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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

SIR  
2028

MOD Form 329D  
(Revised 5/97)  
PPQ = 100

Date opened

Registered file number

D/SEC(CAS)/64/3/4

Part No. A

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

DIVISION/ESTABLISHMENT/UNIT/BRANCH

SECCAS)

SUBJECT UFO Public Correspondence -  
Persistent Correspondence -

Section 40

Referred to	Date	Min/Encl	Referred to	Date	Min/Encl	Referred to	Date	Min/Encl	Referred to	Date	Min/Encl
<p><b>CLOSED</b> No Further Action to be taken in this FILE PART Continued on - DISCONTINUED IP</p>											

FOR DRO USE ONLY

1st Review date

2nd Review date

Section 40



File Ref: DAS(SEC)64/3/4

Part: A

PA ACTION  
(MOD Form 262F must be completed)



RCU000131972



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# Registered File Disposal Form

MOD Form 262F  
(Revised 10/97)

FILE TITLE: (Main Heading - Secondary Heading - Tertiary Heading etc) UFO PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE - PERSISTENT CORRESPONDENCE - Section 40	Reference: (Prefix and Number): D/DAS/64/3/4 Part: A
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PROTECTIVE MARKING (including caveats & descriptors): **UNCLASSIFIED**

Date of last enclosure: 9 JUNE 1998	Date closed: 9 JUNE 1998
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<b>PART 1. DISPOSAL SCHEDULE RECOMMENDATION</b> (To be completed when the file is closed)	<b>FOR CS(RM) USE ONLY</b>									
Destroy after _____ years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward to CS(RM) after _____ years <input type="checkbox"/> <i>for permanent retention in the public records office</i> No recommendation <input type="checkbox"/>	<table style="width:100%"> <tr> <td style="border:1px solid black; height:30px;"></td> <td style="border:1px solid black; height:30px;"></td> <td style="border:1px solid black; height:30px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align:center">Date of 1st review</td> <td style="text-align:center">Date of 2nd review</td> <td style="text-align:center">Forward Destruction Date</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reviewer's Signature: _____</td> <td>Reviewer's Signature: _____</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>				Date of 1st review	Date of 2nd review	Forward Destruction Date	Reviewer's Signature: _____	Reviewer's Signature: _____	
Date of 1st review	Date of 2nd review	Forward Destruction Date								
Reviewer's Signature: _____	Reviewer's Signature: _____									

**PART 2. BRANCH REVIEW**  
(To be completed not later than 4 years after the date of the last enclosure)  
(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 CS(RM)).

b. (i) To be retained for \_\_\_\_\_ years (from date of last enclosure) for the following reason(s): *for permanent retention in the PRO*

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OTHER (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>

PPQ = 100

(Continued overleaf)

(ii) Key enclosures which support the recommendation are:

Four horizontal lines for listing key enclosures.

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

Destroyed

Considered by CS(RM) for permanent preservation

c. Of no further administrative value but worthy of consideration by CS(RM) for permanent preservation.

**PART 3. BRANCH REVIEWING OFFICER**

Section 40

Signature

Signature line with a blacked-out area.

Name:

Name line with a blacked-out area.

(Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank:

CI

Date:

4/4/03

(Not below HEO/equivalent)

Branch Title and Full Address:

Tel No:

**PART 4 DESTRUCTION CERTIFICATE**

It is certified that the specified file has been destroyed.

Signature:

Signature line.

Name:

Name line.

(Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank:

Date:

Witnessed by (TOP SECRET\* and SECRET only)

Signature:

Signature line.

Name:

Name line.

(Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank:

Date:

\*(FOR CS(RM) USE ONLY)

Section 40



with the compliments of  
**Ministry of Defence**

FRMO: (Ltd See (As))

Section 40

DM 170MD  
10 JUN 1998  
NORTH  
NORTH  
15000

Section 40

Our proposed amendments have been incorporated.

Section 40

5/6

MOD Form 195 (Revised 6/89)



From: **Section 40**  
 Room 619, Director of Organisation and Management Development  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Northumberland House, Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5BP



Telephone (Direct dial) **Section 40**  
 (Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
 (Fax) **Section 40**  
 E-mail: domd@gtnet.gov.uk

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
 D/DOMD/2/3/2  
 Date  
 9 June 1998

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter dated 14 May 1998 addressed to **Section 40**. You will be aware from her response to you of 21 May that your complaint has been passed to me in view of my responsibility for handling appeals for information under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code).

I have studied the correspondence between yourself and members of the Secretariat (Air Staff) dating from 15 May 1997 to 14 May 1998. Having considered the information provided, I am satisfied that, in so far as they can, Sec(AS) has responded properly to all the points you have raised.

As Sec(AS) has explained, MOD's role and interest in 'UFO' related issues is limited to establishing from reported sightings whether the UK Air Defence Region has been breached by hostile military activity. The subject of 'UFOs' is not classified. Within the MOD Sec(AS) has responsibility for handling correspondence of this nature. On receipt of reports of alleged sightings, Sec(AS) staff, in consultation with air defence staff and others as necessary, make further investigations only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach might have occurred. No action is taken to follow up reports where there is insufficient supporting evidence that such a breach has indeed occurred. To date, no evidence of breaches to UK Air Defences by craft of unknown origin, or 'UFOs', has been substantiated.

I can reassure you that Mr Pope's views and opinions on these matters are, as stated previously, entirely his own. These views are at odds with those of the Department precisely due to the lack of supporting evidence. However, MOD does, of course, tolerate different points of view, and Mr Pope's freedom to write giving his views on such matters illustrates this.

MOD's position is in line with the Government's position on the Freedom of Information Act and the department will continue to act within the terms set out in the Code of Practice; the non-statutory, best practice guide until legislation is in place. The reference to the Act from Sec(AS) was intended for your information, and most certainly does not imply that information is being wrongly withheld.

There are no planned changes to Government policy on this issue at present, and whilst you might find this frustrating, the fact remains that Sec(AS) do not have the remit to follow up reports where there is insufficient supporting evidence.

I can assure you that a thorough review of your correspondence with Sec(AS) has been conducted. Nevertheless, if you remain dissatisfied and feel that you have exhausted your lines of enquiry with MOD, you may register a complaint with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman) through a Member of Parliament. If you would like to know more about the role and work of the PCA, you may contact his office at: Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP, telephone: (0171) 217 4162. However, I do hope you feel that your concerns have now been answered to your satisfaction.

*Your sincerely*

Section 40



Mon 8 Jun, 1998 15:48 mailbox log Page 1



DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
08/06/98	OMD14	Section 40 COMPLAINT	[ ]

Sent: 08/06/98 at 15:47  
 To: OMD14  
 CC:

Ref: 1816  
 Subject: Section 40 COMPLAINT

Text: Please See Attached.

Priority: Urgent  
 Reply Request [ ]

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

Attachments [ 1 ]  
 Codes [ ]

From: **Section 40**  
Room 619, Director of Organisation  
and Management Development  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

TO: **Section 40**  
OMD14

SUBJECT: **Section 40** - LETTER OF COMPLAINT

Tina,

Thank you for forwarding the draft letter in response to **Section 40** **Section 40** for our views. Head of Sec(AS) has seen the proposed draft and is content with it subject to a couple of minor amendments, which I have highlighted in bold (see attached):

- \* Para 3 Line 3.
- \* Para 3 Lines 4 & 5.
- \* Para 3 Line 11.

I can also confirm in particular:

- (a) The subject of 'UFOs' is unclassified.
- (b) No evidence received to date **substantiates** breaches of the UK Air Defence Region by "craft of unknown origin or 'UFOs'".
- (c) There are no planned changes to Government Policy on this issue at present.

**Section 40**  
Sec(AS) 2a1

**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Verwood  
Dorset

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DOMD/2/3/2  
Date  
5 June 1998

Thank you for your letter dated 14 May 1998 addressed to **Section 40**. You will be aware from her response to you of 21 May that your complaint has been passed to me in view of my responsibility for handling appeals for information under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code).

I have studied the correspondence between yourself and members of the Secretariat (Air Staff) dating from 15 May 1997 to 14 May 1998. Having considered the information provided, I am satisfied that, in so far as they can, Sec(AS) has responded properly to all the points you have raised.

As Sec(AS) has explained, MOD's role and interest in 'UFO' related issues is



limited to establishing from reported sightings whether the UK Air Defence Region has been breached by hostile military activity. The subject of 'UFOs' is not classified. **Within the MOD Sec(AS) has responsibility for handling correspondence of this nature.** On receipt of reports of alleged sightings, Sec(AS) staff, in consultation with air defence staff and others as necessary, make further investigations only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach might have occurred. No action is taken to follow up reports where there is insufficient supporting evidence that such a breach has indeed occurred. To date, no evidence of breaches to UK Air Defences by craft of unknown origin, or 'UFOs', has been **substantiated**.

I can reassure you that Mr Pope's views and opinions on these matters are, as stated previously, entirely his own. These views are at odds with those of the Department precisely due to the lack of supporting evidence. However, MOD does, of course, tolerate different points of view, and Mr Pope's freedom to write giving his views on such matters illustrates this.

MOD's position is in line with the Government's position on the Freedom of Information Act and the department will continue to act within the terms set out in the Code of Practice; the non-statutory, best practice guide until legislation is in place. The reference to the Act from Sec(AS) was intended for your information, and most certainly does not imply that information is being wrongly withheld.

There are no planned changes to Government policy on this issue at present, and whilst you might find this frustrating, the fact remains that Sec(AS) do not have the remit to follow up reports where there is insufficient supporting evidence.

I can assure you that a thorough review of your correspondence with Sec(AS) has been conducted. Nevertheless, if you remain dissatisfied and feel that you have exhausted your lines of enquiry with MOD, you may register a complaint with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman) through a Member of Parliament. If you would like to know more about the role and work of the PCA, you may contact his office at: Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP, telephone: (0171) 217 4162. However, I do hope you feel that your concerns have now been answered to your satisfaction.

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64/3



PSA

I would be grateful if you would confirm that you are happy with the attached draft, and that it is factually accurate. I would particularly draw your attention to the points noted in bold, that:

- a) the subject of UFOs is not classified
- b) there has been no evidence received to date of breaches to UK Air Defences by craft of unknown origin, or UFOs
- c) there are no planned changes to Government policy on this issue at present.

Many thanks,

[signed]

Section 40

OMD14

NH617

Section 40

Section 40

COMPLAINT

Section 40

Section 40

would this up for us to look over.

When you've read it can I take through a couple of waxes with you?

Thanks

Section 40

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From: **Section 40**  
Room 619, Director of Organisation  
and Management Development  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DOMD/2/3/2  
Date  
5 June 1998

Thank you for your letter dated 14 May 1998 addressed to **Section 40**. You will be aware from her response to you of 21 May that your complaint has been passed to me in view of my responsibility for handling appeals for information under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code).

