

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

May 96

Parliamentary Branch

D R A F T

**LETTER FROM JOHN FRASER MP - US 1199/96 - BLUE STREAK MISSILE  
TEST FILM FOOTAGE**

1. Following Lord Howe's interim reply sent on \*\* May, I am now in a position to provide a substantive response to the query from Mr Fraser.
2. Mr Fraser is seeking information on behalf of a constituent whose enquiry was prompted by last month's BBC2 "*Tales of the Paranormal*" programme about "UFOs". The programme, which was made by Ms Jenny Randles, a prominent member of the "UFO" lobby, featured footage filmed inside the Public Records Office (PRO) at Kew.
3. Ms Randles stated that during testing of the Blue Streak Missile at Woomera South Australia in 1964, one of the launches was aborted because a 'spaceman' was seen in the vicinity of the launch site. She also stated that although most of the film of the Blue Streak tests is available to the public, one reel which contains the aborted launch footage has been withheld from the public domain. The implication was that all the Blue Streak Missile test film is held by the PRO for public viewing except the footage of the aborted launch. Ms Randles use of the material she obtained from the files at the PRO was selective.
4. The Imperial War Museum is the official repository of official military film selected for preservation, as approved by the Lord Chancellor. The National Film and Television Archive holds official non-military film selected for preservation. The PRO does not hold archived official film

footage. There is documented evidence in the PRO that in 1964, following an enquiry from a member of the public, MOD branch S4(Air) went to a great deal of trouble to identify the source of the film of the aborted launch. They approached The Rank Organisation, the Central Office of Information (COI) and Associated British-Pathe Ltd. Pathe Ltd were able to provide them with 'clippings' from the film and expressed their judgement that the object seen on the film was an internal camera reflection.

5. The 'clippings' sent to the MOD did not survive on the files, but further approaches to the Imperial War Museum (IWM) and the COI reveal that both hold a copy of the 14 minute Blue Streak test film, which was sponsored by the COI and produced by The Rank Organisation. The IWM also holds a few reels of "off-cuts". Therefore, contrary to the results of initial enquiries, "official" footage of the aborted Blue Streak launch does in fact exist and is held by the IWM and the COI. However, the footage can only be viewed by members of the public with the permission of the COI, which owns the Copyright to the film until 2014. The film itself is not sensitive.

6. Additional information uncovered reveals that the Blue Streak film footage also featured in the COI catalogue "Films from Britain", 1968/69 which is an indication that there are probably numerous copies of the film in circulation throughout the world. It is possible that Ms Randles viewed the other Blue Streak test material from a "commercial" film archive.

7. Neither the MOD nor the PRO hold Blue Streak test film footage. Anyone wishing to view the film would need to contact the IWM or the COI.

8. I attach a draft explaining the above for Lord Howe's consideration.

**D R A F T**

D/USofS/1199/96

May 1996

Further to my letter of \*\*\* **May**, and following enquires which have been made with the Public Records Office, I am now in a position to offer you a substantive reply to your letter to Michael Portillo of 22 April 1996 regarding Blue Streak missile test film footage.

First you will wish to know that all official military film footage which has been selected for preservation is transferred to the Imperial War Museum (the official repository for such material as approved by the Lord Chancellor). The Blue Streak test film mentioned in the BBC2 programme '*Tales of the Paranormal*' last month is not held by the Ministry of Defence, nor the Public Records Office, but enquiries have revealed that copies of the 14 minute footage, which was sponsored by the Central Office of Information (COI) and produced by The Rank Organisation, are held by the Imperial War Museum and the Central Office of Information.

You may be interested to know that in response to a similar query about the film from a member of the public in June 1964 MOD staff obtained 'clippings' of the aborted Blue

Streak launch from Pathe Ltd which revealed that the 'object' observed in the film was in fact believed to be an internal camera reflection which is an apparently well-known phenomenon amongst photographic specialists, and was not a so-called "space-man". I should add that it remains the case that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of craft or lifeforms of extraterrestrial origin.

Until 2014 access to the original Blue Streak test film held by the Imperial War Museum is only possible with the specific permission of the Central Office of Information as they own the Copyright to the film. Should anyone wish to view the footage they should *[details of how members of the public can request to view the material]*

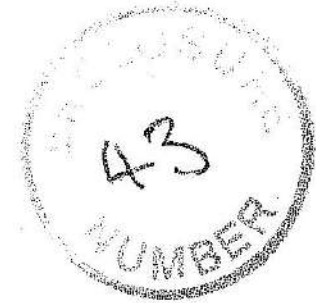
I hope this is helpful.

John Fraser, MP

THE EARL HOWE



07/4



LOOSE MINUTE



CS(RM)/4/6/37

10 May 1996

SEC(AS)2a

PE: BLUE STREAK MISSILE LAUNCH FILM

1. I regret the delay in forwarding the outcome of my research on this subject, but CHOTS was down yesterday!

2. You should by now have received copies of the various documents **Section 40** PRO official with responsibility for MOD, managed to track down. I hope you agree that it is clear from these papers that Jenny Randles use of this material was at best selective!

3. S4(Air) went to a great deal of trouble to identify the source of the film following an enquiry from a member of the public - approaching The Rank Organisation, the Central Office of Information and Associated British-Pathe Ltd. Also note the film provided by Pathe was not cinematic film in the convention sense but just a few clippings from the film (these clippings have not survived on the file). Pathe also provide their own explanation for the phenomenon (E65A).

4. Conversations with representatives from the Imperial War Museum and COI confirm both hold a copy of the "Blue Streak" film - a 14 minute film sponsored by the COI and produced by Rank. The IWM also holds a few reels of "off-cuts". Access to this material for a period of up to 50 years is only possible without the specific permission of the COI. This is not because of any sensitivity but apparently for Copyright reasons.

5. You should also note, and on the face of it in apparent contradiction with the information contained in para 4, there must be numerous copies of the film in circulation throughout the world. The film was originally featured in the COI catalogue "Films from Britain", 1968/69.

6. It would therefore appear "official" film on the launches is available. To the best of our, MOD, COI and IWM collective, knowledge no film is held back. As previously suggested, my minute of 2 May, could she talking about a "commercial" film archive?

7. I would welcome a copy of your submission to Ministers in due course.

[signed]

Section 40

Hd CS(RM)1

AA07 Section 40

Fri 10 May, 1996 8:28

mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
10/05/96	Hd of CS(RM)1	PE: BLUE STREAK MISSILE LAUNCH FILM [	]

Intended:

Sent: 10/05/96 at 8:05

Delivered: 10/05/96 at 8:03

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC:

Ref: 30

From: Hd of CS(RM)1

Auth by:

Subject: PE: BLUE STREAK MISSILE LAUNCH FILM

Text: Advice attached.

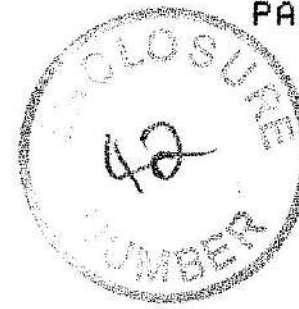
Priority: Normal  
Reply Request [ ]SEE PAGE  
View Acknowledge [\*]Attachments [ 1]  
Codes [ ]



9 MAY '96 10:18

PAGE .001

Classification	<u>U/C</u>
Caveat	
Covering	

F Sigs 927  
(Rev 8/93)

## Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Transmission Details		Document Details	
Serial Number:	Date and Time of Transmission:	Reference:	
From:	Fax Number:	Subject: PR : BLUE STREAK MISSIVE WANCH FHM	
To:	Fax Number:		
Section 40	Section 40	Total number of pages including this cover sheet	
		11	
Authorizing Officer		Transmit Operators	
Rank, Name and Appointment:		Rank/Grade, Name and Telephone No.:	
		AA. Section 40	
Signature:		Signature: Section 40	
Message/Remarks:			
<p>Section 40</p> <p>Copies of papers provided by PRO (extracted from A.R.2/17526)</p> <p>Records</p> <p>Section 40</p>			

Covering	
Caveat	
Classification	

9 MAY '96 10:18

PAGE.002

09-MAY.'96(THU) 08:17 P R O GSD

TEL: Section 40

P.003

Miss Kavanagh

Before I sign this, could you  
check with the M.O.A. Information  
Division to see whether newspaper  
men, T.V. etc. were present at  
the recent Blue Streak launching.

Press facilities were  
arranged by the Australian  
Reginald Truitt was:  
there as were the  
Rank "look at life" camera  
crew and a COI film  
unit. Derek Mayne COI  
is the expert

2

Reference:-

AIR 2/17526

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

1	2	3	4	5	6
1			2		

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9 MAY '96 10:19

PAGE.003

09-MAY.'96(THU) 08:17 P R O GSD

TEL Section 40

P.004

703  
1+1

Thank you for your letter of 15<sup>th</sup>  
June 1996

I have not seen the Blue Streak  
film to which you refer, and I am  
therefore not able to comment. You may  
wish to consult the Ministry of Aviation  
who conducted the launching.

