

Registered File Disposal Form

FILE TITLE: (Main Heading - Secondary Heading - Tertiary Heading etc) <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">UFO's</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;"><i>Parliamentary Questions and Enquiries</i></p>	Reference: (Prefix and Number): <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">D/DAS/64/4</p> Part: F
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PROTECTIVE MARKING (including caveats & descriptors): **RESTRICTED UNCLASSIFIED**

Date of last enclosure: 22 MARCH 2001	Date closed:
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PART 1. DISPOSAL SCHEDULE RECOMMENDATION (To be completed when the file is closed)	FOR DEFENCE INFO(EXP)-R USE ONLY						
Destroy after _____ years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<table style="width:100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30%; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30%; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40%; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">Date of 1st review</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">Date of 2nd review</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">Forward Destruction Date</td> </tr> </table>				Date of 1st review	Date of 2nd review	Forward Destruction Date
Date of 1st review	Date of 2nd review	Forward Destruction Date					
Forward to INFO(EXP)-R after <u>10</u> years <input type="checkbox"/>	Reviewer's Signature: _____						
FOR PERMANENT RETENTION <input type="checkbox"/>	Reviewer's Signature: _____						
No recommendation <input type="checkbox"/>							

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 indefinitely for the following reason(s):

LEGAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DEFENCE POLICY + OPERATIONS <input type="checkbox"/>
CONTRACTUAL <input type="checkbox"/>	ORIGINAL COMMITTEE PAPERS <input type="checkbox"/>
FINANCE/AUDIT <input type="checkbox"/>	MAJOR EQUIPMENT PROJECT <input type="checkbox"/>
DIRECTORATE POLICY <input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Public Interest

For permanent preservation in The National Archive

(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. **Section 40** (w C2/equivalent)

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Grade/Rank: **B2** (Block Capitals) 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)



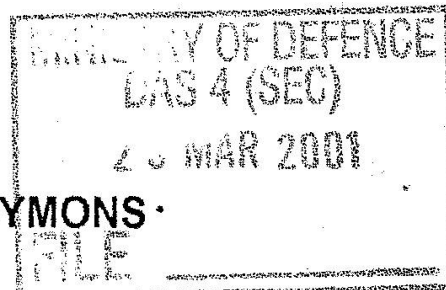
MINISTER OF STATE FOR
DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

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

Fax **Section 40**

46



FROM: THE RT HON BARONESS SYMONS

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

22 March 2001

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

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

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

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

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

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Private Office



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

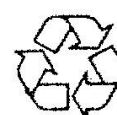


I am sorry if you feel that this is a disappointing reply but I hope you understand that, after all these years, I cannot be more helpful.

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

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



Recycled Paper



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone **Section 40** (Direct Dialling)

(Fax)

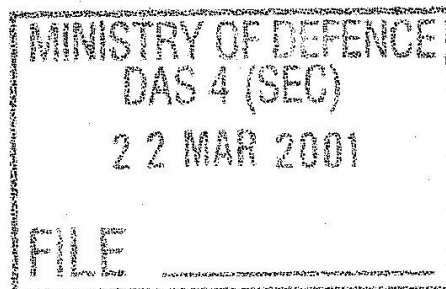
(020) 7218 9000 (Switchboard)

45

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

21st March 2001

Dear Alan,



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

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

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

The Rt Hon Alan Williams MP

Private Office





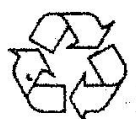
description of the objects, given in the newspaper cutting attached to **Section 40** letter, indicates that they could have been weather balloons which are sometimes released by Universities or weather centres around the country and **Section 40** may wish to pursue her enquiries with these organisations.

