe 146, bound for Stansted from Dublin, took evasive action after both pilots saw what they described as a red aircraft with blue and white stripes heading towards them as they flew over Hertfordshire.

The jet passed 100ft above the interloper two seconds later.

The crew reported the incident to air traffic control and suggested that what they had seen might have been a military aircraft, such as a Red Arrows Hawk.

But inquiries, involving searches of radar recordings and radio transcripts, failed to find another aircraft.

Investigators established that no Red Arrows aircraft flew that day, and checks on all military or civil Hawks revealed that the last one to be airborne had landed four hours earlier.

Inquiries into the whereabouts of Gnat aircraft, which are similar to Hawks, also revealed no flights.

The possibility that an unregistered ex-military aircraft had taken off from a private airstrip was ruled out as "inconceivable" because radar in the area would make detection a certainty.

The Civil Aviation Authority group set up to examine the incident said yesterday that there was no doubt that the pilots "saw something and agreed in some detail in their descriptions".

Group members speculated that the object could have been a model aircraft, an advertising balloon, or even plastic sheeting.

But the lack of radar evidence "meant that members could feel reasonably certain that what had been seen was not an aeroplane".

Similarly, the degree of risk to the jet from the incident, which occurred last June, was "impossible to assess".

Aer Lingus said its pilots had reported the event because they were trained to do so. The airline predicted that the incident was "likely to remain a mystery".

new body.

They will also be able to see what happens to individual cells when cancers are forming in the body and when they come into contact with experimental drugs.

'This would not only aid in cancer treatment and organ transplants but can be widely used in biotechnology in general,' said a member of the research team.

The green mouse comes six months after British scientists working for the Cancer Research Campaign found a way of adding the jellyfish gene to human cells in a test tube.

'We actually have the technology to produce green people, but we're leaving that to the Martians,' said a

'This type of procedure is useful for seeing what happens after a transplant and what happens in the life of a cell.'

Because the jellyfish gene is present in every cell of the mouse, any offspring will also glow.

It has been a confusing few months for the rodent community. Earlier this year scientists found a way of knocking out a muscle restricting gene, creating the mighty mouse one third bigger than normal.

They also successfully transferred a massive fragment of one human chromosome, containing hundreds of human genes, into a mouse.

The jellyfish Aequorea Victoria lives in the Pacific Ocean. Its luminous protein, aequorin,

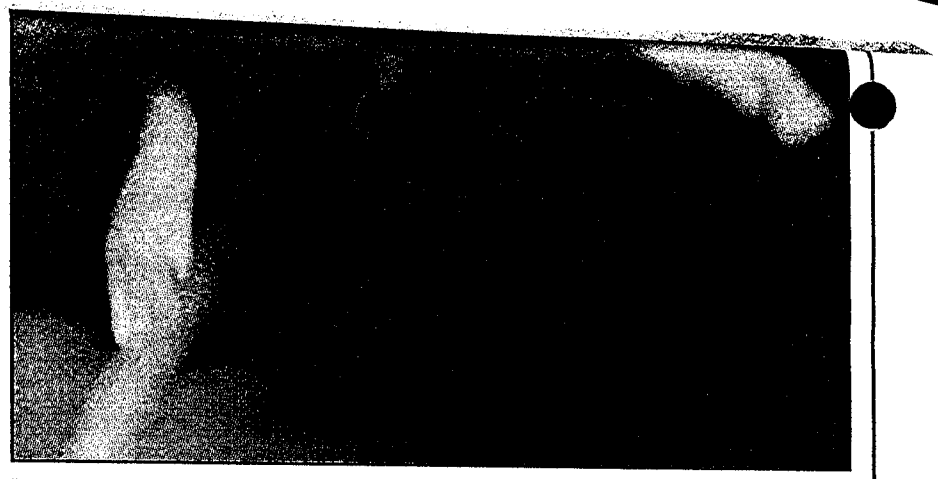
Until recently, scientists were only able to add the protein to living insects and fish, not mammals.

It has however, been transferred to plants. Researchers at Oxford University created a strain of tobacco which glows under attack from pests or disease.

The response is so sensitive, scientists can spot a threat to a plant weeks before it begins to wilt or die.

They are now trying to create fields of luminous crops which would give farmers early warnings of damage.

They are even looking at flowers which light up with the touch of a hand and bushes which glow in the breeze.



Taking the Mickey? No, green mice bring hope, say scientists

Jet 'buzzed by UFO'

Mystery of airliner's near-miss in clear skies

By ANDREW LOUDON

THE pilots had just emerged from heavy cloud when it flashed towards them.

The streak of red, white and blue seemed to be on a collision course. But within two seconds it had vanished.

Was it a military aircraft? Or perhaps a Red Arrow which had strayed from its path?

Both the captain and first officer of the Aer Lingus BAe 146 passenger jet saw it as they flew at 9,000ft over Stevenage, Hertfordshire, on the descent into Stansted Airport on a flight from Dublin last June.

But despite exhaustive investigations, no-one has been able to establish what it was. The 146 had flown down a 'canyon' of huge, towering clouds and was just emerging into clear weather when the object came hurtling towards them, passing down their right-hand side 100ft below and less than 300 yards away.

Both men described it as red with blue and white stripes. They thought it might have been a Hawk jet and noticed engine intakes on the fuselage.

The captain radioed air traffic control and asked: 'Did we have a Red Arrow pass quite close there?' Nothing could be seen on radar. Investigators established that none of the Red Arrows had flown that day and all other RAF and BAe Hawks could be accounted for.

The livery suggested it might have been a Folland Gnat, the aircraft formerly flown by the Red Arrows, but none were found to have been airborne.

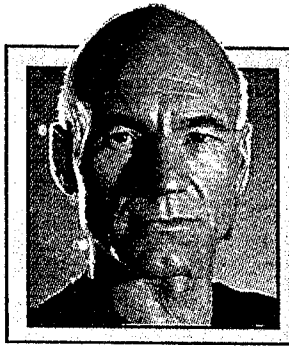
Operators of ex-military jets including MiGs and even old Sabres were checked and eliminated.

An air proximity or 'near miss' report was filed and a lengthy investigation by the Joint Airprox Working Group made up of civil and military flight professionals has concluded that what the pilots saw was 'an unknown object'.

'There is no doubt that both BAe 146 pilots clearly saw something and agreed in some detail in their descriptions.

'Regrettably it has not been possible to trace any aircraft that were in the area at the time.'

An Aer Lingus spokesman said: 'We really have no explanation and the incident is likely forever to remain a mystery.'



STAR TREK diehards are hooked like drug addicts, says a psychologist. The most passionate five to ten per cent 'meet the psychological criteria of addiction, showing withdrawal symptoms such as agitation and frustration if they miss an episode and developing higher tolerance levels so they need increasing doses', said Dr Sandy Wolfson who made a four-year study of Trekkies. 'One woman couldn't relax on holiday because she was worried she had not set the video properly,' said Dr Wolfson.

DAILY MAIL
13 JUNE 97.

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THE TIMES MONDAY JUNE 16 1997

Philosophy student joins the search for life out there

BY MARK HENDERSON

OXFORD UNIVERSITY has opened its own X file. A graduate student at Balliol College is writing a thesis on the philosophy of extra-terrestrial life.

Andrew Clark, 21, is studying the way in which different views of the world have influenced attitudes towards the search for intelligent life on other planets. Oxford's philosophy department is funding his research.

Mr Clark, who graduated last year with a first from Balliol in physics and philosophy, was inspired to write the thesis by Hamlet's line, "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy." The words made him realise that no one had attempted a proper academic discussion of the philosophy of the search for ET.

He has been investigating his subject with all the fervour of the FBI agents Mulder and Scully of *The X Files*, beavering away in the Bodleian Library and surfing the Internet to find evidence of the way we have looked for life on other planets.

"In every society, people have looked for extra-terrestrials according to their own preconceptions. During the Cold War ... the Soviets were basically looking for the Communist Party Intergalactic, the Great Soviet in the Sky. They felt that given the laws of historical materialism, there had to be an advanced communist culture 'out there'.

"The Americans took a very different approach, setting up radio telescopes to listen for deliberate messages from alien life. It was as if they were waiting to be contacted by Radio Free Andromeda."

He said that hostile attitudes towards aliens in the arts and the media, from *The War of the Worlds* to the recent films *Independence Day* and *Mars Attack!*, had been conditioned by a fear of dictatorship. In the 19th century, philosophers used the possible existence of aliens to argue for or against the existence of God.

Mr Clark also hopes to show how different methods of looking for alien life have developed in tune with cultural and philosophical attitudes. Scientists tend to be respectful about looking for aliens with radio-telescopes, but not of "ufology", or *X Files*-style investigation of reported UFO sightings, he said. "That's basically prejudiced, because neither branch has had any more success than the other. We see one as scientific because it has funky instruments, and the other as nutty because it seems based on ghosts and ghouls."

He thinks that only by taking a scientific approach to ufology can we hope to find a way of answering Professor Stephen Hawking's "Flying Saucer Puzzle": why, if it is likely there is life elsewhere in the Universe, does it not seem to have visited us?

☐ Charles Fort, who gave his name to Forteanism, the study of unexplained and paranormal events, will be commemorated with a plaque at the house in Marchmont Street, Bloomsbury, central London, where he lived from 1921 to 1928. The journal *Fortean Times* is sponsoring the plaque. Fort, who was born in New York in 1874, died in 1932.



Clark: takes a scientific approach to ufology

ET, phone again, the line is clear

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE search for intelligent life elsewhere in the Universe has taken a big step forward. The most powerful system for analysing signals from space has been installed at the world's largest radio telescope, the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico.

"We have been searching the sky for signs of extraterrestrials with continuously increasing capability," said Professor Stuart Bowyer, from the University of California at Berkeley, who began the search 20 years ago. "So far, nothing. We are not giving up."

The new equipment, called Serendip IV (Search for Extra-terrestrial Radio Emissions from Nearby Developed Intelligent Populations) is 40 times more powerful than earlier searches, because of sophisticated computer programs that can sort through radio signals.

"All signals detected so far have originated from human sources, such as aircraft and satellites," Jeff Cobb, who is responsible for handling the data, said. "We detect intelligent signals all the time. Unfortunately they have all been from Earthlings."

Serendip IV can scan 168 million frequency channels every 1.7 seconds, analysing each for radio intensities above background levels. Selections are studied to eliminate any caused by interference, then the remainder are examined more closely. Support for the search has come from private sources and companies such as Toshiba, Intel and Sun Microsystems.

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LOOSE MINUTE

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9 June 1997

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SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE ON ALIENS/UFOs : 8 JUNE 1997.

1. Just for your information, the US Colonel mentioned in the above article - Col Corso, a one time US Army intelligence officer - has a previous track record of unreliable testimony.

2. He has previously made claims about the 'Missing in Action' saga, stating that some 1,000 US Servicemen were not repatriated from prisoner of war camps at the end of the Korean War. Colonel Corso's claims have been recorded, examined and rejected by the US authorities. Their examination included study of papers he claimed supported his views.

[redacted]

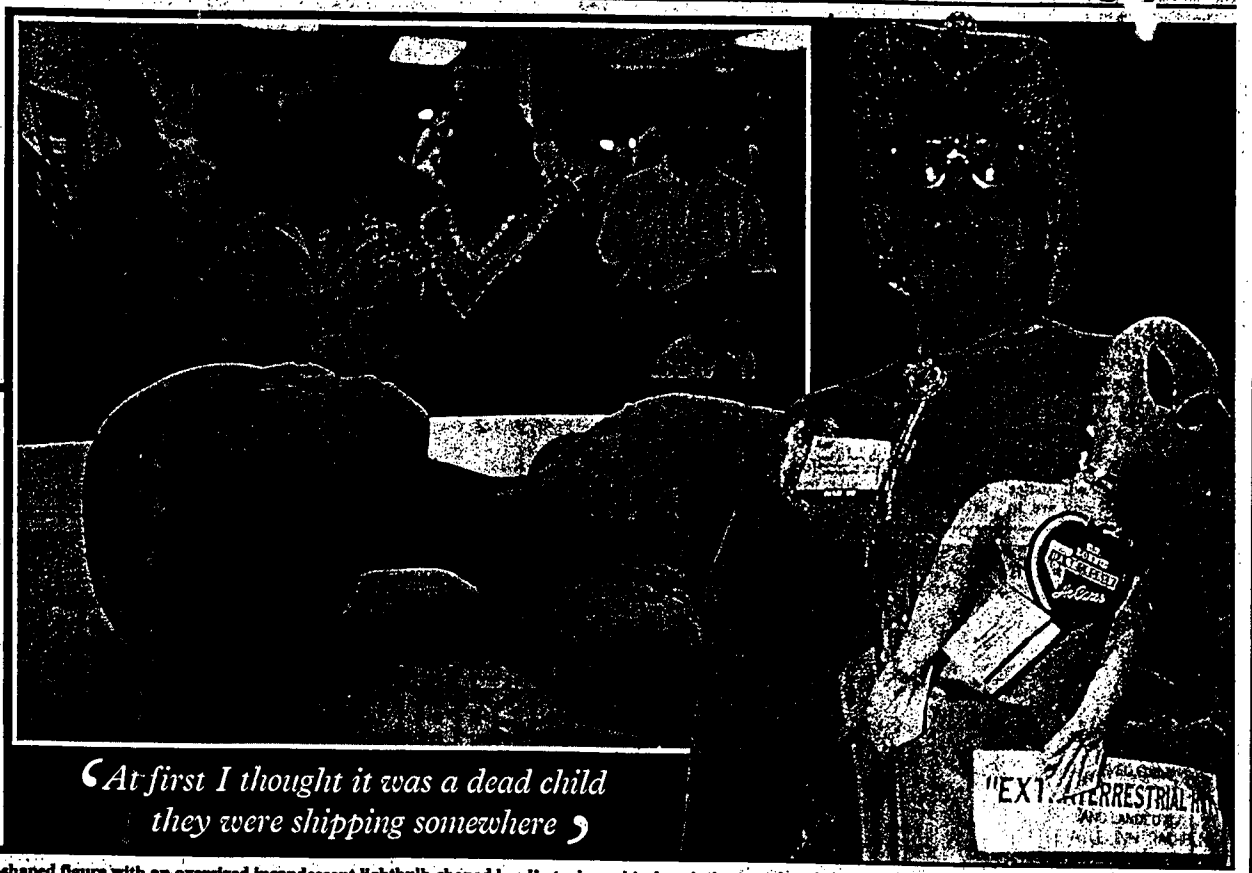
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11 JUN
FILE

Army witness 'saw alien at Roswell'

by James Adams and Maurice Chittenden





'At first I thought it was a dead child they were shipping somewhere'

With his own eyes: Corso, left, claims to have seen 'a human-shaped figure with an oversized incandescent lightbulb-shaped head' at a base; his description matches the image of aliens popularised by UFO enthusiasts

IT CAME from outer space. Now the very first X File is being reopened as a new witness comes from out of the blue to testify that he saw the body of an alien recovered from the wreckage of a flying saucer in the New Mexico desert.

The "Roswell incident" has fascinated UFO researchers for 50 years. Now Colonel Philip Corso, a retired American army officer, has written a book in which he becomes the highest-ranking person to give evidence that what crashed was not, as the Pentagon insisted, a high-altitude balloon, but an alien spacecraft.

Britain's UFO spotters welcomed his testimony this weekend as fresh evidence that Roswell actually happened, after losing credibility when a film purporting to show an autopsy of the aliens was exposed by The Sunday Times as a hoax. Sceptics, though, claim it is Corso who is now full of hot air, pointing to the fact that he has kept quiet for half a century only to come forward to cash in on the golden anniversary of the incident which started the UFO craze.

During the night of July 2, 1947, there was a violent thunderstorm over Roswell army air field (RAAF) in New Mexico, then home to the only atomic bomber squadron in the world. The next morning a rancher, checking for storm damage, stumbled across wreckage and strange shiny material which he could not bend or tear, and which he had never seen before. On July 8 the local newspaper published a report headlined "RAAF captures flying saucer on ranch in Roswell region".

The military authorities at first claimed the wreckage was parts of a weather balloon. Within hours the owner of a local radio station was contacted by the Pentagon and warned that he would lose his licence if he continued to transmit news of the find. Later it was said that the debris belonged to a high-altitude balloon being used to monitor Soviet nuclear tests.

In his book The Day After Roswell, Corso claims not only to have seen an alien who had been killed in a crash but also to have examined the Pentagon's secret files on the incident. Corso says that the Pentagon shipped the bodies of aliens to the Walter Reed hospital in Washington, where autopsies were performed.

The spacecraft contained technology that baffled the Pentagon's best scientists, says Corso. He claims parts of the spacecraft were parcelled out to America's top defence companies and eventually led to the development of fibre optics, night-vision equipment, lasers, particle beams and integrated circuits.

The "massive cover-up" of the Roswell incident was not so much to keep the secret of the aliens from the American people, he insists, but to allow defence contractors to develop the new technologies without them falling into the hands of the Russians. Ironically, the defence contractors were told that the material had been stolen from the Soviet Union.

Corso said: "Nobody wanted to come in second place in the silent, unacknowledged alien-technology development race going on at the Pentagon as each service quietly pursued its version of a secret Roswell weapon."

Corso had joined the army in 1942 and served in intelligence in Europe. Later, during the Korean war, he was on General Douglas MacArthur's intelligence staff and for four years served on President Dwight Eisenhower's national security staff.

He claims that while he was based at Fort Riley in Kansas in July 1947, he became curious about a mysterious group of sealed boxes that had been stored in a secure area. One night, armed with a torch, he prised open one of the containers.

Inside, he says, was an astonishing sight: "The contents, enclosed in a thick glass container, were submerged in a thick light blue liquid. At first I thought it was a dead child they were shipping somewhere, but this was no child.

"It was a 4ft human-shaped figure with arms, bizarre-looking four-fingered hands — I didn't see a thumb — thin legs and feet, and an oversized incandescent lightbulb-shaped head that looked like it was floating over a balloon gondola for a chin. I had the urge to touch the pale grey skin. But I couldn't tell whether it was skin because it also looked like a very thin one-piece head-to-toe fabric covering the creature's flesh."

His account is similar to how others have previously imagined the Roswell "aliens". However, George Knapp, an investigative reporter and UFO expert, said: "Corso brings a level of credibility to these revelations that has been sorely lacking in the past. I strongly suggest that interested parties keep open minds about his claims."

But Karl Pflock, a former assistant secretary of defence and a writer on UFOs who is working on his own account of Roswell, said: "The book is a cross between a 1940s pulp thriller and contemporary pop science fiction. It is one big outrageous joke that a retired officer could pull off this kind of thing. He offers no proof, no back-up and no documentation."

Nevertheless, the book will give weight to the claims of researchers when 10m people watch a live debate on UFOs on ITV later this month. Lionel Beer, founder and vice-president of the British UFO Research Association, said: "Ninety-five per cent of UFO researchers are now convinced the autopsy film was a put-up job. Clearly something happened at Roswell, but we may never know exactly what it was."

each paint a portrait of Major as an insecure prime minister in need of constant reassurance from his ministers. In interviews to be broadcast tomorrow on BBC1's Panorama, they

Ever since, stories have circulated suggesting that Major suffered a minor breakdown that day. Hurd, Fowler and others close to Major at the time

prime minister's temporary residence. ''He said, 'Do you think I am the right man to go on doing European negotiations with the other leaders?' ''

aided by a diary he kept. Off-camera, he told the programme that Major wrote several resignation letters. In the fortnight after Black Wednesday,

this would not happen. ''I think the feeling was that either the prime minister and the chancellor should go or neither,'' says Hurd. ''Certainly John

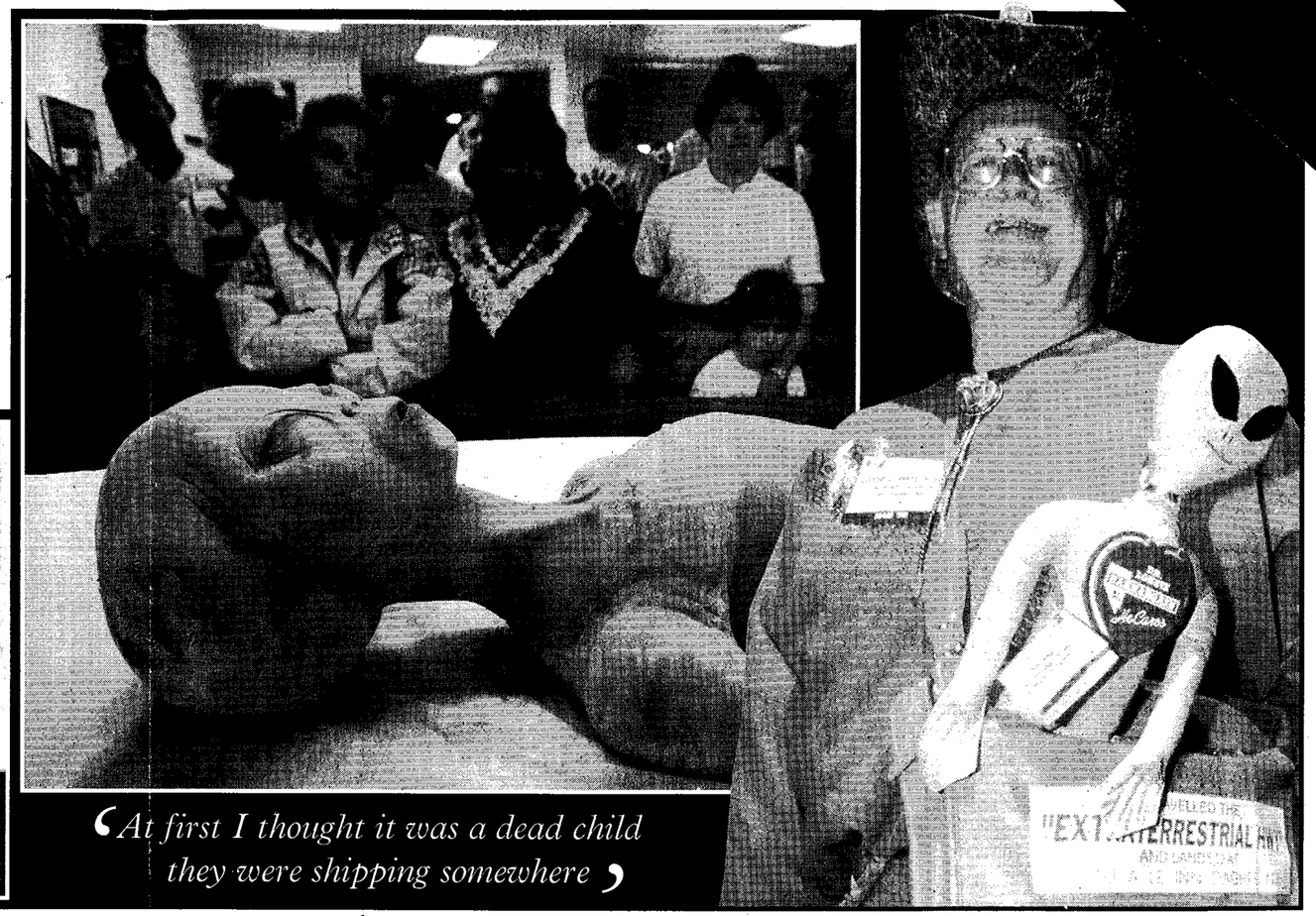
thinking of throwing in the towel, Hurd used his own slang for Black Wednesday, likening it to a lethal missile which downed the government: ''The

ered calling it a day and
it up. There have been mom
of acute frustration and his de
cision to soldier on was often
reluctantly taken.''

Army witness 'saw alien at Roswell'

by James Adams and Maurice Chittenden





With his own eyes: Corso, left, claims to have seen 'a human-shaped figure with an oversized incandescent lightbulb-shaped head' at a base; his description matches the image of aliens popularised by UFO enthusiasts

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Hotter summers raise danger of malaria coming to Britain

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The Sunday Times 8 June 97

elephants in for the kill

le ban is a moral imperative. But African nations ›ple alive. **Ruaridh Nicoll** reports from Namibia

/as put up in a goroba.
lephants into a be traded, Bot- ıve to prove good procedures. The already agreed ll be no export of nown origin or to come from wana'. And 'for toring and con- ill be only two ivory in the two the next Cites

that all three nt to trade will serves built up g poachers and phant culls. All ccording to the ernment, will be rvation and set- unity conserva- where the people ed to manage ir own benefit. d a rift between conservation upport the idea and their European and American counterparts who see the issue as a moral question.

There is no doubt that elephants are thriving. To the west of Harare, where the Cites meeting is to be held, the bushlands of Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia are populated by vast herds. In Namibia, just north of where the elephant vented its frustration against the fence, 500 others waded into the Kavango river to wash, drink and play.

But arguments in favour of trade fail to impress the European and American activists. Already the proposal has been attacked by numerous governments, and to bodies such as the Environmental Investigation Agency any trade in ivory, even the stuff confiscated from poachers, is fundamentally immoral.

But African realities, as always, make a mockery of political correctness. Already more unpleasant activities are afoot. While the arguments fly back and forth over Cites, the hunting season has opened and people from America and Europe are paying up to $50,000 for the chance to shoot an elephant and take their trophy home.

An even grimmer prospect is that of widespread culls, an event which makes even the seasoned elephant hunter squeamish. 'I once saw the professionals shoot a whole herd,' said the owner of a Namibian hunting concession. A small plane finds the herd and the trucks full of workers rush to the spot. There are four shooters, each with high-powered rifles and loaders with semi-automatics.

'Once they are on the herd, the lead shooter identifies and drops the matriarch with a clean head shot, then the other elephants rush around her screaming. The shooters use the semi-automatics to spine shoot the rest and then move in to kill them. There were 30 elephants dead within five minutes.'

These culls take place because of the burgeoning numbers of elephants in a retreating habitat. 'The fence blocks the movement of wildlife, especially elephants,' said Dr Karen Ross of Conservation International's Okavango project.

'Nobody knows the effect it will have yet,' said another conservationist. 'But if it cuts them off from their dry season grazing, many will die.'

Botswana's ministers have begun to speak about removing the 19-mile stretch of the fence which will most affect game but some conservationists are worried that this is just talk in the run-up to Cites.



rs pay $50,000 for a shot at this wild target



***Fortean Times* publisher Dr Mike Dash takes a sceptical look at the paranormal.** Photograph by Richard Mildenhall

Bad news for Mulder. UFO expert says mystery is bunk

by Roger Tredre

IN HIS early twenties, he spent five summers in a row hunting for the Loch Ness Monster. In his late twenties, he edited *Fortean Times*, the monthly journal devoted to strange phenomena, and is now its publisher. So, in his thirties, Mike Dash is well-placed to write the definitive book on the paranormal.

Dr Dash used to believe in all the great strange phenomena of our time, from UFO and ghost sightings to the Bermuda Triangle and the Loch Ness Monster. But his surprising view, expressed in *Borderlands*, published this week by Heinemann, is that most of it is bunkum. He says most strange phenomena are products of the mind — internally generated fantasies rather than paranormal events.

Most monster-watchers on Loch Ness, he argues, are fooled by the psychological phenomenon of 'expectant attention' — seeing what they want or expect to see.

Borderlands is billed as 'the ultimate exploration of the unknown'. But its conclusions will be a severe disappointment to readers addicted to *The X-Files*.

On UFOs, he writes: 'Of the myriad UFO photographs, most are clumsy hoaxes.' On crop circles: 'The saga is perhaps the single best example of a phenomenon riddled so rotten with fraud that it collapses from within.'

He says many ghosts are 'the products of the human imagination', while 'all supposed photos of the gods are dubious at best'. The Bermuda Triangle is dismissed as the product of 'wishful thinking, poor research and misidentification'.

Other researchers criticised Dr Dash's conclusions last week. Dr Karl Shuker, a leading cryptozoologist, said: 'The truth is there are some intriguing pieces of evidence for the existence of a large underwater mammal in Loch Ness, not least the sonar soundings of 1972 which showed the presence of a 6ft flipper.' Recent discoveries of species of deer in Vietnam showed many strange creatures hitherto unknown remained to be identified.

Gloria Dixon, director of investigations at the British UFO Research Association, said: 'It's true that we can explain 90 per cent of the sightings we receive, but there are some things that appear to defy explanation. Some things we can't dismiss or trivialise.' UFO sightings reported to the association have tripled over a year.

> 'Forteans are the reverse of cranks who will believe anything'

Dr Dash does agree that some strange phenomena are real: he includes ball lightning, falls of animals and objects from the sky, and entombed frogs and toads. But the most extraordinary — UFOs, ghosts, ESP, religious visions, and miracles — are not real at all, he says.

Last week, Dr Dash denied he was an overnight convert to scepticism. 'Some people think Forteans are cranks who will believe anything, but actually we're quite the reverse.'

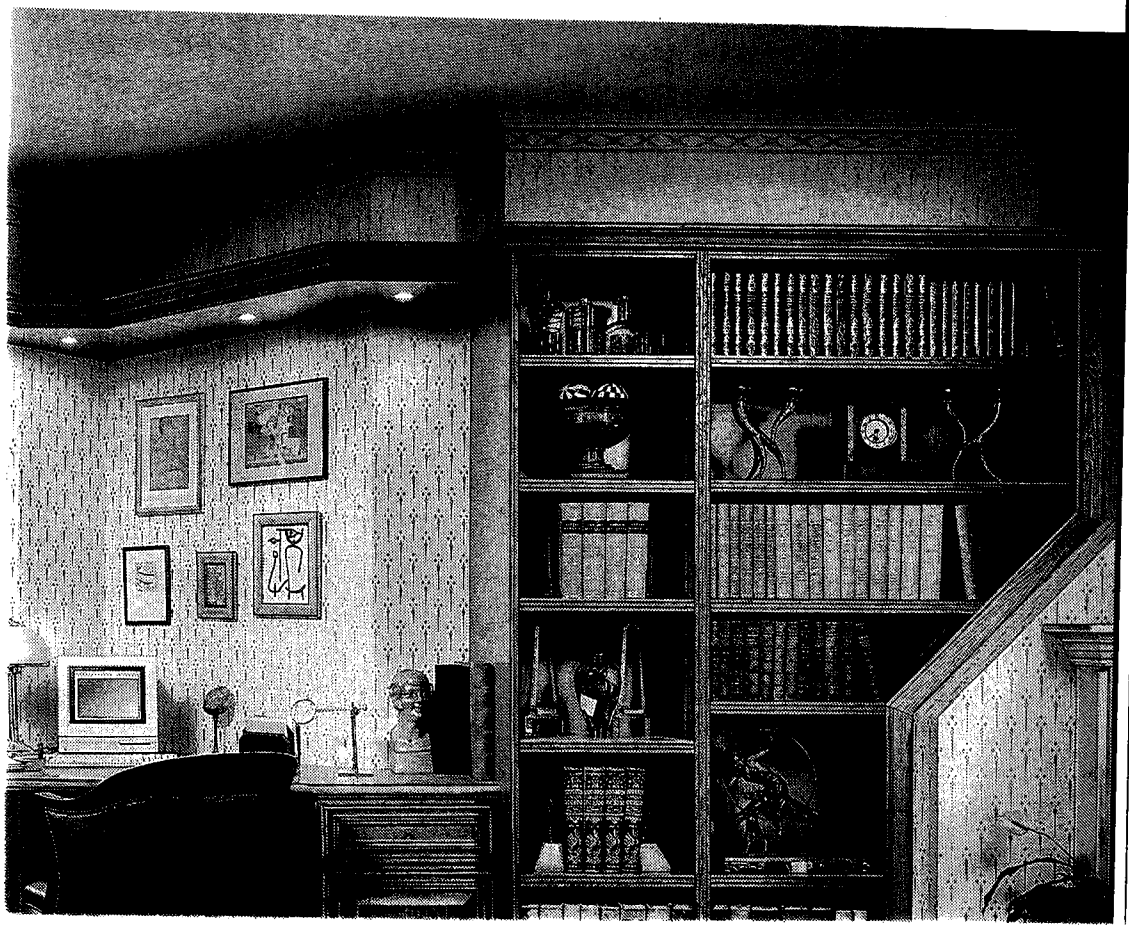
Forteans take their inspiration from Charles Fort, a pioneering American author whose four books published in the 1920s were the first to explore comprehensively the gamut of strange phenomena. Fort took a humorously sceptical stance and devoted much of his efforts to ridiculing the inadequate explanations advanced by many in the field.