However, the fact that none of the  
newspaper reporters present mentioned any  
extraordinary object in their stories is  
not without significance

Rest at life Elgar 1161  
E. 11-1

Reference:-

AIR 2/17526

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

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1			2		

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9 MAY '96 10:19

PAGE.004

MAIL 90 (HND) 00:10 P K O GSD

TEL: Section 40

From Mr. B.E. Robson (S4(Air))

(65A)

18th August 1964

You wrote to me on the 15th June about an alleged mysterious object in the film of the Blue Streak Launching at Woomera.

I have now obtained a number of cuttings from this film by courtesy of Pathe Ltd. and it is quite clear that the object is nothing more than an internal camera reflection. This is a well-known phenomenon among photographic specialists and it is also, of course, the true explanation of the object in the Vulcan photograph at Coningsby.

If you would like to come to see the extracts of the Blue Streak film, perhaps you would let me know.

Mrs. M. Harman  
213 Chelsea Cloisters  
Sloane Avenue  
LONDON SW3

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:-

AIR 2/17526

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9 MAY '96 10:19

PAGE.005

(THU) 08:18 P R O GSD

TEL: Section 40

P.006

b5A

**ASSOCIATED BRITISH - PATHE LIMITED**

FILM HOUSE, 142, WARDOUR STREET, LONDON, W.1.  
 TELEPHONE: GERRARD 0444 • TELEGRAMS: PATHIREMA, RATH, LONDON.  
 NEWSREEL DIVISION

R.A. Langton, Esq.,  
 Ministry of Defence, S.4.F.,  
 Main Building,  
 Whitehall, S.W.1.

August 18th, 1964.

Dear Section 40

I was able to obtain a few clippings  
 of the Blue Streak rocket for you and am sending  
 them herewith.

The only explanation that we can give,  
 is that the object on the left-hand side is a  
 reflection.

I am sorry I do not know the type of  
 camera that was used as apparently Cinesound in  
 Australia filmed it.

I hope these clippings will be of use.

Yours sincerely,

*Susan Robbins*

SECRETARY TO:  
 G. T. CUMMINS  
 EDITOR AND GENERAL MANAGER  
PATHE NEWS

WILF WALTER (CHAIRMAN) ERIC G. M. FLETCHER, LL.B., M.P. (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN) G. J. LAYLA (D.S.A.) ROBERT CLARK, M.A., LL.B. D. J. COOBLATTE.  
 MACGREGOR SCOTT, Secretary: C. H. SUMMERS, P.C.A.

PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE

AIR 2/17526

9 MAY '96 10:20

PAGE.006

70 (THU) 08:17 P R O GSD

TEL Section 40

P. 005

(63B)

213, Chelsea Cloisters,  
Sloane Avenue  
London S.W.3.

15th June 1964

Dear Mr. Robson,

I wonder if you have seen the film  
of the launching of the Blue Streak rocket  
at Woomera?

I enquire, because I would like  
to know what you think of the extraordinary  
object that appears hovering nearby. It is  
impossible to miss it, and equally impossible  
not to realise that it is exactly the same  
object appearing in the photograph of the  
Vulcan bomber which was in last week's  
TODAY magazine.

It also tallies with the sketch drawn  
by Michael Blake, the Southampton schoolboy,  
of an unidentified object which he saw.

Do please let me know your views.

Yours sincerely,

*M. Harman*

(Mrs. M. Harman)

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

reference:-



9 MAY '96 10:20

PAGE.007

(644)

**THE RANK ORGANISATION  
SPECIAL FEATURES DIVISION**

CUMBERLAND AVENUE, PARK ROYAL, LONDON, N.W.10 · ELCAR 1161

H.A. Langton, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence,  
Main Building,  
Whitehall,  
London S.W. 1.

August 17, 1964

Dear Mr. Langton,

With reference to your letter of August 12, I am informed that the copyright in the negative of the "Blue Streak" film is held by the Central office of Information.

I have, therefore, sent your letter on to Mr. Derek Mayne of the C.O.I. Films Division.

I am sorry that I am unable to help you with this.

Yours faithfully,

*E.A. Cardy*  
E.A. Cardy.

*Not 101. Summary of Pathé had  
inquired following release of their  
story.  
Spoke to secretary GER 0444  
she will send negative clippings, or  
phone if not possible*

DIRECTORS: F. L. THOMAS, Managing Director

JOHN DAVIS

KENNETH WINKLES, M.B.E.

C. R. YOUNG

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

AIR 2/17526

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		3		2	

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9 MAY '96 10:20  
'96 (THU) 08:19 P R O GSD

TEL Section 40

PAGE .008  
P.008

# MEMORANDUM

R.A.F. Form 1150

FROM

4/1 (lin)

TO

DI (AI) GSB

Our ref.

Tel. No.

Ext.

2122 .. Date 17/8/64

Your ref.

Dated

SUBJECT:

Unidentified Flying Object

Although the observed sighting was outside your sector you may like to put it with all the rest. If you have any ideas about it, I should, I consider, be only too happy to pass them on.

B.T. Tanker to Ltd MS 7/1/06 P4

Britannia House

Timberley Avenue E.C.2

MOT. (In private)

St. Basil's Church, House

NOTES

Signature of Sender

Name in Block Letters

Rank Appointment

1. - Continue overleaf if necessary, and attach  
2. - This form is normally to be completed in manuscript.

B. & S. Ltd. 51-5917.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

AIR 2/17526

1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2				

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9 MAY '96 10:21

PAGE.009

(62A)

Mr. R. A. Langton

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Main Building, Whitehall, LONDON S.W.1  
 Telephone: Whitehall 7022, ext.

AF/X59/64

12 August 1964

You will remember that we discussed an enquiry I had received from a member of the public interested in "Flying Saucers" who believed such an object had been seen in your film of the Blue Streak launching at Woomera.

It was likened to something appearing in a photograph of a Vulcan bomber by night at Coningsby published in the June 13th issue of TODAY. This was accompanied with the caption "What was this puzzle in the sky?" notwithstanding the explanation, which was ignored, that it resulted from the reflection of a light, appearing diametrically opposite it in the picture, either by the lighting, or within the lens system itself.

I enclose a copy of an extract from the July-August issue of the "Flying Saucer Review" from which you will see that it is proposed to reproduce both photographs, and to quote the "explanations" offered by Air Ministry. If you are right in thinking that the second photograph is from your film, then there should be no difficulty about letting me have the same material as has been supplied to the magazine.

Since our explanation of the first was ignored, and we have not had the opportunity to examine the second, you will appreciate why I am reminding you that you said you would let me have a few frames of the negative, with details of the equipment, exposure etc, and even possibly your views upon it. I should appreciate any assistance you can give in our efforts to make known the truth about these photographic phenomena.

Andy Esg  
 Features Dept  
 Organisation  
 and Avenue



9 MAY '96 10:21

PAGE.010

08:19 P R O GSD

TEL: Section 40

P. 010

### In our next issue

Readers of the REVIEW are advised that *TODAY* magazine in its issue on sale on July 13 will be returning to the subject of flying saucers. In a previous issue it reproduced an officially released photograph of a Vulcan Bomber taken at night last December at Coningsby, Lincolnshire. In the top left hand corner there appeared a mysterious object of a shape familiar to readers of the REVIEW. Another photograph has come to light and will be reproduced by *TODAY* magazine. In the next issue of the REVIEW both photographs will be reproduced and will accompany an article surveying the history of this object, the "explanations" offered by the Air Ministry and others and a summing up of the problem that confronts the saucer student.

9 MAY '96 10:21

AY. '96 (THU) 08:16 P R O GSD

TEL: Section 40

PAGE.011  
P.001PUBLIC  
RECORD  
OFFICEPublic Record Office  
Kew  
Richmond  
Surrey TW9 4DU

## Fax message

To Section 40  
or CS(RM)1  
Fax No. Section 40  
Date 8.5.96  
Number of pages to follow 9

From Section 40  
Department GSD  
Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Our fax No. \_\_\_\_\_

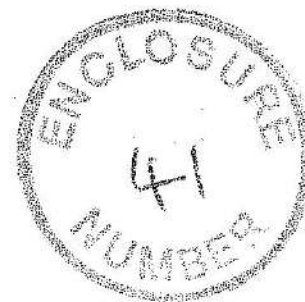
## Message

Success! The documents contain  
photos which were being copied.

Pathe letter refers to clippings  
which are not present on the file.