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

Best wishes

Section 40

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP



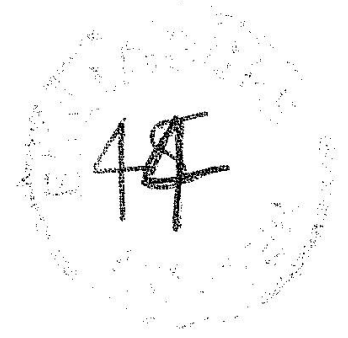
DAS4A1(SEC)

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

Your message

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

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



LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAS(Sec)64/4

March 2001

PE Unit
(through DAS AD4(

Section 40
3/3

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY – US1340/2001- MR ALAN WILLIAMS MP

1. I enclose a draft reply for US of S to send to Alan Williams MP in response to his letter of 26 February, enclosing a letter from his constituent **Section 40** about US experimental craft in UK airspace and Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs).
2. With regard to **Section 40** first question, there are arrangements in place whereby the US authorities are required to seek clearance from the MOD if they wish to conduct any kind of unusual air activity in UK airspace. No such clearance has been sought on this occasion and we therefore conclude that the objects seen by **Section 40** and others were not US experimental craft.
3. **Section 40** has not contacted the MOD before about 'UFOs' and she will not therefore be aware that the MOD's only interest in reported 'UFO' sightings is whether there is any evidence of a breach of UK airspace by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is such evidence, we do not attempt to identify exactly what was seen; we believe that rational explanations could be found, but it is not within the MOD's remit to provide an aerial identification service. However, on this occasion, it has been suggested to us that the description of the objects given in the newspaper article attached to **Section 40** letter, indicates that they could have been weather balloons and this information has been included in our reply as it may be helpful if **Section 40** wishes to pursue her enquiries.

Section 40

DAS 4a1(Sec)

MB8245 **Section 40**

Drafted by:

Section 40

DAS 4a1(Sec)

Authorised by:

DAS AD4(Sec)

US 1340/2001

March 2001

DRAFT REPLY TO MR ALAN WILLIAMS MP

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

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

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

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

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

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP

Alan Williams MP

MOD Form 1740
(Revised 5/99)

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

REGISTERED FILE No. D/DAS 64/4 Enclosure Jacket No. <u>15</u>		DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH: DAS 4a(Sec)	
DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure) 22.2.2001			
SUBJECT: PE: DP 1197/2001 LORD HILL-NORTON RENDLESHAM FOREST / RAF WOODBRIDGE			
Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.
2. When a TEJ is incorporated into the parent file it should be placed in the file in date order (according to the date of the last action on the TEJ) and allocated an enclosure number.
3. The file minute sheet should be annotated to record the enclosure number of the TEJ along with details of the number of enclosures contained within it. The TEJ record sheet (MOD Form 262A) should be annotated to record the date on which the TEJ was incorporated into the parent file (JSP 441, paragraph 4.13 refers).

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

(SEC)

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

Your message

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

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

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAS(Sec)64/4

28 February 2001

PE Unit

(through DAS AD4(

Section 40

7/2

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

1. Lord Hill-Norton has a long standing interest in 'unidentified flying objects' and has tabled many PQs and PEs. In January 2001 he tabled ten PQs, nine of which concerned a recently published book by Georgina Bruni on the subject of the alleged 'UFO' sighting in Rendlesham Forest. He is not content with the answer given to PQ 0392L concerning alleged events in Rendlesham Forest/ RAF Woodbridge between 27-29 December 1980.
2. In his letter of 2 February, the Peer takes issue with the Minister's use of the word "alleged" when discussing these events. In view of Lord Hill-Norton's stance on this matter, I do not believe there is anything to be gained by challenging him and the draft reply (see para 5, below) simply notes his point and seeks to assure him that it was not the Minister's intention to mislead the reader over this issue.
3. In his letter of 12 February, Lord Hill-Norton is essentially repeating the question that he put to Lord Gilbert on 22 October 1997, namely, would we agree that either something intruded into UK airspace and landed near RAF Woodbridge, or that those who say they witnessed this event (including the Deputy Base Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Halt) were either hallucinating, or lying.
4. We are not suggesting that Lieutenant Colonel Halt or any others are lying and it is clear that they observed something which they were unable to explain at the time. However, surviving Departmental records show that when Lt Col Halt's memo arrived at the MOD it was passed to the military authorities responsible for air defence matters and they concluded there was nothing of defence concern. No further investigation was deemed necessary and no evidence has come to light over the intervening years to suggest that this assessment was incorrect.
5. I enclose a draft reply for Min(DP) to send to Lord Hill-Norton in response to his letters of 2 and 12 February.