I have studied the correspondence between yourself and members of the Secretariat (Air Staff) dating from 15 May 1997 to 14 May 1998. Having considered the information provided, I am satisfied that, in so far as they can, Sec(AS) has responded properly to all the points you have raised.

As Sec(AS) has explained, MOD's role and interest in 'UFO' related issues is limited to establishing from reported sightings whether the UK Air Defence Region has been breached by hostile military activity. The subject of "UFOs" is not classified, and Sec(AS) is the responsible MOD branch. On receipt of reports of alleged sightings, Sec(AS) staff, in consultation with air defence staff and others as necessary, make further investigations only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach might have occurred. No action is taken to follow up reports where there is insufficient supporting evidence that such a breach has indeed occurred. To date, no evidence of breaches to UK Air Defences by craft of unknown origin, or "UFOs", has been received. *substantiated*

I can reassure you that Mr Pope's views and opinions on these matters are, as stated previously, entirely his own. These views are at odds with those of the Department precisely due to the lack of supporting evidence. However, MOD does, of course, tolerate different points of view, and Mr Pope's freedom to write giving his views on such matters illustrates this.

MOD's position is in line with the Government's position on the Freedom of Information Act and the department will continue to act within the terms set out in the Code of Practice; the non-statutory, best practice guide until legislation is in place. The reference to the Act from Sec(AS) was intended for your information, and most certainly does not imply that information is being wrongly withheld.

**There are no planned changes to Government policy on this issue at present, and whilst you might find this frustrating, the fact remains that Sec(AS) do not have the remit to follow up reports where there is insufficient supporting evidence.**

I can assure you that a thorough review of your correspondence with Sec(AS) has been conducted. Nevertheless, if you remain dissatisfied and feel that you have exhausted your lines of enquiry with MOD, you may register a complaint with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman) through a Member of Parliament. If you would like to know more about the role and work of the PCA, you may contact his office at: Millbank Tower, Millbank,

*With Man  
Sec(AS)  
has responsibility  
for handling  
complaints  
responsibility  
to report  
to the  
FOI.*

✓

✓

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STAFF

**LOOSE MINUTE**

D/Sec(AS)/64/3(MF127/98)

28 May 1998

**DOMD****OPEN GOVERNMENT - COMPLAINT FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC**

Reference: D/DOMD/2/3/2 dated 20 May 1998

1. **Section 40** [REDACTED], has appealed about the way his questions on 'UFO'-related issues have been dealt with. You asked for advice in order to conduct a full review.

**BACKGROUND****'UFOs' - MOD Policy**

2. It is Government policy that any air defence or air traffic implications of 'UFOs' and related issues are a matter for MOD and the CAA respectively. MOD's interest is limited to establishing from reported sightings of alleged 'UFOs' whether the UK Air Defence Region has been breached by hostile military activity, and responding to any associated public correspondence. On receipt of reports of alleged sightings, Sec(AS)2 staff, in consultation with air defence staff and others as necessary, make further investigations only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach might have occurred. No action is taken to follow up reports (the vast majority) where there is insufficient supporting evidence. Some 'ufologists' are, however, unhappy with MOD's limited interest. A small number lobby vociferously for defence funds to be used for 'UFO' research, have their own agenda for such work and use all possible avenues to pursue their aims.

**Section 40** **Initial Approach**

3. **Section 40** first wrote to the Prime Minister (Flag A) in May last year expressing his concern about the Daily Mail article on 'UFOs and alien abductions' written by Nicholas Pope, an MOD civil servant. **Section 40**, asking if the article was factual, wanted to know what steps the Government was doing to protect the public and suggested the change of Government to one favouring freedom of information would provide the answers. No 10 forwarded the letter to MOD for official action. The reply (Flag B) explained MOD's limited interest in 'UFOs', gave reassurance that to date there was no evidence for concern, went on to emphasise Pope's views were his own and, in view of the FoI reference, included the line provided by your staff about the Government's plans for taking forward the proposed FoI Act.

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**STAFF**

**Nicholas Pope**

4. Nicholas Pope worked as an EO in Sec(AS)2 for three years to July 1994.

**Section 40**

5. There are no regulations preventing serving military and civilian staff from writing books and articles and offering them for publication, nor are they barred from media activities, providing they obtain permission to do so at the outset and secure official clearance of the material they intend to use.

**Section 40**

6.

**Section 40**

The book was published in June 1997 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the first alleged sighting of a 'UFO'. Pre-publication promotional activities included the Daily Mail article and, again,

**Section 40**

**Section 40** **Further Correspondence**

7. **Section 40** wrote again (Flag C) saying that our reply had not taken into account the wealth of evidence provided by UFO sighting reports. He was certain UK airspace was being violated and extremely concerned with the official view that this was not the case. If it was correct that Pope's views had arisen while he worked in Sec(AS)2, he concluded that they amounted to a professional analysis and should be recognised as such. If this was not the case, Pope should be dismissed for knowingly causing unnecessary public concern rather than promoted to work elsewhere.

8. A considerable amount of public correspondence about 'UFO'-related issues was generated during the second half of 1997 as a result of media coverage of the 50th anniversary and it was some

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**STAFF**

time before the backlog was cleared. The reply to **Section 40** (Flag D) pointed out that the MOD's interest in 'UFOs' had already been explained to him. **Section 40** frustrated because he had not, he felt, had a satisfactory explanation about Pope (who he believed had been head of a Department in Sec(AS)), wrote again (Flag E) saying that unless the 'UFO' subject was classified there was nothing to prevent him being told the truth and repeated his assertion that either Pope was right about 'UFOs and alien life forms' or should be dismissed.

**Section 40**

### Sec(AS)2 Review

10. **Section 40** head of Sec(AS)2, reviewed **Section 40** correspondence before replying (Flag F). It was her view, and one I agree with, that a full explanation had been provided of the Department's policy and interest in 'UFO' matters and Pope's literary activities. Still dissatisfied and believing, wrongly, that information to substantiate his views existed somewhere within Government, **Section 40** wrote again (Flag G). **Section 40** response (Flag H) reminded him of the Department's limited interest in the subject and undertook to look at the papers again if MOD policy on 'UFOs' changed. Copies of the correspondence and the Daily Mail article are attached for reference.

### Conclusion

11. There is no evidence to support the view that the UK Air Defence Region is being breached by hostile foreign military activity or anything else, nor the alien abduction hypothesis. There are no plans to change Government policy on 'UFOs' and implement a research programme to further investigate ufologists' claims. There is no cover up of information. As you know from our recent meeting, we would willingly release to the PRO all 'UFO' files subject to resolution of concerns about personal privacy and CS Records making arrangements for their early release. In the meantime, every effort is made to comply with the spirit of FoI when providing information to the public about 'UFOs'.

12. **Section 40** appeal alleges that his questions have not been answered. They have, in so far as hard facts exist. He has been advised that Pope's views are his own and not MOD policy; the forthcoming FoI Act was mentioned as an indication that we comply with it in spirit, not because we conceal information behind it;

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**STAFF**

in answering his original question "what is going on" we have confirmed that there is no evidence to support his view that the UK Air Defence Region is being breached (ie the extent of MOD's interest), nor to support claims about alien abduction. There is no additional information, classified or otherwise and we cannot answer hypothetical questions supposing there to be so.

13. Although **Section 40** has formally complained about my Division, and has made some reference to the process, the root of his dissatisfaction is really a frustration about current Government policy relating to 'UFO' phenomena and a desire to change it.

**Section 40**

M J D FULLER  
Head of Sec(AS)  
MB7257 **Section 40**

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**STAFF**  
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From: **Section 40**, Secretariat (Air Staff)2  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 8247, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 **Section 40**  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date  
2nd March 1998

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your further letter of 31 January.

You will know from previous correspondence the limit of the MOD's interest in the subject of 'unidentified flying objects'. Your continued questioning goes far wider than this and there is, as I have said previously, nothing further that I can add.

Your latest letter and any further ones of a similar nature will be placed on a Departmental file and looked at again in the light of any changes to the MOD's policy on this subject.

*Yours sincerely*

**Section 40**



Section 40

Tele: Section 40

31 January 1998

Section 40

*Dear*

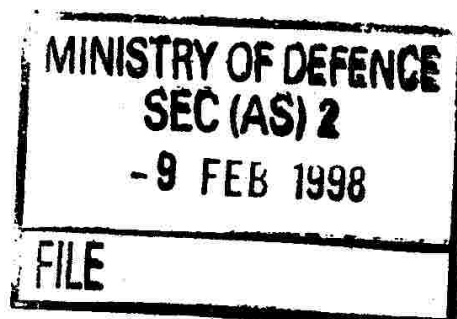
with reference to your D/Sec(AS)/64/3 dated 10th December 1997. It is kind of you to find the time to reply but may I ask why I have been treated to a detailed analysis of the workings of the civil service promotion structure whilst both you and Section 40 ignore all the points that I have made and failed to address the overriding question, "What is going on"?

It is becoming increasingly clear that Air Staff 2a does not know the answer. My letters are being deliberately fielded with a negative response which you have either been instructed to make or that you have inherited from your predecessors. If you continue to do this then remember that at some stage you will retire, at which time you will find yourself 'on the outside' looking back over a career of framing bland letters to the public without ever knowing what is really going on yourself, why be a stooge for somebody else? If you don't actually know the answer why do you continue to tell people like me that there is no question? And there most certainly are questions, let me put some more to you:-

On 5th November 1990, a squadron of RAF Tornado fast jet aircraft flying over the North Sea was casually overtaken by a Unidentified Flying Object. The pilots made an official report and the Ministry of Defence view is that this encounter was of no defence significance.

On 31 March 1993, a UFO flew directly over two military bases; it was seen by a guard patrol at RAF Cosford and by the Meteorological Officer at RAF Shawbury, who described it as being a triangular-shaped craft only marginally smaller than a Boeing 747. It flew over the base at a height of 200 feet, was making a humming sound and was seen to fire a beam of light at the ground. It was moving very slowly, but suddenly shot off at a speed estimated at several times faster than a fast jet. Nothing was detected on radar. That this event took place is not disputed, and indeed it has been confirmed to the House of Commons by the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, in response to a Written Parliamentary Question. Again, incredibly, the official view of the Ministry of Defence is that the event was of no defence significance.

What is going on? Officially confirmed events such as these illustrate beyond a shadow of a doubt that our sophisticated air defences are being breached by structured craft of unknown origin. The intruding technology is



clearly more advanced than the defending technology. This is self-evidently a serious defence issue.

Obviously, obviously, obviously these cases, and hundreds of others, are of overriding defence significance. I was directed to Air Staff 2a by the Prime Ministers office but this was obviously a mistake because your stated role is merely investigative. Not only are you unable, or unwilling, to admit to the view that these occurrences are significant, but you are actively pursuing a policy of ignorance when faced with legitimate and relevant questions from the electorate.