Section 40

\*\* TOTAL PAGE.011 \*\*



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

9 May 96

Parliamentary Branch

LETTER FROM THE RT HON ALFRED MORRIS, AO, OSO, MP - SS 1323/96

1. The comments contained in the constituent's letter reflect the commonly held view by "Ufologists" who ascribe to the conspiracy theory, that the MOD has in its possession evidence which supports the existence of alien lifeforms.
2. Our position in this respect is that to date we know of no evidence which supports the alleged phenomena of extra-terrestrial lifeforms or "UFO/Flying saucers".
3. I attach a draft response for the Secretary of State's consideration which reflects our standard approach to such enquiries.

Section 40

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247

Section 40

Enc.



**DRAFT**

D/SofS/1323/96

May 1996

Thank you for your letter of 29 April, enclosing one from  
**Section 40** Wythenshawe,  
Manchester, **Section 40** on the subject of "unidentified flying  
objects".

My Department does look into reports of "UFO" sightings that  
are sent to us, many of which are very vague, but only to  
establish if what was seen may have some defence significance.  
We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for  
most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from  
unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

**Section 40** asks about files containing reports of "UFOs" made to  
the Ministry of Defence. He will wish to be aware that in  
common with all government files, MOD files are subject to the  
provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967, which  
states that official files generally remain closed from public  
viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. It  
was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were  
destroyed after five years, as at the time there was  
insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their

The Rt Hon Alfred Morris, AO, QSO, MP

permanent retention. Since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject, it has been our policy that such files are to be routinely preserved. A few files from the Fifties and early Sixties did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 20/9994
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17527
PREM 11/855	

My Department does not carry out research into "UFO/flying saucers". We have no direct interest, expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucers" or the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. However, to date we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

I should like to assure **Section 40** that there is no question that the MOD would attempt to withhold information on the subject of so-called "unidentified flying objects".





PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)

0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



*Sec (AS) 1*  
*064/4*

D/US of S/FH 1003/96/A

9th May 1996

*Dear Mr. Chidgey,*

Thank you for your letter of 16 April (reference 27axd155) about the subject of "unidentified flying objects".

My Department is the focal point for reports of "UFO" sightings. We look into such reports, many of which are very vague, only to establish if what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

My Department does not carry out research into "UFO/flying saucers". We have no direct interest, expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucers" or the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. However, to date we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

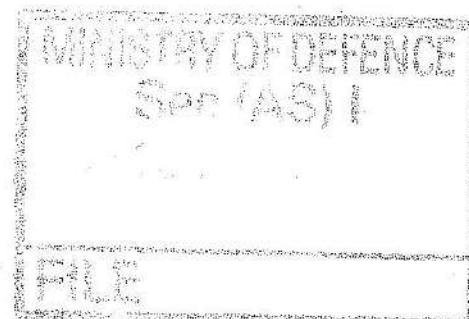
I hope this explains the position.

*Yours sincerely,*

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

David Chidgey Esq CEng FICE MP



Recycled Paper



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
SEC (AS) 2  
23 APR 1996  
FILE

# PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

## FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC (AS) 2aPE REF NUMBER: US 1003/96MINISTER REPLYING: USASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 1/5/96DATE: 22/4/96 FROM: Section 40 PE Unit TEL: Section 40**GUIDANCE NOTE**

Ministers reply to some 8,000 such letters a year. They place great importance on the content style and speed of the replies.

Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. Do not be unduly defensive.

No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

**Layout** Draft replies should be double spaced.

**Always** include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

**Opening and closing** All Ministers prefer to start: "Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ..., Toytown about ...."

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start: "Thank you for your letter of ... addressed to Michael Portillo/ Nicholas Soames/James

Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"

Mr Soames and Earl Howe add "I have been asked to reply" and "I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility." respectively.

Do not end "I hope this is helpful" when the reply is obviously disappointing.

Alternatives are:

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

**Deadlines** If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once - an interim reply might be needed.

**Departmental action** Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply.

Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

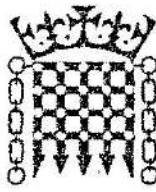
**ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL AND ANNOTATED TO CONFIRM THIS.**

**WHEREVER POSSIBLE DRAFTS SHOULD BE SENT ON CHOTS E-MAIL TO: Parliamentary Enquiries other wise send drafts by fax to Section 40 PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD**



19 APR 1996

David Chidgey, C.Eng., FICE, M.P.  
(Eastleigh)



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Tel: 0171 219 6944  
Fax: 0171 219 2810

Sec (AS) 2  
USCIS

The Earl Howe  
Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2AS

16 April 1996

*David Earl Howe*

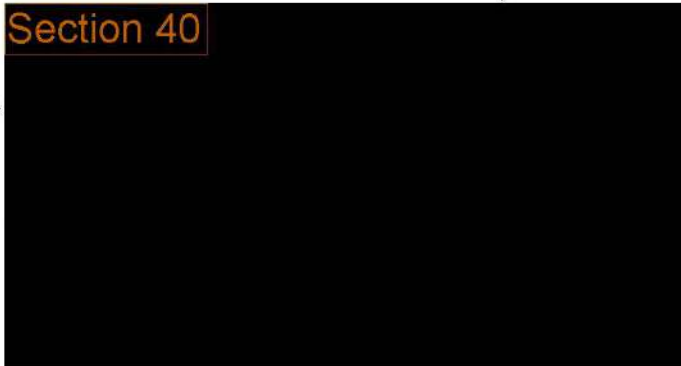
I am writing on behalf of a young constituent of mine who has enquired about UFOs.

As part of his school project he would like to know if any attention has been paid to the subject of UFOs by the Government, and in particular has any money been invested in any research of this nature?

I would greatly appreciate an answer, and look forward to receiving a reply.

*Yours*

Section 40

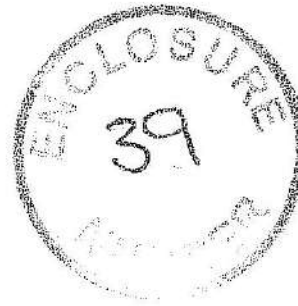


Ref: 27axd155

Constituency Office: 113 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, Hants SO50 9DS  
Tel: 01703 620007 Fax: 01703 618245







LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

8 May 96

Parliamentary Branch

LETTER FROM JOHN FRASER MP - US 1199/96

1. Mr Fraser is writing on behalf of a constituent who saw last month's BBC2 Tales of the Paranormal programme about "UFOs". The programme maker, Jenny Randles, shot some footage in the Public Records Office and claimed that a can of film showing an aborted Blue Streak Missile launch in Australia in 1964, which allegedly shows the presence of a 'spaceman', has been withheld from the public domain.
2. Initial enquiries would indicate that the film in question was not official footage at all, but newsreel footage from 1964. Files from PRO will need to be recalled to confirm this.
3. I attach an interim reply for Lord Howe to send to Mr Fraser. A substantive reply and background note will follow in due course.

Section 40

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247 Section 40

Enc.

**DRAFT**

D/USofS/1199/96

May 1996

Thank you for your letter of 22 April 1996 addressed to Michael Portillo concerning Blue Streak Missile Launch film. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

In order to answer your query it will be necessary for enquiries to be made with the Public Records Office. I shall contact you once these enquiries are completed.

John Fraser, MP

THE EARL HOWE



Wed 8 May, 1996 17:00 mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
08/05/96	Parliamentary Enqu	US 1199	[ ]

Sent: 08/05/96 at 16:59  
 To: Parliamentary Enquiries  
 CC:

Ref: 600  
 Subject: US 1199

Text: **Section 40**

You may recall last week I requested a deadline extension for this PE. I am afraid we will not have the necessary information to answer it by Friday now. I therefore attach an interim reply for Lord Howe to send to Mr Fraser. A substantive reply and fuller background will follow soon. **Section 40**

Priority: Urgent  
 Reply Request [ ]

View Acknowledge [\*]  
 Delivery Acknowledge [\*]

Attachments [ 1]  
 Codes [ ]



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

8 May 96

Parliamentary Branch

LETTER FROM JOHN FRASER MP - US 1199/96

1. Mr Fraser is writing on behalf of a constituent who saw last month's BBC2 Tales of the Paranormal programme about "UFOs". The programme maker, Jenny Randles, shot some footage in the Public Records Office and claimed that a can of film showing an aborted Blue Streak Missile launch in Australia in 1964, which allegedly shows the presence of a 'spaceman', has been withheld from the public domain.
2. Initial enquiries would indicate that the film in question was not official footage at all, but newsreel footage from 1964. Files from PRO will need to be recalled to confirm this.
3. I attach an interim reply for Lord Howe to send to Mr Fraser. A substantive reply and background note will follow in due course.

*[original signed]*

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247 Section 40

Enc.

**DRAFT**

D/USofS/1199/96

May 1996

Thank you for your letter of 22 April 1996 addressed to Michael Portillo concerning Blue Streak Missile Launch film. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

In order to answer your query it will be necessary for enquiries to be made with the Public Records Office. I shall contact you once these enquiries are completed.