Section 40

DAS 4a1(Sec)

MB8245 Section 40

Drafted by: Section 40 DAS 4a1(Sec)

Authorised by: Section 40 DAS AD4(Sec)

DP 1197/2001

February 2001

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE BARONESS SYMONS OF VERNHAM DEAN

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

**** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES ****



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: DAS 4 (SEC)

PE REF NUMBER: DP 1197/2001

Copy to:

MINISTER REPLYING: MIn(DP)

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: S 13/2001

DATE: 21/2/2001

FROM: Section 40 PE Unit

TEL: Section 40

FAX: Section 40

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

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

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

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

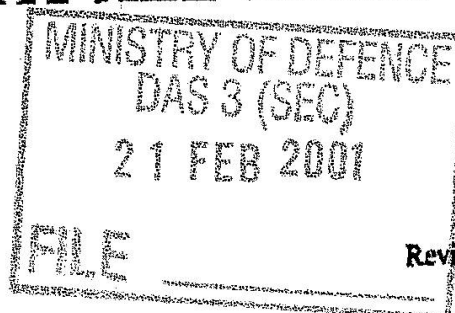
**E-MAIL DRAFTS TO 'PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES',
NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES.**

(Please ensure sensitivity of your email message is 'Normal'.)

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

Number of pages sent by fax: 5

**** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES ****



Revised 26 January 2001

**** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES ****

**** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES ****

**** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES ****

- *Ministers place great importance on the content, style and speed of replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.*
- **DEADLINES:** It is important that your draft is with us by the date shown at the top of this notice, as Ministers must send a written reply within **15 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS ENQUIRY**. The Department's performance is reported each year to Parliament. If you cannot meet the deadline, you should therefore provide an interim reply that apologises for the delay, sets out the action being taken to answer the enquiry, and advises when a substantive reply can be expected. You should aim to provide a substantive draft reply within a further 8 working days. Interim replies should be used infrequently, as every effort must be made to reply to correspondence from MPs (and others) promptly.
- **Action at official level on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts, or other policy aspects, direct with the relevant Private Office.**
- **LAYOUT:** Draft replies should be double-spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft. Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.
- **OPENING AND CLOSING:** All Ministers prefer to start: *"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... about ..."*
If a Minister is replying on behalf of another, start: *"Thank you for your letter of ... to Geoff Hoon/Liz Symons/John Spellar/Lewis Moonie on behalf etc"*
For Mr Spellar, add: *"I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."*
For Baroness Symons, add: *"I am responding because of my responsibility for this issue."* (or, in the case of letters from fellow Peers: *"I have been asked to respond."*)
For Dr Moonie, add: *"I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility."*
Choose an appropriate ending (except for Dr Moonie, who will add his own) - such as: *"I hope this is helpful"; "I hope this explains the position/situation"; "I am sorry I cannot be more helpful";* or *"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply"*.
- **OPEN GOVERNMENT:** Replies **MUST** be drafted in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. It is set out in DCI 223/99. If you are recommending to a Minister that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld - eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

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

**** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES ****

**** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES ****

**** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES ****



DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

Revised 26 January 2001



Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
House of Lords
London SW1A 0PW

RECEIVED BY
PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH

ON: 20/2/01

MIN: G: MIA (DP)

UFO'S

Das 4(sec)

12th February, 2001

RELATED CASE:

CLERK Section 40

Dear Lady Symons,

PQR Reference 03921

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

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

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

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

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

- a. Something physical of non-UK origin landed at the base, as stated by Colonel Halt and many others. Or
- b. Colonel Halt, the Deputy Commander and many of the men under his command at a USAF Base in England were hallucinating, in what they reported.