If UFO matters are significant then why not upgrade their classification to Secret, then you may refuse to talk about them, correspondence would cease and we can all move on knowing that you are dealing with the problem and hope that you do the right thing. On the other hand, if they are not significant and have no security classification, then why can't the MOD answer questions about them? What is going on? If you require help in placing this matter before the public, then just ask for it, there are plenty of people like myself who have the intelligence to get our minds around the implications.

So if the ongoing role of Air Staff 2a is to investigate UFO reports, who makes the decisions on their significance? If you do not know the answers who does? Should my questions be directed to someone on the operations side such as The Provost & Security Services or DI55 or GCHQ or should they be handled by the political side such as the Minister of State for Defence or the Prime Ministers office?

I cannot reconcile the view that these events have no defence significance with the publicly known facts and members of your own staff who appear on television and in the national press bearing expert views which have been officially born in your office.

What is going on? I would be grateful for an earlier reply,

Yours most sincerely,

Section 40



From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff) 2  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
 (Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
 (Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date

10th December 1997

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter to **Section 40** of 25 October concerning "unidentified flying objects" and a former member of Sec(AS)2 staff, Mr Nicholas Pope (**Section 40** predecessor).
2. You have indicated that you were not happy with **Section 40** response to your letters of 15 May and 30 July. I have therefore reviewed your previous correspondence and the way your letters have been handled. The Ministry of Defence's limited interest in the subject of "unidentified flying objects" was clearly set out in **Section 40** letter of 30 June and I am satisfied that your questions have been answered within the scope of this interest.
3. Turning specifically to your comments concerning Mr Pope, I should point out that he was a junior desk officer in the Secretariat(Air Staff)2a section from 1991-1994 and was not in charge of, or the head of any part of Secretariat (Air Staff)2. Mr Pope was an executive officer and shared the support of one administrative officer. Although Sec(AS)2a was, and still is, the focal point for handling queries directed at the MOD in connection with "unexplained" aerial sightings, during Mr Pope's time such work represented a small part of his overall duties. There were no staff working on this subject on a full-time basis and this remains the case.
4. Finally, I should say that in the civil service, promotion is based on merit over a number of years and a wide range of tasks and experience. Mr Pope's time in Sec(AS)2a comprised some 36 months only and anything attributed to him since July 1994 when he left is, and continues to be, his own personal opinion.
5. I hope this explains the position and we can draw this correspondence to a close.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

Section 40

Section 40

Telephone Section 40

Dear

Section 40

25 October 1997

with reference to your brief letter of 7th October, I fully understand the departments position which you have stated and reemphasised over two letters but that position does not extend to ignoring the questions which I originally listed. May I also emphasise that this entire subject was originally raised in the public sector by your own departmental head and that, more than anything else, prompted my initial correspondence. Given these two points I must ask again, what is going on?

Had Mr Pope written a book on cookery or quantum physics then I agree that this would have no connection to his work and as such he would be stating his own view on these subjects. But I, and I assume a great many others, have difficulty in seperating his current analysis from MOD (Air Staff) 2a1 which has been formed and developed as a direct result of his work as head of MOD(Air Staff)2a1. Furthermore this is a specified public expense post under the control of the Minister of Defence and the Government of the day.

If I made enquirys concerning our EW capability or the extent of CIA involvement at GCHQ or SAS covert operations in Northern Ireland, these would rightly be matters on which you could not and would not comment because of their highly classified nature, I am ex service and well aware of the 'Need to Know' rule. However, unless the subject of UFOs has now become classified and is covered by the official secrets act, then you are free to comment upon it. More so since the matter has been publicly raised by the previous head of your department and MOD (Air Staff)2a1 have been delegated by the Prime Ministers office to answer the very reasonable questions in my letter. It would seem therefore that the situation as it currently stands boils down to this, either:-

a) The previous head of your department is correct in his analysis and as a reward for his diligence should be retained and rewarded with promotion by the Ministry of Defence.

or

b) The previous head of your department is totally incorrect in his analysis and should be dismissed from the service for gross incompetence and the willfull misuse of public funds and is possibly open to police charges of conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace.

Which is it to be?

I would be grateful for a reply at your earliest convenience. Naturally, no reply or a negative response will be taken to mean that your chosen answer is a), especially if Mr Pope remains in the service.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

23  
FILE

From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**  
[Redacted]

Your reference  
Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date  
7 October 1997

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter of 30 July.
2. In my previous letter I explained the Department's limited interest in these matters. There really is nothing further I can add. The content of your letter has been noted.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**  
[Redacted signature]



Ministry of Defence  
Secretariat (Air Staff) ~~2~~ 2a  
Room ~~8249~~ 8245  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB

Dear Section 40

of 30 Jul 97

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter/complaint of .....  
~~about military aircraft activity.~~ about "UFO" Policy.

We aim to reply to such letters/complaints within four working weeks from date of receipt. However, owing to current administrative difficulties it may not be possible to reply to you within this timescale.

Nevertheless, you may be assured that you will receive a substantive reply as soon as is practicable.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Section 40

Section 40

Telephone Section 40

30 July 1997

Dear

Section 40

many thanks for your D/Sec(AS)/64/3 of 30 June 1997.

I must say that I was disappointed with your letter but I realise that you must be under certain constraints and are obliged to 'toe the party line'. I have pondered a reply for some time because it may also be the case that you have very little influence over policy but having reviewed the subject and sifted the evidence so far, I am reminded of Churchill's words that 'Evil will succeed when good men, (and women), stand by and do nothing'. He may have been referring to the growth of Nazi German influence in Europe at the time but nevertheless it is a maxim which still holds good and I feel that there is something very wrong occurring here.

Please pardon me for saying that it is all very well to dismiss Mr Nicholas Popes analysis as his own personal opinion but if one discounts 90% of reports as doubtful, the analysis still appears to be based on the testimony of thousands of credible witnesses, whereas your written reply does not have the benefit of support from any basis at all.

You may not be aware that among the millions of witnesses worldwide, (now 20 million reported by civilians, (ominously few from the military), since the war, are two former Presidents of the United States, Presidents Reagan and Carter. Both of these have a military background which qualify them as expert witnesses in this field and both have more to lose by telling the observed truth.

You are also dismissing reports such as one that you may have on file which concerns the case of three objects which were observed, by radar, approaching the east coast of Britian, from across the North Sea, travelling at a recorded speed of over 3,000mph. On slowing down, three disc shaped vehicles were observed, flying in formation, crossing our coastline, by both ground and airborne (RAF) observers, whilst symaltaneously being tracked by no less than 6 seperate radar stations. We are not talking here of lights in the sky and hobgoblins after midnight. These are precise observations made by hardcore professionals combined, symaltaneously, with unquestionably solid findings on a string of radar drums. There are literally dozens of reports like these which provide irrefutable evidence of invasion of our air space and are of major defence significance.

The powers that be may wish to disassociate themselves but if Mr Popes opinion has been forged as a direct result of his professional work, as specified by Government and the MOD, then it is no longer a personal opinion but becomes the professional analysis of a departmental head who is paid by public funds to collate and report exactly that and it must therefore be acted upon accordingly.

If the MOD do not consider his analysis to be in any way relevant then Mr Pope should be dismissed from the service for gross incompetence and is possibly open to police charges of 'conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace', or 'the willfull misuse of public funds'. On the other hand if his professional analysis is considered

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
SEC (AS) 2  
- 4 AUG 1997

to have any relevance at all, then the government should initiate a scientifically based public enquiry and place our armed forces on at least 'Bikini Amber' alert.

I understand that whilst neither of these actions have been taken Mr Pope in the mean time has in fact been rewarded for his work by promotion. Again I must ask the question, what is going on?

You may also be aware that two former Chiefs of Staff, Lord Mountbatten and Admiral Lord Hill-Norton, have voiced grave concern about the slipshod investigative techniques and total lack of detailed response procedures for use by both ministers and the military in this field.

For certain, our sovereign air space is being continually violated by someone or something and it has been apparent since long before the Wright brothers, so it is very doubtful that it is our own forces who are flying prototypes at breakneck speeds through major civilian air traffic lanes and over densely populated areas. There has been no apparent response to these concerns and no progress towards solving this problem. Incidents are reported, statements are recorded, professional analysis is made, the Nick Pops of this world are promoted and everything is filed neatly away and we start again with a fresh face next week. What is going on?

Safeguarding our rights and freedoms is not a waste of valuable resources, it is specifically what the MOD and our armed forces were created for. However, it must be regarded as a waste of public funds to simply observe, record and do nothing. The evergrowing public concerns on this issue are not being met, why are we doing nothing?

I would be grateful if you would attempt to answer some of these questions and perhaps indicate if and when a strategy will be formulated to deal with this increasingly serious problem.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40





From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
 (Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
 (Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

24

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
 Date

30 June 1997

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter addressed to the Prime Minister of 15 May, about the subject of "UFOs and Alien Abductions". Your letter has been passed to this office which is the MOD focal point for correspondence of this nature for reply.
2. First I should explain that the MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.
3. MOD examines any reports of "unidentified flying objects" it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity.
4. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, and to date no "unidentified flying object" sighting has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported incident. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose but it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to provide this kind of aerial identification service.
5. Your letter makes reference to the serialization in the Daily Mail of extracts from a book by a former member of Secretariat (Air Staff)2a, Mr Nicholas Pope. I should point out that the views expressed by Mr Pope are entirely his personal opinions and do not represent, nor do they reflect, the MOD's position.

6. Finally, you may be interested to know that the Cabinet Office has the responsibility for taking forward the Government's manifesto pledge to introduce a Freedom of Information Act. The timetable currently envisaged involves the publication of a White Paper before this year's Summer Recess. This would be followed by a period of open consultation leading to a draft Bill early next year and further consultation.

7. I hope that the above gives you a better understanding of the limited interest that the Department has with respect to the "UFO" phenomenon.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



**PRIME MINISTER'S  
CORRESPONDENCE SECTION**

*Writer informed that letter has been  
forwarded to the appropriate  
Government Department  
for a full reply*

Section 40

Section 40

Telephone/Fax: Section 40

15 May 1997

*3  
MAD  
DET  
UFO's*

*Dear Prime Minister*

Yet again this week we see a major national newspaper, 'The Mail', devoting major space over several days to the issue of UFOs and Alien Abductions. This is not the first occasion that the public has been presented with statement of events from apparently reliable witnesses and what makes this series of articles particularly credible is the fact that they have originated, (not for the first time), in the Ministry of Defence Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a.

A defence official, a mere step away from the cabinet, is hereby presenting 'facts' on the subject and is charging our government, and others, with official indifference to the plight of many apparently traumatised citizens and the alleged invasion of our sovereign airspace, what is going on?