John Fraser, MP

THE EARL HOWE

deployed 52,631 overseas. Information on the associated costs is not available in the form requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

### Nuclear Submarines

**Mr. Charles Kennedy:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many nuclear-submarine Z-berths there are currently in Scottish coastal waters; which ones have been used in the last 10 years, and when; and if he will make a statement. [28076]

**Mr. Soames:** The table sets out the usage of Z-berths in Scotland during the period 1992 to 1994. Figures prior to 1992 are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Figures for 1995 are not yet available.

*Scottish Z-berth usage in days 1992 to 1994*

Z-berth	1992	1993	1994
Broadford bay	0	0	0
Brodick bay	0	0	0
Campbeltown	0	0	1
Coulport	51	94	66
Dales Voe	0	0	0
Dalgety bay	0	0	0
Firth of Forth	0	0	0
Glen Mallan	0	0	0
Holy loch	0	0	0
Lerwick	0	0	0
Loch Ewe	0	0	0
Loch Goil	3	14	14
Loch Striven	0	0	0
Portree	0	1	0
Raasay	0	0	0
Rothsay	0	3	0

**Mr. Kennedy:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what monitoring he undertakes of the potential environmental impact of nuclear submarine Z-berths in Scottish coastal waters; and if he will make a statement; [28075]

(2) what assessment he has made of the potential environmental impact of nuclear submarine Z-berths in Scottish coastal waters; and if he will make a statement. [28074]

**Mr. Arbuthnot:** The Defence Radiological Protection Service—DRPS—regularly monitors areas around UK establishments that support submarine operations to demonstrate that nuclear powered warship operation is neither harming the environment nor resulting in unacceptable levels of public radiation exposure.

DRPS surveys are complemented by the marine radioactivity monitoring programme undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, which publishes its findings independently.

### Unidentified Objects, (Rendlesham Forest)

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

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

### British Service Personnel (Cyprus)

**Mr. Cox:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many official complaints as to the behaviour of British service personnel stationed in Cyprus have been reported to the Ministry of Defence in London since 1 January 1996; and if he will make a statement. [27622]

**Mr. Soames:** My Department has received a number of letters from hon. Members and from members of the public condemning the actions of the three soldiers convicted of the manslaughter of Louise Jensen. While many of them have also included general criticism of the behaviour of some UK military personnel, I am not aware of any separate complaints relating to specific incidents involving service personnel in Cyprus since 1 January 1996.

We will not tolerate behaviour that brings the Armed Forces into disrepute. The vast majority of service personnel based in Cyprus are very well behaved.

### Land Mines

**Mr. Menzies Campbell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions have taken place with the Italian company Valsella regarding the upgrading of the Ranger land mines delivery system; and if he will make a statement. [27631]

**Mr. Arbuthnot:** A representative of Valsella attended a presentation given to officials of my Department in September 1995 by the manufacturer of the Ranger land mine delivery system about the potential for upgrading that system.

### Office Space

**Mrs. Bridget Prentice:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the square footage and cost of office space rented by his Department and its agencies and the number of his Department or agencies' buildings partly, or fully unoccupied together with the square footage of that unoccupied office space and its estimated rental value where available in each of the past five financial years. [27730]

**Mr. Arbuthnot:** The information is not held in the form requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

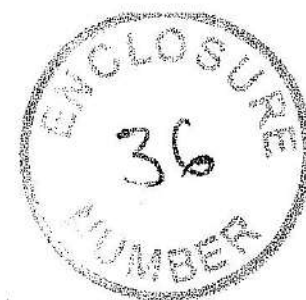
### Employees' Rights

**Ms Jowell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what provision is available to employees of his Department for (a) maternity leave, (b) maternity pay, (c) paternity leave, (d) parental leave, (e) flexible working hours, (f) part-time work, (g) job sharing, (h) leave to care for sick children, (i) home-working, (j) term-time contracts, (k) annual hours contracts, (l) workplace nurseries, (m) child care allowances, (n) carers' leave and (o) career break schemes; and what criteria are used to judge eligibility in each case; [27609]

(2) what provision is available to employees of executive agencies under the control of his Department for (a) maternity leave, (b) maternity pay, (c) paternity



64/4



Thu 2 May, 1996 15:47 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
02/05/96	Hd of CS(RM)1	PE: BLUE STREAK FILM	[ ]

Intended:

Sent: 02/05/96 at 15:13

Delivered: 02/05/96 at 15:16

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC:

Ref: 26

From: Hd of CS(RM)1

Auth by:

Subject: PE: BLUE STREAK FILM

Text: I have requisitioned two AIR 2 pieces from PRO, hopefully they will be me early next week.

The attached gives general background to the position with regard to the specific enquiry.

Any problems please speak on my return from leave

Section 40

Priority: Normal  
Reply Request [ ]

SEE PAGE  
View Acknowledge [\*]

Attachments [ 1]  
Codes [ ]

NOA

Spoke to

Section 40

8 May.

The PRO have mislaid the 2 files in question.

They were booked out to the Repro Section but

can't be found. Searches continue. A girl from

the repro section had been escorted from the premises

recently and relieved of her duties - - - - - 2+2=?

Section 40

Decided to send interim reply. Speak to

on Friday.

Section 40

8/5.

LOOSE MINUTE

CS(RM)/4/6/37

2 May 1996

SEC(AS)2a

PE: BLUE STREAK MISSILE LAUNCH FILM

1. A considerable amount of work has been undertaken in an attempt to resolve the question of the missing Blue Streak film and the apparent wanderings of the "Cumberland Spaceman" (sic) but I regret to advise you that it cannot be located.

2. I very much doubt that the film is/was "official" film in the context of the Public Record Act, but rather footage shot by one of the many newsreel companies covering the historic launchings.

3. All my contacts, Imperial War Museum, RAF Museum, AWE and the Central Office of Information state quite categorically that they did not provide the BBC with any film (you will recall film was shown during the documentary allegedly of a Blue Streak launch). Additionally, if "official" film been used the BBC (who I understand are good at seeking permission to use Crown Copyright material) did not seek permission from the Footage File Section, COI. For the record this Section is responsible for providing clearance world wide!

4. From my various conversations with the experts there is a strong suggestion that the BBC used newsreel footage not official film. This appears to be supported by a further examination of the documentary. If you recall Randles' produced a file that contained an exchange of correspondence between a member of the public and the Ministry concerning the "Spaceman". Paragraph 3 acknowledged that MOD held the Blue Streak film and that it was available for examination. But if you closely examine the paragraph immediately above you will note that the film was obtained from Pathe Ltd! [Following our conversation early this pm I have requisitioned the two most likely files from the PRO to enable confirmation.]

5. On the general question of Record Offices you should note the PRO does not hold film. The two principle places of deposit for this type of record are the IWM and the National Film and Television Archive. The former holds official military film selected for preservation, whilst the latter non-military.

6. In your draft you may wish to make the following points:

- the MOD can identify no such official film as identified in the MP's letter
- all official MOD film selected for preservation is transferred



to the IWM (being a place of deposit approved for such purposes by the Lord Chancellor)

- further enquiries from those authorised to sanction the broadcast of official film - Crown Copyright - apparently reveals no request for clearance

- an examination of records held by the PRO, and cited in the documentary, reveal the film [probably] obtained from commercial sources [to be confirmed].

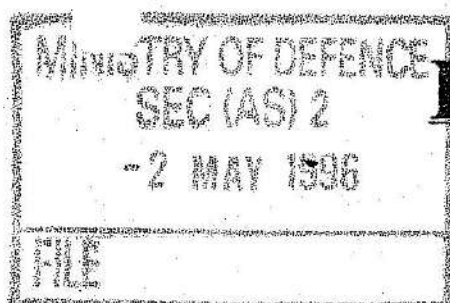
[signed]

Section 40

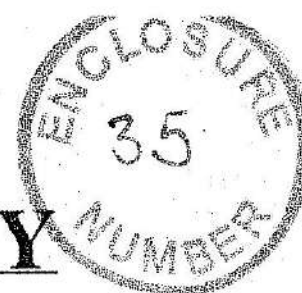
Hd CS(RM)1

AA07 Section 40





# PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY



## FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC (AS) 2A

PE REF NUMBER: SS 1323/96

MINISTER REPLYING: Soames

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 13/5/96

DATE: 2/5/96 FROM: Section 40

PE Unit TEL: Section 40

### **GUIDANCE NOTE**

Ministers reply to some 8,000 such letters a year. They place great importance on the content style and speed of the replies.

Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. Do not be unduly defensive.

No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

**Layout** Draft replies should be double spaced.

**Always** include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

**Opening and closing** All Ministers prefer to start: "Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ..., Toytown about ...."

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start: "Thank you for your letter of ... addressed to Michael Portillo/ Nicholas Soames/James

Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"  
Mr Soames and Earl Howe add "I have been asked to reply" and "I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility." respectively.