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

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

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

Continued:



- 2 -

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

Yours truly

Herbert Morrison



Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Section 40 **Fordingbridge Hants** **Section 40**

The Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
House of Lords
London SW1A

2nd February, 2001

Dear Lady Symons,

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

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

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

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

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

*Yours sincerely,
Hill-Norton.*

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



REPLY TO
ATTN OF:

CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT:

Unexplained Lights


TO:

RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being 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 peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

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


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

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

for PQs - Please see VIKAS/SEC/07/17/11

Enclosures 31-42

- Briefing to Min DP


Monday 29 Jan 01

DDAS/DAS4A/4A1

UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED

BACKGROUND NOTE

1. Lord Hill-Norton, Chief of the Defence Staff from 1971 to 1973, has a long standing interest in 'UFOs' and over a sixteen month period, up to December 1998, tabled 26 PQs.
2. Lord Hill-Norton has tabled ten PQs relating to the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects ('UFOs'). Nine, are in respect of information contained in a book by Georgina Bruni on the subject of an alleged Unidentified Flying Object ('UFO') incident said to have occurred in 1980. One asks for the highest classification of any MOD document on the subject of 'UFOs'. This linked background note is in respect of four of the ten PQs, numbers 0348L, 0349L, 0350L and 0351L for answer on 26 January, the remaining  are for answer on 30 January.
3. The title of the book is "You can't tell the people - the definitive account of the Rendlesham Forest UFO mystery". It concerns a well known 'UFO' incident, alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk over the Christmas period in 1980 in the vicinity of two RAF bases, made available at that time to US Visiting Forces, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge. The subject of the incident first came to prominence in 1983 when a memorandum sent to MOD shortly after the event by the then Deputy Base Commander, Lt Col Charles Halt USAF, was unearthed in the US by researchers. The Halt memorandum describes the alleged incident in some detail and is reprinted in the book where claims are also made that USAF personnel met and communicated with "beings".
4. The book is a detailed account but one that includes contradictory evidence from a range of alleged witnesses. It accuses both UK and US authorities of a "cover-up" of the detail of the event. There is an unclassified MOD file on the subject. It was opened almost two years after the event is alleged to have occurred and appears to contain documents drawn from a number of other files. It cannot be regarded with any degree of certainty as a record of all the papers ever held by MOD on the event.
5. PQs 0348L and 0350L ask about alleged involvement in enquiries following the incident of personnel from either the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) Chemical and Biological Defence (CBD) laboratories at Porton Down, or from the Special Branch.
6. The book repeats the allegation of an unidentified witness that a team of four scientists from the CBD laboratories at Porton Down visited the site of the alleged incident shortly after the event is said to have taken place. Lord Hill-Norton has asked whether personnel visited the Rendlesham Forest or in the area of Watton (further to the north) in December 1980 or January 1981. MOD has been informed by DERA that a search of records has been conducted and enquiries made of a very few existing members of staff who were working at the CBD laboratories in 1980 but that no information has come to light.

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UNCLASSIFIED

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

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

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

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

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

TEL: Section 40
 TEL: Section 40

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

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BACKGROUND NOTE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

copy

DEFENCE INTEREST IN UFO REPORTS

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

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

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

UFO SIGHTING REPORTS MADE TO MOD

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

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

Section 40
[Redacted]



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

18/1
ENCLOSURE
3
NUMBER

Minister of State
for Defence Procurement

From: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

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

14 November 1997

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

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

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

Yours sincerely

Section 40
[Redacted]

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

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

MINIS. OF DEFENCE
SEC. 45/2
17 Nov 1997
FILE



Recycled Pa



MNL
 PB for a SecAS
 UFOs
 → Sec
 (D)-3842/

Section 40

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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

RECEIVED IN

24 OCT 1997

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
 DEFENCE

22 October, 1997

Dear Lord Gilbert,

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

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

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

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

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

or

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

Continued:



- 2 -

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

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

Yours sincerely,
Herbert Morrison

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



REPLY TO
 ATTN OF: CD

13 Jan 81


SUBJECT: Unexplained Lights

TO: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being 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 peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

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


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

Lord Hill-Norton - CDS from 1971 to 1973.