Are we to believe that all this is true? Can we really believe that people are being abducted by aliens? If we are to believe credible witnesses such as police officers, doctors, pilots and such, what are the government doing about it? Is it a problem? Is it a priority? What is going on?

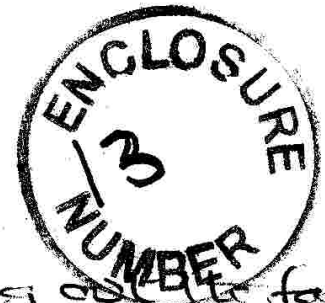
Now that we at last have a change of government to one that understands the need for freedom of information to a mature and intelligent electorate, perhaps we can also at last have some answers on this most perplexing of subjects.

May I therefore respectfully request that a member cabinet is finally tasked with taking control of that which has long been surrendered to those people who are not answerable to the electorate.

May I also request a reply at your earliest opportunity.

Yours most respectfully,

Section 40



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Head of Sec(AS)

Loose Minute A draft for your consideration setting out the facts of its **Section 40** correspondence (full set of papers attached)

D/Sec(AS)/64/3 DOMD needs a response within 10 days of his letter (flag A). I have not offered a draft for DOMD to send to **Section 49** vice this would suggest we have decided the result of his review - I wouldn't want to prejudge it!

May 1998 The Mail Article (which prompted **Section 40** first letter) and the DCI mentioned by DOMD are attached by way of reference

**DOMD**

**OPEN GOVERNMENT - COMPLAINT FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC**

Reference: D/DOMD/2/3/2 dated 20 May 1998

**Section 40** 28/5-

1. **Section 40**, has appealed about the way his questions on 'UFO'-related issues have been dealt with. You asked for advice in order to conduct a full review.

**BACKGROUND**

**'UFOs' - MOD Policy**

2. It is ~~known~~ Government policy that any air defence or air traffic implications of 'UFOs' and related issues are a matter for MOD and the CAA respectively. MOD's interest is limited to establishing from reported sightings of alleged 'UFOs' whether the UK Air Defence Region has been breached by hostile military activity, and responding to any associated public correspondence. On receipt of reports of alleged sightings, Sec(AS)2 staff, in consultation with air defence <sup>staff</sup> ~~experts~~ and others as necessary, make further investigations only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach might have occurred. No action is taken to follow up reports (the vast majority) where there is insufficient supporting evidence. Some 'ufologists' are, however, unhappy with MOD's limited interest. A small number lobby vociferously for defence funds to be used for 'UFO' research, have their own agenda for such work and use all possible avenues to pursue their aims.

**Section 40** **Initial Approach**

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3. **Section 40** first wrote to the Prime Minister (Flag A) in May last year expressing his concern about the Daily Mail article on 'UFOs and alien abductions' written by Nicholas Pope, an MOD civil servant. **Section 40** asking if the article was factual, wanted to know what steps the Government was doing to protect the public and suggested the change of Government to one favouring freedom of information would provide the answers. No 10 forwarded the letter to MOD for official action. The reply (Flag B) explained MOD's limited interest in 'UFOs', gave reassurance that to date there was no evidence for concern, went on to emphasise Pope's views were his own and, in view of the FoI reference, included the line provided by your staff about the Government's plans for taking forward the proposed FoI Act.

Nicholas Pope

**Section 40****Section 40**

4. Nicholas Pope worked as an EO in Sec(AS)2 for three years to July 1994.

**Section 40**

5. There are no regulations preventing serving military and civilian staff from writing books and articles and offering them for publication, nor are they barred from media activities, providing they obtain permission to do so at the outset and secure official clearance of the material they intend to use.

**Section 40**UNCLASSIFIED  
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Section 40

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Section 40

6.

Section 40

The book was published in June 1997 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the first alleged sighting of a 'UFO'. Pre-publication promotional activities included the Daily Mail article and, again, Section 40

#### Section 40 Further Correspondence

7. Section 40 wrote again (Flag C) saying that our reply had not taken into account the wealth of evidence provided by UFO sighting reports. He was certain UK airspace was being violated and extremely concerned with the official view that this was not the case. If it was correct that Pope's views had arisen while he worked in Sec(AS)2, he concluded that they amounted to a professional analysis and should be recognised as such. If this was not the case, Pope should be dismissed for knowingly causing unnecessary public concern rather than promoted to work elsewhere.

8. A considerable amount of public correspondence about 'UFO'-related issues was generated during the second half of 1997 as a result of media coverage of the 50th anniversary and it was some time before the backlog was cleared. The reply to Section 40 (Flag D) pointed out that the MOD's interest in 'UFOs' had already been explained to him. Section 40 frustrated because he had not, he felt, had a satisfactory explanation about Pope (who he believed had been head of a Department in Sec(AS)), wrote again (Flag E) saying that unless the 'UFO' subject was classified there was

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nothing to prevent him being told the truth and repeated his assertion that either Pope was right about 'UFOs and alien life forms' or should be dismissed.

Section 40

### Sec(AS)2 Review

10. Section 40 <sup>h</sup> Head of Sec(AS)2, reviewed Section 40 correspondence before replying (Flag F). It was her view, and one I agree with, that a full explanation had been provided of the Department's policy and interest in 'UFO' matters and Pope's literary activities. Still <sup>dis</sup> unsatisfied that past 'UFO' incidents had been investigated to his own satisfaction and believing, wrongly, that information to substantiate his views existed somewhere within Government, Section 40 wrote again (Flag G). Section 40 response (Flag H) reminded him of the Department's limited interest in the subject and undertook to look at the papers again if MOD policy on 'UFOs' changed. Copies of the correspondence and the Daily Mail article are attached for reference.

### Conclusion

11. There is no evidence to support the view that the UK Air Defence Region is being breached by hostile foreign military activity or anything else, nor the alien abduction hypothesis. There are no plans to change Government policy on 'UFOs' and implement a research programme to further investigate ufologists' claims. There is no cover up of information. As you know from

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our recent meeting, we would willingly release to the PRO all 'UFO' files subject to resolution of concerns about personal privacy and CS Records making arrangements for their early release. In the meantime, every effort is made to comply with the spirit of FoI when providing information to the public about 'UFOs'.

12. **Section 40** appeal alleges that his questions have not been answered. They have, in so far as hard facts exist. He has been advised that Pope's views are his own and not MOD policy; the forthcoming FoI Act was mentioned as an indication that we comply with it in spirit, not because we conceal information behind it; in answering his original question "what is going on" we have confirmed that there is no evidence to support his view that the UK Air Defence Region is being breached (ie the extent of MOD's interest), nor to support claims about alien abduction. There is no additional information, classified or otherwise and we cannot answer hypothetical questions supposing there to be so.

13. I do not consider that **Section 40** has grounds for appeal. I would be happy to discuss any points arising from the above with you if it helps.

Although **Section 40** has formally complained about my Division, and has made some reference to the process, the root of his dissatisfaction is really a frustration about current Government <sup>Head of Sec(AS)</sup> policy relating to 'UFO' phenomena and a desire to change it, ~~rather~~ <sup>rather</sup> towards

**Section 40****UNCLASSIFIED**

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STAFF



**Nicholas Pope**

4. Nicholas Pope worked as an EO in Sec(AS)2 for three years to July 1994. [REDACTED]

Section 40 [REDACTED]

5. There are no regulations preventing serving military and civilian staff from writing books and articles and offering them for publication, nor are they barred from media activities, providing they obtain permission to do so at the outset and secure official clearance of the material they intend to use. [REDACTED]

Section 40 [REDACTED]

⑤  
and

6. [REDACTED]

Section 40 [REDACTED]

The book was published in June 1997 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the first alleged sighting of a 'UFO'. Pre-publication promotional activities included the Daily Mail article and, again, [REDACTED]

Section 40 **Further Correspondence**

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**STAFF**

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**Section 40**

### Sec(AS)2 Review

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### Conclusion

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**RESTRICTED**

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DOMD/2/3/2

20 May 1998

Head of Sec(AS)

Copy to:

Assistant Parliamentary Clerk2 - Section 40

64/1



**'OPEN GOVERNMENT' COMPLAINT BY Section 40**

I am writing regarding a letter of complaint from a member of the public Section 40  
Section 40 Verwood, Dorset), passed on to me by Section 40  
Assistant Parliamentary Clerk.

2. Section 40 has asked for the responses he has received to his enquiries regarding unidentified air vehicles to be reviewed (see attached letter). As DOMD is responsible for handling appeals under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, I will conduct the review.

3. I would be grateful therefore if you would provide advice and a full history of the case within ten working days as set out in DCI Gen 54/98, 'Open Government', in order that we may complete the appeals procedure within the Department's target of twenty working days.

Section 40

DOMD  
NH619 Section 40

Section 40

Tele: Section 40

14 May 1998

Doer Section 40

- Ref A My letter dated 15 May 1997
- B MOD Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1 (Ref D/Sec(AS)/64/3 dated 30 June 1997
- C My letter dated 30 July 1997
- D MOD Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1 (Ref D/Sec(AS)/64/3 dated 7 Oct 1997
- E My letter dated 22 October 1997
- F MOD Secretariat (Air Staff) 2 (Ref D/Sec(AS)/64/3 dated 10 Dec 1997
- G My letter of 31 January 1998
- H MOD Secretariat (Air Staff) 2 (Ref D/Sec(AS)/64/3 dated 2 March 1998

May I take this opportunity to make a formal complaint against MOD Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a.

I respectfully draw your attention to the above references which are held by Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a.

You will see that, following a series of letters, the issues that I have raised have not been addressed at all and that the answers provided by MOD(AS)2a fall far short of an honest attempt to explain not only what is going on but their own departments hand in it.

The views expressed by Mr Nick Pope, (para 5, Ref B), may have been his own but they were gained whilst working in Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a. Mr pope has publicly stated, on more than one occasslon, that he was a 100% sceptic until his posting to Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a and he gained his current knowledge as a direct of result of working for MOD(AS)2a. He has clearly stated that our air space is being repeatedly violated by unidentified, structured vehicles of a superior technology.

MOD Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a are keen to point out that it is the governments intention to publish an Freedom of Information Act, (para 6, Ref B), this is a clear indication that more information is available which is in direct contravention of paragraphs 2 and 5 on the stated MOD position. Am I to understand that the government position and the Ministry of Defence position are different?

Turning to paragraph 3 of reference B. If the MOD examines reports in order "to establish whether what was seen might have some significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity", and during his time Mr Pope did indeed establish the criteria with undeniable, accumulated evidence, that our air defences are continually being breached by structured craft of unknown origin, proving undeniable

Prescribed Notices 7389

To: Section 40

Fax: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Date: 20 MAY 98 Pages: 2

AS DISCUSSED. Grateful for your comments.

Telefax

defence significance, then why the flagrant lies in paragraph 2 and what, therefore, is the answer to my original question?

From a general point of view they have failed to confirm whether the subject is classified or not. They have also failed to answer the very innocent question of who is responsible for making and taking the relevant decisions concerning significance of reports, MOD Secretariat (AS)2a appear only to have a collation and record keeping brief.

As a concerned member of the electorate I have endeavoured to treat the subject with logic and sincerity and have strenuously held to relevant points, as references A, C, E and G testify. However, all my questions have been deliberately ignored and my correspondence has been met with, what could be considered to be, bland and patronising replies.

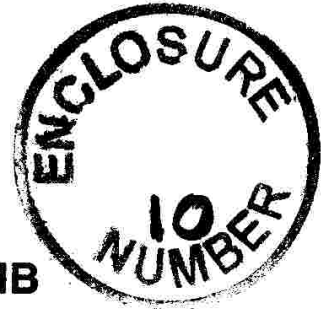
I would be grateful if you would investigate this matter with a view to determining the truth and finding someone within MOD who can answer these questions. If there is no one in MOD who can address this issue, then I would be grateful if you could direct me to the department outside the MOD which is making decisions on this matter. Again the basic question is, 'What in the name of sanity is going on?'

Yours most sincerely,

**Section 40**



From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff)2  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 8247, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 **Section 40**  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date  
2nd March 1998

Dear

**Section 40**

Thank you for your further letter of 31 January.

You will know from previous correspondence the limit of the MOD's interest in the subject of 'unidentified flying objects'. Your continued questioning goes far wider than this and there is, as I have said previously, nothing further that I can add.

Your latest letter and any further ones of a similar nature will be placed on a Departmental file and looked at again in the light of any changes to the MOD's policy on this subject.

*Yours sincerely*

**Section 40**

Thank you for your further letter of 31 January.

MOD 'UFO' files will, as you surmise, be released to the Public Record Office under the 30 year rule. There are no current plans to change this arrangement.

The MOD's interest in the subject of 'unidentified flying objects' has been fully explained to you in previous correspondence and there is nothing further I can add. Your latest letter and any further ones of a similar nature will be placed on a Departmental file and looked at again in the light of any changes to the MOD's policy on this subject.

Head of Sec(AS)

Section 40

Both correspondents are persistent UFO pairs. I should be grateful to know if you think I need be any more helpful than the drafts suggest.

No - I think

Section 40

that there is nothing we could say that would satisfy these people.

Section 40

Ltr \

Section 40

Section 40  
[Redacted]Tele: Section 40  
[Redacted]

31 January 1998

Section 40  
[Redacted]

Dear

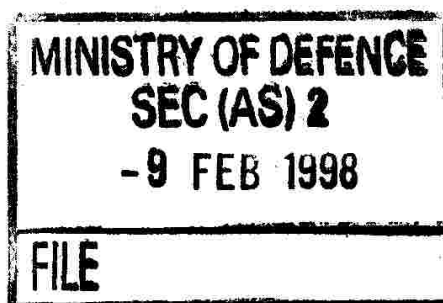
with reference to your D/Sec(AS)/64/3 dated 10th December 1997. It is kind of you to find the time to reply but may I ask why I have been treated to a detailed analysis of the workings of the civil service promotion structure whilst both you and Section 40 ignore all the points that I have made and failed to address the overriding question, "What is going on"?

It is becoming increasingly clear that Air Staff 2a does not know the answer. My letters are being deliberately fielded with a negative response which you have either been instructed to make or that you have inherited from your predecessors. If you continue to do this then remember that at some stage you will retire, at which time you will find yourself 'on the outside' looking back over a career of framing bland letters to the public without ever knowing what is really going on yourself, why be a stooge for somebody else? If you don't actually know the answer why do you continue to tell people like me that there is no question? And there most certainly are questions, let me put some more to you:-

On 5th November 1990, a squadron of RAF Tornado fast jet aircraft flying over the North Sea was casually overtaken by a Unidentified Flying Object. The pilots made an official report and the Ministry of Defence view is that this encounter was of no defence significance.

On 31 March 1993, a UFO flew directly over two military bases; it was seen by a guard patrol at RAF Cosford and by the Meteorological Officer at RAF Shawbury, who described it as being a triangular-shaped craft only marginally smaller than a Boeing 747. It flew over the base at a height of 200 feet, was making a humming sound and was seen to fire a beam of light at the ground. It was moving very slowly, but suddenly shot off at a speed estimated at several times faster than a fast jet. Nothing was detected on radar. That this event took place is not disputed, and indeed it has been confirmed to the House of Commons by the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, in response to a Written Parliamentary Question. Again, incredibly, the official view of the Ministry of Defence is that the event was of no defence significance.

What is going on? Officially confirmed events such as these illustrate beyond a shadow of a doubt that our sophisticated air defences are being breached by structured craft of unknown origin. The intruding technology is





clearly more advanced than the defending technology. This is self-evidently a serious defence issue.

Obviously, obviously, obviously these cases, and hundreds of others, are of overriding defence significance. I was directed to Air Staff 2a by the Prime Ministers office but this was obviously a mistake because your stated role is merely investigative. Not only are you unable, or unwilling, to admit to the view that these occurrences are significant, but you are actively pursuing a policy of ignorance when faced with legitimate and relevant questions from the electorate.

If UFO matters are significant then why not upgrade their classification to Secret, then you may refuse to talk about them, correspondence would cease and we can all move on knowing that you are dealing with the problem and hope that you do the right thing. On the other hand, if they are not significant and have no security classification, then why can't the MOD answer questions about them? What is going on? If you require help in placing this matter before the public, then just ask for it, there are plenty of people like myself who have the intelligence to get our minds around the implications.

So if the ongoing role of Air Staff 2a is to investigate UFO reports, who makes the decisions on their significance? If you do not know the answers who does? Should my questions be directed to someone on the operations side such as The Provost & Security Services or DI55 or GCHQ or should they be handled by the political side such as the Minister of State for Defence or the Prime Ministers office?

I cannot reconcile the view that these events have no defence significance with the publicly known facts and members of your own staff who appear on television and in the national press bearing expert views which have been officially born in your office.

What is going on? I would be grateful for an earlier reply,

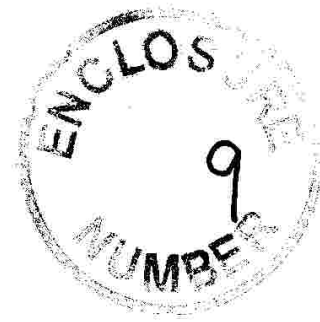
Yours most sincerely,

Section 40





From: Section 40 Secretariat (Air Staff) 2  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
 (Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
 (Fax) 0171 218 Section 40

Section 40

Your reference

Our reference  
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
 Date

10th December 1997

Dear Section 40

1. Thank you for your letter to Section 40 of 25 October concerning "unidentified flying objects" and a former member of Sec(AS)2 staff, Mr Nicholas Pope (Section 40 predecessor).
2. You have indicated that you were not happy with Section 40 response to your letters of 15 May and 30 July. I have therefore reviewed your previous correspondence and the way your letters have been handled. The Ministry of Defence's limited interest in the subject of "unidentified flying objects" was clearly set out in Section 40 letter of 30 June and I am satisfied that your questions have been answered within the scope of this interest.
3. Turning specifically to your comments concerning Mr Pope, I should point out that he was a junior desk officer in the Secretariat(Air Staff)2a section from 1991-1994 and was not in charge of, or the head of any part of Secretariat (Air Staff)2. Mr Pope was an executive officer and shared the support of one administrative officer. Although Sec(AS)2a was, and still is, the focal point for handling queries directed at the MOD in connection with "unexplained" aerial sightings, during Mr Pope's time such work represented a small part of his overall duties. There were no staff working on this subject on a full-time basis and this remains the case.
4. Finally, I should say that in the civil service, promotion is based on merit over a number of years and a wide range of tasks and experience. Mr Pope's time in Sec(AS)2a comprised some 36 months only and anything attributed to him since July 1994 when he left is, and continues to be, his own personal opinion.
5. I hope this explains the position and we can draw this correspondence to a close.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff) 2  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference  
Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date

December 1997

*Thanked*  
*Can I have a fair copy i.d.c.*

*Draft along the lines you proposed.*

**Section 40**

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter to **Section 40** of 25 October concerning "unidentified flying objects" and a former member of Sec(AS)2 staff, Mr Nicholas Pope (**Section 40** predecessor).

*You have indicated*

2. ~~I am sorry~~ that you were not happy with **Section 40** response to your letters of 15 May and 30 July. I have <sup>therefore</sup> reviewed your previous correspondence and the way your letters have been handled. The Ministry of Defence's limited interest in the subject of "unidentified flying objects" was <sup>clearly</sup> set out in **Section 40** **Section 40** letter of 30 June and I am satisfied that your <sup>have been</sup> questions ~~were~~ answered within the scope of this interest.

*specifically*

*about*

3. Turning ~~now~~ <sup>specifically</sup> to your comments ~~concerning~~ <sup>about</sup> Mr Pope, ~~First,~~ I should point out that ~~Mr Pope~~ <sup>he</sup> was a ~~junior~~ desk officer in the Secretariat(Air Staff)2a section from 1991-1994, and <sup>was in charge of,</sup> ~~not as you~~ <sup>or</sup> ~~would appear to be under the impression,~~ the head of any part of Secretariat (Air Staff) 2. Mr Pope Department. ~~At that time he~~ was an executive officer and shared

the support of one administrative officer. Although Sec(AS)2a is <sup>was, and still</sup> the focal point for handling queries directed at the MOD in connection with "unexplained" aerial sightings, <sup>during</sup> ~~when~~ Mr Pope's <sup>time such work</sup> ~~worked here it~~ represented a small part of his overall duties, <sup>and</sup> there were no staff working on this subject <sup>on a</sup> full-time <sup>basis and</sup> ~~h~~ <sup>h</sup> this remains the case.

4. <sup>Finally, I should say that</sup> In the civil service, promotion is based on merit over a number of years and a wide range of tasks and experience. Mr Pope <sup>time</sup> ~~worked~~ in Sec(AS)2a <sup>comprised some</sup> ~~for~~ 36 months <sup>any and</sup> ~~Anything said by~~ <sup>attributed to</sup> him since July 1994 when he left is, and continues to be, his own personal opinion.

5. <sup>I</sup> Pope thus explains <sup>the position and we can draw</sup> this correspondence to a close.

Yours sincerely,

- Shall reply?

Section 40

can you stitch together the previous

lines, on (a) I've reviewed the way (b).

Corresp. has been handled - - - - -

MOD's limited interest fully explained - - -

and your questions answered within

the scope of this interest. (b) the full

line we've used before on Pope - i.e.

junior desk officer, section of - - people

wasn't a head of a dept - - - only part

of his wider duties - - - no-one worked

on the subject full time. In the Civil Service,

promotion based on merit over a number of

years & wide range of tasks. Pope worked

here only - months. Anything said by

him since 1999 when he left is, and

continues to be, his own personal opinion

Section 40

Section 40

Telephone Section 40

25 October 1997

Dear

Section 40

with reference to your brief letter of 7th October, I fully understand the departments position which you have stated and reemphasised over two letters but that position does not extend to ignoring the questions which I originally listed. May I also emphasise that this entire subject was originally raised in the public sector by your own departmental head and that, more than anything else, prompted my initial correspondence. Given these two points I must ask again, what is going on?

Had Mr Pope written a book on cookery or quantum physics then I agree that this would have no connection to his work and as such he would be stating his own view on these subjects. But I, and I assume a great many others, have difficulty in seperating his current analysis from MOD (Air Staff) 2a1 which has been formed and developed as a direct result of his work as head of MOD(Air Staff)2a1. Furthermore this is a specified public expense post under the control of the Minister of Defence and the Government of the day.

If I made enquirys concerning our EW capability or the extent of CIA involvement at GCHQ or SAS covert operations in Northern Ireland, these would rightly be matters on which you could not and would not comment because of their highly classified nature, I am ex service and well aware of the 'Need to Know' rule. However, unless the subject of UFOs has now become classified and is covered by the official secrets act, then you are free to comment upon it. More so since the matter has been publicly raised by the previous head of your department and MOD (Air Staff)2a1 have been delegated by the Prime Ministers office to answer the very reasonable questions in my letter. It would seem therefore that the situation as it currently stands boils down to this, either:-

a) The previous head of your department is correct in his analysis and as a reward for his diligence should be retained and rewarded with promotion by the Ministry of Defence.

or

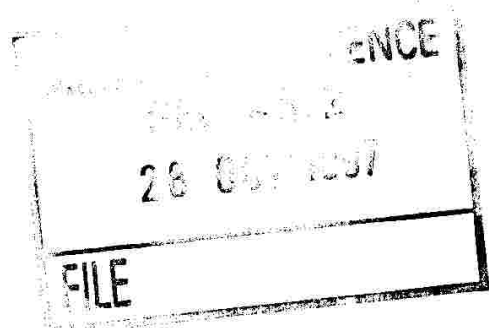
b) The previous head of your department is totally incorrect in his analysis and should be dismissed from the service for gross incompetence and the willfull misuse of public funds and is possibly open to police charges of conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace.

Which is it to be?

I would be grateful for a reply at your earliest convenience. Naturally, no reply or a negative response will be taken to mean that your chosen answer is a), especially if Mr Pope remains in the service.

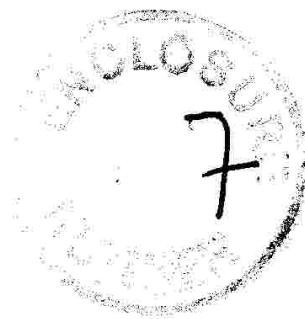
Yours sincerely,

Section 40





From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
7 October 1997

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter of 30 July.
2. In my previous letter I explained the Department's limited interest in these matters. There really is nothing further I can add. The content of your letter has been noted.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

Ministry of Defence  
Secretariat (Air Staff) ~~2a~~ 2a  
Room ~~8249~~ 8245  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB

Dear

Section 40

of 30 Jul 97

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter/complaint of .....  
~~about military aircraft activity.~~ about "UFO" Policy.

We aim to reply to such letters/complaints within four working weeks from date of receipt. However, owing to current administrative difficulties it may not be possible to reply to you within this timescale.

Nevertheless, you may be assured that you will receive a substantive reply as soon as is practicable.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



Section 40

Section 40

Telephone Section 40

20 July 1997

Dear

Section 40

many thanks for your D/Sec(AS)/64/3 of 30 June 1997.

I must say that I was disappointed with your letter but I realise that you must be under certain constraints and are obliged to 'toe the party line'. I have pondered a reply for some time because it may also be the case that you have very little influence over policy but having reviewed the subject and sifted the evidence so far, I am reminded of Churchill's words that 'Evil will succeed when good men, (and women), stand by and do nothing'. He may have been referring to the growth of Nazi German influence in Europe at the time but nevertheless it is a maxim which still holds good and I feel that there is something very wrong occurring here.

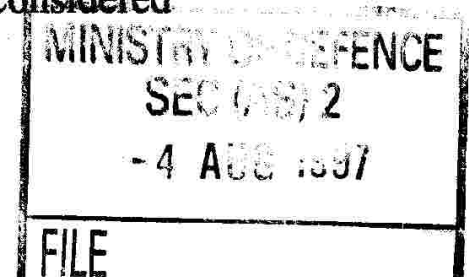
Please pardon me for saying that it is all very well to dismiss Mr Nicholas Popes analysis as his own personal opinion but if one discounts 90% of reports as doubtful, the analysis still appears to be based on the testimony of thousands of credible witnesses, whereas your written reply does not have the benefit of support from any basis at all.

You may not be aware that among the millions of witnesses worldwide, (now 20 million reported by civilians, (ominously few from the military), since the war, are two former Presidents of the United States, Presidents Reagan and Carter. Both of these have a military background which qualify them as expert witnesses in this field and both have more to lose by telling the observed truth.

You are also dismissing reports such as one that you may have on file which concerns the case of three objects which were observed, by radar, approaching the east coast of Britain, from across the North Sea, travelling at a recorded speed of over 3,000mph. On slowing down, three disc shaped vehicles were observed, flying in formation, crossing our coastline, by both ground and airborne (RAF) observers, whilst simultaneously being tracked by no less than 6 separate radar stations. We are not talking here of lights in the sky and hobgoblins after midnight. These are precise observations made by hardcore professionals combined, simultaneously, with unquestionably solid findings on a string of radar drums. There are literally dozens of reports like these which provide irrefutable evidence of invasion of our air space and are of major defence significance.

The powers that be may wish to disassociate themselves but if Mr Popes opinion has been forged as a direct result of his professional work, as specified by Government and the MOD, then it is no longer a personal opinion but becomes the professional analysis of a departmental head who is paid by public funds to collate and report exactly that and it must therefore be acted upon accordingly.

If the MOD do not consider his analysis to be in any way relevant then Mr Pope should be dismissed from the service for gross incompetence and is possibly open to police charges of 'conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace', or 'the willfull misuse of public funds'. On the other hand if his professional analysis is considered



to have any relevance at all, then the government should initiate a scientifically based public enquiry and place our armed forces on at least 'Bikini Amber' alert.

I understand that whilst neither of these actions have been taken Mr Pope in the mean time has in fact been rewarded for his work by promotion. Again I must ask the question, what is going on?

You may also be aware that two former Chiefs of Staff, Lord Mountbatten and Admiral Lord Hill-Norton, have voiced grave concern about the slipshod investigative techniques and total lack of detailed response procedures for use by both ministers and the military in this field.

For certain, our sovereign air space is being continually violated by someone or something and it has been apparent since long before the Wright brothers, so it is very doubtful that it is our own forces who are flying prototypes at breakneck speeds through major civilian air traffic lanes and over densely populated areas. There has been no apparent response to these concerns and no progress towards solving this problem. Incidents are reported, statements are recorded, professional analysis is made, the Nick Popes of this world are promoted and everything is filed neatly away and we start again with a fresh face next week. What is going on?

Safeguarding our rights and freedoms is not a waste of valuable resources, it is specifically what the MOD and our armed forces were created for. However, it must be regarded as a waste of public funds to simply observe, record and do nothing. The evergrowing public concerns on this issue are not being met, why are we doing nothing?

I would be grateful if you would attempt to answer some of these questions and perhaps indicate if and when a strategy will be formulated to deal with this increasingly serious problem.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40





From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
 (Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
 (Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
 30 June 1997

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter addressed to the Prime Minister of 15 May, about the subject of "UFOs and Alien Abductions". Your letter has been passed to this office which is the MOD focal point for correspondence of this nature for reply.
2. First I should explain that the MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.
3. MOD examines any reports of "unidentified flying objects" it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity.
4. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, and to date no "unidentified flying object" sighting has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported incident. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose but it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to provide this kind of aerial identification service.
5. Your letter makes reference to the serialization in the Daily Mail of extracts from a book by a former member of Secretariat (Air Staff)2a, Mr Nicholas Pope. I should point out that the views expressed by Mr Pope are entirely his personal opinions and do not represent, nor do they reflect, the MOD's position.

6. Finally, you may be interested to know that the Cabinet Office has the responsibility for taking forward the Government's manifesto pledge to introduce a Freedom of Information Act. The timetable currently envisaged involves the publication of a White Paper before this year's Summer Recess. This would be followed by a period of open consultation leading to a draft Bill early next year and further consultation.

7. I hope that the above gives you a better understanding of the limited interest that the Department has with respect to the "UFO" phenomenon.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40





SECRETARY OF STATE

Head of Sec(AS)

The attached letter which the Prime Minister has received has been forwarded to this Department for official action. No.10's letter codes are as follows:

- A - The letter has been acknowledged by No.10. Please send a full reply as soon as possible.
- B - The letter has been acknowledged by No.10. Please deal with as you think fit and consider whether there is anything which can usefully be said to the correspondent and to action accordingly.
- C - No acknowledgement has been sent. Please deal with as you think fit. In this case, however, it is obviously important that some form of acknowledgement is sent and a full reply if necessary.

2. Unless specifically asked to do so, there is no need for you to copy your replies to this office.

3. The Open Government Code of Practice came into force on 4th April 1994. You should ensure that all replies to members of the public are provided in accordance with the procedures as set out in the Code. A full explanation of the Code of Practice is contained in DCI(Gen) 48/97; further information is available from DOND telephone extension **Section 40**

13.06.97

**Section 40**

For APS/Secretary of State  
218 **Section 40**

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
SEC(AS) 2  
13 JUN 1997  
FILE 64/3



Recycled Paper

**PRIME MINISTER'S  
CORRESPONDENCE SECTION**

*Writer informed that letter has been  
forwarded to the appropriate  
Government Department  
for a full reply*

Section 40

Section 40

Telephone/Fax

Section 40

15 May 1997

*3  
MAD  
Def  
UFO's*

*Dear Prime Minister*

Yet again this week we see a major national newspaper, 'The Mail', devoting major space over several days to the issue of UFOs and Alien Abductions. This is not the first occasion that the public has been presented with statement of events from apparently reliable witnesses and what makes this series of articles particularly credible is the fact that they have originated, (not for the first time), in the Ministry of Defence Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a.

A defence official, a mere step away from the cabinet, is hereby presenting 'facts' on the subject and is charging our government, and others, with official indifference to the plight of many apparently traumatised citizens and the alleged invasion of our sovereign airspace, what is going on?

Are we to believe that all this is true? Can we really believe that people are being abducted by aliens? If we are to believe credible witnesses such as police officers, doctors, pilots and such, what are the government doing about it? Is it a problem? Is it a priority? What is going on?

Now that we at last have a change of government to one that understands the need for freedom of information to a mature and intelligent electorate, perhaps we can also at last have some answers on this most perplexing of subjects.

May I therefore respectfully request that a member cabinet is finally tasked with taking control of that which has long been surrendered to those people who are not answerable to the electorate.

May I also request a reply at your earliest opportunity.

Yours most respectfully,

Section 40

**UNCLASSIFIED**  
 RESTRICTED  
 STAFF

5

**LOOSE MINUTE**

D/Sec(AS)/64/3(MF127/98)

28 May 1998

**DOMD****OPEN GOVERNMENT - COMPLAINT FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC**

Reference: D/DOMD/2/3/2 dated 20 May 1998

1. **Section 40** [redacted] has appealed about the way his questions on 'UFO'-related issues have been dealt with. You asked for advice in order to conduct a full review.

**BACKGROUND****'UFOs' - MOD Policy**

2. It is Government policy that any air defence or air traffic implications of 'UFOs' and related issues are a matter for MOD and the CAA respectively. MOD's interest is limited to establishing from reported sightings of alleged 'UFOs' whether the UK Air Defence Region has been breached by hostile military activity, and responding to any associated public correspondence. On receipt of reports of alleged sightings, Sec(AS)2 staff, in consultation with air defence staff and others as necessary, make further investigations only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach might have occurred. No action is taken to follow up reports (the vast majority) where there is insufficient supporting evidence. Some 'ufologists' are, however, unhappy with MOD's limited interest. A small number lobby vociferously for defence funds to be used for 'UFO' research, have their own agenda for such work and use all possible avenues to pursue their aims.

**Section 40 Initial Approach**

3. **Section 40** first wrote to the Prime Minister (Flag A) in May last year expressing his concern about the Daily Mail article on 'UFOs and alien abductions' written by Nicholas Pope, an MOD civil servant. **Section 40** asking if the article was factual, wanted to know what steps the Government was doing to protect the public and suggested the change of Government to one favouring freedom of information would provide the answers. No 10 forwarded the letter to MOD for official action. The reply (Flag B) explained MOD's limited interest in 'UFOs', gave reassurance that to date there was no evidence for concern, went on to emphasise Pope's views were his own and, in view of the FoI reference, included the line provided by your staff about the Government's plans for taking forward the proposed FoI Act.

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**UNCLASSIFIED**  
**RESTRICTED**  
**STAFF**

**Nicholas Pope**

4. Nicholas Pope worked as an EO in Sec(AS)2 for three years to July 1994.

Section 40

5. There are no regulations preventing serving military and civilian staff from writing books and articles and offering them for publication, nor are they barred from media activities, providing they obtain permission to do so at the outset and secure official clearance of the material they intend to use.

Section 40

6.

Section 40

The book was published in June 1997 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the first alleged sighting of a 'UFO'. Pre-publication promotional activities included the Daily Mail article and, again, Section 40 Section 40

**Section 40** **Further Correspondence**

7. Section 40 wrote again (Flag C) saying that our reply had not taken into account the wealth of evidence provided by UFO sighting reports. He was certain UK airspace was being violated and extremely concerned with the official view that this was not the case. If it was correct that Pope's views had arisen while he worked in Sec(AS)2, he concluded that they amounted to a professional analysis and should be recognised as such. If this was not the case, Pope should be dismissed for knowingly causing unnecessary public concern rather than promoted to work elsewhere.

8. A considerable amount of public correspondence about 'UFO'-related issues was generated during the second half of 1997 as a result of media coverage of the 50th anniversary and it was some

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**STAFF**



**RESTRICTED  
STAFF**

time before the backlog was cleared. The reply to **Section 40** (Flag D) pointed out that the MOD's interest in 'UFOs' had already been explained to him. **Section 40** frustrated because he had not, he felt, had a satisfactory explanation about Pope (who he believed had been head of a Department in Sec(AS)), wrote again (Flag E) saying that unless the 'UFO' subject was classified there was nothing to prevent him being told the truth and repeated his assertion that either Pope was right about 'UFOs and alien life forms' or should be dismissed.

**Section 40**

**Sec(AS)2 Review**

10. **Section 40** head of Sec(AS)2, reviewed **Section 40** correspondence before replying (Flag F). It was her view, and one I agree with, that a full explanation had been provided of the Department's policy and interest in 'UFO' matters and Pope's literary activities. Still dissatisfied and believing, wrongly, that information to substantiate his views existed somewhere within Government, **Section 40** wrote again (Flag G). **Section 40** response (Flag H) reminded him of the Department's limited interest in the subject and undertook to look at the papers again if MOD policy on 'UFOs' changed. Copies of the correspondence and the Daily Mail article are attached for reference.

**Conclusion**

11. There is no evidence to support the view that the UK Air Defence Region is being breached by hostile foreign military activity or anything else, nor the alien abduction hypothesis. There are no plans to change Government policy on 'UFOs' and implement a research programme to further investigate ufologists' claims. There is no cover up of information. As you know from our recent meeting, we would willingly release to the PRO all 'UFO' files subject to resolution of concerns about personal privacy and CS Records making arrangements for their early release. In the meantime, every effort is made to comply with the spirit of FoI when providing information to the public about 'UFOs'.

12. **Section 40** appeal alleges that his questions have not been answered. They have, in so far as hard facts exist. He has been advised that Pope's views are his own and not MOD policy; the forthcoming FoI Act was mentioned as an indication that we comply with it in spirit, not because we conceal information behind it;

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STAFF  
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**RESTRICTED**  
**STAFF**

in answering his original question "what is going on" we have confirmed that there is no evidence to support his view that the UK Air Defence Region is being breached (ie the extent of MOD's interest), nor to support claims about alien abduction. There is no additional information, classified or otherwise and we cannot answer hypothetical questions supposing there to be so.

13. Although **Section 40** has formally complained about my Division, and has made some reference to the process, the root of his dissatisfaction is really a frustration about current Government policy relating to 'UFO' phenomena and a desire to change it.

**Section 40**

M J D FULLER  
Head of Sec(AS)  
MB7257 **Section 40**

**UNCLASSIFIED**  
**STAFF**  
**RESTRICTED**

4



From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff)2  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 8247, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 **Section 40**  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date  
2nd March 1998

Dear

**Section 40**

Thank you for your further letter of 31 January.

You will know from previous correspondence the limit of the MOD's interest in the subject of 'unidentified flying objects'. Your continued questioning goes far wider than this and there is, as I have said previously, nothing further that I can add.

Your latest letter and any further ones of a similar nature will be placed on a Departmental file and looked at again in the light of any changes to the MOD's policy on this subject.

*Yours sincerely*

**Section 40**

Section 40

Tele: Section 40

31 January 1998

Section 40

Dear

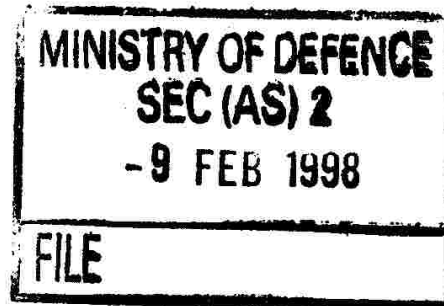
with reference to your D/Sec(AS)/64/3 dated 10th December 1997. It is kind of you to find the time to reply but may I ask why I have been treated to a detailed analysis of the workings of the civil service promotion structure whilst both you and Section 40 ignore all the points that I have made and failed to address the overriding question, "What is going on"?

It is becoming increasingly clear that Air Staff 2a does not know the answer. My letters are being deliberately fielded with a negative response which you have either been instructed to make or that you have inherited from your predecessors. If you continue to do this then remember that at some stage you will retire, at which time you will find yourself 'on the outside' looking back over a career of framing bland letters to the public without ever knowing what is really going on yourself, why be a stooge for somebody else? If you don't actually know the answer why do you continue to tell people like me that there is no question? And there most certainly are questions, let me put some more to you:-

On 5th November 1990, a squadron of RAF Tornado fast jet aircraft flying over the North Sea was casually overtaken by a Unidentified Flying Object. The pilots made an official report and the Ministry of Defence view is that this encounter was of no defence significance.

On 31 March 1993, a UFO flew directly over two military bases; it was seen by a guard patrol at RAF Cosford and by the Meteorological Officer at RAF Shawbury, who described it as being a triangular-shaped craft only marginally smaller than a Boeing 747. It flew over the base at a height of 200 feet, was making a humming sound and was seen to fire a beam of light at the ground. It was moving very slowly, but suddenly shot off at a speed estimated at several times faster than a fast jet. Nothing was detected on radar. That this event took place is not disputed, and indeed it has been confirmed to the House of Commons by the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, in response to a Written Parliamentary Question. Again, incredibly, the official view of the Ministry of Defence is that the event was of no defence significance.

What is going on? Officially confirmed events such as these illustrate beyond a shadow of a doubt that our sophisticated air defences are being breached by structured craft of unknown origin. The intruding technology is



clearly more advanced than the defending technology. This is self-evidently a serious defence issue.

Obviously, obviously, obviously these cases, and hundreds of others, are of overriding defence significance. I was directed to Air Staff 2a by the Prime Ministers office but this was obviously a mistake because your stated role is merely investigative. Not only are you unable, or unwilling, to admit to the view that these occurrences are significant, but you are actively pursuing a policy of ignorance when faced with legitimate and relevant questions from the electorate.

If UFO matters are significant then why not upgrade their classification to Secret, then you may refuse to talk about them, correspondence would cease and we can all move on knowing that you are dealing with the problem and hope that you do the right thing. On the other hand, if they are not significant and have no security classification, then why can't the MOD answer questions about them? What is going on? If you require help in placing this matter before the public, then just ask for it, there are plenty of people like myself who have the intelligence to get our minds around the implications.

So if the ongoing role of Air Staff 2a is to investigate UFO reports, who makes the decisions on their significance? If you do not know the answers who does? Should my questions be directed to someone on the operations side such as The Provost & Security Services or DI55 or GCHQ or should they be handled by the political side such as the Minister of State for Defence or the Prime Ministers office?

I cannot reconcile the view that these events have no defence significance with the publicly known facts and members of your own staff who appear on television and in the national press bearing expert views which have been officially born in your office.