Do not end "I hope this is helpful" when the reply is obviously disappointing. Alternatives are:  
"I hope this explains the position"  
"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"  
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

**Deadlines** If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once - an interim reply might be needed.

**Departmental action** Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply.

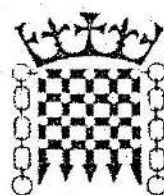
Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

**ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL AND ANNOTATED TO CONFIRM THIS.**

**WHEREVER POSSIBLE DRAFTS SHOULD BE SENT ON CHOTS E-MAIL TO: Parliamentary Enquiries other wise send drafts by fax to Section 40 PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD**



Sec(AS) 2b  
Sols  
UFOS



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

S

FROM THE RT.HON.ALFRED MORRIS, AO, QSO, MP

29th April 1996

Dear Michael,

I have had the attached letter from my constituent:

Section 40

Manchester

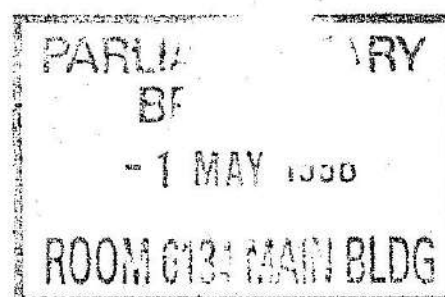
Section 40

It will be helpful if I can have your comments, if necessary after contact with any of your colleagues as appropriate, in a letter I can send on to him as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Rt.Hon.Michael Portillo, MP  
Secretary of State  
Ministry of Defence



## GLOBAL UFO INVESTIGATION SYSTEMS (MANCHESTER)

Section 40

Manchester Section 40

Phone Section 40 Fax

April 24, 1996

Right Honorable Sir Alfred Morris M.P.  
House of Commons  
Westminster  
London  
England

Dear Sir:

I represent an organization that is rapidly growing and some of our members are from within your constituency, these members have asked me to represent them in finding out exactly what your stance is on a legislation that we feel is long overdue in being put before the House of commons and its parliamentary members.

I am of course referring to the the freedom to access government and military files that directly relate to the situation concerning any projects that the government or military are carrying out in the field of unidentified flying objects and or on any objects they may of identified and are currently withholding information on.

As you know this is an area of great controversy but the public has the right to know of any and all developments that may directly effect their safety and well being and also to know if the government or military are in possession of information that could have great consequences upon the world situation as we know it.

I am a patriot of this country and do not wish to do harm to its national security or defence programme. But as a citizen I feel that the government and military do not have the right to refuse its countries people access to knowledge of the magnitude of advances that could be possible if they withheld any information relating to the fact that they have contacted other people from other worlds.

Please do not take this as a crank letter as I assure you this matter I feel is of great importance not only to myself but to our organizations members.

Thankyou.

Section 40

Head of Ops



**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION**

**MP:** MARTIN REDMOND (LABOUR) (DON VALLEY)  
**PQ REFERENCE:** 1220H  
**PQ TYPE:** ORDINARY WRITTEN  
**DRAFT ANSWER REQUIRED BY:** 12:00 THURSDAY 2 MAY 1996

---

**QUESTION:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what is the current security classification on the documents his Department holds on the unidentified objects seen by members of the United States Air Forces in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in 1980; and if he will make a statement.

---

**DRAFT ANSWER:** The papers held by my Department relating to the alleged events at Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in 1980 are Unclassified.

---

**APPROVED BY:**

Head of Sec(AS)

Section 40

Tel: Section 40 Date 2.5.96

Sec(AS)2

Section 40

Tel: Section 40 Date 1/5/96

**COPIED TO:**

PSO/ACAS  
DPR(RAF)  
DI55c  
DD GE/AEW  
Sec(AS)1





## **BACKGROUND**

1. Mr Redmond has asked a large number of PQs on military low flying over the years and it is our understanding that he tables many of these questions on behalf of **Section 40** a researcher into low flying and other military aviation issues, rather than as a result of any direct personal interest. It is not clear why Mr Redmond is specifically interested in the alleged events at Rendlesham Forest, but it is a subject which continues to fascinate "UFO" enthusiasts, and is a topic about which Sec(AS) continues to receive regular correspondence.

2. The alleged incidents occurred between 27-29 December 1980 when unusual lights were seen by USAF personnel, including the Deputy Base Commander, outside RAF Woodbridge. A report of the sighting (copy attached) was forwarded to the MOD by the RAF Liaison Officer at RAF Bentwaters. The report was examined by the Department at the time and no other evidence of any matter of defence significance was found. This is of course the Department's only interest in such sightings.

3. Our line regarding this alleged incident is that all available evidence was examined at the time and we are satisfied that nothing of defence concern occurred in the location on the nights in question. No additional information has come to light over the last 15 years which calls the original judgement into question.

4. The only documents on the subject held by the Department are the report itself, limited official comments on the report, and correspondence from members of the public enquiring about the alleged events.



Fax sent by **Section 40**

PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH A4-&gt;A4 30/04/96 15:50 Pg: 4

\*\*\*\*\*

## PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

## URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

\*\*\*\*\*

MINISTER REPLYING: MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE: 1220H

PQ TYPE: Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON THURSDAY 2 MAY 1996

LEAD BRANCH: SEC(AS)

COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

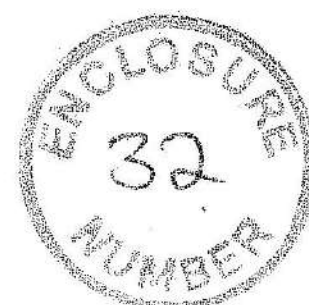
PLEASE NOTE THAT THE NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE DESK OFFICER WHO DRAFTS THE ANSWER AND THE NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE GRADE 5/ONE STAR WHO APPROVES THE ANSWER MUST BE QUOTED.

MP'S DETAILS: MR MARTIN REDMOND (LABOUR) (DON VALLEY)

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

*Spoke to DISS and GE3. To the best of their knowledge and belief no papers on their files (these files that are still in existence) and they know of no classified documents on the Rendlesham Forest case.*





LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

\ May 96

Parliamentary Branch

LETTER FROM DAVID CHIDGEY MP - US 1003/96

1. The letter from David Chidgey seeks information on our policy in respect of "UFOs", on behalf of a school pupil in his constituency.
2. I attach a draft response for Lord Howe's consideration, which reflects our standard response to enquiries of this nature.

Section 40

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247

Section 40

Enc.



**DRAFT**

D/USofS/1003/96

May 1996

Thank you for your letter of 16 April concerning the subject of "unidentified flying objects".

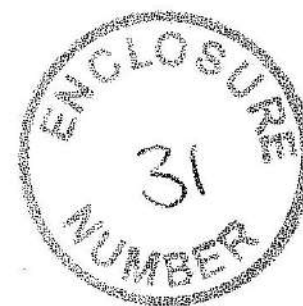
My Department is the focal point for reports of "UFO" sightings. We look into such reports, many of which are very vague, only to establish if what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

My Department does not carry out research into "UFO/flying saucers". We have no direct interest, expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucers" or the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. However, to date we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

I hope this explains the position.

David Chidgey, CEng, FICE, MP

THE EARL HOWE



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

| May 96

Parliamentary Branch

LETTER FROM GEOFFREY CLIFTON-BROWN MP - US 1002/96

1. The comments contained in the constituent's letter reflect the commonly held view by "Ufologists" who ascribe to the conspiracy theory, that the MOD has in its possession evidence which supports the existence of alien lifeforms.

2. As Lord Howe is aware, our stated position in this respect is that to date we know of no evidence which supports the alleged phenomena of extraterrestrial lifeforms or "UFO/Flying saucers".

3. I attach a draft response for Lord Howe's consideration which reflects our standard approach to such enquiries.

Section 40

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247 Section 40

Enc.

**DRAFT**

D/USofS/1002/96

May 1996

I refer to the letter which I received from **Section 40** dated 15 April, enclosing one from **Section 40** **Section 40** Cheltenham, concerning the subject of "unidentified flying objects" and "alien artefacts".

My Department does look into reports of "UFO" sightings that are sent to us, many of which are very vague, but only to establish if what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

The Department has no direct interest, expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucer" matters or the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. However, to date we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

**Section 40** may wish to be aware that in common with all government files, MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967, which states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, MP



the last action has been taken. It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years, as at the time there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. Since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject, it has been our policy that such files are to be routinely preserved. A few files from the Fifties and early Sixties did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 20/9994
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17527
PREM 11/855	

All surviving paperwork from over 30 years ago on the subject of "UFOs" previously held by the MOD has now been transferred to the Public Records Office. I should like to assure Section 40 that there is no question that the MOD would attempt to cover-up information on the subject of so-called "unidentified flying objects".