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

**Rendlesham Forest**

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

Review of reports on UAP (Unidentified Aerial Phenomena).

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

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

Internal review of staffing of UFO reports 1997

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

- **Credible Witness Reports:** reports from service personnel, civil pilots, staff in air traffic control centres/emergency service staff and reports with evidence (eg photos).
- **Corroborated Sightings:** where reports from more than one person on what appears to be the same sighting are received.
- **Timely sightings:** reports of a phenomenon currently being observed.

Other aspects:

- Since 1967, at the request of Parliament, files on the subject have been kept due to **public interest** in the subject..
- A few have not survived but most remain and the vast majority are unclassified. Those classified papers seen by current staff concern handling of correspondence and administrative arrangements.

MR NICK POPE

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

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

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

Section 40

Written Answers

Thursday, 25th January 2001.

Chinook Helicopter Mk II: Conversion Training

Lord Chalfont asked Her Majesty's Government:

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

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

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

European Security and Defence Policy: Intelligence Management

Lord Shore of Stepney asked Her Majesty's Government:

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

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

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

* Rendlesham Forest Incident *

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

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

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: Special Branch officers may have been aware of the incident but would not have shown an interest unless there was evidence of

a potential threat to national security. No such interest appears to have been shown.

* **Lord Hill-Norton** asked Her Majesty's Government: *

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

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

* **Lord Hill-Norton** asked Her Majesty's Government: *

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

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

* Unidentified Flying Objects *

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

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

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

Arms Brokering and Trafficking: Licensing

Lord Hylton asked Her Majesty's Government:

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

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

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

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

Rendlesham Forest/RAF Bentwaters Incident

* **Lord Hill-Norton** asked Her Majesty's Government: Whether they will detail the underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters installation; and what is the purpose of these facilities. [HL320]

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

* **Lord Hill-Norton** asked Her Majesty's Government: Whether they are aware of any involvement in the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident by either Ministry of Defence Police or personnel from the Suffolk Constabulary. [HL321]

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

* **Lord Hill-Norton** asked Her Majesty's Government: Whether they are aware of any investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident carried out by the United States Air force, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations or any other United States agency. [HL322]

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

* **Lord Hill-Norton** asked Her Majesty's Government: *

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

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

* **Lord Hill-Norton** asked Her Majesty's Government: *

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

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

* **Lord Hill-Norton** asked Her Majesty's Government: *

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

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

Nuclear Test Veterans

Lord Ashley of Stoke asked Her Majesty's Government:

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

[HL374]

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

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41

BACKGROUND NOTE

1. Lord Hill-Norton, Chief of the Defence Staff from 1971 to 1973, has a long standing interest in 'UFOs' and over a sixteen month period, up to December 1998, tabled 26 PQs.
2. Lord Hill-Norton has tabled ten PQs relating to the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects ('UFOs'). Nine, are in respect of information contained in a book by Georgina Bruni on the subject of an alleged Unidentified Flying Object ('UFO') incident said to have occurred in 1980. One asks for the highest classification of any MOD document on the subject of 'UFOs'. This linked background note is in respect of four of the ten PQs, numbers 0348L, 0349L, 0350L and 0351L for answer on 26 January, the remaining six are for answer on 30 January.
3. The title of the book is "You can't tell the people - the definitive account of the Rendlesham Forest UFO mystery". It concerns a well known 'UFO' incident, alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk over the Christmas period in 1980 in the vicinity of two RAF bases, made available at that time to US Visiting Forces, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge. The subject of the incident first came to prominence in 1983 when a memorandum sent to MOD shortly after the event by the then Deputy Base Commander, Lt Col Charles Halt USAF, was unearthed in the US by researchers. The Halt memorandum describes the alleged incident in some detail and is reprinted in the book where claims are also made that USAF personnel met and communicated with "beings".
4. The book is a detailed account but one that includes contradictory evidence from a range of alleged witnesses. It accuses both UK and US authorities of a "cover-up" of the detail of the event. There is an unclassified MOD file on the subject. It was opened almost two years after the event is alleged to have occurred and appears to contain documents drawn from a number of other files. It cannot be regarded with any degree of certainty as a record of all the papers ever held by MOD on the event.
5. PQs 0348L and 0350L ask about alleged involvement in enquiries following the incident of personnel from either the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) Chemical and Biological Defence (CBD) laboratories at Porton Down, or from the Special Branch.
6. The book repeats the allegation of an unidentified witness that a team of four scientists from the CBD laboratories at Porton Down visited the site of the alleged incident shortly after the event is said to have taken place. Lord Hill-Norton has asked whether personnel visited the Rendlesham Forest or in the area of Watton (further to the north) in December 1980 or January 1981. MOD has been informed by DERA that a search of records has been conducted and enquiries made of a very few existing members of staff who were working at the CBD laboratories in 1980 but that no information has come to light.