So was Dr Dash an unbeliever from the start? 'Oh no, I originally believed . . . I used to think the huge volume of witnesses couldn't all be wrong. I believed there were UFOs and that people were seeing ghosts.'

But years of trawling Loch Ness without success started him on the transition to sceptic. 'The core of the problem is the complete fragility of human testimony. The physical evidence for most strange phenomena is extremely fragile, so you're left with witness statements. Researchers have tended to gloss over major problems in examining these statements: for example, it's hard to find someone who doesn't know what a UFO and a monster is supposed to look like, and is influenced accordingly.'

Dr Dash does not believe his sceptical approach will harm sales of his 43,000-circulation magazine. 'I like to think that people who buy it are impartial seekers after truth.'

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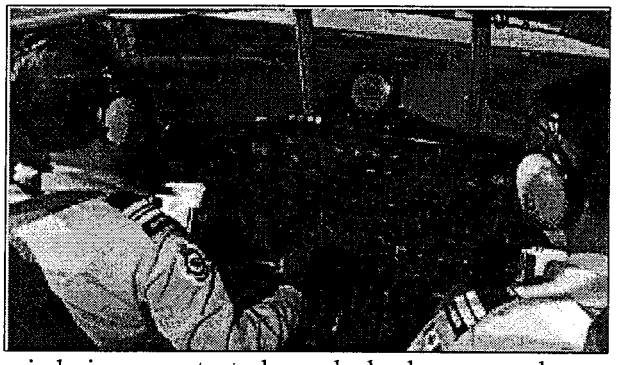
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ENCOUNTERS

UFO Silence

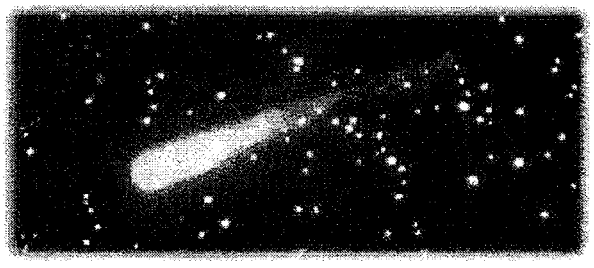
You could easily be mistaken for believing that Americans are the only ones lucky enough to be plagued by crashed saucers. Jonathon Dillon looks into Britain's UFO history and asks whether the British Government is simply more experienced at the old cover-up routine.

The British Government holds the dubious honour of being the most secretive in the First World despite promises to be more open with the public. The USA, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, France, Denmark, Holland and a host of other countries have a Freedom of Information Act, which over the last few years has enabled investigators all over the world to explore thousands of hitherto classified documents and papers which refer to the UFO subject. By these governments' own admission, thousands more documents are being witheld in the `interests of National Security' proving without doubt, that the subject is of great interest and seriousness to the world's elected leaders.



But our own government keeps quiet about everything and the general public can only gain access to documentation released under terms of the 30, 75 or 100 year ruling. These papers flow from the Air Ministry, RAF and Ministry of Defence, and roughly amount to just a dozen already released files covering the period 1950 to1964. Now with the arrival of the Scott Report, the need for a British Freedom of Information Act is more than evident.

Sadly, Her Majesty's Government will be amongst the last to willingly confess to the fact that our airspace is being penetrated regularly, by unusual intelligently controlled devices, that are way beyond our cutting edge technology. However, there seems to have been a turnabout on the part of the authorities in recent years, with more and more credible military personnel, government officials and people in power coming forward to tell of their UFO experiences. Through the hard work of many UFO investigators across the country, it has been disclosed that several Ministry of Defence departments at Whitehall and the Armed Services have been, and continue to be, actively engaged in covert research into UFOs.



According to several informers, investigations have been carried out by the Royal Air Force, The Defence Intelligence Staff (DI55) and the Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence. The DIS in particular, is a mixed organisation of serving officers and civillian research staff, scientific staff and linguists headed by the Chief of Defence Intelligence (CDI). This essential element of the government's central intelligence machinery has several tasks to perform and it evaluates a range of studies. One of its most important duties is to concentrate on UFO reports. Basically, some reports are handled by the Provost and Security Police Special Investigators who are attached to the Flying Complaints Flight Base at RAF Rudloe Manor.

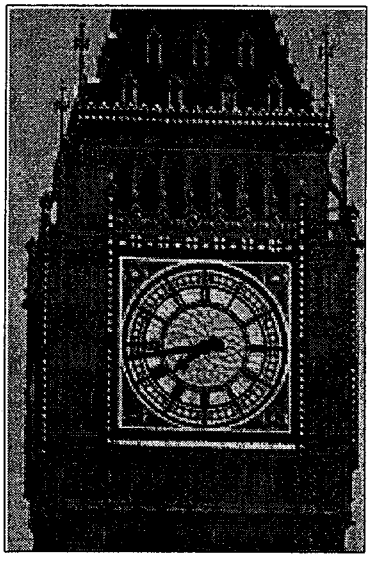
Stimulating news, which has been a long time coming, just came to light recently, with the shock admission by the MOD's Kerry Philpott, of Secretariat Air Staff 2a (the MOD UFO desk), that RAF Rudloe Manor was indeed a co-ordination point for reports of UFOs. This facility is known to be staffed by senior non-commissioned officers trained in numerous methods of special investigations. MI5 also works with Rudloe. Much of the collaboration relates to Rudloe's work in checking the

MI5 also works with Rudloe. Much of the collaboration relates to Rudloe's work in checking the credentials of RAF employees who work with classified data. They keep bulky files on RAF employees with "highly subversive" interests, Animal Rights, Nuclear Disarmament, Liberty etc. It is not known for certain whether or not the Security Services take on UFO matters , but according to an ex-MI5 employee I managed to interview, they do monitor the activities of individual UFO investigators and civilian UFO research groups.

The reports that come into the MOD are sent to DI55 who then forward them to the Director of Security and Provost Marshall (RAF) in London, who in turn will inform an infrastructure of other departments such as Air Force operations and Airborne early warning/ground environment. Some of these organisations are amongst the most well developed military systems in the modern world.

Additional research has exposed an international liaison with other foreign intelligence authorities such as the American NSA, CIA, US Air Force Office of Special Investigation and the State Department's Office of Security Assistance, Science and Technology. The Defence Intelligence Liaison branch of the MOD (DIALL) provides this affiliation through the Government Communications Head Quarters.

Intense Government interest in the UFO topic doesn't end with the MOD's preoccupation. According to my source, the Home Office plays an operative role, sustaining teeming computer files on the subject. The MOD's Air Staff 2a has computerised UFO files, but most of them are pretty innocent. Nick Redfern, an outstanding Intelligence researcher, told me the database held by the Defence Intelligence Staff is meant to be explosive and refers to National Security Agency files (despite their being no such agency). My source told me there is a `Main Computer' within the Home Office (F10 Division) which contains a database on several governmental issues, including UFOs. My contact also said that "only selective people can use the computer system in the matters of National Security". He continued, "I had a meeting with the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, and at the end of it I asked him about the UFO predicament. Howard didn't say much about the subject and went very quiet." This publicity will certainly be unwelcome. The Police Force also takes in a reasonable portion of UFO reports. The UK Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary are regularly briefed to anticipate UFO sightings in the proximity of atomic energy installations. They are to take no other action but are to prepare a report, which they then send to their superiors.



Unquestionably, our own armed forces are lively UFO researchers. Numerous instances have come to light involving UFO/RAF dog fighting, crash retrieval ventures and clandestine research into Alien technology at places such as RAF Farnborough, where during the mid-50s, secret research was conducted into UFOs, according to several RAF sources. The Defence and Evaluation Research Agency have a facility at Farnborough, rumoured lately to be housing a downed UFO and Boeing 747 jumbo jet.

During the 70s there was an impressive UFO encounter in Minley Manor Woods, not far from Farnborough. My source, who I'll call `Hannah' told me there was a strong military attendance in the woods after several hexagonal shaped UFOs visited the district. Nowadays, the area is a Mecca for enigmatic unmarked helicopters and when questioned the local Air Force, Police and Airport assure me their aircraft are not in the territory. Last year, a helicopter hovered over a housing estate early one morning. The residents got up and went outside to see what all the fuss was about and it was then they saw four pulsing red lights above a corn field. The helicopter began to close in on the lights and as it got nearer, the lights shot off at great speed towards Aldershot.

In retrospect, it is now obvious that the British Government investigates UFO reports, but has it drawn any conclusions? According to some sources, the RAF did indeed reach a UFO decision asserting the root of the phenomena was extraterrestrial and that humankind was somehow related to the visitors! Was Darwin wrong? I daren't say, but I have learned that during the 1960s a building called Riverwalk House, which was used by the Intelligence Services (SIS, MI6, MI5) for the compilation of Eastern bloc and Russian affairs, did have some of the sought after answers. Apparently, during a document review in the building's library, two female colleagues came across a

Confidential file which stated the British Government had solved the UFO mystery, and that we really aren't alone!

Certainly, some UFO cases have come to light through US documents released under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Here, ministers use secrecy to suppress embarrassing findings and to protect themselves from public challenge. But the findings about UFOs may be so powerful, governments acting in our names, may only be doing so because they feel it is the right thing to do. Afer all, government influence affects just about every aspect of our lives. In matters of national security, it seems obvious for governments to become mute, but I believe it is time for the curtain to be lifted and governments should become more honest with society.

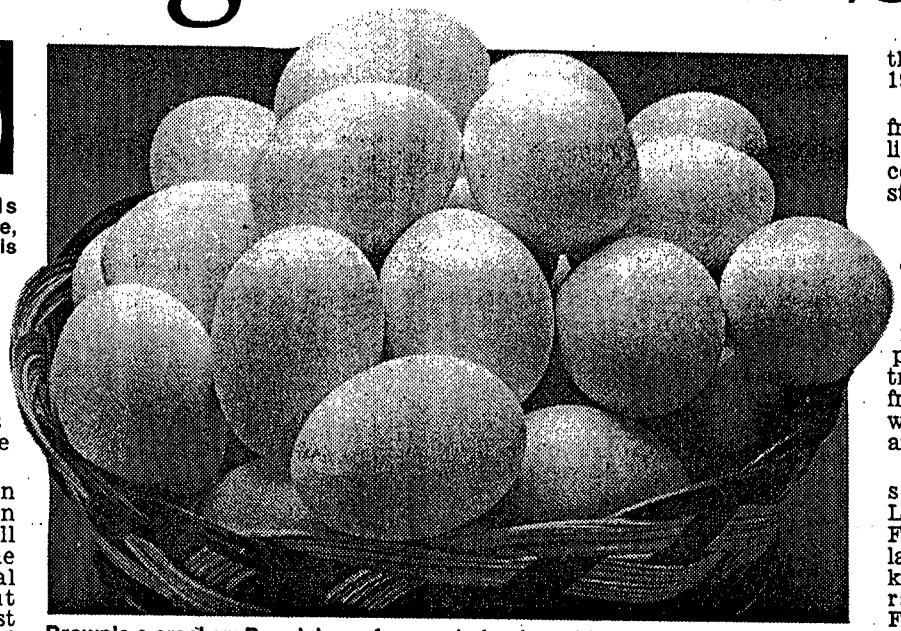
Encounters would like to thank Jonathon Dillon for this fascinating insight into our government's guarded silence. Should you have any information relating to RAF/MOD/Military involvement etc. with the UFO subject, Jonathon would like to hear from you. He can be contacted at 176 Coal Clough Lane, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 4NJ.

Finally Jonathon would in turn like to thank Matt Williams, of the *Truthseekers Review*, for the Photograph, Nick Redfern and Robert Gray for their help with this article.

Shelling out on brown eggs

24 Apr 97

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS



Brown's a cracker: People's preference is forcing white eggs out of shops

QUESTION: Most eggshells used to be white, now they are mostly brown. Why is this?

OF THE 9,504 million eggs produced every year in the UK (that's 26 million eggs a day) roughly 65 per cent go to the retail market, 20 pc to catering and 15 pc to processing. Hens in cages produce 86 pc of our eggs while 11 pc come from free-range hens and 3 pc from hens in barns.

Generally, white breeds of hen produce white eggs and brown hens make brown eggs. Shell colour has no influence on the nutritional value or internal composition of an egg, but consumer preference has almost entirely forced the white-shelled egg off UK shop shelves. In other countries, notably the US, the preference is for white eggs.

Peter Sellicks, British Egg Information Service, London.

QUESTION: Is anything now done in the underground factory at Hawthorn, near Box, Wiltshire, where my father worked during the war for the Bristol Aircraft Company?

THE site isn't a factory but a series of man-made caverns and tunnels created when stone was mined to build the city of Bath. The underground complex has 40 miles of tunnel at various depths, of differing widths and heights, from tiny potholes to enormous caverns with floor spaces equivalent to 12 full-size football pitches.

During World War II, the complex was put to full military use as an underground ammunition store and workshop for vital components produced in relative safety from Luftwaffe bombing.

To maintain secrecy, much of what went in and out of the caverns did so through a specially constructed underground branch to Box railway tunnel. One train would enter the tunnel and pull into the complex while another similar train left the complex for the exit at the other end, giving the impression that it was the same train.

Shortly after the war this very dark and damp complex was closed, even for storage and, though tours were conducted for several years, the area has now been sealed off for safety reasons.

Flt Lieut Jeremy Wright, RAF Rudloe Manor, Wilts.

QUESTION: When was the last time a British regiment went into battle wearing kilts?

FURTHER to the answer claiming kilts were not used after 1936, I have a photo taken at Stammlager the Protecting Power (America in 1940) and had his kilt returned.

He snipped off several pieces from the heavy seams to reduce lice infestation and I obtained a couple of these snippings which I still use as bookmarks.

Capt W. Hutchings, Newhaven, East Sussex.

THE kilt was taken out of battle service in 1940 because it was considered unsuitable for mechanised warfare and cost far more to produce than standard uniform trousers. It was also suspended from service dress until after the war, the exceptions being pipers and drummers.

However, Winston Churchill gave special permission for the Liverpool Scottish to readopt the Forbes tartan and they were the last British unit to go into battle kilted when they formed part of a raiding force on St-Nazaire, France, in March 1942.

Frazer Keith, Cleethorpes, Lincs.

I SAW the Camerons wearing kilts at Sidi Barrani, Egypt, on December 9, 1940.

M. G. D'Arcy, Colyton, Devon.

QUESTION: What is the answer to the pub quiz question: There are three words in common use in the English language that end '-gry'. 'Angry' and 'hungry' are two, what is the third?

FURTHER to the earlier answer giving some examples, this has rather spiked the guns of those clever-clogs pub quizmasters who delight in asking questions which are updated versions of the old playground catch: 'Constantinople is a long word; can you spell it?'

The trick lies in the exact wording of the question: '... three words in common use in *the English language* ...', the answer being

QUESTION: What happens to deposits lost in a General Election?

ANY candidate in an election has to deposit £500 with the constituency's returning officer and receives it back only if he or she gets at least 5 per cent of the votes cast. If he or she fails to get 5 pc, their £500 goes into the Treasury's Consolidated Fund.

Of the 2,948 candidates who stood for the 651 constituencies in the last General Election, 903 polled less than 5 pc and forfeited a total of £451,500 in lost deposits.

Debbie Holgate, Chigwell, Essex.

A RECORD total of 3,718 candidates are standing for the 659 constituencies in this year's General Election, and each voter will have an average five or six candidates to choose from.

If the nation's voting patterns run true to form, an estimated 1,670 candidates will lose their deposits, bringing £836,500 into Treasury coffers, about one 54th of the cost of mounting the election.

Pat Hutton, Twickenham.

QUESTIONS

Q: What is the system underlying the star dates given by Captain Kirk at the beginning of Star Trek? I would be interested to know the star date of my birthday, January 12, 1964.

Paul Chandler, Linford, Essex.

Q: What is the island shaped like a butterfly one can see from the aircraft just beyond Papua New Guinea when flying from Cairns, Australia, to Hong Kong?

Mrs T. McGroaty, Alperton, West London.

Q: What was the basis of the codewords — for example, kushti (pretty), dulcie (fair), chako (child), mark (generous person) — used by tramps who knocked on our doors in years gone by?

P. Wynel-Thompson, Bexhill.

THE Daily Mail OFFER

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27

FOR three years, Ministry of Defence official Nick Pope was the UFO desk officer in the MoD division, Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a. In that time he concluded that there was compelling evidence for some encounters being of extraterrestrial origin. His subsequent expose, Open Skies, Closed Minds, was an instant bestseller.
Now, in a second book, The Uninvited, he has reached an even more startling conclusion. Aliens, he believes, are actually abducting thousands of people, possibly as a programme to 'civilise' human society. Today, in our final extract, he focuses on more strange cases and looks at conventional explanations for alien abduction.

If Patsy had just dreamed of floating above the park, why had a mysterious wound appeared on her body . . .



by Nick Pope

FORMER UFO DESK OFFICER AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

WHAT happened to Patsy Ryan, a 28-year-old psychology graduate, in June 1992 is the sort of experience that sends ufologists into a frenzy.

She was spending a quiet afternoon sunbathing in a park near her London home when, suddenly, she felt herself being lifted up into the air in a violent spinning motion.

Even more extraordinary, not least because she seemed to be about 50ft above the ground, she was embarrassed that others would see her up in the air.

Such a thought might suggest that Patsy was dreaming, but there was to be a dramatic and compelling piece of evidence to support the theory that something more astonishing had happened.

Her immediate concern was to get back down to the ground. Willing herself to return, she came down slowly but surely, although she is clear in her mind that the last part of her descent was the hardest.

She remembers a strange jolting sensation, which she believes was her spiritual body interlocking with her physical self.

Then she became aware of great pain in her upper thigh, the most excruciating she had ever known. Later, at home, she examined her leg. She found a wound about ¾in long, and ⅝in wide.

In time the wound became redder and more raised. She sought advice from her friend Hazel Gilbert, a nurse, who said the wound looked like a burn.

Two or three days later, the pain spread to the rest of her leg, and she asked Hazel to take her to the casualty department of Guy's Hospital in London. Nurses at Guy's examined the wound and confirmed Hazel's view that it looked like a burn. But Patsy was adamant that she had no recollection of having received such an injury.

The wound healed slowly, but the scar remained, and is still faintly visible. It is reminiscent of the type of scars often reported by abductees as resulting from medical operations carried out by extraterrestrials.

How did Patsy receive such a serious burn in a public park? Why did she not recall being injured? How did it occur without leaving any mark on her shorts?

There was a gap of three years, Patsy believes, before she finally met extraterrestrials face to face. The 'encounter' happened on the afternoon of Saturday, September 23, 1995, while she was working in a Central London art shop.

A group of people assembled outside the shop in a quiet side street, and Patsy said to one of her colleagues, Maggie, that it looked as if a coach party had arrived.

The 13-strong group were definitely unusual. All of them were oddly dressed, as if uncomfortable in their clothes. One middle-aged man, for example, was wearing a stylish pin-striped suit, but had a pair of scruffy trainers on his feet.

A man with what appeared to be an American accent said hello to Patsy as they went into the shop, but she found herself unable to speak. It was as if an other-worldly atmosphere had descended. All the visitors were talking, but Patsy and Maggie were unable to make out a single clear word.

The group, having made no purchases, finally began to filter out of the shop, but then a Swedish-looking woman stepped forward and bought a single pencil.

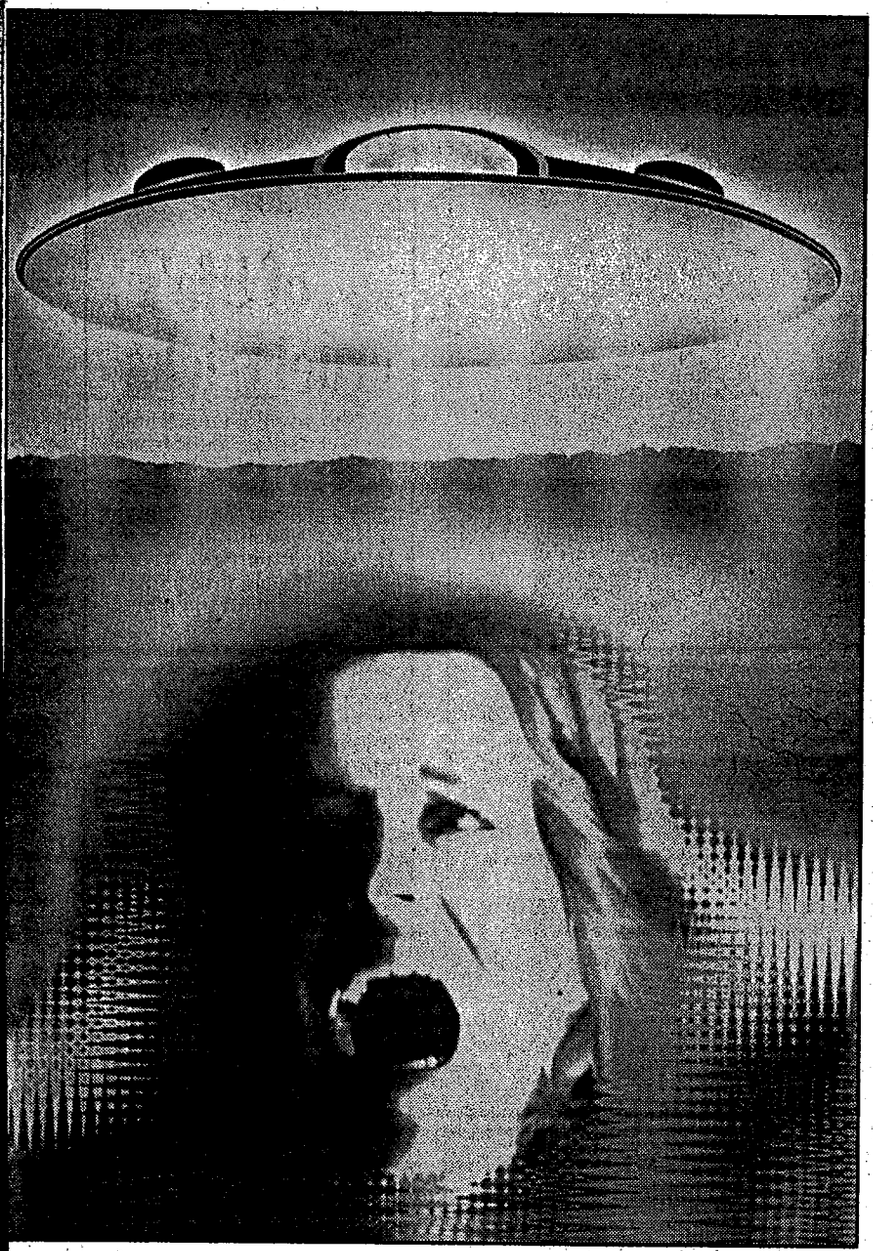
Since then Patsy has flirted briefly with the world of ufology, but she has decided it is a world she wants little to do with.

■ *ABRIDGED extract from THE UNINVITED by Nick Pope, published by Simon & Schuster on June 2 at £15.99. © Nick Pope 1997. To order a copy p&p free, call 01624 675137.*

■ **DURING September 1990, James and Pamela Millen went camping in Dorset. One night they woke just before 3am and James, intrigued by lights he could see through the canvas, went outside. He saw several orange balls of light that seemed to be dancing in the air over an adjacent field.**
He pointed them out to Pamela and the couple watched, mesmerised, as the glowing spheres moved silently around. After a couple of minutes, he decided to get his camera, but what happened next remains unclear. Pamela recalls that James reappeared and commented on a pile of cigarette ends at Pamela's feet, which seemed odd as he had been away for only a minute or so and she could not have smoked that many. When they looked at their watches it was 5.40am. More than two-and-a-half hours were unaccounted for.
James subsequently had recollections of being in a circular white room, lying on his back on something cold, and seeing figures dressed in robes rather like those worn by the Ku Klux Klan. He has no idea what happened to him, but believes that it was 'beneficial'.

■ **ON November 9, 1979, forester Bob Taylor was walking in Dechmont woods near Livingston, in Scotland, when he saw a huge, domed UFO hovering silently about 250ft above the ground. Two small, round balls detached from the craft and moved rapidly towards the startled forester. The objects had spikes on them, and looked rather like old naval mines.**
The balls attached themselves to Taylor's trousers, cutting him, and he recalls an acrid smell, which was his last memory before passing out. When he came to, he recalled the sound of an object moving off at high speed. When he returned to his truck, it would not start. Later, the police concluded that an object weighing several tons had been in the clearing.

SERIES



Lost hours on a weird car journey

LONDONER Mary O'Donnell, a 31-year-old secretary, was apparently involved in one of the most spectacular 'missing time' incidents I've come across.

Last October, Mary was travelling on the M1 approaching Leeds with her friend Brenda Bailey when she noticed what she thought was a small aircraft flying across the road ahead of them.

It turned towards their car and, while Mary had a brief impression that it might be trying to land on the motorway, Brenda reached for some drinks that were in a bag on the floor. When she looked up again she yelled: 'Where the hell are we?'

They were no longer on the motorway, but on a roundabout in central Leeds. Mary and Brenda had both experienced the same sudden transition from motorway to roundabout.

Just before Mary saw the aircraft, they had made a note of the time — 2pm. Now, an instant later as far as they were concerned, it was 5.30pm.

The scenario fits the classic story of aliens intercepting people travelling in cars, but surely anything unusual would have been witnessed by countless other motorists. Could some form of mass hypnosis have been involved?

IF ABDUCTIONS are nothing to do with an extraterrestrial presence, what conventional theories might explain what is going on?

Explanations for these disturbing occurrences

BIRTH TRAUMA

MANY psychologists believe that the trauma of birth is one of our most profound experiences, and is largely responsible for shaping our psyche. Is it not conceivable that recollections of abductions are recollections of birth?

Some of the images reported in a typical abduction experience mirror images associated with birth. Many abductees report being in an environment that contains no right angles. Might this not be a distorted memory of the womb?

The aliens bear more than a passing resemblance to a foetus. The central procedure reported by so many abductees is medical, and is recalled as traumatic.

The problem with such a theory is that, unlike birth, the abduction phenomenon is experienced by only a small percentage of the population.

NEAR-DEATH/OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCES

IN A typical near-death experience (NDE), said to occur sometimes in hospitals when a person is clinically dead for a few seconds, the subject reports a lifting sensation. There is a feeling that they are travelling down a tunnel, at the end of which is a bright light.

Some experts believe NDEs arise from the brain being starved of oxygen. But this would not explain the NDE cases where people report details of real conversations that occurred outside the room they were in.

The out-of-body experience (OBE) is similar but is not limited to critically-ill people. They will typically report seeing their body lying below them.

The similarity of sensation and imagery between abductions, NDEs and OBEs — especially the lifting sensation — is remarkable.

HOAXES

FRAUDSTERS are often intelligent people who are capable of constructing intricate and believable fantasies. Some do it for fun, others for publicity and money. Then there are those who have a 'fantasy-prone personality': the psychologically-driven need to be at the centre of dramatic events. However, bogus stories account for relatively few abduction testimonies.

FALSE MEMORY SYNDROME

MEMORY is not an accurate record of past events. Sometimes, when we play events over in our minds or relate an experience, what started as something about which we were unsure finishes up as a certainty. This is called false memory syndrome.

HYPNAGOGIC OR HYPNOPOMPIC IMAGERY

JUST before we fall asleep and just after we wake up, our minds are in a curious state of consciousness. In this state we sometimes see images or experience sensations that seem real.

TEMPORAL LOBE LABILITY

THE temporal lobes are areas of the brain associated with memory, emotion and understanding of speech. They can be extremely labile — that is, unstable and responsive to stimulation — and give rise to the feeling of a strange presence, a sense of ascending into the air, and panic.

ELECTROMAGNETISM

SOME researchers suggest that many UFO and abduction experiences have their roots in electromagnetic anomalies — possibly caused by tectonic stresses in the Earth's crust — which can cause hallucinations in those who come close to them.

SLEEP PARALYSIS

THIS is the biological process which inhibits our movements during sleep. In the borderline state between being asleep and awake, it can lead to situations where people wake up and are momentarily unable to move, perhaps giving them the impression that something is holding them down.

CHILD SEX ABUSE

SUCH events have a devastating effect on the victims, who will carry the mental scars for life. The mind often suppresses memories of traumatic events. The problem is that they never disappear and can resurface from the subconscious at any time, often in a jumbled or disguised form.

HAVE you had any experiences of the paranormal? Send your accounts to the Features Department, Daily Mail, Northcliffe House, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT.



Jane felt a rush of air like automatic doors opening as she was carried from her bedroom into a blaze of light. Then she realised exactly what was happening to her

FROM 1991 to 1994, Nick Pope was UFO desk officer at the Ministry of Defence's Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a. His initial scepticism was swept away by military and civilian evidence which he believed proved some UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin. He made his findings public in an instant bestseller, Open Skies, Closed Minds. Now, in his latest book, which is being serialised by the Mail, Pope has an even more startling conclusion — he believes people are being abducted by aliens and subjected to mysterious examinations. He has investigated hundreds of cases — half, he insists, are genuine happenings. Yesterday, in part one, Pope set out his controversial argument for the abduction phenomenon. Today, in part two, he describes more strange encounters . . .



by NICK POPE

FORMER UFO DESK OFFICER AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

JAYNE RIMMER, a 40-year-old mother of three from the West Country, is a professional clairvoyant who attributes her strange powers to what she believes was her first encounter with aliens on a Sunday night in November 1992.

She had gone to bed at about 10pm, but was restless and could not sleep. Some time later she heard a strange, electronic buzzing sound, which made the hairs on her arms stand on end. Simultaneously, the family's two dogs started to whine.

Then, at around 1am, she heard her eldest son Mark arguing with his girlfriend Sue, who had been staying with the family. The argument became so heated that at one stage Mark tried to get Sue out of the house.

This was out of character, and it later transpired that he had felt a sense of impending danger; a feeling that something was going to happen which he did not want Sue to be caught up in.