I hope this explains the position.

THE EARL HOWE



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
SEC (AS) 2  
23 APR 1996  
FILE

# PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

## FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC (AS) 2aPE REF NUMBER: US 1002/96MINISTER REPLYING: USASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 1 / 5 / 96DATE: 22/4/96 FROM: **Section 40**PE Unit TEL: **Section 40****GUIDANCE NOTE**

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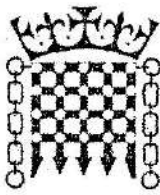
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Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sec (AS) 2  
USAFS

15 April 1996

The Earl Howe  
The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State  
Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB

Dear Lord Howe,

**Re: Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs)**

I enclose a copy of a letter which has today been received from **Section 40**  
**Section 40** Cheltenham, the contents of which are self-explanatory.

Mr Clifton-Brown is currently abroad and in his absence I would appreciate receiving your comments on the points raised by **Section 40** so that we may respond to him more fully.

Thank you for your attention in this matter and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

Secretary to  
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown

Enc



Fax **Section 40**  
Cirencester & Tewkesbury Constituency Office **Section 40**

should prove that the population  
is not going to go crazy nor  
the stock markets crash if the  
facts are made available.

Yours faithfully,

Section 40

RECEIVED  
15 APR 1996

Section 40

CHERTENHAM,

Section 40

Dear Sir,

I have been made aware that  
on July 4th 1996 the Japanese will  
be opening a new museum dealing  
with Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs).  
I gather that they will exhibit parts  
of non man made machines and an  
almost intact alien 'saucer'. Beyond  
this is suspected that alien bodies  
preserved at low temperature will  
be on view.

In the light of the foregoing  
will the government come clean  
on UFOs and give the public of  
this country the facts and show them  
artefacts from alien craft? The  
great interest in the "X Files"



Classification

Caveat

Covering

F Sigs  
(Rev 8)

64/4

## Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Transmission Details		Document Details
Serial Number:	Date and Time of Transmission: 30 APR	Reference:
From: SEC(CAS)2a	Fax Number: Section 40	Subject: PE: BLUE STREAK MISSILE LAUNCH FILM
To: Section 40 WD CS (RM)	Fax Number: Section 40	Total number of pages including this cover sheet: 2
Authorizing Officer		Transmit Operators
Rank, Name and Appointment: EO Section 40 Section 40		Rank/Grade, Name and Telephone No.: AO Section 40
Signature: Section 40		Signature: Section 40
Message/Remarks:		
<p>Section 40</p> <p>We have received the attached PE to staff, which has been prompted by the Jenny Randles programme on "UFOs" earlier this month.</p> <p>I seem to recall that Ms Randles claimed that "one can of film was missing" from the set of films released to the PRO. I should be grateful for any light you may be able to shed about this matter, about which I am afraid I know absolutely nothing.</p> <p>Regards</p> <p>Section 40</p>		

Covering

Caveat

SECRETARIAT(AIR STAFF) Fax: **Section 40**

\*\* Transmit Conf. Report \*\*

30 Apr '96 11:14

SECRETARIAT(AIR STAFF) --> <b>Section 40</b>	
No.	036
Mode	NORMAL
Time	'55"
Pages	Page(s)
Result	





PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR DEFENCE

Sec (AS) 2

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)

0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/FH 0909/96/A

22 April 1996

Dear Derek,

Thank you for your letter of 12 March to Roger Freeman enclosing one from **Section 40** of **Section 40** about files of "unidentified flying objects" reports held by my Department. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department does look into reports of "UFO" sightings that are sent to us, many of which are very vague, but only to establish if what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

We have no direct interest, expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial life forms, about which we remain open-minded. However, to date we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

**Section 40** asks about the MOD's "UFO" reports files. In common with all government files, MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967, which as you will be aware, states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years, as at the time there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. Since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject, it has been our policy that such files are to be routinely preserved. A few files from the Fifties and early Sixties did,

Sir Derek Spencer QC MP



Recycled Paper





however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 20/9994
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17527
PREM 11/855	

In answer to **Section 40** query therefore all surviving paperwork from over 30 years ago on the subject of "UFOs" previously held by the MOD has now been transferred to the Public Records Office. I should also like to assure **Section 40** that there is no question that the MOD would attempt to cover-up information on the subject of so-called "unidentified flying objects".

I hope this explains the position.

*Yours ever,*

**Section 40**

THE EARL HOWE



Recycled Paper



FILE COPY

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4 ✓

18 Apr 96

Parliamentary Branch



LETTER FROM SIR DEREK SPENCER QC MP - US 0909/96

1. The comments contained in the constituent's letter reflect the commonly held view by "Ufologists" who ascribe to the conspiracy theory, that the MOD has in its possession files which contain sensitive "UFO" sightings reports made by military pilots or personnel, which we keep separate from the files which contain reports of sightings made by members of the public.

2. There is no evidence to support this claim and all reports, from whatever source, are placed on the same departmental files. CS(Records Management) have confirmed to the best of their knowledge that all surviving "UFO" paperwork from over 30 years ago has now, in accordance with the Public Records Act, been passed to the Public Records Office (PRO).

3. I attach a draft response for Lord Howe's consideration.

Section 40

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247

Section 40

Enc.

DRAFT

D/USofs/0909/96

April 1996

Thank you for your letter of 12 March addressed to Roger

Freeman enclosing one from **Section 40**

**Section 40**

concerning the subject of files of "unidentified flying objects" reports. Your letter has been passed to the Ministry of Defence for reply as this falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department does look into reports of "UFO" sightings that are sent to us, many of which are very vague, but only to establish if what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

We have no direct interest, expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. However, to date we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

**Section 40** asks about the MOD's "UFO" reports files. In common with all government files, MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967, which as

Sir Derek Spencer QC MP



you will be aware, states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years, as at the time there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. Since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject, it has been our policy that such files are to be routinely preserved. A few files from the Fifties and early Sixties did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

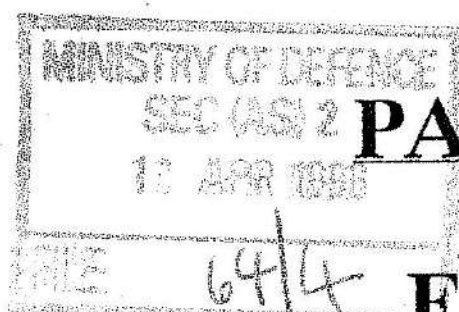
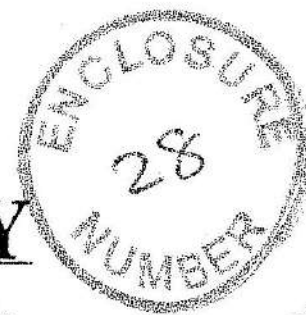
AIR 16/1199	AIR 20/9994
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17527
PREM 11/855	

In answer to **Section 40** query therefore all surviving paperwork from over 30 years ago on the subject of "UFOs" previously held by the MOD has now been transferred to the Public Records Office. I should also like to assure **Section 40** that there is no question that the MOD would attempt to cover-up information on the subject of so-called "unidentified flying objects".

I hope this explains the position.

THE EARL HOWE





# PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

## FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC(AS) 2A

PE REF NUMBER: US 0909/96

MINISTER REPLYING: USCAs

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 22/4/96

DATE: 11/4/96 FROM: Section 40

PE Unit TEL: Section 40

### **GUIDANCE NOTE**

Ministers reply to some 8,000 such letters a year. They place great importance on the content style and speed of the replies.

Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. Do not be unduly defensive.

No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

**Layout** Draft replies should be double spaced.

**Always** include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

**Opening and closing** All Ministers prefer to start: "Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ..., Toytown about ...."

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start: "Thank you for your letter of ... addressed to Michael Portillo/ Nicholas Soames/James

Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"  
Mr Soames and Earl Howe add "I have been asked to reply" and "I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility." respectively.

Do not end "I hope this is helpful" when the reply is obviously disappointing. Alternatives are:  
"I hope this explains the position"  
"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"  
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

**Deadlines** If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once - an interim reply might be needed.

**Departmental action** Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply.

Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

**ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL AND ANNOTATED TO CONFIRM THIS.**

**WHEREVER POSSIBLE DRAFTS SHOULD BE SENT ON CHOTS E-MAIL TO: Parliamentary Enquiries other wise send drafts by fax to Section 40 PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD**





*Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster  
Cabinet Minister for Public Service*

Correspondence Section  
Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall

*Sec(AS)  
USSES*  
**CABINET OFFICE**  
70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS  
Telephone: **Section 40**

29 March 1996

The attached letter addressed to Roger Freeman appears to fall within the remit of your Department. I should be grateful if you could reply to the correspondent direct, copying the reply back to myself.

They have been informed of the transfer.