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RESTRICTED

UNCLASSIFIED

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

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

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

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

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

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

UNCLASSIFIED

BACKGROUND NOTE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DRAFTED BY : [Section 40]
AUTHORISED BY : [Section 40]
GRADE/RANK : B1
BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director

TEL: [Section 40]

TEL:

[Section 40]

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

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

39

Ministry of Defence

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 2001

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

LORDS WRITTEN

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

Minister replying Baroness Symons

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

January 01

PQ Ref 0394L

BACKGROUND NOTE

See combined background note attached to PQ0355L.

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

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

TEL: Section 40

TEL:

Section 40

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

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN : 12:00 ON 22 January 2001
 PQ REFERENCE : PQ 0394L
 PQ TYPE : LORDS WRITTEN
 MINISTER REPLYING : -NOTFOUND-

LEAD BRANCH: : SEC (AS)

COPY ADDRESSEE(S) :

MDP Sec

DI(Sec)

D NEWS

D AIR RP

CAS

ACAS

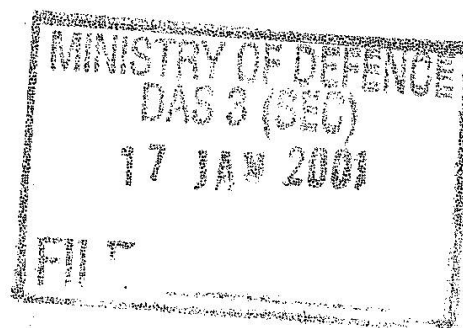
DAS (Sec) consideration

- The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.
- Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.
- The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.
- If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.

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

QUESTION

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



RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

MOD Form 174D
 (Revised 5/99)

38

REGISTERED FILE No. D / DAS (SEC) 64/4		DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH: DAS (SEC) 4A	
Enclosure Jacket No 715			
DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure) 22 January 2001			
SUBJECT: PA 0393 L LORD HILL - NORTON REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS			
Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.
2. When a TEJ is incorporated into the parent file it should be placed in the file in date order (according to the date of the last action on the TEJ) and allocated an enclosure number.
3. The file minute sheet should be annotated to record the enclosure number of the TEJ along with details of the number of enclosures contained within it. The TEJ record sheet (MOD Form 262A) should be annotated to record the date on which the TEJ was incorporated into the parent file (JSP 441, paragraph 4.13 refers).

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 2001

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

LORDS WRITTEN



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

Minister replying Baroness Symons

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

January 01

PQ Ref 0393L

BACKGROUND NOTE

See combined background note attached to PQ0355L.