What is going on? I would be grateful for an earlier reply,

Yours most sincerely,

Section 40





From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff) 2  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
 (Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
 (Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
 10th December 1997

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter to **Section 40** of 25 October concerning "unidentified flying objects" and a former member of Sec(AS)2 staff, Mr Nicholas Pope (**Section 40** predecessor).
2. You have indicated that you were not happy with **Section 40** **Section 40** response to your letters of 15 May and 30 July. I have therefore reviewed your previous correspondence and the way your letters have been handled. The Ministry of Defence's limited interest in the subject of "unidentified flying objects" was clearly set out in **Section 40** letter of 30 June and I am satisfied that your questions have been answered within the scope of this interest.
3. Turning specifically to your comments concerning Mr Pope, I should point out that he was a junior desk officer in the Secretariat(Air Staff)2a section from 1991-1994 and was not in charge of, or the head of any part of Secretariat (Air Staff)2. Mr Pope was an executive officer and shared the support of one administrative officer. Although Sec(AS)2a was, and still is, *the* focal point for handling queries directed at the MOD in connection with "unexplained" aerial sightings, during Mr Pope's time such work represented a small part of his overall duties. There were no staff working on this subject on a full-time basis and this remains the case.
4. Finally, I should say that in the civil service, promotion is based on merit over a number of years and a wide range of tasks and experience. Mr Pope's time in Sec(AS)2a comprised some 36 months only and anything attributed to him since July 1994 when he left is, and continues to be, his own personal opinion.
5. I hope this explains the position and we can draw this correspondence to a close.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

Section 40

Section 40

Telephone

Section 40

Dear

Section 40

25 October 1997

with reference to your brief letter of 7th October, I fully understand the departments position which you have stated and reemphasised over two letters but that position does not extend to ignoring the questions which I originally listed. May I also emphasise that this entire subject was originally raised in the public sector by your own departmental head and that, more than anything else, prompted my initial correspondence. Given these two points I must ask again, what is going on?

Had Mr Pope written a book on cookery or quantum physics then I agree that this would have no connection to his work and as such he would be stating his own view on these subjects. But I, and I assume a great many others, have difficulty in seperating his current analysis from MOD (Air Staff) 2a1 which has been formed and developed as a direct result of his work as head of MOD(Air Staff)2a1. Furthermore this is a specified public expense post under the control of the Minister of Defence and the Government of the day.

If I made enquiries concerning our EW capability or the extent of CIA involvement at GCHQ or SAS covert operations in Northern Ireland, these would rightly be matters on which you could not and would not comment because of their highly classified nature, I am ex service and well aware of the 'Need to Know' rule. However, unless the subject of UFOs has now become classified and is covered by the official secrets act, then you are free to comment upon it. More so since the matter has been publicly raised by the previous head of your department and MOD (Air Staff)2a1 have been delegated by the Prime Ministers office to answer the very reasonable questions in my letter. It would seem therefore that the situation as it currently stands boils down to this, either:-

a) The previous head of your department is correct in his analysis and as a reward for his diligence should be retained and rewarded with promotion by the Ministry of Defence.

or

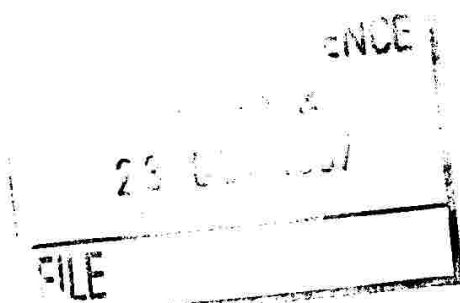
b) The previous head of your department is totally incorrect in his analysis and should be dismissed from the service for gross incompetence and the willfull misuse of public funds and is possibly open to police charges of conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace.

Which is it to be?

I would be grateful for a reply at your earliest convenience. Naturally, no reply or a negative response will be taken to mean that your chosen answer is a), especially if Mr Pope remains in the service.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



2



From: **Section 40**, Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
7 October 1997

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter of 30 July.
2. In my previous letter I explained the Department's limited interest in these matters. There really is nothing further I can add. The content of your letter has been noted.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**



Ministry of Defence  
Secretariat (Air Staff) ~~20~~ 2a  
Room ~~8248~~ 8245  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB

Section 40  
[Redacted]

Dear

of 30 Jul 97

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter/complaint of .....  
~~about military aircraft activity.~~ about "UFO" Policy.

We aim to reply to such letters/complaints within four working weeks from date of receipt. However, owing to current administrative difficulties it may not be possible to reply to you within this timescale.

Nevertheless, you may be assured that you will receive a substantive reply as soon as is practicable.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40  
[Redacted]

Section 40

Section 40

Telephone Section 40

20 July 1997

Section 40

Dear

many thanks for your D/Sec(AS)/64/3 of 30 June 1997.

I must say that I was disappointed with your letter but I realise that you must be under certain constraints and are obliged to 'toe the party line'. I have pondered a reply for some time because it may also be the case that you have very little influence over policy but having reviewed the subject and sifted the evidence so far, I am reminded of Churchill's words that 'Evil will succeed when good men, (and women), stand by and do nothing'. He may have been referring to the growth of Nazi German influence in Europe at the time but nevertheless it is a maxim which still holds good and I feel that there is something very wrong occurring here.

Please pardon me for saying that it is all very well to dismiss Mr Nicholas Popes analysis as his own personal opinion but if one discounts 90% of reports as doubtful, the analysis still appears to be based on the testimony of thousands of credible witnesses, whereas your written reply does not have the benefit of support from any basis at all.

You may not be aware that among the millions of witnesses worldwide, (now 20 million reported by civilians, (ominously few from the military), since the war, are two former Presidents of the United States, Presidents Reagan and Carter. Both of these have a military background which qualify them as expert witnesses in this field and both have more to lose by telling the observed truth.

You are also dismissing reports such as one that you may have on file which concerns the case of three objects which were observed, by radar, approaching the east coast of Britain, from across the North Sea, travelling at a recorded speed of over 3,000mph. On slowing down, three disc shaped vehicles were observed, flying in formation, crossing our coastline, by both ground and airborne (RAF) observers, whilst simultaneously being tracked by no less than 6 separate radar stations. We are not talking here of lights in the sky and hobgoblins after midnight. These are precise observations made by hardcore professionals combined, simultaneously, with unquestionably solid findings on a string of radar drums. There are literally dozens of reports like these which provide irrefutable evidence of invasion of our air space and are of major defence significance.

The powers that be may wish to disassociate themselves but if Mr Popes opinion has been forged as a direct result of his professional work, as specified by Government and the MOD, then it is no longer a personal opinion but becomes the professional analysis of a departmental head who is paid by public funds to collate and report exactly that and it must therefore be acted upon accordingly.

If the MOD do not consider his analysis to be in any way relevant then Mr Pope should be dismissed from the service for gross incompetence and is possibly open to police charges of 'conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace', or 'the willful misuse of public funds'. On the other hand if his professional analysis is considered

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
SEC (AS) 2  
- 4 AUG 1997

to have any relevance at all, then the government should initiate a scientifically based public enquiry and place our armed forces on at least 'Bikini Amber' alert.

I understand that whilst neither of these actions have been taken Mr Pope in the mean time has in fact been rewarded for his work by promotion. Again I must ask the question, what is going on?

You may also be aware that two former Chiefs of Staff, Lord Mountbatten and Admiral Lord Hill-Norton, have voiced grave concern about the slipshod investigative techniques and total lack of detailed response procedures for use by both ministers and the military in this field.

For certain, our sovereign air space is being continually violated by someone or something and it has been apparent since long before the Wright brothers, so it is very doubtful that it is our own forces who are flying prototypes at breakneck speeds through major civilian air traffic lanes and over densely populated areas. There has been no apparent response to these concerns and no progress towards solving this problem. Incidents are reported, statements are recorded, professional analysis is made, the Nick Pops of this world are promoted and everything is filed neatly away and we start again with a fresh face next week. What is going on?

Safeguarding our rights and freedoms is not a waste of valuable resources, it is specifically what the MOD and our armed forces were created for. However, it must be regarded as a waste of public funds to simply observe, record and do nothing. The evergrowing public concerns on this issue are not being met, why are we doing nothing?

I would be grateful if you would attempt to answer some of these questions and perhaps indicate if and when a strategy will be formulated to deal with this increasingly serious problem.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



From: **Section 40** Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
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 (Fax) 0171 218 **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Your reference

Our reference  
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
 30 June 1997

Dear **Section 40**

1. Thank you for your letter addressed to the Prime Minister of 15 May, about the subject of "UFOs and Alien Abductions". Your letter has been passed to this office which is the MOD focal point for correspondence of this nature for reply.

2. First I should explain that the MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

3. MOD examines any reports of "unidentified flying objects" it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity.

4. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, and to date no "unidentified flying object" sighting has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported incident. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose but it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to provide this kind of aerial identification service.

5. Your letter makes reference to the serialization in the Daily Mail of extracts from a book by a former member of Secretariat (Air Staff)2a, Mr Nicholas Pope. I should point out that the views expressed by Mr Pope are entirely his personal opinions and do not represent, nor do they reflect, the MOD's position.

6. Finally, you may be interested to know that the Cabinet Office has the responsibility for taking forward the Government's manifesto pledge to introduce a Freedom of Information Act. The timetable currently envisaged involves the publication of a White Paper before this year's Summer Recess. This would be followed by a period of open consultation leading to a draft Bill early next year and further consultation.

7. I hope that the above gives you a better understanding of the limited interest that the Department has with respect to the "UFO" phenomenon.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



**PRIME MINISTER  
CORRESPONDENCE SECTION**

*Writer informed that letter has been forwarded to the appropriate Government Department for a full reply*

Section 40

Section 40

Telephone/Fax Section 40

15 May 1997

*3  
MAD  
Def  
UFO's*

*Dear Prime Minister*

Yet again this week we see a major national newspaper, 'The Mail', devoting major space over several days to the issue of UFOs and Alien Abductions. This is not the first occasion that the public has been presented with statement of events from apparently reliable witnesses and what makes this series of articles particularly credible is the fact that they have originated, (not for the first time), in the Ministry of Defence Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a.

A defence official, a mere step away from the cabinet, is hereby presenting 'facts' on the subject and is charging our government, and others, with official indifference to the plight of many apparently traumatised citizens and the alleged invasion of our sovereign airspace, what is going on?

Are we to believe that all this is true? Can we really believe that people are being abducted by aliens? If we are to believe credible witnesses such as police officers, doctors, pilots and such, what are the government doing about it? Is it a problem? Is it a priority? What is going on?

Now that we at last have a change of government to one that understands the need for freedom of information to a mature and intelligent electorate, perhaps we can also at last have some answers on this most perplexing of subjects.

May I therefore respectfully request that a member cabinet is finally tasked with taking control of that which has long been surrendered to those people who are not answerable to the electorate.

May I also request a reply at your earliest opportunity.

Yours most respectfully,

Section 40