**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Ministerial Support Unit  
Room 313, 70 Whitehall

**Section 40**

SIR DEREK SPENCER QC MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

12th March 1996



*Historic Records  
MoD*

*RF/96/M/581 18/06/96*

*MoD*  
*Pass Andrew*  
*by 9/4*

*Dear Roger,*

*FRD:  
SECT (AS)  
Room 8245  
MAIN BUILDING  
WHITEHALL.*

Please find enclosed a letter I have received from my constituent  
**Section 40** Brighton about information  
regarding unidentified flying objects.

I would be most grateful for a reply I could pass on to **Section 40**  
**Section 40**

*Yours ever,*

**Section 40**

Rt Hon Roger Freeman MP  
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster  
Office of Public Service  
70 Whitehall  
London SW1A 2AS





Section 40

BRIGHTON  
East Sussex

Saturday 2nd March

Dear Sir Derek,

sorry about this  
 questionnaire being late but it  
 got lost on my desk amongst all  
 the other stuff. The reason why  
 I am writing to you is to ask  
 about UFO's. I would like you  
 to see if you could get certain  
 files released from over 50 years  
 ago to the present. This files  
 concern the 10% of sightings  
 which cannot being explained by  
 means other than extra-terrestrial  
 ones. These sightings were made by  
 reliable sources such as airline and  
 airforce pilots and radar

operators, although when asked about them in the House of Commons, previous governments have said they are from unreliable sources. But why have these files been kept <sup>locked</sup> away if they are as worthless as has been made out?

If you wish to know more about this I recommend Timothy Good's book 'Above Top Secret' which will surely convince you about this enormous cover-up. Please endeavour to ~~answer~~ answer my questions as the public <sup>could</sup> should know the truth - maybe you <sup>could</sup> do a Private members bill about it. The public have had the wool pulled over their eyes for too long so please try your best Sir Derek,

yours sincerely,

Section 40





CORNELL UNIVERSITY

*Center for Radiophysics and Space Research*

SPACE SCIENCES BUILDING  
Ithaca, New York 14853-6801



Laboratory for Planetary Studies

8 30 68  
Telephone [Section 40]  
Fax [Section 40]

March 6, 1996

[Section 40]  
Chief, Public Relations  
Ministry of Defence  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB  
ENGLAND

REFERENCE: Crop Circles

Dear [Section 40]

One [Section 40] self-described as "England's foremost crop circle expert" claims that "The British government...has sanctioned the Ministry of Defence to say that the circles are real. Evidence has been uncovered showing some farmers have been paid considerable sums of money to destroy the real crop circles when they appear, and groups encouraged to then make hoaxed replicas." Could I trouble you to tell me the Ministry of Defence's view of this statement?

With many thanks,

Cordially,

[Section 40]

Carl Sagan  
David Duncan Professor of Astronomy and  
Space Sciences, and  
Director, Laboratory for Planetary Studies

CS:lkp

Gave [Section 40] (PS)  
a copy of USOP's letter  
to [Section 40] of  
6 Oct 95. Also advised  
he spoke to PL(LS) Claims.  
[Section 40]  
28/3



**HEADLINE**

**BOOK PUBLISHING LTD**

TEL: 0171 873 6000 FAX: 0171 873 6124

25 March 1996

Section 40

Chief, Public Relations  
Ministry of Defence  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB

Dear Section 40

I would be most grateful if you could inform me of your response to Carl Sagan's letter of 6 March 1996, a copy of which I enclose herewith.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

Pp Section 40

Publishing Director, Non-fiction

Enc

REGISTERED OFFICE:  
338 EUSTON ROAD  
LONDON NW1 3BH  
COMPANY NO: 2782638 ENGLAND

A MEMBER OF THE HODDER HEADLINE PLC GROUP

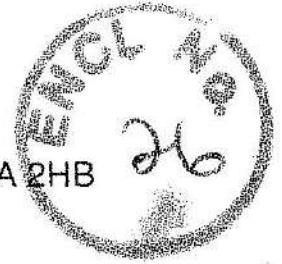




PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21..... (Direct Dialling)  
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/FH 0712/96/S

2/5V March 1996

Dear Mr. Jones,

Thank you for your letter of 6 March to the Station Commander at RAF Valley, about a "sighting" which was witnessed over Llanfaes on Saturday, 4 November 1995. In accordance with normal practice your letter has been passed to me for reply.

We have looked into the matter and can tell you that no aircraft were operating out of Royal Air Force Valley on the evening in question and no military aircraft were booked into military Night Low Flying Section 5D, in which Llanfaes is situated. Furthermore, the Department did not receive any other reports of "sightings" from members of the public. This of course does not rule out the possibility that a civil aircraft of some description was observed.

I hope this is helpful to you in responding to your constituent.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

Ieuan Wyn Jones Esq MP





LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

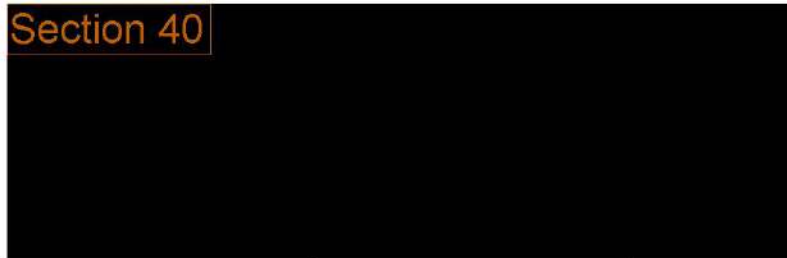
15 Mar 96

APS/USofs

**REVERSE MINISTERIAL - IEUAN WYN JONES MP**

1. The Station Commander at Royal Air Force Valley has received the attached letter from Ieuan Wyn Jones MP, who has been asked by a constituent to make enquiries into a "sighting" witnessed on 4 Nov 95 near RAF Valley.
2. The constituent has asked whether an object seen at 1905 hours over Llanfaes could have been an aircraft from RAF Valley. The expression "sighting" used by Mr Jones might indicate that his constituent believes the craft seen could have been a so-called "unidentified flying object".
3. RAF Valley confirm that none of their aircraft were operating on the evening in question, and records show that neither were any aircraft booked into Night Low Flying Sector 5D conducting military low flying training. Furthermore, this office did not receive any "UFO" reports which would tie in with this sighting.
4. As there is no evidence to confirm that the sighting was a matter of defence concern, we have no further role. I attach a draft for Lord Howe's consideration, which reflects the standard line in response to such queries.

Section 40



Sec(AS)2

MB8245

Section 40

Enc:



D R A F T

D/USofS/ /96

March 1996

Thank you for your letter of 6 March 1996 to the Station Commander at Royal Air Force Valley, concerning a "sighting" which was witnessed over Llanfaes on Saturday, 4 November 1995. In accordance with normal practice your letter has been passed to me, as the responsible Minister, for reply.

We have looked into the matter and can tell you that no aircraft were operating out of Royal Air Force Valley on the evening in question, and no military aircraft were booked into military Night Low Flying Sector 5D, in which Llanfaes is situated. Furthermore, the Department did not receive any other reports of "sightings" from members of the public. This of course does not rule out the possibility that a civil aircraft of some description was observed.

I hope this is helpful to you in responding to your constituent.

THE EARL HOWE

Ieuan Wyn Jones, Esq, MP



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)

0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/FH 0712/96/S

2/5v March 1996

Dear Mr. Jones,

Thank you for your letter of 6 March to the Station Commander at RAF Valley, about a "sighting" which was witnessed over Llanfaes on Saturday, 4 November 1995. In accordance with normal practice your letter has been passed to me for reply.

We have looked into the matter and can tell you that no aircraft were operating out of Royal Air Force Valley on the evening in question and no military aircraft were booked into military Night Low Flying Section 5D, in which Llanfaes is situated. Furthermore, the Department did not receive any other reports of "sightings" from members of the public. This of course does not rule out the possibility that a civil aircraft of some description was observed.

I hope this is helpful to you in responding to your constituent.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

Ieuan Wyn Jones Esq MP



Recycle



12 Mar '95

13:58

P.01/02

Classification

Caveat

Covering

F Sigs 927  
(Int.9/92)

## Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Transmission Details		Document Details	
Serial Number:	Date and Time of Transmission:	Reference:	
		ISJ/2/96/36	
From: DC Support of RAF Valence	Section 40	Subject:	
To: Section 40	Section 40	LLANFAES 'SIGHTING'	
Section 40	Section 40	Total number of pages including this cover sheet	2
Section 40	Section 40	Transmit Operators	
Authorizing Officer		Rank/Grade and Name:	
Rank, Name: Section 40		Signature:	
Section 40			

To: S. AS/26 Mod  
Info: ACB/Sec)2 HoPc

Please find attached details from Hys Môn HP,  
Ileuon Hys Môn on the subject of a  
'sighting' at Llanfaes. Please let me know  
if you wish us to research further, I will.