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

DRAFTED BY : [Section 40]
AUTHORISED BY : [Redacted]
GRADE/RANK : B1
BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director

TEL: [Section 40]

TEL:

[Section 40]

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

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN : 12:00 ON 22 January 2001
 PQ REFERENCE : PQ 0393L
 PQ TYPE : LORDS WRITTEN
 MINISTER REPLYING : -NOTFOUND-

LEAD BRANCH: : SEC (AS)
 COPY ADDRESSEE(S) :
 MDP Sec
 DI(Sec)
 NEPG
 D AIR RP
 CAS
 ACAS

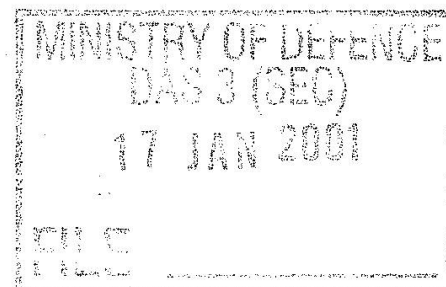
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- The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects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

QUESTION

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



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

Question:

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

Answer:

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

For Background Note:

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

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

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

Final

Answers approved

QASSec. **Section 40**

Question:

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

Answer:

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

For Background Note:

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

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

MOD Form 174D
 (Revised 5/99)

37

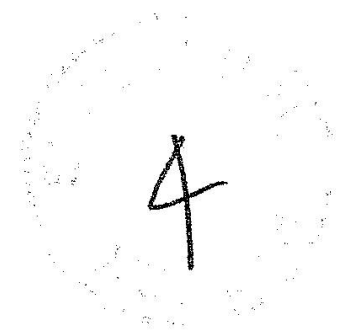
REGISTERED FILE No. D / DAS (SEC) 64/4		DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH: DAS (SEC) 4A	
Enclosure Jacket No 12			
DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure) 22 JANUARY 2001			
SUBJECT: PA 0392L LORD HILL-NORTON REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS			
Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

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RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY



Ministry of Defence

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 2001

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

LORDS WRITTEN

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

Minister replying Baroness Symons

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

January 01

PQ Ref 0392L

BACKGROUND NOTE

See combined background note attached to PQ0355L.

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

DRAFTED BY : Section 40 TEL: Section 40
AUTHORISED BY : [REDACTED] TEL: [REDACTED]
GRADE/RANK : B1 Section 40
BRANCH : DAS Deputy Director [REDACTED]

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

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN : 12:00 ON 22 January 2001
 PQ REFERENCE : PQ 0392L
 PQ TYPE : LORDS WRITTEN
 MINISTER REPLYING : -NOTFOUND-

LEAD BRANCH: : SEC (AS)
 COPY ADDRESSEE(S) :
 Defence Estates
 CS HQ Strike Cmd
 D NEWS
 MDP(SEC)
 D AIR RP
 CAS
 ACAS

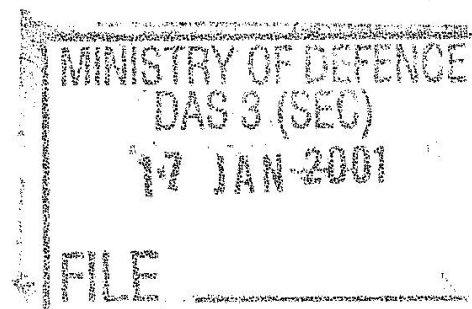
DAS (Sec) consideration.

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

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

QUESTION

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



Section 40



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone Section 40 (Direct Dialling)
071-21 89000 (Switchboard)

2
ENCLOSURE
3
18/11

Minister of State
for Defence Procurement

From: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

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

14 November 1997

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

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

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

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

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

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SECRET
17 Nov 1997
FILE



Recycled Paper



MR for Sec
 → Sec
 MNL
 SecAS
 UFOs
 (L) 3842

Section 40

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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

22 October, 1997

Dear Lord Gilbert,

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

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

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

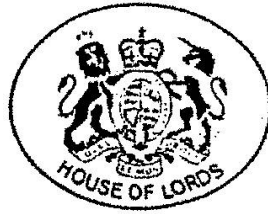
My position both privately and publicly expressed over the last dozen years or more, is that there are only two possibilities, either:

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

or

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

Continued:



- 2 -

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

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

Yours sincerely,
Herbert Morrison

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

Subject: Unexplained Lights
To: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.
2. The next day, three depressions 1.5" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/Gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05 -.07) readings at the side of the tree toward the depressions.
3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10° 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.

Draft.

PQ0392L -

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

Answer:

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

Background Note:

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

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

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

Copied from G BRINI BOOK

42B

YOU CAN'T TELL THE PEOPLE



Minister of State
for Defence Procurement

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone **Section 40** (Direct Dialling)
071-21 89000 (Switchboard)

From: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/Min(DP)/JWG/MP/3842/97/M

16 October 1997

Dear Lord Hill-Norton

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

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

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

I hope this clarifies the position.

[Handwritten signature]

Section 40

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

dppsMb39/pe/3842hillno/an/cs



MOD letter from Lord Gilbert to Lord Hill-Norton

Col 10 from G. Blunt
429 Book

APPENDIX III

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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

22 October, 1997

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

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

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

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

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

or

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

Continued:

Letter to Lord Gilbert from Lord Hill-Norton

430

YOU CAN'T TELL THE PEOPLE

- 2 -

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

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

Page 2 of Lord Hill-Norton's letter

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN : 12:00 ON 22 January 2001
 REFERENCE : PQ 0392L
 PQ TYPE : LORDS WRITTEN
 MINISTER REPLYING : -NOTFOUND-

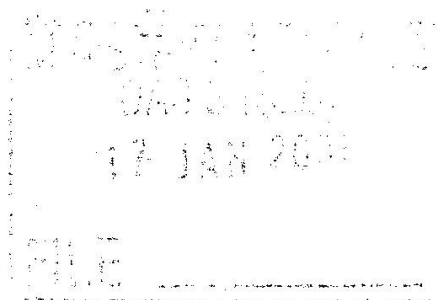
LEAD BRANCH: : SEC (AS) DAS (400) consideration.
 COPY ADDRESSEE(S) :
 Defence Estates
 CS HQ Strike Cmd
 D NEWS
 MDP(SEC)
 D AIR RP
 CAS
 ACAS

- The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.
- Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.
- The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.
- If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.

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

QUESTION

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



APPENDIX III

429

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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

22 October, 1997

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Continued:

Letter to Lord Gilbert from Lord Hill-Norton

430

YOU CAN'T TELL THE PEOPLE

- 2 -

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Your Ref.

Our Ref.

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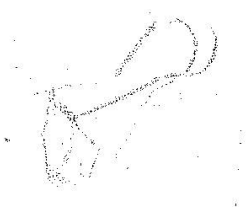
Section 40

Chief Consta

Page 2 of Lord Hill-Norton's letter

Letter

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED



RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET

MOD Form 174D
 (Revised 5/99)

36

REGISTERED FILE No. D / DAS (SEC) 64/4		DIVISION / DIRECTORATE / BRANCH: DAS (SEC)	
Enclosure Jacket No ...13...			
DATE OPENED (Date of First Enclosure) 19 JAN 2001			
SUBJECT: PQ 0359 L LORD HILL-NORTON REPLY BY BARONESS SYMONS			
Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

USER NOTES

1. A MOD Form 262A (File Record Sheet) must be raised for each new Temporary Enclosure Jacket (TEJ) created. The TEJ should also include a minute sheet.
2. When a TEJ is incorporated into the parent file it should be placed in the file in date order (according to the date of the last action on the TEJ) and allocated an enclosure number.
3. The file minute sheet should be annotated to record the enclosure number of the TEJ along with details of the number of enclosures contained within it. The TEJ record sheet (MOD Form 262A) should be annotated to record the date on which the TEJ was incorporated into the parent file (JSP 441, paragraph 4.13 refers).

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2001

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

LORDS WRITTEN

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

Minister replying Baroness Symons

There are no underground facilities at the former RAF Bentwaters.

January 01

PQ Ref 0359L