Jayne's husband Tom is normally a light sleeper but on this night Jayne could not rouse him, despite shaking him violently.

At 1.45am she heard a blast of air, as if automatic doors had opened, and suddenly she felt herself being lifted up and carried from her bedroom into a corridor.

She could see little grey figures around her and described them as having wrinkled skin, 'like a mushroom'. There was a strong smell of ammonia and something else which she could only liken to Brylcreem.

By this stage she was not sure whether she was being carried or if she was walking. She caught sight of a woman with blonde, shoulder-length hair, who was smiling.

Jayne felt frightened but kept telling herself it was only a dream. At the back of her mind, however, she was convinced it was not.

She entered an oval-shaped room — with three pyramid designs on the wall that she thought must be insignia of some kind — which was bathed in an exceptionally bright light.

A medical examination was then carried out. She had pains in her stomach and felt that something was being done to her head, and particularly to her ears.

At the end of this procedure she was taken to what appeared to be a refectory, where there seemed to be a lot of people eating, talking and relaxing. She was offered a drink but cannot recall any more details.

HER AWARENESS — which up to now had been rather unfocused — began to sharpen. She suddenly started to appreciate the enormity, and the extreme strangeness, of what was occurring. A sudden thought crystallised in her mind: 'They're aliens.'

As soon as the thought was out, Jayne felt that the entities realised she was not under the mysterious control that had made her so docile and compliant, and they did something to her, placing her into an altered state of consciousness.

She saw an image of her mother, who had been dead for many years. Jayne feels this imagery was deliberately placed in her mind to convince her that she was dreaming.

She then felt a curious pulling, as if she was being sucked into a vortex, followed by a thump as she fell back into her own bed. The time was now 4.35am and Jayne spent the next 20 minutes trying, unsuccessfully, to rouse her husband.

She made a cup of tea and lit a cigarette. Then she noticed that she was shaking uncontrollably and sweating. She started thinking about the events of the previous night and kept trying to convince herself that she had dreamed them.

When Tom, a mechanic, finally woke, Jayne told him about her 'nightmare'. Later, when both came to believe there was an astounding explanation for Jayne's experience, Tom gave her his complete support.

FOR THE rest of the day Jayne suffered from shaking, headaches and extreme thirst. She is usually very calm but every time she thought about her 'dream', a feeling of dread came over her. The family's dogs and cat also acted strangely and refused to come into the house.

When her son Mark came home at 5pm, his first words finally dashed her hopes of passing the incident off as a vivid nightmare: 'What the hell was going on in your bedroom last night?'

A chill came over Jayne as Mark described what he had experienced. It transpired that after he had made sure Sue had gone home, he had returned to bed but had been unable to sleep. He had then seen a bizarre green, fluorescent light shining all around his door, as if there was an extremely bright light source just outside his room.

He tried to move but was overcome by a feeling of paralysis. He, too, heard the eerie whooshing sound, together with what sounded like very loud voices, although quite unlike anything he had heard before. He was aware of nothing else until the morning.

Jayne, profoundly affected by this corroborative account, was very emotional over the next few days. She was afraid to go to bed and could do so only if her pets were in the room with her. The experience also seemed to unlock memories of earlier incidents, such as one in November 1991.

On this occasion Jayne woke with a start and had been aware of what she thought was an exceptionally bright full moon outside her window. Standing by the chest of drawers was a tall figure she assumed was her husband.

She wondered why he was standing there but assumed it had something to do with his insomnia. A few seconds later the truth dawned on her, as she moved her arm and felt that Tom was sleeping soundly beside her.

Only the benevolence emanating from the figure prevented her from screaming out.

As Jayne's night vision began to take effect, she got a better view. The figure was male, tall, with long blond/brown hair and possibly a beard. He was kindly-looking, not dissimilar to the popular image of Jesus.

He was wearing a shiny garment that looked almost as if it were made of polythene and was leaning against the chest of drawers, with his arms folded nonchalantly. The amazing thing was that Jayne could see right through him.

In the past she had seen what she had believed were ghosts, but Jayne sensed that this was very different and definitely possessed self-awareness.

Jayne hid under the quilt until the figure disappeared. The following morning her daughter, then eight, asked her: 'Why was Daddy watching me in bed last night?'

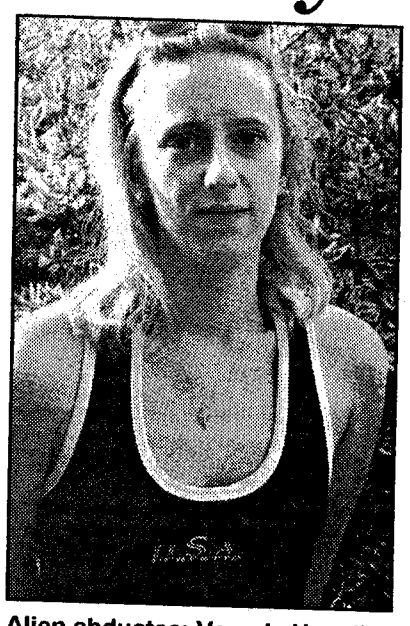
The next strange event took place on a Thursday night after Jayne had retired early. When she woke up she was not in bed but on a hard surface. She felt warm and comfortable and was aware of a lilac/white light above her in a narrow line, as if from a strip light, and of two figures on either side of her.

She heard a conversation: 'She's aware of where she is.' 'She can't be.' 'We've got to take her back.'

She then felt a spiralling sensation and found herself back in bed. Next day, she was positive the experience had been real, not just a dream.

Jayne says she has since developed precognition — the ability to see the future — and is now one of Britain's most talented clairvoyants.

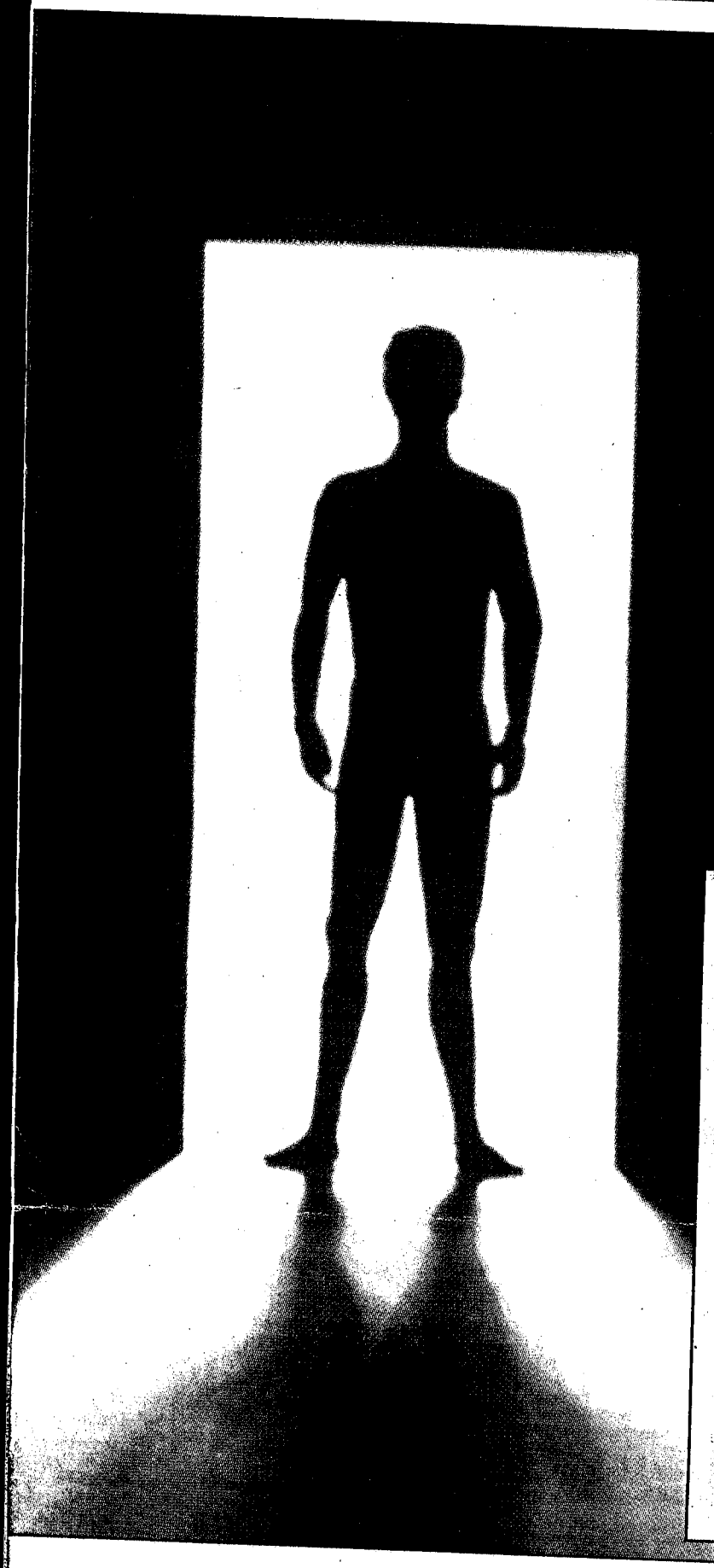
Greys



Alien abductee: Vaunda Hoscik

■ **HAVE you had any experiences of the paranormal? Send your accounts to the Features Department, Daily Mail, Northcliffe House, 2 Derry Street, London W8 5TT.**

BY THE DEFENCE OFFICIAL WHO BELIEVES ALIENS ARE ABDUCTING PEOPLE



Our car was sucked upwards into the air

ON JANUARY 3, 1991, Londoner Peter Milton, his American girlfriend Jenny Robinson and her friend Sharon Voght had a classic UFO encounter while driving from Orlando to Boca Raton, Florida — the details of which emerged only later during hypnotic regression.

They took the Florida Turnpike, a toll road which skirts around the Everglades and Lake Okeechobee. There is no way to leave the road other than by the exits, with booths and barriers.

Jenny was driving the rented Honda, while Peter was at her side. Sharon was asleep in the back.

Slowly, Peter became aware that something odd was happening. He had a map and had noticed that the distance between the last exit they had passed and the next one — the one they wanted — was short. They had placed the toll ticket on the dashboard with the few dollars they would need to pay at the booth.

But there was no sign of the exit. Peter wondered whether the map might be out of date and mentioned this to Jenny. She was a native of Florida and knew the route well. But she was confused, too. In an instant, they were on the outskirts of Boca Raton. They looked at each other in disbelief. The toll ticket and money were still on the dashboard. They did not mention the event to Sharon, since she had slept through it.

A few months later, Peter was chillingly reminded of their odd experience when he read a book about alien abductions. It described a motorist who had had a similar experience

In the autumn of 1995, Peter, his relationship with Jenny long since over, visited the U.S. once again. This time he underwent regression hypnosis to try to resolve what had happened on the toll road. Under hypnosis he told a remarkable story . . .

He recalled feeling uneasy. Next moment, their car was being pulled off the road. He glanced to his left and saw Jenny was sitting in the driving seat, staring ahead, with her hands on the steering wheel.

They felt nauseous as the car was drawn off the road and sucked upwards, turning as it went. When it stopped, they were surrounded by trees, as if they were in a clearing, a hundred feet up in the air.

The trees were illuminated, but Peter was unsure whether this was from the car headlights or from another source. Peter glanced again at Jenny, who seemed like a statue. He unfastened his seatbelt and opened the car door, telling Jenny that he wouldn't be long. He stepped out into thin air.

He was supported by an invisible surface which 'gave' slightly — a feeling he likened to walking on a mattress. He stepped up to avoid tripping on what seemed to be a bulkhead.

Suddenly, without being aware of how the transition had happened, Peter was walking down a metallic corridor. Floor lights were coming on in sequence and gave the impression of a moving arrow, which Peter felt he had to follow.

When the lights stopped, he was at an open door which led into a room piled with cardboard boxes full of junk. He recalled seeing hazard lamps and road traffic signs.

Leaving the room, he saw that the direction of the floor lights had reversed and were pointing back the way he had come. He followed them, not feeling the urge to explore. Soon he was walking on air again. When he looked back, the corridor was disappearing into the trees.

He got back into the car, closed the door and fastened his seatbelt. The car spun to the ground. It was put back on a road near Boca Raton.

spirited me away for tests

VAUNDA Hoscik, 22, from Dulwich, South London, believes she has been abducted by aliens many times.

She was only 14 when, she says, the extraterrestrial beings known to ufologists as Greys somehow spirited her from her bedroom and then subjected her to memory tests in a metallic, brightly lit room with banks of computer screens on the walls.

Several years later, says Vaunda, she had telepathic contact with an alien called Antholus, who said 16 alien species were visiting Earth, and some carried out experiments on people.

He told Vaunda: 'As the years have passed we have been studying your planet thoroughly. We have come to the conclusion that for every one person who believes in us there are another ten who don't.

'Therefore we have a harder task to convince those of you who don't believe.

'You have so much to offer us, just as we have a lot to offer you and your society. Hopefully, one day in the near future, we will be able to show you just what we can actually give you.

'It is an effort to keep ourselves hidden, with your technology becoming more and more advanced. Unfortunately, until we feel we can trust you completely, we are unable to reveal ourselves in full.

'This is why we are taking people, in the hope that they will spread the word of our existence.'

■ ON A summer's evening in 1979, in Didsbury, near Manchester, Lynda Jones was out walking with her young son and daughter. Suddenly they saw an object hurtling towards them from the sky and, thinking an aircraft was about to crash, they crouched down in a field. When the object had passed overhead they ran up a hill to get a better view. To their amazement, they saw a crescent-shaped UFO. Lynda was extremely curious, and felt drawn to it.

Time seemed to stand still for her, and she walked towards the brightly lit object. But, prompted by the shouting of her daughter, all three ran off. When they got home, one and a half hours of time was unaccounted for, and the following morning Lynda's husband, Trevor, noticed that she had red marks, similar to blistering sunburn, around her eyes. Under hypnotic regression, Lynda recalled seeing a figure in the field, followed by a floating sensation.

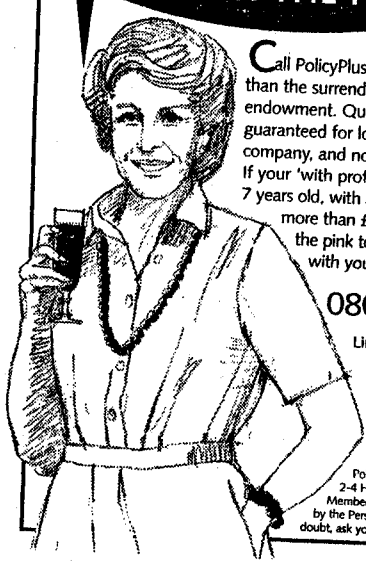
She then recalls being in a room with three tall figures with black hair, jump suits and large, black, almond-shaped eyes.

The figures were shining a bright light in her face. She does not know how to evaluate this incident, which she freely admits was outside her knowledge or experience.

■ *ABRIDGED extract from The Uninvited by Nick Pope, to be published by Simon & Schuster on June 2 at £15.99. © Nick Pope 1997. To order your copy p&p free, please call 01624 675137.*

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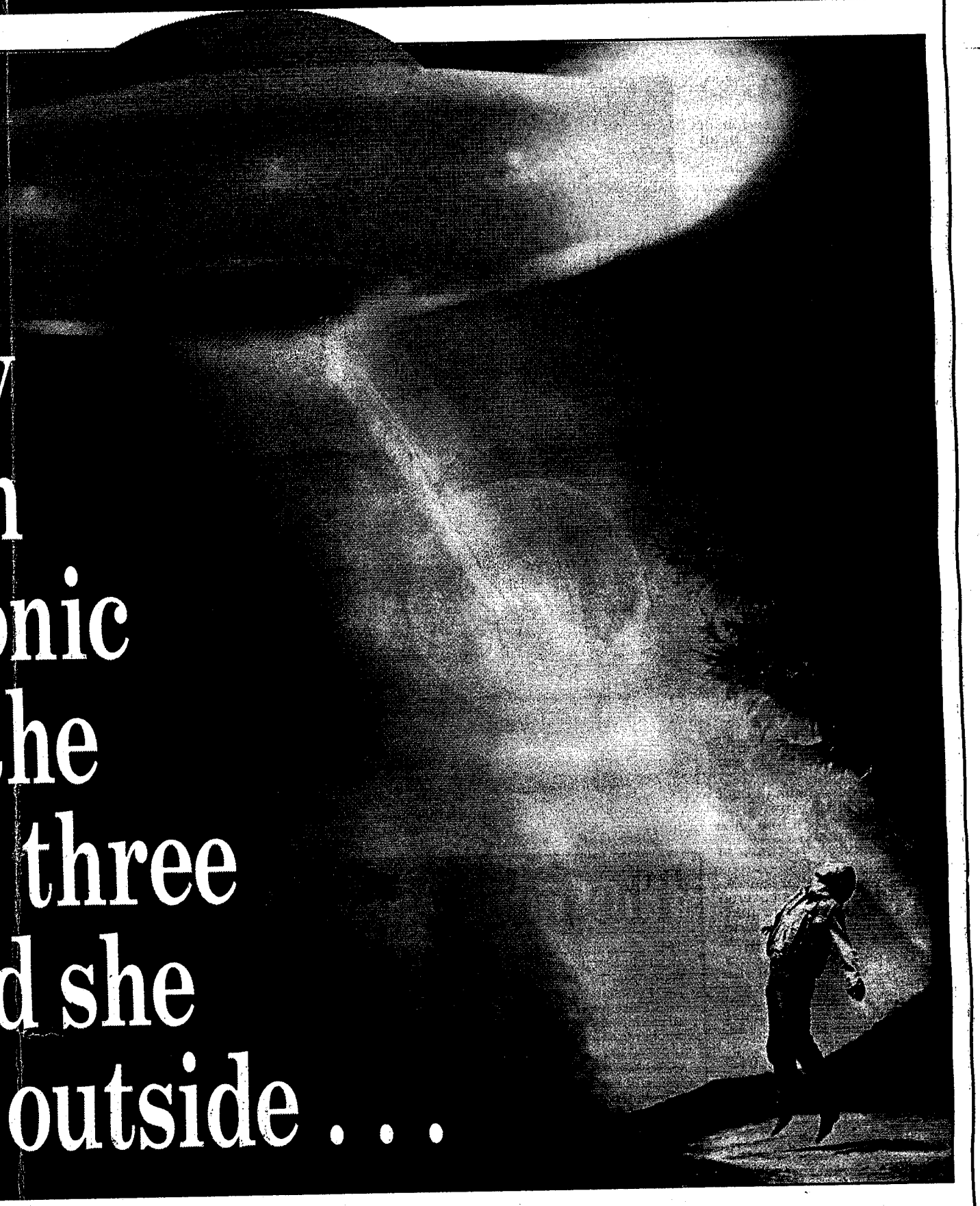
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ENCE OFFICIAL EXAMINES TALES OF ALIEN ABDUCTION AND DRAWS STARTLING CONCLUSIONS

vas so Her d was away re had been ious electronic g noises in the Now it was three norning and she bright light outside . . .



CKPOPE

CHILDHOOD recollections of 'going somewhere' when 'the Moon landed in the garden' came back to haunt Maria Ward after the birth of her son, Andras, when she was 19.

Doctors said she would not be able to have more children because a previous laparoscopy had left adhesions in her womb. A closer examination revealed a strange scar on her navel, consistent with keyhole surgery.

The doctors wanted to know about the operation. Maria was shocked and frightened. Apart from the removal of a cyst from her ear, she had never had surgery before.

Maria, now 36, from Dartford, Kent, did her best to forget this mystery. She got on with family life and started a five-year degree in philosophy.

Then, on November 21, 1990, Maria's husband, John, went away on a training course for a few days. Maria was apprehensive. For the previous two weeks there had been a series of mysterious, electronic beeping sounds in the house. That night,

MARIA'S STORY

at exactly 3.17am, she suddenly woke up as if someone had shaken her and noticed a bright light outside.

She saw an object which appeared to be shaped like a gigantic wheel, complete with spokes, and an outer rim festooned with multi-coloured lights of blue, white and red, which seemed to be rotating around the rim. At the hub of this 'wheel' was a bright white light.

The object moved closer, and she panicked. She was afraid for Andras, who was sleeping in the room with Maria (a special treat whenever John was away). She tried to rouse him, but, mysteriously, he would not wake up.

Suddenly, a blue/white light the size and shape of a football began to come through the bedroom wall. Maria heard a voice telling her not to be frightened and to follow the light.

She did, as if under some kind of compulsion, and was somehow led *through* the closed front door. She describes the process as being like 'moving through treacle', and recalls that she was aware of the internal structure of the wood — the splinters, gaps and knots.

Once outside she was pulled quickly upwards into the air, catching sight of a tennis ball in a gutter on the house. Weeks later, she pinpointed its exact location.

MARIA was suddenly aware that she had stopped moving and was standing on something solid. She saw three small, brown creatures in front of her.

They were up to 4ft tall, naked with hairless smooth skin and had large eyes. Somehow, Maria *knew* they were male, although no genitalia were visible.

She was taken into a room with a domed ceiling. In the centre was a raised, 'rectangular platform. Five creatures were with her and then another arrived and stood in front of her.

This one, physically, was markedly different. Taller and a dirty white in colour, its face was slightly fuller, and there was a small bump which might have been a nose and a slit where a mouth might have been.

Once Maria looked into its large black eyes, she could not look away. The being communicated a thought to her: 'Has it been so long.' Not a question, but a statement.

Maria found herself lying on the platform and felt her thoughts being 'pulled' out of her head. 'It was like someone was raping my mind,' she told me.

One of the creatures produced a lime-green device about a foot long and triangular in shape with a bright green light at its tip. She was prodded with it. Everywhere it touched her, bruises would later appear on her body.

When it touched her arm, she was able to see the blood flowing inside her, and even her bone structure.

Something was stuck into her finger and, though the skin was not broken, a tiny circle of red dots was visible for eight weeks after, she claimed.

A block descended from the ceiling and stopped just above her, bathing her with a blue/white light. Then one of the creatures inserted a long filament into her neck just below her right ear, causing terrible pain.

THE tall alien touched her forehead and stared into her eyes. The pain evaporated. It was as if she had been anaesthetised.

Maria glanced downwards and, to her horror, saw something moving inside her stomach.

There was a sharp pull at her navel, and then the sound of things being put in some sort of tray, somewhere at the foot of the platform, out of sight.

At another stage in the procedure, something was placed up her nose.

Finally, all the beings left, apart from one of the brown ones. Maria was now able to move. Realising that she was naked,

TURN TO NEXT PAGE



Maria w scared. husbanc and thei mysteri beeping house. N in the m saw a bi

FOR THREE years, Nick Pope was UFO desk officer at the Ministry of Defence's Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a. He swept aside official reticence about compelling military and civilian evidence of extraterrestrials visiting Earth. Concerned by the national security implications, he wrote Open Skies, Closed Minds, serialised by the Mail and an instant bestseller. All along, though, he was amassing evidence of an even more frightening phenomenon — abduction of humans by aliens. Now, in his new book, which is being serialised by the Mail, Pope reveals his extraordinary conclusion . . .



by NICK POPE

ABDUCTIONS of humans by alien visitors to Earth are fact, not fiction. That, I know, is a startling and shocking statement, but I stand by it. The evidence for abductions is so strong as to be virtually undeniable.

At the Ministry of Defence, I started out as a sceptic about UFOs but came to believe that *some* were genuinely of extraterrestrial origin. At the same time, I slowly accumulated evidence for the abduction of humans by these mysterious aliens.

Initially, I was distinctly sceptical about the abduction phenomenon. I believed these claims were made by cranks, and that they devalued 'ufology' and alienated the public.

Slowly, though, my views changed. The sheer volume of reports, the common features of independent accounts and the physical and emotional effects on abductees convinced me that we were dealing with more than just hoaxes or psychological delusions.

While prosaic explanations accounted for *some* abductions, they could not explain all of them. Around the world, thousands of people have reported being taken into a craft, against their will, by alien beings. The most likely explanation for this is that the witnesses are, generally speaking, describing events that actually took place.

Having spoken to hundreds of genuine, well-meaning people, I believe alien abduction may be far more common than even many ufologists suspect. The purpose of this extraterrestrial meddling is, I believe, to 'civilise' human society.

Most abductees are neither cranks nor hoaxers. They are only too mindful of the adverse reactions to their claims. Many had their sanity questioned, were called liars and ostracised by family and friends. At the very least, they have risked ridicule.

I started off feeling that genetic explanations, centring on an extraterrestrial programme to create a human/alien hybrid race, were the key to the mystery.

BUT why should aliens whose technology is clearly light years ahead of ours bother with the logistical nightmare of thousands of abductions when they could easily remove the genetic material they wanted from our laboratories?

Ultimately, though, I discarded the genetic theory because it did not tally with the views of the abductees I met, many of whom had positive feelings about their experiences.

This, coupled with the abductees' frequent and spontaneous development of interests in spiritualism and the environment, seemed at odds with the idea of aliens using them as guinea pigs.

I am the first to admit that my belief that the phenomenon is part of a campaign to civilise us is only one more theory to join the ranks of competing ideas.

The distress experienced by some abductees has been sobering and has acted as a brake on the idea that my theory may represent some sort of New Age interpretation of the phenomenon.

It would be nice to think that the motivation behind abductions is to prepare humans for entry into some sort of galactic network, but if this were so, why aren't the extraterrestrials open with us?

The covert nature of what is going on suggests that any alterations being made to our behaviour are done for the benefit of the abductors, not for us — perhaps to remove the threat we may pose to them.

This phenomenon needs serious investigation. The real crime against humanity may not be that inflicted upon us by extraterrestrials, but rather the official indifference that allows the phenomenon to continue unchallenged.

Today and tomorrow I will be revealing the most convincing — and startling — cases I have investigated.



Risking ridicule: Maria Ward Picture: NICKPOPE

THE UNINVITED

MORE ASTONISHING 'ALIEN ENCOUNTERS'

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

she put on her baggy T-shirt, which was lying beside her, neatly folded.

She had no recollection of how or when it had been removed.

Minutes later, another of the taller beings had somehow appeared in the room.

Maria instinctively knew this was a female, before she noticed that the creature was wearing what she could describe only as a crude, paper dress — as if for show.

The being stared at Maria, who felt the scrutiny to be uncomfortable and intrusive. She went through a complete range of emotions, which she felt were being deliberately induced.

Then images were flashed in front of her, some of them apocalyptic and distressing.

ONE showed the Earth, as if from space, with what appeared to be a horrendous yellow and black bruise over the North Pole. Could this have been a warning about the hole in the ozone layer?

Another image was of a nuclear explosion in the South of France.

Finally, as a wave of tiredness swept over her, she was led out of the room. The next thing Maria knew, she was walking up the stairs in her house back to bed. She glanced at the clock. It was 4.23am.

When she awoke she did not remember anything. But, while brushing her hair, she noticed that quite a lot of it was missing from the back of her head.

There were further revelations: her T-shirt was covered with a strange orange material and her feet were dirty. She felt as if she were in shock.

Over the next few weeks, memories came back in disjointed fragments. And she suddenly began to suffer claustrophobia, which became so debilitating that she consulted her doctor.

He felt she was suffering from traumatic stress, stemming from some intense, unpleasant experience. When his questions failed to find any obvious cause, the doctor suggested Maria undergo hypnosis to relax her.

A hypnotherapist, Dr Susan Winne, suggested that Maria be regressed. But instead of a 'conventional' cause being discovered, Maria recounted the story of the abduction.

MARIA also spontaneously regressed to when, at 16, she had apparently been sealed in a perspex capsule which floated above the ground and filled with a gelatinous pink liquid.

Dr Winne would not continue the session, saying that she was simply not able to evaluate Maria's account.

It is important to stress that this was the only regression session Maria has undergone.

Once these memories surfaced, the rest began to emerge unaided.

What are we to make of Maria? The sceptics might simply say she is lying, but she has passed two polygraph 'lie-detector' tests administered by a qualified expert, Jeremy Barrett.

■ *ABRIDGED extract from The Uninvited by Nick Pope, to be published by Simon & Schuster on June 2, at £15.99. © Nick Pope 1997. To order your copy p&p free, please call 01624 675137.*



The essential features of an extra-terrestrial

DAVID E. JACOBS is a historian who has analysed the stories of more than 60 abductees. The abductees did not know each other and had not heard of each others' experiences.

Yet, under hypnosis, the alien figures they described were so alike that Jacobs could set down common denominators and describe the essential features of an extraterrestrial.

They occur so frequently, and are so stereotyped, that they have even been given a name: psychologists call them the 'Greys'.

■ A GREY is 3½ to 4½ft tall, with a disproportionately large head, like a pear upside down.

■ THEY are hairless, have leathery skin, only the smallest protuberance for a nose and lipless mouths that do not move.

■ THEY communicate by telepathy.

■ THE most striking feature is the eyes: black, enormous, almond-shaped, compelling. They do not blink, nor do they move in their sockets. They are like goggles. Yet, staring into them, they seem to have enormous power — to communicate, to reassure or to frighten.

■ GREYS are usually naked, but no genitals are seen. The chest does not swell as they breathe.

■ THESE beings are frail, with thin limbs and no bone structure or musculature. They have three fingers, with no opposable thumb.

A second type is also reported: the Nordic. It is humanoid, taller and has blond hair. Americans see 12 Greys to every one Nordic. In Europe, though, the Nordics outnumber the Greys.

Some abductees feel that the Nordics are female. One woman even reported that a Nordic had tried on her high-heeled shoes. That is either evidence of derangement or it is a detail that no one could possibly have made up.

One bizarre detail: to Britons, Greys smell of cinnamon or rotting leaves; in America, the scent is of ammonia, sulphur, lemons and almonds.

The bobby snatched from his beat

ONE of the most famous abduction cases in Britain happened on November 26, 1980, and involved a police constable based in the Yorkshire town of Todmorden.

Alan Godfrey was nearing the end of his night shift when he was ordered to investigate reports that some cows had escaped from a farmer's field and were getting into private gardens.

Godfrey drove towards the area and, as he rounded a bend, saw what he at first took to be a bus in the road. On closer inspection, he saw it was a diamond-shaped object hovering 5ft above the ground. Godfrey attempted to contact his headquarters, but his radio would not function properly.

He decided to sketch the object in his notebook and after having done so found himself suddenly and mysteriously about 100 yards further down the road. The UFO had vanished.

He returned to the police station, picked up a colleague and went back to the site of his encounter. They noticed that the road was much drier at the point where Godfrey had seen the craft.

What puzzled him was that, when he had returned to the police station, it had been much later than he thought. Under hypnosis, an abduction story emerged.

Apparently, Godfrey had got out of the car for a better look at the object, but had suddenly seen a bright light emanating from the craft. He had been frightened and had tried to drive off, only to find that his car would not start.

Recalling being inside the craft, he felt he was being restrained. He saw a tall, bearded humanoid figure called Joseph, together with smaller creatures who Joseph said were robots. Godfrey even described seeing a dog on the craft.

He said that he was placed on a table, but, despite recollections of a bright light and some sort of machinery, was unable to remember any further details.



Bright light: Alan Godfrey

Alfred the fisherman was not a prize catch

ON AUGUST 12, 1983, Alfred Burtoo was night-fishing on the Basingstoke Canal near Aldershot, Hampshire, when he saw a bright light approaching.

His dog growled and then Alfred saw two entities walking towards him. They were about 4ft tall, dressed in green one-piece overalls, with their heads covered by a sort of helmet. They beckoned to him to follow them, which he did.

Then, on the towpath, he encountered a UFO on the ground and followed the beings aboard. After some time inside, during which Burtoo had been observing his surroundings, he was told to stand under a light.

He was asked his age, and told them he was 77. To his disappointment, he was told that he was too old for their purposes. He then left the craft, heard a whining noise and saw the craft fly away at high speed.

Incredibly, he calmly picked up his equipment and carried on fishing. Burtoo died in 1986, never once having changed his story.



UFO reject: Alfred Burtoo

AN IMPORTANT British case occurred near Aveley in Essex in 1974. John and Susan Day, with their three children, were returning from a relative's house when they saw a blue light following them.

A little later, their car radio began to malfunction and gave off smoke. As the car negotiated a bend, it entered a patch of strange green mist and was jolted. When the vehicle emerged from the mist, the family found they were much further down the road.

Arriving home, they turned on their television and were amazed to find that the evening's programmes had finished. They had lost several hours.

Under hypnosis, the Days recalled being taken onto a craft and subjected to medical investigations. The aliens they recalled were tall humanoids, which ufologists label Nordics.

■ ON DECEMBER 1, 1987, a former policeman, Philip Spencer, was walking on Ilkley Moor in Yorkshire. He heard a low humming sound and then saw a strange creature. He took a photograph of it and followed it to a UFO which seemed to consist of two saucers joined together. The entity got into the craft, which accelerated away at high speed.

When Spencer returned home, he found he had lost two hours and, during a hypnotic regression, recalled being taken into the craft by creatures with pointed ears.

As a number of other abductees have reported, he was then shown a film which contained apocalyptic images. He was also shown a second film, the contents of which he was told not to reveal.

Baffled by a strange gap in time

TOMORROW: WHAT ELSE COULD EXPLAIN ALIEN ABDUCTIONS?

International Herald Tribune
5th April 1997
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For Many Americans, Existence of UFOs Is an Article of Faith

By Barry James
International Herald Tribune

For many ufologists, it's another government cover up. This month, the U.S. Department of Defense attempted once again to convince the American people that the military has not made contact with aliens, is not harboring an alien base under the Nevada desert and is not harboring the remains of unidentified flying objects.

In fact, a Pentagon spokesman said, the military gave up the search for aliens 18 years ago because it was considered a waste of taxpayers' money.

The conspiracy theorists who abound in America and literally swarm on the Internet might point out that 18 years is about as long as little gray beings with pointy heads and wraparound eyes have been stealing people from their beds in the middle of the night and forcing them to take part in a kind of intergalactic breeding program.

The fact that most of these abductions take place in the United States, said Philip J. Klass, a longtime skeptic, is an indication either than Americans are tastier, or "we have more kooks."

Ufology began 50 years ago this summer when a pilot, Kenneth Arnold, reported sighting a formation of silvery disks above Mount Rainier on June 24, 1947. Newspapers coined the expression "flying saucers," and within a few months accounts of more sightings started pouring in by the hundreds.

Two weeks after Mr. Arnold had his vision, a rancher in New Mexico found some unusual wreckage — bits and pieces of a thin, lightweight silvery material with patterns that resembled hieroglyphs. The wreckage was taken to the nearby Roswell Air Base, where a spokesman announced that the Army Air Corps had recovered a "flying disk."

Although the statement was quickly retracted, the lore about aliens spread unchecked amid the secrecy surrounding America's nuclear weapons development, and now seems as deeply implanted in the human consciousness as earlier myths about fairies, witches or demons.

Ufology, said Mr. Klass in an interview, "is a modern substitute for religion." Indeed, the California cultists who committed suicide to join a spaceship they believed to be traveling in the wake of the Hale-Bopp comet borrowed a concept believed by millions of American born-again Protestants — that at the end of the world, the chosen few will be "raptured" into heaven while the rest stay below to fight it out at the Battle of Armageddon.

Many UFO buffs are convinced that the government has recovered alien bodies and an intact flying saucer. Some say they know for sure that aliens have a base in southern Nevada known as Area 51 or more simply as Dreamland, and others believe just as firmly that the government has signed a treaty with the gray intruders — their technology in exchange for the right to abduct Americans for use in medical experiments and a breeding program. That's not all. Among ufologists, aliens are widely held responsible for the deaths of cattle, whose remains, always "surgically dissected," are left to baffle small-town sheriffs.

A few true believers, who call themselves "starseed," are firmly convinced that they themselves ARE aliens, but hardened conspiracy theorists dismiss them as government plants to discredit the UFO movement.

The U.S. Air Force and the General Accounting Office have both issued lengthy reports saying the wreckage found in 1947 came from a balloon used to track evidence of Soviet nuclear explosions.

As alien speculation mounted with the arrival of the Hale-Bopp comet and the suicide of California cultists, a Defense Department spokesman, Ken Bacon, stated, "We cannot substantiate the existence of UFOs, and we are not harboring remains of UFOs."

Mr. Bacon said that between 1947 and 1969, as part of "Project Blue Book," the air force investigated 12,618 sightings and found no evidence that any were extraterrestrial vehicles.

What the Pentagon spokesman did not and could not explain is why so many Americans and a growing number of people around the world believe that they have been abducted by aliens. The mythology about alien kidnapping began to accrue in the 1960s with the publication of John G. Fuller's book, "The Interrupted Journey," which told how a couple, Barney and Betty Hill, were abducted off a lonely road, taken to a space craft and subjected to medical experiments.

In the 1980s, a New York artist called Budd Hopkins uncovered hundreds of similar stories by hypnotizing subjects, writing about their experiences in two books, "Missing Time," and "Intruders." He sent many of the subjects to a Harvard psychiatrist, John Mack, whose views, which he wrote about in a 1994 best-seller called "Abduction," is essentially that if people believe they have been taken by aliens it must be true. Earlier, Whitley Strieber, a science-fiction writer, told about his personal abduction experience in a best-seller called "Communion."

But like tales of childhood sexual abuse, all of these accounts have emerged under hypnosis with, critics say, a lot of suggestion from the therapists.

"There is zero hard evidence of any sort," said

a Harvard colleague of Dr. Mack, the physicist Paul Horowitz. "There are only anecdotes, experiences earnestly believed but not buttressed by any sort of real evidence."

Robert Baker, emeritus professor of psychology at the University of Kentucky, said that the abductions were real enough to those who say they experience them. "During the middle ages, they were called incubus and succubus attacks," he said. "The modern equivalent of the demons is the aliens. These are what we call waking dreams."

David Hufford, professor of humanities at Penn State medical school, said the cause is sleep paralysis. "Most people," he said, "will tell you, 'I woke up, I couldn't move. There was something frightening in the room with me. It wanted to do me harm.'

"One person might say, 'So I think it was an alien.' Someone else might think it was an abominable snowman. That is a matter of inference from their culture."

Bill Ellis, a folklorist at Penn State, said he believed that all people have the same kind of dreams, but the way they express them conforms to their culture. "An ancient Greek might have seen it as going up with the Gods," he said. "In 20th century America, it is seen as being abducted by aliens."

In telling their stories, Mr. Ellis said, "abductees" resort to the images supplied by Hollywood and particularly by television. Pseudo-documentary programs like the "X-Files," in which a couple of FBI agents investigate alien happenings as routinely as though they were ordinary homicides, blur the line between fact and fiction.

The face of TV travel programmes for almost 30 years, John Carter is facing his last sunset.

The 61-year-old Wish You Were Here? presenter has been told he is too old for the job.

He has been axed from the show and anchorwoman Judith Chalmers, also 61, is making room for 36-year-old Anthea Turner.

Last night Mr Carter — who created the BBC's Holiday programme in 1968 and has presented ITV's Wish You Were Here? for ten years — said: 'I am sad to be going and sorry it's ended like this.

'I was told they want the show to appeal to a younger audience so they do not want a presenter who is a grandfather and there is absolutely nothing I can do about being old. I went into the office yesterday to be told there was no place for me in the new-style programme.'

The father-of-three, who has five grandchildren, added: 'The producer Kim Robson told me the bad news. This time last year I was told that instead of 18 assignments I would be on 11, and that was the first indication of what was to follow.

'As I understand it, it was not the team at Wish You Were Here?, or its makers Thames, that made the decision.

'As far as I am aware they were pressured into getting rid of me by Network Centre. The bosses there have been saying the programme needs to appeal to a more youthful audience. I think they are wrong. The programme appeals across the spectrum, as well as attracting the older viewers who are the people with the disposable income to buy the holidays.

'I hope the show will succeed in the new format but I feel it will not. It is becoming more of an entertainment show than an information show.

'I'm not sure why it has to be changed. I know they need to attract different types of viewers to attract advertisers, but the ratings are not bad.'

'John's pride took rather a pummelling'

In fact, at 10million, the viewing figures for Wish You Were Here? are higher than any other travel programme. Its closest competitor, BBC1's Holiday presented by Jill Dando, attracts between eight and nine million.

Channel 4 has launched several travel shows aimed at a younger audience, each with little ratings success. Gaby Roslin's The Real Holiday Show attracts 4.1million viewers, while Lonely Planet manages just 1.5million.

Mr Carter, who lives in Bromley, Kent, added: 'Last night I came home and opened a bottle of champagne and my daughter came over and she said maybe this was the best thing for me, that I needed a kick up the backside. Maybe she is right. I have been on travel programmes for a long time and I suppose I am getting on.

'I'm sure now I'll have time for more writing and radio work as well as being able to put more into the travel industry charity I'm helping to launch in May.

'I wish Miss Turner all the best. I've never worked with her but she did a story for us from South America and I understand it went well. I hear she is a very professional presenter and she seems quite a nice girl.'

A programme source said: 'John's pride certainly took rather a pummelling. It's very hard when someone tells you your writing ability is marvellous and you add a necessary authority to the show, and then says you're too old so none of that matters.

'There has been the feeling for some time that the show should have a younger format and John couldn't fit into that plan.'

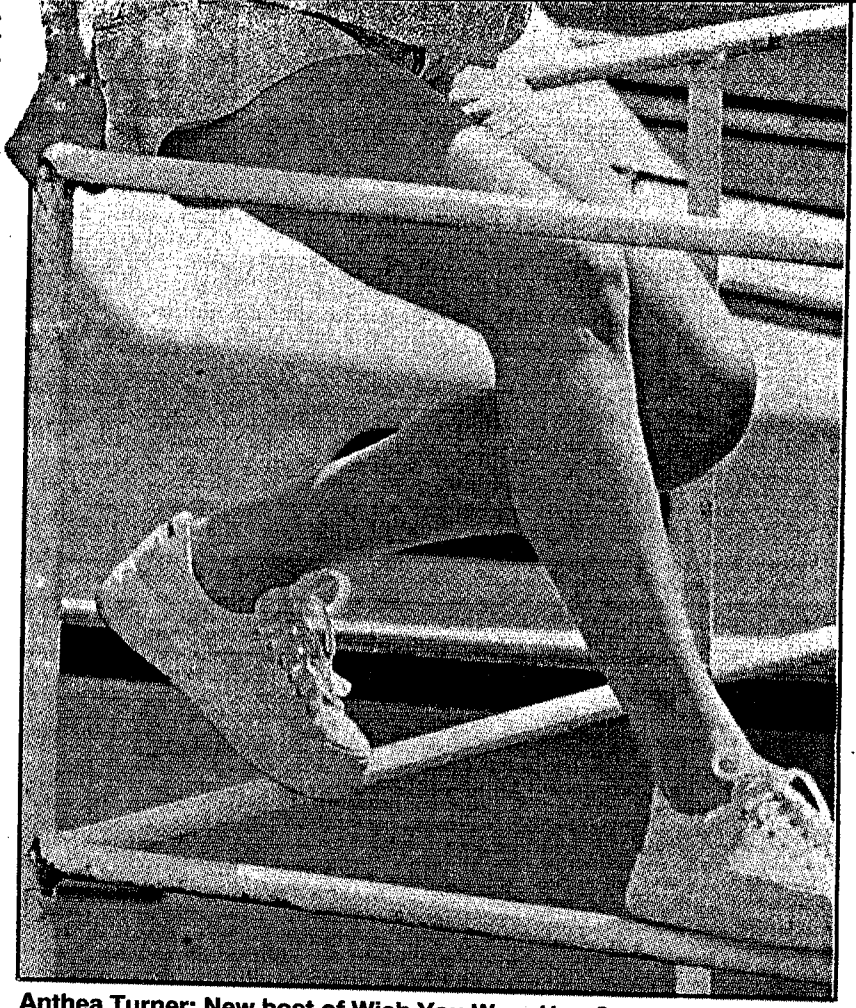
Following lengthy talks with programme-makers, Miss Chalmers will now present 11 holiday features a year while Miss Turner hosts the 20-part series.

Miss Chalmers said: 'I'm delighted to be spending more time at home. Now I will be away for about three months a year rather than six. I have worked for Wish You Were Here? for 24 years now and I can't imagine ever not being in it.'

EXCLUSIVE

By ANNE SHOOTER

Showbusiness Reporter



Anthea Turner: New host of Wish You Were Here?

Sorry, ET, but the Pentagon says you do not exist

ET may be out there, but if he wants to make contact he will have to land on the White House lawn and seek a change of policy.

For the Pentagon is certain there is no such thing as an extra-terrestrial and that UFO sightings are all either figments of imagination or natural phenomena. In fact, it has not investigated any sightings since 1969, it was disclosed yesterday.

The issue arose following the mass suicide of 39 members of the Heaven's Gate cult who believed they were linking up with a spacecraft tucked in the tail of the Hale-Bopp comet.

Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said the Air Force had investigated 12,618 sightings between 1947 and 1969 and found no evidence of extra-terrestrials, exotic technology or any threat to the United States.

Virtually all reports of flying saucers and other spacecraft turned out to be explainable as aircraft or weather phenomena.

'We cannot substantiate that UFOs exist,' said Mr Bacon.

There is not, however, total disregard for the possibility that aliens might fly by. America's Space Surveillance Centre still maintains a 24-hour watch, although its main duty is identifying man-made space junk. In Britain, the Ministry of Defence still studies UFO reports in a department called Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a, recently highlighted by Nick Pope, a former administrator, in his book Open Skies, Closed Minds, serialised in the Daily Mail last year.

Daily Mail 3 April 1997

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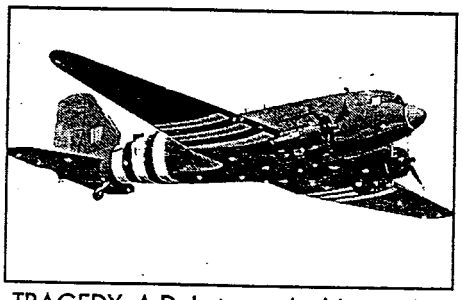
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MD

Daily Mirror
26th March 1997
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WW2 GHOST PLANE RIDDLE ON MOORS



TRAGEDY: A Dakota crashed in wartime



SEARCH: Rescue teams join the hunt for the mystery plane

By STEVE DENNIS

Rescuers can't find 'crash'

A MYSTERY plane crash that vanished without trace left witnesses and rescuers baffled yesterday.

Locals dialled 999 after seeing the plane explode in flames as it hit a remote Yorkshire moor.

Emergency services from two counties launched a huge search on Monday night.

But despite scouring the moors for 24 hours, not one piece of wreckage was found.

Now people in Hope, South Yorks, are talking of a ghost plane after recalling an identical mystery crash two years ago — on the 50th anniversary of a World War Two Dakota coming down nearby.

Witness Mariafrance Tattersfield, 39, a former special constable from nearby Sheffield, said: "I know what I saw. None of this adds up."

The search began after she and other witnesses reported a blinding orange flash and billowing smoke as the twin engined plane crashed on the Pennines above Hope Forest.

Fifty police from Yorkshire and Derbyshire, fire and ambulance crews, more than 100 men and dogs from seven mountain rescue teams, an RAF helicopter and the West Yorks police helicopter joined in.

Police said: "It certainly is a mystery and extremely baffling — reliable witnesses clearly saw something go down."

The spot is just three miles from where the Dakota crashed in 1945, killing all seven Canadian crew.

Two years ago postman Tony Ingle, 53, reported seeing a Dakota crash in the same area.

But when he raced to the scene he found only grazing sheep.

He said: "I don't believe in ghosts and have racked my brains for explanation but there isn't one."

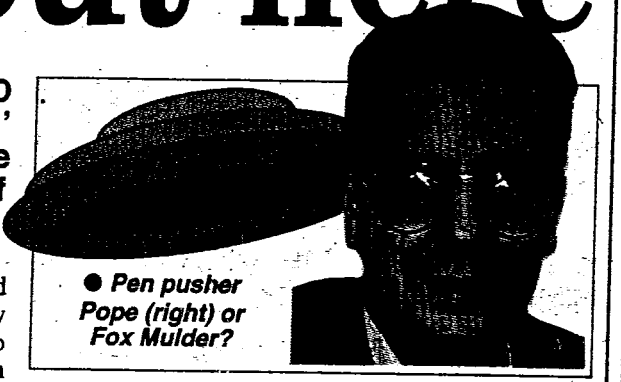
Bedfordshire on Sunday, March 9, 1997

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PIERRE WILLIAMS hears the news from space

The truth is out here

A SELF-STYLED UFO 'expert' took a £100 fee to tell a group of stargazers ...not a lot.



● *Pen pusher Pope (right) or Fox Mulder?*

Nick Pope, who used to work at the Ministry of Defence, talked to Bedford UFOlogists on Tuesday night but according to former colleagues he has little specialist knowledge.

"He never was and in our view never will be an expert on UFOs," said an MoD spokesman after we asked for Mr Pope's UFO credentials.

"He was a low-grade civil servant filing letters telling of apparent UFO sightings. He knows what he thinks he knows."

Despite his alleged lack of knowledge, Mr Pope, 31, makes a comfortable living writing books and lecturing on the subject.

He managed about 30 lectures last year, with a dozen more planned and a trip to America to tell of his experiences.

He said: "I have been called the real Fox Mulder (of X-Files fame), but that's another story."

Despite talking to the Bedford group for almost two hours at Edward Arnold Court, Emmerton Road, Mr Pope said little of significance.

He told the group that astronomers regularly saw UFOs but were reluctant to report them for fear of ridicule.

"There is a trickster-like quality about these objects – as if someone is leading us on. I am aware that Bedford has experienced its own UFO activity, especially over Chicksands base.

"If intelligent extra-terrestrial visitors are travelling here they may be coming to see what nasty little toys we have."

He also said it was 'quite a buzz' standing in corn circles.

When asked why UFOs were not intercepted by air force jets, Mr Pope said: "UFOs are stealthy. Our fighters are scrambled and the object has gone.

"Forget it – we're never going to catch one; these things are capable of a very quick getaway."

Ken Parsons of the Kempston branch of the British Earth and Aerial Mysteries Society (BEAMS) said of Mr Pope: "He was quite guarded in what he was saying and didn't come up with anything new – but we got our money's worth."

"You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time but you can't fool all of the people all of the time."

Abraham Lincoln

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE,
RAF COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER (WALES)

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The Western Mail

Monday, 3 March 1997

BRIEFLY

UFO petition

THE West Wales Paranormal group is organising a petition to get a Government response about a number of UFO sightings over Cardigan Bay last November.

Half a dozen separate accounts of a mysterious black triangle craft in the skies on November 21 were logged by the group and there were numerous other sightings of mysterious lights in the sky.

END

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28 FEB 97

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

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MRE

NEWS

PRINT FOR FASTER JUSTICE

matic right to jury trial

ld deal enders

● Report recommends free legal advice for guilty pleas

ases because they considered he offence too minor to merit urther action.

The CPS would also be obliged o provide an on-call service at veekends and evenings and vould have greater administrative back-up in reviewing files.

EGAL REPRESENTATION

To speed up the process once a rial gets to court the report ecommends changing the way egal aid and representation is rovided.

Where defendants promise to plead guilty they would be given ree legal advice on the morning of the court appearance regardless of whether they were entitled to legal aid.

However, if defendants pleading guilty want their own lawyer they will no longer be able to delay procedings until he is available. The court would impose a duty solicitor on them if their own choice could not be made available in time.

MAGISTRATES' COURT

More powers would be given to Clerks to the Justices to manage pre-trial hearings. Only when the cases were ready for trial would they go before magistrates who would decide only on bail, guilt and sentences.

The clerks would be given many new powers including the right to extend bail, dismiss cases when no evidence was offered, request pre-sentence reports in guilty pleas and arrange the timetable for the proceedings. Defendants could appeal against any decision to the magistrates if they felt it unfair.

TRIAL BY JURY

The most controversial recommendation involves taking away the defendant's right to insist on trial by jury when a magistrate decided the case should be tried summarily in a magistrates' court. This applies to those cases classified as "either way" offences which could be tried in either court.

In the year to September 1996, 24,170 defendants in this category chose a Crown Court trial, often in the hope that they might have a greater chance of acquittal. This amounted to around a quarter of all the cases tried at Crown Court.

But two-thirds of them later pleaded guilty, wasting considerable money and three-quarters of all defendants electing for jury trial were later convicted.

The report recommends that the defendant lose the absolute right to demand a jury trial against the recommendation of the magistrate.

It estimates that the proposal would result in 18,000 of the 24,000 cases being heard in the lower court.

Critics argue that for someone of good character even a minor conviction for dishonesty can have a grave impact on their reputation and so they should be entitled to a jury trial. The report accepted that this might be taken into consideration by the magistrate but quoted one who said he could not remember the last time someone had chosen a jury trial "for reasons of reputation".

This could save up to £70 million, it is estimated.

Also recommended is that serious cases like murder which were certain to go to the Crown Court should go straight there rather than spend half their life in magistrates' court.

By completing cases more quickly it should also "reduce prisoner escapes".

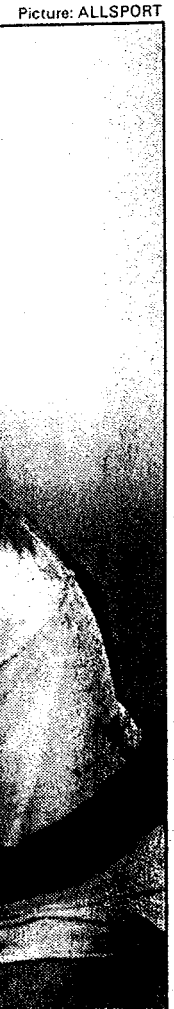
YOUTH COURTS

The report recommends reversing the 1991 Criminal Justice Act which placed 17-year-olds in the jurisdiction of the youth courts.

It suggests they be returned to the adult courts as "they tend to be experienced as offenders". This would affect 35,000 cases. Those youths receiving cautions or conditional discharges could have conditions attached to them.

Editorial Comment: Page 29

Picture: ALLSPORT



Court ruling paves way for sportsmen to challenge bans

By Will Bennett

A RUGBY international won a landmark legal ruling yesterday paving the way for sportsmen to challenge disciplinary decisions by regulatory bodies in the courts.

Mark Jones, a 16-stone forward, was granted an injunction lifting his suspension for fighting during a match until his appeal has been heard.

The case marks an important extension of legal intervention in sporting disputes. In the past judges have been reluctant to get involved in disciplinary matters.

More challenges are expected after Mrs Justice Ebsworth told the High Court that disciplinary decisions now affected the livelihoods of professional players.

Jones, who plays for Ebbw Vale, was sent off after a but the new professional Welsh Rugby Union was



Mrs Justice Ebsworth: bans affect players' careers

IN BRIEF

BBC admits error over campaign

The BBC admitted last night that it was wrong to allow Ben Bradshaw, one of its reporters, to campaign for Labour while on paid leave.

Mr Bradshaw, 36, was suspended from Radio 4's *The World At One* to ensure impartiality after his selection as Labour candidate for Exeter last September. He could not be found alternative work and was released on full pay, prompting Tory complaints.

Admiral warns of 'Satanic aliens'

Aliens are among us and are under Satanic control, according to UFO Concern, a predominantly Anglican pressure group founded by Lord Hill-Norton, a retired Admiral of the Fleet and former Chief of Defence staff.

Lord Hill-Norton has written to interested parties about the threat, says the *Church Times*. He claims UFO incidents have been covered up.

Isabelle Lucas

rages over keys to Bayreuth



SIEGFRIED LAUTERWASSER

he archetypal Wagnerian role, as portrayed at Bayreuth in the postwar years by the great German bass-baritone, Hans Hotter

al controversy. Semitism does ... in Nike's ... helps her Wolfgang de- olic. She is the ieland whom ... to agree had tic talent than ... accuses her g a witches' ksberg) out of ch the ghosts of the past are summoned again and again. Nike, whose qualifications are those of a musical critic rather than director, proposed that the Wagner festival be staged every two years instead of annually to allow new ideas to develop.

The conventional comparison of the Bayreuth succession contest is with the antics of the Ewing family in the *Dallas* soap opera. The family, and the plot, are indeed tangled. Wolfgang considers both Nike and her brother, Wolf-Siegfried (a talented stage director), to be disloyal and unworthy of Bayreuth. Even as a child Gottfried was banned from playing with them.

Eva, Wolfgang's daughter by his first marriage, is a talent scout for the Metropolitan Opera in New York but she, too, is not considered a worthy successor by Wolfgang. Gottfried's lasting concern with Wagner's anti-Semitism seems to exclude him. The most likely member of the family to take over after Wolfgang's death is his second wife, Gudrun.

Bayreuth need not be controlled by a Wagner. The festival is managed by a public foundation with an elected board. But five out of 24 seats are reserved for Wagner family members and they, or rather Wolfgang, usually carry the day. His rule is crumbling, however, and like King Lear the king of Bayreuth is stumbling on blindly, banishing his children, disinheriting and pronouncing curses. This, say Wagnerians, will be the year that the fourth generation strikes back.

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cancelled a planned for est, told Mr tter that the e confidence rocess and anger that olence and ss of peace

An Israeli d yesterday nan, 22, a d wounded in Hebron eated in a d and not

Pentagon 'UFO' site revealed on film

THE Pentagon is bracing itself for calls from conspiracy theorists after news that Area 51, a top-secret site where the American Government tests stealth aircraft and is alleged to have held captured UFOs, has been revealed on camera (Anjana Ahuja writes).

The film, made in 1964, does not record details of the site but shows a scientist chalking on a blackboard the phrase "move out to Area 51". The authorities have never acknowledged the site, and often deny its existence.

The footage was uncovered by Hugh McDaid while shooting *Robot Warriors*, a documentary on unmanned aircraft.

According to Mr McDaid, the film was a top-secret briefing film for military and intelligence personnel. The scientist shown writing on the blackboard was Clarence "Kelly" Johnson, who designed the Lockheed U2 spy plane.

The refusal of the USAF to confirm or deny anything regarding the site has fuelled speculation that it is a cover for something more sinister than testing new aircraft. Some believe the US Government has captured flying saucers and used the base to conduct experiments on the vehicles and their inhabitants.

è Observer
December 1996

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The Men In Black are out there. But who are they? And why did they kill Beethoven?

Strange things can happen anywhere, even in Birmingham. Cynthia Appleton lived in Birmingham and strange things certainly happened to her. If they had occurred today, her experiences would probably merit only half a footnote in the UFO literature; with interest in the extra-terrestrial now at an all-time high, alien encounters seem to be ten-a-penny. Back in 1957, however, a native of Venus materialising in a West Midlands living room was on the unique side.

And yet, nearly four decades on from Cynthia's frequent encounters, what interests the Ufologists is not what the visitor had to say, or how he said it, but his tailoring. 'Cynthia Appleton's is the first British encounter with one of the Men In Black,' says leading UFO researcher Jenny Randles. The Venusian, you see, came in black suit, tie and homburg hat. He was, in short, a particularly well-dressed alien.

No one could claim that the Men In Black – or MIBs, as the aficionados call them – have been thronging Britain's streets ever since. Reports remain resolutely few and far between. But interest in this little-talked-about aspect of the UFO phenomenon is definitely on the up. Next year, the fortieth anniversary of Cynthia's encounter, sees the publication of a new book by Randles that explores the history and myth of the MIBs. The Internet is now groaning with thousands of pages dedicated to their activities, including a new on-line magazine titled *MIB*. There's also a major Hollywood movie called, simply, *Men In Black*, starring Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith, due for release in the spring. Hell, why not beat the rush and prepare your wardrobe now? Buy yourself a black suit, white shirt, black tie and hat. No self-respecting follower of kooky fashion will be without them next year.

In truth, Cynthia Appleton's experience was decidedly atypical. In the classic MIB scenario, the visitor is not identifiably an alien in a suit (although there are many suggestions that they may be), and they are rarely as friendly or open as Cynthia said hers was. As befits individuals who like to wear officious-looking outfits and drive around in big, black scary cars, their common currency is threat and menace. They are generally accused of trying to scare the bejesus out of anybody who reports a UFO sighting and, while no one has come up with a plausible theory as to where they come from or where they go back to when they disappear, they stand accused of being part of a massive conspiracy to cover up The Truth.

The Truth being, of course, that aliens have long been here but that They don't want us to know. Hence, in the forthcoming movie, Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith play members of a top secret organisation established to monitor and police alien activity on Earth. To the lover of the paranormal and bizarre, that is their appeal. For a long time all thought has been on the UFO; on what, as *The X Files* puts it, is 'Out There'. The myth of the MIB is fundamentally different. They aren't out there, at all. They are Here, among us.

Which is why theories about MIBs often go far beyond involvement in the simple mechanics of UFO sightings. In this millennial age where the end of the world is said to be nigh – or if not nigh then at least due the day after nigh – the MIBs are now being fingered for much, much more. Ask around a bit and you will soon find people willing to accuse them of everything from murdering Beethoven, through to Stalin's purges, to detonating the Oklahoma bomb. No wonder they keep their heads down.

Nevertheless, the first account of MIB activities was decidedly UFO-related and it happened in America. (Well, what did you expect? Belgium?) Shortly after World War II, Albert K. Bender had founded the grandly titled International Flying Saucer Bureau, an organisation dedicated to the belief that UFOs were craft from outer space. And why not? While it only boasted a few hundred members, it did manage to publish a magazine called *Space Review*. The edition of October 1953 made curious reading. In it, Bender claimed that the authorities had solved the mystery of the flying saucers and were soon to reveal all. He said he would like to publish the evidence but had been told he could not. Shortly after that, Bender closed down both his magazine and his organisation.

When asked by his local paper for an explanation, he said he had been visited by 'three men wearing dark suits' and driving a Cadillac, who had simply ordered him to stop printing material on UFOs. They had, he said, scared him so much that he 'couldn't actually eat for a couple of days'. At first, he claimed they were members of the US government. Later, however, he changed his story: now they were dreadful aliens in human disguise who had come to Earth to suck up lots of sea water, which they needed for some great alien project. This version of events rather undermined Bender's credibility in the eyes of many researchers.

Other US sightings have been equally bizarre. In 1976, a doctor by the name of Herbert Hopkins from Maine, who had become involved with investigating a UFO sighting, was visited by a man claiming to be a member of another UFO research organisation. The visitor wore the classic uniform: black suit, tie and hat and a white shirt. But when he took his hat off he revealed he had no hair at all. And when he brushed his hand across his lips it appeared he was wearing lipstick, which smudged desperately. As they talked, his conversation slowed until he claimed his 'energy was running low' and that he had to leave. Before he departed he told the good doctor to destroy all his research material on UFO sightings – with which request Hopkins complied. Scared? Dr Hopkins was.

Most American MIBs have been described as being of similarly bizarre appearance: by turns Asian or Oriental, but with eyes that glow golden or green; or skin so yellow it shimmered or so pale it appeared translucent. They have talked in numbers or in code to each other and presented military ID cards for people who later turned out not to exist. One MIB was minus an arm (poor MIB). Another had wires coming out of his flesh. They have apparently hypnotised their witnesses and threatened them, but never do they seem to have made good on such threats. Oh, and they have always driven about in those huge black cars. The assumption among less sceptical US investigators has always been that these were aliens trying to encourage witnesses not to say another word about the UFOs they had spotted.

For national pride, it may be reassuring to know that, aside from the Cynthia Appleton case, British MIBs have always been rather less bizarre. Sure, Britain has reports of the weird. But our weird is less weird than their weird. 'Here, it has almost always been perceived that these people were from the Government,' says Jenny Randles, who has uncovered about a dozen cases from the past 40 years for her book. 'In three quarters of cases they show ID. And they have always seemed to visit people who sighted UFOs where something away from the norm occurred. Where a door on the UFO was said to have opened or closed in a peculiar way. Something like that. The point is, it was always very easy to dismiss these MIBs as men from the Intelligence Services. It could be that. Or maybe in Britain we just invent stories with less panache.'

In the Sixties, a Carlisle fireman called Jim Templeton photographed what looked like some alien creature out on the moors, hovering over his young daughter's shoulder, as aliens are probably wont to do of a Sunday. Jim was later visited by two MIBs who drove him back to the scene in their Jaguar, asked him about the weather at the time, how the wildlife had reacted and then tried to get him to confess that actually he had merely taken

'Albert said he was visited by three men in dark suits driving a Cadillac. Later, he claimed they were aliens in human disguise who had come to Earth to suck up lots of sea water'

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a snap of an ordinary bloke out walking his dog. When Jim refused to agree any such thing, the MIBs became very angry and eventually climbed back into their cars and drove off, leaving him to hike five miles home.

Then there was the couple in the Eighties who saw a UFO near a top secret military base up on the moors in Yorkshire. When they tried to call a press conference to explain what they had seen, two MIBs arrived in a large (black) car, flashed Ministry of Defence ID cards and told the press to leave. The MoD later denied the two men had anything to do with them.

'I strongly suspect,' says Randles, 'that most MIB cases here, maybe 99 out of 100, would never get reported. In my experience, most people who have had an experience view it in some way as absurd. And obviously the more bizarre it is, the less likely they are to want to discuss it. Also, the comments MIBs make to witnesses are phrased in ways which would encourage people not to talk about any of it. They say, oh people will just laugh at you. Or they are told it's a matter of national security so they don't say a word.'

But exactly who are the MIBs? Randles has a theory. 'My view is that there is a department within the Ministry of Defence which takes UFOs more seriously than they are letting on. For the vast majority of sightings – say 95 per cent – there is an explanation. But occasionally reports will come along that can't be explained away and then they have to go out and interact with the witnesses.'

To do so, she says, they have appropriated the US myth and folklore of the MIBs. It would be a great cover for carrying out bizarre investigations. And they would get to drive around in really natty black Jaguars. Nice work if you can get it.

Nick Pope disputes Randles's explanation. But then you would expect him to. For three years, Pope was the man in the MoD who was employed to sit at a desk sifting through and collating reports of UFOs from all over the country. At the end of his three years he claimed to have been converted from sceptic to believer. Accordingly, this summer he published a book called *Open Skies, Closed Minds* which stated that we were indeed being visited by alien spacecraft. Just to prove what a jolly nice place the MoD happens to be, he's still employed there, though he's no longer on UFO watch.

'The MIBs are certainly a part of UFO folklore,' he says now. 'But personally I can't help thinking that it's all part of urban myth. I never once had a case where somebody phoned up and said who were those strange people you sent round to my house? And I handled 300 cases a year.'

'If there are MIBs out there, then I suspect they are merely Walter Mitty characters who like to dress up. You know, like those people who pretend to be policemen or doctors. Sometimes when I go to UFO conferences I see people dressed in black sitting in the front rows furiously taking notes. I think they are just people who like wearing black and being mysterious.' Of course, if Nick Pope was Mr MIB, he's hardly likely to admit it now, is he? In the world of UFOs and conspiracy theories, you have to keep your wits about you.

Still, we are in need of a solid explanation, something to help us plough a reasonable furrow through the mound of rumour and myth piling up before us. Well, there is one. It's a bit bizarre. Which is to say, a bit more bizarre than anything so far (more bizarre even, than aliens with green eyes, one arm and lipstick). But it's worth looking at, inasmuch as any of this is worth looking at. The theory is this: the MIBs are the manifestation of evil from unseen realities who come into this world to prey on our souls.

See? It all makes perfect sense.

Leslie Kenton lives in the kind of place where you can imagine that Things happen, and that's definitely Things with a capital 'T'. Here in deepest West Wales, the sea crashes its brow against the dark, fractured cliffs and the wind tugs and pulls at the hedgerows and trees so that every plant leans away in one direction as if trying to escape the advancing shore. It's the perfect place for a Californian woman like Kenton.

Now in her fifties, she has lived in Britain for years, first as a health and beauty journalist, now writing books on alternative health and ageing, forever directing her faithful readers to replace the refined foods and lifestyles of the late twentieth century with the natural and unsullied.

If she is particularly famous for anything, it is for eating the placenta after her last child was born, to help her get in touch with her womanhood. This gives you an idea of the territory she occupies.

Kenton is relevant because, three years ago, she published a long (very long) novel called *Ludwig*. It argued that Beethoven gained his musical powers from the gods and that, because he refused to put his divine composition skills at the service of a devilish conspiracy to subvert the will of mankind, he was poisoned by the Men In Black.

It is easy to ridicule Leslie Kenton – but that doesn't mean it is the wrong thing to do. On the question of the MIBs and the demons, she claims not to be burdened by faith or belief in their existence. 'I know about them because I have experienced these things.'

So had she actually met any MIBs? 'I've never had three men turn up at my door with a black Cadillac. But that's because I don't think they would dare.

'There are unseen realities,' she says. 'And I think the Men In Black are manifestations from those unseen realities. They trade in fear. I suspect there are non-human beings feeding off the human life force and that, when they find people whose soul has become separated from their intellect, they become easy prey to these non-human beings.'

These poor, dislocated individuals are then the protagonists behind conspiracy and, just to jolly them along, the MIBs occasionally appear out of the unseen realities to keep the conspiracy on course. And, when necessary, kill people like Beethoven.

Enough, already.

The MIB myth is a variation of the modern conspiracy theory; the idea of some greater truth being hidden from the mass. In September, *The New American* magazine, mouthpiece of the right-wing John Birch Society, dedicated an issue to the 'Conspiracy for Global Control'.

In his introduction to the edition, William Jasper argues that criminal conspiracies to control mankind are as ancient as history itself. There is now, he says, 'a communist conspiracy. Communism has been, and remains, the single most dramatically significant phenomenon of our century.' In this vast and uniquely entertaining conspiracy theory, the United Nations is the motor of a campaign for world domination. It has, he claims, become an organisation as evil as Spectre in James Bond movies and will eventually take over the world and enslave us all.

In the course of his argument, Jasper claims that this virulent conspiracy is responsible for – take a deep breath now – the machinations of the Mafia, the rule of Al Capone in Chicago, the rise of Stalin, the rise of Hitler and hence the Holocaust, the multi-billion dollar drugs cartels, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, the shooting of Pope John Paul II in 1981, the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the Oklahoma City bombing (the last two in an attempt to discredit the radical Right, who would be – and were – blamed.)

So, what is the truth? After all of this, there are just two options. The first is that aliens have made contact, the MIBs have been sent out to shut up the people who know this, demons are trying to control our souls, and the communists, despite all the setbacks of recent years, are working to take over the world.

The second is that, as the millennium approaches, certain portions of humanity have decided to be just a little more bonkers than usual.

I know which I favour.

Fortean Times 64/5 Nov '96
ENCLO... 15

CLIMBING MOUNT IMPROBABLE
Richard Dawkins

Dawkins is one of the world's leading popularisers of Darwinism, producing a series of effortlessly lucid books explaining evolution. He has an even tone and proceeds by telling illuminating parables drawn from the natural world. In this he is really the anti-Lyall Watson. Both write in the same, calm authoritative manner, anticipating and addressing the readers objections just before they voice them, and using keen observations of nature as the backbone of their argument. However, while Watson deals in vague truisms and is blissed out on mystic wonderment, Dawkins homes in quite mercilessly to skewer facts and tease out the biological mechanisms that underlie the behaviours, and fascinating stuff it is too.



Mount Improbable is basically a rewrite of his most successful book *The Blind Watchmaker*, in which he used computer simulations to model evolution and natural selection. The same programmes are still called into use here to make the same points – that the popular idea of evolution as a random process is wrong. The objections to it – based on the impossibility of complex structures evolving – are mistaken and the Neo-darwinist model of evolution can explain all life as we know it. Here he retreads his explanation of the evolution of the eye, comparing the perception and the truth of the process to a mountain which has an impossibly sheer face on one side and a gentle slope round the back – *Mount Improbable*. He then replays the argument from other angles, using as examples such phenomena as spider webs and fig wasp behaviour. Some classic Forteana – such as simulacra and the frog with its eyes in its mouth – pop up throughout. Dawkins makes a convincing and seamless case for his beliefs, ably illustrated by his (former Dr Who assistant) wife, Lalla Ward-Dawkins.

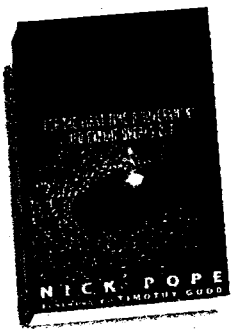
He does at times take a lofty and slightly patronising tone, a smugly sceptical "we really do know everything" attitude that undermines his status as an open-minded investigator. His excellence as a writer can make you almost forget that some of Dawkins' views are considered a bit extreme, even by fellow Darwinists. He is a strong advocate of the selfish gene principle, which sees all life and behaviour as fundamentally determined by the need of genes to perpetuate themselves and nothing else – a view that few other scientists support to that degree. This does not detract from the essential clarity and logic of his arguments; they are hard to fault and more than enough to crush legions of fuddled creationists into the dust from which they believe God made them.

LONDON: VIKING, 1996. HB £20, pp308, INDEX, BIB, FIGS, PLATES. ISBN 0-670-85018-7.

IAN SIMMONS

OPEN SKIES, CLOSED MINDS
Nick Pope

It might seem fatuous to review a book that's been hovering around the top five of the bestseller lists for some weeks, but there's always the hope that someone out there will be prevented from letting ex-Civil Servant Nick Pope have a close encounter with their wallet. One can pass over the foreword by Timothy Good in discreet silence except to note that he is sure Pope's book "will do much to dispel the myth that UFOs are a ridiculous nonsense". If only it were a myth, and if only Pope did.



He deserves credit for having bothered to read up on UFOs once he landed the job of dealing with sighting reports at the Ministry of Defence, and for taking the time to interview witnesses. Unfortunately, he seems to have been caught up in the hothouse of British ufology in the process, with the result either that his brains cooked or he left them in Whitehall. His account of historic cases worldwide begins with the ritual quotation from Ezekiel (groan), and goes so far downhill that he calls Erich von Däniken an archæologist. Pope cheerily takes virtually every wild claim ever made about UFOs as grist to his mill, from the airship wave of 1897 and Roswell to the Area 51 hokum, never once addressing the reams of critical literature on the cases he adduces. One suspects he simply hasn't read it.

The photo section is full of fake pictures that are never identified as such. His skimpy, sceptic-free bibliography includes one of ufology's most unhinged books, Linda Moulton Howe's *An Alien Harvest*. This, presumably, caused him to call cattle mutilations "a proven fact" – which they are, but not in any ufological sense. He even goes so far as to claim that the Belgian "triangles" seen in 1990 correlated with radar targets, when even the most vociferous proponent of that mildly farcical event admitted they did not.

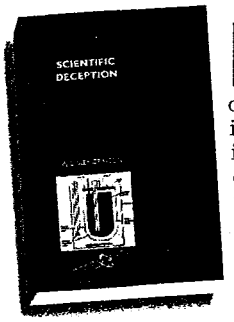
The level of his thinking is shown well enough by his answer to the question "Why don't aliens land on the White House lawn?". "Aliens may well be aware that the White House is surrounded by controlled airspace," he explains, apparently with a straight face, and "the barrage of secret service agents and their firepower would be awesome".

It's not surprising that a polite silence greeted Pope's suggestion that the MoD should draw up contingency plans for war with the aliens. What's really depressing about this book is not that it has become a best seller, but that no one at Simon & Schuster saw fit, or knew enough, to throw it back for a re-write. Emphatically not one for your bookshelf, unless you're studying human irrationality – or closed minds.

LONDON: SIMON & SCHUSTER, 1996.
HB £14.99, pp270. INDEX, BIB, APPENDICES, PHOTOS. ISBN 0-684-81664-4.

PETER BROOKESMITH

SCIENTIFIC DECEPTION
Lesley Grayson



Published by the British Library, this is one of its Keynote series giving an overview of the literature in various active policy areas. It is indicative of the path that modern science is taking that a volume on scientific deception should be up there with ones on environmental audit and science parks, as five years ago such a thing would have been unthinkable. Until recently, the science establishment has considered deception to be a relatively minor problem, committed by isolated mavericks and easily revealed. It is significant that most of the literature cited is post-1990. In the nineties, realisation has dawned that scientific fraud has been much more widespread and subtle than people had been pretending and that a more organised approach to dealing with it was required; hence this volume.

It is, basically, an annotated bibliography. It begins with a well thought out and penetrating look at the culture of science, accepting that science is not purely an impartial way of looking at the universe but also a social construct articulated by participants in the process. It then surveys fraudulent behaviour, citing a fascinating range of relevant literature, which takes in volumes well outside mainstream scientific literature, such as Richard Milton's *Forbidden Science*.

It encompasses much of Fortean interest, above and beyond the consideration of scientific fallibility, including archæological faking (such as Piltdown Man and Schliemann's Troy), Cold Fusion, Pasteur as a deceptionist, the first AIDS victim and the way established scientists prevent the publication of radical ideas.

It is a surprisingly easy read for a science policy document and provides an excellent window into how science works and how it can go wrong.

BRITISH LIBRARY, LONDON. 1995. PB £24.50, $37.40. pp107. INDEX. BIB.
ISBN: 0-7123-0831-8.

IAN SIMMONS

THE ENCHANTED LAND
Janet and Colin Bord

Regular readers of the authors' 'Secret Country' feature in *FT* will know precisely what to expect and they are not disappointed. Newcomers to the writing of Britain's most venerable brace of geographical folklorists are treated to their knowledgeable and eclectic collections of local lore, organised usefully in chapters

The Herald
Glasgow
11 November 1996

Professor believes the military might be responsible for incident over the Hebrides

US investigates air explosion

AMERICAN military scientists are investigating a mysterious mid-air explosion two weeks ago off the Outer Hebrides.

A British scientist contacted by the Americans believes the blast could have been caused by the military.

The development comes at a time when former White House adviser Pierre Salinger is claiming that a stray American missile shot down the TWA jumbo jet over New York in July, killing all 230 people on board.

Now US military scientists from Sandia National Laboratories — which operates spy satellites — in Albuquerque, New Mexico, are hoping to pinpoint the object which caused the mid-air explosion off the north of Lewis.

Why the Americans have become involved is as much a mystery as the cause of the explosion, but it gives new force to those who suspect the military were the cause of the explosion over Ness.

It is known that Britain's missile tracking station at Fylingdales and its American counterpart in Virginia both investigated the incident.

The military has denied it was involved in causing the explosion but a Nato exercise, involving more than 30 ships and 80 aircraft, started in the area two days later. It finished on Friday and involved American warships, including the frigate Aubrey Fitch.

This week, Defence Secretary Michael Portillo said his Ministry was "unaware" of any military activity in the area of the blast, but Western Isles MP Calum Macdonald described the reply as "not a definitive answer" and said he would continue to push to find out if non-British military could have been responsible.

The SNP claims it has information that a naval frigate was seen off the west coast of Lewis uplifting wreckage from the area, as if she was involved in some covert recovery operation.

There is an unconfirmed report of a military Lynx helicopter being secretly involved in the initial two-day £200,000 search after the explosion. The Defence Ministry says it has no record of the aircraft being involved.

Now the US military scientists have contacted the Armagh Observatory in Northern Ireland, the country's leading astronomical research centre for fireballs and similar objects, for information on the explosion.

They particularly want to pinpoint the exact time of the explosion to check pictures of spy satellites trained on the earth to look for nuclear and other missile explosions.

The technology involves differentiating between natural phenomena such as meteorites and man-made explosions like missiles.

Professor Mark Bailey, the observatory director, admitted he was puzzled.

"I am torn between this being caused by the military, such as target practice, and a natural phenomenon such as a fireball," he said.

"I am hoping to be told the results of the American investigation. But it all hinges on getting an exact time of the explosion to see if a satellite was trained on that particular area at that particular time. This is a very strange incident indeed."

Meanwhile, SNP parliamentary leader Margaret Ewing is being asked to raise in the Commons the possibility of military involvement being behind the explosion.

The party's Western Isles parliamentary candidate, Dr Anne Lorne Gillies, has forwarded a full report to SNP defence spokesman Colin Campbell.

UFO expert Nick Pope is also investigating — he believes the explosion could have been extra terrestrial.

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ENCOUNTERS

UFO Silence

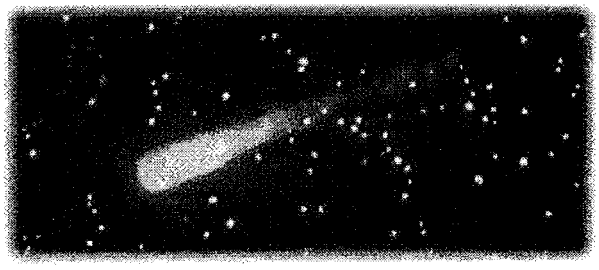
You could easily be mistaken for believing that Americans are the only ones lucky enough to be plagued by crashed saucers. Jonathon Dillon looks into Britain's UFO history and asks whether the British Government is simply more experienced at the old cover-up routine.

The British Government holds the dubious honour of being the most secretive in the First World despite promises to be more open with the public. The USA, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, France, Denmark, Holland and a host of other countries have a Freedom of Information Act, which over the last few years has enabled investigators all over the world to explore thousands of hitherto classified documents and papers which refer to the UFO subject. By these governments' own admission, thousands more documents are being witheld in the `interests of National Security' proving without doubt, that the subject is of great interest and seriousness to the world's elected leaders.



But our own government keeps quiet about everything and the general public can only gain access to documentation released under terms of the 30, 75 or 100 year ruling. These papers flow from the Air Ministry, RAF and Ministry of Defence, and roughly amount to just a dozen already released files covering the period 1950 to1964. Now with the arrival of the Scott Report, the need for a British Freedom of Information Act is more than evident.

Sadly, Her Majesty's Government will be amongst the last to willingly confess to the fact that our airspace is being penetrated regularly, by unusual intelligently controlled devices, that are way beyond our cutting edge technology. However, there seems to have been a turnabout on the part of the authorities in recent years, with more and more credible military personnel, government officials and people in power coming forward to tell of their UFO experiences. Through the hard work of many UFO investigators across the country, it has been disclosed that several Ministry of Defence departments at Whitehall and the Armed Services have been, and continue to be, actively engaged in covert research into UFOs.



According to several informers, investigations have been carried out by the Royal Air Force, The Defence Intelligence Staff (DI55) and the Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence. The DIS in particular, is a mixed organisation of serving officers and civillian research staff, scientific staff and linguists headed by the Chief of Defence Intelligence (CDI). This essential element of the government's central intelligence machinery has several tasks to perform and it evaluates a range of studies. One of its most important duties is to concentrate on UFO reports. Basically, some reports are handled by the Provost and Security Police Special Investigators who are attached to the Flying Complaints Flight Base at RAF Rudloe Manor.

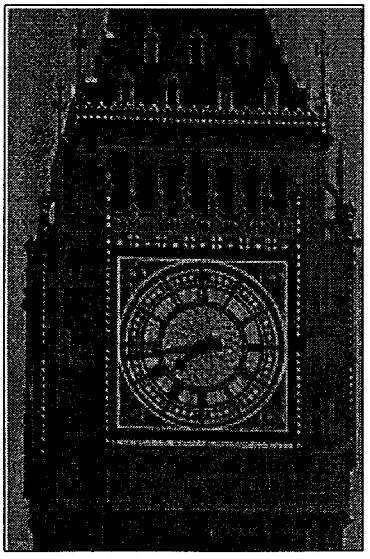
Stimulating news, which has been a long time coming, just came to light recently, with the shock admission by the MOD's Kerry Philpott, of Secretariat Air Staff 2a (the MOD UFO desk), that RAF Rudloe Manor was indeed a co-ordination point for reports of UFOs. This facility is known to be staffed by senior non-commissioned officers trained in numerous methods of special investigations. MI5 also works with Rudloe. Much of the collaboration relates to Rudloe's work in checking the

MI5 also works with Rudloe. Much of the collaboration relates to Rudloe's work in checking the credentials of RAF employees who work with classified data. They keep bulky files on RAF employees with "highly subversive" interests, Animal Rights, Nuclear Disarmament, Liberty etc. It is not known for certain whether or not the Security Services take on UFO matters , but according to an ex-MI5 employee I managed to interview, they do monitor the activities of individual UFO investigators and civilian UFO research groups.

The reports that come into the MOD are sent to DI55 who then forward them to the Director of Security and Provost Marshall (RAF) in London, who in turn will inform an infrastructure of other departments such as Air Force operations and Airborne early warning/ground environment. Some of these organisations are amongst the most well developed military systems in the modern world.

Additional research has exposed an international liaison with other foreign intelligence authorities such as the American NSA, CIA, US Air Force Office of Special Investigation and the State Department's Office of Security Assistance, Science and Technology. The Defence Intelligence Liaison branch of the MOD (DIALL) provides this affiliation through the Government Communications Head Quarters.

Intense Government interest in the UFO topic doesn't end with the MOD's preoccupation. According to my source, the Home Office plays an operative role, sustaining teeming computer files on the subject. The MOD's Air Staff 2a has computerised UFO files, but most of them are pretty innocent. Nick Redfern, an outstanding Intelligence researcher, told me the database held by the Defence Intelligence Staff is meant to be explosive and refers to National Security Agency files (despite their being no such agency). My source told me there is a `Main Computer' within the Home Office (F10 Division) which contains a database on several governmental issues, including UFOs. My contact also said that "only selective people can use the computer system in the matters of National Security". He continued, "I had a meeting with the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, and at the end of it I asked him about the UFO predicament. Howard didn't say much about the subject and went very quiet." This publicity will certainly be unwelcome. The Police Force also takes in a reasonable portion of UFO reports. The UK Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary are regularly briefed to anticipate UFO sightings in the proximity of atomic energy installations. They are to take no other action but are to prepare a report, which they then send to their superiors.



Unquestionably, our own armed forces are lively UFO researchers. Numerous instances have come to light involving UFO/RAF dog fighting, crash retrieval ventures and clandestine research into Alien technology at places such as RAF Farnborough, where during the mid-50s, secret research was conducted into UFOs, according to several RAF sources. The Defence and Evaluation Research Agency have a facility at Farnborough, rumoured lately to be housing a downed UFO and Boeing 747 jumbo jet.

During the 70s there was an impressive UFO encounter in Minley Manor Woods, not far from Farnborough. My source, who I'll call `Hannah' told me there was a strong military attendance in the woods after several hexagonal shaped UFOs visited the district. Nowadays, the area is a Mecca for enigmatic unmarked helicopters and when questioned the local Air Force, Police and Airport assure me their aircraft are not in the territory. Last year, a helicopter hovered over a housing estate early one morning. The residents got up and went outside to see what all the fuss was about and it was then they saw four pulsing red lights above a corn field. The helicopter began to close in on the lights and as it got nearer, the lights shot off at great speed towards Aldershot.

In retrospect, it is now obvious that the British Government investigates UFO reports, but has it drawn any conclusions? According to some sources, the RAF did indeed reach a UFO decision asserting the root of the phenomena was extraterrestrial and that humankind was somehow related to the visitors! Was Darwin wrong? I daren't say, but I have learned that during the 1960s a building called Riverwalk House, which was used by the Intelligence Services (SIS, MI6, MI5) for the compilation of Eastern bloc and Russian affairs, did have some of the sought after answers. Apparently, during a document review in the building's library, two female colleagues came across a

confidential file which stated the British Government had solved the UFO mystery, and that we really aren't alone!

Certainly, some UFO cases have come to light through US documents released under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Here, ministers use secrecy to suppress embarrassing findings and to protect themselves from public challenge. But the findings about UFOs may be so powerful, governments acting in our names, may only be doing so because they feel it is the right thing to do. Afer all, government influence affects just about every aspect of our lives. In matters of national security, it seems obvious for governments to become mute, but I believe it is time for the curtain to be lifted and governments should become more honest with society.

Encounters would like to thank Jonathon Dillon for this fascinating insight into our government's guarded silence. Should you have any information relating to RAF/MOD/Military involvement etc. with the UFO subject, Jonathon would like to hear from you. He can be contacted at 176 Coal Clough Lane, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 4NJ.

Finally Jonathon would in turn like to thank Matt Williams, of the *Truthseekers Review*, for the Photograph, Nick Redfern and Robert Gray for their help with this article.



With the Compliments of the

COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER

Royal Air Force Lossiemouth

24th October 1996

The most recent locally reported happening!

Regards,

[redacted]

Lossiemouth (0343) 812121
ext 7284

RAF Lossiemouth
Morayshire. IV31 6SD

64.5

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Press and Journal

THURSDAY OCTOBER 24 1996

Couple stunned at eerie object in sky

MORE dramatic evidence of weird activity in the sky above the Bonnybridge area was revealed last night.

And a UFO expert said the latest video footage of a strange sighting was tremendous.

Amateur fisherman Barry McDonald and his girlfriend, Jane Adamson, were stunned last week when they saw the eerie object low in the sky above Camelon — just a few miles from Bonnybridge, the UK's UFO Mecca.

Barry, 27, and Jane, 23, were travelling from their home in Hallglen, Falkirk, at 6.40pm last Wednesday when Barry braked sharply.

Jane, who is due to have a baby next week, said: "We saw this weird object in the sky. I got such a fright I thought I was going to give birth."

Barry said: "I was driving toward Camelon. It was just still daylight. Suddenly, we saw a bright light low in the sky ahead of us. Jane said it was a UFO and we both burst out laughing.We watched it for about 20 minutes. Then I remembered I had my camcorder in the boot. I had been using it the night before when I was out fishing with my dad.

"The object was white at first and stationary. Then it changed shape into a saucer-type appearance and became an orange colour. I filmed it on tape for about half a minute. It then turned white again and vanished from the sky.

"I wasn't frightened. But we were both stunned. I've never seen anything like it in my life. I've heard all the stories about UFOs in this area and I dismissed them as the work of cranks. But now I've seen it with my own eyes."

UFO researcher Ron Halliday, of Stirling University, said: "The footage is tremendous. We can see the object clearly. It shows a orange-coloured saucer shape which then changes to white against a bright blue sky."

Mr Halliday, chairman of Scottish Earth Mysteries Research, added: "We will now do a deeper analysis of the tape. I have already ruled out the usual explanations such as weather ballooons, stars, aircraft and helicopters."

● Last week, Falkirk granny Margaret Ross, 63, revealed she had captured evidence of what she believed was a UFO on her camcorder.



■ *Barry McDonald and Jane Adamson, stunned by what they saw in the sky*

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
UNITED KINGDOM
PRESS OFFICE
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To: [redacted], Sec A/S

Fax: _____

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Tel : _____

MESSAGE: For info !

If any part of this transmission is incomplete please ring [redacted]
Ministry of Defence, Room 0389, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2H

** TOTAL PAGE.002 **

lary for Scotland after being criticised in Lord Cullen's report.

The SRA also plans to launch an election challenge in up to 70 seats

what would happen as a result of their actions, he added.

He estimated that the loss to the industry from the Dunblane shootings

tion to stalk Europe since the reign of the Third Reich is about to be forced upon the British nation.

"This proposed law

posed legal action.

However, a statement is likely to be made by the chief constable in the event of formal notification of proceedings.

Daylight video of UFO 'tremendous'

MORE evidence of unexplained activity in the sky above the Bonnybridge area was revealed last night. UFO experts described the latest video footage as "tremendous".

Mr Barry McDonald, 27, and his girlfriend Jane Adamson, 23, saw the object low in the sky above Camelon, Falkirk, a few miles from Bonnybridge, the UK's UFO Mecca.

They were travelling from their home in Hallglen, Falkirk, at 6.40pm last Wednesday, when Mr McDonald braked suddenly.

Ms Adamson, due to have a baby next week, said: "We saw this weird object in the sky. I got such a fright, I thought I was going to give birth."

Mr McDonald said: "We saw a bright light low in the sky ahead of us. We watched it for about 20 minutes. Then I remembered I had my camcorder in the car boot.

"The object was white at first and stationary. Then it changed shape into a saucer-type appearance and became an orange colour. I filmed it on tape for about half a minute. It then turned white again and vanished from the sky."

UFO researcher Ron Halliday, of Stirling University, said: "The footage is tremendous. We can see the object clearly. It shows a orange-coloured saucer-shape which then changes to white against a bright blue sky.

"It's by far the best bit of daylight film of a UFO that I have seen."

A spokesman at Scottish Air Traffic Control HQ in Prestwick said they had no reports of any unusual activity in the Falkirk area at the time of the latest sighting.

Daughter's fury at Reynolds article

THE daughter of former Irish premier Albert Reynolds broke down in the witness box yesterday as she described the "nightmare" of her father's libel action against The Sunday Times.

Tax consultant Miriam Reynolds Fogarty, the eldest of the former Prime Minister's seven children, struggled for composure from the moment she took the stand before Mr Justice French and a High Court jury.

Mrs Fogarty, who lives in Edinburgh with her husband, said she was "absolutely furious" when she saw the article in the Sunday Times.

She told her father because she "just didn't think it was right or fair that the Sunday Times should get away with it," she said.

Mr Reynolds is suing over a November 1994

report which said he misled the Dail, the Irish Parliament, by defending the President of the High Court, Mr Harry Whelehan, against criticism of his delay in extraditing an alleged paedophile priest.

The paper denies libel, pleading qualified privilege and justification.

Earlier, Mr Reynolds denied it was "bizarre" to sue only the Sunday Times and not Irish papers, which had made similar allegations. He said he had not seen the Irish papers during his "traumatic" resignation.

Mr Price said: "The fact is that your reputation has been shattered into little pieces in Ireland and you appear not to have noticed."

Mr Reynolds responded: "If I was to listen to that kind of talk, I'd have gone into exile long ago."

The hearing continues.

Cairngorm ski centre chief resigns after row

THE man who runs one of Scotland's major ski centres announced he was quitting yesterday after a disagreement with his company chairman.

Mr Tim Whittome resigned as general manager of Cairngorm Chairlift Company, which operates the winter sports facilities on 4085ft Cairngorm mountain, near Aviemore.

In a statement issued yesterday, Mr Whittome said he was "uncomfortable" about a new style of management introduced by company chairman Hamish Swan, a senior brewery executive.

Mr Swan, 62, took over his post last March and cut the firm's full-time workforce from more than 80 to 42.

Both sides in the bitter row denied that Mr Whittome's resignation



Tim Whittome: clash with company chairman.

day by conservationists opposing the firm's plans for Scotland's first Alpine-style mountain railway.

In a statement issued yesterday, he said he fully supported the £16m funicular railway project, which involves a two-carriage service, conveying 120 people at a time, and a 250-seater

Whittome went on local radio to criticise a decision by the World Conservation Congress in Montreal, Canada, to call on the British Government for a rethink on the Cairngorm railway plan.

Objectors say an increasing number of visitors will damage the fragile plant, bird and animal life on the summit plateau.

Earlier this year, Mr Magnus Magnusson, who chairs the Government's official wildlife body Scottish Natural Heritage, announced that it was willing to withdraw its objections to the plans once a legal agreement was reached with the Cairngorm company on the management of visitors.

This is expected to be signed on November 5.

Dunbar, East Lothian, issued a statement yesterday saying he was disappointed to receive Mr Whittome's resignation.

Dundee-born Mr Swan, who lives at Insch, near Aviemore, added: "Tim has given a great deal to Cairngorm, but has disagreements with the management style and structure of the company which I introduced after taking over the chairmanship last March."

Mr Whittome said: "I am saddened to be leaving after so many years. I am exploring ways in which my expertise may still be available to the mountain railway project in the future."

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is still fighting to block the railway which, it claims,

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Sunday Mirror
6 October 1996

I'm a believer ...there is something out there

EXCLUSIVE by ROS WYNNE-JONES

IT was no time and no place for a little girl to be out on her own. But at 5.20am in the wilds of Exmoor, Somerset, she was singing Three Blind Mice as she stared up at the lightning in the dawn sky.

The sound woke a family on a camping holiday, and the father checked that his own children were safe inside their tent.

Disturbed by the thought of a child out on her own miles from nowhere, he went to look for her. He wrapped himself up warmly against the morning chill and followed her voice deep into the woods. Then, suddenly, the singing stopped.

Later the family recounted their story to a local historian. Shocked, he told them that in 1858 a villager had been convicted of murder after throwing his little daughter down a mineshaft.

The site of the mine was exactly where the little girl's singing had stopped. And when the camping family had been wakened at dawn, it was, to the day, the 137th anniversary of the murder.

Chilling, unearthly, inexplicable — exactly the sort of case that FBI special agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully investigate in The X-Files on TV each week.

But today the Sunday Mirror can reveal that Britain has its very own Scully and Mulder, who have spent the last 20 years investigating the real-life X Files.

She is Jenny Randles, a recognised world expert on aliens and the paranormal. He is Peter Hough, Britain's leading lecturer and researcher into unexplained phenomena.

Like Scully, Jenny's work has included briefing senior politicians at Westminster on UFOs. She has also advised Steven Spielberg on the making of Close Encounters Of The Third Kind - and on Close Encounters Of The Fourth Kind, which Spielberg still hopes to make one day.

Jenny and Peter live close to each other in Lancashire - and when they come across the unexplained, they set out together to find the truth.

They met in 1975 through the Manchester UFO Research Association, and since then they have become increasingly convinced that there IS something out there.

"I am a believer," says Hough. "It is as if, from time to time, another reality temporarily eclipses our own.

"Things are only as real as we can understand them to be. I am always willing to be convinced by the evidence, not by what I believe or what other people tell us to believe."

Hough traces his fascination for the unexplained to his childhood. He became disillusioned with science at school because it couldn't provide him with all the answers.

He turned to books, newspaper articles and magazines on the paranormal which left him with more questions and even fewer answers.

"Finally, I decided to cut out the middle man," he says. "I wanted to get right to the people who were having these experiences instead of having them filtered through someone else. I became an investigator."

Randles specialises in Ufology. She believes there is "an intelligence" behind some of the UFO incidents the pair have recorded.

The truth is out there. And by investigating the cases below, Randles and Hough are as determined as Scully and Mulder to find it.

The Rendlesham Forest Affair

LIKE Roswell, scene of America's most famous UFO incident, the quiet woodland of Rendlesham Forest is a place of many secrets.

To the north is Sizewell, with its controversial nuclear power stations. The coastal spit, along its eastern rim, houses maximum-security American research units. Right in the heart of the Suffolk forest are two air bases which were leased to the Americans for NATO defensive duties.

On Christmas Day 1980, strange objects tracked by radar and seen by eye-witnesses appeared in the sky over south-eastern England.

One of the US Air Force security police sent to the scene told investigators that his team had found an object the size of a car. He said small creatures with domed heads were suspended inside a beam of light and senior officers communicated with them using sign-language.

The UFO had been damaged as it fell through the trees, but the aliens had repaired it and left.

The USAF official report, by deputy base commander Colonel Charles Holt, stated that radiation of two to three times the normal background count was recorded where the object had landed.

As the investigation continued, further UFOs were seen visiting the site of the accident by officers including Holt himself.

Jenny Randles was warned off investigating the incident. A government scientist said she could "end up at the bottom of the Thames".

But she risked prosecution under the Official Secrets Act to bring the matter to public attention.

The Ministry of Defence denied everything until April 1983, when Squadron Leader Donald Moreland admitted that the stories were correct — except, he said, for the involvement of aliens.

Verdict: MoD cover-up

Abduction On Ilkley Moor

IN December 1987, ex-policeman Philip Spencer took an early morning walk across Ilkley Moor in Yorkshire to visit his father-in-law.

As he passed a small overgrown quarry, he saw something move out of the corner of his eye. He turned and saw a "small green creature".

It quickly scuttled away, then stopped and made a dismissive movement with its right hand. As it did so, Spencer photographed it.

He followed the creature around an outcrop and found a "hovering silver disk". It rose into the air at a terrifying speed and disappeared into a cloud. When he returned home he realised he was "missing" two hours. He also began to have recurring dreams of a starry sky.

Under hypnosis, he told of being drawn towards the hovering disc and then finding himself inside a white room, where he was physically examined by creatures with pointed ears and big eyes. They were about four feet tall and had enormous hands and feet with three big digits. He saw the earth through a window and realised he was in space.

He was then shown two films. The first was about how humans were destroying earth. The second he could not talk about, even under hypnosis.

The photograph, which came out under-exposed and blurred from shaking, remains one of the most disputed pieces of extra-terrestrial evidence ever to be recorded.

Verdict: Unexplained

The Stocksbridge Bypass Mystery

IN September 1987, a mysterious chain of events unfolded around the Stocksbridge Bypass, then under construction just north of Sheffield.

Len Marsh was driving home from his niece's wedding when he saw pulsating lights in a clearing in the pine forest along the side of the road.

They seemed to be attached to a circular object apparently floating about 50 feet off the ground. He pulled into a lay-by, but then drove off, afraid of what he might find.

When he returned home he was "missing" one hour. After the incident he was plagued by dreams of a grey face with large black eyes and of standing in the forest looking up at a brightly lit circular object.

Just days earlier two security guards had stopped their car near to where he saw the lights. They had seen four or five small beings, which they took to be children, dancing in a circle. But when they got out of their car the "children" had vanished without leaving any footprints in the fresh mud.

Then they saw a hooded figure on the parapet of the bypass above them. They turned the car's headlights on, but they shone through the figure.

Other sightings have continued to the present day. Invesigators found that a monk had been buried on unhallowed ground close by. His grave had been disturbed during the construction work.

The bypass was officially opened on a Friday the 13th in 1988. The place where the figures were seen is now a notorious accident blackspot where several people have been killed and many more seriously injured.

Verdict: Unexplained

Mystery Of The Murdered Witch

IN 1945 a man called Charles Walton died in mysterious circumstances in Lower Quinton, a village in the shadow of Meon Hill, near Stratford-upon-Avon.

As a boy he had experienced a terrifying vision. For three consecutive nights he watched a phantom dog running across Meon Hill. On the third night the black dog transformed itself into a headless woman.

The following morning his sister died. The experience turned him into a recluse. He was known to breed toads and to talk to birds — which would sit on his head and shoulders. Villagers believed he was a witch.

The year 1944 was a bad one for Lower Quinton. Despite an early spring, the harvest was poor, livestock went missing and the beer went sour in local pubs. The finger of blame was pointed at Charles Walton.

On February 14, 1945, Walton was found on Meon Hill with a pitchfork through his neck. A cross had been carved from the back of his neck to his stomach and the bill-hook which had been used was still wedged between his ribs. A few days after the murder a black dog was found hanged further up the hill — some said it was Walton's "familiar" or spirit.

What made the story even more remarkable to investigators was that 70 years earlier, in 1875, a woman from a neighbouring village had suffered exactly the same fate.

Her murderer had later confessed: "Her was a proper witch. I pinned Ann Tennant to the ground before slashing her throat with a bill-hook in the form of a cross".

She had been staked to the ground with a pitchfork.

Verdict: Unexplained

Case Of The Highgate Vampire

RUMOURS of a vampire in Highgate Cemetery in London, where Karl Marx is buried, date back to at least the 19th Century.

Artist and poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti had his lover's body exhumed in 1869, at least 10 years after she was laid to rest.

When they opened the coffin, she was lying there with her hair as golden-red and her face as beautiful and unblemished as it had been when she was alive.

The rumours reached fever pitch a century later, and on Friday the 13th of March, 1970, locals carried out a mass vampire hunt.

Over 100 people, protected with crucifixes and carrying sharpened stakes, rampaged through the cemetery led by vampire hunter David Farrant and an Essex schoolteacher called Alan Blood.

Farrant claimed that on four occasions he had seen a dark, human-like shape, about eight foot tall, gliding over the vaults at night.

Many of the vampire hunters said they had seen "something crawling in the dark".

On September 30, Farrant was arrested climbing over the graveyard wall, armed with a wooden cross and a stake.

He left the court declaring: "I won't rest until I catch the vampire of Highgate Cemetery."

A few days later, the graveyard was desecrated. Graves had been disturbed, lead stolen from coffins and bodies moved.

Three schoolgirls walking through the cemetery had come across the remains of a woman who had been dragged from her tomb.

Farrant blamed occult groups whom he believed were responsible for releasing the vampire in the first place. "He has to be destroyed," he said. "He is evil."

And to this day Farrant believes a vampire lurks in the ancient tombs of the cemetery.

Verdict: Unexplained

Morag, Monster Of Loch Morar

WHILE everyone knows of the Loch Ness Monster, few have heard of the monster of Loch Morar in northern Scotland. The monster, which locals call Morag, has been seen more than 30 times.

On August 16, 1969, Duncan MacDonnell and William Simpson were fishing on the loch when MacDonnell heard a splashing noise behind the boat. He turned to see a creature up to 30ft long with three humps powering towards them. It struck the boat and slowed down.

The creature was covered in rough, dirty brown skin and had a snake-like head about a foot wide. Simpson panicked and grabbed his shotgun, but as he fired the monster disappeared back into the depths.

Despite the fact that the area is very difficult to reach, without roads on either shore, sightings continue to the present day. Some psychic investigators believe Nessie and Morag are paraphysical phenomena rather than ancient monsters. They say the body of water is at the centre of an energy field that responds to thought by conjuring up temporary mythical beasts.

When one team investigated Loch Morar using dowsing rods, they found regularly spaced lines of energy passing from the hills into the loch.

Verdict: Unexplained

Mysteries that CAN Be Explained

MANY phenomena investigated by Peter and Jenny turn out to have scientific explanations — or to be elaborate hoaxes.

In 1986 a Warrington newspaper printed a photograph of a partial eclipse of the moon. In the corner was a Flying Saucer-like shape flitting across the sky.

The buildings and sky behind turned out to be the only genuine parts of the photo. Both the eclipse and the UFO had been burned on.

In 1984 a couple from Luxembourg were contacted by spirits advising them to disconnect their TV aerial and switch the set to an untuned channel.

The image of a dead relative appeared telling them that a communications team was being organised on the Other Side and they should do the same.

Their office also received computer, telephone and fax messages from remarkably hi-tech spirits. Investigators believe they did indeed come from the Other Side — of the office, not the psychic divide.

Verdict: Hoaxes

Life After Death and The World Beyond, by Jenny Randles and Peter Hough, is published this month in hardback by Piatkus, priced at £16.99.

The Sunday Telegraph
6 October 1996

Off the beat Albany

AMID a wealth of military pageantry, fanfares of trumpets, stars, ribbons and plumed hats, Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge was last week installed as the 157th Constable of the Tower of London in succession to Field Marshal Sir John Stanier. The appointment will not add appreciably to his existing duties as Chief of the Defence Staff.

His Letters Patent disclose that the oldest military office in the country, established by William the Conqueror and held by, among others, Thomas à Becket, is now effectively in the hands of a usurper called the Secretary of State for National Heritage, an office founded all of four years ago.

The Tower nowadays is big business. But that splendid body of men the Yeomen Warders are all former warrant officers who value a personal link with the Sovereign far above regulation by a department of Civil Service managers.

The Constable nevertheless retains perks: a one-bedroom flat in the Tower, a cask of wine from every warship visiting the Pool of London and the confiscation of any horse, ox, pig or sheep that falls off London Bridge. 10

Independent On Sunday
6 October 1996

A Palace fit for a pensioner (if rich)

By Michael Leapman

10

A SELECT few of the richest old people in the land may soon be able to spend their twilight years in sheltered accommodation on the top floor of a royal palace with an unsurpassed view of the Thames. It is one of the options being urgently debated for the future of the space above the King's Apartments at Hampton Court Palace, empty and unused since the state rooms themselves were restored following the major fire in 1986.

The third floor, looking out over the newly restored Privy Garden, used to be divided into grace-and-favour apartments, given rent-free to the widows of distinguished military men and public servants. It was in one of them that the fire began. But grace and favour are unfashionable in the 1990s; so Robin Evans, Director of Historic Royal Palaces, the body that administers the property, is being urged by the Government to find a revenue-earning use for the space.

His options are limited by the need not to interfere with the palace's main function as a historic building that attracts 600,000 paying visitors a year. "We must not have any use that affects the visitors' enjoyment," he says.

Another inhibiting factor is the lift, which can carry only four people. Installing a new one would mean hacking away at the state rooms below. For the same reason, no major structural alterations can be envisaged. That rules out such potentially profitable uses as a super-luxury small hotel and restaurant or a suite of prestige high-tech offices – although one of the possibilities is to let out some of the rooms for small business gatherings, exploiting the palace's proximity to Heathrow airport. The rooms would make a fine suite of top-flight apartments, but anyone who could afford to rent them would demand generous parking space – in short supply at Hampton Court – and would entertain lavishly and often. That is the appeal of making flats available only to elderly people, who have few cars and do not give many parties. There would be room for up to a dozen apartments, plus any necessary medical facilities. A final decision will be taken next year.

The Sunday Times
6 October 1996

'X file' warns of asteroid disaster

by Jonathan Leake
Environment Correspondent

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IT IS the X file the Ministry of Defence would rather ignore. Prepared privately by an army officer, it warns that extra-terrestrial objects should be put at the top of the list of threats to national security.

The report, by Major Jay Tate, a ballistics expert, claims the threat of a devastating impact by a comet or asteroid is real and humanity could follow the dinosaurs into extinction.

The MoD, however, has decided it will take no action, even though Tate's findings have aroused concern among some of Britain's leading astronomers. Next month a group of them, including Dr Jasper Wall, director of the Royal Greenwich Observatory, will meet at the British National Space Centre in London to discuss the threat.

Like Tate, the astronomers believe public money should be allocated to map ping the thousands of objects whose orbits cross that of the Earth.

Tate's report, which recommends a group of scientists and civil servants be set up to study the threat, is the first to analyse the work of astronomers who have studied the courses of comets and asteroids and discovered hundreds of extra-terrestrial bodies that could hit Earth. Since only a tiny section of the sky has been mapped, however, there could well be many more such objects waiting to be found — provided they do reach Earth first.

Tate, 41, said last week: "The Earth has a long history of collisions with asteroids and comets, several of which have caused mass extinctions and severe alterations in climate.

"The spread of humanity makes it likely that even a relatively small impact could cause massive loss of life and property."

He took up astronomy using a pocket telescope to relieve the boredom of night duty in Germany, where he controlled anti-aircraft missiles, and his observations are based on years of experience.

His interest in comets and asteroids followed a posting to Canada, where he was impressed by a lecture by David Levy, co-discoverer of the Schoemaker-Levy comet, which smashed into Jupiter two years ago.

That led to his research and the scientific paper which has so stirred the professional astronomers. Tate hopes it will soon arouse the same interest in the general public.

Wall said his observatory scientists considered Tate's work excellent. He added: "This is a real threat, but one that we can do something about."

An MoD spokesman confirmed it had a copy of Tate's report but said the risk of Earth being obliterated by comets or asteroids was "not a priority". He said: "Michael Portillo has written to Major Tate thanking him, but we have decided this is not something we will be taking any further."

21

Classification
Caveat
Covering

F Sigs 927

[redacted] (Int S/92)

We've seen this article. An interesting letter from the public at the rear. Gideon Not v. helpful.

Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Transmission Details		Document Details	
Serial Number: 1654	Date and time of Transmission	Reference:	
From: RAF Waddington	Fax No: 0522 720271 Ext 7729	Subject: UFO Sightings Heard Help us!	on 40
To: MOD Sec (AS) 2	Fax No: [redacted]		n 40
		4 pages	

Authorising Officer	Transmit Operators
Rank, Name and Appointment: [redacted] Community Relations Officer	Rank/Grade and Name:
Signature: [redacted]	Signature:

Message/Remarks:

1. Reference the last para from Neatishead. HE were never contacted & did not see anything at all!
2. The letter refers to comments in the original report that the RAF were unable to provide any aircraft to investigate.
3. Our SATCO considers many points in this report are unlikely to be factual!

Tel no [redacted]

[redacted]

Covering
Caveat
Covering

today.

The Echo has managed to get hold of a transcript of a conversation between police, RAF officials, the coastguard and a tanker boss which gives a blow-by-blow account of the unexplained events which took place.

We have also got hold of a snap-shot taken by Skegness police which clearly shows the bright light which suddenly appeared in the sky.

The mystery flying object was picked up by radar at RAF Neatishead in Norfolk and its movements were tracked for a number of hours from 3am on Saturday.

The conversation clearly reveals the confusion and excitement the unidentified object caused on the night.

Officials at the Ministry of Defence are now carrying out an investigation into the incident.

Here is the conversation between the different parties, word-for-word:

Skegness police: "We can see a strange red and green rotating light in the sky directly south east from Skegness. It looks strange as it is stationary and there is no aircraft sound in the area."

RAF Kinloss: "Northwood have a radar contact bearing 221 degrees at 16 miles, it looks to be stationary and there is no way of determining its height but it must be quite a size to be visible from Skegness."

Kinloss: "Neatishead now confirms a couple of radar contacts in the area but no height, they seem to be stationary. There are definitely no military aircraft in the area and no notified civil flights should be there.

Conocoast tanker: "We have these lights on

by Susan Ridd

visual, now they are flashing red, green and white. Cannot identify it as an aircraft as it looks stationary and it is approximately one mile high."

Yarmouth Coastguard: "Did you see from which direction it appeared?"

Conocoast: "Not it just appeared and is stationary."

Kinloss: "Neatishead say it could be caused by the weather."

Coastguard: "I don't think so as we have visual contact."

Kinloss: "We'll Neatishead and Northwood report that there is no transponder on this object and therefore no means of interrogation. It is obvious that whatever it is it does not wany anyone to know that it is there. Also Neatishead report its position as directly over Boston."

Conocoast: "It is still stationary and flashing red, green, blue and white. It looks very high, north of us, and there is no engine noise."

Coastguard: "Skegness, can you get video footage as the RAF are very interested and may require it later."

Kinloss: "Neatishead are keeping a log of what looks like clutter on the radar."

Yarmouth Coastguard: "Conocoast, can you give us an update?"

Conocoast: "We can see two lights flashing green and red."

Coastguard: "Give us both bearings of the two lights."

Conocoast: "There is one stationary light at 345 deg true and the other at 160 true, the lights are both visible with the naked eye and both exhibit the same characteristics flashing red, blue, green and white."

Boston police: "We can still see the light, it is towards the south east and seems about 40-45 degrees up in the sky it is just a bright light to us."

Kinloss: "Neatishead are running a trace on this and cannot explain it. If they are helicopters they are fast approaching the end of their endurance as it is well over two hours since the first report let alone how long they were up there before they were actually sighted."

Conocoast: "We can still see the lights, and they are on their original bearings and flashing the same colours but they seem higher and dimmer."

Flight Lieutenant McFarlane, Neatishead: "We had a report from Northwood that a civil flight had also reported strange lights in the area. They fit exactly what was seen from the ground, multi-coloured, flashing, stationary lights."

Flight Lieutenant George, Northwood: "This echo is still on our screens and we cannot explain this at all apart from it being a meteorological phenomena but then again we have visual sightings also as the civilian flight that reported these lights as a flare was six miles away at the time. All very strange."

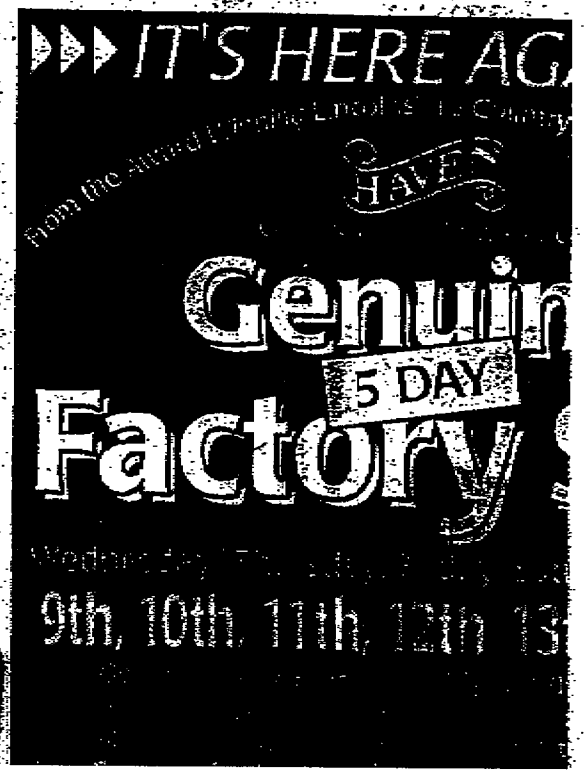
Neatishead: "The object still has not moved, London radar and Waddington can also see it.

Layland who shot the video on the roof of Skegness Police Station.

Mystery of light in sky

Confusion at 'UFO sighting'





14-OCT-96 11:23 FROM: C REG RAF WADDINGTON ID: PAGE 3



• Captured: The bright light over the county coast and (right) Lincolnshire Police controller Dave Leyland who shot the video on the roof of Skegness Police Station.

Mystery of light in sky

Confusion at

by Susan Ridd

THE mystery surrounding a possible UFO sighting off the county coast deepened today.

The Echo has managed to get hold of a transcript of a conversation between police, RAF officials, the coastguard and a tanker boss which gives a blow-by-blow account of the unexplained events which took place.

We have also got hold of a snap-shot taken by Skegness police which clearly shows the bright light which suddenly appeared in the sky.

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Your letters

Readers' Letters, Lincolnshire Echo, Brayford Wharf East, Lincoln LN5 7AT. Please keep letters brief and, if typed, use double spacing. The Editor reserves the right to shorten letters. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Lincolnshire Echo.

It might have been a threat

SO, an unidentified flying object, travelling at speed which suggested that it wasn't a weather balloon" passed down the Lincolnshire coast (Echo, October 7).

An RAF spokesman said: "The object appeared on our radars and stayed there for a number of hours."

A number of hours? Can you imagine the situation if, in 1588, a Royal Navy spokesman said: "A large number of ships, flying Spanish flags, sailed along the south coast and were watched from our mast-tops for a number of hours"?

We would by now be a nation of swarthy, bull-fighting, tap dancers.

Who knows what the UFO could have been? It could have been a potential enemy testing our defences, a steam-powered Iraqi missile.

Or even a spaceship full of love-goddesses from Venus looking for me. (Memo to all staff: if the latter, contact must be restricted to guidance).

Loan

If the RAF cannot do better than this it should return the aircraft to the Armed Forces from whom they were taken on temporary loan in 1917, and try running a garage.

E. C. COLEMAN

Bishop Norton

Sir Peter's views came as a shock

I WAS very disappointed and shocked to hear Sir Peter Tapsell say on Radio Lincolnshire (October 5) that it would be more cost-effective to put patients in nursing homes at £400 a bed than into Horncastle hospital at £800 a bed.

Does he really believe that patients would get the same level of expertise as they would in the hospital? He underestimates our intelligence.

When someone goes into a nursing home they have to pay for themselves. That's one way of privatising the health service in Horncastle!

In January 1987 I wrote to Sir Peter opposing the closure of the hospital.

In his reply he wrote: "This hospital, for which I fought hard and successfully over the years when I was the local Member of Parliament, is now the responsibility of Mr Edward Leigh MP.

"I know that he is doing everything in his power to protect the future of the hospital and I have already told him that if there is anything I can do to help, I stand ready to do so."

I challenge Sir Peter to keep his promise!

No wonder the NHS is short of money. In a cutting I kept from the Mirror newspaper, dated September 10, 1995 the headline is: NHS Fat Cats Pocket £63m.

It states: "More than £63m has been paid to the people who run Britain's NHS Trusts — many of them leading Tories."

It gives a list of names and salaries. It also says: "The entire sum is going to fund posts that didn't exist before the Tories created the new tier of Trust boards in 1990".

ELFREDA T. PATCHETT (MRS)

North Road,
Telford,
Horncastle.

Good base idea

I AGREE 100 per cent with what B. Green had to say about RAF Scampton (Your Letters, October 5).

I think it is high time that those in high places who claim to have the interests of our county and the future of international business development at heart, do just what is needed with this airfield.

I can't for the life of me see why, now that the RAF has pulled out, it should be torn up when the facilities are already in place and the potential is there for a freight airport.

If any of our MPs should read this and they want my vote at the next election, please start to do something positive NOW about RAF Scampton . . . and let's see you doing it.

S. TAYLOR

Greenhill Close, Bishop Norton.

Aware of tide against the EU

VERONICA Hardstaff, justifying her employers' generosity (Your Letters, October 2) is obviously aware of the tide of common sense running against the EU.

She talks of large, powerful Germany "winning" and implies a threat of war if we don't acquiesce, grateful for small local handouts of our own money!

Are we seriously to accept that we owe 50 years of peace in Europe to the EU and that "no-one" wants a superstate and that, for example, the fishing and beef situations have been beneficial?

We are the biggest net contributor, after Germany — £60 for every man, woman and child in 1995-96.

Our food is more expensive because of it, and in the 23 years since we joined the "Common Market" our partners have sold £90b more to us than we have sold to them.

Most of the "little" countries she refers to have three-quarters of their trade within the EU and are paid to be members.

Most of our profitable trade is outside — in 1994 we had £5b surplus but a £6.8b deficit with the EU.

Europe needs and envies us, and there are even those who would like to replace London as the principal European financial market and worldwide centre, not to mention our dominant language and culture.

Our young people are unlikely to be fooled and will prefer to remain world players and traders, rather than "little Europeans" under the sway of costly foreign bureaucrats.

T. G. HERRICK

Sudbrooke Lane,
Nettleham.

The creature feature



HAMLONE by Mike Flanagan



ur weekend stars

with Mystic Meg



ARIES (March 21-April 20) Close relationships are giving you pause for reflection now since you recognise that you cannot go on as before. There have to be far reaching changes in the way you share, care and co operate. You have the passionate enthusiasm and the energy to carry you along so do not be slow about stating your terms.



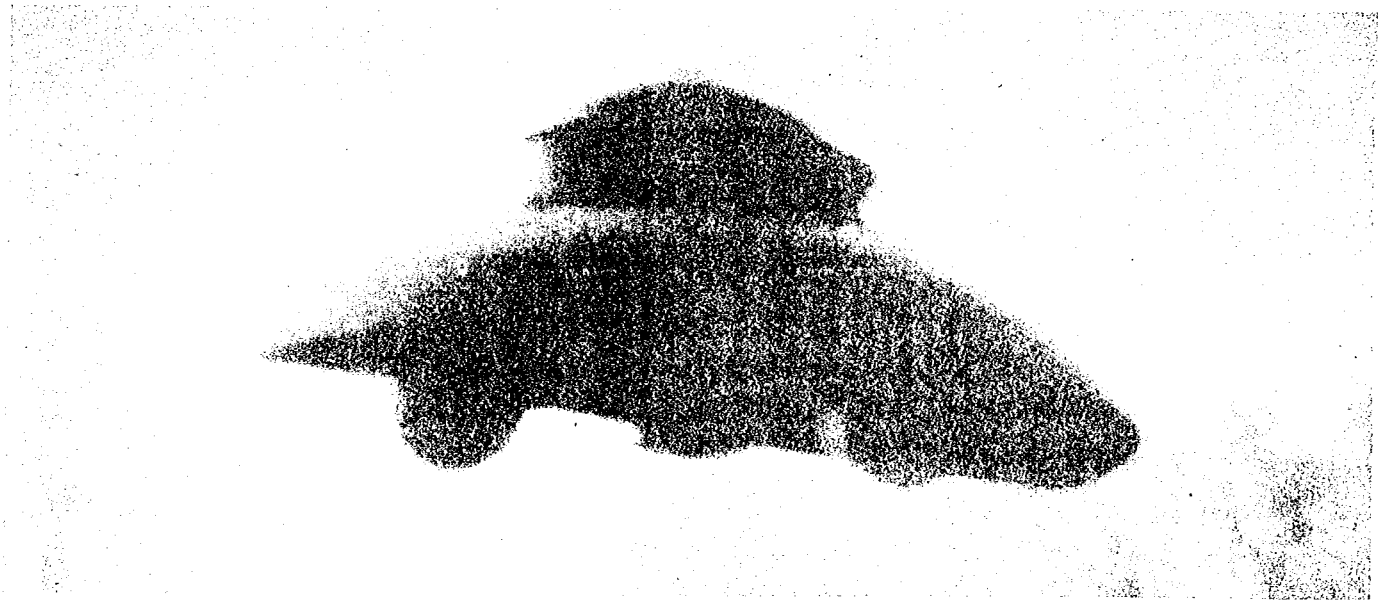
CANCER (June 22-July 23) Someone close is being specially comforting and supportive which is heartwarming. You do want to wrap yourself in cotton wool and shut out the outside world as much as possible. So clinging on to loved ones and familiar surroundings is making you feel secure. Push hard on your [illegible]



LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 22) The day of the solar eclipse in your own sign need not necessarily bring up significant events. It merely happens to be at the centre of an ongoing process of shaking your life down and moving it on at all speed. You have good friends [illegible]

THE REAL X-FILES?

TIM COLEMAN MEETS **NICK POPE**, AUTHOR OF *OPEN SKIES, CLOSED MINDS* AND ONE-TIME DESK OFFICER AT SEC(AS)2A, THE UFO INFORMATION-GATHERING DEPARTMENT AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE.



Alleged space craft photographed at Silver Springs, Maryland by Madeleine Rodeffer in 1965

Over the last few years something extraordinary has been happening in Britain. The trickle of interest in UFOs and paranormal phenomena, which has traditionally been investigated by a collection of so-called 'fringe' groups, and normally fills the columns of a small number of specialist magazines, has suddenly become a raging torrent. It appears that what was once considered the domain of a few enthusiastic amateurs has now become a subject of major public fascination, increasingly fuelled by the mainstream media who are falling over themselves in a competitive frenzy to feed this exponential growth in all things weird, wonderful and certainly extraterrestrial.

The reasons behind this explosion of interest are complex and multifaceted. Perhaps part of the reason lies in the fact that many old paradigms are collapsing like houses made of straw. Revolutionary new theories are hammering at the doors of an endless list of scientific theories in physics, medicine and archaeology, to name but a few. A climate of uncertainty has thus been created which provokes both demands for change and an infectious, all-pervading curiosity at all levels of our society.

It could also be that due to the vast increase in interest in the UFO phenomenon, whether in the form of science fiction or in documentaries or media investigations, a more open atmosphere has been created in which people feel more confident about discussing the phenomenon, without fear of ridicule. With more and more scientists admitting just how limited their knowledge is, being agnostic about UFOs seems an ever more reasonable position. One thing is certain though: the actual number of reported sightings has increased enormously over the last few years.

One of the most significant changes to have occurred in the field of UFO research has been the increase in the number of respected academics who have been prepared to risk their reputations by becoming involved. This has occurred in the political arena as well, especially in America, where interest in the UFO phenomenon has become a public obsession.

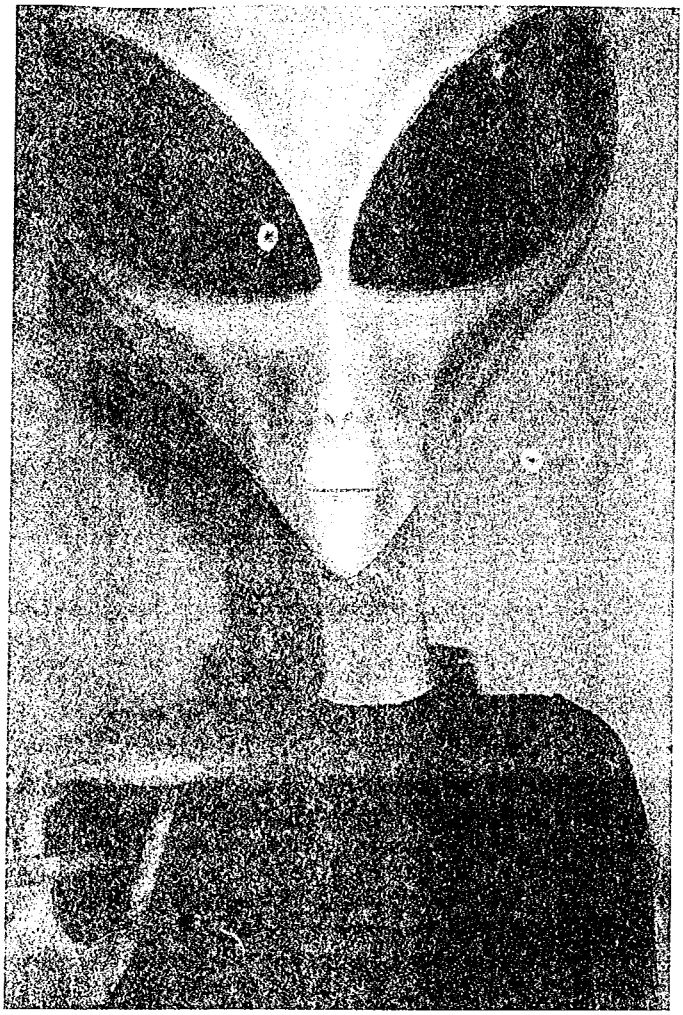
Roy Lake, who heads a UFO study group in London and has been investigating the phenomenon for 43 years, states: 'There is no doubt that interest in UFOs and alien visitors is at an all-time high.' He believes part of the reason for this is to do with the flood of material coming from America. There has been a massive growth of interest in subjects such as Area 51, the notorious US military installation at Groom Lake, Nevada, where 'black budget' operations are carried out - the building of the Stealth bomber and 'Star Wars' technology research for example. Various witnesses who claim to have worked there say the underground base is home to extraterrestrial discs, which are supposedly being 'back-engineered' for military use.

Lake also believes that: '*The X-Files* has had a remarkable effect on the British public. This programme has acted as a catalyst for many people who originally were not interested in UFOs but have now begun to get more involved.'

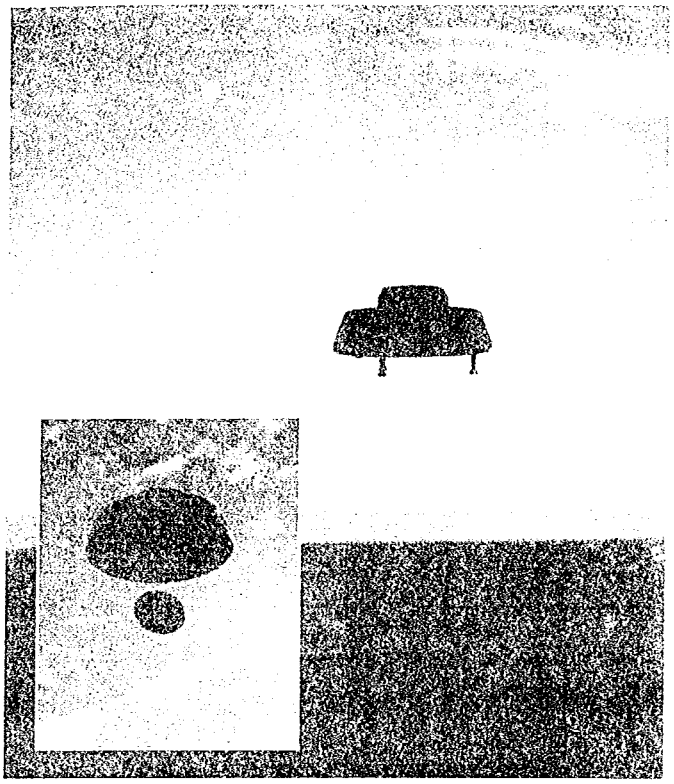
Nick Pope: the maverick at the MoD

When *The X-Files* was first screened on BBC 2, its viewing figures of 6.2 million made it the channel's most popular programme. It's success has been such that it has since transferred to BBC 1 and is now showing twice every week. If you believe the characters in *The X-Files* to be pure fiction, then think again.

Although quite clearly not in the same league as the television character, Nick Pope often refers to himself as 'the real Fox Mulder'. From 1991 to 1994, Pope ran a special department at



A model of a 'grey' alien by Steve Neill



Photographs of reportedly alien craft in Australia sent to our offices

the Ministry of Defence, called Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a. This innocuous-sounding branch of the Civil Service was more commonly known as the 'UFO desk'. As its manager, Nick Pope was the government's top expert on the subject. It is possible that Nick had more access to UFO-related information than anyone else in the whole country.

Pope says he horrified his colleagues at the MoD (and delighted UFO buffs) by publicly admitting his belief that some UFOs are extraterrestrial space craft. He has published a book, *Open Skies, Closed Minds*, which contains a description of his time on the UFO desk, as well as a detailed look, not only at important UFO cases he investigated, but also the alien abduction phenomenon, and even animal mutilation.

Is it a bird? Is it a plane?

If anyone reported a UFO sighting in Britain, whether they were airline pilots, military personnel, radar operators or civilians, the reports would be investigated by Pope. He states: 'The vast majority of the 300 or so cases that arrived on my desk every year could be accounted for. There are, after all, numerous possible explanations, such as misidentification, and a wide range of natural phenomena, but that left a hard core of five per cent which are genuine unknown cases, all of which totally defy rational explanation. Five per cent is a lot, especially when you factor in the hundreds of people who never report their sightings. My best assessment is that they are extraterrestrial in origin.'

When Pope began his job, he echoed the entrenched scepticism of his sober civil servant colleagues. As time went by, though, the number of sightings reported by credible witnesses grew, (these were from men and women who, because of their social position, were unlikely to fabricate stories of alien spaceships - airline pilots and RAF officers for example). He started to develop a genuine passion for the subject, and began to read the literature and meet all the top UFO researchers. 'The more I thought about it, the more I realised how much there was to this subject. I came to the conclusion that there must definitely be something going on'.

'Spooky' Pope

Not long after *The X-Files* was released his colleagues began to draw parallels between the UFO-obsessed Fox Mulder and his real-life counterpart at the MoD. He says he even acquired Mulder's nick name, 'Spooky'. 'I would walk down the corridors and people would start whistling the theme tune from *The Twilight Zone* and say "there goes Spooky Pope". I suppose like Mulder I am a maverick and my views were considered outrageous.'

Regardless of any "evidence" to the contrary, the MoD still claim that all UFOs can be explained in terrestrial terms. Since the 1950s the MoD has accumulated information on more than 8000 UFO sightings, much of which is still withheld under the 30-year secrecy rule. It is clear that there are still plenty of files sitting in vaults that the public will not see for a very long time, if ever.

Issues of National Security?

The MoD's official line is: 'Our only concern is to establish whether or not they pose a threat to the security of the United Kingdom. Unless we judge that they do, and this has not been the case so far, we do not attempt to investigate further.'

Ironically, it is exactly the issue of national security that worries Pope so much, and it is one of the reasons he gives for speaking out. Cases like the Rendlesham forest incident, where a UFO landed inside a US Air Force base in Suffolk (which happened before Pope took up his post), are of the sort that he has investigated and which are a source of great concern to him: 'We have a highly sophisticated array of air defence measures including ground-based and airborne radar. If the system has failed it is a very serious matter indeed. If structured craft of unknown origins are routinely viewed over the UK, it's a clear implication that they have

breached our defence system. In my opinion that poses a definite threat to the security of this country.'

But whether we could actually *do* anything about the aliens' apparent technological superiority is a very open question. Presumably, the fact that these alien beings are able to travel across the Universe and land undetected in our fields, in craft whose method of propulsion we can only wonder at, might be an indication that our technology is, in comparison to theirs, light years behind. Thus being concerned about the risk to our 'national security' might be a simple red herring, a justification for further spending on weapons of war even. All we can do is hope that their intentions are benign, because it is obvious that if they wanted to destroy us they would most likely have the capacity to do so. For them we could be just a diverting anthropological field trip.

Although Pope states that his conversion from sceptic to believer occurred gradually - 'The drip, drip, drip effect', as he describes it - he also asserts that it was particular cases arriving on his desk that were responsible for tipping the balance. 'Were I to name one day in the three years I spent as the ministry's UFO expert which convinced me that extra-terrestrial spacecraft are regularly visiting the Earth, it would have to be March 31st, 1993.'

March 31st 1993

In the morning Pope received a call from a police constable in Devon who, along with his colleagues, described initially seeing two bright lights, together with a third, fainter one darting across the night sky. The officers were convinced it was like nothing they had ever seen before, and stated in their report that they were three craft flying in tight formation.

Pope then began to be besieged by calls from other witnesses, who described seeing exactly the same objects travelling at extremely high speed, then stopping instantaneously and hovering in mid-air.



Nick Pope, a UFO believer within the MoD.

"The more I thought about it, the more I realised how much there was to this subject. I came to the conclusion that there definitely must be something going on."

He co-ordinated the locations of the reports and discovered that the craft had been seen over Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Wales and as far north as the Midlands and Yorkshire. The craft seemed to be zig-zagging at phenomenal speed all across the country. 'By lunchtime', Pope realised, 'it became obvious that I was right in the centre of the biggest wave of UFO sightings ever reported in Britain'.

One of the sightings in Wales was reported by a man with vast experience in aviation and mathematics. Knowing the local terrain extremely well, he had managed to time the UFO's passage between two points on the horizon and, knowing the distance between these landmarks, was able to calculate that the craft were ripping along at about 1,100 mph - roughly equivalent to the top speed of an F-16 jet fighter aircraft.

A group of five people in Staffordshire described seeing a huge diamond-shaped object flying so low over their heads that they could estimate its size to be about 200 metres in diameter - far larger than any man-made flying machine. As it went past them they heard a very low humming sound, so deep it was similar to the bass at a rock concert. The low bass frequency reverberated through their bodies. Utterly amazed, they jumped into their car and screeched down the road in hot pursuit, but the craft had gracefully accelerated away. They had no hope of catching up with it.

So far, the reports had originated from non-military personnel, so when Pope received a call from a meteorological officer stationed at an RAF base in Shropshire, he became very concerned. 'The officer saw the most astonishing sight of that whole amazing night. An object in the sky, at first stationary, moved erratically towards him at a speed of several hundred miles an hour. At one point it fired a beam of light at the ground, which swept the countryside from left to right as if it was looking for something.' The officer reported seeing the object for a full five minutes - long enough to estimate that it was larger than a jumbo jet and to notice that it was emitting the same low frequency bass hum previously reported.

Pope then conducted a thorough investigation to see if any terrestrial explanation could account for some of the sightings - that was his job, after all. He could find none. He realised that there were too many visual sightings from trustworthy sources to ignore the implications of what he had heard, and wrote a detailed report for his bosses at the Ministry. This, much to his surprise, went straight to the assistant chief of the Air Staff. 'He noted my report, but there was little else he could do.'

Being a loyal Ministry man, what disturbed Pope most, he says, was the fact that whatever had zig-zagged across Britain on the night of the 30th March had invaded British air space and probed military installations without even being picked up by radar early warning systems. Its technical superiority was so great that, should it have proven to be hostile, there could have been no defence against it. If ever there was an issue of national security for the MoD, surely this one should be given top priority. When Pope pointed this out to his superiors, he claims, they at first laughed the matter off, but when they realised he was serious, they told him to 'drop certain lines of enquiry'.

As Pope points out in his book, the 1976 US Freedom of Information Act allowed the release of many documents in the States that demonstrate the seriousness with which the American establishment views the possible existence and potential threat of UFOs. Most of the work was, and is, however, done undercover by various intelligence agencies. It could just be, therefore, that Pope's concern at his colleagues' cynicism is misplaced - few of them would know if there was top secret research being undertaken in *this* country into UFOs, and while state security agencies would have ready access to all of Pope's files (without his knowledge), Pope himself would be unable to discover the extent - or even the existence - of intelligence databases on all the various UFO phenomena.

Takeaway food?

Although Pope was sent reports of alleged alien abduction cases, it was not in his brief to deal with them, so he passed details of the cases on to UFO experts. He was also aware of the strange animal mutilations that have been occurring on a large scale since 1967, primarily in America. In 1993 he began to receive the first reports of animal mutilations in Britain. In several places in the south of England it was discovered that horses and family pets had been subjected to an inexplicable method of mutilation where flesh is removed in neat circles, and genitals and other organs bored out. Pope was required to refer these cases on to the police or to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Unsurprisingly, their 'clear up rate' was a little on the low side. Pope is now planning a follow-up book which will cover the 'alien abduction' phenomenon.

The rise of alien chic

The current wave of interest in UFOs and other strange phenomena seems to go hand in hand with the search amongst young people for alternative belief systems. The younger generation have appropriated UFO imagery, wearing the popular SCHWA T-shirts and other paraphernalia which feature alien heads and UFOs themselves. According to *Fortean Times* editor Bob Pickard, 'It provides them with a belief system, something else to hang on to'. Young people *are* growing up in a world where old social norms are being undermined almost daily, but couldn't their interest in UFOs also be a manifestation of rebelliousness? After all, what could better demonstrate their disaffection with dogmatic elders than to openly embrace the idea of alien beings whose power far outstrips that of any terrestrial government?

The interest in aliens and UFOs also seems to have infiltrated the rave scene, with the appearance of a number of clubs which cater for these combined interests. Club Alien in London is a good example, where the organisers invite UFO experts to lecture at the club and to hang out with the ravers who can then ask questions about their favourite UFO topics.

Alien autopsy film gets the thumbs down

Nick Pope has been very busy this year doing the lecture circuit and promoting his book. He recently appeared at the *Fortean Unconvention* held on April 20th and 21st in London. Amongst the plethora of weird subjects under discussion was the 'alien autopsy' film associated with the Roswell incident.

A discussion panel met following a showing of the film in its entirety, including the notorious 'tent sequence'. This involved a similar type of 'alien' body to that seen in the footage first shown to the media back in the summer of 1995. This sequence proved to be even less convincing than the footage shot in the 'autopsy room'. The quality of the film was appalling. It was badly underexposed, shot with a single camera that remained fairly stationary, and failed to show any revealing details as the autopsy took place. The story was that this autopsy had been conducted in a tent because of the urgent need to operate on the badly decomposing body.



Model of one of the alien bodies reputedly recovered at the Roswell UFO crash site

The footage was presented by Philip Mantle, head of the famous British UFO Research Association (BUFORA), who has received a great deal of criticism from the UFO community for his 'support of and association with' Mr. Santilli, the producer who claims to have bought the footage from the US military cameraman who shot it in 1947. During the discussion on the authenticity of the footage, chaired by Mantle, the overwhelming consensus was that this was an elaborate hoax. When the audience were asked if they thought it was a fake, practically all hands shot up.

The most interesting aspect of the Santilli film is that it is still the centre of so much attention. Despite 99 per cent of the UFO community condemning it as a hoax, it continues to fascinate the public. In fact, if the footage is part of some elaborate disinformation campaign designed to discredit the Roswell crash, it seems to have backfired dramatically. Like Area 51, Nick Pope, and *The X-Files*, the alien autopsy footage has attracted a huge amount of mass media attention and it has therefore succeeded in exposing a vast world-wide audience to the existence of the UFO phen-omenon. It has clearly illustrated that the public (and UFO experts) are far less gullible than many expected them to be, and it has clearly been one of the major factors responsible for triggering the exponential growth of interest in many of the more serious aspects of the whole alien and UFO subject in general.

But, as one panel member observed, much of the interest in the footage probably stems from the fact that two main questions still have to be answered: Who made the film and why was it made? He also points out that, although he believes it to be a hoax, 'No one has actually come along with absolute proof that it's a fake. Which leaves the uncomfortable element of possibility that it could yet turn out to be real'.

Open skies but a lot of closed minds

Pope claims, optimistically, that: 'When people read my book it will change their attitudes in a very profound way. A lot of material in there is very sensational and there are a lot of great cases that will make people look at this in a whole new light.' But he adds that: 'Until we have the start key of an actual UFO you are not going to be able to convince the sceptics of the reality of the phenomenon, whether they be from the general public or from the ranks of government.'

Pope says that his three years spent investigating UFOs for the government was a real voyage of discovery, and one that has turned his world view completely inside out. He concludes that the implications of the reality of an alien presence on earth are beyond the means of adequate expression: 'It is beyond the scope of any single individual to comprehend or put into words. There's no doubt that *if* such a presence were 'officially' established it would change the way humanity views itself for ever.'

When I persisted in asking him where he thought the answers to the UFO phenomenon lie, he finally replied: 'If you want to know where the answer is to what is actually going on with the whole UFO and alien subject, the place to find it is almost definitely buried somewhere deep within the American government.'

Given the seemingly unquenchable public thirst for more information, and its need to be given some real answers, perhaps one day those secrets will finally emerge.

MORE INFORMATION

Nick Pope's book *Open Skies, Closed Minds* is published by Simon & Schuster and is available in hardback at £14.99.

Cuttings from area around Leuterod to follow.

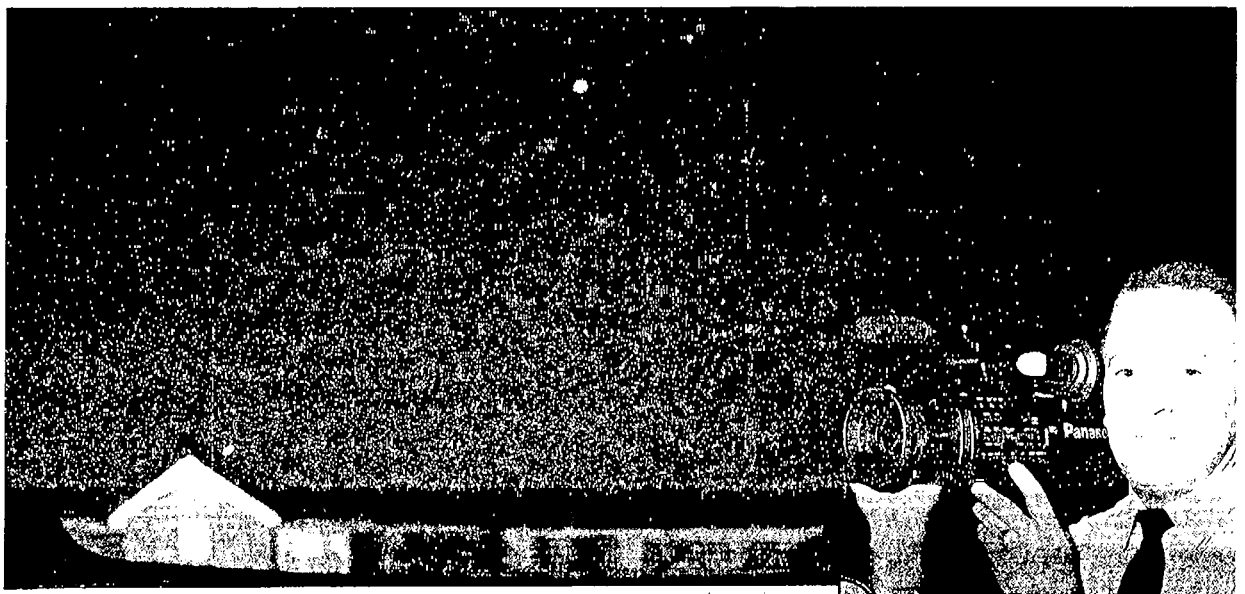
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Defence Press Office

(Defence Information Division)
Room 0389 Main Building
Whitehall London SW1A 2HB
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● Captured: The bright light over the county coast and (right) Lincolnshire Police controller Dave Leyland who shot the video on the roof of Skegness Police Station.

Mystery of light in sky

Confusion at 'UFO sighting

by Susan Ridd

'E mystery surrounding a possible UFO ihting off the county coast deepened lay.

he Echo has managed to get hold of a transcript of a versation between police, RAF officials, the stguard and a tanker boss which gives a blow-by-w account of the unexplained events which took :e.

'e have also got hold of a snap-shot taken by Skegness ce which clearly shows the bright light which suddenly :ared in the sky.

he mystery flying object was picked up by radar at RAF tishead in Norfolk and its movements were tracked for a ıber of hours from 3am on Saturday.

he conversation clearly reveals the confusion and ex-ment the unidentified object caused on the night.

fficials at the Ministry of Defence are now carrying out nvestigation into the incident.

ere is the conversation between the different parties, d-for-word:

kegness police: "We can see a strange red and green ting light in the sky directly south east from Skegness. It ts strange as it is stationary and there is no aircraft sound ıe area."

IAF Kinloss: orthwood have a radar tact bearing 221 degrees ,6 miles. it looks to be ionary and there is no / of determining its ght but it must be quite a : to be visible from gness."

inloss: "Neatishead / confirms a couple of ır contacts in the area but height, they seem to be ionary. There are defi-ly no military aircraft in area and no notified civil hts should be there.

:onocoast tanker: 'e have these lights on visual, now they are flashing red, green and white. Cannot identify it as an aircraft as it looks stationary and it is approximately one mile high."

Yarmouth Coastguard: "Did you see from which direction it appeared?"

Conocoast: "Not it just appeared and is stationary."

Kinloss: "Neatishead say it could be caused by the weather."

Coastguard: "I don't think so as we have visual contact."

Kinloss: "Well Neatishead and Northwood report that there is no transponder on this object and therefore no means of interrogation. It is obvious that whatever it is it does not wany anyone to know that it is there. Also Neatishead report its position as directly over Boston."

Conocoast: "It is still stationary and flashing red, green, blue and white. It looks very high, north of us, and there is no engine noise.

Coastguard: " Skegness, can you get video footage as the RAF are very interested and may require it later."

Kinloss: "Neatishead are keeping a log of what looks like clutter on the radar."

Yarmouth Coastguard: "Conocoast, can you give us an update?"

Conocoast: "We can see two lights flashing green and red."

Coastguard: "Give us both bearings of the two lights."

Conocoast: "There is one stationary light at 345 deg true and the other at 160 true, the lights are both visible with the naked eye and both exhibit the same characteristics flashing red, blue, green and white."

Boston police: "We can still see the light, it is towards the south east and seems about 40-45 degrees up in the sky it is just a bright light to us."

Kinloss: "Neatishead are running a trace on this and cannot explain it. If they are helicopters they are fast approaching the end of their endurance as it is well over two hours since the first report let alone how long they were up there before they were actually sighted."

Conocoast: "We can still see the lights, and they are on their original bearings and flashing the same colours but they seem higher and dimmer."

Flight Lieutenant McFarlane, Neatishead: "We had a report from Northwood that a civil flight had also reported strange lights in the area. They fit exactly what was seen from the ground, multi-coloured, flashing, stationary lights.

Flight Lieutenant George, Northwood: "This echo is still on our screens and we cannot explain this at all apart from it being a meteorological phenomena but then again we have visual sightings also as the civilian light that reported these lights as a flare was six miles away at the time. All very strange."

Neatishead: "The object still has not moved, London radar and Waddington can also see it.

On road to exam

ROAD workers in the county must now take a course and get a certificate before they can lift a pick.

Hundreds of gang members must get the City and Guilds qualification before a new law comes into force next August.

The guarantee of training has been welcomed by Lincoln City Council which is responsible for monitoring the safety of road work.

Deputy city engineer Steve Roper said: "I think these changes should have an impact on the standard of work."

The measures will come into force under the last wave of orders made by the New Roads and Street Works Act of 1991.

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Heritage spotlight on three historic Brentwood buildings

THREE Brentwood buildings have been chosen as sites of special historic interest.

As part of the Department of National Heritage open days, there will be tours of Brentwood School in Ingrave Road over the weekend.

Organisers say that the school complex includes many Grade II listed buildings, a Tudor schoolroom and a small 19th century chapel.

There are also Georgian and earlier buildings which can be seen from outside.

Tours will be held on Saturday at 11.30am

WEEKLY NEWS

Keeping you informed, in touch and entertained

● THE French doors of a house in Worrin Road, Shenfield , were forced and thieves got away with ornaments, jewellery and a computer worth between £8,000 and £10,000.



Concert was out of this world!

AN extra-terrestrial audience convinced some people that the music at Weald Country Park on Saturday was out of this world.

The Last Night of the Proms concert (left) attracted a huge crowd – but it seems that some on-lookers may have come from further afield.

Essex Police received reports of UFOs in the area at the time of the concert which is part of Festival Brentwood.

Two drivers phoned in to say that they had seen alien aircraft.

And claims that the strange lights were due to the laser show which was part of the concert failed to convince the mystified callers.

Festival co-ordinator Andy Wilson said that it was not out of the question: "Well, the concert really was out of this world, so you never know!"

More than 4,000 music-lovers turned up to enjoy the concert – the first of its kind in Brentwood.

Andy said: "That's an incredible number considering it was the first time we have held it.

"Words really can't describe how good it was. The atsmosphere was electric, and it was simply the best concert I have ever been to."

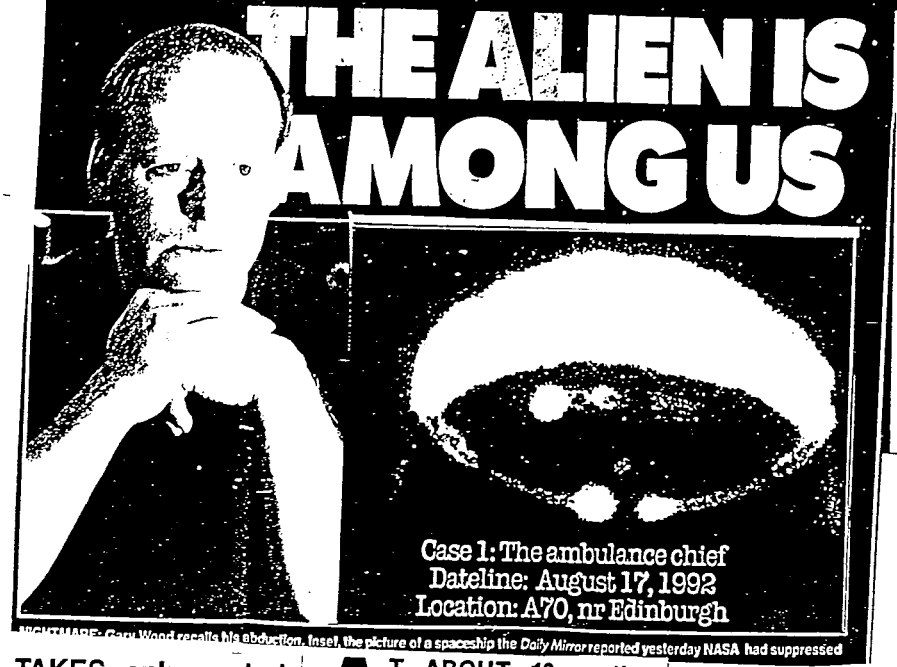
A grand firework finale, set to music, finished off the evening.

And now it looks as if the park concert could become an annual event, with two already pencilled in for next year.

Daily Mirror
23 August 1996

A respected ambulance chief and his friend reveal under hypnosis they were abducted by a spaceship on a lonely road. Is this the proof?

THE ALIEN IS AMONG US



Case 1: The ambulance chief
Dateline: August 17, 1992
Location: A70, nr Edinburgh

NIGHTMARE: Gary Wood recalls his abduction. Inset, the picture of a spaceship the *Daily Mirror* reported yesterday NASA had suppressed

DAILY Mirror

DAY 2 OF 28
A SPECIAL INQUIRY

IT TAKES only a dark road with a dip in it, or a blind corner, and Gary Wood is gripped by fear.

Nightmares shatter the four hours' sleep he has now learned to live with.

Every day the words echo in his head: *"We are already here — and we are still coming."*

Yet this is a man who holds down the vital job of keeping Scotland's ambulances on 100 per cent call-out readiness,

In a country pub, his drink untouched, making his story as detailed as possible, 32-year-old Gary shoots embarrassed glances at his listeners.

He shakes his head. "I'm sorry. I know it sounds nuts, but I can only tell it how it happened ... I don't want this. I would rather have my life back the way it was."

Gary tells a story of alien abduction on a Scottish road. Of beings who probed his body and mind and left him terrified that one day they will return — for him.

Of all the encounters claimed around the world, Gary's is considered one of the most authentic. For he was not alone on the night of August 17, 1992, when he was plucked from his car.

Friend Colin Wright was with him. Separately, under hypnosis, they have told the same story.

Colin has coped with it better, refusing to talk publicly. Gary talked and suffered ridicule and hostility. It took much persuasion to arrange this rare interview.

Nervous, and watching for the first hint of derision, he begins: "I was just a normal guy. All I wanted was my job, plenty of money, a nice house, a family..."

Today he shrugs as if these things are lost forever.

AT ABOUT 10pm that August night, Gary set off with Colin on a 40-minute journey to another friend's house outside Edinburgh.

Driving at a safe 45mph, the pair had just passed Harper's Ridge reservoir on the A70 when they approached a blind dip in the road.

Before them, floating about 20ft above the ground, was a black, domed object measuring 30-35ft across. It was a classic flying saucer shape.

A curtain of light bathed the width of the road.

"Suddenly, it was like I was in a black void," says Gary. "There I am, standing up and thinking: 'Where's my car? Where's Colin?' I wondered if I was dead.

"Another 15 seconds went by and I was back in my car on the wrong side of the road, shunting diagonally into the banking."

At their friend's home, the terrified pair told what had happened.

Independently, in separate parts of the house, they drew what they had seen. The drawings were identical.

They also discovered that somehow, they had lost an hour-and-a-half en route.

For Gary, the ordeal was just beginning. He began to suffer severe headaches and flashbacks which left him screaming in bed. The fear was so crippling he couldn't go out alone, except to work.

Nine months after his encounter, Gary was prepared for hypnosis. Colin also agreed to undergo testing.

The regression was video-taped. Horror is stamped over Gary's face as he relives the meeting.

"I saw three creatures coming towards my car. I felt intense pain, like an electric shock. Then I was in some room.

"I saw these things like wee men moving about, doing something to me. I could only see up. Then this six-foot creature approached.

"It was white-grey in colour with a large head and dark eyes with a long, slender neck, very slim shoulders and waist.

"There were either ribs or folds of skin on its body. The arms were like ours but there were four very long fingers.

"The little ones were about three feet tall and seemed to do all the work while the big ones did the communication.

"I felt that some of them felt sorry for me. One of them looked into my life and I looked into it — it couldn't stop me. It was hiding something.

"One of the big creatures put his face close to mine and I was so frightened I could hardly breathe.

IT NEVER spoke to me, but something came into my head.

"I heard a voice saying: 'I have a life like you but different things happen to us — but it's got to be done.'

"I was crying like a baby — I wanted to get away. I must have asked what it wanted. It said: 'Sanctuary — we are here already and we are coming here.'

"Just to the left of me I saw a girl. She was on the ground, her hands clasping her knees to her chest. She was naked and crying.

"She looked at me, but I couldn't do anything. Tears were coming down her face. She was in her early twenties, with shoulder-length blonde hair. I would recognise her face if I saw it again but it was nobody I'd met before."

In separate sessions, Colin remembered being in a different room. He was naked and sitting in a chair.

If he tried to move, one of the creatures would stop him.

In his head he heard: "Gary's all right, you don't have to get off the chair."

Hanging from the ceiling were cylinder-shaped objects which made him think of containers for people.

After the regression, Gary became obsessed with research and tracking down other people who have had similar experiences.

He now has his own page on the Internet. Along with Edinburgh author John Jenkins, he has recorded the stories of others — debunking many of them.

Every spare hour is devoted to seeking an answer to what happened to him.

"I know something is going to happen. I believe they are here

MANY CASES INVOLVE SANE, HONEST PEOPLE

PHILIP MANTLE, of the British UFO Research Association (BUFORA), has interviewed many of the 80 Britons claiming alien encounters. He says: "There are too many cases involving sane, sober, decent and honest people for it to be discounted.

"The fact that alleged abductees risk ridicule when they talk publicly must deter the cranks."

AN **MoD SPOKESMAN** dismissed the threat of aliens arriving here as "negligible". He said: "We don't perceive any threat from extra-terrestrials.

"Around 99.9 per cent of cases are explained by natural phenomena like lighting, weather balloons or aircraft."

EXPERTS' VIEW

NICK POPE spent three years at the MoD, investigating and researching the UFO mystery. He says: "I have absolutely no doubt that some of these accounts do happen and that some sort of alien intelligence may be involved.

"Of the MoD UFO sightings, five to ten per cent are unexplained.

"On a number of occasions, RAF jets have been scrambled to try and intercept UFOs."

● Philip Mantle's book *Without Consent* is published by Ringpull Press. You can contact BUFORA at BM Bufora, London, WC1N 3XX

Case 3: The forester
Dateline: Nov, 1979
Location: Scotland



ATTACK: Bob's picture of his assailant

SPIKES WENT FOR MY LEGS

RETIRED forester Bob Taylor will never forget that day in November 1979 when he was attacked by a UFO in a Scottish wood.

Bob, 78, who now lives in Tayside, says: "I was walking through Dechmont woods with my red setter Lara and as I turned this corner there was this 250ft spinning top thing in front of me.

"These sea-mine-type things with spikes on them came out of the back and grabbed my trousers ripping right through to my skin."

Bob passed out.

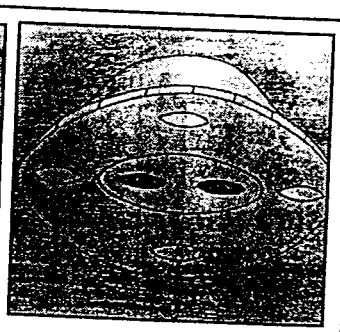
"When I came to, I heard a sound of something moving very fast away in the distance. I eventually got on my knees and crawled to my truck but it was dead."

Dad-of-five Bob crawled the mile to his home and told his wife he'd been attacked by a UFO.

The police were called to the scene and their report states: "The marks indicated an object of several tons had stood there but no information has been gained to explain them."

But widower Bob says: "I know there is something out there.





TERROR DRIVE: Rose and Val and an impression of the UFO

OUR LOST 30 MINUTES

IT WAS 2am and the road was deserted. Suddenly, bright lights appeared to hover in front of Vivien Hayward's car.

She, Rosemary Hawkins and Valerie Walters noted that the huge object ahead was silent.

Foster carer Rosemary, 40, recalls that night 15 years ago: "Our engine lost power. Then the object's lights dimmed and it disappeared. We arrived at a police station at 2.50 – we'd lost half an hour."

Under hypnosis, Rosemary remembered being scanned in a machine. Valerie recalled: "Something grabbed my shoulders and a voice told me not to be afraid.

"I was in a room with no doors and a tall, long-haired man and woman appeared. The female tried on my shoes and fell. I asked what they wanted and was told: 'There will be a time when you'll understand'."

Case 3: The girlfriends
Dateline: July, 1981
Location: A5, Shropshire

Case 4: Philip Spencer
Dateline: December 1, 1987
Location: Ilkley Moor, Yorkshire

FORMER policeman Philip Spencer was walking across Yorkshire's Ilkley Moor just after dawn when he encountered something incredible.

Philip (not his real name) was carrying a camera to take some snaps of the town when it got lighter.

Hearing a humming sound, he looked up to see a figure he is convinced wasn't human.

He took a photo and followed it to what appeared to be two giant silver saucers stuck together.

The craft shot upwards and into the clouds.

When he got back into town, Philip realised it was 10am – he'd "lost" two hours. He had the photos developed – to find the creature had been captured on film. During later hypnotic regression Philip described entering the craft and being put on a table by creatures with pointed ears.

He said they showed him two films, the first containing scenes of destruction and starvation. He said he was not allowed to discuss the second.

Daily Mail
3 August 1996

Why would aliens want to come to our town?

CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON visits the small Scottish valley that's become the scene of Britain's real-life X-Files

It's not immediately clear why aliens should want to come to Bonnybridge. A small, windswept town just north of Glasgow, it sits in a muddy valley, framed by electric pylons and low hills. There's a bridge (not remotely bonny), a Chinese takeaway, two pubs and 5,450 people.

There's also plenty of sky — and from the window of their seventh-floor flat, pensioners Bill and Mabel Bestall can see most of it. If they are preoccupied with the view, few can blame them. From their windows, they have witnessed UFO activity on no less than three occasions.

Bizarrely, perhaps, this small, close-knit community has become the scene of Scotland's real-life X-Files — a town where, with startling regularity, residents report evidence of alien activity.

The most dramatic of these sightings took place in the early hours of the morning last January. 'It was about a quarter to five, and I'd got up in the night,' remembers Bill. 'Suddenly, I spotted a large circular light hovering over Bonnybridge and realised it was heading towards our flats.

'Next, two smaller circular objects came into view, spinning around the larger one. I was intrigued and called the wife to come and look. However, as it got nearer, we became scared. It was huge and it was heading straight for us. But then it suddenly rose up and over the top of the flats.'

Perhaps it was a plane. Or a helicopter. Or perhaps Mr Bestall is completely batty, and so is his wife — who, incidentally, confirms every detail. All these are possibilities. But when you look at the sheer statistical mass of sightings by people in the Bonnybridge area, then the greater likelihood is that the Bestalls are telling the truth.

For some reason, this corridor of countryside between Glasgow and Edinburgh is a UFO hotspot. Of all sightings in Scotland, two-thirds occur within it. 'To my knowledge, 3,000 people have seen something unusual in our skies during the past few years,' says Bonnybridge councillor Bill Buchanan. 'And there must be many more who have been afraid to come forward.'

Walk down the main street, and everyone knows someone who's seen a UFO. At the electrical goods shop, it's Anne Stewart's daughter, Carol, who had a night encounter with bright, flying objects while driving home. 'We were at the pub when she rang us, terrified,' says her mother. 'The whole bar piled outside to have a look, but whatever it was had gone.'

Meanwhile, at the post office, Marlene Fleming has been keeping a secret for years. It concerns an elderly friend who went fishing one night at nearby St Helen's Loch, and saw a bright light in the sky. 'The thing started moving back and forth across the water,' says Marlene. 'Then it started following my friend, who decided to head back home. By the time he reached the house, he was running for all he was worth.'

Marlene's friend never made his ordeal public, and many others feel the same way. There is, however, someone they can turn to. And that's John Jenkins. A 60-year-old piano tuner from nearby Penicuik, John was a spaceship sceptic until one morning in 1992, when he saw an 'orange-golden ball' in the sky just outside Edinburgh.

'It was travelling in an absolute straight line and at great speed,' recalls John. 'I thought the whole city would be in an uproar, but although there was an article about it in The Scotsman, it was quickly forgotten.'

But not by him. Before long, he was seeking out others who had experienced close encounters. One was Andy Swan, a 27-year-old electric cable layer from nearby Armadale. 'I'd been to Cowdenbeath,' recalls Andy. 'When I got home, around 11.45pm, there was a lightning storm, and as I was sitting in the car watching it, I saw this large object come crashing down from the sky — about 35 to 40 foot long, the size of a lorry trailer. I decided to drive in the direction it had been travelling.'

A mile along the road, the object suddenly came flying low over the hedgerows, straight at his car. 'I thought I was going to run into it, but it passed over the bonnet and came to a halt in a field. It just sat there, hovering silently, about 15 feet off the ground. I got out of the car and pointed my halogen lamp at it to get a better look. Immediately, the bulb blew. Then my headlights went out. I tried the car ignition, but it wouldn't start. Suddenly, the thing leapt up and reversed at incredible speed back over the top of the car.'

The police were called, as was an AA patrolman, who was unable to find any visible fault in Andy's car. No sooner had it been towed back home, however, than the electrics came back to life. In a police statement, Andy described the object as looking like 'a giant, black Toblerone bar'.

What still troubles him now, though, is that, 'Somehow, an hour of my life can't be

accounted for.' Falkirk police confirm that they received a distress call on Andy's mobile phone at 1.20am. Yet he is sure he made it at around 12.15. So what happened in that lost time? At this point, one makes a significant leap from the world of visible, recordable fact — into the black hole of sci-fi speculation.

Suddenly, X-Files theories loom large. One theory gaining ground in UFO circles is that humankind is being infiltrated by a race of creatures often referred to as The Greys. Those who have experienced such contact tell their 'true life' stories in glossy 'paranormal' magazines such as Encounters and Alien Encounters.

Others, however, are more sceptical. One explanation for the whirling lights seen by the Bestalls is that they are fireballs — pieces of matter burning up on entering the earth's atmosphere. Other possible culprits include aircraft lights or aircraft seen from unusual angles, kites, helium balloons, weather balloons and unusual cloud formations — not to mention lightning and meteorites.

Yet there is one rather disquieting detail which may yet prove the sceptics wrong. It concerns what has been Bonnybridge's most distressing case so far, involving two young men who have become so upset by their experience that they no longer talk about it publicly. It happened one night in 1992, as Colin Wright and Garry Wood were taking a satellite dish to be repaired at a friend's house. Ordinary working people, they had no previous interest or belief in UFOs. Colin was a painter and decorator, Garry worked for the ambulance service.

As they drove along the A70, near the Harperrig Reservoir, they suddenly saw a jet-black, disc-shaped object 20 feet above the road. They came to a halt directly underneath the thing, upon which it released a shimmering curtain of light over them — 'like confetti', one of them described it.

Both men were catapulted into inky blackness, and remember only that there was a huge shudder. Then they found themselves still in the car, the blackness gone. Shaken, they drove on — but found when they reached their destination that the journey had taken two hours longer than the 35 minutes it should have done.

To find out what happened in those two missing hours, Colin and Garry independently underwent a dozen sessions of hypnotherapy, during which they provided accounts that not only matched each other's, but also those of previous 'abductees'.

Both claim they were transported out of the car by a beam of light, then stripped and subjected to an inspection by creatures with translucent, child-like bodies and pear-shaped heads. Both saw other men and women being examined, but not each other.

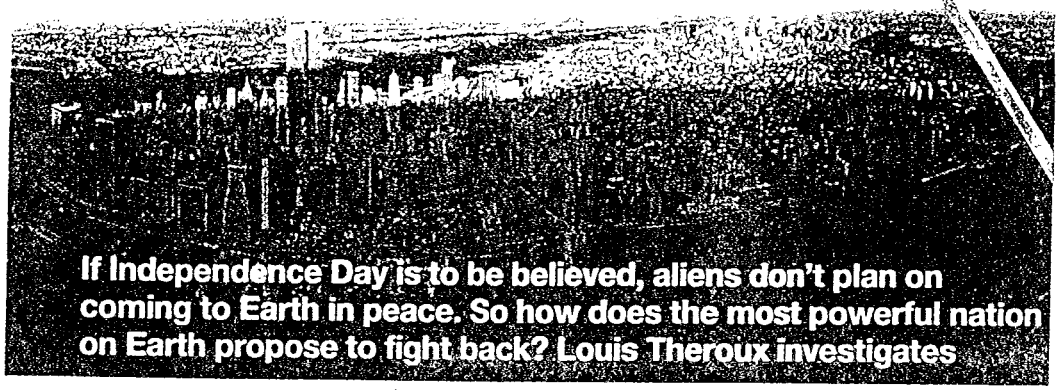
And the official response to all this? Don't panic, Captain Mainwaring, would seem to be the answer. 'If we conclude that no threat to the security of the UK has occurred, we do not attempt to investigate,' says the Ministry of Defence. And in none of the Bonnybridge cases is any such threat thought to have occurred.

In the case of Andy Swan, for example, they wonder if he had mistaken his Toblerone bar for a Harrier Jump Jet, of which there were three in the area that night.

Nevertheless, local MP Dennis Canavan and Bill Buchanan still want the Bonnybridge phenomenon investigated. 'It's a disgrace that no one has come here to look into what's going on,' says Councillor Buchanan. 'I have this feeling that something really dramatic is going to happen here. I'm just hoping that I and all these other law-abiding people will eventually be vindicated — and preferably in our own lifetime.'

The Guardian
3 August 1996

Invasion Earth



If Independence Day is to be believed, aliens don't plan on coming to Earth in peace. So how does the most powerful nation on Earth propose to fight back? Louis Theroux investigates

Independence Day is the G.4 mother of all summer blockbusters, looming in the sky like a huge alien spaceship about to blast us with its death ray.

You doubtless know the plot already: a malevolent race of greasy space creatures have marauded their way through the galaxy and arrived at Earth. Far from wanting to heal our children with their long glowing fingers, these ETs plan to pillage our planet out of existence; and only a ragtag band of freedom fighters stand between us and total annihilation.

Luckily, it's all fiction, and for the most part Independence Day has been treated as an engaging piece of sci-fi nonsense. But having seen it myself and having sweated through the long minutes of alien dominion, it's hard to shake the nagging fear: what if it actually happened? What if space creatures really did invade Earth? Would we be as ill-prepared as our fictional Earthling counterparts? Would we flash welcome messages at the space monsters while they proceeded to blow up New York, Los Angeles, and Washington DC? Or would we dispense with the niceties and go kick some space butt?

Consequently, I made a series of calls to find out the likelihood of an assault from outer space and to find out what contingency plans are in place should such an assault happen. The good news is: the chances of an alien invasion appear to be very, very small, chiefly because the space beings would have to come from such a long way away.

"Most scientists and astronomers say they do believe that there's life somewhere in the universe besides the Earth," says NASA spokesperson Don Savage. "But they think it's unlikely that they have visited here or could visit here, given what we understand about faster-than-light travel." Okay — that's encouraging. But then Savage adds: "We don't know what we don't know. So perhaps they have found a way to travel long distances. It's not outside the realm of possibility."

Worst-case scenario: the aliens reach Earth. What next? Here the news becomes rather more disquieting. In the movie, Earth learns of their arrival via SETI, the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence. This is a fictionalised version of a real-life non-profit organisation, also called SETI, but unlike its movie version, the real SETI doesn't operate much of an early warning system. In the event of actually picking up a space signal from, let's say, an alien attack vessel, SETI's policy isn't to tell the Pentagon or Congress or the UN — it's to notify its "donors", the various captains of industry who fund the project. More worrying still, it seems SETI isn't actually functioning at the moment ("We're waiting for some upgrades in equipment," says a spokesperson), making Earth a sitting duck for those greasy aliens.

It gets worse. An exhaustive probe of the US military and NASA reveals that there are no protocols in place to deal with an assault from outer space. "We do contingency planning for a whole

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range of potential military options worldwide," says Pentagon spokesperson Brian Whitman, "but I don't have any information on anything in terms of contingency planning for aliens." Whitman refers me to the air force. "The air force handles UFOs," he says.

But USAF spokesperson Major Ed Worley reveals that, while the air force is "working on an airborne laser", they haven't made any plans for combating the interstellar menace. "They could be so far advanced that they're going to vaporise us all anyway, so what difference does it make?" he reasons.

Fair enough, I suppose. But does the air force perhaps know more than it's letting on? In the movie, we Earth beings are ultimately able to vanquish the space monsters thanks to research being done at an airbase in Nevada where the US military has secretly been keeping an alien vessel. In fact, the airbase is real and for years UFO kooks have indeed maintained that the US uses it to study a downed alien spaceship. So can we at least count on having a piece of alien hardware to help us?

I ask Major Worley: "Totally off the record – and I mean totally, I definitely won't use this – is there an alien spaceship in that airbase in Nevada?" "Not that I know of," he replies.

Despairing of finding a US governmental policy on defence against space monsters, I draw up a quick list of suggestions myself:

1 Invisible shield for White House.
2 Alien lookout post on moon.
3 Mirror on White House roof to reflect death ray back at space ship.
4 New line of "attack shuttles".
5 Use salt on aliens – like slugs?

I score a small success with the air force, they like the salt suggestion. But I hit a snag when I run the suggestions for White House improvements by the Secret Service. Regarding the invisible shield, a spokesperson says: "From our understanding, that is technologically unfeasible." Nod to the big mirror idea, he says: "That would go right up there with designing aluminium around your head."

My last resort is NASA and its "attack shuttles" idea. Does it score big points with their spokesperson? "I don't think we're interested in doing that," he says. "We're interested in the peaceful exploration and the scientific exploration of space. I don't know that attack shuttles are really necessary."

It seems hopeless. Our real-life leaders are every bit as ineffectual and doubting as their fictive equivalents. I'm about ready to abandon my fellow Earth beings to their probable doom at the hands of the intergalactic marauders. But then, a glimmer of hope, in the form of the moon lookout post. "We've been looking at possibly returning to the moon and possibly setting up a long-term facility there," says the NASA spokesperson. "That's still somewhat off in the future. But it may be sooner than some people think."

Let's hope so.

● *Independence Day is released on Friday 3.*

NASA: "We're interested in the peaceful exploration of space. I don't know that attack shuttles are really necessary."



Closer to home, it seems that Britain is just as ill-prepared for hostile "visitors"...

The man from the ministry was not giving much away. Sensible chap, really; I could have been a malicious alien posing as a journalist.

"We have contingency plans for a variety of scenarios," he said, explaining how the Ministry of Defence would react to invasion by a foreign army. Did any of these include the possibility of UFOs hovering over London?

"I will not get drawn on the issues," he added tersely. "The role of the armed forces is to provide defence to the UK in support of British policy."

John Major's office declined to say if there was in fact a policy on alien invasions, redirecting me to the MoD.

The Home Office were more helpful. "If the UFO crashed, obviously the emergency services would be involved. We would have an overseeing role." Good old Home Office, dispatching bobbies and ambulancemen when everyone else is running for the bunkers. "But if they declared war on us, that would be a matter for the MoD."

One senior British military figure believes the country is embarrassingly ill-equipped to deal with a UFO attack. Lord Hill-Norton, chairman of NATO's Military Committee, 1974-77, said he was certain the UK had no strategy for aliens: "Nobody in Whitehall is the slightest bit interested in the matter."

"I don't think there is a threat, but I think it entirely possible there are other civilisations flying in our atmosphere. [The MoD] should have started thinking about it. They should open a dialogue with other civilised countries and decide what to do."

ALEX BELLOS



1 (9)

In January 1995, two BA pilots saw this object in the sky above Britain. After 18 months' investigation the aviation authorities are left with only one explanation . . .

Daily Mail
5 August 1996

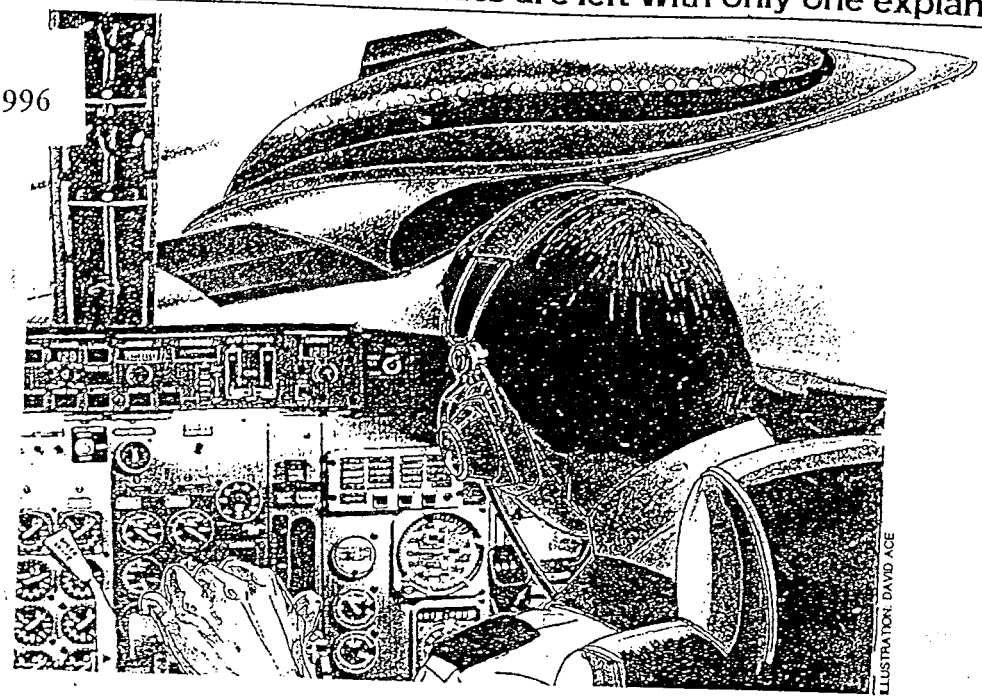


ILLUSTRATION: DAVID ACE

Is this the proof that UFOs exist?



by JANE KELLY 9

OUT of the winter darkness, on January 6 last year, BA flight 5061 from Milan began its descent into Manchester's Ringway Airport, flying into a strong north-westerly wind. Visibility was good, stretching over six miles, and the crew and passengers were looking forward to touching down.

At 6.48pm, as the Boeing 737 cruised over the Pennines, just above the rugged cumulus cloud-cover, the pilot, Captain Roger Wills, and First Officer Mark Stuart, saw something which stunned them.

They ducked instinctively as a triangular, silver-coloured object with a dark stripe down one side hurtled towards them from the opposite direction. It disappeared down the right-hand side of the aircraft, only feet from Officer Stuart's cockpit seat.

For two to three seconds the two men were able to track the object through the cockpit windscreen and a side window. It was one of the most reliable sightings of an unidentified flying object ever to have taken place in Britain. Both men are sensible, well-trained pilots with thousands of air miles between them.

Since that mysterious incident above the Pennines, neither pilot has spoken in public about their encounter. They have spent months being teased mercilessly by their colleagues. Should they keep quiet and forget the incident, or reveal publicly what they saw?

Eventually, Officer Stuart decided that it was, indeed, time to talk about the extraordinary encounter above Manchester, and to set the record straight once and for all.

Tomorrow evening, in a television documentary, Officer Stuart vividly recreates the moment when he thought his aircraft was about to collide with a strange and fast-moving flying object.

'We were coming back from Milan and were on the last stages of approach, at about 4,000ft,' recalls Stuart. 'We were on a northerly course direction heading towards the airfield, just in the tops of the clouds.

'The captain was flying the aircraft. I was monitoring what was going on; my job was to keep an eye on the settings



Shocked: Pilot Mark Stuart

MY PERIPHERAL vision was drawn to something out of the front window. I actually saw the object coming towards me. It was a silvery-grey wedge-shaped object.

'My reaction was to reach for the control column, to try to get away from what I felt was an object in very close proximity. My hands never really went further forward than maybe an inch or two. The object passed very, very close down the right-hand side.

'I asked the captain if he had seen it, to which he replied "yes", he had.

'We decided to ask air traffic control if they had seen anything on the radar. They replied that they hadn't and asked us if we'd like to file an air miss, which would lead to an investigation.

'The object didn't alter its course. There was no deviation on the part of either aircraft. It just came down the side, making no attempt to avoid us, and we didn't have a chance to take any evasive action. It was over very quickly, so there wasn't much that could be done.'

On landing, both pilots discussed what they had seen. 'I suggested to the captain that it would be a good idea to draw what we had seen. We both did so.

'The objects we drew were the same shape, but they differed in texture — mine was a solid object which I believed had black or grey stripes down the side.

'I didn't see any windows or anything like that. The captain drew a similar shape, but his was made up of lots of different little lights.

'I felt his drawing could be explained by a reflection from our landing lights as the object went down our right-hand side.

'We then phoned air traffic control and decided that we would file an air miss, which meant that all the traces from radar would have to be examined in further detail.'

By filing that report, the two men launched themselves on to the treadmill of rumour and mystery that accompanies all such unexplained sightings.

Many airline pilots talk anecdotally of seeing UFOs. But very few actually report what they have seen, fearful of a sceptical response from their colleagues. And, until now, no pilot of a commercial British aircraft has ever spoken publicly about such an incident.

Although Officer Stuart still cannot explain what he and his captain saw, there are a number of possibilities.

Could it have been a craft that has become known as the Silent Vulcan, a supposedly top-secret American military aircraft, so called because its shape resembles an old Vulcan bomber?

THE Silent Vulcan, a similar shape to the Stealth bomber, has allegedly been seen over Europe and North America, and was first sighted over the Hudson Valley in upstate New York in 1983.

In Britain, many of the sightings since have taken place in the Pennine Corridor, which runs from the Midlands to Yorkshire.

In 1990, an object similar to the one seen by Officer Stuart and his captain was spotted in Belgium; the Belgian air force scrambled fighter planes to try to intercept it, but it vanished without leaving radar or radiation readings.

Conspiracy theorists, who have welcomed the BA incident with glee, point to the fact that the American F-117 Stealth bomber flew for five years before the U.S. government confirmed its existence.

Like the Silent Vulcan, it is triangular in shape, and was designed not to show up on radar screens.

Radar experts, however, do not believe that the BA sighting could have been a Stealth bomber. It is not allowed to fly in controlled airspace without being identifiable to ground control.

And even the Stealth bomber cannot explain the speed, agility and rapid acceleration displayed by the object the BA pilots saw.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) spent months investigating the pilots' claims. They talked to all the flight crews and air staff involved. They examined recordings and radar tapes which would tell them whether any other aircraft was in the vicinity of BA flight 5061. They found nothing.

In April this year, the CAA agreed that the crew on board the flight had seen an unidentified flying object — or, as it preferred to term it, an 'unassessable' object.

The CAA decided that in the absence of any firm evidence or explanation for the object, it was not possible to assess either the cause of the near miss or the risk of the encounter.

It concluded that the incident didn't fit any of the normal criteria applicable to air-miss reports.

Officer Stuart was not happy with the result. 'We did not get the answers we were hoping for,' he says. 'If I can't explain it and I was there, I cannot hope that anyone else can ever explain it away.'

Despite Stuart's reservations, the CAA's response — in conducting such a thorough investigation — has been seen as a milestone in the official recognition of the UFO phenomenon.

The Ministry of Defence is still reluctant to discuss the issue of UFOs at all. Officially, the Ministry does not investigate inexplicable sightings, because they are not considered a threat to national security.

Others tell a different story. For three years, Nick Pope headed Air Staff 2a, within the MoD. Part of his work was to investigate UFO reports.

Pope, whose book Open Skies, Closed Minds, was serialised by the Daily Mail, calls the Silent Vulcan 'the Flying Triangle'. 'It behaves in a way that is beyond the cutting edge of our own technology,' he says.

BUT could the BA pilots have seen the mysterious military craft known as the Silent Vulcan? Or must there be another explanation, that the versatility of the craft they saw simply cannot be created by humans?

Pope says of sightings like the BA one: 'Alien craft are the only logical conclusion of some sightings. The technology they display is way beyond our own.'

Although the MoD denies any special research, insiders who have worked within the Ministry claim that the Ministry base at Rudloe Manor, in Wiltshire, is being used as a centre for secret investigations into aerial phenomena.

The Public Records Office in Kew, South-West London, sheds even more intriguing light on just how seriously incidents like the BA one are being taken by the Government.

From the mid-Fifties onwards, the MoD has accumulated more than 8,000 UFO sightings, and has withheld the information under the 30-year secrecy rule. While many of these accounts are now available at Kew, others will remain sealed for decades to come.

Officer Stuart knows what he saw. He has kept the drawing of that mysterious triangular object, and he and his captain have never changed their story. They also, of course, cannot explain it.

■ *OUT Of This World is on BBC1, tomorrow, 9.30pm.*

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