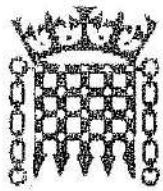
4 Nov 95

Kingstone,  
2 reports - Scotland

Brundle  
1 report - Norfolk



12 Mar '95 13:59 P.02/02



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

NSSD

SM6077

17

Ref: IWJ/2/96/

March 1996

Sm Cdr

Up Captain  
Air Force

Section 40

MSn

Redd

MSn

Group Captain

Section 40

have been asked to make enquiries regarding a "sighting" over  
the village of Ilanfaes on Saturday, 4 November 1995 at 19.  
One of my constituents has written to me enquiring what  
the "object" could have been an aircraft from RAF  
and I wonder if you could let me know if you have been  
asked about this event.

As you would be good enough to let me know what  
craft has been identified as being in the "area"  
is fine.

Sincerely

Section 40

LFA 7

STANCL





PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR DEFENCE

*Hd Sec (AS)*

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)  
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



Section 40

Section 40

D/US of S/0443/96/M

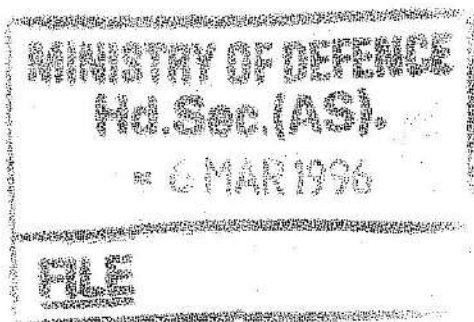
4th March 1996

*Dear John,*

Thank you for your letter of 14 February on behalf of **Section 40** of **Section 40** about her claimed sightings of "UFOs".

My Department does look into reports of "UFO" sightings that are sent to us, many of which are very vague, but only to establish if what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

We are not aware of any RAF investigation into sightings in the Withernsea area. Although a very small number of "unexplained" sightings have been reported in this area over the last three years, none was considered to be of any defence significance. We have no trace of any reports made by **Section 40** or of correspondence with her, over this period.



*Yours ever,*  
Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

John Townend Esq FCA MP



Recycled Paper

64/4



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

\ Mar 96

Parliamentary Branch

LETTER FROM JOHN TOWNEND, FCA, MP - US 0443/96

A self explanatory draft reply to **Section 40** letter of 14 February is attached for Lord Howe's consideration.

**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Head of Sec(AS)  
MB7257 **Section 40**

Enc.



DRAFT

D/USofs/0443/96

March 1996

Thank you for your letter of 14 February concerning **Section 40** **Section 40** and her claimed sightings of "UFOs".

My Department does look into reports of "UFO" sightings that are sent to us, many of which are very vague, but only to establish if what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

As to **Section 40** we are not aware of any RAF investigation into sightings in the Withernsea area. Although a very small number of "unexplained" sightings have been reported in this area over the last three years, none was considered to be of any defence significance. We have no trace of any reports made by **Section 40** or of correspondence with her, over this period.

I hope this is helpful to you in responding to **Section 40**

THE EARL HOWE

John Townend, Esq, FCA, MP



Fri Mar 01, 1996 10:44 mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	
01/03/96	Parliamentary Enqu	PE: US 0443/96	Ref: 531

Sent : 01/03/96 10:44  
To : Parliamentary Enquiries  
Cc :

Ref : 531  
Subject: PE: US 0443/96

Text : The attached has been seen and signed off by **Section 40** (Grade 5)

Priority: Urgent View Acknowledge [\*] Attachments [1]  
Reply Request [ ] Delivery Acknowledge [\*] page 1

Bcc :

Auth by :

Defer Date :

Defer Time :

No Redirection [ ]

page 2



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

1 Mar 96

Parliamentary Branch

LETTER FROM JOHN TOWNEND, FCA, MP - US 0443/96

A self explanatory draft reply to Mr Townend's letter of 14 February is attached for Lord Howe's consideration.

*[original signed]*

Section 40

Head of Sec(AS)

MB7257 Section 40

Enc.

**DRAFT**

D/USofS/0443/96

March 1996

Thank you for your letter of 14 February concerning **Section 40** **Section 40** and her claimed sightings of "UFOs".

My Department does look into reports of "UFO" sightings that are sent to us, many of which are very vague, but only to establish if what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

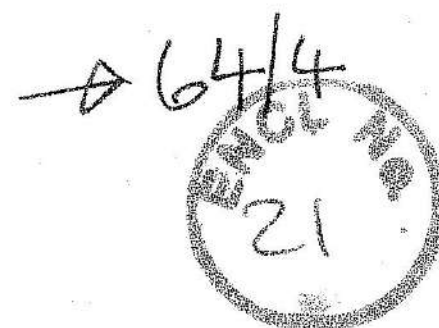
As to **Section 40** we are not aware of any RAF investigation into sightings in the Withernsea area. Although a very small number of "unexplained" sightings have been reported in this area over the last three years, none was considered to be of any defence significance. We have no trace of any reports made by **Section 40** or of correspondence with her, over this period.

I hope this is helpful to you in responding to **Section 40**

THE EARL HOWE

John Townend, Esq, FCA, MP





Section 40 Section 40

thro Section. ...

PE: 0443/96 - "UFOs"

1. Attached for your consideration is a draft response to a PE from Mr John Townend, the MP for Bridlington.
2. His constituent, Section 40 is not known to me, and we have checked back through our correspondence files and have not had cause to write to her in the last three years. Whilst it would be almost impossible to categorically state that no member of the RAF has asked questions about "UFO" sightings in the area, we have not requested any investigation into "UFO" sightings there.
3. The draft response is required by the Parliamentary Branch by COP Fri 1 Mar.

Section 40

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Feb 96

D R A F T

Parliamentary Branch

LETTER FROM JOHN TOWNEND, FCA, MP - US 0443/96

1. A self explanatory draft reply to Mr Townend's letter of 14 February is attached for Lord Howe's consideration.

Section 40

Head of Sec(AS)  
MB7257

Section 40

Enc.



DRAFT

D/USofS/0443/96

March 1996

Section 40

Thank you for your letter of 14 February concerning ~~the subject~~  
~~and how claimed sightings of UFOs~~  
~~of "unidentified flying objects".~~

My Department does look into reports of UFO sightings that are sent to us, many of which are very vague, <sup>but only if</sup> [to establish/what was seen may have some defence significance. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings, such as aircraft seen from unusual angles, or natural phenomena.

~~... which are not immediately~~  
 John Townend, Esq, FCA, MP

identifiable. However, we believe explanations could be found for most of them. Possibilities include aircraft lights or aircraft seen from unusual angles, helium balloons, searchlights or lasers reflecting off clouds, or even natural phenomena like fireballs and meteorites. Nevertheless, we do accept that there will always be some sightings that appear to defy explanation, and we are open-minded about these as it is outside the Department's remit to investigate further if there is no defence interest.

As to Section 40 we are not  
~~Neither I nor my officials are~~ aware of any specific RAF investigation into sightings in the Withernsea area. Although a very small number of ~~reports of~~ "unexplained" aerial sightings have been reported in this area over the last three years, <sup>none was considered to be of any</sup> ~~the reports were examined by the Department and~~ were found to have no defence significance. We have no trace of any reports made by Section 40, or of correspondence with her, over this period.  
~~I can assure you that the MOD and our Armed Forces remain properly vigilant for any physical threat to the security of the United Kingdom, but to date it remains the case that we are not aware of any evidence which substantiates the existence of the alleged phenomena of "UFO/flying saucers".~~  
Section 40  
<sup>to you in responding to</sup>  
 I hope this is helpful ~~in explaining the role of this~~  
~~Department regarding "UFO" sightings.~~

THE EARL HOWE



# PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

## FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC(AS)2aPE REF NUMBER: US 0443/96MINISTER REPLYING: US ASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 1/3/96DATE: 21/2/96 FROM: Section 40PE Unit TEL: Section 40**GUIDANCE NOTE**

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No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

**Layout** Draft replies should be double spaced.

**Always** include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

**Opening and closing** All Ministers prefer to start: "Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ..., Toytown about ...."

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start: "Thank you for your letter of ... addressed to Michael Portillo/ Nicholas Soames/James

Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"  
Mr Soames and Earl Howe add "I have been asked to reply" and "I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility." respectively.

Do not end "I hope this is helpful" when the reply is obviously disappointing. Alternatives are:  
"I hope this explains the position"  
"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"  
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

**Deadlines** If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once - an interim reply might be needed.

**Departmental action** Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply.

Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

**ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL AND ANNOTATED TO CONFIRM THIS.**

**WHEREVER POSSIBLE DRAFTS SHOULD BE SENT ON CHOTS E-MAIL TO: Parliamentary Enquiries other wise send drafts by fax to Section 40 PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD**