

Registered File Disposal Form

FILE TITLE: (Main Heading - Secondary Heading - Tertiary Heading etc) <i>WFOs PQs/PEs</i>	Reference: (Prefix and Number): <i>D/Sec(NS) 64/4</i> Part: <i>C</i>
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PROTECTIVE MARKING (including caveats & descriptors): **UNCLASSIFIED**

Date of last enclosure: *10.7.97* Date closed:

PART 1. DISPOSAL SCHEDULE RECOMMENDATION (To be completed when the file is closed) Destroy after _____ years <input type="checkbox"/> Forward to CS(RM) after <i>10</i> years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>for Permanent Retention</i> No recommendation <input type="checkbox"/>	FOR CS(RM) USE ONLY		
	Date of 1st review	Date of 2nd review	Forward Destruction Date
Reviewer's Signature:	Reviewer's Signature:		

PART 2. BRANCH REVIEW
(To be 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 *indefinitely* years (from date of last enclosure) for the following reason(s):

LEGAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DEFENCE POLICY + OPERATIONS <input type="checkbox"/>
CONTRACTUAL <input type="checkbox"/>	ORIGINAL COMMITTEE PAPERS <input type="checkbox"/>
FINANCE/AUDIT <input type="checkbox"/>	MAJOR EQUIPMENT PROJECT <input type="checkbox"/>
DIRECTORATE POLICY <input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Public Interest For permanent retention in The National Archives</i>

PPQ = 100

(Continued overleaf)

(ii) Key enclosures which support the recommendation are:

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

Destroyed

Considered by CS(RM) for permanent preservation

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

PART 3. BY **Section 40**

Signature: _____

Name: _____

(Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank: B2

Date: 28/6/04

(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: _____

Name: _____

(Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank: _____

Date: _____

Witnessed by (TOP SECRET* and SECRET only)

Signature: _____

Name: _____

(Block Capitals)

Grade/Rank: _____

Date: _____

(FOR CS(RM) USE ONLY)

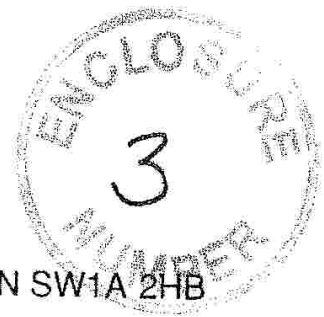
UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/JS 2508/97/M

28 July 1997

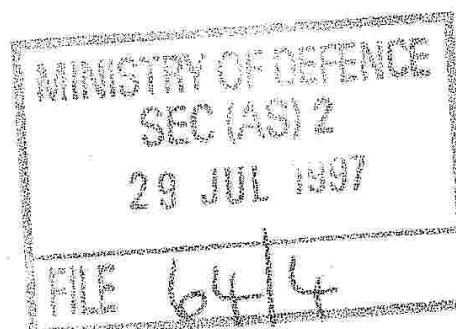
Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 28 June to George Robertson on behalf of your constituent, **Section 40** about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying in view of my responsibility for this matter.

The events of 5 October 1996 off the Lincolnshire coast received a certain amount of media attention at the time, much of it incorrect, ill-informed and speculative. Our air defence system found no evidence of unidentified flying craft throughout the period in question. Two quite separate phenomena were reported: an unexplained radar plot and lights in the sky. The radar plot observed, which was identified on the National Air Traffic Services Claxby radar in the position of Boston, was judged by experienced operators at two separate locations to be a permanent echo, caused by a natural phenomena (something that does occur in certain weather conditions). It was not suspicious in nature nor of any significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. The characteristics of the radar plot confirmed beyond reasonable doubt that this judgement was sound.

There was very little reliable or accurate bearing or elevation information in connection with any of the reported sightings of the lights which were observed in the area of The Wash. From that provided, including a copy of police video footage, which was not forwarded to us by the Lincolnshire Police HQ until 5 November, the Greenwich Observatory considered that the lights were of celestial origin and likely to have been Venus which was exceptionally bright during the week in question.

David Chidgey Esq C.Eng FICE MP





MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

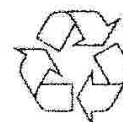
The video recording, which was not taken at the request of the Ministry of Defence as Mr Sears suggests, belongs to a member of the Skegness Police force. Mr Sears may wish to approach them direct or Lincolnshire Police HQ who provided our copy, with a view to obtaining a copy for his own use.

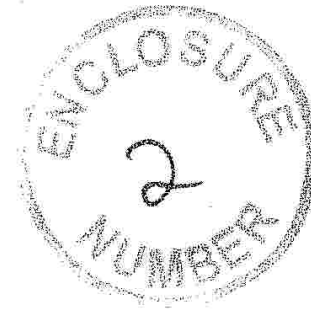
Finally, I should say that I am confident there was no evidence the UK Air Defence Region was compromised on that day and there was, of course, no reason whatsoever, in the light of the this for military action.

I hope this explains the position.

Section 40

JOHN SPELLAR MP





LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

9 Jul 97

PE Unit
(thro' Section 40)

LETTER FROM DAVID CHIDGEY MP: US 2508/97

1. Mr Chidgey's constituent, Section 40, has written to Sec(AS) on several occasions over the last 3 years and is well aware of the Department's limited interest in reports of "UFO sightings". The MP has also written on this subject of "UFOs" in general before (May 96) on behalf of another of his constituents.
2. The events referred to in the MP's letter relate to two separate phenomena which were reported in the early hours of Sat 5 Oct 96 in the area of The Wash: an unexplained radar plot and lights in the sky. Although there was no evidence of an unauthorized incursion of the UK Air Defence Region, and as such no further investigation would usually have been conducted, on this occasion the events were subject to a very thorough investigation following media interest and a letter from the late Martin Redmond MP who, at the time, made serious allegations about the effectiveness of the UK Air Defence System (D/USofs/FH/4198/96/M dated 21 November 1996 - copy attached).

BACKGROUND

3. Initial Observations. At approximately 0205Z on 5 October PC Section 40 a Skegness police officer on mobile patrol at Addlethorpe observed stationary multicoloured lights in the sky which he reported to Skegness control room who relayed the message on to Great Yarmouth Coastguard Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) suspecting it might be related to an incident at sea. The MRCC, unaware of any maritime activity, asked the Air Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) at RAF Kinloss about any air activity or incident in The Wash area, and with nothing to report, they in turn asked the Control and Reporting Centre (CRC) at RAF Neatishead to check their radar for that area. Neatishead confirmed they had no unidentified radar contact on the air defence radars being used to provide air surveillance in the area. ARCC subsequently checked with the Distress and Diversion (D&D) Cell (which is located at the London Air Traffic Control Centre (LATCC) West Drayton and not RAF Northwood as the Coastguard erroneously assumed and the press subsequently reported) for advice. The D&D Cell advised a radar plot on the NATS Claxby radar over Boston and this information was passed through ARCC to MRCC. CRC Neatishead having by now conducted a search on all available radar displays, observed the same plot on the same Claxby radar in the same position. For reasons that are unclear,

MRCC associated the police officer's report of lights with the radar return over Boston.

4. Actions by Air Defence System. CRC Neatishead's inquiries revealed no sign of air movements or military exercises in the area and there was no evidence of unidentified air activity. The stationary radar plot, without associated height or IFF/SSR (Identification Friend or Foe/Secondary Surveillance Radar) was judged by experienced operators at both Neatishead and the D&D Cell to be a permanent echo. The separate, stationary, lights were judged to be some form of natural phenomena, not suspicious in nature nor of significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. No flying craft had either penetrated the UKADR or was present on any radar and no recommendation to scramble a Quick Reaction Alert aircraft from RAF Leuchars to investigate either the permanent echo showing on the stationary radar plot, or the reported lights, was sought.

5. Subsequent Reporting. MRCC assumed a coordination role and continued to seek further information on both the radar plot and the lights. At the instigation of the coastguard, further interest in the radar plot was kept alive and involved LATCC(Civil), LATCC(Military), Anglia Radar and Waddington Approach; and with the involvement of a tanker vessel at sea (MV CONOCOAST), Boston and Skegness Police Forces and LATCC(Civil) in the lights until they disappeared with the dawn.

INVESTIGATION OF RADAR PLOT AND VISUAL SIGHTINGS

6. The Boston Radar Plot. The radar Plot was observed in the position of Boston on the NATS sensor at Claxby by the D&D Cell and CRC Neatishead, although neither uses that radar on a routine basis for surveillance or aircraft control in The Wash area. Later, the plot was observed by Anglia Radar at Stanstead and the Claxby radar display. The radar plot was always single and stationary and defied attempts to obtain height or IFF/SSR information on it. Significantly, it was never present on radar displays from the NATS sensors at Cromer and Debden nor on the air defence radar at Trimmingham. The characteristics of the plot confirm beyond reasonable doubt that it was a permanent radar echo. The fact that it could only be detected by the closest sensors indicated a relatively low physical feature which appears as a permanent radar echo only in certain weather conditions and was most likely the 273ft Spire of St Botolph's Church, Boston (the 'Boston Stump').

7. Stationary Lights. Various sightings of lights were made between approximately 0205Z and dawn by observers at Skegness and Boston and on board the Section 40 some 8 miles to the east of Skegness. However, neither the police at Kings Lynn when asked at 0227Z, nor the cargo vessel, Section 40, some 16nms ENE of Skegness, at 0240Z observed any unusual lights. The crews of two civilian airliners flying through the area at 0557Z reported no sightings of lights when asked by LATCC(Civil). Only the original

report by PC **Section 40** was unsolicited. Although there was little reliable or accurate bearing and elevation information in connection with the sightings the observations were assessed by the Royal Greenwich Observatory. They surmise the likely source of the Boston Police sighting as the planet Venus which was exceptionally bright in the early morning sky on 5 October. Their assessment of the Skegness Police video film (which was not, as reported by the media, forwarded to MOD at the time but only after repeated requests for sight of it), was that it was also likely to be the planet Venus. They could offer no explanation for either set of lights observed from the **Section 40**

CONCLUSION

8. Detailed research at the time did not reveal evidence or admissions that alarming or extraordinary events were witnessed on 5 Oct 96. The radar plot observed in a position at Boston was a permanent radar echo. It was correctly assessed as such by CRC Neatishead and no further air defence related action was necessary. The bright stationary lights observed from Boston and Skegness were probably the planet Venus.

9. I apologise for the length of this background note but the events reported at the time required detailed investigation in order to set the record straight. The attached draft reflects the standard lines used previously to explain this event about which Sec(AS) continues to receive a significant amount of correspondence. No subsequent, substantial, information has come to light about this event.

10. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

D/USofS/2508/97

July 1997

Thank you for your letter of 28 June addressed to George Robertson on behalf of your constituent Section 40 about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying in view of my responsibility for this matter.

The events of 5 October 1996 off the Lincolnshire coast received a certain amount of media attention at the time, much of it incorrect, ill-informed and speculative. Our air defence system found no evidence of unidentified flying craft throughout the period in question. Two quite separate phenomena were reported: an unexplained radar plot and lights in the sky. The radar plot observed, which was identified on the National Air Traffic Services Claxby radar in the position of Boston, was judged by experienced operators at two separate locations to be a permanent echo, caused by a natural phenomena (something that does occur in certain weather conditions). It was not suspicious in nature nor of any significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. The characteristics of the radar plot confirmed beyond reasonable doubt that this judgement was sound.

There was very little reliable or accurate bearing or elevation information in connection with any of the reported sightings of the lights which were observed in the area of The

Wash. From that provided, including a copy of police video footage, which was not forwarded to us by the Lincolnshire Police HQ until 5 November, the Greenwich Observatory considered that the lights were of celestial origin and likely to have been Venus which was exceptionally bright during the week in question.

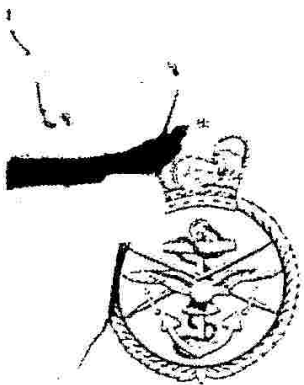
The video recording, which was not taken at the request of the Ministry of Defence as **Section 40** suggests, belongs to a member of the Skegness Police force. **Section 40** may wish to approach them direct or Lincolnshire Police HQ who provided our copy, with a view to obtaining a copy for his own use.

Finally, I should say that I am confident there was no evidence the UK Air Defence Region was compromised on that day and there was, of course, no reason whatsoever, in the light of the this for military action.

I hope this explains the position.

David Chidgey Esq MP

JOHN SPELLAR



21 NOV 1996

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
 MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
 Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
 0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

64/4
 64
 NUMBER

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
 FOR DEFENCE

D/US of S/FH 4168/96/M

278v November 1996

Dear Mr. Redmond,

Thank you for your letter of 24 October to Michael Portillo expressing concern about the effectiveness of the UK air defence system. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

I must say at the outset that much of the content of the press reports enclosed with your letter is incorrect, ill-informed and speculative. Much of what you say in your letter is also incorrect.

The facts are that our air defence system found no evidence of unidentified flying craft throughout the period in question. The only radar plot observed, which was identified on the National Air Traffic Services Claxby radar in the position of Boston, was judged by experienced operators at two separate locations to be a permanent echo, caused by a natural phenomena (something that does occur in certain weather conditions), not suspicious in nature nor of any significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. The characteristics of the radar plot confirm beyond reasonable doubt that this judgement was sound.

There is very little reliable or accurate bearing or elevation information in connection with any of the sightings of lights observed in the area of The Wash. From that provided, including the video which was not forwarded to us by the Lincolnshire Police HQ until 5 November, the Greenwich Observatory view is that the lights were of celestial origin and likely to be Venus which had been exceptionally bright during the week in question.

Martin Redmond Esq MP



I am confident that there is no evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised. There was, of course, no reason whatsoever, in the light of the above for any further military action.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT**

TO: SEC(AS)2 **MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**
SEC(AS)2
-4 JUL 1997 PE REF NUMBER: US 2508/97

MINISTER REPLYING: USOAS **FILE 64/4** DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 15/7/97

DATE: 3/7/97 FROM: **Section 40** PE Unit TEL: **Section 40**

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

***** **IMPORTANT UPDATES** *****

1. Ministerial responsibilities changed.

2. Opening and Closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."
 If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/John Reid/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"

Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."

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

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

3. Open Government A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 48/1997.

Replies **MUST** be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

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

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES**, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40**
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

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



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Tel: 0171 219 6944
Fax: 0171 219 2810

US4J
Sec(A2)
UFOs

The Right Hon George Robertson MP
Secretary of State For Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2HB

28th June 1997

Unidentified Flying Object - East Anglia 1996.

My constituent, **Section 40** has raised a matter with me regarding the above, which is of some concern to him.

Section 40 who is interested in the subject of UFO's, refers to an incident which he informs me took place over the sea off East Anglia last year. A lighted object apparently hovered and moved around in the sky for several hours. This was witnessed by coastguards, off duty RAF pilots who were fishing, and police who were called in etc. The solution to the matter was apparently a mis-identification of the so-called 'Boston Stump' (a church tower?).

Section 40 believes that a video film of the incident was taken by the police at the request of the Ministry of Defence. He asks why the film is being kept from the public, and when will it be available for public scrutiny or genuine information received about it.

I would be grateful to receive any information your Department may be able to supply on the issue.

Section 40

BRAC
- 2 JUL 1997
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

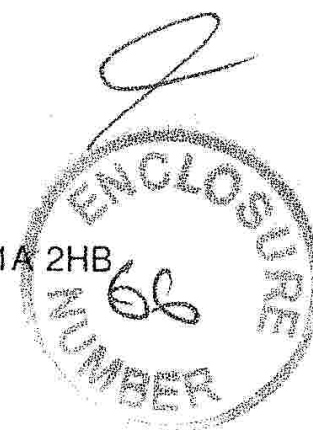
Ref: X/ExS/2/5/3-ho

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



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

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D/US of S/JS 2076/97/M



Dear Alan.

Thank you for your letter of 2 June (reference: 97/6.97/AS) to George Robertson enclosing correspondence from **Section 40** of **Section 40** Carmarthen, about a "UFO" sighting in West Wales on 21 November 1996. I am replying in view of my responsibility for this matter.

As you may know, my Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported event. 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.

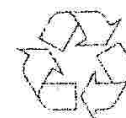
I note from the file of papers you forwarded with your letter that my predecessor wrote to you in January about **Section 40** concerns. I can confirm that routine low level military flying training was authorised in the area concerned on the day in question. This may, therefore, account for some of the reports. It remains the case, however, that there was no evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised by unauthorized foreign military activity.

I am sorry that I cannot be more helpful.

Section 40

JOHN SPELLAR MP

Dr Alan Williams MP



Recycled Paper



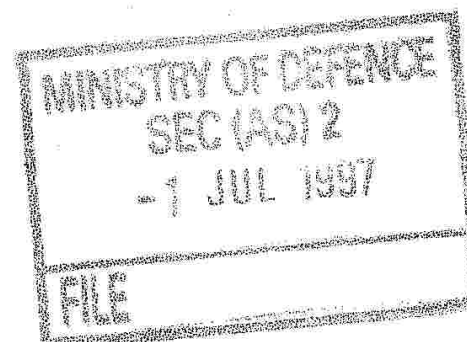
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/JS 1983/97/A

25 June 1997



Dear Ben,

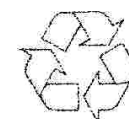
Thank you for your letter of 27 May to George Robertson enquiring on behalf of a constituent about my Department's policy on reports of "unidentified flying objects". I am replying in view of my responsibility for this matter.

My Department has no expertise or role with respect to "UFO/ flying saucer" matters or the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. 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.

I should wish to assure your constituent that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

You ask about the law relating to the release of MOD "UFO" report files. As is the case with other government files, all MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of

Ben Bradshaw Esq MP



Recycled Paper



1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. The files selected for preservation are then transferred to the Public Record Office for release into the public domain.

It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However, since 1967 there has been an increase in public interest in this subject and "UFO" report files are now routinely preserved. A few files from the 1950s and early 1960s did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17527
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17982
AIR 20/9994	AIR 2/17983
PREM 11/855	

Whilst it was past practice to sanitize some sensitive information held on files before release to the Public Record Office, this is no longer the case and MOD "UFO" report files are now released with no extractions or deletions.

Your constituent 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.

I hope this explains the position.

Section 40



JOHN SPELLAR MP



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PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

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D/US of S/JS 2019/97/P

22 June 1997

Dear Nigel,

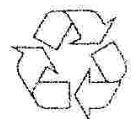
Thank you for your letter of 28 May enclosing correspondence from your constituent, **Section 40** of **Section 40** Preston about an incident which occurred off the Island of Lewis.

Following reports to the authorities of an alleged explosion in the air in the vicinity of the Western Isles on 26 October last year, an extensive search of the area was carried out by RAF and Coastguard Search and Rescue assets. The search was later called off after it became clear that no aircraft, either military or civilian, had been reported overdue. There was no evidence to support any of the media theories about the cause of the incident.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us 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, but it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to provide this kind of aerial identification service.

I should wish to assure **Section 40** that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air

Nigel Evans Esq MP



Recycled Paper

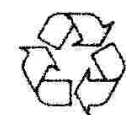


Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat.
I can confirm that there were no incidents of unauthorized foreign
military incursions of UK airspace on 17 or 22 November 1996.

I hope this is helpful.



JOHN SPELLAR MP



Recycled Paper



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

19 JUN 1997

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

F. J.
ENCLOSURE
63
NUMBER

Sec Asst Dir, Int

D/US of S/JS 1963/97/M

17 June 1997

Dear Kevin,

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS) 2
19 JUN 1997
FILE 64/4

Thank you for your letter of 20 May to George Robertson enclosing one from Section 40 of Section 40 Doncaster, about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying in view of my responsibility for this matter.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify what might have been seen. We believe that down to earth explanations such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena could be found for these reports 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.

I should wish to assure Section 40 that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

I can confirm that it is part of Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a's much wider responsibilities to act as the MOD focal point for handling queries and correspondence relating to reports of "unidentified flying objects", consulting the Department's air defence experts as required.

Finally, Section 40 asks about the number of reports my Department has received during the last 12 months. From June 1996 - May 1997 we received 531 reports of aerial observations

Kevin Hughes Esq MP





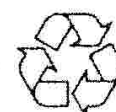
which the witness was not able to identify. None revealed any evidence of an unauthorized military incursion of the United Kingdom's airspace.

I hope this explains our position.

Section 40



JOHN SPELLAR MP



Recycled Paper

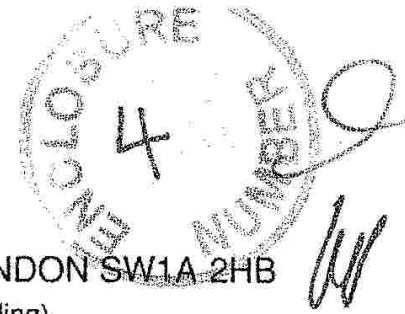
UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/JS 2109/97/M

24 June 1997

Dear Michael,

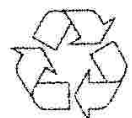
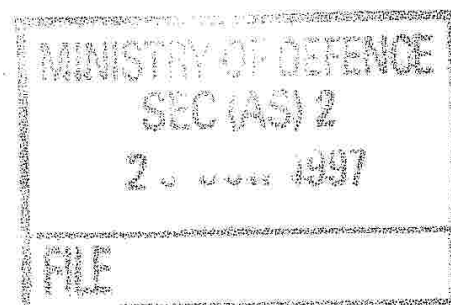
Thank you for your letter of 2 June to John Reid enclosing one from your constituent, **Section 40** [redacted] about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying in view of my responsibility for this matter.

I should explain that my Department has no expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. To date, however, we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these phenomena.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each 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.

As there was no evidence to substantiate an event of defence concern at Rendlesham Forest in December 1980 no further investigation into the matter was necessary. Although a number of allegations have subsequently been made about these reported events, nothing has emerged over the last 16 years which has given us reason to believe that the original assessment made by this Department was incorrect.

Michael Mates Esq MP



Recycled Paper



I can confirm that as a matter of routine, my Department was notified by the Civil Aviation Authority about the British Airways pilots' report of 6 January 1995. The information was provided shortly after the incident occurred and was discussed with Departmental air defence experts. There was no evidence to suggest anything of defence significance, and my Department's interest in the incident ceased thereafter.

With regard to your question about the number of Airmis incidents involving "unidentified" craft and civil airliners, the Department of Environment, Transport and The Regions has advised that three such incidents were recorded in the last five years; these took place in January 1994, January 1995 and June 1996. Airmis reports are given the name AIRPROX and must be filed by pilots and/or air traffic controller where a loss of separation between aircraft have occurred. AIRPROX incidents are considered by the Joint Airmis Working Group which consist of representatives from both civil and military aviation. The findings of the working group are published and the reports can be obtained from Civil Aviation Authority Printing and Publications, Greville House, 37 Gratton Road, Cheltenham, GL50 2BN.

I hope this explains the position.

Section 40

JOHN SPELLAR MP



Recycled Paper



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

18 Jun 97

PE Uni
(thro

Section 40

12/6

LETTER FROM MICHAEL MATES MP - US 2109/97

1. Mr Mates' constituent, Section 40 is not known to us. However, his questions are very similar to a number already received by the Department over the last year and the standard lines have been used in the draft reply.

2. One of the questions refers to "The Rendlesham Forest Incident". The incident, which is alleged to have occurred in December 1980 in Rendlesham Forest, near RAF Woodbridge, continues to interest "UFO" enthusiasts and has been the subject of books magazine articles and television programmes. We continue to receive a steady stream of correspondence on this subject and have, again, used the standard line on this topic. In summary, a report of an incident (a copy of which will be walked down to you) was sent to the MOD on 15 Jul 81 under cover of a letter from RAF Bentwaters. It comprised a statement from the then Deputy Base Commander at RAF Woodbridge, Lt Col Charles Halt, recording what a few USAF personnel and, in part, he himself claimed to have seen outside RAF Woodbridge over the nights of 27-29 Dec 80. The report was examined by the Department at the time. Nothing of defence significance was found which is, of course, the Department's only interest in such reports.

3. The information about Airmiss incidents involving civil airliners has been cleared with the Civil Aviation Division of the Department of Environment, Transport and The Regions.

4. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

D/US/2109/97

June 1997

Thank you for your letter of 2 June addressed to John Reid enclosing questions about "unidentified flying objects" from one of your constituents, **Section 40** [REDACTED]. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

I should explain that my Department has no expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. To date, however, we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these phenomena.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each 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.

As there was no evidence to substantiate an event of defence concern at Rendlesham Forest in December 1980 no further investigation into the matter was necessary. Although a number of allegations have subsequently been made about these reported events, nothing has emerged over the last 16 years which has given us reason to believe that the original assessment made by this Department was incorrect.

I can confirm that as a matter of routine, the MOD was notified by the Civil Aviation Authority about the British Airways pilots' report of 6 January 1995. The information was provided shortly after the incident occurred and was discussed with Departmental air defence experts. There was no evidence to suggest anything of defence significance, and my Department's interest in the incident ceased thereafter.

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obtained from Civil Aviation Authority Printing and Publications,
Greville House, 37 Gratton Road, Cheltenham, GL50 2BN.

I hope this explains the position.

JOHN SPELLAR

Michael Mates MP

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:



Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Serial Number:	Transmission: Date: 18 JUNE Time:	Document Reference: 64/4	Total number of pages including this one: 1+9
From: SEC(AS) Room 8245 MOD MAIN BUILDING	Fax Number: Section 40 Tel Number: Section 40	To: Section 40 CAD Dept E.T.R.	Fax Number: Section 40
Authorised by: Rank Name Appointment EO Section 40 Sec(AS)2A1	Signature: Section 40	Transmitted by: Rank Name Tel Number	Signature:

Subject: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY 2109/97

Section 40

Any queries please give me a call.

Regard Section 40 called. Contact with para proposed

Civil Auction Division.

Section 40 18/6

①

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

URGENT!



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

Telephone (Direct dial) Section 40 [redacted]
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000
(Fax) Section 40 [redacted]

Department of Environment,
Transport and The Regions
Civil Aviation Department

Your reference

Our reference
D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Date
18 June 1997

Attn: Section 40 [redacted]

== by fax ==

Dear Section 40 [redacted]

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY: US 2109/97

1. As agreed during our telephone conversation last week please find attached our proposed draft reply to the Parliamentary Enquiry received from Michael Mates.
2. I should be grateful for confirmation that you are content with my proposed paragraph about Airmis incidents involving civil airliners over the last five years, which you will note is mostly cribbed from Rob Toft's handiwork earlier this year. I presume, but would welcome confirmation, that there haven't been any more such incidents since June 1996?
3. Finally, could you fill in the blank in the background note - what is the correct title of your branch? The deadline for this work is COP Thu 19 June, so may I ask for a response by 1500hrs tomorrow please?

Yours sincerely

Section 40 [redacted]

Encs.

(2)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

SEC (AS) 2

- 9 JUN 1997

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

FILE

THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ ITTO: Sec (As) 2aPE REF NUMBER: US 2109/97MINISTER REPLYING: USOFSDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 19/6/97DATE: 9/6/97FROM: **Section 40**

PE Unit

TEL: **Section 40**

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

***** **IMPORTANT UPDATES** *****

1. Ministerial responsibilities changed.

2. Opening and Closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/John Reid/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"

Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."

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

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

3. Open Government A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 48/1997.

Replies **MUST** be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

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

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

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES**, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40**
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

3

2109

US40
Sec(AS)20
UFO



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dr. John Reid, MP,
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Whitehall,
London, SW1A 2HB

2nd June, 1997.

Dear Sir

I am enclosing a number of questions on the subject of Unidentified Craft from my constituent, **Section 40** I would be grateful for your responses.

Yours faithfully

Section 40

MICHAEL MATES, MP

4

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
6 JUN 1997
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

Unidentified Craft

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, does his Department acknowledge that the United Kingdom airspace has been penetrated on several occasions by craft of unknown design and origin whose flight and maneuverability far exceed current advanced aircraft design; and if he will make a statement.

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, (i) does his Department acknowledge that the United Kingdom airspace has been penetrated on several occasions by craft of unknown design and origin whose flight and manoeverability far exceed current advanced aircraft design and (ii) how many records of near misses and sightings of unidentified craft in United Kingdom airspace by civilian airliners does his department hold; and if he will make a statement.

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make it his policy to allocate resources to researching extraterrestrial phenomena.

Unidentified Craft

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, does his Department accept that based on evidence such as that given by Lt Colonel Charles Holt on The Rendlesham Forest Incident, material contained in Joint Airmiss Working Group Report No. 1/95 and the fact that his Department receives up to five-hundred reports a year relating to unidentified craft that (i) the UK airspace has been penetrated on one or more occasions by unidentified craft whose performance characteristics far exceed cutting edge technology and (ii) that the best available evidence supports the hypothesis that these craft are of extraterrestrial origin; and if he will make a statement.

From

Section 40

(constituent of Michael Mates)

5

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Jun 97

D R A F T

PE Unit

(thro **Section 40**)

LETTER FROM MICHAEL MATES MP - US 2109/97

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⑥

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Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

7

D/US/2109/97

June 1997

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8

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JOHN SPELLAR

Michael Mates MP

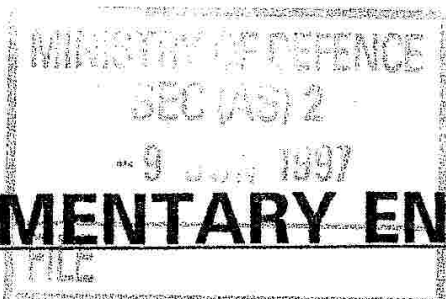
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Secretariat(Air Staff) Fax: Section 40

** Transmit Conf. Report **

18 Jun '97 12:54

Secretariat(Air Staff)---> Section 40	
No.	4812
Mode	NORMAL
Time	4'13"
Pages	10 Page(s)
Result	O K



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT

TO: Sec (AS) 2a

PE REF NUMBER: US 2109/97

MINISTER REPLYING: USOFS

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 19/6/97

DATE: 9/6/97

FROM: **Section 40**

PE Unit

TEL: **Section 40**

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PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

2109

US45
Sec(AS)2a
Ufos



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dr. John Reid, MP,
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Whitehall,
London, SW1A 2HB

2nd June, 1997.

Don Sam

I am enclosing a number of questions on the subject of Unidentified Craft from my constituent, **Section 40** I would be grateful for your responses.

Sam

Section 40

MICHAEL MATES, MP

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
6 JUN 1997
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

Unidentified Craft

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From

Section 40

(constituent of Michael Mates)

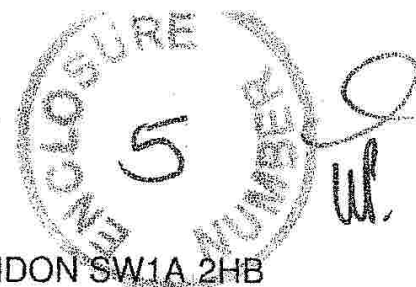
RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/JS 2106/97/A

24 June 1997

Dear Ieuan,

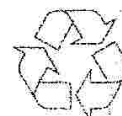
Thank you for your letter of 4 June (reference: IWJ/2/96/137) to George Robertson enclosing one from your constituent, **Section 40** **Section 40** of **Section 40** Llangefni about an article relating to alleged "UFO" incidents. I am replying in view of my responsibility for media matters.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. 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.

As is the case with other government departments, MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. Those files selected for preservation are then transferred to the Public Record Office for release into the public domain.

It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years as there was insufficient public

Ieuan Wyn Jones Esq MP



Recycled Paper



interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However, since 1967 there has been an increase in public interest in this subject and "UFO" report files are now routinely preserved. A few files from the 1950s and early 1960s did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17527
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17982
AIR 20/9994	AIR 2/17983
PREM 11/855	

All surviving paperwork from over 30 years ago on the subject of "UFOs" previously held by my Department has now been transferred to the Public Record Office.

I can confirm that as a matter of routine, my Department was notified by the Civil Aviation Authority about the British Airways pilots' report of 6 January 1995. The information was provided shortly after the incident occurred and was discussed with Departmental air defence experts. As there was no evidence to suggest anything of defence significance, my Department's interest in the incident ceased thereafter. As is usual with airmiss incidents involving civil aircraft, the CAA Joint Airmiss Working Party (a joint Civil/Military body with complete access to all sources of available civil and military information) investigated the incident. Airmiss Working Group investigations are published and can be obtained from Civil Aviation Authority Printing and Publications, Greville House, 37 Gratton Road, Cheltenham GL50 2BN.

Finally, **Section 40** 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.



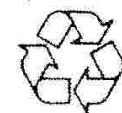


This would be followed by a period of open consultation leading to a draft Bill early next year and further consultation.

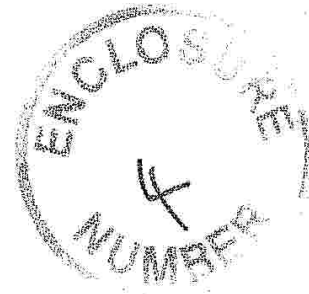
I hope this explains the position.



JOHN SPELLAR MP



Recycled Paper



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

18 Jun 97

PE Uni
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Section 40

8/6

LETTER FROM IEUAN WYN JONES MP - US 2106/97

1. Ieuan Wyn Jones' constituent, Section 40, has written requesting that all documentation held by the Government on five alleged "UFO" incidents mentioned in an article in the June edition of "FOCUS Magazine", be released into the public domain. The magazine to which Section 40 refers is not the MOD in-house magazine "FOCUS" but one of the many magazines now available on the subject of "UFOs" and the paranormal.

2. Although the MP has written to Ministers about "UFOs" before, most recently October 1996, this is the first approach on behalf of Section 40. The draft therefore seeks to explain MOD policy concerning the "UFO" phenomena, and clarifies the rules governing the release of documentation held on official files. A paragraph obtained from the Cabinet Office has been included about the proposed Freedom of Information Act.

3. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

D/US/2106/97

June 1997

Thank you for your letter of 4 June (ref: IWJ/2/96/137) addressed to George Robertson enclosing one from your constituent **Section 40** of **Section 40** Llangefni concerning an article relating to alleged "UFO" incidents. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. 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.

As is the case with other government departments, MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. Those files selected for preservation

are then transferred to the Public Record Office for release into the public domain.

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AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/17318
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PREM 11/855	

All surviving paperwork from over 30 years ago on the subject of "UFOs" previously held by the MOD has now been transferred to the Public Record Office.

I can confirm that as a matter of routine, the MOD was notified by the Civil Aviation Authority about the British Airways pilots' report of 6 January 1995. The information was provided shortly after the incident occurred and was discussed with Departmental air defence experts. As there was no evidence to

suggest anything of defence significance, my Department's interest in the incident ceased thereafter. As is usual with airmiss incidents involving civil aircraft, the CAA Joint Airmiss Working Party (a joint Civil/Military body with complete access to all sources of available civil and military information) investigated the incident. Airmiss Working Group investigations are published and can be obtained from Civil Aviation Authority Printing and Publications, Greville House, 37 Gratton Road, Cheltenham GL50 2BN.

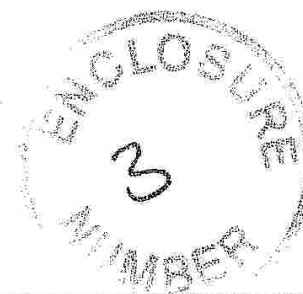
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I hope this explains the position.

JOHN SPELLAR

Ieuan Wyn Jones MP

6414



Wed 18 Jun, 1997 9:29

mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
18/06/97	Hd of CS(RM)1	PE 2106/97	[]

Intended:

Sent: 18/06/97 at 8:34

Delivered: 18/06/97 at 8:36

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC:

Ref: 322

From: Hd of CS(RM)1

Auth by:

Subject: PE 2106/97

Text: attached

Priority: Normal
Reply Request []

SEE PAGE
View Acknowledge [*]

Attachments [1]
Codes []

Loose Minute

CS(RM)/4/6/37

June 1997

Sec(AS)2A1 *

*Chots only

LETTER FROM IEUAN WYN JONES MP - US 2106/97

1. You recall correctly my reviewers have recently alerted me to a small number of files relating to "ufos" (fewer than 50) currently collecting dust in DIS.
2. Further investigation revealed all are relatively recent files, none older than 10 years.
3. I have only one minor change to make to your bold paragraph - the Public Records Office should read Public Record Office.

Section 40
Hd CS(RM)1
MTD8/2 Section 40

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:



Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Serial Number:		Transmission: Date: 16 JUN Time:		Document Reference: 64/4	
From: SEC(AS) Room 8245 MOD MAIN BUILDWG		Fax Number: Section 40		Total number of pages including this one: 1 + 7	
Authorized by: Rank Name Appointment EO Section 40 Sec(AS)2A1		Tel Number: Section 40		To: Section 40 Hd CS(CRM) 1	
Signature: Section 40		Transmitted by: Rank Name Tel Number AO Section 40		Fax Number: Section 40	
Signature: Section 40		Signature: Section 40			

Subject: PE 2106/97

Section 40

Yet another PE I'm afraid.
 Can you confirm the validity of the para in bold in the draft reply. We've used it before but we had a telephone chat a while ago which I recall might call this into question.
 The deadline is Thu 19 June - grateful for a word before then if possible.

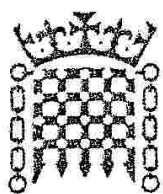
Section 40

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

USAS
Sec(AS)2
UFOs



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

PE: 2107/97

Our ref: IWJ/2/96/137

4 June 1997

The Rt Hon George Robertson MP
Secretary of State for Defence
The Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2HB

Dear Secretary of State

I enclose correspondence I have received from my constituent,
Section 40 [redacted] of Section 40 [redacted] Llangefni, Ynys
Môn, regarding an article in "Focus" magazine on UFO incidents.

I would be grateful if you could let me have your response to
its contents in due course.

Yours sincerely

Section 40 [redacted]

W
MP for Ynys Môn

2/56/137

22 MAY 1997

Section 40

Llangefni

Section 40

18 May, 1997

Ieuan Wyn Jones, MP
House of Commons
London,
SW1A 0AA

Dear Sir:

I would like to draw your attention to a recent article in Focus Magazine (June 1997, p. 70-1) which referred to a number of UFO incidents.

I would be grateful to you if you would make representations on my behalf with the appropriate government departments and ask that all documents relating to these incidents be released for public viewing.

Sincerely,

Section 40

Enclosure: Cuttings from Focus Magazine (June 1997)

Britain's Area 51 revealed... UFOs in military zones

**RAF Neatishead,
Norfolk**

**Late October/Early
November 1980**

A UFO was tracked by radar during night-flying exercises by RAF Phantoms. The uncorrelated target was stationary at 5,000 ft. It then made a series of incredible manoeuvres and jumped to an altitude in excess of 90,000 ft before disappearing. One of the Phantoms was tasked with intercepting the UFO and got to within half a mile of "a very bright light," but before the aircraft could get any closer, the object flew off.

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Bentwaters, Suffolk**

27-29 December 1980

Strange lights in nearby Rendlesham Forest were investigated by USAF patrolmen. As they approached the source of these lights

they noted it was a metallic triangular shape roughly three metres across the base and standing around two metres high.

Unable to determine whether it was hovering or on legs of some kind, their report describes a pulsing red light on the top of the craft with a bank of blue lights underneath. Before they could get any closer it began to move through the trees and vanished.

The following day three depressions were found in the ground where the sighting took place and subsequent independent analysis indicated 10 times the normal level of background radiation in the centre of where the object had been.

Later in the night a moving, pulsing sun-like light was seen to throw off glowing particles before breaking into

pieces that shot skywards and remaining there for some time, darting about and emitting red, green and blue lights. These events were witnessed by several military personnel including the Deputy Base Commander who audio taped a dramatic commentary during his search and filed his official report outlining the events. However, other eye witnesses spoke of even more fantastic happenings including a 30 ft wide 20 ft tall vehicle landing in a nearby field.

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An uncorrelated target was picked up over the North Sea heading toward the airfield at a speed of over 4,000 mph. Twenty miles inland it disappeared.

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12 August 1983**

A local historian and keen angler noticed a vivid light moving towards him as he fished on a canal bank. The bright light went out, but he was still

aware of some illumination. Suddenly two, four-feet-tall beings approached and beckoned him to follow them. Amazingly he did, and found himself climbing into a 40ft disc. He was made to stand under an amber light for minutes before being told: "You can go. You are too old and infirm for our purposes."

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SE Manchester Airport
6 January 1995**

A Boeing 737, with 60 people on board, encountered a high speed, wedge-shaped craft as it approached Manchester airport on a flight from Milan. The captain reported that the UFO had small white lights and a black stripe down one side and flashed silently down the side of the jet so close that his co-pilot involuntarily ducked. The crew had it in sight for a total of about two seconds. There was no apparent sound or wake.

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Jun 97

D R A F T

PE Unit

(thro **Section 40**)

LETTER FROM IEUAN WYN JONES MP - US 2106/97

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Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

D/US/2106/97

June 1997

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AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17527
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AIR 20/9994	AIR 2/17983
PREM 11/855	

 **All surviving paperwork from over 30 years ago on the subject of "UFOs" previously held by the MOD has now been transferred to the Public Records Office.** [*Hd of CS(RM)1: we have used this line before in PEs - is it still correct?*] 

I can confirm that as a matter of routine, the MOD was notified by the Civil Aviation Authority about the British Airways pilots' report of 6 January 1995. The information was provided shortly after the incident occurred and was discussed with

Departmental air defence experts. As there was no evidence to suggest anything of defence significance, my Department's interest in the incident ceased thereafter. As is usual with airmiss incidents involving civil aircraft, the CAA Joint Airmiss Working Party (a joint Civil/Military body with complete access to all sources of available civil and military information) investigated the incident. Airmiss Working Group investigations are published and can be obtained from Civil Aviation Authority Printing and Publications, Greville House, 37 Gratton Road, Cheltenham GL50 2BN.

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I hope this explains the position.

JOHN SPELLAR

Ieuan Wyn Jones MP

Secretariat(Air Staff) Fax: Section 40

** Transmit Conf. Report **

16 Jun '97 15:42

Secretariat(Air Staff)---> Section 40	
No.	4758
Mode	NORMAL
Time	3'49"
Pages	8 Page(s)
Result	OK

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT**TO: SEC GAS/2aPE REF NUMBER: US 2106/97MINISTER REPLYING: USASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 19/6/97DATE: 9/6/97FROM: **Section 40**PE Unit TEL: **Section 40**

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

******* IMPORTANT UPDATES *******

1. Ministerial responsibilities changed.

2. Opening and Closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/John Reid/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"

Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."

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

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

3. Open Government A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 48/1997.

Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. **Always** include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

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

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES**, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40**
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

USAS
Sec(AS)2
UFOs



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Our ref: IWJ/2/96/137

4 June 1997

The Rt Hon George Robertson MP
Secretary of State for Defence
The Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2HB

Dear Secretary of State

I enclose correspondence I have received from my constituent,
Section 40 [redacted] of Section 40 [redacted] Llangefni, Ynys
Môn, regarding an article in "Focus" magazine on UFO incidents.

I would be grateful if you could let me have your response to
its contents in due course.

Yours sincerely

Section 40 [redacted]

W IEUAN WYN JONES
MP for Ynys Môn



2/56/137

22 MAY 1997

Section 40

Llangefni

Section 40

18 May, 1997

Ieuan Wyn Jones, MP
House of Commons
London,
SW1A 0AA

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Sincerely,

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**Late October/Early
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Strange lights in nearby Rendlesham Forest were investigated by USAF patrolmen. As they approached the source of these lights

they noted it was a metallic triangular shape roughly three metres across the base and standing around two metres high.

Unable to determine whether it was hovering or on legs of some kind, their report describes a pulsing red light on the top of the craft with a bank of blue lights underneath. Before they could get any closer it began to move through the trees and vanished.

The following day three depressions were found in the ground where the sighting took place and subsequent independent analysis indicated 10 times the normal level of background radiation in the centre of where the object had been.

Later in the night a moving, pulsing sun-like light was seen to throw off glowing particles before breaking into

pieces that shot skywards and remaining there for some time, darting about and emitting red, green and blue lights. These events were witnessed by several military personnel including the Deputy Base Commander who audio taped a dramatic commentary during his search and filed his official report outlining the events. However, other eye witnesses spoke of even more fantastic happenings including a 30 ft wide 20 ft tall vehicle landing in a nearby field.

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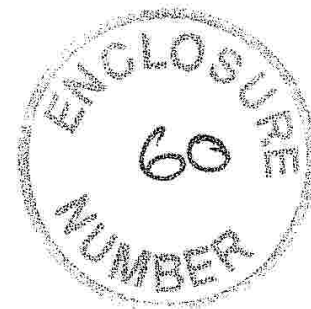
Aldershot, Hampshire
12 August 1983

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aware of some illumination. Suddenly two, four-foot-tall beings approached and beckoned him to follow them. Amazingly he did, and found himself climbing into a 40ft disc. He was made to stand under an amber light for minutes before being told: "You can go. You are too old and infirm for our purposes."

**Pennines, 8-9 miles
SE Manchester Airport**
6 January 1995

A Boeing 737, with 60 people on board, encountered a high speed, wedge-shaped craft as it approached Manchester airport on a flight from Milan. The captain reported that the UFO had small white lights and a black stripe down one side and flashed silently down the side of the jet so close that his co-pilot involuntarily ducked. The crew had it in sight for a total of about two seconds. There was no apparent sound or wake.



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

17 Jun 97

Section 40

PE Uni

(thro

LETTER FROM DR ALAN WILLIAMS MP - US 2076/97

1. This is the second time Section 40 has raised this issue with his MP. Dr Alan Williams wrote to the then USofS at the turn of the year. A copy of Earl Howe's reply to him (D/USofS/FH5119/96P of 22 January) has been included in the file of papers supporting this second approach.

2. In his initial approach Section 40 sought information on alleged 'UFO' sightings in the Cardigan Bay area on 21 Nov 96 and, assuming these events to be soundly based, posed a number of questions about them. He gave weight to his assumptions by commenting that:

- Dyfed-Powys police were reported to be co-operating with the RAF and their 'UFO unit';
- MOD denied there was any military activity in the area.

Section 40 also wrote in similar terms to the military staff at the London Air Traffic Control Centre, West Drayton seeking information about what they had observed on their radar. There is nothing new in his latest approach to his MP.

3. The Air Defence Staffs confirmed that on the day in question there was no unusual air defence activity, no penetration of the UK Air Defence Region, no unknown aircraft activity on any military radars and that no Quick Reaction Alert aircraft (QRAs) had been scrambled. Three reports of alleged 'UFO' sightings were received by Sec(AS) for 21 Nov 96 but these were for the Twickenham area, two-three miles off Newhaven/Brighton, and Althorpe near Scunthorpe. There were no reports from, or about, the Cardigan Bay area. The Aberporth Range danger area extends into Cardigan Bay and the Range regularly fires air-to-air missiles (on average two each week). On 21 Nov 96 two missiles were fired, the first at 1045 hrs and the second at 1529 hrs. Neither of these firings accord with the timings of the reported 'UFO' sightings (1610 hrs, 2045 hrs and 2110 hrs) and we cannot, therefore, suggest any connection. The position has not changed since we last looked into this matter.

4. As USofS will recall, the MOD examines any reports of "unidentified flying objects" received 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. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, (no "UFO" report to date has revealed such evidence), the Department does not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us.

5. Dr Williams has asked that we comment on the questions which **Section 40** sought to have tabled in the House. There were several authorized military low level flying sorties which took place in the area on the day in question at times which roughly accorded with the sightings. Records are not held in a way that would enable military aircraft flying at medium level to be identified.

6. We are unable to provide details of civil air traffic that might have been in the area at the time (aircraft, microlights, gliders, balloons etc). In the circumstances we could only speculate on what Mr Alexander might have seen.

7. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40



Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

D/US/2076/97

June 1997

Thank you for your letter (ref: 97/6/97/AS) of 2 June addressed to George Robertson enclosing correspondence from **Section 40** of **Section 40** Carmarthen, about a "UFO" sighting in West Wales on 21 November 1996. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

As you may know, my Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported event. 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.

I note from the file of papers you forwarded with your letter that my predecessor wrote to you in January about **Section 40** concerns. I can confirm that routine low level military flying training was authorised in the area concerned on the day in question. This may therefore account for some of the reports. It

remains the case, however, that there was no evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised by unauthorized foreign military activity.

I am sorry that I cannot be more helpful.

JOHN SPELLAR

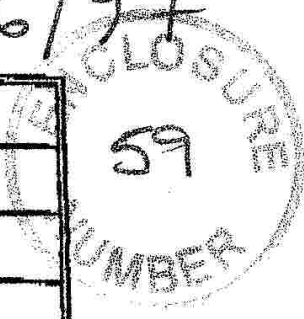
Dr Alan Williams MP

64/4

→ PE 2076/97

LOG&TRACE

DATE	LFA	BASE	TYPE	TIME IN	TIME OUT	HT
21/NOV	7	Clashed LBR	LYNX	1450	1630	100
1610		---	---	1430	1620	---
		---	---	1420	1600	GL
	Mahan	MR	TORN	1552 1614	1607 1630	250
	Leaming	LI	2XF3	1520	1620	250
	M	MR	TORN	1610	1620	250
	lynchan	NSSD	LA	2043	2111	250



PE 2076/97

Log + Trace: 21 Nov 96

- 1. 1610 hrs CARDIGAN BAY or
- 2. 2045 hrs Surrounding areas.
- 3. 2110 hrs ← NONE

WFA 7

SN165/ ~~NSSD~~

Section 40

① Yes, can the Complaints cell do a log and trace.

② Can you check (not to put in the draft) if Aberporth fired air to air or ground to air (or even air to ground) missiles on that day.

Section 40

Says, with this report, I've got it wrong!

Classification
 Caveat
 Covering

F Sigs 927
 (Int.9/92)

Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Transmission Details		Document Details	
Serial Number:	Date and Time of Transmission:	Reference:	
From: OC FCF HQ P&SS(UK)	Fax Number Section 40 Ext. Section 40 GPTN Section 40	Subject: TRACES for Sangib	
To: Sec AS 2b	Fax Number:	Total number of pages including this cover sheet	
Authorizing Officer		Transmit Operators	
Rank, Name and Appointment:		Rank/Grade and Name:	
Signature: Section 40		Signature:	

Message/Remarks:

Covering
 Caveat

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT**TO: SEC(AS) 2aPE REF NUMBER: US 2076/97MINISTER REPLYING: USOFSDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 17/6/97DATE: 5/6/97FROM: **Section 40**

PE Unit

TEL: **Section 40**

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

******* IMPORTANT UPDATES *******

1. Ministerial responsibilities changed.

2. Opening and Closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/John Reid/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"

Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."

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

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

3. Open Government A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 48/1997.

Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

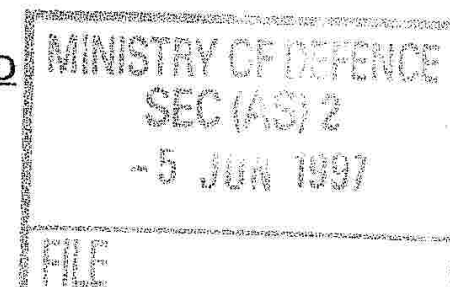
Ministers place great importance on the content style and speed of the replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. **Always** include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

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

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40****
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD





HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

USAFS 207c
Sec (AS) 2/a
UFOs
① - 5/19/96

Ref: 97/6.97/AS

2nd June 1997

Rt. Hon. George Robertson M.P.,
Secretary of State,
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Whitehall,
London.
SW1A 2HB

Dear George,

I am writing on behalf of **Section 40** Carmarthen, who came to see me in a surgery last week. **Section 40** tells me that on 21st November 1996, there was a UFO sighted in West Wales. Enclosed is a report of many witnesses' comments. I would be grateful for your comments on the enclosures.

He also told me that there were three questions that he wanted me to table as Written Parliamentary Questions. I explained that I am a total non-believer in UFO's and could not table such questions in my name, but that I would send them to you by letter for reply. I would be grateful for your comments on the questions and on the enclosures.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Dr. Alan Williams

M.P. for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
- 4 JUN 1997
3746135 MAIN BLDG

SUGGESTED PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Has the ^{Secretary} ~~Minister~~ of State for Defence received + read the report prepared on the activities of one or more low-flying triangular craft over mid-west Wales on the evening of 21/11/96 and would he make a statement.

Will the S&S4D inform the House of the identity of the above craft, including its nationality together with the purpose of its flight over Mid Wales on the evening in question. + NHMAS.

Will the S&S4D, in view of the flying characteristics of this craft, i.e. the apparent discharge of intense lights at frequent intervals at very low heights, enforce a ban on such flights in future, or at least issue public warnings in advance of such flights as is the case with normal RAF low-flying exercises - NHMAS.

THE WEST WALES PARANORMAL GROUP

(affiliated to The Welsh Federation of Independent Ufologists)

Section 40 [redacted] Cardiganshire, Section 40 [redacted]

Tel: Section 40 [redacted] - Tel/Fax: Section 40 [redacted] - (Media: Section 40 [redacted])

email: Section 40 [redacted]

Organiser: Section 40 [redacted] Press Officer: Section 40 [redacted]

TRIANGULAR CRAFT

U.S. SIGHTING REPORTS FOR 1995

The following sighting reports of triangular objects for 1995 were extracted from data available at the National UFO Reporting Centre web site by **Section 40**

Further information on these mysterious craft is available at The UFO Phenomenon

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DETAILS
1/01/95	22:00	Shelton, WA	CA woman visiting daughter witness discs and triangular ships over Squaxin Island in Puget Sound. Dramatic.
1/03/95	5:00	Gladstone, OR	Woman witnessed triangular ship with white & blue lights. She & neighbors witnessed 5 ships. Reported military jets in area.
1/03/95	18:00	Marysville, WA	Young man sees large triangular ship with blue & white lights moving slowly in night. Set off to north.
1/04/95	0:54	Rodney, MI	Mother & daughter witness approx. 10 triangular object hovering in sky, beaming lights to ground. Calls 911
1/07/95	5:00	Makapiu Point, HI	Man and wife observe bizarre hump-backed, triangular object hover over sea. Had opaque windows. Humming.
1/21/95	21:50	Seymour, TN	A man and his fiancée witnessed gigantic triangle hovering in the night sky. Red & blue belly lights. Good report.
1/22/95	20:00	Seattle, WA	Man witnesses triangular object with dull, or "subdued" lights streak overhead.
1/30/95	20:29	Harrisburg, PA	County Emergency Agency supervisor receives call regarding triangular ship, seen to emit three beams of light.
2/21/95	19:00	Council Bluffs, IA	Young man sees 3 solid lights; pulls off highway. Sees gigantic, gray triangle with "archways." Good report, excellent drawing.
2/26/95	20:00	Tallassee, TN	FAA empl. & pilot reports seeing triangular ships with bizarre lights. Over mountainous country.
3/11/95	3:00	Chesapeake, VA	Man witnessed orange triangular object with light in center pass overhead. Surrounded by 20 red objects. Very high.

3/25/95 23:10 Salinas, CA Man & wife hear approaching "thumping" sound. See two bright red, pulsing triangles in sky fly from NW.

4/13/95 23:07 Brooklyn, AR Witness reports huge, brilliantly bright triangle passes overhead. Lit up area, hovered, turned, streaked off.

4/23/95 3:45 99 mile Exit/I-5, WA Truck driver reports witnessing "elongated triangle, almost transparent" in morning sky. Traversed 60 deg. of sky quickly.

5/12/95 22:50 Duarte, CA Young woman reports triangular ship suspended in SE sky, three smaller lights below larger object. Objects fly off.

5/13/95 21:40 Framingham, MA Woman reports triangular ship flies overhead, stops, hovers. Simply "winked out." Object very bright. First sighting for her.

6/11/95 17:15 Tacoma, WA 3 adults witness "white balloon" to south. Then witness 3 triangular-shaped objects nearby. They slowly drift into clouds.

7/09/95 23:00 Versailles, MO Multiple witnesses observe huge triangular ship, surrounded by four disc-shaped ships, with up to 50 bizarre creatures underneath!

7/27/95 23:20 Rochester, NY Two men driving on major highway witness a strange triangle overhead with red, green, & yellow lights directly overhead. Flew slowly.

7/29/95 22:30 Culver City, CA Woman sits outside to witness aircraft. Sees a large "triangular-shaped object with pastel lights on edge" pass slowly overhead.

8/15/95 4:30 Tacoma, WA Woman & friend witness "yellowish, whitish triangular object" suddenly appear in morning sky. "Popped out of nowhere." Just disappears.

8/20/95 21:35 Culver City, CA Woman hears peculiar roaring sound, goes outside and witnesses "triangular craft" fly overhead.

8/29/95 21:45 La Habra, CA Man sees 2 triangles hovering in night sky. They dim, get brighter. (All facts not available.)

9/10/95 22:00 Auburn, WA Young woman sees "black boomerang with dim lights" descend in sky. Then, she with 5 friends, see triangular ship with 5 lights hovering.

9/24/95 20:25 Boise, ID Woman calls to report seeing large, triangular-shaped, black mass hovering, moving slowly. Son sees same thing

from different location.

9/24/95 20:45 Scappoose, OR	Three young people witness a triangular-shaped craft hovering nearby. Craft had 2 white lights, 1 red. Maneuvered slowly.
10/22/95 19:35 Auburn, CA	Young girl with friends witness bizarre "triangle with 3 red, dim lights," streak across sky. Strobed bright light. Scared.
11/03/95 Albany, NY	Man reports witnessing triangular shaped craft pass overhead on NO 03, 04, & 05. Illuminated clouds; changed shape!
11/17/95 22:25 Lower Nazareth, PA	Woman witnesses huge, triangular-shaped ship, covered with bizarre lights, "like traffic lights." Very dramatic sighting.
11/18/95 1:15 Muskegon, MI	Woman reports daughter encountered intensely bright red, triangular object sitting on side of road. Object rose, disappeared suddenly.
11/19/95 20:45 Holton, KS	Youth with friend pursue on Highway 16 "triangular thing in sky, with yellow, blue, and green" lights. Object turned abruptly, flew north.
12/06/95 17:00 Bothell, WA	Father & daughter driving in car witness "beautiful electric blue" triangular shaped object in evening sky. Flipped on side, maneuvered.
12/20/95 23:50 Schnecksville, PA	Man & daughter witness triangular object with very bright white lights on the corners, 1 red light in the center. Object circled their home!

This page last updated: Wednesday, 07-May-97 02:07:17 EDT

~~1997 Reports~~ ~~Contacts~~

TRIANGULAR CRAFT

U.S. SIGHTING REPORTS FOR 1996

The following sighting reports of triangular objects for 1996 were extracted from data available at the National UFO Reporting Centre web site.

Further information on these mysterious craft is available at The UFO Phenomenon.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DETAILS
2/01/96	21:00	Big Pine, CA	Woman sees large triangular object with white sparks pouring off its nose pass over Highway 395, disappear to East. Twice size of moon.
2/18/96	2:05	Cedar Springs, MI	Man & wife witness three strange lights near their rural home. They exhibited red, green, and white light; formed a triangle.
2/19/96	22:44	Whidbey Island, WA	Three adults see triangular shaped object, with 4 very bright white lights, streak to the East. Emphasized brightness of light, humming sound.
3/20/96	21:00	Seattle, WA	Young woman & 2 friends witness 3 lights overhead, arranged in a triangular pattern. Suddenly, a 4th light appears. Not aircraft.
3/24/96	20:10	Austin, TX	Commercial pilot & friend on Austin airport see "triad of white lights" streak directly over airport. "Speed was incredible." Radar neg..
3/26/96	21:45	Thousand Oaks, CA	Man & wife in hot tub see 2 "tiny triangles" streak from South to North directly overhead, as fast as "shooting star." Silent; yellow color.
4/12/96	22:08	Baltimore, MD	Man sees formation of 10-12 dimly lit amber lights in wedge-formation pass E to W overhead at VERY high speed, like shooting star. (A formation or one object? - John)
5/04/96	5:30	Morris, MI	Woman sees delta-shaped ship w/ convex bottom & 3 prominent lights over house. Illuminates entire yard with light beam. Frightened by it.
5/21/96	23:58	Charleston, IL	Four youth camping witness big white light, then huge triangular craft with 2 red lights on side. Object illuminated them with spotlight.
6/12/96	12:15	Seattle, WA	Two young men, unloading van, see 3x pinpoints of light streak directly overhead.

Arranged in a triangular shape.

11/16/96 22:00 Riverside, NJ

Woman & daughter see V-shaped obj. w/
red/blue/green lights streak across sky,
stop dead, hover.
Many neighbors witness object.

11/17/96 Grandview, MO

Multiple residents see 2x large triangles
w/ lights & fireball behind it fly over,
call 911.
Police choppers respond; neg.. Loud. TV.

11/17/96 2:30 Arcadia, CA

2x young men see large triangular obj.
w/ lights on corners. Dips, rises, several
times, then STREAKS to W.
Had "shimmering effect."

12/29/96 19:00 Hartsburg, MO

Relayed rept.: 2x men trapping witness
silent, black triangular obj. overhead.
3-4 white strobe lights; blue & red lights.
No sound.

This page last updated: Wednesday, 07-May-97 02:07:20 EDT

~~Home~~ ~~Search~~ ~~Contact~~

THE WEST WALES PARANORMAL GROUP

(affiliated to The Wales Federation of Independent Ufologists)

Section 40, Ceredigion, Section 40
Tel: Section 40 - Tel/Fax: Section 40 - (Media: Section 40)
email: Section 40
Organiser: Section 40 Media & Research: Section 40

Summary Report of the UFO Sightings in Mid and West Wales, 21st Nov 1996, as reported to the West Wales Paranormal Group.

Introduction

The following is a report into unusual atmospheric and aerial phenomena which was observed in Mid and West Wales on the evening of 21st November 1996. The phenomenon is popularly known as The Flying Triangle or Black Triangle - a type of UFO which has been sighted elsewhere in Wales as well as many countries throughout the world since the early 1980's and possibly earlier.

Our sources have included signed witness reports and personal interviews with witnesses. We have found no evidence of collusion in these reports, most witnesses were totally amazed at the quantity of corroborative evidence gathered for this report. We have omitted the names of witnesses to respect their privacy but many have readily agreed to subsequent investigation by other bona fide researchers. Please contact us for further details.

We would like to express our thanks to everyone who contacted us in regard to these events and to those public services who patiently answered our enquiries - even if it was only to say that they knew nothing about the events. We would also like to express our thanks to the journalists and staff on the local newspapers who printed the initial stories and helped in our enquiries, without whom this report would have been considerably less comprehensive. We look forward to the day when such reports can be published without ridiculous and sensationalist headlines and without the ludicrous "explanations" by so-called 'experts' that inevitably follow in subsequent issues!

We would also like to thank the staff at the Ministry of Defence, but unfortunately the standard response we received from them proved to be of little assistance. It seems inconceivable that the RAF were unaware of this craft as it flew around Mid and West Wales for several hours - or if they weren't then they simply are not doing their job properly. It seems probable that they are instructed to stay well clear of these craft, possibly due to the electro-magnetic discharges. It is also possible that the craft operates at night and at such low altitude as to avoid collisions with civil aircraft. The MoD response therefore can be seen to be correct only if they have prior knowledge of these otherwise unidentified craft - however they have said elsewhere that they do not operate an aircraft recognition service and therefore feel under no obligation to identify "UFO"s even if they could. Perhaps such obstructionism is part of the "deal"?

We'd also like to thank everyone who has attended meetings of the West Wales Paranormal Group at New Quay, Aberaeron and Lampeter, some of whose experiences are recorded here. For details of future meetings phone Section 40. We also hope to be able to publish all our other UFO sightings from 1996, together with those from earlier years that have recently been made known to us.

We would like to make it clear that although this evening's sightings were unusual in their number, that we do not consider the area to have been especially favoured in the quantity of sightings - the East Midlands have seen a large number of them - and the Belgian sightings from the early 1990's involved thousands of witnesses. We would also like to point out that we would initially pursue a

rational and terrestrial explanation for this Flying Triangle phenomena (and UFO's in general) and would not suggest an extra-terrestrial explanation without some positive evidence for it.

If you have any information regarding these sightings or any other interesting "paranormal" phenomena then either phone the number above or write to us at **Section 40** [REDACTED] Ceredigion, **Section 40**

Sightings

Swansea Area

4.10 pm. Witnesses saw a large elliptical shape craft, with tailfin, pass through the air at approx 2,000 ft moving in a N/NE direction over Swansea. The object was travelling at normal jet speed and had a white smoke trail behind it. The object glowed white and was not clearly defined around the edges. It was brighter than the moon when it passed in front of it. Weather was reasonably clear, with the sun setting in the west. There were several witnesses, one of whom viewed the object through binoculars, and stated that no wings were visible on the craft. Size unknown. No positive identification forthcoming but it was possibly a normal airliner dazzling in the setting sunlight ?

Cardigan Area

6.00 - 6.30 pm. Three witnesses were driving in their car from Dinas to Cardigan, near Eglwswrw, in a NE direction. What sounded like two aerial objects with flashing red and green lights flew low and slow over the car. The Shape(s) was uncertain but the lights were described as being "Christmas Tree" like. When the craft/s was passing over the car it emitted a loud noise "a bit like a jet". No positive identification was forthcoming but it could just possibly be the two Hercules transport planes seen near New Quay although the times of the sightings are inconsistent.

7.30 pm. Two witnesses in a car saw a low flying triangular shaped craft flying S/SE from Cardigan Bay coast over Mwnt and Penparc, between Cardigan and Aberporth. Initially they just saw flashing blue and red lights in the sky but as the craft passed over their car they could clearly make out the triangular shape. As the craft flew further on it glowed yellow and then suddenly "shot off, like a bullet towards the Preseli hills" (S/SW direction.) A few minutes later the craft then returned (witnesses presumption) and hovered over the car before disappearing extremely quickly once again. N.B. a possibility of two separate craft must now be considered in view of this and other witnesses accounts and the correspondences as stated.

8.45 pm. The second witness initially heard a loud rumbling noise and thought it was an aircraft flying extremely low - perhaps about to crash. The witness ran into the back garden which is in village of Penparc. She looked up to see a large triangular shaped craft flying slowly overhead. The craft was described as having rounded corners, black underneath and having grey sides. It was surrounded in an orange glow which clearly silhouetted the craft. There were red and blue lights in the tips, with a secondary flashing light following (i.e. detached) from the craft. A fairly clear description of the Flying Triangle "UFO".

8.50 - 9.20 pm. A driver initially saw a bright flashing orange/yellow light seawards off the Cardigan to Penparc road on way home. On arriving at home in Penparc his family watched the flashes for a while. They seemed to be every 5 minutes or so. No sound was heard. No positive identification was possible. The witnesses said the flashes were definitely not lightning. No storms were reported in the area.

9.00 pm. Witness, 3 miles north of Glandwr (7 miles south of Cardigan) saw a bright flash of light outside. Went out of the house to investigate and saw intermittent very bright flashes, approx 2 seconds in duration. They were seen in a northerly direction which lit up the surrounding cloud. The weather was clear and definitely not lightning. There was a 5 minute pause between the groups of flashes.

9.30 pm. Cardigan Bus Depot. Witness saw flashing blue, red and yellow lights which lit up the surrounding white clouds very clearly. The flashing lasted about 10 minutes and was accompanied by "crackling like static". Not a storm.

Aberystwyth Area

8.50 pm. A witness in Rhydyfelen, just south of Aberystwyth, saw an object out of his living room window. It was travelling extremely fast and very low over the roof tops. The object appeared to have a white light at the front and a red light to the rear, this appeared to merge as the craft was moving so fast. No sound was heard, the object moved very rapidly and out of sight towards the sea (W).

9.10 pm. Witness in Rhydyfelen saw a brilliant white column of light, "about 10 times higher than it was wide", for 2/3 seconds about 2 miles out into Cardigan Bay. It was reported to the police as she felt it could be a distress flare. No ships or boats were at sea at the time. The following day the local police reported that they had been contacted by police in Hereford to say that an identical column of light had been seen there at the same time - no further information available.

Time unknown (before 9.30 pm). Sub-editor with local paper talked to someone in Aberystwyth who had seen a bright light in the sky overhead.

10.30 - 11.00 pm. Two witnesses at Llanbadarn Fawr saw a large grey mass flying along the valley tops of the Rheidol Valley. The object was emitting a slowly pulsating streak of light. It flew in an arc out into Cardigan Bay where it was seen to hover in a pillar of light. The object made several circles of Aberystwyth during the 30 minutes it was observed. Diameter of circles was approx. 15 - 20 miles. Movement of the object described as being a mile or so at a time on each pulse of horizontal light (much brighter than sheet lightning.) The flashes were between 1 - 3 seconds long, sometimes there were multiple flashes between 3 - 7 seconds in duration. No sound was heard. The object's speed was said to be much faster than a normal jet, almost too fast for the naked eye to track. Object finally disappeared off towards Nant-y-moch and the Hafren Forest. Weather described as hazy with 25% cloud cover, dry with a light breeze and near freezing temperature.

Cardigan Bay Coast

Time unknown. Two witnesses in Aberaeron contacted the local coastguard on seeing bright flashes going off in Cardigan Bay. Coastguards arrived after flashes had stopped and assumed the flashes were lightning. No storm was reported in the area.

Time unknown. Witness at Llangrannog reported seeing bright white flashes going off over Cardigan Bay every few seconds.

5.30-6.30 pm several separate witnesses saw 2 RAF Hercules transport planes flying low, they were following each other closely together and at moderate speed. They were seen near New Quay travelling up the coast (S-N) towards Aberystwyth. n.b. this single report is included for information but is not considered to be related to the other sightings neither do we consider that the Hercules were mistaken for the FT by any witnesses. There is a possibility that they might have been sent as 'decoys' to conveniently account for any forthcoming UFO reports but admittedly, we have no evidence to support this.

8 - 9 pm (uncertain) witness left his house at top of the hill in Ffosyffin, he saw the horizon brilliantly lit up about 20 miles out to sea. The white light seemed to have a "central core" and was "sitting over the horizon". There was continuous illumination for 30 secs-1 minute. He called his father who also witnessed the light and shortly afterwards they spoke to several others who had also seen the light/s.

9.10 - 9.15 pm Driver going North to Aberystwyth at Llanrhystud saw a bright white flash that lit up the sky for two seconds. Definitely not lightning. No sound.

10.10 pm. Driver at Llanon, coming south on coast road, saw an enormous burst of white light to his right (i.e. seawards), like a 1,000 fireworks going off at once. No sound.

Teifi Valley

9.0 - 9.30 pm.(approx). Bright flashes of light seen behind Adpar hill by witnesses in Newcastle Emlyn (i.e. to the East).

9.30 pm.(approx) Driver and four passengers were on route to Llanybydder from Pencader, approx 1 mile from home when they spotted a moving white light low over the tree tops moving an NE direction. Initially thought this was a shooting star but it was too low and lasted too long and was too slow. As object moved across sky it changed to an orange colour before disappearing in a brilliant white flash. Witnesses thought it may have been a plane crashing so investigated area but nothing was found. No sound heard.

- 9.20 pm. Bright flashes of light seen westward of Llanfair Clydogau by witness while driving, approx 700 feet above sea level (NE of Lampeter). Had a panoramic view over the area. Particularly noticed two very bright flashes close together.

9.45 pm. Driver in the vicinity of Llandewi Brefi (NE of Lampeter) saw a bright white flash illuminate the sky and the surrounding area and was almost blinded by it. Then saw a second flash, not so intense, further to the north. Thought the light had come from an adjacent field about 100 yards further on the right and had the impression that there may have been a rectangular object. Clear night, no thunder or other noise heard.

Shrewsbury / Welshpool / Machynlleth

Driver going home from Birmingham to Aberystwyth area. 10.00 pm saw a bright green "star" descending vertically on the horizon in the direction of Shrewsbury (i.e. to the West). Further along the A5 came across a police diversion due to what looked like deliberately spilled pile of sand. Diversion took them through Shrewsbury and back on to the A5 and thence the A458. As they approached the Trewern Bridge (5 miles NE of Welshpool) they saw the first in a series of extremely bright, bluey white flashes that projected upwards from behind the hills to their right (i.e. North). The flashes continued every 4/5 minutes until they reached the east side of Welshpool, when they seemed to be left behind. Witnesses bewildered! 30 minutes later, in the Mallwyd area, 3 very bright flashes dazzled witnesses. This time flashes came from in front of them (i.e. West) as well as behind the hills to their right (i.e. North). Witness also reported seeing several military helicopters flying in a "hurried fashion" during the drive home - exact location unknown.

Subsequent Investigation

As one of the initial explanations for the flashing lights had been that there was an electrical storm in the area, the Met Office were contacted. According to their records there was no report of a storm that night, although they said they could not rule one out. No witnesses in the entire area heard any thunder that evening, nor was there any rain. Weather was generally described as "clear", with patchy cloud. It seems impossible that a storm could traverse such a wide area and not give any rain or thunder. Furthermore, many witnesses described the flashes as coming from ground level and the range of colours and length of flashes is atypical of a storm. Conclusion is simple. No storm.

As much of the area is designated as a Military low-flying and missile testing area it seemed a good idea to contact the Ministry of Defence. They simply trotted out the usual line about there being "no UFO sighting reported in the area at the time *that was considered to be of defence significance*" and that "there was no unusual air defence activity, no penetration by hostile military aircraft of the UK Air Defence Region, no unknown aircraft activity on any military radars and that no Quick Reaction Alert Aircraft were scrambled".

Incidentally, such quotations as worded above would prove useful if and when such time arises as a new technology craft is announced as the MoD could simply truthfully say that, "yes - it was not unidentified" (we knew), and "yes - it was not of defence significance" (it was one of ours)! With a 'secret-technology' hypothesis the answer would both be true and logical whilst neatly sidestepping the real issue - another indication of the usual modus operandi of the MoD.

The MoD did inform us that two air-to-air missiles had been fired from Aberporth testing station that morning but this, of course, would not have been at the relevant time. There also seems to be a contradiction in there being a ground-based firing range firing an air-to-air missile but this may well have been a typographical error. In any event, the missiles would probably have been fired from land or sea along the Cardigan Bay coast into Cardigan Bay and certainly not towards land. Interestingly, the Aberystwyth Police informed us that two RAF Hercules aircraft had been seen in the area on the day but unfortunately they could not confirm the time for this. Hercules are known for low-flying in this area and may be responsible for some UFO sightings involving small flashing aerial lights. However, to our knowledge, they have never been associated with the huge brilliant white flashes nor the Flying Triangle-type-craft as seen by many witnesses. It is interesting that the MoD did not report the existence of the low flying Hercules.

We were unable to find out if there were any civilian aircraft, blimps or so forth in the air. However, it would seem unlikely for them to be around during the night at low altitude in a designated RAF low-flying area. Aberystwyth police claimed that a civilian pilot on an inward bound transatlantic flight contacted Air Traffic Control at Heathrow asking about bright flashes of light but ATC referred us to the military ATC at West Drayton and no information on this has been forthcoming.

Initial news reports on the radio the following day claimed that local police and the "RAF UFO Unit" were investigating UFO reports from West Wales, the Midlands and Herefordshire. We were unable to get further information as to the source of this news. It is possible that the witness in Hereford, mentioned above, may have been responsible as he is a radio producer for the local radio station. It seems unbelievable that this news would have been given out if there had been an easy explanation for the sightings. None of the local police stations contacted gave any indication of having been contacted by a "RAF UFO Unit" or of there having been any official enquiry.

So officially we drew a complete blank - nobody was willing to give us information other than to follow the official line that nothing happened that night. None of the police stations contacted reported having received any calls from the public (other than Aberystwyth with one single report) nor that any of their officers had seen anything unusual whilst on duty that night.

And yet we have 18 reports, many of them by multiple witnesses of seeing something very unusual happening in the skies of mid and west Wales on the evening of 21st November 1996. Although it is possible that the two earliest reports are unrelated to the main events (although Omar Fowler subsequently informed us that there had indeed been elliptical craft - with tailfins - sighted in the Midlands only a week or two prior to our report!) it still leaves 16 reports which are all unexplained, other than that they all are consistent with the Flying Triangle "UFO" reports that have been compiled by various sources, in particular Omar Fowler's Phenomena Research Association.

Correspondences of reports on 21st Nov sightings with other reports.

Shape. Two reports of witnesses clearly identified the outline of a triangular craft. One of those reports also gave the rounded corners which are sometimes characteristic of these craft.

Sound. In general there was no sound associated with the reports, with the exception of the low overflight at Penparc, when a loud rumbling noise was heard. This is typical of other reports, the Flying Triangle is normally silent unless one is directly underneath it and it is flying slow and low.

Lights. These can be divided into three groups: white flashes, coloured flashes and orange glow.

One of the most outstanding "trademarks" of Flying Triangle reports are brilliant, almost blinding white flashes. These usually, but not always occur when the craft rapidly accelerates or decelerates. These often occur in pairs as it appears the craft often hovers or flies very slowly for 5 minutes or so before taking off in a flash at tremendous speed only to "stop on a sixpence" 5 seconds later. Several witnesses saw two closely timed flashes, some distance apart.

Besides these flashes, several witnesses saw flashing red and blue lights. Note that normal aircraft operating at night have continuously flashing anti-collision and navigation lights, which are red, white and green. These are never extremely bright and do not go on only every 5 minutes or so. Whatever the Flying Triangle is, it does not conform to standard aeronautical practice! There are numerous variations between observed lights coming from FT's but blue and red are quite common, along with green, yellow and white. Lights in the tips are also a common feature as is a white light on the leading tip and an orange one in the centre.

Finally the yellow/orange glow that direct observers of the craft saw, just prior in two cases, to its taking off in a flash. Again this is standard for the FT, it would appear that the orange/yellow glow could represent some form of "Charging-up" of the air around the craft to enable rapid acceleration.

Electro-magnetic disturbances. One witness reported that the air seemed charged with static. Again not uncommon, and perhaps indicative that the motive power for these craft is not conventional jet power.

Following lights. Initially this sounded very unusual but Omar Fowler's booklet actually reports many such lights, sometimes singular, as in the Penparc report, sometimes multiple.

Speed. Our reports are again very typical of FT phenomena. It would appear that the craft operate in two modes: hovering or slow (50 - 100 knots) and extremely fast (speed unknown but appears to disappear "in a flash" with no appreciable transition between the two (seemingly inertia-free). Again this is not conventionally possible either in terms of propulsion devices or in terms of the inertial effect on possible crew members (the g forces would, in a conventional aircraft would cause a blackout or even totally squash the crew not to mention the probability of wrecking the machine itself!)

Operating height. For some reason these craft spend most of their time flying at very low altitude. Typical phrases are "just above the roof-tops", "behind the hills" and so forth. Given the speed that these craft operate at when accelerating (which most estimate to be well in excess of Mach 1 - yet no sonic boom!) this would appear to be extremely dangerous, yet there is no evidence that there is any way the crew (if any) can see where they are going - no cockpits are sighted and the edges of the craft appear to be solid. Logos or insignia are not seen, Neither are any aerials, masts or other normal distinguishing features. A further consideration is that if, as seems likely, the craft operates within an intense electro-magnetic field, then conventional magnetic compasses, radar and radio would be appear to be useless, so how the craft navigates and tracks other craft in the area and communicates (if it indeed does so) remains a mystery. It is possible that navigation is by an inertial system and that some form of laser or microwave-based digital pulsed communication system is involved. This may also account for the lack of IFF transponder response which has been alleged in other encounters with the craft.

Size. No witnesses were able to give a reliable estimate of the size. One, possibly of "jet airliner size" in length, is the closest report given for the 21st November sighting. From other sources we know that many other witnesses have seen craft of this type and shape ranging in size from 30 feet to 700 feet in length. In some cases even quoted as "the size of a football pitch"! The accuracy in judging the size would greatly depend on an accurate judgement on the height of the craft above the observer. This can be particularly difficult against a dark sky with no other point of reference especially if the craft perhaps has some special kind of non-reflective 'stealthy' coating.

Time and Date. Although these craft have been seen in daytime and summer, they are most commonly seen in the evening during the hours of darkness in autumn and winter, as was the case with our reports.

Conclusion

Mid and West Wales were definitely visited by one or more (probably two) craft of the "Flying Triangle" type on the evening of 21st November 1996.

Speculation on the Identity of the Flying Triangle "UFO".

There are two schools of thought about these craft. Either they are "Our Secret Technology", that is they are terrestrial in design, manufacture and operation or they are extra-terrestrial in some or all of those aspects.

There can be no doubt that whichever is true, the Flying Triangle is more typical of other "UFOs" than it is of any publicly known terrestrial aircraft type in either design, propulsion or use. All of the reported characteristics of the FT are familiar to anyone who has studied the 'UFO' phenomenon and their variously differing designs and characteristics. This similarity would suggest a common source and/or propulsion system.

Nearly all "UFOs" manage to combine the ability to move practically silently, apart from a humming/whirring noise when very close to the observer; the ability to change speed and direction in an instant; a range of speeds from hovering and very slow upwards to extremely fast - some claim above Mach 10; they often give off electro-magnetic effects, including interference with TVs and radios, car electrics etc; they are often seen to be inside a glowing (usually red/orange/yellow) field of, presumably electrically charged/ionised air; their arrival and departure is often spectacularly bright and rapid and so forth.

In short all these craft, including the Flying Triangle, appear to be propelled by an some form of electro-magnetic device which also could possibly act as an anti-gravity force-field providing for inertia-free acceleration/deceleration and flight. Rather than this speculation being a flight of fancy (forgive the pun), it is understood, for example, that ARCO together with Japanese scientists test-flew an aircraft 150 miles in Canada in 1987 using a microwave energy source and that theoretically, an aircraft powered in this way would be able to fly almost indefinitely provided the power continued to be beamed at it. It is worthy of note that many reports of the 'next generation' stealth aircraft suggest that they are remotely piloted vehicles (RPV's) with virtual reality control from the ground, via satellite or from conventional aeroplanes such as the AWACS-type 747 - more probably a combination of the three. This would alleviate the problems associated with high g-force effects on pilots.

It seems bizarre that if this is terrestrial technology that has been around for 50 years, at least, nobody has been found to be manufacturing or designing such craft (or paying for them!) Similarly, they might need to be crewed (unless remotely controlled) and certainly maintained but again nobody has come forward to claim to have done so. Furthermore, before such craft would have been built

the underlying technology and scientific theory would need to have been publicly discussed to ensure that the project was viable.

With regard to the Flying Triangle in particular, these have been around for at least 10 years in their present designs, and have been very widely reported when flying around - yet where do they come from, where are they based? It is believed that British Aerospace have prototype scaled-down versions of this design operating from Wharton in Lancashire, but they are a mere 30 feet long and have only been flying for a year at the most. It seems most unlikely that BAe would build full-scale aircraft of such an unconventional design, operate them and then only afterwards, build the scaled down prototypes!

Project Aurora and Project HALO are said to be triangular or diamond-shaped prototype craft that are being developed by the US military and are the subject of continuing independent investigation. However, concrete evidence of these very-real projects being the Flying Triangle is sadly lacking and prone to many researchers jumping to hasty conclusions.

A conjecture that is not generally considered is that the Flying Triangle's flight characteristics and styling are partly or wholly modelled on the assumed manoeuvres and physical form of extra-terrestrial craft - whether real or otherwise. The reasons for this possibility could be either to divert public attention from a top secret military project with obvious earthly origins and/or to purposefully reinforce a manufactured public belief system in an extra-terrestrial 'reality'. For whatever reason the latter may be so, we can only guess as to why (we have our suspicions). A further associated conjecture is that the FT may even be a sophisticated satellite-source holographic projection that is utilised for decoy purposes and the associated witness phenomena such as auditory and tactile vibrations and even (optional) radar sensitivity may also be microwave generated. There does appear to be a mounting body of evidence to suggest that widespread covert forces exist to spread counter dis-information to actually promote a ET reality. This double-bluff is contrary to the more-popular belief that the UK, US and other governments are attempting to hide the reality of an extra-terrestrial presence. However, regrettably, this alternative theory is not readily absorbed by a growing body of biased researchers who seem bent on 'proving' an extra-terrestrial connection. It may turn out that they are being used to perpetuate the myth - only time will tell!

It is interesting to note that in 1987 there was some public concern over a British Aerospace facility in the Hafren Forest in Powis due, in part, to anomalous "strobe-like" lights being seen over the hill tops in the area. BAe refused, at the time to inform the locals about what was going on but did say that they had chosen the site (in a disused quarry in the middle of a huge forest) due to its distance from domestic and industrial electromagnetic "smog". We are currently investigating whether BAe is still operating at the site and its purpose - it certainly wasn't or isn't a conventional airfield or manufacturing site!

However, it is possible that the UK Government has given permission to another government (USA?) for the Flying Triangle craft to be test-flown over Wales and elsewhere in exchange for technological know-how or additional defence facilities. It may be that given the apparent massive discharges of electro-magnetic energy coming from this type of craft that it is not permitted to fly in certain countries, but that the UK is once again acting as the USA's hand-maiden. With the UK's secrecy laws and culture of denial in the civil service it would be easier to maintain a "plausible denial" of FT operations here.

Other considerations include: if they are of terrestrial origin who has given them permission to fly so low over populated and rural areas, with a propulsion system that is guaranteed to be spotted by anyone who is out and about (hardly stealth!) and so low that when it "flashes" it practically blinds any motorist who has the misfortune to be nearby. Further, to operate in British skies it would need to have been granted a certificate of air-worthiness, which should be publicly available for inspection.

On the other hand some reports of 'close encounters' with purported Flying Triangle "crews" have suggested that they are flown by USA military personnel, but how reliable these reports are is a

matter for conjecture and beyond the scope of this report. Elaborate hoaxes may not be beyond the bounds of possibility.

So, what to conclude? We are reluctant to suggest the extra-terrestrial hypothesis in the absence of any positive evidence but we cannot confirm the terrestrial alternative for similar reasons. However, a terrestrial alternative does seem the most likely and logical explanation given the evidence available to-date. Until further evidence is produced, the jury must remain out on the true nature and origin of these craft. One thing is most definitely certain - in whatever form - they exist and they are here!

Current Investigations

We are currently researching the possible propulsion system and power source/s of the Flying Triangle and hope to publish a further report on this subject in the future. We are willing to exchange information with others in this field and would welcome contact with like-minded researchers.

Our local M.P. Mr Cynog Dafis (Plaid Cymru), had expressed an interest in the interim report and has agreed to pursue the matter further. It is hoped that the issue will be raised through the House of Commons Parliamentary Questions procedure.

Further Reading

Fowler, Omar. The Flying Triangle Mystery. 1996. Phenomenon Research Association. **Section 40**
Section 40 Derby, **Section 40** Compilation of Flying Triangle reports, mainly from the UK.
 Suggests an extra-terrestrial origin.

Matthews, Tim. Stealth, Lies and Videotapes. 1997. Lancashire UFO Society. **Section 40**
 Lancaster, **Section 40** Suggests Flying Triangles are of terrestrial origin and that British Aerospace are involved in developing a UK version.

Sheffield, Derek. Deadly Concealment. 1996. Blandford. The Henry Root approach to UFOlogy as the author attempts to get an honest answer out of the authorities regarding the Belgian Flying Triangle sightings in the early 1990's.

Lyne, William R. 1995 Space Aliens from the Pentagon. Tesla Technology and THE BIG LIE. Man-Made UFO's and public deception to promote the New World Order and Global Elite.

We recommend that anyone wishing to keep up-to-date with reports of the Flying Triangle reads magazines such as "Alien Encounters", "Sightings", "UFO Magazine" and "UFO Reality" which are available from local newsagents. Also, the Internet - particularly the alt.ufo.reports, alt.ufo.research and alt.paranet.ufo newsgroups.



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

D/US of S/FH 5119/96/P

Hand January 1997

Dear Dr. Williams,

Thank you for your letter of 12 December to William Hague enclosing one from **Section 40** of the West Wales Paranormal Group about 'UFO sightings' on 21 November. **Section 40** also wrote in similar terms to the military staffs at the London Air Traffic Control Centre, West Drayton and I hope he will accept this as a reply to both letters.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. From the descriptions we do receive, aircraft or natural phenomena probably account for most of the observations.

I should wish to assure **Section 40** that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force and we remain vigilant for any potential military threat. Our enquiries reveal that on the day in question there was no unusual air defence activity, no penetration by hostile military aircraft of the UK Air Defence Region, no unknown aircraft activity on any military radars and that no Quick Reaction Alert aircraft were scrambled.

We have also checked whether the Aberporth Range was being used that day since the range danger area extends into Cardigan Bay. The Range regularly fires air-to-air missiles but, although

Dr Alan Williams MP



Recycled Paper



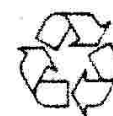
on 21 November two missiles were fired, the timings do not accord with the events documented by **Section 40**

I hope this is helpful.

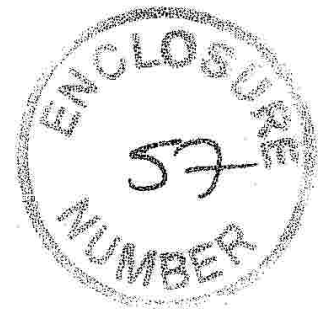
Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE



Recycled Paper



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

10 Jun 97

PE Uni

(thro

Section 40

LETTER FROM NIGEL EVANS MP - US 2019/97

1. Nigel Evans' constituent, Section 40, is rather confused about the dates and locations of the incidents he mentions in his letter to his MP. In Nov last year Nigel Evans forwarded a letter from Section 40 asking about an air crash alleged to have occurred in Morecambe Bay on 26 Oct. There were no military aircraft crashes on 26 Oct, and the CAA confirmed that there were no civil aircraft accidents in the Morecambe Bay or surrounding areas on that day. In fact, media reports at the time suggested an explosion in the air, initially attributed to a mid-air collision, north of the Butt of Lewis. An extensive search of that area was carried out by RAF and Coastguard Search and Rescue assets but was later abandoned after it became clear that no aircraft had been reported overdue. Media reports subsequently focused on the possibility that the incident was caused by space debris, although the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at RAF Fylingdales, which tracks all satellites in orbit within the UK's area of responsibility, had no evidence to support this theory.

2. Section 40 is a member of a Morecambe "UFO" group. His latest letter to Nigel Evans seeks information about "UFO" sightings alleged to have occurred in mid-Nov last year. As USofS will recall, the MOD examines any reports of "unidentified flying objects" 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 foreign military activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, the Department does not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us.

3. RAF air defence staff have confirmed that there were no recorded incidents of unauthorized military incursions of UK airspace for either 17 or 22 Nov 96; moreover, there is no record of unusual or unauthorized air activity of any nature on these dates. Although the Department received three "UFO" reports from members of the public for 17 Nov, none concerned sightings in the Preston or surrounding areas. There were no reports of sightings anywhere in the country for 22 Nov. In the absence of any substantive information at the time, we can only speculate on what the witnesses might have seen. It is quite common for members of the public to report military aircraft "chasing" objects which are, in fact, two or three aircraft flying in formation.

4. In view of **Section 40** confusion about the events of October last year, and his interest in "UFO" matters, the attached draft seeks to set the record straight and provides the standard line about the Department's interest in "UFO" sightings. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

D/US/2019/97

June 1997

Thank you for your letter of 28 May enclosing two from your constituent Section 40 of Section 40 Preston, Lancashire, about an incident which occurred off the Island of Lewis.

Following reports to the authorities of an alleged explosion in the air in the vicinity of the Western Isles on 26 October last year, an extensive search of the area was carried out by RAF and Coastguard Search and Rescue assets. The search was later called off after it became clear that no aircraft, either military or civilian, had been reported overdue. There was no evidence to support any of the media theories about the cause of the incident.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us 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.

I should wish to assure Mr Wood that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat. I can confirm that there were no incidents of unauthorized foreign military incursions of UK airspace on 17 or 22 November 1996.

I hope this explains the position.

JOHN SPELLAR

Nigel Evans MP



Mon 9 Jun, 1997 15:54 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
09/06/97	ADGE1	PE: US 2019/97	[]

Intended:

Sent: 09/06/97 at 15:52

Delivered: 09/06/97 at 15:53

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC:

Ref: 343

From: ADGE1

Auth by:

Subject: PE: US 2019/97

Text: Please see attached reply to your PE. Regards

Priority: Normal
Reply Request []

SEE PAGE
View Acknowledge []

Attachments [1]
Codes []

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAO/1/13

9 Jun 97

Sec(AS)2a1

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY: US 2019/97: NIGEL EVANS MP

Reference: D/Sec(AS)/64/4 dated 6 Jun 97.

1. At Reference, you asked for confirmation that there were no recorded incidents of unauthorised military incursions of UK airspace on 17 and 22 Nov 97.

2. Having consulted HQ 11/18 Gp, I can confirm that there was no such activity; moreover, there is no record of unusual or unauthorised air activity of any nature on these dates.

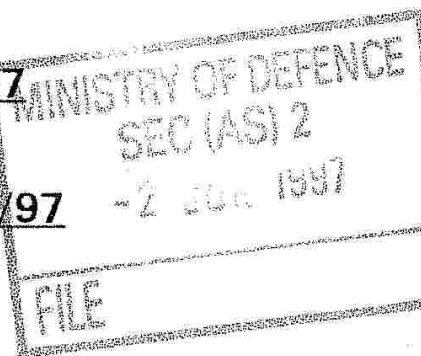
Section 40

Wg Cdr

ADGE 1

MB4227 Section 40

CHOTS: ADGE1

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT**TO: SEC(AS)2aPE REF NUMBER: US 2019/97MINISTER REPLYING: USASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 12/6/97DATE: 2/6/97FROM: **Section 40**PE Unit TEL: **Section 40**

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

******* IMPORTANT UPDATES *******

1. Ministerial responsibilities changed.

2. Opening and Closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."
 If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/John Reid/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"

Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ... "

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

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

3. Open Government A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 48/1997.

Replies **MUST** be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

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

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES**, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40**
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

NIGEL EVANS MP

29 MAY 1997



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

PE
USGS
Sec (AS) 2
VFOs

John Spellar, MP
The Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London. SW1A 2HB

28 May 1997

Dear John

Re: Section 40 [redacted] Preston, Lancs. Section 40 [redacted]

I enclose for you a letter that I have received from my constituent regarding an incident which occurred off Lewis Island, Scotland on 26th October 1996.

In view of the concerns expressed I would be grateful for any comments that you might have.

John

Section 40 [redacted]

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
30 MAY 1997
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

Surgery: [01200 425939](tel:01200425939)

Email: ribblevalley@dial.pipex.com

Web site: <http://dSPACE.dial.com/town/square/hi13>

A strong voice for
Ribble Valley and Fulwood

Section 40

PRESTON

LANCS

Section 40

~~26th~~ Feb 1997.2nd MAY

Dear MR EVANS

In reference to my correspondence regarding the Lewis Island incident.

I would like to add some further information about the strange happenings on the night of 26th Oct 1996 on that evening earth tremor was felt in Lancashire and Morecombe had a large power cut. A lot of people are asking if there is a connection.

Also on Nov 17th 1996 there was another incident over Preston when 5 people witnessed a large triangular UFO south of the town. Five days later a large silent aircraft was observed being intercepted by 3 Tornados just after GPM east of Preston.

Can you ask the Minister of Defence for an explanation are the American testing a new secret aircraft.

Best wishes

Section 40

Section 40

Preston
Lancs

Section 40

~~12th March 97~~
25 97

Dear Mr ERANS

I Sending you some information on UFO
and UFO MAGAZINE March and April 97

Please could you send me copy of the
official on the Lewis Island report made by
The local MP.

Best wishes

Section 40



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

9 Jun Section 40

PE Uni
(thro [REDACTED])

Copy to:

DOMD
Head of CS(RM)1 } sent by CHOTS

LETTER FROM BEN BRADSHAW MP - US 1983/97

1. I attach a draft reply for USofS to send to Ben Bradshaw MP setting out the MOD's current policy relating to the so-called "UFO" phenomenon.

2. The Department receives a number of letters from members of the public who believe "unidentified flying objects" to be craft of extraterrestrial origin. The draft therefore makes it clear that the Department keeps an open-mind about the possibility that extraterrestrial lifeforms exist, but to date knows of no evidence which proves that they do. No discussions within the Department take place specifically on the phenomenon of "UFOs" in the sense implied by Mr Bradshaw's unnamed constituent.

3. The draft reply also provides information on the Public Records Act in respect of the law governing release of "UFO" files and advice on the forthcoming proposed Freedom of Information Act provided by the Cabinet Office. In the past some information, such as the names and addresses of those reporting "UFO" sightings was deleted from papers released to the Public Record Office.

4. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

D/US/1983/97

June 1997

Thank you for your letter to George Robertson of 27 May enquiring on behalf of a constituent about MOD policy on reports of "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department has no expertise or role with respect to "UFO/ flying saucer" matters or the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. 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.

I should wish to assure your constituent that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the

Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

You ask about the law relating to the release of MOD "UFO" report files. As is the case with other government files, all MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. The files selected for preservation are then transferred to the Public Record Office for release into the public domain.

It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However, since 1967 there has been an increase in public interest in this subject and "UFO" report files are now routinely preserved. A few files from the 1950s and early 1960s did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17527
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17982
AIR 20/9994	AIR 2/17983
PREM 11/855	

Whilst it was past practice to sanitize some sensitive information held on files before release to the Public Record Office, this is no longer the case and MOD "UFO" report files are now released with no extractions or deletions.

Your constituent may find it of interest 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.

I hope this explains the position.

JOHN SPELLAR

Ben Bradshaw MP

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:



Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Serial Number:	Transmission: Date: 9 JUN. 97 Time:	Document Reference: 64/4	Total number of pages including this one: 1 + 6
From: SEC(AS) Room 8245 MOD MAIN BUILDING	Fax Number: Section 40	To: Section 40	Fax Number: Section 40
Authorized by: Rank Name Appointment EO Section 40 Sec(AS)2A1	Tel Number: Section 40	Transmitted by: Rank Name Tel Number AO Section 40	Signature: Section 40
Signature: Section 40		Signature: Section 40	

Subject: PE 1983/97 - BEN BRADSHAW MP. - UFOs.

Section 40

Said I'd let you see the draft before it went off. This is due with PE Unit by COP tomorrow. Please let me know if you have any comments.

Section 40

Section 40 phoned

Happy with draft

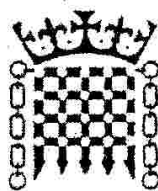
Section 40 1040hrs 9/6.

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

USFS
Sec(13)
Ufo:



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

George Robertson
Secretary of State for Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

May 27th

Dear George,

I have a number of questions from a constituent which I would be grateful if your Department could answer. They regard what are commonly known as "UFOs".

1. Will the law relating to the release of documents on "UFOs" be changed?
2. If papers are released, will they be blanked out? (I'm not quite sure what she means by this)
3. Are there on-going discussions on the "UFO phenomenon"?
4. Are any policies in connection with "UFO" going to change with a new Government?

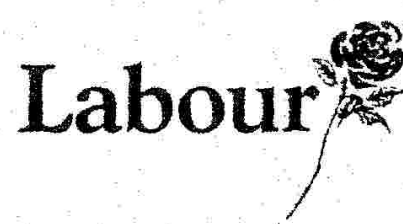
With very best wishes,

Section 40
[Redacted]

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
26 MAY 13



Ben Bradshaw
MP for Exeter



①

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Jun 97

D R A F T

PE Unit

(thro **Section 40**)

Copy to:

DOMD

Head of CS(RM)1

LETTER FROM BEN BRADSHAW MP - US 1983/97

1. I attach a draft reply for USofS to send to Ben Bradshaw MP setting out the MOD's current policy relating to the so-called "UFO" phenomenon.

2. The Department receives a number of letters from members of the public who believe "unidentified flying objects" to be craft of extraterrestrial origin. The draft therefore makes it clear that the Department keeps an open-mind about the possibility that extraterrestrial lifeforms exist, but to date knows of no evidence which proves that they do. No discussions within the Department take place specifically on the phenomenon of "UFOs" in the sense implied by Mr Bradshaw's unnamed constituent.

3. The draft reply also provides information on the Public Records Act in respect of the law governing release of "UFO" files and advice on the forthcoming proposed Freedom of Information Act provided by the Cabinet Office. In the past some information,

②

such as the names and addresses of those reporting "UFO" sightings was deleted from papers released to the Public Record Office.

4. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

3

D/US/1983/97

June 1997

Thank you for your letter to George Robertson of 27 May enquiring on behalf of a constituent about MOD policy on reports of "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department has no expertise or role with respect to "UFO/ flying saucer" matters or the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. 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.

I should wish to assure your constituent that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the

④

Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

You ask about the law relating to the release of MOD "UFO" report files. As is the case with other government files, all MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. The files selected for preservation are then transferred to the Public Record Office for release into the public domain.

It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However, since 1967 there has been an increase in public interest in this subject and "UFO" report files are now routinely preserved. A few files from the 1950s and early 1960s did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17527
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17982
AIR 20/9994	AIR 2/17983
PREM 11/855	

(5)

Whilst it was past practice to sanitize some sensitive information held on files before release to the Public Record Office, this is no longer the case and MOD "UFO" report files are now released with no extractions or deletions.

Your constituent may find it of interest 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.

I hope this explains the position.

JOHN SPELLAR

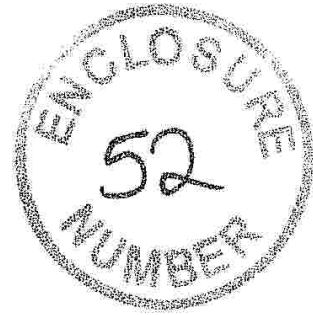
Ben Bradshaw MP

6

Secretariat(Air Staff) Fax: **Section 40****** Transmit Conf. Report ****

9 Jun '97 8:44

Secretariat(Air Staff)---> Section 40	
No.	4666
Mode	NORMAL
Time	2'54"
Pages	7 Page(s)
Result	O K



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Jun 97

D R A F T

PE Unit

(thro Section 40)

Section 40

addresses.

Copy to:

DOMD CR(RS)

or whatever

LETTER FROM BEN BRADSHAW MP - US 1983/97

I attach a draft reply for US of S to send to Ben Bradshaw

MP setting out

1. The MP has written on behalf of a unnamed constituent and

seeks information on the MOD's current policy relating to the so-called "UFO" phenomenon.

2. The constituent also seeks information on any planned changes

in the law governing release of "UFO" files

The draft gives

reply also provide

in respect of,

information on the Public Records Act and information, via DOMD

and the Cabinet Office, on the forthcoming proposed Freedom of Information Act provided by the Cabinet Office.

some information, such as the names and addresses of those reporting UFO sightings was deleted from papers released to the Public Record Office

2. Many members of the public who write to the Department receive a number of letters from members of the public who believe "unidentified flying objects" to be craft of

extraterrestrial origin. The draft therefore includes a paragraph

which makes clear that the Department keeps an open-mind about the

possibility that extraterrestrial lifeforms exist, but to date

knows of no evidence which proves that they do. As we have no

remit regarding the possible existence of extraterrestrial life,

No discussions within the Department take place specifically on

the phenomenon of "UFOs" in the sense implied by the constituent.

Mr Bradshaw's unnamed

3. 4

4. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

D R A F T

D/US/1983/97

June 1997

MOD
~~the MOD~~
 Thank you for your letter to George Robertson of 27 May enquiring on behalf of a constituent about ~~the MOD's~~ policy on reports of "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

Insert from Page 2.
↓
~~I should first explain that~~ My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. 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.

constituent
 I should wish to assure you that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

X You ask about the law relating to the release of MOD "UFO" report files. As is the case with other government files, all MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. The files selected for preservation are then transferred to the Public Record Office for release into the public domain.

It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years, as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However, since 1967, ^{there has been} ~~following~~ an increase in public interest in this subject ^{and} "UFO" report files are now routinely preserved. A few files from the ^{1950s} ~~fifties~~ and ^{1960s} ~~sixties~~ did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17527
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17982
AIR 20/9994	AIR 2/17983
PREM 11/855	

Whilst it was past practice ~~on occasion~~ to sanitize some ^{classified} information held on files ^{before} ~~which had been~~ released to the Public

We used to delete distribution lists with DI branding on them. We also used to sanitize the names of the ^{good pair} ~~reportees~~ but we don't anymore.

(DO I NEED TO MAKE REFERENCE TO THIS IN THE BACKGROUND NOTE)

Record Office, this is no longer the case and MOD "UFO" report files are now released with no extractions or deletions.

Your constituent may find it of interest to know that

~~The Cabinet Office is the lead Department for implementing Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's~~ has the responsibility

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. Whilst I cannot prejudge the contents of the Queen's Speech, it would be a likely candidate for enactment in the 1998/99 Parliamentary Session. In the meantime, Ministers have emphasised the need for all Departments to be as open as possible under the terms of the existing Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.~~

Do we want this bit left in!!

~~I should conclude by adding that my Department has no interest, expertise or role with respect to "UFO/flying saucer" matters or the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain open-minded. To date, however, the MOD remains unaware of any evidence which might substantiate these alleged phenomena.~~

Insert in previous page

I hope this explains our position.

JOHN SPELLAR

Ben Bradshaw MP

*

~~If we need to copy this to Domo for "safety" reasons I suppose we'd better include it!!~~
No don't include it.



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

6 Jun 97

ADGE1

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY: US 2019/97: NIGEL EVANS MP

1. The attached PE has been received from Nigel Evans the Conservative MP for Ribble Valley, forwarding a letter from a constituent, **Section 40**.

2. I am writing in respect of the highlighted paragraph which talks about a five day period between 17 and 22 Nov 96. I would like to be able to include a short paragraph in the background note to USofS (something along the lines below), and would welcome your confirmation (or otherwise) of the accuracy of the sentence in bold:

"There were no recorded incidents of unauthorized military incursions of UK airspace on the dates in question. We can therefore only speculate on what the witnesses are alleged to have seen. It is quite a common occurrence for members of the public to report military aircraft "chasing" objects, which in the event turn out to be two or more aircraft flying in formation."

3. Thank you for your assistance with this task. To meet the PE Unit's deadline, I should be grateful for a response by COP Wed 11 June if at all possible.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

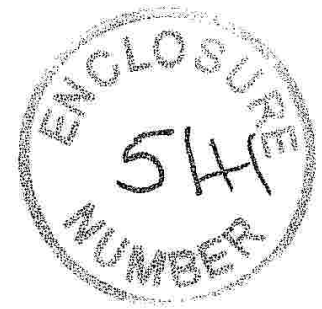
MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

06 JUN '97 09:24 FROM CS (RM)

TO 82680

P.01/01



LOOSE MINUTE

CS(RM)/4/6/37

6 June 1997

Sec(AS)2a1 *

* Fax only x82680

PE: US 1983/97: BEN BRADSHAW MP

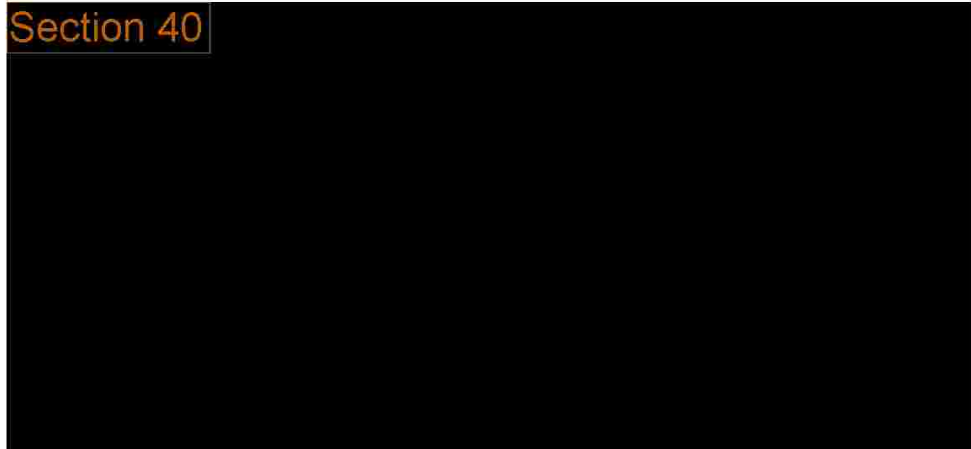
1. Your E-mail message dated 5 June 1997 sought a few lines covering the retention/deletion of sensitive material not available to the public at the normal release point.

2. The following may be helpful:

"A great majority of records selected for permanent preservation are transferred to the Public Record Office for release under the "30 year rule". For the few where continuing sensitivity precludes release at the normal point the Lord Chancellor's agreement is sought for closure. It is our custom to periodically review closed records. On this latter point I can advise the Ministry of Defence has released more than 9,200 records over the last few years that had previously been closed for more than 30 years."

3. Just in case Mr Bradshaw follows up Ministers' reply with a supplementary records question I would welcome a copy of your submission to the Parliamentary Branch.

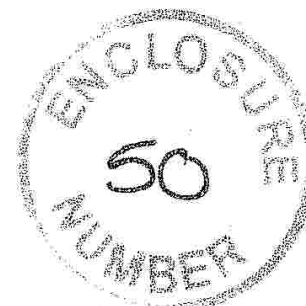
Section 40



This didn't answer the question (misunderstanding between us). Spoke to **Section 40** again and agreed following

" It was the practice in the past to sanitise some information on files prior to release to the PRO. However this is no longer the case and MOD info reports files are now being released without no extractions or deletions. "

Thu 5 Jun, 1997 14:01 mailbox log Page 1



DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
05/06/97	Hd of CS(RM)1	PE - BEN BRADSHAW	[]

Sent: 05/06/97 at 14:00
 To: Hd of CS(RM)1
 CC:

Ref: 1196
 Subject: PE - BEN BRADSHAW

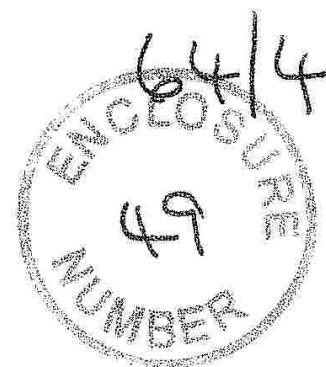
Text: **Section 40** Sorry to bother you again. Do you have a standard paragraph which explains why sometimes documents may be released to the PRO with paragraphs or sections blanked out. You know the sort of thing, "retained in the Department under section 3(4) ??? of the Code of Practise or Public Records Act???" etc.

Section 40

Priority: Normal
 Reply Request []

View Acknowledge [*]
 Delivery Acknowledge [*]

Attachments []
 Codes []



Thu 5 Jun, 1997 10:13 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
05/06/97	Hd of CS(RM)1	PE - BEN BRADSHAW - RELEASE OF UFO	[]

Intended:

Sent: 05/06/97 at 10:05

Delivered: 05/06/97 at 10:08

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC:

Ref: 306

From: Hd of CS(RM)1

Auth by:

Subject: PE - BEN BRADSHAW - RELEASE OF UFO FILES

Text: Section 40 hope this is helpful!

Section 40

Priority: Normal
Reply Request []

SEE PAGE
View Acknowledge [*]

Attachments [1]
Codes []

LOOSE MINUTE

CS(RM)/4/6/37

5 June 1997

Sec(AS)2a1 *

* CHOTS only

PE: US 1983/97: BEN BRADSHAW MP

Reference; D/Sec(AS)/64/1 dated 3 June 1997

1. Your standard line, paragraph 3 of the reference, accurately reflects MOD's current position in respect of the Public Records Act (PRA).

2. The Act of course goes further. Under Section 5(1) not only can records selected for preservation be closed for periods in excess of 30 years but records can be released much earlier. During the last 6/7 years we have released perhaps 80 records ahead of time.

3. The vagaries of the Act are generally lost on the public ie the frequent assertion that records are closed under the Official Secrets Act, rather than the PRA, but you should also be aware the White Paper on Open Government (published July 1993) highlighted, to a wider and arguably more clued-up public (if only based on the numerous requests I receive to review closed records) a number of additional measures aimed at releasing more records including "give consideration to [the release of] blocks of records which, although not 30 years old, may be releasable".

4. You may wish to consider whether records relating to UFOs constitutes a block of records. If you decide they do, be sure that you can defend any (arbitrary!) date you use as a cut off ie release the 50 or so files due for release between 1999 and 2003 that just happen to have been reviewed and prepared for the PRO, but why not accelerate the review programme and release similar records at the 20/15/10 year point. The ufo fan would no doubt be ecstatic but "serious" researchers would question why such trivia receives favourable treatment.

5. On the general question of a Freedom of Information Act I understand a White (or perhaps more accurately a Green/White) Paper is due either later this year or early next. With legislation in place 1999. FOI will presumably target current and historic data held by departments. It follows branches that have regular dealings with the public, such as ours, should expect the new legislation to have an effect on current level of staffing. Also expect an associated charging regime.

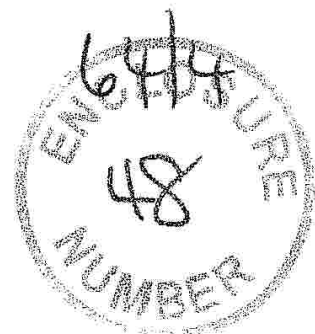
6. As a side issue to FOI is the continuance of the 30 year rule. The Departmental Record Officer/PRO network suspect that this is in jeopardy (the US introduced automatic declassification at the 25th year in 1995, albeit not effective until 2000 and with a significant number of exemptions to protect certain information, and I understand a number of European countries are starting to drift down to 25 or even 20 years).

7. I hope the above is helpful, we can speak further if you wish.

Section 40

Head CS(RM)1

MT D8/2 Section 40



Fri 6 Jun, 1997 11:31 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
04/06/97	OMD/AD(Management)	Freedom of Information Act	[]

Intended:

Sent: 04/06/97 at 14:09

Delivered: 04/06/97 at 14:11

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC:

Ref: 1309

From: OMD/AD(Management)

Auth by:

Subject: Freedom of Information Act

Text: Advice from DOMD attached. Regards, **Section 40**

Priority: Normal
Reply Request []

SEE PAGE
View Acknowledge []

Attachments [1]
Codes []

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DOMD/2/3/4

4 Jun 97

Sec(AS)2a1

PROPOSED FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Reference:

A. D/Sec(AS)/64/1 dated 3 Jun 97

1. You asked at Ref A for advice on the line to take in a response to a PE concerning a Freedom of Information Act. Having consulted the Cabinet Office, I suggest that you respond along the following lines:

"The Cabinet Office is the lead Department for implementing 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. Whilst I cannot prejudge the contents of the Queen's Speech, it would be a likely candidate for enactment in the 1998/99 Parliamentary Session. In the meantime, Ministers have emphasised the need for all Departments to be as open as possible under the terms of the existing Code of Practice on Access to Government Information."

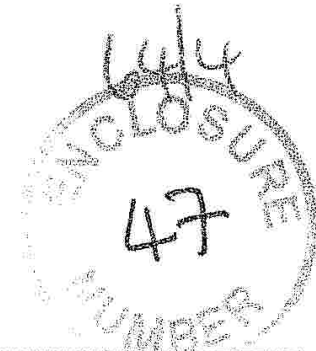
2. I trust that this meets your needs. I assume that you are currently responding to requests for information on UFOs and related matters in accordance with the requirements of the Open Government Code. The MOD policy on this is set out in DCI GEN 48/97. PUS has recently reminded the Department of the importance he attaches to this and, pending the introduction of a Freedom of Information Act, Ministers are making it clear that the requirements of the Code should be applied with the presumption in favour of openness and disclosure. You can get specific advice on the application of the Code from Sam Keayes, OMD 14, on x84814MB.

<Signed>

Section 40

DOMD

NH619 Section 40



Wed 4 Jun, 1997 9:58

mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
04/06/97	SEC(AS) REGISTRY 1	PE US 1963/97	[]

Sent: 04/06/97 at 9:57
 To: SEC(AS) REGISTRY 1
 CC:

Ref: 1189
 Subject: PE US 1963/97

Text: **Section 40**

Just to let you know the a/m PE has been actioned and is with the PE Branch.

Section 40

Priority: Normal
 Reply Request []

View Acknowledge [*]
 Delivery Acknowledge [*]

Attachments []
 Codes []



Tue 3 Jun, 1997 15:58

mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
03/06/97	DOMD	LINES TO TAKE ON NEW FREEDOM OF	[]

Sent: 03/06/97 at 15:58
 To: DOMD
 CC:

Ref: 1184
 Subject: LINES TO TAKE ON NEW FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Text:

Priority: Urgent
 Reply Request []

View Acknowledge [*]
 Delivery Acknowledge [*]

Attachments [1]
 Codes []

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/1

3 Jun 97

DOMD

PROPOSED FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

1. One of the much wider ranging responsibilities of Sec(AS)2 is to act as MOD (and effectively HMG) focal point for correspondence from members of the public on the so-called "UFO" phenomenon. The subject attracts significant public interest and claims of "Government cover-ups", and with a change of Government we have started to receive letters from the "UFO" fraternity asking when the Government intends to bring in a new Freedom of Information Act.
2. In addition we have just received a Parliamentary Enquiry, due for answer by Tue 10 Jun, which touches upon this question. Although I would imagine that responsibility for guiding in such a new piece of legislation would rest with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Department, I would welcome the current MOD line for inclusion in our draft reply for USofS' signature.
3. It would be most helpful if you could let me have something by **COP Mon 9 Jun.**

[original signed]

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

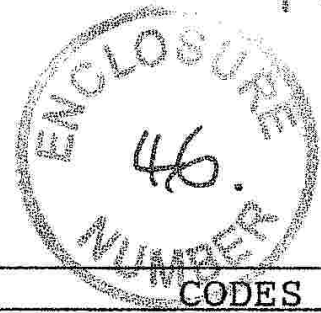
MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

UNCLASSIFIED

~~RESTRICTED~~

64/4



Wed 4 Jun, 1997 9:44

mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
04/06/97	Parliamentary Enqu	PE US 1963/97	[Background Note []]

Sent: 04/06/97 at 9:40
 To: Parliamentary Enquiries
 CC:

Ref: 1187
 Subject: PE US 1963/97 [Background Note only]

Text: The attached background note has been seen and signed off by
 Section 40

The draft reply has been sent down separately by UNCLASSIFIED
 E-mail.

Priority: Urgent
 Reply Request []

View Acknowledge [*]
 Delivery Acknowledge [*]

Attachments [1]
 Codes []

UNCLASSIFIED

~~RESTRICTED~~

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

3 Jun 97

PE Unit

(thro **Section 40**)

LETTER FROM KEVIN HUGHES MP - US 1963/97

1. It is part of Sec(AS)2's much wider responsibilities to act as the MOD (and effectively HMG) focal point for handling requests for information and dealing with queries in relation to the so-called "unidentified flying object" phenomenon. The "UFO" phenomenon attracts a significant and increasing amount of public interest, much of it prompted by media coverage of fictitious events. In 1996 the Department received 609 reports alleging sightings of "UFOs" as well as 343 letters on a variety of "UFO" related issues, including 22 from MPs on behalf of their constituents.

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

3. The integrity of British airspace in peacetime is maintained through a continuous Recognised Air Picture and air policing of the United Kingdom Air Defence Region. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, and no alleged "UFO" sighting or report to date has revealed such evidence, no attempt is made to identify the precise nature of what is reported to us. It is the considered view that most "UFO" reports have rational and mundane explanations such as normal air traffic activity (the majority are received from centres of population or near airports and airfields) or balloons, or are related to weather conditions etc. And providing an aerial identification service for the public in these circumstances would inappropriately tie up resources allocated for defence purposes.

4. It is therefore current policy for Sec(AS)2a to consult Departmental Air Defence experts for advice only in the following circumstances:

- a. Documented sightings: where reports are supported by evidence such as photographs, video recordings or radar traces, where they cannot be readily explained and are provided by reliable sources, ie. pilots (servicemen and civilian), servicemen in general, members of the emergency services etc.

RESTRICTED
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

~~RESTRICTED~~

b. Corroborated sightings: where a series of reports apparently describing the same phenomenon and provided by separate and independent sources, and cannot be readily explained.

c. Timely sightings: where reports are of a phenomenon currently being observed which might, therefore, be capable of detection by air defence or other assets such as military aircraft or radar observers.

5. **Section 40** has not previously written seeking information about "UFOs" and the draft reply therefore provides the standard line on the MOD's interest.

6. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

[original signed]

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 **Section 40**

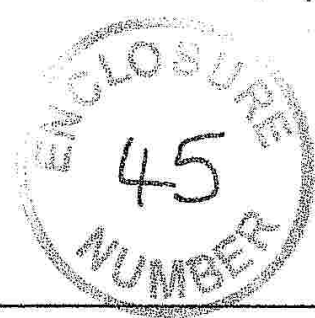
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~RESTRICTED~~

64/4



Wed 4 Jun, 1997 9:46

mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
04/06/97	Parliamentary Enqu	PE US 1963/97 [Draft reply only]	[]

Sent: 04/06/97 at 9:46
 To: Parliamentary Enquiries
 CC:

Ref: 1188
 Subject: PE US 1963/97 [Draft reply only]

Text: PLEASE CONNECT WITH BACKGROUND NOTE (WHICH IS CLASSIFIED RESTRICTED) AND HAS BEEN SENT DOWN BY RESTRICTED E-MAIL

The attached draft has been seen and signed off by **Section 40** .

Priority: Urgent
 Reply Request []

View Acknowledge [*]
 Delivery Acknowledge [*]

Attachments [1]
 Codes []

D/US/1963/97

June 1997

Thank you for your letter to George Robertson of 20 May, enclosing one from Section 40 of Section 40 Section 40 Doncaster, about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify what might have been seen. We believe that down to earth explanations such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena could be found for these reports 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.

I should wish to assure Mr Fawcett that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

I can confirm that it is part of Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a's much wider responsibilities to act as MOD focal point for handling queries and correspondence relating to reports of "unidentified flying objects", consulting the Department's air defence experts as required.

Finally, **Section 40** asks about the number of reports my Department has received during the last 12 months. From June 1996 - May 1997 we received 531 reports of aerial observations which the witness was not able to identify. None revealed any evidence of an unauthorized military incursion of the United Kingdom's airspace.

I hope this explains our position.

JOHN SPELLAR

Kevin Hughes MP

UNCLASSIFIED**RESTRICTED**

LOOSE MINUTE



D/Sec(AS)/64/4

3 Jun 97

PE Uni
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Section 40

3/6

LETTER FROM KEVIN HUGHES MP - US 1963/97

1. It is part of Sec(AS)2's much wider responsibilities to act as the MOD (and effectively HMG) focal point for handling requests for information and dealing with queries in relation to the so-called "unidentified flying object" phenomenon. The "UFO" phenomenon attracts a significant and increasing amount of public interest, much of it prompted by media coverage of fictitious events. In 1996 the Department received 609 reports alleging sightings of "UFOs" as well as 343 letters on a variety of "UFO" related issues, including 22 from MPs on behalf of their constituents.

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

3. The integrity of British airspace in peacetime is maintained through a continuous Recognised Air Picture and air policing of the United Kingdom Air Defence Region. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, and no alleged "UFO" sighting or report to date has revealed such evidence, no attempt is made to identify the precise nature of what is reported to us. It is the considered view that most "UFO" reports have rational and mundane explanations such as normal air traffic activity (the majority are received from centres of population or near airports and airfields) or balloons, or are related to weather conditions etc. And, providing an aerial identification service for the public in these circumstances would inappropriately tie up resources allocated for defence purposes.

4. It is therefore current policy for Sec(AS)2a to consult Departmental Air Defence experts for advice only in the following circumstances:

- a. Documented sightings: where reports are supported by evidence such as photographs, video recordings or radar traces, where they cannot be readily explained and are provided by reliable sources, ie. pilots (servicemen and civilian), servicemen in general, members of the emergency services etc.

UNCLASSIFIED**RESTRICTED**

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

b. Corroborated sightings: where a series of reports apparently describing the same phenomenon and provided by separate and independent sources, and cannot be readily explained.

c. Timely sightings: where reports are of a phenomenon currently being observed which might, therefore, be capable of detection by air defence or other assets such as military aircraft or radar observers.

5. **Section 40** has not previously written seeking information about "UFOs" and the draft reply therefore provides the standard line on the MOD's interest.

6. I am satisfied that the draft is in accordance with the Government's policy on answering Parliamentary Enquiries and the Open Government Code (DCI Gen 48/97).

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

D/US/1963/97

June 1997

Thank you for your letter to George Robertson of 20 May, enclosing one from **Section 40** of **Section 40** **Section 40** Doncaster, about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify what might have been seen. We believe that down to earth explanations such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena could be found for these reports 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.

I should wish to assure Mr Fawcett that the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat.

I can confirm that it is part of Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a's much wider responsibilities to act as MOD focal point for handling queries and correspondence relating to reports of "unidentified flying objects", consulting the Department's air defence experts as required.

Finally, **Section 40** asks about the number of reports my Department has received during the last 12 months. From June 1996 - May 1997 we received 531 reports of aerial observations which the witness was not able to identify. None revealed any evidence of an unauthorized military incursion of the United Kingdom's airspace.

I hope this explains our position.

JOHN SPELLAR

Kevin Hughes MP

64/4
ENCLOSURE
43/2
NUMBER

Tue 3 Jun, 1997 15:32 mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
03/06/97	Hd of CS(RM)1	PE - BEN BRADSHAW - RELEASE OF UFO	[]

Sent: 03/06/97 at 15:31
To: Hd of CS(RM)1
CC:

Ref: 1183
Subject: PE - BEN BRADSHAW - RELEASE OF UFO FILES

Text: **Section 40**

I mentioned this on the phone yesterday. Grateful for any guidance.

Section 40

Priority: Urgent
Reply Request []

View Acknowledge [*]
Delivery Acknowledge [*]

Attachments [1]
Codes []

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/1

3 Jun 97

Head of CS(RM)1

PE: US 1983/97: BEN BRADSHAW MP

1. As discussed, in a recent PE the above mentioned MP asked, amongst other things, the following question in relation to the subject of "UFO" files:

"Will the law relating to the release of documents on "UFOs" be changed?"

2. At this stage we propose to respond with our lines setting out the current legal position for the release of all MOD and government files. I am also writing separately to DOMD to get any MOD line on the introduction of a Freedom of Information Act, as this is cropping up in many of the "UFO" letters we are now receiving following the change of Government.

3. The following reflects our standard lines relating to current legislation:

"You ask about the law relating to the release of MOD "UFO" report files. As is the case with other government files, all MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files selected for preservation generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. At the 30 year point the files are then transferred to the Public Record Office for release into the public domain.

It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years, as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject "UFO" report files are now routinely preserved. A few files from the fifties and sixties did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199 AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/7390 AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9320 AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9321 AIR 2/17527
AIR 20/9322 AIR 2/17982
AIR 20/9994 AIR 2/17983
PREM 11/855"

3. Although we have not finally decided how we are going to approach this question yet, in the meantime I should be grateful for any comments or suggestions you may have on the above paragraphs. A response by COP Fri 6 June would be appreciated.

[original signed]

Section 40 [REDACTED]
Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 Section 40
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT

TO: SEC(AS)20PE REF NUMBER: US 1983 /97MINISTER REPLYING: USASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 10/6 /97DATE: 29 / 5 /97FROM: **Section 40**PE Unit TEL: **Section 40**

 YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

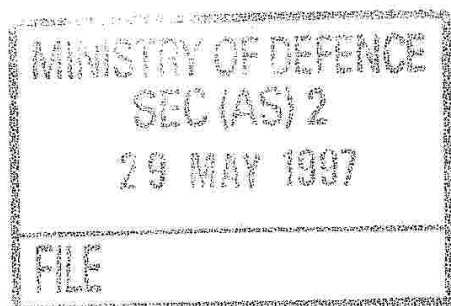
ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

GUIDANCE NOTE

***** IMPORTANT UPDATES *****

1. *Ministerial responsibilities have stayed the same.*
2. *Revised guidance on the style Ministers wish to use for opening and closing correspondence will be issued as soon as possible.*
3. *Open Government A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 48/1997.*

*Replies **MUST** be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.*



Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

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

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES**, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40**
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

USQs
Sec(AI)
UFO:



HOUSE OF COMMONS

George Robertson
Secretary of State for Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

LONDON SW1A 0AA

May 27th

Dear George,

I have a number of questions from a constituent which I would be grateful if your Department could answer. They regard what are commonly known as "UFOs".

1. Will the law relating to the release of documents on "UFOs" be changed?
2. If papers are released, will they be blanked out? (I'm not quite sure what she means by this)
3. Are there on-going discussions on the "UFO phenomenon"?
4. Are any policies in connection with "UFO" going to change with a new Government?

With very best wishes,

Section 40

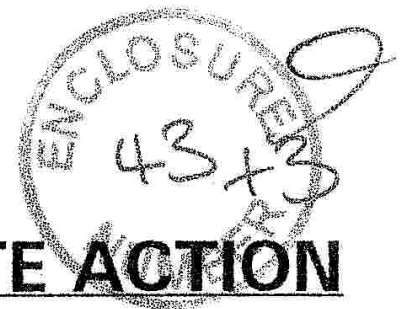


PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
28 MAY 1997



Ben Bradshaw
MP for Exeter





PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT

TO: SEC(AS)20PE REF NUMBER: US 1963 /97MINISTER REPLYING: USASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 9/8 /97DATE: 28/5 /97FROM: **Section 40**PE Unit TEL: **Section 40**

 YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

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GUIDANCE NOTE

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Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

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

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Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES**, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40**
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD



KEVIN HUGHES MP
Doncaster North

*When replying to this correspondence
please reply to:*

4 Jossey Lane
Bentley
Doncaster DN5 0BS
Tel: 01302 873974
Fax: 01302 876176

*US/S
Sec(AS)2
UFOs*

The Rt Hon George Robertson MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

20 May 1997

Dear George,

Please find enclosed a copy of a letter I have received from one of my constituents, the contents of which are self explanatory.

I would be grateful for your comments.

Yours Sincerely

Section 40

Kevin Hughes MP
Doncaster North



Section 40

DONCASTER

Section 40

18 May 1997

Dear Kevin ,

congratulations on your recent election success.

Now down to business .

Please could you tell me if it is the new Governments intention to keep Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a at the Ministry Of Defence, as the official U.F.O desk, and is this the only department concerned with U.F.O reports and investigations.

Also , could you tell me how many reports of unidentified flying objects have been made to the M.o.D. in the last 12 months , how many were not eventually identified and what were the result of any investigations carried out.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

From 09/06/97

to 09/06/97

SIR reports

to 29/05/97

Section 40



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

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

0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/FH 1334/97/P

2nd April 1997

Dear Mr. Canavan,

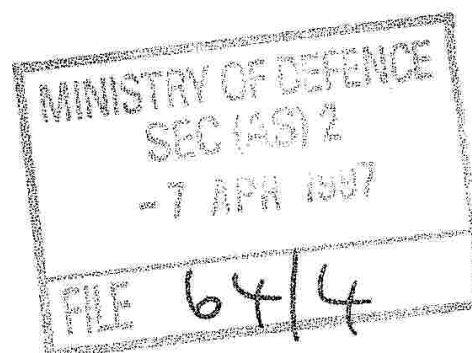
Thank you for your letter of 10 March (reference: DC/AT) to Michael Portillo enclosing one from Councillor William Buchanan of Municipal Buildings, Falkirk, about unexplained lights over Falkirk and Bonnybridge. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

As you will recall from Oliver Henley's letter of 1 February 1995, my Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what has been seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached.

I should wish to assure Councillor Buchanan that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force and we remain vigilant for any potential military threat. However, unless there are defence implications we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of every "UFO" sighting reported to us. We believe that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but I am afraid that it is not the function of my Department to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so.

As we have said previously, if Councillor Buchanan has information to support his concerns that Falkirk and Bonnybridge are experiencing phenomena of defence significance then my officials would be happy to examine this further.

Dennis Canavan Esq MP



Recycled Paper



In the absence of such evidence we remain satisfied that there are no phenomena in the Falkirk area which are of defence concern.

I hope this explains the position.

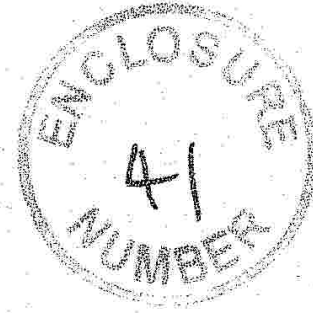
Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE



Recycled Paper



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

2 Apr 97

Section 40
PE Uni
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PETITION TO PARLIAMENT - UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

1. This Petition is likely to have been orchestrated by Section 40, a resident of Llanfaes, Anglesey, who over the last year has initiated three Parliamentary Enquiries on the subject of "UFOs" through the MP for Anglesey, Ieuan Wyn Jones, and has been responsible for numerous letters to the Department, on the same subject, requiring official action replies. Section 40 has previously solicited the Department's support in his attempt to encourage the Royal Society of Chemistry to establish a scientific division to investigate "Anomalous Aerial Phenomena". The Department declined to support his request.

2. In responding to the Petition we have another opportunity to state the Government's position with respect to the unidentified flying object phenomenon. This was given by the Prime Minister in response to a PQ tabled by the late Martin Redmond (Official Report, Col 1082, 17 Oct 96 attached) and is repeated in the draft observations.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 Section 40
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

**OBSERVATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE ON THE PETITION FROM
THE RESIDENTS OF ANGLESEY AND ELSEWHERE PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE ON
17 MARCH 1997**

The air defence and air traffic implications of "unidentified" flying objects are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and the Civil Aviation Authority respectively. The Government have no plans to allocate resources to researching extraterrestrial phenomena.

The MOD is satisfied that there are no phenomena in the Anglesey area which warrant further investigation.

ENVIRONMENT

Radioactive Scale (Disposal)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what provisions exist for the offshore disposal of radioactive scale arising from oil exploration and drilling in the North sea and Atlantic. [41251]

Mr. Clappison: Discharge of naturally radioactive scale from oil exploration and drilling in UK waters is regulated under the Radioactive Substances Act 1993, as amended. The Environment Agency is the regulator for the English and Welsh sectors. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency is the regulator for the Scottish sector.

World Conservation Congress

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what contribution his Department made to the World Conservation Congress held in Montreal this month; if his Department was represented at the congress; and what plans he has to assess the conclusions of the congress. [41252]

Mr. Clappison: The UK is a state member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Officials from my Department are leading the UK delegation at the World Conservation Congress which began on 13 October and will finish on 23 October. My Department contributed towards the costs of the UK IUCN committee's report on the UK's contribution to IUCN 1994 to 1996, which will be launched during the congress.

PRIME MINISTER

Government Policies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister what new policy proposals were announced by Ministers of Her Majesty's Government in the week beginning 7 October; and if he will indicate which of them will be subject to compliance cost assessments. [40801]

The Prime Minister: The Government prepare a compliance cost assessment for all new legislation likely to have an impact on business and the voluntary sector. The Government's legislative programme will be presented to the House on 23 October. Compliance costs assessments will be presented in due course for the Bills in the programme.

Consultants

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Prime Minister what are his latest estimates of the expenditure on all external consultants, including management consultants, for each year since 1992, in 1996 prices, for his Department and its agencies; and what are the quantified annual cost savings which such expenditure has resulted in. [41173]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my Office is part of the Cabinet Office, Office of Public Service. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster will write to the hon. Member.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Prime Minister if he will allocate to a department the assessments of the non-air defence implications associated with unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement. [40822]

The Prime Minister: The air defence and air traffic implications of unidentified flying objects are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and the Civil Aviation Authority respectively. The Government have no plans to allocate resources to researching extraterrestrial phenomena.

Terrorist Damage

Mr. Soley: To ask the Prime Minister if he will extend the Northern Ireland compensation scheme for terrorist attacks to mainland Britain. [40934]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply given to the hon. Member for Manchester, Blackley (Mr. Eastham), by my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade on 27 June 1996, *Official Report*, column 202.

New Buildings and Premises

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister what was the total expenditure on new buildings and premises by his Department and its agencies; and if he will indicate the square footage of new office space purchased or newly rented in each of the last five years. [41148]

The Prime Minister: For the purposes of this question, my Office is part of the Cabinet Office, Office of Public Service. I refer the hon. Member to the reply given today by my right hon. Friend, the Paymaster General.

British Beef

Mr. Hanson: To ask the Prime Minister what steps he is taking to encourage the purchase and use of British Beef by Government Departments. [41308]

The Prime Minister: The best way to encourage use of British Beef is to restore confidence in the product. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has launched an initiative to reassure consumers and those responsible for procurement about the rigorous enforcement of the control measures introduced to protect public health. The Meat and Livestock Commission is continuing with its successful campaign to promote consumption.

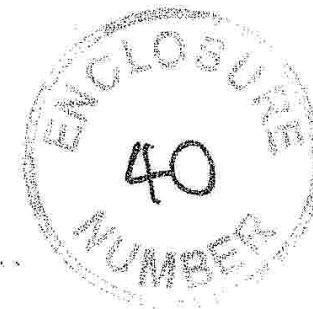
WALES

GP Salaries

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what proposals he has and what consultations he has set up on the introduction of a salaried status scheme for general practice. [40668]

Mr. Hague [holding answer 14 October 1996]: Proposals for the development of primary care health services, including a salaried option for general practitioners, are set out in the White Paper "Choice and Opportunity", Cm 3390, published on 15 October. This issue is also addressed in the document "Primary Care: The Way Forward in Wales", also published on

64/4



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Parliamentary/3/9

24 March 1997

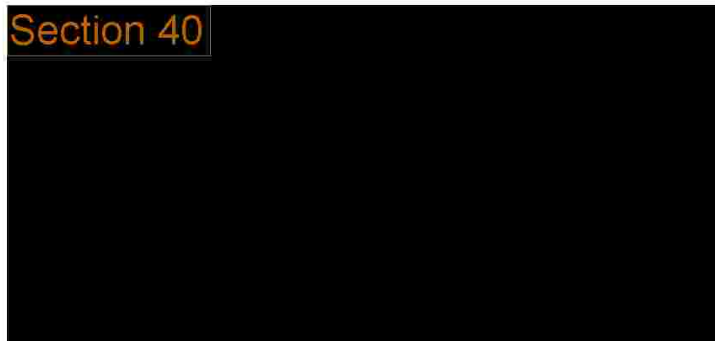


Sec(AS)

PETITION TO PARLIAMENT - UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

1. I attach a copy of a Petition on the above subject which was recently presented to Parliament from residents of Anglesey and elsewhere.
2. Ministers are under no absolute obligation to respond formally to a Petition but it is normally Ministers' practice to do so, especially where there is a need to put the records straight.
3. I should be grateful therefore if you would let me have either draft "Observations by the Secretary of State" responding to the points made, or, exceptionally a submission outlining the reasons why Observations are not considered necessary.
4. Attached are two recent examples and responses to petitions. As you will see they have much the tone of an expanded PQ answer.
5. Please could I have your draft response by close of play on **3 April 1997**. Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Section 40



Asst Parliamentary Clerk 1
MB6134 Section 40

SUPPLEMENT TO THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

PETITION FROM RESIDENTS OF ANGLESEY AND ELSEWHERE

17th March 1997

To the House of Commons.

The Petition of a number of the residents of the County of Anglesey and elsewhere

Declares that there are a number of sightings of aircraft or unexplained objects in the sky in or around the said county and elsewhere.

The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons pass legislation to facilitate the setting up of an independant civilian commission to investigate and establish the full relevance of the unidentified flying object phenomenon in the U.K.

And the Petitioners remain, etc.

**OBSERVATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE ON THE PETITION
FROM THE RESIDENTS OF NORTH LONDON AND ELSEWHERE
PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE ON 30 APRIL 1996**

No decision has been made about the scrambling of the television service broadcast in Cyprus. This is one of the options under consideration which would allow the reinstatement of programmes which have been withdrawn from the Services Sound and Vision Corporation TV (SSVC TV) service for MOD personnel and dependants posted to the island. MOD has the right to broadcast only to this entitled audience.

The right to broadcast some programmes on SSVC TV was withdrawn following representation by a Cypriot TV company. It objected, for commercial reasons, to the transmission of programmes in a way which allowed non-entitled viewers (including expatriates, other British passport holders and Cypriot nationals) to watch SSVC TV if they had access to a suitable TV set and aerial within range of the transmitter.

In deciding which option to implement on a permanent basis, MOD's aim will be to provide the best possible service to the maximum number of entitled viewers at least cost.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

PETITION FROM RESIDENTS OF NORTH LONDON AND ELSEWHERE

30th April 1996

To the House of Commons.

The Petition of Mr Andreas Karaolis of 30 Hamilton Way, London N3, Mr Anthony Mitsides of 30 Cissbury Ring South, London N12, Mr Chrisanthou Sauvakis of 32 Totteridge Common, London N20 and Mr Jimmy Apostolou of 30 North Crescent, London N3 and 10,000 others,

Declares that they are against the decision of the Ministry of Defence to fund in full the estimated £500,000 minimal costs associated with the scrambling of television pictures broadcast in Cyprus via Sight and Sound Vision Corporation for servicemen and women posted to the island.

The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons do not introduce such costly restrictions which would not be in the UK's interest in Cyprus nor is wanted amongst the large British ex-patriate community, other British passport holders and the majority of Cypriots who speak the English language.

And the Petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE ON THE PETITION FROM THE RESIDENTS OF PLYMOUTH AND DEVON PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE BY DAVID JAMIESON ESQ MP ON 7/11/95

Service personnel exposed to asbestos prior to 1987 are subject to the provisions of Section 10 of the Crown Proceedings Act 1947. This means that they may be eligible for an award of war pension but would be precluded from suing for common law damages.

Whilst the repeal of Section 10 enabled damages to be awarded on common law principles for Service Personnel exposed to asbestos after 1987, this duplicates, to some extent, what is available on a no-fault basis through the war pension scheme.

The possibility of making the repeal retrospective was debated in the House in 1987 and it was decided that it could not be made retrospective without causing further injustices and anomalies.

Former Service personnel can claim War Disablement Pensions or Gratuities from the War Pensions Agency of the Department of Social Security irrespective of when exposure to asbestos dust took place, although an award of war pension depends on the degree of disablement. These entitlements are tax free, index-linked and periodically reviewed. The benefits are not just the entitlement award but also lead to supplements depending on need. eg: war pension mobility supplement or the constant care allowance. The capital value of these entitlements can be substantial.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Observation by the Secretary of State for Defence on the Petition [7th November 1995] from Residents of Plymouth and Devon for redress for illness caused by exposure to asbestos at Devonport Dockyard.

Service personnel exposed to asbestos prior to 1987 are subject to the provisions of Section 10 of the Crown Proceedings Act 1947. This means that they may be eligible for an award of war pension but would be precluded from suing for common law damages.

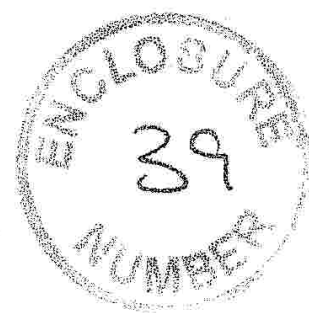
Whilst the repeal of Section 10 enabled damages to be awarded on common law principles for Service Personnel exposed to asbestos after 1987, this duplicates, to some extent, what is available on a no-fault basis through the war pension scheme.

The possibility of making the repeal retrospective was debated in the House in 1987 and it was decided that it could not be made retrospective without causing further injustices and anomalies.

Former Service personnel can claim War Disablement Pensions or Gratuities from the War Pensions Agency of the Department of Social Security irrespective of when exposure to asbestos dust took place, although an award of war pension depends on the degree of disablement. These entitlements are tax free, index-linked and periodically reviewed. The benefits are not just the entitlement award but also lead to supplements depending on need, eg: war pension mobility supplement or the constant care allowance. The capital value of these entitlements can be substantial.

20th February 1996

file



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4



13 Mar 97

Section 40
 PE Un: [REDACTED]
 (thro [REDACTED])

LETTER FROM DENNIS CANAVAN MP - US 1306/97

1. Councillor William Buchanan wrote to the Prime Minister in Sep 94 to say that in the preceding two years over 600 people had come forward with reports of "UFO" sightings in the Falkirk District. He urged the Prime Minister to order an enquiry into the sightings to alleviate the concerns of his constituents.

2. Sec(AS) replied to the letter stating that the Department had received only two or three reported sightings over the period in question and none were of defence significance. The letter went on to say that we were not aware of any phenomena in the Falkirk area which would warrant investigation, but that if we received any further reports (or substantive evidence) they would be assessed to establish whether they indicated any physical threat.

3. Nothing else was heard from Councillor Buchanan until Jan 95 when the local MP, Dennis Canavan asked if the Councillor and a local 'ufologist' might meet officials to discuss the "UFO" sightings. It was considered that such a meeting would probably perpetuate the myth that the Department had a role in "UFO" research and Lord Henley's reply (copy attached) declined the request. In so doing we emphasised, once more, that should Councillor Buchanan wish to provide any further information we would assess it in the normal way.

4. In the two years since that time we have not heard at all from Councillor Buchanan. There have been a handful of "UFO" sightings reported to us from the Falkirk area during this time. This would not be unusual given the number of sightings received for the UK as a whole (over 600 in 1996 alone). Those from the Falkirk area were not deemed to have defence significance. Geographically, Falkirk sits between Glasgow and Edinburgh airports, and an aerodrome (Cumbernauld) is close by. It is likely that civil aircraft activity accounts for much of what has been seen.

5. I attach a draft response for Lord ^{US&FS'} Howe's consideration.

Section 40
 [REDACTED]

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2).

Enc.

D/USofS/FH/1306/97

March 1997

Thank you for your letter (ref: DC/AT) of 10 March addressed to Michael Portillo enclosing one from Councillor William Buchanan of Municipal Buildings, Falkirk, about unexplained lights over Falkirk and Bonnybridge. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

As you will recall from Oliver Henley's letter of 1 February 1995, my Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what has been seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached.

I should wish to assure Councillor Buchanan that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force and we remain vigilant for any potential military threat. However, unless there are defence implications we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of every "UFO" sighting reported to us. We believe that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but I am afraid that it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so.

As we have said previously, if Councillor Buchanan has information to support his concerns that Falkirk and Bonnybridge are experiencing phenomena of defence significance then my officials would be happy to examine this further.

In the absence of such evidence we remain satisfied that there are no phenomena in the Falkirk area which are of defence concern.

I hope this explains our position.

THE EARL HOWE

Dennis Canavan, Esq, MP



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 071-21.....(Direct Dialling)
071-21 89000 (Switchboard)

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
S. 21
2 FEB 1995

D/US of S OH 0381/95

/ February 1995

Thank you for your letter of 18 January about the approach you have received from Councillor W Buchanan on the subject of unidentified flying objects.

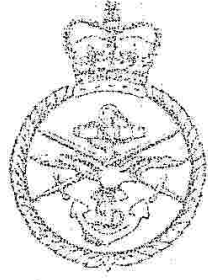
Councillor Buchanan wrote to the Prime Minister at the end of September last year expressing his concern that there had been 600 UFO sightings in his District and requesting a Government enquiry into the matter. This letter was passed to my officials who explained the Department's role and responsibility with respect to unexplained aerial sightings, namely that our interest is confined to establishing whether the reports indicate evidence of the presence of a physical threat to the United Kingdom's air defences. They also pointed out that my Department has received only a handful of reports of such sightings from the Falkirk area over the last few years, none of which were deemed to be of defence significance. Councillor Buchanan was invited to send us any additional information he may have and my officials explained that we would look carefully at all reports received. Nothing has been received from him and we therefore remain unaware of any evidence which would indicate that the original assessment was incorrect.

Given the specific responsibilities of my department in this matter, and the continued absence of any evidence that would indicate phenomena of defence significance, I do not believe that a meeting with Councillor Buchanan and **Section 40** would serve any useful purpose. Should Councillor Buchanan wish to submit any further information, my officials will of course assess this in the normal way.

Dennis Canavan Esq MP



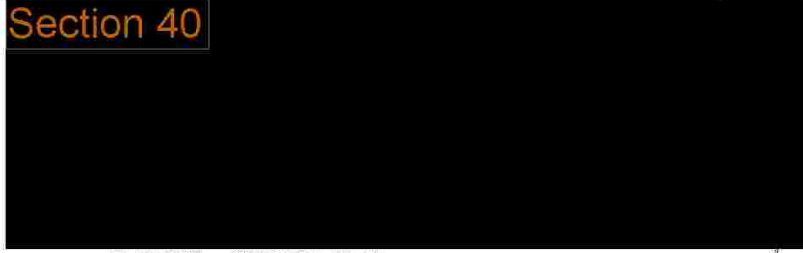
Recycled Paper



I hope this is helpful in explaining the role of this Department with respect to 'UFO' sightings.

So sincere

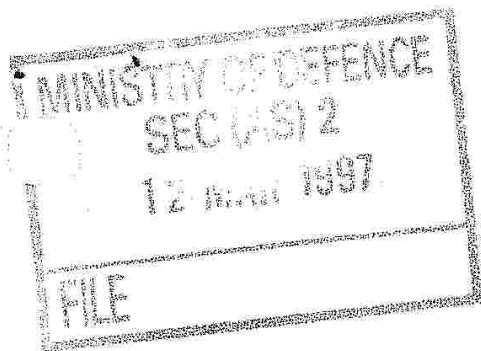
Section 40



LORD HENLEY



Recycled Paper



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC(AS)2aPE REF NUMBER: US 1308 /97MINISTER REPLYING: USASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 21/3 /97DATE: 12 / 3 /97FROM: **Section 40**PE Unit TEL: **Section 40**

GUIDANCE NOTE

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is extremely important that your response is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed. Once an interim has been provided the final reply should follow within **8 days**.

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

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

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

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

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40****
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

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

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

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced.

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

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

Opening and closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ..., Toytown about"

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... addressed to Michael Portillo/ Nicholas Soames/James Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"

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

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

"I hope this explains the position"
"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"
"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

From: DENNIS CANAVAN M.P.

USDS
sec (AS)
WFO's



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Tel: 0171-219 4127
Fax: 0171-219 2513

Please reply to constituency
office (address below)

Our ref: -DC/AT

10 March 1997

The Rt Hon Michael Portillo MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

Dear Secretary of State

Councillor William Buchanan

Further to my previous correspondence with Lord Henley,
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence, I enclose
another letter from Councillor Buchanan.

I would be grateful if you would arrange for consideration to be
given to its contents and for any background information or
advice which might enable me to reply to Councillor Buchanan.

Yours sincerely

Section 40
[Redacted signature]

Dennis Canavan MP

Enc

PARLIAMENTARY
SECRETARY
FOR DEFENCE
10 MARCH 1997



TUE. 04-MAR-97 13:57

FC MEMBERS SERVICES

1324 506151

P. 01

Home Address:

Section 40

**Falkirk Council**

Date 4 March 1997

Dennis Canavan, MP
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Canavan

For over five years now there have been continuous sightings of unexplained lights and objects in the skies all over the Falkirk district but predominantly in the Bonnybridge area. The biggest majority of the people that have come forward are not only my constituents but yours as well. I have, as you well know, been subjected to public ridicule for involving myself in this phenomenon but I would not turn my back on the people I and you represent and my thirst for the truth is unquenchable.

You helped initially when I wanted to contact the MOD to launch an investigation in the phenomenon unfortunately, they declined, stating that nothing in Bonnybridge poses a threat to national security. This phenomenon is still ongoing and the people, especially those who have suffered at the hands of the media, deserve an answer. I therefore ask you formally if you could raise a question in the house to try and get some kind of investigation into what is happening, what are the people we represent seeing. It is your duty and I know you will not let us down.

Thanking you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

Councillor William Buchanan

P.S. I will be down in London next week (12 & 13 March) if you would like to discuss the matter.

*Councillor William F Buchanan
Independent - Chacefield Ward*

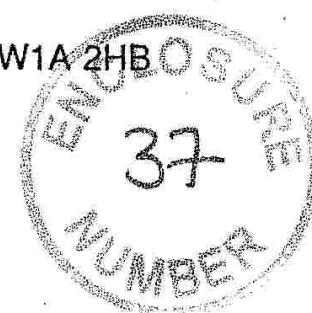
Municipal Buildings, Falkirk FK1 3RS
Telephone: 01324 506167
Fax: 01324 506151

24 FEB 1997



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/FH 0473/97/P

24th February 1997

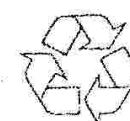
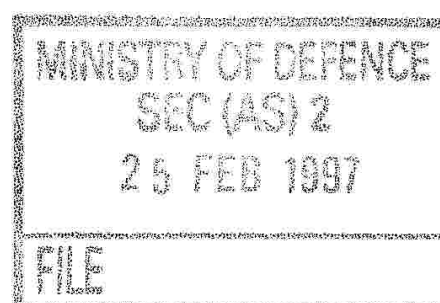
Dear Roger,

Thank you for your letter of 1 February to Nicholas Soames on behalf of your constituent, **Section 40** of **Section 40** **Section 40** Margate, about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department examines any reports of "UFO sightings" solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no "UFO sighting" reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each report. From the descriptions we do receive, aircraft or natural phenomena probably account for most of the observations.

Section 40 has asked about a "UFO" sighting on 5 October 1996 off the Lincolnshire coast and I must say that the events concerned received a certain amount of media attention at the time, much of it incorrect, ill-informed and speculative. Our air defence system found no evidence of unidentified flying craft throughout the period in question. Two quite separate phenomena were reported: an unexplained radar plot and lights in the sky. The radar plot observed, which was identified on the National Air Traffic Services Claxby radar in the position of Boston, was judged by experienced operators at two separate locations to be a permanent echo, caused by a natural phenomenon (something that does occur in certain weather conditions). It was not suspicious in nature nor of any significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. The characteristics of the radar plot confirmed beyond reasonable doubt that this judgement was sound.

Roger Gale Esq MP





There was very little reliable or accurate bearing or elevation information in connection with any of the reported sightings of the lights which were observed in the area of The Wash. From that provided, the Greenwich Observatory advised that they were of celestial origin and likely to have been Venus which was exceptionally bright during the week in question.

I am confident that there was no evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised and there was, of course, no reason whatsoever, in the light of the above for any further military action.

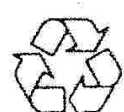
We have already provided the above information on request to any interested parties, and are content to continue to do so.

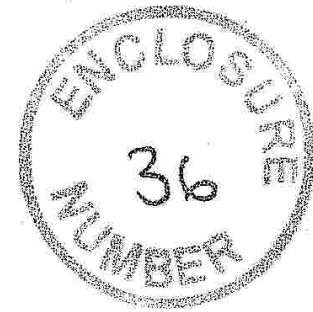
I hope this explains the position.

Lawrence

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE





LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

20 Feb 97

DDI Sec

LETTER PLACED IN THE LIBRARY OF THE HOUSE

1. You will no doubt recall the saga of the raft of PQs last October tabled by the late Martin Redmond MP about "UFO"-related issues.
2. As you know the attached letter about the roles of various DI branches was placed in the Library of the House. I am writing to let you know that we were recently asked by a member of the public (a **Section 40** of **Section 40** Cheshunt, Herts) to provide him with a copy of this letter which I have now done. I did check first with the Parliamentary Branch who confirmed that we were permitted to do so.
3. I thought you might wish to be aware in case **Section 40** decides to write directly to DIS about the letter.

Section 40
[Redacted]

Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 **Section 40**
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)



071
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-218 2218 (Direct Dialling)
0171-218 9000 (Switchboard)



MINISTER OF STATE FOR
THE ARMED FORCES

D/Min(AE)/NS/PQ2103H/2110H/2113H/
2120H/2122H/96/M

28th October 1996

Nick Soames

I am writing as promised in my answers of 17 October to your Parliamentary Questions (Official Report, col 1092, copy attached) about the functions of a number of Defence Intelligence branches.

It has been the policy of successive Governments not to provide information on the functions of individual intelligence branches when this discloses the more recent nature of their duties.

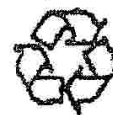
I shall arrange for a copy of this letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Nick Soames

Section 40
[Redacted]

THE HON NICHOLAS SOAMES MP

Martin Redmond Esq MP



Recycled Paper

UNCLASSIFIED

research has been conducted on behalf of his
by the national poisons information service
causes of Gulf war syndrome. [41292]

Soames: I will write to the hon. Members and a
copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the
House.

Mr. Nicholas Pope

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for
Defence to what post Mr. Nicholas Pope was appointed
by his Department after his tour of duty with Secretariat
(Air Staff) Department 2A; and if he will make a
statement. [40929]

Mr. Soames: Mr. Nicholas Pope was posted on
promotion two years ago to a general finance policy
branch.

Uranium-tipped Shells

Dr. David Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for
Defence what assessment he has made of the current risk
posed to civilians from exploded depleted uranium-tipped
shells in Kuwait. [41101]

Mr. Arbutnot: My Department has conducted no
formal assessment of the risks to civilians from exploded
depleted uranium-tipped ammunition in Kuwait.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence
if he will make a statement concerning the risk to soldiers
of handling depleted uranium-tipped shells. [41100]

Mr. Soames: Depleted uranium has a very low level
of radioactivity and the risks attached to the handling of
depleted uranium ammunition are minimal.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence
what assessment he has made of the 1991 Atomic Energy
Authority report on industrial technology concerning the
risk of exposure to exploded depleted uranium-tipped
shells. [41102]

Mr. Soames: I refer the hon. Member to the letter sent
by my noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for
Defence to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent
(Mr. Smith) on 7 August 1996, a copy of which has been
placed in the Library of the House.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence
how many depleted uranium-tipped shells were fired by
British forces during the Gulf war; and what assessment
he has made of the number of exploded shells remaining
in Kuwait. [41099]

Mr. Soames: British forces fired some 88 depleted
uranium shells during the Gulf conflict. The Ministry of
Defence has made no assessment of the number of
exploded shells remaining in Kuwait, as we judge the risk
to human health posed by DU rounds to be negligible. It
is likely, though, that a large proportion of the 88 shells
was expended in Iraq rather than Kuwait.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for
Defence what studies have been conducted by his
Department into the nephrotoxicity of the inhalation of
uranium particles. [41296]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a
copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the
House.

Married Quarters Estate

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence
what are the locations of the houses from the married
quarters estate that have been released to Arrington
Homes for immediate use by the private sector. [40931]

Mr. Arbutnot: I will write to the hon. Member and
a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the
House.

RAF Rudloe Manor

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for
Defence what work is currently undertaken at RAF
Rudloe Manor; what work was undertaken in the last
10 years; what was, by rank, the establishment for the last
10 years; and if he will make a statement. [40823]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a
copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the
House.

Defence Intelligence Branches

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for
Defence (1) what is the current function of DI55 SIG;
what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago;
and if he will make a statement; [41040]

(2) what is the current function of DI65B; what was its
function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will
make a statement; [41038]

(3) what is the current function of DI55; what was its
function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will
make a statement; [41041]

(4) what is the current function of DI61E; what was its
function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will
make a statement; [41037]

(5) what is the current function of DI10; what was its
function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will
make a statement. [41039]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a
copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the
House.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for
Defence (1) what consultation has taken place in each of
the last five years by his Department with the French
Ministry of Defence Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales
in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will
make a statement; [41048]

(2) if a lodger unit housed within his Department's
Flying Complaints Flight specialises in unidentified flying
object investigations; and if he will make a statement; [41036]

(3) how many records currently held by his
Department's Scientific Intelligence Branch are under
extended closure for (a) 50 years, (b) 75 years and (c) 100
years; how many of these records refer to unidentified
flying objects; and if he will make a statement; [40911]



01 FEB 1997

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

D/US of S/FH 0243/97/M

11th February 1997

Dear Stephen,

Thank you for your letter of 21 January enclosing one from **Section 40** of **Section 40** Leicester about his correspondence with my Department.

Since December 1994 **Section 40** has written to my officials in the Secretariat (Air Staff) on three occasions about "unidentified flying objects". In addition to these letters, you have also made two enquiries on this subject on his behalf. **Section 40** letters and your own have been placed on Registered Departmental files together with copies of the relevant replies. **Section 40** name and address are not held on any other files within Secretariat (Air Staff).

I am afraid that I cannot accede to **Section 40** request to remove his letters or details from our files as his correspondence now forms part of the Department's official records. However, I should wish to assure **Section 40** that it is Departmental policy to treat correspondence from members of the public as strictly confidential, and neither the content of a letter nor the fact of its existence may be revealed to a third party without the agreement of the correspondent. This would of course also apply to details of **Section 40** private address.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful, but I hope this explains the position.

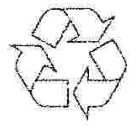
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS) 2
13 FEB 1997
FILE 644

Yours ever,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

The Rt Hon Stephen Dorrell MP



Recycled Paper

14-FEB-1997 14:57 FROM UK DOT

TO

Section 40 P.01/01



THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

ZONE 2/26
GREAT MINSTER HOUSE
76 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 4DR
FAX
TELEX
DIRECT LINE
SWITCHBOARD
GTN

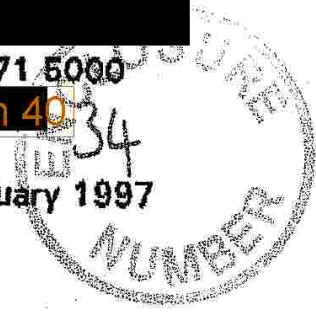
Section 40

0171 271 5000

Section 40

Date:

14 February 1997



Section 40

BEAUMARIS
Anglesey

Section 40

UNIDENTIFIED AIRCRAFT

Thank you for your letter of 22 January to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State about unidentified aircraft. I have been asked to reply.

This Department has no responsibility for the issues raised in questions numbered 1 and 2 of your letter. You may wish to raise these issues with the Ministry of Defence at the following address:

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

National Air Traffic Services, the body responsible for providing en route air traffic control to aircraft in UK airspace, advise me that Joint Airmiss Working Group Reports can be obtained from Civil Aviation Authority Printing & Publications, Greville House, 37 Gratton Road, CHELTENHAM, GL50 2BN.

A listing of incidents involving loss of separation between aircraft can be obtained from the Joint Airprox Section, Hillingdon House, UXBRIDGE, UB10 0BS.

Yours sincerely,

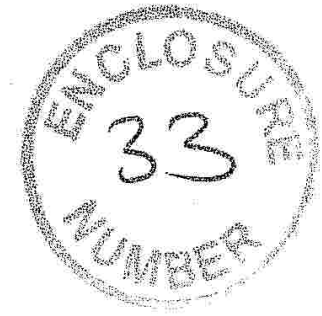
Section 40

CIVIL AVIATION DIVISION

To	Section 40	FAA
Company	MOD	
From	Section 40	Section 40
Company	CAD DOT	
Tel No.	Section 40	No. of Pages 1

*AS agreed. (Draft
reply to Roger Gale MP
went up to Ministers
today)*

Section 40



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

13 Feb 97

PE Uni **Section 40**
 (thro **Section 40**)

PE US 473/97: MR ROGER GALE MP

1. Mr Gale's constituent, **Section 40** is not known to Sec(AS)2. However, from the attachment to the MP's letter it is very likely that another member of public, **Section 40** has a hand in this enquiry. **Section 40** has initiated three Parliamentary Enquiries on the subject of "UFOs" through the MP for Anglesey, Ieuan Wyn Jones, and has been responsible for numerous letters to the Department, on the same subject, requiring official action replies.
2. The main theme of the enquiry centres on a "UFO" sighting on 5 October 1996 in "The Wash" off the Lincolnshire Coast which received a fair amount of media attention at the time. The sighting, and follow up MOD involvement was the subject of a PE from Martin Redmond MP (US 4168/96), the background note of which sets out the position (attached at ANNEX A). A more detailed analysis is available if required.
3. The MP has written in similar terms to the Department of Transport. I have agreed with DoT officials that MOD will address the air defence aspects of this enquiry, while they will concentrate on the question of near misses with civil airliners.
4. Given MOD's limited interest in reports of "unexplained" aerial sightings to those only occurring within the UK Air Defence Region, we have not addressed those questions directed at the FCO or Home Office. Mr Gale could have included both Departments in his circulation of the attachment in a similar way to the DoT.
5. There can be no justification for a Press Conference about the sightings of 5 October. There was no evidence of any defence interest; information about our findings is already in the public domain and is readily available to anyone who requests it.

6. The line taken in the draft reply to Mr Gale is consistent with that given to Martin Redmond in November last year (US 4168/96 copy attached at ANNEX B.)

Section 40



Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

DRAFT

D/USofS/473/97

February 1997

Thank you for your letter of 1 February addressed to Nicholas Soames on behalf of **Section 40** of **Section 40** Margate about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department examines any reports of "UFO sightings" solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no "UFO sighting" reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each report. From the descriptions we do receive, aircraft or natural phenomena probably account for most of the observations.

Section 40 has asked about a "UFO" sighting on 5 October 1996 off the Lincolnshire coast and I must say that the events concerned received a certain amount of media attention at the time much of it incorrect, ill-informed and speculative. Our air defence system found no evidence of unidentified flying craft throughout the period in question. Two quite separate phenomena were reported: an unexplained radar plot and lights in the sky. The radar plot observed, which was identified on the National Air Traffic Services Claxby radar in the position of Boston, was judged by experienced operators at two separate locations to be a

permanent echo, caused by a natural phenomena (something that does occur in certain weather conditions). It was not suspicious in nature nor of any significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. The characteristics of the radar plot confirmed beyond reasonable doubt that this judgement was sound.

There was very little reliable or accurate bearing or elevation information in connection with any of the reported sightings of the lights which were observed in the area of The Wash. From that provided, the Greenwich Observatory advised that they were of celestial origin and likely to have been Venus which was exceptionally bright during the week in question.

I am confident that there was no evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised and there was, of course, no reason whatsoever, in the light of the above for any further military action.

I hope this explains the position. We have already provided the above information on request to any interested parties, and are content to continue to do so.

Roger Gale Esq MP

THE EARL HOWE

10 11/16/96

ANNEX A

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

15 Nov 96

PE Unit

(thro' Head of S [REDACTED])

15
Section 40

LETTER FROM MARTIN REDMOND MP - US 4168/96

1. I attach a draft reply for USofS to send to Martin Redmond MP. The deadline was extended to COP today with the agreement of the Parliamentary Unit.

BACKGROUND

2. The substance of Mr Redmond's letter alleging 'unidentified flying craft sightings' is based on various reports some incorrect, ill-informed or speculative, which appeared in the local press.

3. Initial Observations. At approximately 0205Z on 5 October [REDACTED] Section 40, a Skegness police officer on mobile patrol at Addlethorpe observed stationary multicoloured lights in the sky which he reported to Skegness control room who relayed the message on to Great Yarmouth Coastguard Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) suspecting it might be related to an incident at sea. The MRCC, unaware of any maritime activity, asked the Air Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) at RAF Kinloss about any air activity or incident in The Wash area, and with nothing to report, they in turn asked the Control and Reporting Centre (CRC) at RAF Neatishead to check their radar for that area. Neatishead confirmed they had no unidentified radar contact on the air defence radars being used to provide air surveillance in the area. ARCC subsequently checked with the Distress and Diversion (D&D) Cell (which is located at the London Air Traffic Control Centre (LATCC) West Drayton and not RAF Northwood as the Coastguard erroneously assumed and the press subsequently reported) for advice. The D&D Cell advised a radar plot on the NATS Claxby radar over Boston and this information was passed through ARCC to MRCC. CRC Neatishead having by now conducted a search on all available radar displays, observed the same plot on the same Claxby radar in the same position. For reasons that are unclear, MRCC associated the police officer's report of lights with the radar return over Boston.

4. Actions by Air Defence System. CRC Neatishead's inquiries revealed no sign of air movements or military exercises in the area and there was no evidence of unidentified air activity. The stationary radar plot, without associated height or IFF/SSR (Identification Friend or Foe/Secondary Surveillance Radar) was judged by experienced operators at both Neatishead and the D&D.

Cell to be a permanent echo. The separate, stationary, lights were judged to be some form of natural phenomena, not suspicious in nature nor of significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. No flying craft had either penetrated the UKADR or was present on any radar and no recommendation to scramble a Quick Reaction Alert aircraft from RAF Leuchars to investigate either the permanent echo showing on the stationary radar plot, or the reported lights, was sought.

5. Subsequent Reporting. MRCC assumed a coordination role and continued to seek further information on both plot and lights. At the instigation of the coastguard, further interest in the radar plot was kept alive and involved LATCC(Civil), LATCC(Military), Anglia Radar and Waddington Approach; and with the involvement of a tanker vessel at sea (Section 40), Boston and Skegness Police Forces and LATCC(Civil) in the lights until they disappeared with the dawn.

INVESTIGATION OF RADAR PLOT AND VISUAL SIGHTINGS

6. The Boston Radar Plot. The radar Plot was observed in the position of Boston on the NATS sensor at Claxby by the D&D Cell and CRC Neatishead, although neither uses that radar on a routine basis for surveillance or aircraft control in The Wash area. Later, the plot was observed by Anglia Radar at Stanstead and the Claxby radar display. The radar plot was always single and stationary and defied attempts to obtain height or IFF/SSR information on it. Significantly, it was never present on radar displays from the NATS sensors at Cromer and Debden nor on the air defence radar at Trimmingham. The characteristics of the plot confirm beyond reasonable doubt that it was a permanent radar echo. The fact that it could only be detected by the closest sensors indicated a relatively low physical feature which appears as a permanent radar echo only in certain weather conditions and was most likely the 273ft Spire of St Botolph's Church, Boston (the 'Boston Stump').

7. Stationary Lights. Various sightings of lights were made between approximately 0205Z and dawn by observers at Skegness and Boston and on board the Section 40 some 8 miles to the east of Skegness. However, neither the police at Kings Lynn when asked at 0227Z, nor the cargo vessel, Section 40, some 16nms ENE of Skegness, at 0240Z observed any lights which they considered unusual. The crews of two civilian airliners flying through the area at 0557Z reported no sightings of lights when asked by LATCC(Civil). Only the original report by Section 40 was unsolicited. Although there is little reliable or accurate bearing and elevation information in connection with the sightings the observations have been assessed by the Royal Greenwich Observatory. They surmise the likely source of the Boston Police sighting as the planet Venus which was exceptionally bright in the early morning sky on 5 October. Their assessment of the Skegness Police video film (which was not, as reported, forwarded to MOD at the time but only after repeated requests for sight of it), was

that it was also likely to be the planet Venus. They could offer no explanation for either set of lights observed from the **Section 40**
Section 40

CONCLUSION

8. Detailed research has not revealed evidence or admissions that alarming or extraordinary events were witnessed on 5 October. The radar plot observed in a position at Boston was a permanent radar echo. It was correctly assessed as such by CRC Neatishead and no further air defence related action was necessary. The bright stationary lights observed from Boston and Skegness were probably the planet Venus.

ADDITIONAL FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

9. Mr Redmond has tabled 33 'UFO'-related PQs during the last four weeks and is keen to exploit any opportunity to draw attention to what he perceives to be the Governments unwillingness to investigate each reported sighting in depth. This investigation was only considered necessary in view of Mr Redmond's serious allegations about the effectiveness of our Air Defence systems and involved the RAF staffs in very detailed work over a significant period. It is indicative of the effort that would be required to investigate all sightings, something Mr Redmond is keen we should do. We have explained to Mr Redmond on a number of occasions the limit of MOD's interest in 'UFO'-related issues, which is simply to determine whether there is any penetration of the UK Air Defence Region but it is unlikely he will be deflected from his attempts to discredit MOD's handling of 'UFO' reports. On balance we do not believe that the draft letter should provide a full and detailed explanation of the events of 5 October since to do so would only encourage Mr Redmond to write more frequently with this in mind. Mr Redmond has already informed the Media of his letter to MOD (The People, 10 Nov 96, copy attached) and it is likely that he will seek to interest them in the reply.

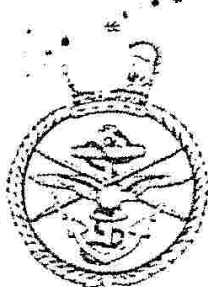
10. Finally, I apologise for the length of this background note but believe on this occasion it is warranted.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

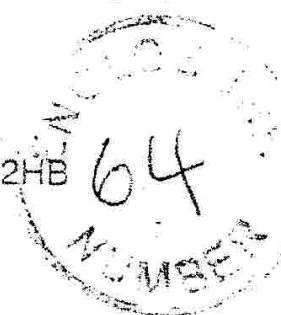
MB8247 **Section 40**

Enc.



21 NOV 1996

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
 MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
 Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
 0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
 FOR DEFENCE

ANNEX B

D/US of S/FH 4168/96/M

278v November 1996

Dear Mr. Redmond,

Thank you for your letter of 24 October to Michael Portillo expressing concern about the effectiveness of the UK air defence system. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

I must say at the outset that much of the content of the press reports enclosed with your letter is incorrect, ill-informed and speculative. Much of what you say in your letter is also incorrect.

The facts are that our air defence system found no evidence of unidentified flying craft throughout the period in question. The only radar plot observed, which was identified on the National Air Traffic Services Claxby radar in the position of Boston, was judged by experienced operators at two separate locations to be a permanent echo, caused by a natural phenomena (something that does occur in certain weather conditions), not suspicious in nature nor of any significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. The characteristics of the radar plot confirm beyond reasonable doubt that this judgement was sound.

There is very little reliable or accurate bearing or elevation information in connection with any of the sightings of lights observed in the area of The Wash. From that provided, including the video which was not forwarded to us by the Lincolnshire Police HQ until 5 November, the Greenwich Observatory view is that the lights were of celestial origin and likely to be Venus which had been exceptionally bright during the week in question.

Martin Redmond Esq MP

I am confident that there is no evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised. There was, of course, no reason whatsoever, in the light of the above for any further military action.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

F Sigs 927
(Rev 2/95)



Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Serial Number:		Transmission:		Document Reference:	
		Date: 11 FEB		64/4 ←	
		Time:		Total number of pages including this one:	
				11	
From:		Fax Number:		To:	
Section 40		Section 40		Section 40	
MOD		Tel Number:		Tel: Section 40	
AIR STAFF SEC.		Section 40		Fax	
Authorised by:			Transmitted by:		
Rank	Name	Appointment	Rank	Name	Tel Number
EO	Section 40	Sec(CAS)ZAI	AO	Section 40	
Signature:		Section 40		Signature:	
				Section 40	

Subject: CORRESPONDENCE FROM ROGER GALE MP.

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

1



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

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

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

Attn: Section 40

== by fax ==

Tel: Section 40

Fax:

Your reference

Our reference
D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Date
11 February 1997

Dear Section 40

**PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY FROM ROGER GALE MP ON BEHALF OF Section 40
Section 40 MARGATE**

1. As discussed during our telecon last week I have put together a proposed draft reply for the Under Secretary of State for Defence to send to Roger Gale MP.
2. The attached should provide you with some background on what has prompted this enquiry. As agreed I shall call you on Wednesday to talk over our respective replies.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

Enc.

2

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Feb 97

PE Unit

(thro Section 40)

D R A F T

PE US 473/97: MR ROGER GALE MP

1. Mr Gale's constituent, Section 40 is not known to Sec(AS)2. However, from the attachment to the MP's letter it is very likely that another member of public, Section 40, has a hand in this enquiry. Section 40 has initiated three Parliamentary Enquiries on the subject of "UFOs" through the MP for Anglesey, Ieuan Wyn Jones, and has been responsible for numerous letters to the Department, on the same subject, requiring official action replies.

2. The main theme of the enquiry centres on a "UFO" sighting on 5 October 1996 in "The Wash" off the Lincolnshire Coast which received a fair amount of media attention at the time. The sighting, and follow up MOD involvement was the subject of a PE from Martin Redmond MP (US 4168/96), the background note of which sets out the position (attached). A more detailed analysis is available if required.

3. The MP has written in similar terms to the Department of Transport. I have agreed with DoT officials that MOD will address the air defence aspects of this enquiry, while they

3

will concentrate on the question of near misses with civil airliners.

4. Given MOD's limited interest in reports of "unexplained" aerial sightings to those only occurring within the UK Air Defence Region, we have not addressed those questions directed at the FCO or Home Office. Mr Gale could have included both Departments in his circulation of the attachment in a similar way to the DoT.

5. There can be no justification for a Press Conference about the sightings of 5 October. There was no evidence of any defence interest; information about our findings is already in the public domain and is readily available to anyone who requests it.

6. The line taken in the draft reply to Mr Gale is consistent with that given to Martin Redmond in November last year (US 4168 copy attached.)

SEC(CAS)

4

DRAFT

D/USofS/473/97

February 1997

Thank you for your letter of 1 February addressed to Nicholas Soames on behalf of **Section 40** of **Section 40** Margate about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

My Department examines any reports of "UFO sightings" solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no "UFO sighting" reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each report. From the descriptions we do receive, aircraft or natural phenomena probably account for most of the observations.

Section 40 has asked about a "UFO" sighting on 5 October 1996 off the Lincolnshire coast and I must say that the events concerned received a certain amount of media attention at the time much of it incorrect, ill-informed and speculative. Our air defence system found no evidence of unidentified flying craft throughout the period in question. Two quite separate phenomena were reported: an unexplained radar plot and lights in the sky. The radar plot observed, which was identified on the National Air Traffic Services Claxby radar in the position of Boston, was judged by experienced operators at two separate locations to be a

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permanent echo, caused by a natural phenomena (something that does occur in certain weather conditions). It was not suspicious in nature nor of any significance to air or maritime safety, and of no air defence or air concern. The characteristics of the radar plot confirmed beyond reasonable doubt that this judgement was sound.

There was very little reliable or accurate bearing or elevation information in connection with any of the reported sightings of the lights which were observed in the area of The Wash. From that provided, the Greenwich Observatory advised that they were of celestial origin and likely to have been Venus which was exceptionally bright during the week in question.

I am confident that there was no evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised and there was, of course, no reason whatsoever, in the light of the above for any further military action.

I hope this explains the position. We have already provided the above information on request to any interested parties, and are content to continue to do so.

Roger Gale Esq MP

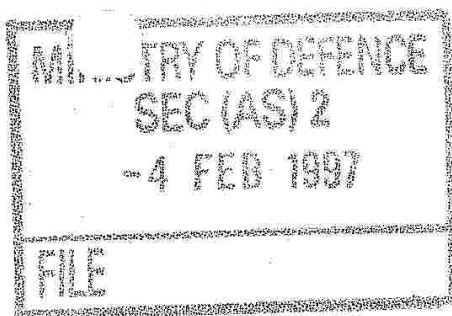
THE EARL HOWE

6

Secretariat(Air Staff) Fax: **Section 40****** Transmit Conf. Report ****

11 Feb '97 9:47

Secretariat(Air Staff)---> Section 40	
No.	3122
Mode	NORMAL
Time	4'44"
Pages	11 Page(s)
Result	O K



64/4

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC(AS)2aPE REF NUMBER: US473 /97MINISTER REPLYING: USQPSDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 13/2/97DATE: 4/2/97FROM: **Section 40**PE Unit TEL: **Section 40****GUIDANCE NOTE**

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is extremely important that your response is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed. Once an interim has been provided the final reply should follow within **8 days**.

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

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

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

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

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES, otherwise send drafts by fax to **Section 40****
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

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

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

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced.

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

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

Opening and closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ..., Toytown about"

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... addressed to Michael Portillo/ Nicholas Soames/James Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"

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

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

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

USAFS
Sec (AS) 2
UFOs



Roger Gale, M.P.

House of Commons
London, SW1A 0AA

01227 722366 (Private Office - a.m. only)
01227 720593 (FAX - 24hr)
0171 219 3000 (House of Commons)
0171 219 4343 (Members' messages)

Sat. 1.2.1997.

Hon. Nicholas Soames, M.P.
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Main Building
Whitehall
London, SW1A 2HB.

Section 40

Margate, Section 40

My constituent, Section 40 of the above address, has today called to see me at my advice surgery concerning his desire to have a number of Parliamentary Questions tabled relating to Unidentified Flying Objects.

I note from recent Hansards that you answer for the Ministry of Defence in connection with these issues and I thought that rather than table questions it would be simpler for me to let you have the briefing paper that Mr. Smith has prepared in order that you may respond to the specific points that he has raised. I am writing in similar terms to John Bowis at the Department of Transport.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With my very best wishes.

Section 40

ROGER GALE MP

*Conservative
Thames North*

c.c. Section 40

Section 40

I believe this has

Section 40

Stamped all over

it

Section 40

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
-3 FEB 1997
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

Questions to be raised in The House of Commons

Unidentified Craft

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, does his Department acknowledge that the United Kingdom airspace has been penetrated on several occasions by craft of unknown design and origin whose flight and maneuverability far exceed current advanced aircraft design; and if he will make a statement.

✓

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, (i) does his Department acknowledge that the United Kingdom airspace has been penetrated on several occasions by craft of unknown design and origin whose flight and manoeverability far exceed current advanced aircraft design and (ii) how many records of near misses and sightings of unidentified craft in United Kingdom airspace by civilian airliners does his department hold; and if he will make a statement.

DOT

Incident off the Skegness Coast, 4th-5fd October 1996

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the incident on 4th-5fd October 1996 off the Skegness Coast and if he will indicate (i) why were there no aircraft scrambled to intercept the unidentified craft on the morning of the 5fd October, (ii) who took this decision and (iii) whether civil flights in the area were notified of the presence of an unidentified craft; and if he will make a statement.

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, (i) what assessment his Department has made of the incident that occurred between the hours of 3.14am and 11.09am on the morning of the 5fd October, (ii) was an incident report filed by the crew of The Conocoast Barge and (iii) were any reports of unidentified craft or other aerial phenomena such as flares filed by airline pilots flying in the vicinity of the sighting; and if he will make a statement.

No
files
No
copy
needed

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs have any foreign governments expressed an interest in the details of the incident on 4th-5fd October 1996 off the Skegness Coast and if so will he indicate (i) which government, (ii) for what reason and (iii) will cooperation with such governments be forthcoming; and if he will make a statement.

Need
we
address
these
issues

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs have the Russian Government expressed an interest in the details of the incident on 4th-5fd October 1996 off the Skegness Coast and if so will he indicate (i) has cooperation with the Russian Government been forthcoming (ii) have parallels been drawn with the object observed by Kazakhstan Defence HQ over Alma Ata on 24th July 1996 and (iii) has film of the two incidents been compared; and if he will make a statement.

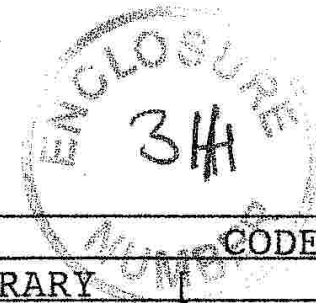
To ask the Secretaries of State for Transport, Defence and the Home Department if they will acknowledge that details of this incident are in the public interest and in this spirit, organise a joint televised press conference where their representatives can make public all the aspects associated with the incident and include in this press conference such details as (i) shape, flight-pattern, colour and size of the unidentified craft, (ii) where and when the craft was seen, (iii) what action their respective Departments took, (iv) the radar profile of the craft and (v) all film relating to this incident; and if they will make a joint statement.

US

64/4

Tue 11 Feb, 1997 9:23

mailbox standard Page 1



DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
10/02/97	PARLIAMENTARY CLERK	RE: LETTERS PLACED IN THE LIBRARY	[]

Intended:

Sent: 10/02/97 at 20:41

Delivered: 10/02/97 at 20:44

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC:

Ref: 1717

From: PARLIAMENTARY CLERK

Auth by:

Subject: RE: LETTERS PLACED IN THE LIBRARY OF THE HOUSE

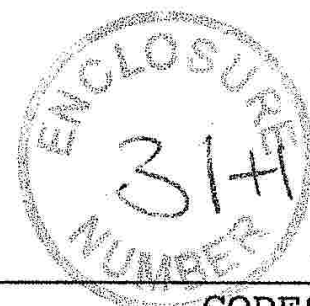
Text: Thanks for your loose minute about letters in the Library of the House. Placing letters in the Library does not constitute publication. They are however available to other members and their research assistants. It is therefore as good as public. If you have been asked for a copy I think you should provide it direct to the member of the public. **Section 40**

Priority: Normal
Reply Request []

SEE PAGE
View Acknowledge [*]

Attachments []
Codes []

64/4



Thu 6 Feb, 1997 11:47 mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
06/02/97	PARLIAMENTARY CLER	LETTERS PLACED IN THE LIBRARY OF	[]

Sent: 06/02/97 at 11:46
 To: PARLIAMENTARY CLERK
 CC:

Ref: 1017
 Subject: LETTERS PLACED IN THE LIBRARY OF THE HOUSE

Text: PLEASE SEE ATTACHED

Priority: Normal
 Reply Request []

View Acknowledge [*]
 Delivery Acknowledge [*]

Attachments [1]
 Codes []

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

6 Feb 97

Parliamentary Clerk - Section 40

LETTERS PLACED IN THE LIBRARY OF THE HOUSE

1. I should be grateful if you could give me a steer in respect of a query I have received from a member of the public about copies of letters placed in the Library of the House in answer to PQs.
2. As you may recall there was a flurry of "UFO" PQs in November which necessitated "I will write to the Hon member ...etc" replies from Minister(AF). A member of the public has now written in requesting copies of these letters. I am not sure of the protocol in this situation; is it one of the following:
 - (a) Do we provide him with copies of the letters.
 - (b) Inform him that he should seek copies from the MP concerned. (Unfortunately the MP concerned is Martin Redmond who as you know died recently).
 - (c) Advise him that he should write to the Library of the House to obtain copies of these letters.
3. If none of the above is the correct procedure I should be grateful for any further guidance.

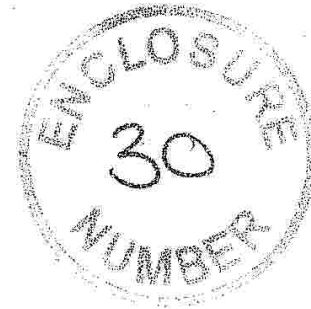
[original signed]

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4 ✓

5 Feb 97

PE Uni
(thro

Section 40

Copy to:

Head of CS(RM)1
PL(LS)L1

PE US 243/97: THE RT HON STEPHEN DORRELL MP

1. Mr Dorrell's constituent, Section 40, is known to Secretariat(Air Staff)2 in that he has written, and received replies, to three letters as well as two Parliamentary Enquiries since December 1994. All correspondence relates to the subject of "unidentified flying objects". Section 40 is asking that details of his name and address be removed from our files.

2. We do not know why Section 40 is suddenly concerned about his details being held on MOD files. Sec(AS) holds only the five letters Section 40 has sent to the Department and our five replies. In discussion with Records Management, we have been unable to establish a precedent but believe that Section 40 request should be denied on the basis that his correspondence forms part of the Department's records, and no right to demand that his name and address be deleted from the letters he has sent. The Legal Adviser has been consulted and endorses this view, believing that there would be no grounds for a legal challenge should Section 40 wish to take the matter further.

3. The attached draft for USofS' consideration seeks to explain that it is Departmental policy to treat correspondence from members of the public as confidential and that neither the content nor the fact of existence of a member of the public's correspondence may be revealed to a third party without the agreement of the correspondent. This would of course also apply to details of Section 40 private address.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

DRAFT

D/USofS/243/97

February 1997

Thank you for your letter of 21 January enclosing one from Section 40 of Section 40 Leicester about his correspondence with my Department.

Since December 1994 Section 40 has written to my officials in the Secretariat (Air Staff) on three occasions about "unidentified flying objects". In addition to these letters, you have also made two enquiries on this subject on his behalf. Section 40 letters and your own have been placed on Registered Departmental files together with copies of the relevant replies. Section 40 name and address are not held on any other files within Secretariat (Air Staff).

I am afraid that I cannot accede to Section 40 request to remove his letters or details from our files as his correspondence now forms part of the Department's official records. However, I should wish to assure Section 40 that it is Departmental policy to treat correspondence from members of the public as strictly confidential, and neither the content of a letter nor the fact of its existence may be revealed to a third party without the agreement of the correspondent. This would of course also apply to details of Section 40 private address.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful, but I hope this explains the position.

The Rt Hon Stephen Dorrell MP

THE EARL HOWE

64/4



Mon 3 Feb, 1997 13:46 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
03/02/97	Hd of CS(RM)1	RE: PE US 243/97	[]

Intended:

Sent: 03/02/97 at 13:08

Delivered: 03/02/97 at 13:09

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC:

Ref: 186

From: Hd of CS(RM)1

Auth by:

Subject: RE: PE US 243/97

Text: Section 40 I'm happy with your draft.

Regards Section 40

Priority: Normal
Reply Request []

SEE PAGE
View Acknowledge [*]

Attachments []
Codes []

Mon 3 Feb, 1997 13:46 mailbox log Page 1

DATE	TO	SUBJECT	CODES
03/02/97	Hd of CS(RM)1	PE US 243/97	[]

Sent: 03/02/97 at 12:43

To: Hd of CS(RM)1

CC:

Ref: 1010

Subject: PE US 243/97

Text: **Section 40** You may by now have seen PL(LS)L1's very helpful note to me of 30 Jan. I have put together the attached draft reply to the PE. I'd be grateful if you would indicate whether you are content with the line taken or if you have any suggestions.

Section 40 out til Wed morning so I'd like to get this ready for despatch on her return if possible. Thanks **Section 40**

Priority: Urgent
Reply Request []

View Acknowledge [*]
Delivery Acknowledge [*]

Attachments [1]
Codes []

LOOSE MINUTE

D R A F T

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

Feb 97

PE Unit

(thro **Section 40**)

Copy to:

Head of CS(RM)1

PL(LS)L1

PE US 243/97: MR STEPHEN DORRELL MP

1. Mr Dorrell's constituent, **Section 40**, is known to Secretariat(Air Staff)2 in that he has written, and received replies, to three letters as well as two Parliamentary Enquiries since December 1994. All correspondence relates to the subject of "unidentified flying objects". **Section 40** is asking that details of his name and address be removed from our files.

2. We do not know why **Section 40** is suddenly concerned about his details being held on MOD files. Sec(AS) holds only the five letters **Section 40** has sent to the Department and our five replies. I have discussed this matter with Records Management and although we have been unable to establish a precedent we believe that **Section 40** request should be denied on the basis that his correspondence forms part of the Department's records and he has no right to demand that his name and address be deleted from the letters he has sent. The Legal Adviser has been consulted and endorses this view, believing that there would be no grounds for a legal challenge should **Section 40** wish to take the matter further.

3. The attached draft for USofs' consideration seeks to explain that it is Departmental policy to treat correspondence from members of the public as confidential and that neither the content nor the fact of existence of a member of the public's correspondence may be revealed to a third party without the agreement of the correspondent. This would of course also apply to details of **Section 40** private address.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

DRAFT

D/USofS/243/97

February 1997

Thank you for your letter of 21 January enclosing one from
Section 40 of **Section 40** Leicester.

Section 40 is concerned that details of his name and address are held on MOD files and has asked that they be removed. Since January 1995 **Section 40** has written to the Department on three occasions about "unidentified flying objects", and made a further two enquiries on this subject through you. His letters have been placed on Registered Departmental files along with copies of our five replies. **Section 40** name and address are not held on any other files within Sec(AS).

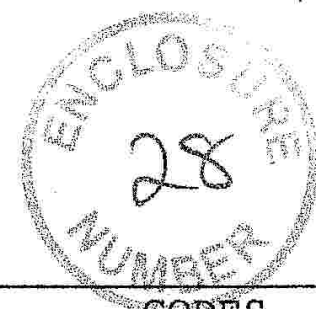
I am afraid that I cannot accede to the request to remove **Section 40** **Section 40** letters from our files as his correspondence now forms part of the Department's official records. However, I should wish to assure **Section 40** that it is Departmental policy to treat correspondence from members of the public as strictly confidential and neither the content nor the fact of existence of a member of the public's correspondence may be revealed to a third party without the agreement of the correspondent. This would of course also apply to details of **Section 40** private address.

I hope this explains the position.

Stephen Dorrell Esq MP

THE EARL HOWE

64/4



Thu 30 Jan, 1997 17:24 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
30/01/97	PL(LS)L1-EO	PE: US 243/97 Section 40	[]

Intended:

Sent: 30/01/97 at 17:24

Delivered: 30/01/97 at 17:23

To: SEC(AS)2A (2)

CC: Hd of CS(RM)1

Ref: 568

From: PL(LS)L1-EO

Auth by:

Subject: PE: US 243/97 Section 40

Text: Please see attached

Priority: Normal
Reply Request []

SEE PAGE
View Acknowledge []

Attachments [1]
Codes []

LOOSE MINUTE

D/PL(LS)517/95

30 Jan 97

Sec(AS)2a1 - Section 40 [redacted] *by e.mail

Copy to:
CS(RM)1/Hd - Section 40 [redacted] *

PE: US 243/97: Section 40 [redacted]

Reference. D/Sec(AS)/64/4 dated 27 Jan 97

1. I am writing further to your Loose Minute at Reference which was copied to me by CS(RM)1/Hd who asked if we wished to have any input to the reply to Section 40 [redacted].

2. I understand that CS(RM) were advising that Section 40 [redacted] request should be denied on the basis that his correspondence forms part of the Department's records and that he has no right to demand that his name and address be deleted from letters he has sent to us. I have spoken to Legal Adviser who has endorsed that view, saying that there would be no grounds for a legal challenge should Section 40 [redacted] wish to take the matter further.

3. In view of Section 40 [redacted] apparent concerns regarding a possible invasion of his privacy, you may wish to mention in your reply that the Department treats correspondence from members of the public as confidential and neither it's contents nor it's existence may be revealed to a third party without the agreement of the correspondent. The same would apply to the private address of an individual.

4. I hope that this helps.

(signed)

Section 40 [redacted]

PL(LS)L1

MT3/6 Section 40 [redacted]

Fax sent by : **Section 40**

PE SECTION

A4->A4 24/01/97 12:05 Pg: 1

64/4

ENCLOSURE
27
NUMBER**PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY
FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**TO: *Sec (AS) 82680*PE REF NUMBER: *US 243* /97MINISTER REPLYING: *USoff*DRAFT REQUIRED BY: *4 Feb* 97DATE: *24 Jan* 97FROM: **Section 40**

PE Unit

TEL: **Section 40****GUIDANCE NOTE**

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

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

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced.

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

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

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

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

Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"

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

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

Alternatives are:

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

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

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

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

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL AND ANNOTATED TO SHOW THIS HAS BEEN DONE.

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

Fax sent by : Section 40

PE SECTION

A4->A4 24/01/97 12:05 Pg: 2

Stephen Dorrell, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

243

USofS
Sec (AS)
Records
PE

21 JAN 1997

The Eral Howe,
Parl. Under-Secretary of State,
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Whitehall,
London, SW1A 2HB

Dear Geddin

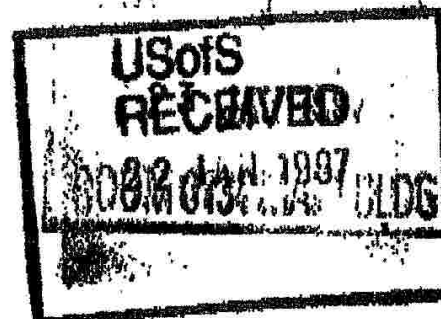
I enclose a copy of a letter I have received from my con-
stituent, Section 40 of Section 40
Leicester, who is concerned that his name and address should
be deleted from the Ministry of Defence's records.

I would be grateful for your comments on this matter.

Section 40

Stephen Dorrell

Enc.



29 JAN 1997

ack 9/1

7th, Jan, 1997.

Section 40

Leicester,
Section 40

Fax sent by :

Dear Mr Dorrell,

When a member of the public makes an enquiry by post therefore disclosing his/her name and address to any M.o.D. department, I have done on two or three occasions in the recent past to the Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a, are their names and addresses kept on the M.o.D.'s records/files permanently or for a certain time only.

Section 40

The reason I am sending this to you is that I would like my name and address deleting from the M.o.D.'s records/files, if they have still retained them, simply on the grounds of persons privacy, but felt safer asking through yourself, being an M.P., rather than enquiring to the above department directly. No actual infringement of my privacy has taken place to the best of my knowledge, but it's the knowing that my name and address are possibly on a file when there is absolutely no reason for them to be there.

PE SECTION

Any help or advice would be most appreciated or if you can intervene on my behalf I would be very grateful. I look forward to your reply,

Yours faithfully,

Section 40

A4-744 24/01/97 12:05 Pg: 3



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

D/US of S/FH 0090/97/P

30th January 1997

Dear Matthew,

Thank you for your letter of 13 January to Michael Portillo enclosing one from **Section 40** of **Section 40** Southport about the UK Air Defence Region and uncorrelated radar returns. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility. **Section 40** also wrote direct to my officials and I hope he will accept this in reply to both his letters.

By way of background I should say that my officials wrote to **Section 40** in September last year to explain my Department's interest in 'unexplained' aerial phenomena which is limited to that required solely to establish whether what has been reported may have any defence significance.

The focal point within my Department for reports of sightings is Secretariat (Air Staff)2a and all sighting reports, whether relating to something witnessed over land or sea, are passed to them. Detailed investigation of the reports, by the appropriate experts within the Department, would only be initiated if there was some evidence to suggest that the UK Air Defence Region may have been breached.

I can confirm that there is no 'Aerospace Intelligence' branch within the Ministry of Defence, nor any separate department which deals with 'UFO' sightings at sea.

I hope this explains the situation.

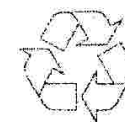
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS) 2
3 FEB 1997
FILE 64/4

Yours ever,

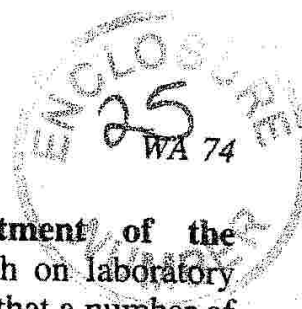
Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

Matthew Banks Esq MP



Recycled Paper



Written Answers

Monday, 27th January 1997.

Treaty of Rome: Ministerial Advice

Lord Pearson of Rannoch asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they agree with the advice given on 14th December 1960 by the then Lord Chancellor, Lord Kilmuir, to the then Lord Privy Seal, the right honourable Edward Heath MP, about the effect of British sovereignty of the United Kingdom's participation in the Common Market under the Treaty of Rome.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Chalker of Wallasey): It would not be sensible for the Government to comment on advice given by one Minister to another 36 years ago. The Government made clear in the *Partnership of Nations* White Paper that "common European decision making, as opposed to co-operation, can only be justified where it brings benefits for British security, prosperity and quality of life which are so significant that they justify some loss of unfettered national control over decision making in the area concerned, or where common action enables nation states to exercise joint control which is not open to them individually".

Pilotless Aircraft

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

What, if any, are the limits on the right of owners of remote-controlled unmanned aircraft (or their agents) to fly them within other countries' national air space.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Transport (Viscount Goschen): The use of pilotless aircraft is governed by Article 8 of the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation. This states: "No aircraft capable of being flown without a pilot shall be flown without a pilot over the territory of a contracting State without special authorisation by that State and in accordance with the terms of such authorisation. Each contracting State undertakes to ensure that the flight of such aircraft without a pilot in regions open to civil aircraft shall be so controlled as to obviate danger to civil aircraft".

Hormone Mimics

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether, to their knowledge, the release (whether intended or unintended) of endocrine and hormone mimics into the environment is taking place; and if so, whether these have, or are suspected of having, an effect on the human genome and if, therefore, such a release is lawful.

The Minister of State, Department of the Environment (Earl Ferrers): Research on laboratory animals such as rats and fish has shown that a number of substances, both man-made and naturally occurring, have the potential to act as hormone mimics. Many of these substances are widely used in industrial processes and consumer products; some occur naturally in foods. They are therefore both present in the environment and released through processes and products.

In some circumstances such chemicals can interfere with the endocrine (hormonal) system, for example by acting like the hormone oestrogen to cause female traits to be manifest in male fish. This action does not effect the genome or the heritable material in cells. The department is not aware of any research to suggest that hormone mimics are acting in a way which would affect the human genome. Of course chemicals can have more than one type of biological activity, and substances with endocrine disrupting activities may also for example be carcinogenic and therefore be controlled for those reasons.

Releases into the environment of hazardous chemicals (including those potentially interacting with human genetic material, such as mutagens and carcinogens) are controlled under the provisions of Part I the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Water Resources Act 1991.

Current scientific opinion is that there is no proven link between observed trends in human reproductive health and exposure to putative hormone mimics in the environment. The question of hormone mimics is the subject of considerable research both in this country and elsewhere in Europe and in North America.

Millenium Exhibition Site

Lord Sefton of Garston asked Her Majesty's Government:

What contribution has been paid by British Gas toward clearing pollution caused by them on the proposed site of the Millennium Exhibition.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of National Heritage (Lord Inglewood): I understand that British Gas is committed to meet in full the costs of cleaning up the part of the Greenwich peninsula which it owns to comply with the Environment Act 1995 and using methodology agreed with the Environment Agency. This includes the proposed site of the Millennium Exhibition.

The initial land reclamation project, paid for by British Gas, will finish on time at the end of this month, at a cost of £10.5 million.

Unemployment Comparisons

Lord Acton asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is the current rate of unemployment in (a) the United Kingdom, (b) the United States of America; and (c) Japan.



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/FH 5119/96/P

22nd January 1997

Dear Dr. Williams,

Thank you for your letter of 12 December to William Hague enclosing one from **Section 40** of the West Wales Paranormal Group about 'UFO sightings' on 21 November. **Section 40** also wrote in similar terms to the military staffs at the London Air Traffic Control Centre, West Drayton and I hope he will accept this as a reply to both letters.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. From the descriptions we do receive, aircraft or natural phenomena probably account for most of the observations.

I should wish to assure **Section 40** that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force and we remain vigilant for any potential military threat. Our enquiries reveal that on the day in question there was no unusual air defence activity, no penetration by hostile military aircraft of the UK Air Defence Region, no unknown aircraft activity on any military radars and that no Quick Reaction Alert aircraft were scrambled.

We have also checked whether the Aberporth Range was being used that day since the range danger area extends into Cardigan Bay. The Range regularly fires air-to-air missiles but, although

Dr Alan Williams MP

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS) 2
23 JAN 1997
FILE 644



Recycled Paper



on 21 November two missiles were fired, the timings do not accord with the events documented by Mr Alexander.

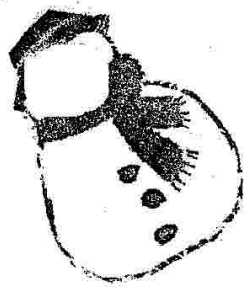
I hope this is helpful.

James Smeady

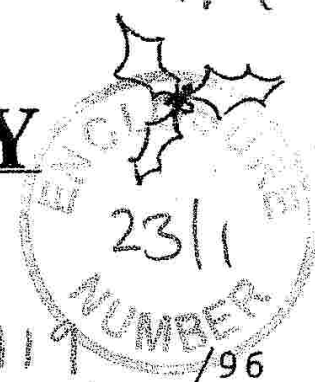
Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

Re



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION



TO: See (AS) 2

PE REF NUMBER: US 5119/96

MINISTER REPLYING: US of S

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 9 Jan 97

DATE: 31 Dec 96

FROM: Section 40

PE Unit

TEL: Section 40

GUIDANCE NOTE

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Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"

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

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WHEREVER POSSIBLE DRAFTS SHOULD BE SENT ON CHOTS E-MAIL TO:

Parliamentary Enquiries
other wise send drafts by fax to **Section 40** PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD



US of SS
UFOs
Sec (AS) 2

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

I shall be grateful if you will give the enclosed
communication from **Section 40**
your attention and send me a reply which I can forward to
my constituent.

Please acknowledge.

PARLIAM. BRANCH
31 DEC 1996
ROOMS MAIN BLDG
[Signature] (Cam Aka)

19 Dec 96



H.C.91B

THE WEST WALES PARANORMAL GROUP

(affiliated to The Welsh Federation of Independent Ufologists)

Section 40 Cardiganshire, Section 40

Tel: Section 40 - Tel/Fax: Section 40 - (Media: Section 40)

email: Section 40

Organiser: Section 40 Press Officer: Section 40

Section 40

CARDIGANSHIRE, Section 40

Dear Dr Williams,

I am writing to you concerning the events in Cardigan Bay and over Cardigan on the evening of Thursday 21st November 1996. I expect you may have seen the reports in the Cumbrian News and the Tivyside Advertiser, but not be aware of other witness statements that have been made to us. I also understand that BBC Radio Wales + Radio 1 carried reports on this matter but I have to admit to having missed them.

As far as we can piece together the evidence we have it would appear that there were 3 separate "UFO" events that took place locally

① At 4.10pm a glowing metallic object, elliptical in shape with a tail fin passed N/NE over Swansea. An eye-witness has told me that he looked at this from just off the Carmarthen Road through his binoculars that he carried in his car. The object had a hazy outline and emitted a white "smoke" trail behind it. It was moving at "airliner" speed at approx 2,000 feet. When the object passed in front of the Moon it shone more brightly than it.

② At 8.45pm, a triangular shape craft flew over the Teifi Estuary and then Cardigan before "shooting off like a bullet" in the direction of the Preseli Mountains. At one stage the craft emitted red and blue lights and when over Perpoze area of Cardigan was flying very low

and slowly. One witness has described how her attention was drawn to it by "a loud rumbling noise she heard whilst indoors watching TV. She went out into her back garden to see a large triangular craft low overhead.

③ The light show in Cardigan Bay. At 9.10pm one witness saw what she described as a pillar of light very white, a few miles out to sea. Another witness has described how, for 2/3 seconds the entire sky lit up "as if it was day". Someone in Llangrannog informed us of there being a bright light every few seconds. A bus driver in Cardigan saw a "flash of light then a series of lights, first blue + red, then green + yellow over a period of 10 minutes. He was also aware of crackling /static noise. Shortly after 9.50pm an editor at the Cambrian News, having previously been told about some lights out at sea was driving south from Aberystwyth when he saw an enormous "burst of white light" to his right (ie in Cardigan Bay.) I understand the Dyfed - Pwys Police received a great many calls and were reported on the radio to be co-operating with the RAF + their "UFO unit". The local coastguards confirmed that there was no ship in distress and the MoD denied any military activity. The only "explanation" for the light show was "probably lightning" but none of the witnesses ever considered this a possibility due to the nature: colour, variation, frequency etc of the lights and the I phoned the Met Office who said that they had not had any reports of lightning off the Welsh coast that evening. The following day the Police contacted the first witness to say that someone in Hereford had seen an identical pillar of light at exactly the same time 9.10pm! Although the radio reports did mention sightings in the West Midlands I have been unable to find any confirmation of this.

I would like to make the following observations.

1 The West Wales Paranormal Group have received at least 25 reports of "UFO" activity in the past year and have heard of many more. These range from small 'balls of light' (which I have seen from bedroom window!) to strange "flashes" - glows to cigar, circular, triangular and simply unusual shaped craft. Some hovering, some going slowly some going really fast. Fortunately no "aliens" have been spotted and why go to some lengths to look for rational explanations for people's sightings and try + steer journalists away from their tired clichés

(2)

THE WEST WALES PARANORMAL GROUP

(affiliated to The Welsh Federation of Independent Ufologists)

Section 40 Cardiganshire, Section 40

Tel: Section 40 - Tel/Fax: Section 40 - (Media: Section 40)

email: Section 40

Organiser: Section 40 Press Officer: Section 40

Section 40

CARMARTHENSHIRE

Section 40

continued

sadly not always successfully.

2] I do not believe that we are in any way a unique area in experiencing this. For example a month or so ago there was a very similar set of light 'events' off Skegness in the Wash, about which I believe Martin Redmond MP has or is going to ask questions. The triangular craft has been seen many times over the past few years - most famously over Belgium. I have heard that one such craft was seen over Synodlan last year (but do not yet have details.)

3] The explanation of 'lightning' for the light events does not accord with the Met Office records - considering how bright, widespread + long-lasting they were I simply do not believe that such a "storm" would have been missed by the Met Office. But when it appears the RAF were unable to track track a large triangular craft flying slow + slow over Cardigan?

I would therefore like to ask you if you could do the following for me acting on behalf of all local people who have experienced the strange events:

1) Can you please find out all that you can about the investigation into the events of Thursday 21st November 1996 undertaken by the MoD "UFO unit", what evidence it gathered, whether the craft over Swansea + Cardigan were tracked and/or identified, what was in Cardigan Bay putting on the spectacular light-show + people from Aberystwyth to Cardigan (and possibly beyond.)?

If the craft over Swansea + Cardigan were identified - what was the identification, were any interceptors scrambled - or if they were "friendly" craft why did they need to announce that their 'UFO' unit was investigating them.

If the craft are "friendly" (RAF/NATO) can we have assurances that they won't be

flitting low over our part of the world again. Brightening people and causing confusion and wasting the time + energy of the police + coastguards.

However if the craft or not "friendly" (RAF/NATO) then what steps is the MoD taking to prevent such craft approaching, let alone entering UK Airspace. How can they reassure people that they do not represent a threat if they do not know what these craft are and who controls them?

4) Please support any attempts by fellow MPs to get more information about all the various type of "UFO" and related phenomena from the Government and press the Labour Party to commit itself to "No More Cover-Ups" on the UFO issue. The longer this remains a mystery and the Government and the Media refuse to take the issue seriously the greater the feeling grows that perhaps some of the wilder conspiracy theories relating to aliens and such like, might just be true!

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I look forward to your reply and I trust you will be able to get some sensible answers that relate to the evidence people present and not worn-out excuses that few people will believe.

Thanks again

Section 40



P.S. We've just had another 2 witness reports. At 8.50pm at Rhydfehn a teenage boy saw a craft travelling very fast out of a window, very low towards the sea. It appeared to have a white light at the front and a red light at the back.

9.45pm. a woman was driving near Llanedwini Becti when she was blinded by an extremely bright light - and then there was a second flash (not so bright) No sound accompanied either flash. She believes there may have been a rectangular shape in a field to her right but could not confirm this.

Both refer to Thursday 2/11/06

***** TRANSMISSION REPORT *****

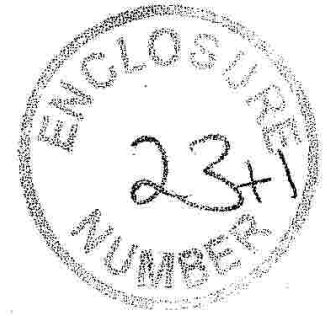
Name : PE SECTION

N° : Section 40

Date : 31/12/96 14:14

Date/Time	31-12 14:07
Dialled number	Section 40
Fax Id No.	Section 40
Durat.	6'53"
Mode	NORM
Pages	14
Status	Correct

* Correct : Manual communication



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

27 Jan 97

Head of CS(RM)1

PE: US 243/97: **Section 40**

1. The attached PE has been received from a Mr Jonathan Barker, via his MP Stephen Dorrell. **Section 40** has corresponded on several occasions with Sec(AS)2a and on two occasions through his MP on the subject of "UFOs".

2. As you will see for some reason **Section 40** now wants details of his name and address to be deleted from our files. The only details we hold on **Section 40** are the letters which he has sent to the Department and the replies we have sent him.

3. As this is a PE reply I should be most grateful for formal advice on the policy in respect of such requests. Does **Section 40** have a right to demand that his letters be removed from our files, and how would that leave our records of correspondence with him?

4. I should be grateful for advice please by Thu 30 Jan if at all possible.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 **Section 40**

Encs.

ent by : Section 40

PE SECTION

A4->A4 24/01/97 12:05 Pg: 2

Stephen Dorrell, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

243

USoS
Sec (AS)
Records
PE

21 JAN 1997

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

Dear Geddin

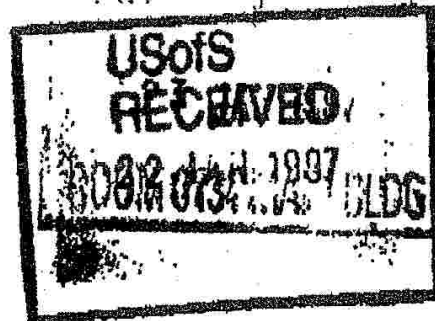
I enclose a copy of a letter I have received from my con-
stituent, Section 40 of Section 40
Leicester, who is concerned that his name and address should
be deleted from the Ministry of Defence's records.

I would be grateful for your comments on this matter.

Section 40

Stephen Dorrell

Enc.



9 JAN 1997

ack 9/1

7th, Jan, 1997.

Section 40

Leicester

Section 40

Fax sent by

Dear Mr Dorrell,

When a member of the public makes an enquiry by post therefore disclosing his/her name and address to any M.o.D. department, I have done on two or three occasions in the recent past to the Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a, are their names and addresses kept on the M.o.D.'s records/files permanently or for a certain time only.

The reason I am sending this to you is that I would like my name and address deleting from the M.o.D.'s records/files, if they have still retained them, simply on the grounds of persons privacy, but felt safer asking through yourself, being an M.P., rather than enquiring to the above department directly. No actual infringement of my privacy has taken place to the best of my knowledge, but it's the knowing that my name and address are possibly on a file when there is absolutely no reason for them to be there.

Any help or advice would be most appreciated or if you can intervene on my behalf I would be very grateful. I look forward to your reply,

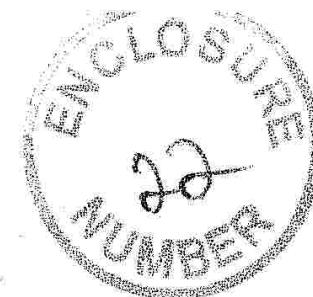
Yours faithfully,

Section 40

Section 40

PE SECTION

A4-7A4 24/01/97 12:05 Pg: 3





LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

24 Jan 97

PE Uni **Section 40**
(thro )

PE US 90/97: MATTHEW BANKS MP

1. Mr Banks' constituent, **Section 40** , contacted Sec(AS) in September to ask about 'UFO' sightings and was advised of the limit of the Department's interest in an official action reply (Annex A).
2. It is not clear why **Section 40**  has now written to his MP since a similar letter was sent to us direct on the same day. He may have been prompted into his latest line of enquiry by the recent Martin Redmond PQs on uncorrelated radar tracks (Annex B), or his Questions about the functions of Intelligence Branches (Annex C). It may, of course, be speculation prompted by media interest in 'UFOs'.
3. Sec(AS)2a is the focal point within the MOD for all reports of 'UFO' sightings. Reports can be made direct to the desk officer concerned or, if made locally to a military establishment, they are passed on to Sec(AS)2a for action. As a matter of routine, Sec(AS)2a copies all sighting reports to the Defence Intelligence staff (DI55) for information and, where appropriate, to the Air Defence staff for evaluation.
4. There is no 'Aerospace Intelligence' branch within the DIS or the MOD. Neither is there a naval/admiralty branch dealing with 'UFO' reports. In the circumstances I attach a short draft reply for USofS to send to Matthew Banks MP setting the record straight.

Section 40 

Sec(AS)2a1
MB8245 **Section 40**
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

DRAFT REPLY FOR USofS TO SEND TO MATTHEW BANKS MP

D/USofS/FH/90/97

January 1997

Thank you for your letter of 13 January addressed to Michael Portillo enclosing one from **Section 40** of **Section 40** **Section 40** Southport about the UK Air Defence Region and uncorrelated radar returns. I am replying as the matter falls within my area of responsibility. **Section 40** also wrote direct to my officials and I hope he will accept this as a reply to both his letters.

By way of background I should say that my officials wrote to **Section 40** in September last year to explain my Department's interest in 'unexplained' aerial phenomena which is limited to that required solely to establish whether what has been reported may have any defence significance.

The focal point within my Department for reports of sightings is Secretariat (Air Staff)2a and all sighting reports, whether relating to something witnessed over land or sea, are passed to them. Detailed investigation of the reports, by the appropriate experts within the Department, would only be initiated if there was some evidence to suggest that the UK Air Defence Region may have been breached.

I can confirm that there is no 'Aerospace Intelligence' branch within the Ministry of Defence, nor any separate department which deals with 'UFO' sightings at sea.

THE EARL HOWE

Matthew Banks Esq MP



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

ANNEX A

Telephone (Direct)
 (Switchboard) 01/1 218 9000
 (Fax) **Section 40**

Section 40

Southport
 Merseyside

Section 40

Your reference

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

Date
 11 September 1996

Dear **Section 40**

1. I said I would write to you following our conversation earlier this week when you asked if the MOD might be able to shed any light on a "UFO" sighting you are investigating which took place on 29 Aug 96 between 2115 and 2200 hrs over Kendal, witnessed by 20 or so people.
2. As briefly explained during our telephone conversation the Ministry of Defence examines any reports of "UFO" sightings it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely is there any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by a foreign hostile military aircraft? The reports are examined, with the assistance of the Department's air defence experts as required. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, and to date no "UFO" sighting has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings.
3. First I can confirm that the MOD received only two "UFO" reports for 29 Aug 96, one in Clwyd and one in Dundee, neither were deemed to be of defence significance. With regard to the possibility of the sighting being attributed to a military aircraft/helicopter I have ascertained that as Kendal has a relatively large population it is a military low flying avoidance area. As such no military low level flying would have been permitted over Kendal and this rules this option out, unless the sighting occurred on the very outskirts of Kendal. This would not of course rule out the possibility of it being a civil helicopter.
4. The other potential option is that the shape seen was some form of advertising dirigible. Advertising balloons would of course be deliberately flown over centres of population to attract as much attention as possible. A dirigible which is manned is subject to the same air traffic regulations as other aircraft and would be required to display green and red navigation lights. This might also account for the humming sound you mentioned some

of the witnessess heard which would be caused by the light engines these balloons possess. You may in this respect care to approach the Civil Aviation Authority public relations department who should be able to advise you of the regulations governing manned advertising balloons and inform you if operators of such balloons have to seek permission from any particular authority to operate over built up areas.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



Written Answers

11 NOVEMBER 1996

Written An.

Annex
B

	All persons ILO unemployed of working age (thousands) of which (percentage) with highest qualification ¹	Degree or other higher education	'A' level and equivalent (excluding trade apprenticeships)	Trade apprenticeship	GC equi		
United Kingdom	2,344	11.6	12.3	10.6	18.1	20.0	27.4
Great Britain	2,274	11.7	12.3	10.4	18.2	20.4	27.0
England	1,942	11.8	12.2	9.7	18.1	20.8	27.4
South East	742	14.1	12.8	8.7	16.7	22.1	25.5
Greater London	379	15.6	11.2	7.1	15.8	23.7	26.5
Rest of South East	362	12.6	14.4	10.5	17.7	20.3	24.5
East Anglia	72	—	—	—	21.1	23.6	23.0
South West	169	12.7	14.9	10.1	22.1	18.4	22.0
West Midlands	219	9.0	12.1	6.6	16.9	19.5	35.9
East Midlands	152	9.9	13.4	11.5	18.5	18.7	28.0
Yorkshire and Humberside	189	11.0	11.9	8.2	18.3	20.2	30.4
North west	248	11.9	9.4	10.7	19.9	20.0	28.2
North	151	7.1	11.3	16.5	16.8	22.1	26.3
Wales	114	9.3	9.7	10.8	19.2	20.2	30.8
Scotland	218	12.0	14.6	16.0	19.1	16.6	21.6
Northern Ireland	69	—	—	19.4	14.1	—	41.0

Notes:

¹Working age is men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59. Includes those who did not answer, but percentages are based on totals excluding them.

²Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

Source:

Labour Force Survey (winter 1995–96), Office for National Statistics.

Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative

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

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

if it was judged that breaches of United Kingdom airspace had occurred; and if he will list all similar incidents which have occurred since 1979. [2932]

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

DEFENCE**Nuclear Weapons**

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

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

Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the circumstances of the two occasions referred to in his answer of 24 July, *Official Report*, column 424, when RAF aircraft were scrambled or diverted from task to investigate uncorrelated radar targets; if the objects were identified;

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

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

Radiation

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

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

DEFENCE

Plutonium

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the United States Government have since 1966 requested the United Kingdom to provide reactor grade plutonium for the purpose of conducting a nuclear test explosion under the provisions of the US-UK mutual defence agreement on atomic energy co-operation. [38500]

Mr. Arbuthnot: No such requests have been made by the United States.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the impact of (a) his policies and (b) the work of his Department in helping small businesses in the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors the impact and the statistical results of such monitoring. [39141]

Mr. Arbuthnot: The Government recognise the crucial role played by small firms in the UK economy and aim to help them by providing sound economic conditions—keeping inflation and interest rates low; reducing legislative administrative and taxation burdens; and where appropriate provide direct assistance in the form of specialist advice and support and easing access to finance.

My Department supports the DTI's small business measures and initiatives. I am the Minister within this Department for small businesses and I attend or am represented at the DTI's regular meetings.

The Defence Suppliers Service assists companies, including small businesses, in making contact with appropriate contracts branches. It also arranges for details of many forthcoming tenders to be published in the fortnightly MOD *Contracts Bulletin* which is available to any interested party on subscription. This enables small businesses either to seek to tender directly for specific requirements or, more commonly, to become sub-contractors to larger companies.

Since the Procurement Executive of the Ministry of Defence moved to the new procurement headquarters at Heywood near Bristol earlier this year, the Defence Suppliers Service is in contact with the Bristol chamber of commerce and DTI's business links, whose South-west regional supply network office has become their national focal point for the defence industry. Other areas of the country can reach my Department, and be reached by us, through the business links network.

As much of the assistance provided by my Department to small businesses tends to be in the sub-contractor sector, it is not possible to establish suitable performance parameters and therefore no statistics are available.

Rendlesham Forest (Incident)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what response his Department made to the report submitted by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt

relating to events in Rendlesham forest in December 1980; what interviews were held; and if he will make a statement; [39247]

(2) who assessed that the events around RAF Woodbridge and RAF Bentwaters in December 1980, which were reported to his Department by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt were of no defence significance; on what evidence the assessment was made; what analysis of events was carried out; and if he will make a statement. [39249]

Mr. Soames: The report was assessed by the staff in my Department responsible for air defence matters. Since the judgment was that it contained nothing of defence significance no further action was taken.

Uncorrelated Radar Tracks (Investigations)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions RAF aircraft have been (a) scrambled and (b) diverted from task to investigate uncorrelated targets picked up on radar; and if he will make a statement. [39218]

Mr. Soames: In the past five years RAF aircraft have been scrambled or diverted from task on two occasions to intercept and identify uncorrelated radar tracks entering the United Kingdom air defence region.

Unidentified Craft

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what is his Department's assessment of the incident that occurred on 5 November 1990 when a patrol of RAF Tornado aircraft flying over the North sea were overtaken at high speed by an unidentified craft; and if he will make a statement; [39245]

(2) if he will make a statement on the unidentified flying object sighting reported to his Department by the meteorological officer at RAF Shawbury in the early hours of 31 March 1993. [39246]

Mr. Soames: Reports of sightings on these dates are recorded on file and were examined by staff responsible for air defence matters. No firm conclusions were drawn about the nature of the phenomena reported but the events were not judged to be of defence significance.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department made of the photograph of an unidentified craft at Calvine on 4 August 1990; who removed it from an office in secretariat (air staff) 2a; for what reasons; and if he will make a statement. [39248]

Mr. Soames: A number of negatives associated with the sighting were examined by staff responsible for air defence matters. Since it was judged that they contained nothing of defence significance the negatives were not retained and we have no record of any photographs having been taken from them.

Publicity

Ms Hodge: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his Department's budget in 1996-97 for consultants to assist with information, publicity, press and media. [39353]

Annex
C



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LC
Telephone 0171-218 2218 (Direct Dialling)
0171-218 9000 (Switchboard)

MINISTER OF STATE FOR
THE ARMED FORCES

D/Min(AE)/NS/PQ2103H/2110H/2113H/
2120H/2122H/96/M

28 October 1996

Martin Redmond

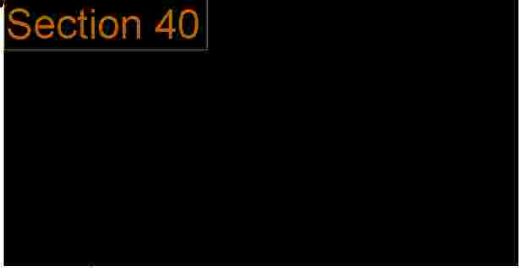
I am writing as promised in my answers of 17 October to your Parliamentary Questions (Official Report, col 1092, copy attached) about the functions of a number of Defence Intelligence branches.

It has been the policy of successive Governments not to provide information on the functions of individual intelligence branches when this discloses the more recent nature of their duties.

I shall arrange for a copy of this letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Nicholas Soames

Section 40



THE HON NICHOLAS SOAMES MP

Martin Redmond Esq MP

C-1



Recycled Paper

1091

Written Answers

17 OCTOBER 1996

Written Answers

1092

(3) what research has been conducted on behalf of his Department by the national poisons information service into the causes of Gulf war syndrome. [41292]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Members and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Nicholas Pope

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence to what post Mr. Nicholas Pope was appointed by his Department after his tour of duty with Secretariat (Air Staff) Department 2A; and if he will make a statement. [40920]

Mr. Soames: Mr. Nicholas Pope was posted on promotion two years ago to a general finance policy branch.

Uranium-tipped Shells

Dr. David Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the current risk posed to civilians from exploded depleted uranium-tipped shells in Kuwait. [41101]

Mr. Arbutnot: My Department has conducted no formal assessment of the risks to civilians from exploded depleted uranium-tipped ammunition in Kuwait.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement concerning the risk to soldiers of handling depleted uranium-tipped shells. [41100]

Mr. Soames: Depleted uranium has a very low level of radioactivity and the risks attached to the handling of depleted uranium ammunition are minimal.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the 1991 Atomic Energy Authority report on industrial technology concerning the risk of exposure to exploded depleted uranium-tipped shells. [41102]

Mr. Soames: I refer the hon. Member to the letter sent by my noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Defence to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Mr. Smith) on 7 August 1996, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many depleted uranium-tipped shells were fired by British forces during the Gulf war; and what assessment he has made of the number of exploded shells remaining in Kuwait. [41099]

Mr. Soames: British forces fired some 88 depleted uranium shells during the Gulf conflict. The Ministry of Defence has made no assessment of the number of exploded shells remaining in Kuwait, as we judge the risk to human health posed by DU rounds to be negligible. It is likely, though, that a large proportion of the 88 shells was expended in Iraq rather than Kuwait.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what studies have been conducted by his Department into the nephrotoxicity of the inhalation of uranium particles. [41296]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Married Quarters Estate

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the locations of the houses from the married quarters estate that have been released to Arrington Homes for immediate use by the private sector. [40931]

Mr. Arbutnot: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

RAF Rudloe Manor

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what work is currently undertaken at RAF Rudloe Manor; what work was undertaken in the last 10 years; what was, by rank, the establishment for the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [40823]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Defence Intelligence Branches

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what is the current function of DI55 SIG; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement; [41040]

(2) what is the current function of DI65B; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement; [41038]

(3) what is the current function of DI55; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement; [41041]

(4) what is the current function of DI61E; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement; [41037]

(5) what is the current function of DI10; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement. [41039]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

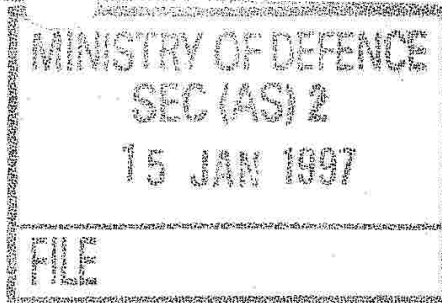
Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what consultation has taken place in each of the last five years by his Department with the French Ministry of Defence Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement; [41048]

(2) if a lodger unit housed within his Department's Flying Complaints Flight specialises in unidentified flying object investigations; and if he will make a statement; [41036]

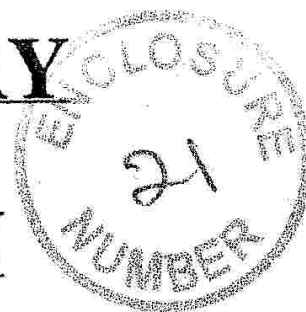
(3) how many records currently held by his Department's Scientific Intelligence Branch are under extended closure for (a) 50 years, (b) 75 years and (c) 100 years; how many of these records refer to unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement; [40911]

644



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC (AS) 2APE REF NUMBER: US 90 ⁹⁷/₁₉₆CC: DE SECMINISTER REPLYING: USOASDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 24/1 ⁹⁷/₁₉₆DATE: 15/1/97FROM: **Section 40** PE UnitTEL: **Section 40****GUIDANCE NOTE**

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

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

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced.

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

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

Opening and closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ..., Toytown about"

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... addressed to Michael Portillo/ Nicholas Soames/James

Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"

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

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

Alternatives are:

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

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

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

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

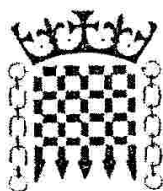
ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL AND ANNOTATED TO CONFIRM THIS.

WHEREVER POSSIBLE DRAFTS SHOULD BE SENT ON CHOTS E-MAIL TO: Parliamentary Enquiries

other wise send drafts by fax to **Section 40**
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

USQ8
SEC(AS)2
UPO3

MATTHEW BANKS, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

13 January 1997

The Rt Hon Michael Portillo MP
The Secretary of State
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

Dear Michael,

I am writing to enclose a letter from my constituent, **Section 40** of **Section 40** **Section 40** Southport, **Section 40**, which is self-explanatory. I would be grateful for your comments.

I do not know what to make of this one!

Yours ever

Section 40

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
14 JAN 1997
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

Section 40

Southport, Merseyside

Section 40

5th January 1997

Dear Mr Banks,

I am making enquiries as to the nature and function of a section or department within the Ministry of Defence known as Aerospace Intelligence. I am particularly interested in the question of uncorrelated radar returns and the possible penetration of the UK Air Defence Region by structured craft of unknown origin.

It is my understanding that neither Defence Intelligence 55 nor Secretariat Air Staff 2a are responsible for dealing with all reports relating to the above and that in fact Aerospace Intelligence is the section tasked with investigating serious incidents involving structured craft of unknown origin. I further understand that there is a small component within the Admiralty that evaluates reports of "unknown aerial objects" out to sea.

Could you shed some light on this for me or at least point me in the right direction?

Thank you for you work you have done for Southport during your time as MP for the area. Best wishes in the forthcoming election campaign.

I await your reply in anticipation,

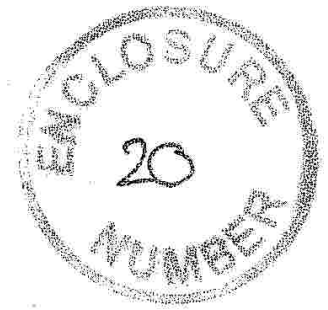
Yours faithfully,

Section 40



Sec (NS)
confirmed
to Sec (B2)
that there
is no
Admiralty
JFO call.

Section 40



Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

16th January 1997

DDI SEC

Copy to:

ADGE1

Sec(NS)b - you may wish to note the 'admiralty' connection.

PE US90/97 - MATTHEW BANKS MP: UK AIR DEFENCE REGION

1. We spoke yesterday about the PE from Matthew Banks MP (Enclosure 1). His constituent, **Section 40** contacted Sec(AS) in September to ask about 'UFO' sightings and received the standard reply (Enclosure 2).

2. I said that I would draft a reply (Enclosure 3) and would welcome your advice and comment. I have also discussed what we might say with ADGE1 and should be grateful for anything further he might wish to add to either the background note or the draft letter. An early reply would enable me to meet the Parliamentary Branch deadline of 24th January.

Section 40

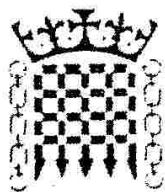
Sec(AS)2

MB8247 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2

FAX : **Section 40**

MATTHEW BANKS, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Enclosure
ONE

13 January 1997

The Rt Hon Michael Portillo MP
The Secretary of State
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2HB

Dear Michael,

I am writing to enclose a letter from my constituent, **Section 40** of **Section 40** **Section 40** Southport, **Section 40** which is self-explanatory. I would be grateful for your comments.

I do not know what to make of this one!

Yours ever

Section 40

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
14 JAN 1997
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

Section 40 [REDACTED] Southport, Merseyside Section 40 [REDACTED]

5th January 1997

Dear Mr Banks,

I am making enquiries as to the nature and function of a section or department within the Ministry of Defence known as Aerospace Intelligence. I am particularly interested in the question of uncorrelated radar returns and the possible penetration of the UK Air Defence Region by structured craft of unknown origin.

It is my understanding that neither Defence Intelligence 55 nor Secretariat Air Staff 2a are responsible for dealing with all reports relating to the above and that in fact Aerospace Intelligence is the section tasked with investigating serious incidents involving structured craft of unknown origin. I further understand that there is a small component within the Admiralty that evaluates reports of "unknown aerial objects" out to sea.

Could you shed some light on this for me or at least point me in the right direction?

Thank you for your work you have done for Southport during your time as MP for the area. Best wishes in the forthcoming election campaign.

I await your reply in anticipation,

Yours faithfully,

Section 40 [REDACTED]



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

Enclosure

TWO

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

Section 40

Southport
 Merseyside

Section 40

Your reference

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

Date
 11 September 1996

Dear **Section 40**

1. I said I would write to you following our conversation earlier this week when you asked if the MOD might be able to shed any light on a "UFO" sighting you are investigating which took place on 29 Aug 96 between 2115 and 2200 hrs over Kendal, witnessed by 20 or so people.
2. As briefly explained during our telephone conversation the Ministry of Defence examines any reports of "UFO" sightings it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely is there any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by a foreign hostile military aircraft? The reports are examined, with the assistance of the Department's air defence experts as required. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, and to date no "UFO" sighting has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that down-to-earth explanations are available for most of these reported sightings.
3. First I can confirm that the MOD received only two "UFO" reports for 29 Aug 96, one in Clwyd and one in Dundee, neither were deemed to be of defence significance. With regard to the possibility of the sighting being attributed to a military aircraft/helicopter I have ascertained that as Kendal has a relatively large population it is a military low flying avoidance area. As such no military low level flying would have been permitted over Kendal and this rules this option out, unless the sighting occurred on the very outskirts of Kendal. This would not of course rule out the possibility of it being a civil helicopter.
4. The other potential option is that the shape seen was some form of advertising dirigible. Advertising balloons would of course be deliberately flown over centres of population to attract as much attention as possible. A dirigible which is manned is subject to the same air traffic regulations as other aircraft and would be required to display green and red navigation lights. This might also account for the humming sound you mentioned some

of the witnessess heard which would be caused by the light engines these balloons possess. You may in this respect care to approach the Civil Aviation Authority public relations department who should be able to advise you of the regulations governing manned advertising balloons and inform you if operators of such balloons have to seek permission from any particular authority to operate over built up areas.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



Written Answers

11 NOVEMBER 1996

Written An.

Annex
B

	All persons ILO unemployed of working age (thousands) of which (percentage) with highest qualification ¹	Degree or other higher education	'A' level and equivalent (excluding trade apprenticeships)	Trade apprenticeship	GC equi			
United Kingdom	2,344	11.6	12.3	10.6	18.1	20.0	27.4	
Great Britain	2,274	11.7	12.3	10.4	18.2	20.4	27.0	
England	1,942	11.8	12.2	9.7	18.1	20.8	27.4	
South East	742	14.1	12.8	8.7	16.7	22.1	25.5	
Greater London	379	15.6	11.2	7.1	15.8	23.7	26.5	
Rest of South East	362	12.6	14.4	10.5	17.7	20.3	24.5	
East Anglia	72	—	—	—	21.1	23.6	23.0	
South West	169	12.7	14.9	10.1	22.1	18.4	22.0	
West Midlands	219	9.0	12.1	6.6	16.9	19.5	35.9	
East Midlands	152	9.9	13.4	11.5	18.5	18.7	28.0	
Yorkshire and Humberside	189	11.0	11.9	8.2	18.3	20.2	30.4	
North west	248	11.9	9.4	10.7	19.9	20.0	28.2	
North	151	7.1	11.3	16.5	16.8	22.1	26.3	
Wales	114	9.3	9.7	10.8	19.2	20.2	30.8	
Scotland	218	12.0	14.6	16.0	19.1	16.6	21.6	
Northern Ireland	69	—	—	19.4	14.1	—	41.0	

Notes:

¹Working age is men aged 16–64 and women aged 16–59. Includes those who did not answer, but percentages are based on totals excluding them.

²Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

Source:

Labour Force Survey (winter 1995–96), Office for National Statistics.

Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative

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

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

if it was judged that breaches of United Kingdom airspace had occurred; and if he will list all similar incidents which have occurred since 1979. [2932]

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

DEFENCE**Nuclear Weapons**

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

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

Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the circumstances of the two occasions referred to in his answer of 24 July, *Official Report*, column 424, when RAF aircraft were scrambled or diverted from task to investigate uncorrelated radar targets; if the objects were identified;

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

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

Radiation

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

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

DEFENCE

Plutonium

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if the United States Government have since 1966 requested the United Kingdom to provide reactor grade plutonium for the purpose of conducting a nuclear test explosion under the provisions of the US-UK mutual defence agreement on atomic energy co-operation. [38500]

Mr. Arbuthnot: No such requests have been made by the United States.

Small Businesses

Mr. David Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the impact of (a) his policies and (b) the work of his Department in helping small businesses in the last 12 months as against the previous 12 months; and if he will publish the performance indicators by which his Department monitors the impact and the statistical results of such monitoring. [39141]

Mr. Arbuthnot: The Government recognise the crucial role played by small firms in the UK economy and aim to help them by providing sound economic conditions—keeping inflation and interest rates low; reducing legislative administrative and taxation burdens; and where appropriate provide direct assistance in the form of specialist advice and support and easing access to finance.

My Department supports the DTI's small business measures and initiatives. I am the Minister within this Department for small businesses and I attend or am represented at the DTI's regular meetings.

The Defence Suppliers Service assists companies, including small businesses, in making contact with appropriate contracts branches. It also arranges for details of many forthcoming tenders to be published in the fortnightly MOD *Contracts Bulletin* which is available to any interested party on subscription. This enables small businesses either to seek to tender directly for specific requirements or, more commonly, to become sub-contractors to larger companies.

Since the Procurement Executive of the Ministry of Defence moved to the new procurement headquarters at Abbey Wood near Bristol earlier this year, the Defence Suppliers Service is in contact with the Bristol chamber of commerce and DTI's business links, whose South-west regional supply network office has become their national focal point for the defence industry. Other areas of the country can reach my Department, and be reached by us, through the business links network.

As much of the assistance provided by my Department to small businesses tends to be in the sub-contractor sector, it is not possible to establish suitable performance parameters and therefore no statistics are available.

Rendlesham Forest (Incident)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what response his Department made to the report submitted by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt

relating to events in Rendlesham forest in December 1980; what interviews were held; and if he will make a statement; [39247]

(2) who assessed that the events around RAF Woodbridge and RAF Bentwaters in December 1980, which were reported to his Department by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt were of no defence significance; on what evidence the assessment was made; what analysis of events was carried out; and if he will make a statement. [39249]

Mr. Soames: The report was assessed by the staff in my Department responsible for air defence matters. Since the judgment was that it contained nothing of defence significance no further action was taken.

Uncorrelated Radar Tracks (Investigations)

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions RAF aircraft have been (a) scrambled and (b) diverted from task to investigate uncorrelated targets picked up on radar; and if he will make a statement. [39218]

Mr. Soames: In the past five years RAF aircraft have been scrambled or diverted from task on two occasions to intercept and identify uncorrelated radar tracks entering the United Kingdom air defence region.

Unidentified Craft

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what is his Department's assessment of the incident that occurred on 5 November 1990 when a patrol of RAF Tornado aircraft flying over the North sea were overtaken at high speed by an unidentified craft; and if he will make a statement; [39245]

(2) if he will make a statement on the unidentified flying object sighting reported to his Department by the meteorological officer at RAF Shawbury in the early hours of 31 March 1993. [39246]

Mr. Soames: Reports of sightings on these dates are recorded on file and were examined by staff responsible for air defence matters. No firm conclusions were drawn about the nature of the phenomena reported but the events were not judged to be of defence significance.

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department made of the photograph of an unidentified craft at Calvine on 4 August 1990; who removed it from an office in secretariat (air staff) 2a; for what reasons; and if he will make a statement. [39248]

Mr. Soames: A number of negatives associated with the sighting were examined by staff responsible for air defence matters. Since it was judged that they contained nothing of defence significance the negatives were not retained and we have no record of any photographs having been taken from them.

Publicity

Ms Hodge: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his Department's budget in 1996-97 for consultants to assist with information, publicity, press and media. [39353]

Annex
C



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LC
Telephone 0171-218 2216 (Direct Dialling)
0171-218 8000 (Switchboard)

MINISTER OF STATE FOR
THE ARMED FORCES

D/Min(AF)/NS/PQ2103H/2110H/2113H/
2120H/2122H/96/M

28 October 1996

Nick Soames

I am writing as promised in my answers of 17 October to your Parliamentary Questions (Official Report, col 1092, copy attached) about the functions of a number of Defence Intelligence branches.

It has been the policy of successive Governments not to provide information on the functions of individual intelligence branches when this discloses the more recent nature of their duties.

I shall arrange for a copy of this letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Nick Soames

Section 40
[Redacted]

THE HON NICHOLAS SOAMES MP

Martin Redmond Esq MP



(3) what research has been conducted on behalf of his Department by the national poisons information service into the causes of Gulf war syndrome. [41292]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Members and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Nicholas Pope

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence to what post Mr. Nicholas Pope was appointed by his Department after his tour of duty with Secretariat (Air Staff) Department 2A; and if he will make a statement. [40920]

Mr. Soames: Mr. Nicholas Pope was posted on promotion two years ago to a general finance policy branch.

Uranium-tipped Shells

Dr. David Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the current risk posed to civilians from exploded depleted uranium-tipped shells in Kuwait. [41101]

Mr. Arbuthnot: My Department has conducted no formal assessment of the risks to civilians from exploded depleted uranium-tipped ammunition in Kuwait.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement concerning the risk to soldiers of handling depleted uranium-tipped shells. [41100]

Mr. Soames: Depleted uranium has a very low level of radioactivity and the risks attached to the handling of depleted uranium ammunition are minimal.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the 1991 Atomic Energy Authority report on industrial technology concerning the risk of exposure to exploded depleted uranium-tipped shells. [41102]

Mr. Soames: I refer the hon. Member to the letter sent by my noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Defence to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Mr. Smith) on 7 August 1996, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many depleted uranium-tipped shells were fired by British forces during the Gulf war; and what assessment he has made of the number of exploded shells remaining in Kuwait. [41099]

Mr. Soames: British forces fired some 88 depleted uranium shells during the Gulf conflict. The Ministry of Defence has made no assessment of the number of exploded shells remaining in Kuwait, as we judge the risk to human health posed by DU rounds to be negligible. It is likely, though, that a large proportion of the 88 shells was expended in Iraq rather than Kuwait.

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what studies have been conducted by his Department into the nephrotoxicity of the inhalation of uranium particles. [41296]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Married Quarters Estate

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what are the locations of the houses from the married quarters estate that have been released to Arrington Homes for immediate use by the private sector. [40931]

Mr. Arbuthnot: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

RAF Rudloe Manor

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what work is currently undertaken at RAF Rudloe Manor; what work was undertaken in the last 10 years; what was, by rank, the establishment for the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [40823]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Defence Intelligence Branches

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what is the current function of DI55 SIG; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement; [41040]

(2) what is the current function of DI65B; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement; [41038]

(3) what is the current function of DI55; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement; [41041]

(4) what is the current function of DI61E; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement; [41037]

(5) what is the current function of DI10; what was its function (a) five years and (b) 10 years ago; and if he will make a statement. [41039]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what consultation has taken place in each of the last five years by his Department with the French Ministry of Defence Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement; [41048]

(2) if a lodger unit housed within his Department's Flying Complaints Flight specialises in unidentified flying object investigations; and if he will make a statement; [41036]

(3) how many records currently held by his Department's Scientific Intelligence Branch are under extended closure for (a) 50 years, (b) 75 years and (c) 100 years; how many of these records refer to unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement; [40911]

Enclosure

THREEDRAFT

PE US 90/97

APS/USofs - thru' PE Section

1. Mr Banks' constituent, **Section 40** contacted Sec(AS) in September to ask about 'UFO' sightings and was advised of the limit of the Department's interest in an official action reply (Annex A - currently Enclosure ^{TWO} ~~ONE~~).
2. It is not clear why **Section 40** has now written to his MP since a similar letter was sent to us direct on the same day. He may have been prompted into his latest line of enquiry by the recent Martin Redmond PQs on uncorrelated radar tracks (Annex B), or his Questions about the functions of Intelligence Branches (Annex C). It may, of course, be speculation prompted by media interest in 'UFOs'.
3. Sec(AS)2a is the focal point within the MOD for all reports of 'UFO' sightings. Reports can be made direct to the desk officer concerned or, if made locally to a military establishment, they are passed on to Sec(AS)2a for action. As a matter of routine, Sec(AS)2a copies all sighting reports to the Defence Intelligence staff (DI55) for information and, where appropriate, to the Air Defence staff for evaluation.
4. There is no 'Aerospace Intelligence' branch within the DIS or the MOD. Neither is there a naval/admiralty branch dealing with 'UFO' reports. In the circumstances I attach a short draft reply for USofs to send to Matthew Banks MP setting the record straight.

DRAFT REPLY FOR USofs TO SEND TO MATTHEW BANKS MP

D/USofs/FH/90/97

Thank you for your letter of 13 January addressed to Michael Portillo enclosing one from **Section 40** of **Section 40** **Section 40** Southport about the UK Air Defence Region and uncorrelated radar returns. I am replying as the matter falls within my area of responsibility. **Section 40** also wrote direct to my officials and I hope he will accept this as a reply to both his letters.

By way of background I should say that my officials wrote to **Section 40** in September last year to explain my Department's interest in 'unexplained' aerial phenomena which is limited to that required solely to establish whether what has been reported may have any defence significance.

The focal point within my Department for reports of sightings is Secretariat (Air Staff)2a and all sighting reports, whether relating to something witnessed over land or sea, are passed to them. Detailed investigation of the reports, by the appropriate experts within the Department, ^{would only be} ~~is~~ ^{if} initiated ^{where there is} ~~only~~ ^{US} where there ^{may have} ~~is~~ some evidence to suggest that the UK air defence region ~~has~~ been breached.

I can confirm that there is no 'Aerospace Intelligence' branch within the Ministry of Defence, ^{nor any separate department}

THE EARL HOWE

Matthew Banks Esq MP

which deals with 'UFO' sightings at sea.

21 JAN '97 (TUE) 12:33 PARLIAMENTARY - DO

FAX: Section 40

P. 002



Civil Aviation Authority
CAA House
45-59 Kingsway
London WC2B 6TE

Telephone: Section 40



Sir Malcolm Field
Chairman

15 January 1997

Ieuan Wyn Jones Esq MP
House of Commons
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ieuan Wyn Jones,

The Secretary of State has asked me to respond to your recent question concerning the training given to pilots of civil aircraft on their actions in the event of encountering unidentified craft which do not show up on radar.

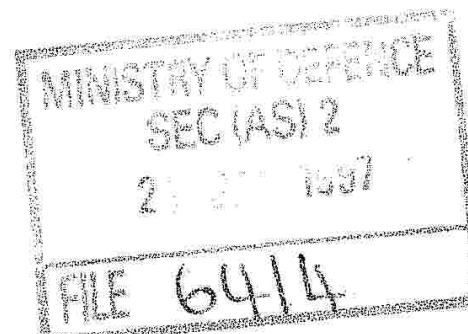
From the start of their training, all pilots are made aware of the importance of a comprehensive visual search to detect other aircraft, even when flying in an environment where ground radar is ostensibly providing separation or information on those aircraft. Training also stresses that there is no substitute for a comprehensive visual check of the surrounding sky, even when aided by on-board or ground-based technology designed to alert pilots to danger. Initial training is followed up by regular coverage of this topic in aviation publications, including the Civil Aviation Authority's own General Aviation Safety Information Leaflets, one of which deals specifically with the avoidance of collision by correct visual techniques.

Advice and training given to the private pilot is enhanced for professional pilots by training in crew resource management to ensure best use of the available crew to meet all flight deck tasks adequately, including visual lookout.

Should these technical and visual safeguards fail, pilots are required to report any situation where they considered that there was a risk to the safety of the aircraft caused by the close proximity of another, particularly if no warning was received. These reports, known as Aircraft Proximity Reports or 'AIRPROX', are investigated by the Joint AIRPROX Advisory Panel - a group of experts drawn from CAA, all sides of the industry and the military. The circumstances and Panel's findings are published regularly by the Authority and are circulated to all areas of the aviation community.

I trust that this information adequately answers your question to the Secretary of State.

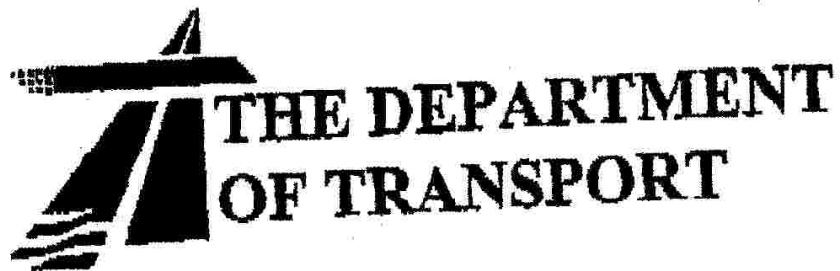
[Signature]
Section 40



21-JAN. '97 (TUE) 12:33 PARLIAMENTARY - DO

FAX: Section 40

P. 001



PARLIAMENTARY

TEL Section 40 FAX Section 40

TO

Section 40

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Section 40

DATE

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MESSAGE

<p>Section 40</p> <p>As promised.</p> <p>Section 40</p>

Section 40

copy

64/4

Written Answers

18 DECEMBER 1996

Written Answers

662

Mr. Watts: Following the 1995 "Managing the Roads Programme" review Staffordshire county council was commissioned to investigate what interim measures could be undertaken on that section of trunk road. Its report is expected the end of the year. With the scheme now withdrawn from the programme, we shall consider what measures, within current resources limitations, we can undertake to deal with existing traffic problems.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what has been the total expenditure in (a) design costs, (b) legal costs, (c) land and property acquisition and (d) other preparatory work for the A5 Weeford to Fazeley improvement scheme. [8822]

Mr. Watts: Total expenditure incurred to date amounts to £473,445. This comprises:

	£
(a) Design costs	349,562
(b) Legal costs	nil
(c) Land and Property acquisition	90,000
(d) Other preparatory work	33,883

Mr. Ashdown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many holders of a UK private pilot's licence and a UK private pilot's licence (helicopter) have been convicted for conducting public transport operations. [8835]

Mr. Bowis: Since 1 January 1991, there have been 18 successful prosecutions for illegal public transport operations, 12 involving fixed-wing aircraft and six involving helicopters. The records do not show the category of licence held by the pilots.

Section 40

Civilian Pilots

5808.
2715

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what training is provided to pilots of civilian aircraft on what to do in the event of encountering unidentified craft which do not show up on radar. [9563]

Mr. Bowis: Matters relating to the training of civil aircrew are the responsibility of the Civil Aviation Authority. I have asked the chairman of that authority to write to the hon. Member.

Ringway Airport

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the incident that occurred at 6.48 pm to flight 5061 on its descent into Ringway airport, Manchester on the night of 6 January 1995; and if he will make a statement. [9581]

Mr. Bowis: This incident was assessed by the joint airmiss working group, consisting of representatives from both civil and military aviation. The group found that both the degree of risk and the cause of the incident were unassessable. Full details are contained in joint airmiss working group report No. 1/95—January 1995 to April 1995, which is available from the Library.

Flight Operations Inspectors

Mr. Ashdown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what are the minimum professional qualifications for a person to be employed as a flight operations inspector (helicopters) in the flight operations inspectorate of the safety regulation group of the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority; [8829]

(2) what are the professional qualifications and total helicopter and fixed wing flying hours, of the most experienced flight operations inspector (helicopters) currently employed on flight operations inspectorate duties in the specialist helicopter section, FOI2, in the flight operations safety regulation group in the UK Civil Aviation Authority; and what were the equivalent data on 30 June 1990; [8830]

(3) what are the professional qualifications, and total helicopter and fixed-wing flying hours, of the least experienced flight operations inspector (helicopters) currently employed on flight operations inspector (helicopters) duties in FOI2; and what were the equivalent data on 30 June 1990; [8831]

(4) what are the average total flying hours, helicopter and fixed wing, of the flight operations inspector (helicopters) employed as flight operations inspectors in FOI2 in the safety regulation group of the UK Civil Aviation Authority. [8832]

Mr. Bowis: The minimum professional qualifications for a person to be employed as a flight operations inspector (helicopters) in the flight operations inspectorate of the Civil Aviation Authority is five years experience in command of an appropriate helicopter and relevant experience in the UK industry. Inspectors are expected to retain a current airline transport pilot's licence (helicopters and gyroplanes).

While individual inspectors keep a record of their flying hours in their personal flying log book, a record is not kept by the CAA. The CAA could require such information from its inspectors under article 68(4) of the Air Navigation (No. 2) Order 1995 but there is a statutory prohibition on the disclosure of information obtained in this way.

Birmingham Northern Relief Road

Mr. Rooker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement about the timetable for, and funding of, the proposed Birmingham northern relief road. [9771]

Mr. Watts: The 16-month public inquiry ended in October last year. Many complex issues were raised and it is necessarily taking time for the inspector to complete his report. Once it is received my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for the Environment and for Transport will consider it and issue a decision as soon as possible.

The Birmingham northern relief road is the subject of a concession agreement with a private sector concessionaire, Midland Expressway Ltd., which is responsible for designing, building, financing and operating the road.

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Dr. Liam Fox: The Government remain committed to meeting the UN target of 0.7 per cent. of gross national product to be devoted to development assistance, but not to a timetable for reaching it. At 0.28 per cent. of GNP, the UK ratio remains above average for all donors—0.27 per cent. UK public and private flows to the developing world stood at 1.38 per cent. of GNP in 1995, well in excess of the 1 per cent. UN target, and second only to the Netherlands.

Regional Summit, Nairobi

Mr. Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the outcome of the regional summit in Nairobi on 16 December. [9757]

Dr. Liam Fox: We welcome the decision of the Nairobi summit on 16–17 December that Presidents Moi, Mugabe, Mandela and Biya should take steps to assist the ending of conflict in eastern Zaire, and to promote peace and security in the Great Lakes region.

DEFENCE

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what additional resources have been made available to the Atomic Weapons Establishment in respect of the promotion and operation of a comprehensive test ban treaty. [9635]

Mr. Arbuthnot: As there are currently no plans to involve AWE in the promotion and operation of CTBT, no additional resources have been allocated. The United Kingdom remains committed to an effective and verifiable comprehensive test ban treaty. My Department has made available additional funding for the United Kingdom's share of the international monitoring system, which is to be established by the CTBT organisation.

Information Technology (Euro)

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what tenders his Department has put out to convert its information technology systems to be euro compliant; what is the cost and person hours required to convert the systems to handle the euro; and when he expects his Department's systems to be fully economic and monetary union compliant. [9462]

Mr. Arbuthnot: My Department and agencies will need to assess the impact that a single currency, assumed to be starting on 1 January 1999, would have on their information systems, whether or not the United Kingdom decides to participate in the third stage of economic and monetary union.

Young Service Personnel (Fatalities)

Mr. Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of those under age 18 years in the United Kingdom armed forces have been killed in each of the last three years. [9298]

Mr. Soames: This is a matter for the chief executive of the Defence Analytical Services Agency. I have asked him to write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Fred Johnson to Mr. Alan Simpson, dated 18 December 1996:

In the absence of the Chief Executive on duty, I have been asked to reply to your question to the Secretary of State for Defence regarding the number of minors in the United Kingdom armed forces killed in each of the last three years, as this matter falls within the area of responsibility of the Chief Executive of the Defence Analytical Services Agency.

The figures are as follows:

1993: 1
1994: 0
1995: 3
1996 to date¹: 1

¹ Information reported to DASA as at 12 December 1996.

Notes:

'Minors' comprise those aged 16 and 17.

'Killed' has been taken to include all deaths of serving personnel either on duty or off duty.

Extraterrestrial Phenomena

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to allocate resources to researching extraterrestrial phenomena. [9419]

Mr. Soames: I have nothing to add to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 17 October 1996, *Official Report*, column 1082.

Staff

Mr. Hain: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many (a) permanent and (b) non-permanent staff there have been in (i) his Department and (ii) executive agencies of his Department in each year since 1992. [9623]

Mr. Arbuthnot: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 25 November 1996, *Official Report*, columns 27–28.

Chilwell/Chetwynd Barracks

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) which establishments his Department plans to be covered by the area policing team based at Chilwell/Chetwynd barracks; [9692]

(2) what are the proposed authorised complements for his Department's area policing teams at (a) Dishforth, (b) Donnington and (c) Chilwell; [9696]

(3) when the area policing team complements at (a) Dishforth, (b) Donnington and (c) Chilwell will be introduced; [9697]

(4) what assessment he has made of the benefits of retaining an on-site Ministry of Defence police presence at base ordnance depot Donnington and Chilwell/Chetwynd barracks until the area policing teams are fully established. [9698]

Mr. Soames: This is a matter for the chief executive of Ministry of Defence Police. I have asked the chief executive to write to the hon. member.

Letter from W. E. E. Boreham to Mr. Paddy Tipping, dated 18 December 1996:

I am replying to your Questions to the Secretary of State for Defence about the Area Policing Teams of the Ministry of Defence as these matters fall within my area of responsibility as Chief Executive/Chief Constable of the Ministry of Defence Police.

Mr. Watts: Following the 1995 "Managing the Roads Programme" review Staffordshire county council was commissioned to investigate what interim measures could be undertaken on that section of trunk road. Its report is expected the end of the year. With the scheme now withdrawn from the programme, we shall consider what measures, within current resources limitations, we can undertake to deal with existing traffic problems.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what has been the total expenditure in (a) design costs, (b) legal costs, (c) land and property acquisition and (d) other preparatory work for the A5 Weeford to Fazeley improvement scheme. [8822]

Mr. Watts: Total expenditure incurred to date amounts to £473,445. This comprises:

	£
(a) Design costs	349,562
(b) Legal costs	nil
(c) Land and Property acquisition	90,000
(d) Other preparatory work	33,883

Mr. Ashdown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many holders of a UK private pilot's licence and a UK private pilot's licence (helicopter) have been convicted for conducting public transport operations. [8835]

Mr. Bowis: Since 1 January 1991, there have been 18 successful prosecutions for illegal public transport operations, 12 involving fixed-wing aircraft and six involving helicopters. The records do not show the category of licence held by the pilots.

Civilian Pilots

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what training is provided to pilots of civilian aircraft on what to do in the event of encountering unidentified craft which do not show up on radar. [9563]

Mr. Bowis: Matters relating to the training of civil aircrew are the responsibility of the Civil Aviation Authority. I have asked the chairman of that authority to write to the hon. Member.

Ringway Airport

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the incident that occurred at 6.48 pm to flight 5061 on its descent into Ringway airport, Manchester on the night of 6 January 1995; and if he will make a statement. [9581]

Mr. Bowis: This incident was assessed by the joint airmiss working group, consisting of representatives from both civil and military aviation. The group found that both the degree of risk and the cause of the incident were unassessable. Full details are contained in joint airmiss working group report No. 1/95—January 1995 to April 1995, which is available from the Library.

Flight Operations Inspectors

Mr. Ashdown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what are the minimum professional qualifications for a person to be employed as a flight operations inspector (helicopters) in the flight operations inspectorate of the safety regulation group of the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority; [8829]

(2) what are the professional qualifications and total helicopter and fixed wing flying hours, of the most experienced flight operations inspector (helicopters) currently employed on flight operations inspectorate duties in the specialist helicopter section, FOI2, in the flight operations safety regulation group in the UK Civil Aviation Authority; and what were the equivalent data on 30 June 1990; [8830]

(3) what are the professional qualifications, and total helicopter and fixed-wing flying hours, of the least experienced flight operations inspector (helicopters) currently employed on flight operations inspector (helicopters) duties in FOI2; and what were the equivalent data on 30 June 1990; [8831]

(4) what are the average total flying hours, helicopter and fixed wing, of the flight operations inspector (helicopters) employed as flight operations inspectors in FOI2 in the safety regulation group of the UK Civil Aviation Authority. [8832]

Mr. Bowis: The minimum professional qualifications for a person to be employed as a flight operations inspector (helicopters) in the flight operations inspectorate of the Civil Aviation Authority is five years experience in command of an appropriate helicopter and relevant experience in the UK industry. Inspectors are expected to retain a current airline transport pilot's licence (helicopters and gyroplanes).

While individual inspectors keep a record of their flying hours in their personal flying log book, a record is not kept by the CAA. The CAA could require such information from its inspectors under article 68(4) of the Air Navigation (No. 2) Order 1995 but there is a statutory prohibition on the disclosure of information obtained in this way.

Birmingham Northern Relief Road

Mr. Rooker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement about the timetable for, and funding of, the proposed Birmingham northern relief road. [9771]

Mr. Watts: The 16-month public inquiry ended in October last year. Many complex issues were raised and it is necessarily taking time for the inspector to complete his report. Once it is received my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for the Environment and for Transport will consider it and issue a decision as soon as possible.

The Birmingham northern relief road is the subject of a concession agreement with a private sector concessionaire, Midland Expressway Ltd., which is responsible for designing, building, financing and operating the road.



You asked when the APT complements for Dishforth, Donnington and Chilwell will be introduced. It is planned to introduce Area Policing Teams at Donnington and Chilwell in April 1997, and at Dishforth on a date in 1997 yet to be determined.

You asked what assessment had been made of the benefits of retaining an on-site presence at BOD Donnington and Chetwynd Barracks until APTs are fully established. The requirement for Ministry of Defence Police is made by discussion between the Establishment, the budget holder and the Chief Constable, taking into account the views of specialist complementing teams. This procedure has been undertaken for BOD Donnington and Childwell/Chetwynd Barracks, amongst others, and considered the best and most economical means of meeting those requirements without lowering in any way the necessary security standards.

You asked which establishments are to be covered by the APT to be based at Chilwell/Chetwynd Barracks. The Area Policing Team based there will cover those Ministry of Defence establishments within reasonable range of their base, and give assistance according to the assessed priorities on the calls on their time.

You wished to know the authorised complements for the APTs proposed for Dishforth, Donnington and Chilwell. The APT complements at Donnington and Chilwell will each be 11 officers; and in addition 8 MDP officers will be retained at Donnington for policing duties. No decisions have yet been taken on Dishforth.

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) from which budget holders the funding for (a) the Ministry of Defence police area policing teams at Chilwell/Chetwynd barracks and (b) the Military Provost guard service at Chilwell/Chetwynd barracks will be provided in 1997-98; [9691]

(2) what consent has been (i) sought and (ii) received from the chief constable of Nottinghamshire constabulary in respect of (a) armed and (b) unarmed off-base patrols by the Military Provost guard service at Chilwell/Chetwynd barracks; [9694]

(3) what anti-terrorist patrols will be included in the off-base activities of the Military Provost guard service at Chilwell/Chetwynd barracks. [9695]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of state for Defence what has been the total cost in each of the last five years, for acquiring and operating nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. [9670]

Mr. Arbuthnot: The strategic nuclear deterrent is the UK's only dedicated nuclear weapon delivery system. I refer the hon. Member to the Trident procurement and Polaris and Trident operating costs for 1991-92 and 1992-93 given in answer to the hon. Member for Wakefield (Mr. Hinchliffe) on 27 October 1993, *Official Report*, column 702), for 1994-95 given in answer to the hon. member for Tooting (Mr. Cox) on 6 March 1996, *Official Report*, column 232 and for 1995-96 given in answer to the hon. Member for Meirionnydd Nant Conwy (Mr. Llwyd) on 26 November 1996, *Official Report*, column 193. The figure for 1993-94 is £1,082 million. The operating costs of the WE177 free-fall nuclear bomb and the Lance nuclear artillery system, which was withdrawn from service in 1992-93, are not recorded separately.

Great Lakes Region

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to his oral statement of 14 November, *Official report*, column 487-89 what contribution United Kingdom forces have made to the resolution of the humanitarian crisis in the great lakes region; and if he will make a statement. [10399]

Mr. Soames: British forces deployed to the region have made an extremely valuable contribution to the action taken by the international community. The Canberra PR9 has flown 24 sorties, playing a pivotal role in determining the precise location and numbers of refugee groups in eastern Zaire. Our liaison personnel in Rwanda have provided unique information about the situation on the ground, and have assisted in the co-ordination of work in the area.

Substantial numbers of refugees have returned home to Rwanda, and aid agencies now enjoy greater ease of access to eastern Zaire. In the light of the dramatic change in the humanitarian situation, the steering group overseeing the multinational mission to the region has recommended to the UN Secretary-General that the multinational force be withdrawn by 31 December. The focus now must be on efforts to obtain wider access for the aid agencies on the ground and to enable them to assess the scale and nature of humanitarian needs and how these can best be met.

Our forces in the region will accordingly return to the UK this week. Our international partners are making similar plans for the withdrawal of their own forces.

The UK will continue to lend full support to the humanitarian mission in the region and to regional efforts to find a lasting political solution. In that context we welcome the outcome of the Nairobi summit of 16 and 17 December.

Convicted Soldiers (Cyprus)

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what Army pension payments will be made to each of the three soldiers convicted of the manslaughter of the Danish tour guide in Cyprus; when such payments will commence; and what is the current value of such pensions. [8639]

Mr. Soames: I can confirm that the three former soldiers had accrued sufficient military service to qualify for a preserved Army pension, which will be payable from their 60th birthday. Under the code of access to Government information, it is not our policy to release information relating to an individual's financial affairs on the grounds that to do so without their consent could facilitate an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

Unidentified Craft

Mr. Ieuan Wyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of state for Defence if his Department will adopt a policy on the reporting of unidentified craft of releasing to the press details of (i) shape, flight-pattern, colour and size of craft, (ii) where and when the craft was seen, (iii) what action his Department took and (iv) the radar profile of the craft. [9410]

Mr. Soames: No.

Mr. Jones: To ask the secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the incident on 16 October 1990 involving two unidentified craft in the vicinity of Wylfa nuclear power station on Anglesey; what estimate the intercepting helicopter pilots made of the departing speeds of the two unidentified craft; if they showed up on radar; and if he will make a statement. [9561]

Mr. Soames: None, so far as we can establish from existing records.

Mr. Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the two attempted interceptions of unidentified craft that occurred near Anglesey in September and November 1995; what other attempts have been made to intercept unidentified craft in this vicinity; and if he will make a statement [9562]

Mr. Soames: From records available, and from the limited information given in the question, we are unable to identify any incidents of this kind.

Pindar Bunker

Mr. Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many beds there are in the Pindar bunker; how many of these will be occupied over Christmas; and what is his Department's estimate of the cost of using the unoccupied beds to shelter the homeless; [9669]

(2) what estimate he has made of the operating costs of the Pindar bunker in 1996-97. [9668]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Training Facilities (Bahrain)

Mr. Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what training facilities are provided for Bahrain defence force personnel in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [9737]

Mr. Soames: The Bahrain defence force is provided with access to a range of military training courses in the UK. Details of military assistance remain confidential between Governments.

Military Provost Guard Service

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under what circumstances his Department will arm patrols by the Military Provost guard service outside an establishment. [9693]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Area Policing Teams

Mr. Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the introduction of area policing teams at Chilwell and Donnington in the event of the annulment of the Army Terms of Service (Amendment) Regulations (S.I., No. 2973/96). [9699]

Mr. Soames: I hope that these will not be annulled. In the event that they were, the implications would be carefully considered at the time.

Gulf War Syndrome

Mr. Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what was the cost of the anti-botulism toxin vaccine serum produced from October 1990 for use in the Gulf war, mentioned in the memorandum prepared by his Department issued in support of the ministerial statement on Gulf war illness on 10 December, *Official Report*, columns 119-23; [9632]

(2) what quality control was applied to the purchase of propoxur and bendiocarb-based pesticides from suppliers in Riyadh in January 1991; [9595]

(3) what was the cost of the anthrax vaccine ordered from the public health laboratory service in August 1990, to which reference is made in his Department's memorandum released in support of the statement made on Gulf war illness on 10 December, *Official Report*, columns 119-23. [9637]

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the oral statement by the Minister of State for the Armed Forces of 10 December *Official Report*, column 120, on Gulf war syndrome, what steps he has taken to assist Professor Nicola Cherry and Dr. Patricia Doyle to visit Iraq in order to meet Dr. Mubarrak, Minister of Health. [9429]

Dr. David Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will include in the investigation being conducted by his Department's permanent under-secretary into the misleading of the House on the issue of organophosphate pesticide use the conclusions of the inquiry conducted by his Department's security official Mr. A. G. Rucker into the alleged theft of Gulf war syndrome documents, as reported to him by the hon. Member for South Shields in November 1995; [9727]

(2) how many of the Gulf war veterans examined by the medical assessment programme have been found to be suffering from (i) kidney and liver damage, (ii) lung complications, (iii) osteoporosis, and (iv) neurological damage; [9723]

(3) pursuant to his oral statement of 10 December, *Official Report*, column 121, on how many occasions information was provided in background material to parliamentary answers on the possible local purchase of organophosphate pesticides between October 1995 and September 1996; [9725]

(4) how many medical records of those in his Department serving in the Gulf war are currently missing; and if he will make a statement on the steps being taken to recover them; [9722]

(5) if he will name the staff undertaking clinical work for his Department as part of the medical assessment programme. [9724]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Members and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Dr. Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the terms of reference of the investigation being conducted by his Department's permanent under-secretary into the misleading of the House on the issue of organophosphate pesticide use during the Gulf war; and who will assist the permanent under-secretary in his investigation. [9719]

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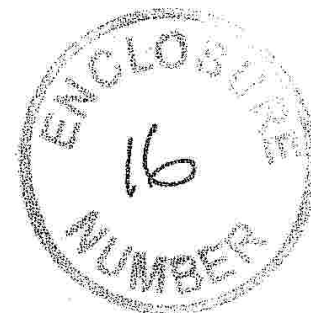
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Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

9th January 1997

PE Unit

LETTER FROM DR ALAN WILLIAMS - US 5119/96

1. Dr Williams constituent, **Section 40**, is seeking information on alleged 'UFO' events in the Cardigan Bay area on 21st November and, assuming these events to be soundly based, poses a number of questions about them. He gives weight to this assumption by commenting that:

- Dyfed-Powys police were reported to be co-operating with the RAF and their 'UFO unit';
- MOD denied there was any military activity in the area.

Section 40 wrote in similar terms to the military staff at the London Air Traffic Control Centre, West Drayton seeking information about what they had observed on their radar.

2. The Air Defence Staffs have confirmed that on the day in question there was no unusual air defence activity, no penetration of the UK Air Defence Region, no unknown aircraft activity on any military radars and that no Quick Reaction Alert aircraft (QRAs) were scrambled. Three reports of alleged 'UFO' sightings were received by Sec(AS) for 21st November but these were for the Twickenham area, two-three miles off Newhaven/Brighton, and Althorpe near Scunthorpe. There were no reports from, or about, the Cardigan Bay area.

3. The Aberporth Range danger area extends into Cardigan Bay and the Range regularly fires air-to-air missiles (on average two each week). On 21st November two missiles were fired, the first at 10.45 and the second at 15.29. Neither of these firings accord with the timings of the reported 'UFO' sightings and we cannot, therefore, suggest any connection.

4. **Section 40** mentions Martin Redmond's interest in the 'events' last year off Skegness and The Wash. Mr Redmond wrote, at length, about the effectiveness of the UK air defence system following media reports of 'UFO sightings' in the area on 5th October. Much of this reporting was media hype. USofs replied to Mr Redmond (copy attached for information) and the content of this letter is known in 'ufologist' circles. **Section 40** should, by now, be aware of what was said and we consider there is no need to resurrect this issue.

5. As is usual with reports of this nature (and Sec(AS) received some 600 reports last year), the draft reply (attached) simply sets out the MOD position in respect of 'UFO' sightings. Where it is clearly the case that there is no threat to the UKADR, no attempt is made to investigate what the witnesses might have seen.

D/USofs/FH/5119/96

Thank you for your letter of 19th December enclosing one from **Section 40** of the West Wales Paranormal Group about 'UFO sightings' on 21st November. **Section 40** also wrote in similar terms to the military staffs at the London Air Traffic Control Centre, West Drayton and I hope he will accept this as a reply to both letters.

My Department examines any reports of 'UFO sightings' sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been breached. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no 'UFO sighting' reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. From the descriptions we do receive, aircraft or natural phenomena probably account for most of the observations.

I should wish to assure **Section 40** that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force and we remain vigilant for any potential military threat. Our enquiries reveal that on the day in question there was no unusual air defence activity, no penetration by hostile military aircraft of the UK Air Defence Region, no unknown aircraft activity on any military radars and that no Quick Reaction Alert aircraft were scrambled.

We have also checked whether the Aberporth Range was being used that day since the range danger area extends into Cardigan Bay. The Range regularly fires air-to-air missiles but, although on 21st November two missiles were fired, the timings do not accord with the events documented by Section 40

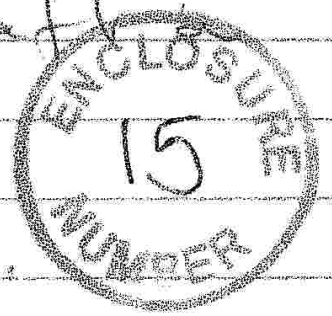
I hope this explains our position.

THE EARL HOWE

Dr Alan Williams MP

Section 40
Sec(AS)2
MB8247 Section 40
CHOTS: SEC(AS)2

no unusual air defence activity
no penetration of UK ADR
& no unknown aircraft
any mil radar



✓ no QRAs scrambled.

no unusual air activity of
any kind.

in the latter an observation
9.10. over cardigan bay

nothing at that time

but at 15.30 Sidewinder
missile firing abeam
west by target w/o
detonating & exploded
when hit the sea in a flash
in central cardigan bay.

This was before any reference
made

Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

6th January 1997

ADGE 1

PE 5119/96 - DR ALAN WILLIAMS: 'UFOs'

1. Happy New Year! But, nothing changes.
2. I attach a copy of a letter from a member of the public to Dr Alan Williams MP and should be grateful for your advice to use in a reply for USofS to send to the MP in time to meet the 9th January deadline.
3. We received no reports of activity in the area concerned on 21 November and I do not propose we should answer every single point in the letter. However, there are references to the RAF and MOD investigations and I wonder if you can throw any light on what went on. On page two it alleges that the Dyfed-Powys police were 'co-operating with the RAF and their UFO unit' and a local newspaper report as saying 'MOD denied any military activity'. On page three there are comments about 'RAF unable to track a large triangular craft', 'an investigation by the MOD UFO Unit' and whether or not 'interceptors were scrambled'.
4. The letter writer is the Press officer for the West Wales Paranormal Group and he has also written to AIS(M). A copy of the letter to them, which is similar to the one sent to the MP, is also attached; they will not be replying separately.
5. Finally, I think I should mention that the Chief Constable of Dyfed-Powys police is well known to us in respect of his concerns about low flying. If it is at all possible I should appreciate it if neither he, nor members of his force, were contacted directly about the events of 21st November.

Section 40
 Sec(AS)2
 MB8247 Section 40
 CHOTS: SEC(AS)2
 FAX : Section 40

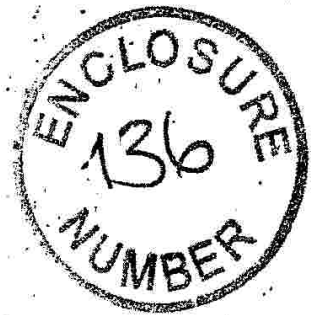
ENCLOSURE
137

TELEPHONE REPORT OF AN UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT

A Date: 21 NOV 96		Time: 2175		Duration of Sighting: 12-15	
B Description of Object:					
Number	ONE	Size	LARGE	Shape	ZEPPELIN
Brightness	VERY FLASHING	Sound	NIL	Smell	/
C Exact Position of Observer:					
Geographical Location		TWILKENTHAM		Indoors	Outdoors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Stationary		Moving <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
D How Object was Observed:					
Naked Eye	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Binoculars		Camera	Type
E Direction in which Object was first seen: (A Landmark may be useful)					
SOUTH					
F Angle of Sight:		45°			
G Distance: (By reference to a known Landmark if possible)				N/A	
H Movement of Object:		SOUTH WESTERLY			
I Met conditions during Observation:		CLEAR			
Moving Clouds, Mist, Haze etc					
J Nearby Objects or Buildings:		BUILT UP AREA			
K To Whom Reported:		Press	NIL	Police	NIL
L Military Organisation:		D20			
M Details of Informant:		Name	Section 40	Tel No	Section 40
N Address:		Section 40	HAMPDEN HILL	Postcode	Section 40
O Any Background of Informant that may be Volunteered:					
P Other Witnesses:		NIL			
Q Date/Time of Report:		Date	22 NOV 96	Time	1740

REPORT OF AN UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT

- A. Date, Time, Duration of Sighting.**
21 NOV 96 4:30pm (20 mins duration)
- B. Description of Object.**
Number,
Size, Too far away
Shape, 2 lines - not like aircraft. like pencil lines
Colours, Orange.
Brightness, - bright.
Sound, - NO
Smell, - NO.
- C. Exact Position of Observer.** Newhaven : to Brighton.
Geographical Location,
Indoors, Outdoors,
Stationary, Moving, - saw them when moving then when stopped saw there.
- D. How Object was Observed.**
Naked Eye, Binoculars, Still or Video Camera. Took photographs.
- E. Direction in which Object was first seen.** SE
(A Landmark may be useful)
- F. Angle of Sight.**
- G. Distance.**
(By reference to a known Landmark if possible) Quite far away
2-3 miles out to sea.
- H. Movement of Object.**
Stationary + moved slowly on level.
- J. Met Conditions during Observation.**
Moving Clouds, low clouds in sky, still night.
Haze, Mist. sea was calm.
- K. Nearby Objects or Buildings etc.**
- L. To Whom Reported.**
Police, Press, Military Organisation, Airport.
- M. Name and Address of Informant.**
Section 40
- N. Any Background of the Informant that may be Volunteered.**
- O. Other Witnesses.**
Husband. (who is a member of photo club + took some photographs).
- P. Date & Time of Receipt of Report.**
1550 22nd NOV 96.



PRINT INCIDENT FACILITY

SER. NO. 972B05V REC RAD BY 1145 AT 2059 21/11/96 (GENERAL POLICE)
 B152 MAP 111A1 GRID 832098 LOG SENT FROM HA1V TO HB4V A
 MESSAGE-LARGE OBJECT SEEN IN SKY ON FIRE FALLING TO EARTH WEST SIDE OF SCU
 E TOWARDS EARTH
 LOCATION-1- **Section 40** SCUNTHORPE, **Section 40**

INFORMANT-PC 1668 DAY ON PATROL BM13
 REMARKS-***PC*** SEE TEXT ***

ACTION

2109 BY 1145 B05V-OBJECT SEEN 2055 21/11/96
 2110 BY 1145 B05V-DESCRIPTION LARGE ROUND BALL ON FIRE
 2111 BY 1145 B05V-SEEN WHILST ON MANOR ROAD TRAVELLING TOWARD MOORWELL ROAD
 THORPE
 2113 BY 1145 B05V-SEEN BY NAKED EYE
 OBJECT BELIEVED TO BE DROPPING VERTICALLY LOST SIGHT OVER
 ZON BELIEVED BETWEEN ALTHORPE AND WEST BUTTERWICK
 2113 BY 9430 H03V-ENO BUREAU CHECKING AGENCIES
 2114 BY 1145 B05V-NOT KNOWN EXACTLY HOW FAR AWAY
 2114 BY 9436 HB4V-FROM E. BUREAU CONTACTED COASTGAURD, NO FLARES IN THAT AREA
 IF THEY RECEIVE ANY MORE SIMILAR REPORTS THEY WILL CONTACT
 US QUOTING LOG NUMBER.
 2115 BY 1145 B05V-WEATHER CONDITIONS CLEAR SKIES DRY
 2116 BY 1145 B05V-**Section 40** BELIEVED COULD HAVE BEEN SHOOTING STAR NOT SURE
 2118 BY 9436 HB4V-CONTACTED AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL HUMBERSIDE AIRPORT, THEY CAN
 SHED ANY LIGHT ON THIS, THEY HAVE HAD NO AIR TRAFFIC IN THE
 AREA ALL EVENING.
 2121 BY 9436 HB4V-CONTACTED KIRTON LINDSEY BARRACKS RE EXERCISE, IT WAS
 DEFINITELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.
 2201 BY 1133 HA1V-OWNERSHIP OBTAINED BY HA1V
 INCIDENT TRANSFERRED TO H03V
 2203 BY 9436 HB4V-INCIDENT REALLOCATED TO HB4V
 LOG FAXED TO M O D AND RAF WADDINGTON OPERATIONS AS PER
 INSTRUCTION **Section 40**

END OF PRINT INCIDENT



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FOR DEFENCE

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*US of S dist:
Sec (AS) 2*



D/US of S/FH 19/2/0

6th January 1997

Dear Wayland,

Thank you for your letter of 11 December about 'crop circles'.

There is little I can offer by way of explanation. There is no evidence to suggest that these phenomena are caused by anything of military concern and my Department does not therefore investigate reported sightings or carry out any research into them.

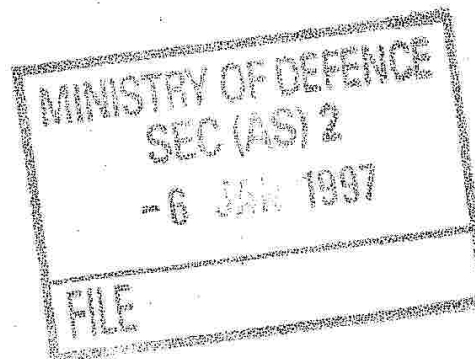
I am sorry I cannot be more helpful.

I believe the view in MAFF is that most, if not all, crop circles can be explained as the work of hoaxers.

Yours ever

Section 40

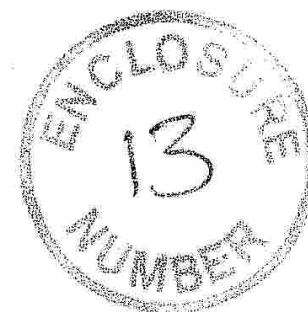
THE EARL HOWE



The Lord Kennet



Recycled Paper



Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

6th January 1997

ADGE 1

PE 5119/96 - DR ALAN WILLIAMS: 'UFOs'

1. Happy New Year! But, nothing changes.
2. I attach a copy of a letter from a member of the public to Dr Alan Williams MP and should be grateful for your advice to use in a reply for USofS to send to the MP in time to meet the 9th January deadline.
3. We received no reports of activity in the area concerned on 21 November and I do not propose we should answer every single point in the letter. However, there are references to the RAF and MOD investigations and I wonder if you can throw any light on what went on. On page two it alleges that the Dyfed-Powys police were 'co-operating with the RAF and their UFO unit' and a local newspaper report as saying 'MOD denied any military activity'. On page three there are comments about 'RAF unable to track a large triangular craft', 'an investigation by the MOD UFO Unit' and whether or not 'interceptors were scrambled'.
4. The letter writer is the Press officer for the West Wales Paranormal Group and he has also written to AIS(M). A copy of the letter to them, which is similar to the one sent to the MP, is also attached; they will not be replying separately.
5. Finally, I think I should mention that the Chief Constable of Dyfed-Powys police is well known to us in respect of his concerns about low flying. If it is at all possible I should appreciate it if neither he, nor members of his force, were contacted directly about the events of 21st November.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2

FAX : Section 40



Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

30th December 1996

APS/USofs

LETTER FROM LORD KENNET - CROP CIRCLES

1. Lord Kennet has asked (D/USofs/FH/19/2/0 of 20th December) for the MOD's view on 'crop circles' and appears to have been prompted into asking the question by a letter from USofs to Martin Redmond. The letter to Martin Redmond (copy attached) was placed in the Library of the House in response to 15 PQs tabled by the MP in October. None of the PQs concerned 'crop circles' and it is not clear why Lord Kennet should suddenly ask about them.

2. There is little we can say to Lord Kennet. There is no evidence that 'crop circles' are caused by anything of military concern and the Department does not investigate reported sightings or carry out any research into them. A draft reply for US of S to send to Lord Kennet is attached.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2

FAX : Section 40

DRAFT REPLY FROM USofS TO LORD KENNET

D/USofS/FH 19/2/0

Thank you for your letter of 11 December about 'crop circles'.

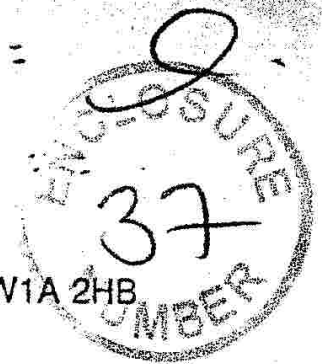
There is little I can offer by way of explanation. There is no evidence to suggest that these phenomenon are caused by anything of military concern and my Department does not therefore investigate reported sightings or carry out any research into them. I am sorry I cannot be more helpful.

THE EARL HOWE

The Lord Kennet



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PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE



D/US of S/FH/PQ2100H/2101H/2105H/2106H/
2109H/2111H/2112H/2114H/2118H/2123H/
2124H/2127H/2130H/2131H/2136H/96/M

28th October 1996

Dear Mr. Redmond,

Nicholas Soames undertook to write to you in his reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about UFOs. (Official Report, cols 1092-1093 and 1095, copies attached). I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

The MOD's interest in 'unexplained' aerial phenomena (Question 1) is limited to whether the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised. Unless there is any evidence that this is the case, and to date no sighting has provided such evidence, we do not investigate further or seek to provide an explanation for what might have been observed. We have no expertise or role with respect to 'UFO/flying saucer' matters and, so far as the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms is concerned, we remain open minded but know of nothing that proves they exist. Our policy in this respect has not changed during the last thirty years.

RAF Standing Instructions (Question 2) require all RAF Station Commanders to forward reports of all 'UFO' sightings whether made by members of the public or on-duty Service personnel to the Secretariat (Air Staff), Branch 2a. Sec(AS)2a look at all 'UFO' sighting reports (Question 3) whether military or civilian reported. Reports are assessed in consultation with other MOD branches as required to determine whether there is any defence interest in what has been reported. Over the last twelve months there has been one instance of an on-duty member of the Services reporting an 'unexplained' aerial sighting, and this was not judged to be of any significance.

Martin Redmond Esq MP

Wrong attachment sent!
Correct one being sent
as per an minute.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
H- Sec (AS).
257 075
FILE 64/4





We have no evidence (Question 4) that any structured craft of unknown origin has penetrated the UK's Air Defence Region. I am unable to provide the information you seek about reports of alleged landings (Question 5) since records are maintained only of 'UFO' sighting reports which are not broken down further into specific categories.

You ask at Questions 2a, 2b and 6-12 about collaboration and consultation with a number of foreign governments. My Department has regular discussions with a number of countries on a wide range of topics of mutual interest but such discussions have not extended to 'UFO/flying saucer' issues or the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial life forms.

I can confirm (Question 13) that my Department's Scientific Intelligence Branch holds no records under extended closure for any period in excess of 30 years. So far as the information sought at Question 14 is concerned, the PRO has confirmed that the class list giving details of preserved records is available to researchers at Kew.

Finally, I can also confirm (Question 15) that there is no unit within the Flying Complaints Flight (FCF) based at RAF Rudloe Manor (or anywhere else) specialising in investigations into unidentified flying objects. I should add that despite continuing misunderstandings about the role of RAF Rudloe Manor in alleged 'UFO' investigations, the Station is not and never has been involved in this way.

I shall arrange for a copy of this letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

Written Answers

1092

17 OCTOBER 1996

Unidentified Flying Objects

10. Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what consultation has taken place in each of the last five years by his Department with the French Ministry of Defence Centre National d'Études Spatiales in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement: [41048]

15. (2) if a lodger unit housed within his Department's Flying Complaints Flight specialises in unidentified flying object investigations; and if he will make a statement: [41036]

13. (3) how many records currently held by his Department's Scientific Intelligence Branch are under extended closure for (a) 50 years, (b) 75 years and (c) 100 years; how many of these records refer to unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement: [40911]

1093

Written Answers

11. (4) what consultation has taken place in each of the last five years by his Department with the Royal Australian air force in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement: [41042]

7. (5) what consultation has taken place in each of the last five years by his Department with the Spanish Ministry of Defence's intelligence section of the Spanish air forces air operations command in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement: [41050]

1. (6) if he will make statement on his Department's policy towards unidentified flying objects and on how this has developed during the past 30 years: [40913]

6. (7) what co-operation there is between the Royal Air Force and the United States air force in respect of establishing the facts relating to unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement: [40918]

5. (8) how many alleged landings by unidentified flying objects have been recorded in each year since 1980 and this year to date; how many have been investigated by his Department's personnel; which of these had been traced by radar and with what result; and if he will make a statement: [40921]

8. (9) what consultation has taken place in each of the last five years by his Department with the Italian Ministry of Defence air force general staff (2. Department) in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement: [41049]

2. (10) what instructions have been sent to the commanders of Royal Air Force stations to collect reports from air crews having allegedly sighted unidentified flying objects; what inquiries have been held following such sightings; to what extent there has been collaboration between his Department and departments in (a) Canada and (b) the United States of America on this problem; and if he will make a statement: [40917]

12. (11) what consultation has taken place in each of the last five years by his Department with New Zealand's Ministry of Defence in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement: [41043]

9. (12) what consultation has taken place in each of the last five years by his Department with the Portuguese Ministry of Defence's joint staff of the armed forces intelligence division in respect of unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement: [41051]

3. (13) how many instances of unidentified flying objects have been reported on by the defence services of the United Kingdom during the last 12 months; what steps are taken to co-ordinate such observations; and if he will make a statement: [40910]

4. (14) if he will list by year for the last 30 years how many structured craft of unknown origin have penetrated the United Kingdom's air defence region; and if he will make a statement: [40919]

Mr. Soames: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

1095

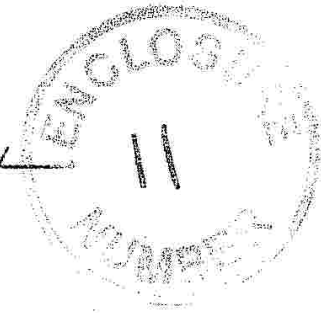
Written Answers

Mr. Nicholas Redfern

14. Mr. Redmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the titles of the records of the Ministry of Defence's scientific intelligence branch in respect of correspondence sent to Mr. Nicholas Redfern by the Public Record Office, Kew on 21 September 1990. [40889]

Mr. Soames: I will write to hon. Member and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Library in the House.

234



COVERING ~~SECRET/CONFIDENTIAL/RESTRICTED/MANAGEMENT/~~

REFERENCE D/US of S/FH 19/2/0

Sec (AS) 2

Crop Circles

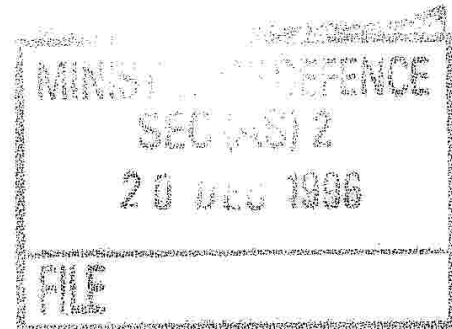
I am attaching a letter/~~minute~~ from Lord Kennet!
to The Earl Howe dated 11/12/96

Will you please consult other Departments, divisions and branches
as necessary and submit advice, together with a draft reply,
in order to reach US of S not later than 3/1/97

I am sending copies of this to:

.....
.....
.....
.....

The Open Government Code of Practice came into force on 4 April
1994 and you should ensure that replies to members of the public
are provided in accordance with its procedures.



Section 40
[Redacted]

Date: 20/12/96

APS/US of S
MB6215 Section 40
CHOTS: USofS/APS(1)

18 DEC 1996

ah yes....

draft reply please.



Section 40
19/12

11 December 1996



Earl Howe

Dear Freddy,

I got a copy of your letter of 28 October to Martin Redmond about UFOs etc. What, I can't help asking, given MoD's interest in 'unexplained' aerial phenomena where 'the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised', does MoD make of crop circles? Some members of my family - we live in Wiltshire, where they are a salient fact of life in the summer - suppose them to be made by the RAF practising making patterns with various energetic beams.

Yours

Section 40

Lord Kennet.

The Ministry of Defence does not research or investigate the phenomenon of crop circles. We would only do so if there was evidence that they were caused by something which was of military concern.



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

17 DEC 1996

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)

Sec (AS) 1
ENCLOSURE
10
NUMBER

Section 40

- Section do this?

Sec (AS) 2

Section 40

D/US of S/FH 4752/96/P

16th December 1996

Dear Nigel,

Thank you for your letter of 26 November to Nicholas Soames enclosing one from Section 40 of Section 40 Preston, about an alleged air crash into the North Sea near Morecambe Bay on 26 October. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

I can confirm that there were no military aircraft crashes in the Morecambe Bay or surrounding area on 26 October. Enquiries with the Civil Aviation Authority have also confirmed that there were no crashes involving civil aircraft in the area on that day.

I am sorry that I cannot be more helpful.

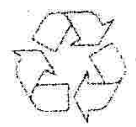
Yours ever,

Section 40

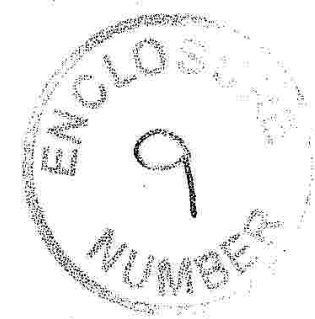
THE EARL HOWE

Nigel Evans Esq MP

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
SEC (AS) 2
18 DEC 1996
FILE



64/4



PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

MINISTER REPLYING: MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE: 2753H
PQ TYPE: Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

**DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON TUESDAY 17
DECEMBER 1996**

LEAD BRANCH: SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

MP'S DETAILS: MR IEUAN JONES (PLAID CYMRU) (YNYS MON)

32|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make it
his policy to allocate resources to researching extraterrestrial
phenomena. [9419]

MR SOAMES: I have nothing to add to the reply given by my Rt hon
friend the Prime Minister on 17 October 1996, Official Report,
Column 1082.

APPROVED BY:

Head of Sec(AS) Section 40 Tel: Section 40 Dec 96

Sec(AS)2 Section 40 Tel: Section 40 Dec 96

Copy to:

- PSO/ACAS*
- DPR(RAF)*
- AO-AD1*
- DPO(RAF)*
- DI55c

*by CHOTS

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

MINISTER REPLYING: MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE: 2747H
PQ TYPE: Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

**DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON TUESDAY 17
DECEMBER 1996**

LEAD BRANCH: SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

MP'S DETAILS: MR IEUAN JONES (PLAID CYMRU) (YNYS MON)

28|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if his Department will adopt a policy on the reporting of unidentified craft of releasing to the Press details of (i) shape, flight-pattern, colour and size of craft, (ii) where and when the craft was seen, (iii) what action his Department took and (iv) the radar profile of the craft. [9410]

MR SOAMES: No.

APPROVED BY:

Head of Sec(AS)	Section 40	Tel:	Section 40	Dec 96
Sec(AS)2		Tel:		Dec 96

Copy to:

- PSO/ACAS*
- DPR(RAF)*
- AO-AD1*
- DPO(RAF)*
- DI55c

*by CHOTS

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

MINISTER REPLYING: MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE: 2748H
PQ TYPE: Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON TUESDAY 17
DECEMBER 1996

LEAD BRANCH: SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

MP'S DETAILS: MR IEUAN JONES (PLAID CYMRU) (YNYS MON)

29|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his
Department has made of the incident on 16th October 1990 involving
two unidentified craft in the vicinity of Wylfa Nuclear Power
Station on Anglesey; what estimate the intercepting helicopter
pilots made of the departing speeds of the two unidentified craft;
if they showed up on radar; and if he will make a statement.
[9561]

MR SOAMES: None, so far as we can establish from existing
records.

APPROVED BY:

Head of Sec(AS)	Section 40	Tel:	Section 40	Dec 96
Sec(AS)2		Tel:		Dec 96

Copy to:

PSO/ACAS*
DPR(RAF)*
AO-AD1*
DPO(RAF)*
DI55c

*by CHOTS

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

MINISTER REPLYING: MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE: 2757H
PQ TYPE: Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON TUESDAY 17
DECEMBER 1996

LEAD BRANCH: SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

MP'S DETAILS: MR IEUAN JONES (PLAID CYMRU) (YNYS MON)

35|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his
Department has made of the two attempted interceptions of
unidentified craft that occurred near Anglesey in September and
November 1995; what other attempts have been made to intercept
unidentified craft in this vicinity; and if he will make a
statement. [9562]

MR SOAMES: From records available, and the limited information
given in the question, we are unable to identify any incidents of
this kind.

APPROVED BY:

Head of Sec(AS)	Section 40	Tel:	Section 40	Dec 96
Sec(AS)2		Tel:		Dec 96

Copy to:

PSO/ACAS*
DPR(RAF)*
AO-AD1*
DPO(RAF)*
DI55c

*by CHOTS

BACKGROUND - POS 2747H, 2748H, 2753H, 2757H

1. Mr Ieuan Wyn Jones MP has tabled four PQs on 'UFO'-related issues.

2. Since March 1996 the MP has written three times, either forwarding correspondence, or on behalf of, a constituent, **Section 40** **Section 40** who is a member of a local group of 'UFO' enthusiasts calling themselves the "Wales Federation of Independent Ufologists". **Section 40** regularly writes direct to Sec(AS) and recently sought the Department's endorsement of his recommendation to the Royal Society of Chemistry that they should establish a scientific division to investigate 'Anomalous Aerial Phenomena'. **Section 40** is, apparently, a Research and Development Chemist for a local Chemical company. As the PQs mirror the content of the Parliamentary Enquiries arising from **Section 40** it is likely they have been tabled as a result of his contacts with the MP.

3. PQ 2753H - In an answer given to a question tabled by Martin Redmond MP in October (Official Report attached at Annex A), the Prime Minister made it clear that he has no plans to allocate resources to researching extraterrestrial phenomena. The answer given to this PQ maintains the previous line.

4. PQ 2747H - Mr Jones is aware of the Department's policy on reports of 'UFO' sightings, most recently set out in a letter to him from USofS dated 9 Oct 96 (copy attached at Annex B, Tab A). There are no plans to alter that policy and we believe a more substantive answer is not required.

5. PQ 2748H - Mr Jones wrote to Ministers in October about the 16th October 1990 sighting which allegedly occurred near Wylfa Power Station on Anglesey. A copy of his letter is at Annex B, Tab B. There were two Wessex squadrons operating at RAF Valley in 1990, 22 Sqn and the Search and Rescue Training Unit (SARTU). At

1930 hrs on the evening in question, records show that 22 Sqn were not operating. SARTU records no longer exist but, because of the nature of their task, it would have been highly unlikely that any of their helicopters would have been airborne. However, the area in question is a SARTU training area and without records it is simply not possible to determine whether a helicopter might have been in the area at that time. It certainly would not have been 'scrambled' for interception purposes. From surviving local records there is no evidence to support the claim of an alleged incident and, as such, that any assessment was ever made by the Department. The PQ answer therefore reflects this position.

6. PO 2757H - Although specific dates have not been given in the PQ, the Station Commander at RAF Valley received a letter (Annex C, Tab A) from the MP about a report of a 'UFO' sighting on 4 Nov 95. USofS replied (Annex C, Tab B) that there was no evidence to support a sighting of air defence interest. There has been no previous interest by the MP in an alleged sighting for Sep 95. The air defence staffs have confirmed that no Quick Reaction Alert aircraft were scrambled for practice or real operations on the West Coast during September or November 1995, although QRA aircraft were scrambled for no-notice missile firing at Aberporth Range on 7 Sep 95 and 22 Nov 95 respectively. Without precise dates from the MP it is simply not possible to provide a more detailed answer to his question.

ANNEX A

1081

Written Answers

17 OCTOBER 1996

Written Answers

1082

ENVIRONMENT

Radioactive Scale (Disposal)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what provisions exist for the offshore disposal of radioactive scale arising from oil exploration and drilling in the North sea and Atlantic. [41251]

Mr. Clappison: Discharge of naturally radioactive scale from oil exploration and drilling in UK waters is regulated under the Radioactive Substances Act 1993, as amended. The Environment Agency is the regulator for the English and Welsh sectors. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency is the regulator for the Scottish sector.

World Conservation Congress

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what contribution his Department made to the World Conservation Congress held in Montreal this month; if his Department was represented at the congress; and what plans he has to assess the conclusions of the congress. [41252]

Mr. Clappison: The UK is a state member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Officials from my Department are leading the UK delegation at the World Conservation Congress which began on 13 October and will finish on 23 October. My Department contributed towards the costs of the UK IUCN committee's report on the UK's contribution to IUCN 1994 to 1996, which will be launched during the congress.

PRIME MINISTER

Government Policies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Prime Minister what new policy proposals were announced by Ministers of Her Majesty's Government in the week beginning 7 October; and if he will indicate which of them will be subject to compliance cost assessments. [40801]

The Prime Minister: The Government prepare a compliance cost assessment for all new legislation likely to have an impact on business and the voluntary sector. The Government's legislative programme will be presented to the House on 23 October. Compliance costs assessments will be presented in due course for the Bills in the programme.

Consultants

Mr. Milburn: To ask the Prime Minister what are his latest estimates of the expenditure on all external consultants, including management consultants, for each year since 1992, in 1996 prices, for his Department and its agencies; and what are the quantified annual cost savings which such expenditure has resulted in. [41173]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my Office is part of the Cabinet Office, Office of Public Service. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster will write to the hon. Member.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Mr. Redmond: To ask the Prime Minister if he will allocate to a department the assessments of the non-air defence implications associated with unidentified flying objects; and if he will make a statement. [40822]

The Prime Minister: The air defence and air traffic implications of unidentified flying objects are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and the Civil Aviation Authority respectively. The Government have no plans to allocate resources to researching extraterrestrial phenomena.

Terrorist Damage

Mr. Soley: To ask the Prime Minister if he will extend the Northern Ireland compensation scheme for terrorist attacks to mainland Britain. [40934]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply given to the hon. Member for Manchester, Blackley (Mr. Eastham), by my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade on 27 June 1996, *Official Report*, column 202.

New Buildings and Premises

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister what was the total expenditure on new buildings and premises by his Department and its agencies; and if he will indicate the square footage of new office space purchased or newly rented in each of the last five years. [41148]

The Prime Minister: For the purposes of this question, my Office is part of the Cabinet Office, Office of Public Service. I refer the hon. Member to the reply given today by my right hon. Friend, the Paymaster General.

British Beef

Mr. Hanson: To ask the Prime Minister what steps he is taking to encourage the purchase and use of British Beef by Government Departments. [41308]

The Prime Minister: The best way to encourage use of British Beef is to restore confidence in the product. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has launched an initiative to reassure consumers and those responsible for procurement about the rigorous enforcement of the control measures introduced to protect public health. The Meat and Livestock Commission is continuing with its successful campaign to promote consumption.

WALES

GP Salaries

Mr. Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what proposals he has and what consultations he has set up on the introduction of a salaried status scheme for general practice. [40668]

Mr. Hague [*holding answer 14 October 1996*]: Proposals for the development of primary care health services, including a salaried option for general practitioners, are set out in the White Paper "Choice and Opportunity", Cm 3390, published on 15 October. This issue is also addressed in the document "Primary Care: The Way Forward in Wales", also published on



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
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Sec(AS) 2A

64/4



ANNEX B
TAB A

D/US of S/FH 3761/96/M

9th October 1996

Dear Mr. Jones,

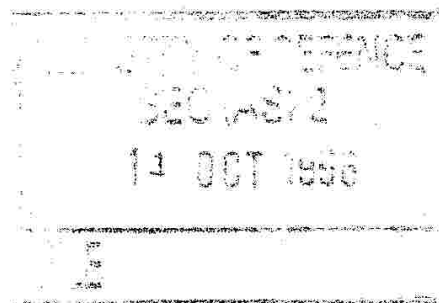
Thank you for your letter of 24 September (reference: IWJ/2/96/36) to Michael Portillo enclosing one from your constituent, **Section 40** of **Section 40**, Beaumaris, about "unidentified flying objects". I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

As you may know, my Department examines any reports of "UFO" sightings sent to us solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance, namely, whether there was any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by a hostile foreign military aircraft. Unless there are defence implications, and to date no "UFO" sighting reported to us has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. From the types of descriptions we receive, however, aircraft or natural phenomena probably account for most of the observations.

Enquiries have revealed that as **Section 40** telephone call to RAF Valley was made outside routine working hours, a record of his call would have been logged in the Station Duty Officer's Report. However, Station Duty Officer's Reports are not kept indefinitely but routinely destroyed and Reports for 1990 are no longer available.

You may wish to be aware that we do not routinely contact or reply to every witness who reports a "UFO" sighting to us (on average the Department receives 200-300 such reports annually). Such contact is only necessary if what has been seen has a defence interest and it is necessary to interview the witness further.

Ieuan Wyn Jones Esq MP



Recycled Paper

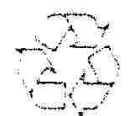


The integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through the continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force. I should wish to assure **Section 40** that my Department takes its responsibilities for the effective Defence of the UK very seriously indeed and we remain vigilant for any potential military threat.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE **MARK ROWE**



Recycled Paper



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

3 Oct 96

PE Unit

(thro Mrs Field, Sec(AS)2)

LETTER FROM IEUAN WYN JONES MP - US 3761/96

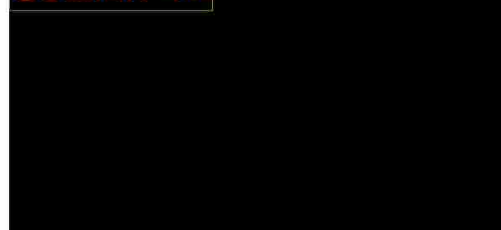
1. The attached is the second "UFO" PE received from Ieuan Wyn Jones in four weeks on behalf of **Section 40**. A further "UFO" PE was received from the MP in March 1996 written on behalf of an unnamed constituent who lived in Llanfaes, and it is more than likely that that PE was also on behalf of **Section 40**. This enquiry concerns a "UFO" report which was allegedly made to RAF Valley nearly six years ago on 16 October 1990.

2. According to the letter, the phone call to RAF Valley would have been made at approximately 1940 hrs and thus 'out of hours'. RAF Valley have advised that any record of the event would have been detailed in the Station Duty Officer's Report. These Reports are kept for a few years and are then routinely destroyed. The earliest such reports held by Valley date back to 1992. The CRO's office can find no trace of any "UFO" reports dating back to 1990 still held at the Station.

3. Although Sec(AS) has records of two reports of "UFO" sightings for 16 Oct 90, both were in the London area.

4. In the two previous PE replies to Mr Wyn Jones it has not been necessary for us to spell out the Department's specific interest in "UFO" reports, but on this occasion it is felt appropriate that we do. I attach a draft response for USofS' consideration.

Section 40

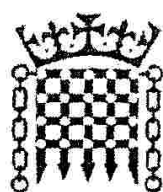


Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sec (AS)
USed.
UFOs

ANNEX B
TAB B

Our ref: IWJ/2/96/36

24 September 1996

The Rt Hon Michael Portillo MP
Secretary of State for Defence
The Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2HB

Dear Secretary of State

I enclose correspondence I have received from **Section 40** of Llanfaes, in my constituency, enclosing a copy of a letter he received from **Section 40** of Cemaes, also a constituent of mine, regarding the alleged sighting of a UFO.

I would be pleased if you could let me have your response to the allegations made by **Section 40**, so that I can reply to **Section 40** in due course.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

MP for Ynys Môn

PARLIAMENTARY
BRANCH
26 SEP 1996
100/312 MAIN BLDG

WALES FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT UFOLOGISTS



TEL

ADDRESS

24 SEP 1996

Section 40

Beaumaris
Anglesey

22 September 1996

Your Ref : IWJ / 2 / 96 / 36

TRH Ieuan Wyn Jones MP
Plaid Cymru Offices
45 Bridge St
Llangefni

Dear Mr Jones,

I am passing on to you the enclosed UFO-related statement at the witnesses' request.

No doubt, Whitehall will issue the usual bland statement that the incident was of no defence significance. Given the close proximity of a nuclear power station, I would dispute that.

In the first instance, I feel that the RAF or the MOD should send a letter to Section 40 thanking him for his public spiritedness and apologising for such a long delay. Perhaps they would also be kind enough to let him know what the helicopter pilots saw as well.

If possible, I would also like to interview the pilots involved as they are in effect witnesses.

On the 13th October, there is a meeting of The Welsh Federation of Independent Ufologists to be held at the Canolfan Beaumaris Leisure Centre. The agenda will concentrate on recent UFO sightings over Anglesey. The time will be between 6 and 9pm and admission is free. Invitations have gone out to the Station Commander at RAF Valley and to the Chief Constable of North Wales Police. I would feel it a privilege if you could attend or send a representative.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

Section 40

Cemaes Bay
Anglesey

Section 40

September 13/1996

Section 40

Llanfaes.

GLOBAL UFO INVESTIGATION SYSTEMS

The following is a report of what was witnessed on the evening of ----
October 16 1990, Approx time 7:30pm, Weather conditions extremely calm, quiet

Myself and my friend Section 40 were returning from Cemlyn and walking
up the path to Section 40, my home address, when we noticed two pairs of
white lights hovering noiselessly out to sea in the vicinity of Wylfa Power
Station and Skerries Light House, we watched it for a minute or two by which
time my wife Enid had come from the house and joined us.

None of us could fathom out what they might be as neither pair of lights
moved, made no noise, just hovered in one place.
It was fairly obvious that there were two of these objects as one pair of
lights was lower and further than the other.

We must have watched them for maybe five to ten minutes before deciding to
inform the R.A.F. base at Valley of what we were witnessing.
I have no recollection of being given the name of who answered the phone at
Valley but I did give my name and address to whoever in order that they
could contact me if more information was needed at a later date.
I was asked if it was a distress flare I was seeing to which I replied no
He then asked me to wait while he checked I presume, the RADAR, and shortly
afterwards came back to the phone to say that he wasn't picking anything up
and that they did not have anything of theirs flying in that vicinity and
would send someone out to investigate
Shortly afterwards we watched the Helicopter, a Wessex, coming towards our
end of the island from R.A.F. Valley direction, as it flew over Llanfechell
towards Tregel area the lights on the two crafts still hovering out to sea
went off for a very short time, then a more blueish coloured flashing light
came on before the two crafts moved off at an astonishing speed,
The furthest one went westerly while the other went north easterly passing
the back of our house but out to sea.
We heard no noise from these craft even when they were moving and the time
taken to cover the distance from Skerries to a northerly point to my house
was no more than two seconds!! (Distance estimated as 5 to 6 miles) Both
craft vanished leaving the helicopter to circle the area once and turn her
course for home.....

No one from R.A.F. Valley contacted us

Yours sincerely

Section 40

Section 40

Section 40

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

GROUP /INVEST REF:	WFII NORTH WALES	WALES FEDERATION OF IND: UFOLOGISTS	YEAR	NUMBER	INVESTIGATOR	CASE SUMMARY	
				Section 40	DATE		
					coordinator for Isle of Anglesey	TIME	
						LOCATION	
						EVALN	
						UFO CLASS	
						CLOSED	

RETURN FORM TO: Section 40 Beaumaris, Isle of Anglesey

UFO SIGHTING ACCOUNT FORM

SECTION A PLEASE USE BLACK BIRO OR A BLACK INK PEN

Please write an account of your sighting, make a drawing of what you saw and then answer the questions in section B overleaf as fully as possible. Write in BLOCK CAPITALS using a ball point pen.

See adjoining sheet
signed by the three witnesses

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

DRAWING*

[Faint, illegible text in the drawing section]

Your full name (Mr/Mrs/Ms) **Section 40** Age 49

Address **Section 40**
Cemaes Bay Anglesey

Telephone No. **Section 40** (STD **Section 40**)

Occupation during last two years Disabled

Any professional, technical or academic qualifications or special interests
Qualified Plasterer

Yes No

Today's Date 13. September 1996

Signature **Section 40**

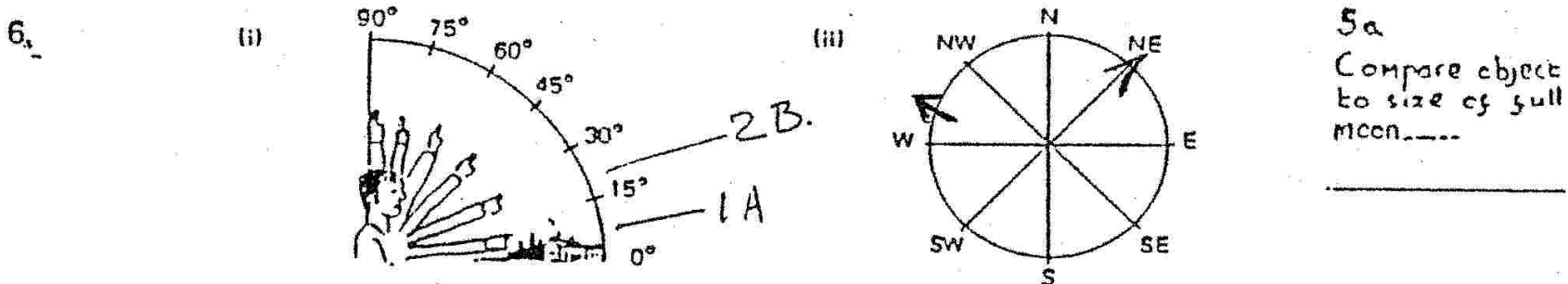
* If preferred, use a separate sheet of paper.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

WFIU (N)		YEAR	NUMBER

SECTION B

- Where were you when you saw the object(s)? Exact location. **Section 40**, Cemaes Bay, Anglesey
 Nearest town/village. Cemaes Bay County/District. Llanbadrig
- What was the date of your sighting? 16 day of October 1990
- At what time did you see the object(s)? 7:30 *am/pm/midday/midnight. *Delete which ever does not apply. How did you know the time? Clock.
- For how long did you observe the object(s)? If not certain please state - for not less than 15 min and for not more than 30 min
- If each of the following objects were held at arm's length which one would just cover the object(s) you saw, i.e. have the same apparent size? (underline) Richard's sea/half penny/penny/two pence/golf ball/tennis ball/other



Place an 'A' on the curved line in diagram (i) to show the altitude of the object(s) above the horizon when you first noticed it/them and a 'B' when you last noticed it/them. Also place an 'A' on the outside edge of the compass in diagram (ii) to indicate the direction in which you first observed the object(s) and a 'B' when you last saw it/them.

- Did you see the object(s) at or near ground level? Not very high above the sea
- How did the object(s) disappear from view? Very fast in opposite directions
- If you took a photograph or made any measurements, give details (including camera type and film)
No photos.
- If you noticed any unusual effects on people, animals, plants, objects or equipment nearby: Describe these
Cannot recall say & did.
- What was the main feature of the sighting which made you feel that the object(s) was/were not natural or man-made?
The quietness + speed it moved off
- How many other people at the same time saw the object(s)? 3 Give the names, addresses, age and relationship to you of other witnesses **Section 40** my wife
Section 40 - friend

- Give a brief description of the object(s) under the following headings: -
 (a) Number of objects 2 (b) Colour just lights (c) Sound No sound
 (d) Shape was this sharply defined or hazy?
White light, car headlights.
 (e) Brightness Coloured light - welding flash. (compared to star, venus, moon, sun etc.)

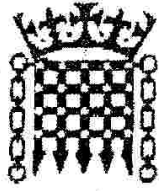
- What were the local conditions? Please tick in box where applicable.

Clouds	Temperature	Wind	Precipitation	Astronomical
Clear Sky <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cold <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>	Dry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Stars <input type="checkbox"/>
Scattered cloud <input type="checkbox"/>	Cool <input type="checkbox"/>	Breeze <input type="checkbox"/>	Fog or mist <input type="checkbox"/>	Moon <input type="checkbox"/>
Much cloud <input type="checkbox"/>	Warm <input type="checkbox"/>	Moderate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rain <input type="checkbox"/>	Planet <input type="checkbox"/>
Overcast <input type="checkbox"/>	Hot <input type="checkbox"/>	Strong <input type="checkbox"/>	Snow <input type="checkbox"/>	Sun <input type="checkbox"/>

 Other conditions if any Very quiet evening.

The overall majority of UFO reports never get to the Media at all.

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



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

17

NSSD

SM6077

ANNEX C
TAB A

Our ref: IWJ/2/96/

6 March 1996

Group Captain **Section 40** RAF
Royal Air Force
EY
Ynys Môn
Gwynedd
LL65 3NY

Shm Cdr

Wg Cdr **Section 40**
confirmed no aircraft
movements from Valley
on the evening
"in question"

Section 40

Dear Group Captain **Section 40**

I have been asked to make enquiries regarding a "sighting" over the village of Llanfaes on Saturday, 4 November 1995 at 1905 hrs. One of my constituents has written to me enquiring whether the "object" could have been an aircraft from RAF Valley, and I wonder if you could let me know if you have had similar enquiries about this event.

Perhaps you would be good enough to let me know whether any aircraft has been identified as being in the Llanfaes area at this time.

Section 40

LFA 7

MP for Ynys Môn

STN CDR

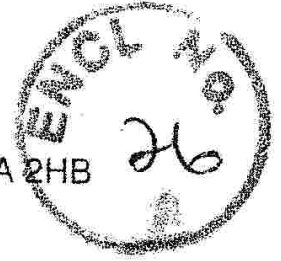
11 MAR 1996



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

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



ANNEX C
TAB B

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

2/5/96 March 1996

Dear Mr. Jones,

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

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

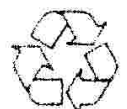
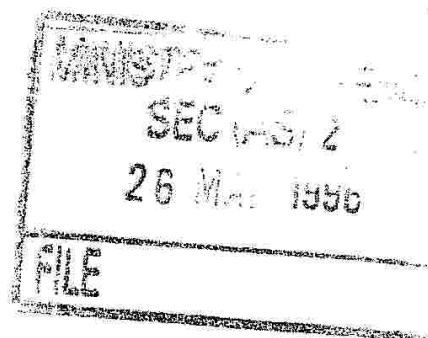
I hope this is helpful to you in responding to your constituent.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

Ieuan Wyn Jones Esq MP



Recycled Paper

ENCLOSURE
25

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

15 Mar 96

APS/USofs

REVERSE MINISTERIAL - IEUAN WYN JONES MP

1. The Station Commander at Royal Air Force Valley has received the attached letter from Ieuan Wyn Jones MP, who has been asked by a constituent to make enquiries into a "sighting" witnessed on 4 Nov 95 near RAF Valley.

2. The constituent has asked whether an object seen at 1905 hours over Llanfaes could have been an aircraft from RAF Valley. The expression "sighting" used by Mr Jones might indicate that his constituent believes the craft seen could have been a so-called "unidentified flying object".

3. RAF Valley confirm that none of their aircraft were operating on the evening in question, and records show that neither were any aircraft booked into Night Low Flying Sector 5D conducting military low flying training. Furthermore, this office did not receive any "UFO" reports which would tie in with this sighting.

4. As there is no evidence to confirm that the sighting was a matter of defence concern, we have no further role. I attach a draft for Lord Howe's consideration, which reflects the standard line in response to such queries.

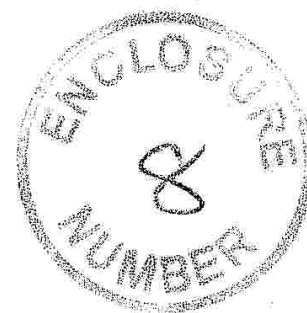
Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8245 Section 40

Enc:

64/4



LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAO/1/13

16 Dec 96

Sec(AS)2a1POs 2748H AND 2757H - ANGLESEY AREA UFO REPORTS

1. PO 2748H - UFO Report 16 Oct 90. As already reported, RAF Valley have no record of this incident. There were 2 Wessex squadrons operating at RAF Valley in 1990, 22 Sqn and the Search and Rescue Training Unit (SARTU). On the evening in question at 1930, 22 Sqn were not operating; SARTU records no longer exist but, because of the nature of their task, it would have been highly unlikely that any of their helicopters would have been airborne. Nevertheless, the area in question is a SARTU training area and the possibility cannot be discounted entirely. Without records, it is impossible now to determine whether a helicopter, airborne on a training sortie, might have just happened to be in the area, or been asked to have a quick look; it certainly would not have been 'scrambled' for that specific purpose.

2. PO 2757H - UFO Report 4 Nov 95. It has already been established that no aircraft were operating out of RAF Valley on the night in question and that no military aircraft had been scheduled to use the Low Flying Area 5D. I can find no evidence that this sighting generated air defence interest and QRA intercept aircraft were not scrambled to investigate. No date for the Sep 95 report has been given, however, no QRA aircraft were scrambled for practise or real operations on the west coast that month. A QRA aircraft was scrambled for a no-notice missile firing at Aberporth Range on 7 Sep at 1330Z.

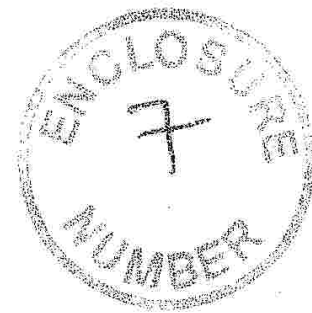
ADGE confirmed no
QRA launches for practise
or operational reasons during
Nov 95 to West Coast.
Similarly for ^{September} one no-notice
missile firing launch at
Aberporth Range on 22 Nov 95.

Section 40

Wg Cdr
ADGE 1
MB4227

Section 40

64/4



PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

MINISTER REPLYING: MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE: 2747H
PQ TYPE: Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

**DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON TUESDAY 17
DECEMBER 1996**

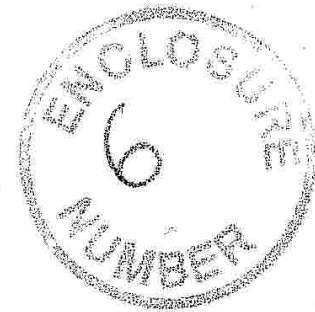
LEAD BRANCH: SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

MP'S DETAILS: MR IEUAN JONES (PLAID CYMRU) (YNYS MON)

28|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if his Department will adopt a policy on the reporting of unidentified craft of releasing to the Press details of (i) shape, flight-pattern, colour and size of craft, (ii) where and when the craft was seen, (iii) what action his Department took and (iv) the radar profile of the craft. [9410]

64/4



PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

MINISTER REPLYING:MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE:2748H
PQ TYPE:Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON TUESDAY 17
DECEMBER 1996

LEAD BRANCH:SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

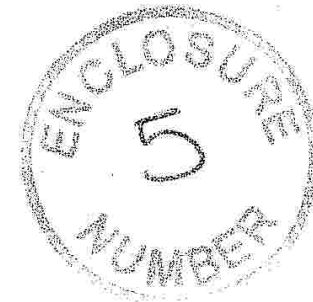
MP'S DETAILS:MR IEUAN JONES (PLAID CYMRU)(YNYS MON)

29|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his
Department has made of the incident on 16th October 1990 involving
two unidentified craft in the vicinity of Wylfa Nuclear Power
Station on Anglesey; what estimate the intercepting helicopter
pilots made of the departing speeds of the two unidentified craft;
if they showed up on radar; and if he will make a statement.
[9561]

64/4

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED



MINISTER REPLYING:MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE:2753H
PQ TYPE:Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON TUESDAY 17
DECEMBER 1996

LEAD BRANCH:SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

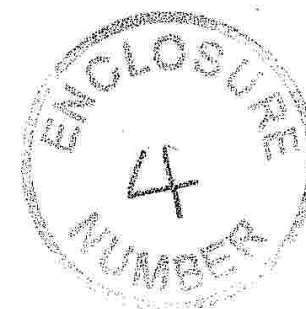
MP'S DETAILS:MR IEUAN JONES (PLAID CYMRU)(YNYS MON)

32|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make it
his policy to allocate resources to researching extraterrestrial
phenomena. [9419]

64/4

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED



MINISTER REPLYING: MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE: 2757H
PQ TYPE: Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON TUESDAY 17
DECEMBER 1996

LEAD BRANCH: SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

MP'S DETAILS: MR IEUAN JONES (PLAID CYMRU) (YNYS MON)

35|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his
Department has made of the two attempted interceptions of
unidentified craft that occurred near Anglesey in September and
November 1995; what other attempts have been made to intercept
unidentified craft in this vicinity; and if he will make a
statement. [9562]

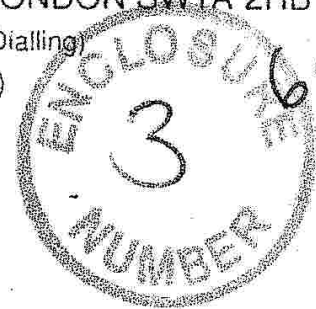
SEC(AS)2a

19 DEC 1996



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/FH 4516/96/A

6th December 1996

Dear Mr. Fraser,

Thank you for your further letter of 15 November about Blue Streak Missile Test Film footage.

Enquiries have revealed that the clippings to which you refer were not placed on the relevant Departmental file. Thirty years hence I am afraid we can only speculate why. It is most likely that it was not considered necessary that they be kept. I can however confirm that the clippings have not been withheld from the public domain by my Department.

Notwithstanding the above, as explained in my letter of 24th May, anyone wishing to view the footage from which the clippings were taken should contact the Central Office of Information; for ease of reference the details are as follows:

Section 40

Head of Film Footage
Central Office of Information
Hercules House
London SE1 7DU

Telephone: Section 40

I hope this explains the position.

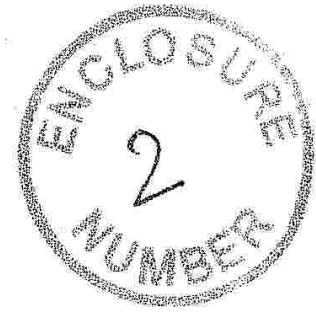


Yours sincerely,

Section 40

THE EARL HOWE

John Fraser Esq MP



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

6 Dec 96

PE Unit **Section 40**
(thro' **Section 40**)

LETTER FROM NIGEL EVANS MP - US 4752/96

1. I attach a draft reply for USofS to send to Nigel Evans MP.

BACKGROUND

2. Mr Evans' constituent, **Section 40**, is seeking information on an alleged crash into the North Sea (near Morecambe Bay) on 26 Oct 96, the inference being from his letter that the accident may have had something to do with an "unidentified flying object".

3. Enquiries have revealed that there were no crashes involving military aircraft on 26 Oct, and the CAA have confirmed that there were no corresponding civil aircraft accidents in the Morecambe Bay or surrounding areas on that day. The air defence staff have confirmed that there is no RAF air defence radar site in the North West of England and without more information about who the "UFO" group allegedly contacted it is not possible to establish the facts behind the statement in the third paragraph of **Section 40** letter.

4. It may be that **Section 40** is seeking more information following media reports of an explosion in the air, initially attributed to a mid-air collision, north of the Butt of Lewis on the evening of 26 Oct. An extensive search of the area was carried out by RAF and Coastguard Search and Rescue assets but this search was later abandoned after it became clear that no aircraft had been reported overdue. Media reports subsequently focused on the possibility that the incident was caused by space debris, although the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at RAF Fylingdales, which tracks all satellites in orbit within the UK's area of responsibility, has no evidence to support this theory. Only one report of an "unidentified flying object" was received for 26 Oct but that was reported in the Glasgow area.

5. The Department has corresponded previously at official level with **Section 40** and explained the MOD's position in respect of "UFO" sightings. The attached draft therefore does not repeat this information and confirms only that there were no aircraft crashes

involving military or civilian aircraft on 26 Oct in the Morecambe Bay or surrounding area.

Section 40



Sec(AS)2a1

MB8245 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A (2)

Enc.

DRAFT

D/USofS/4752/96

December 1996

Thank you for your letter of 26 November addressed to Nicholas Soames enclosing one from **Section 40** of **Section 40** **Section 40** Preston who is concerned about an alleged air crash into the North Sea near Morecambe Bay on 26 October. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

I can confirm that there were no military aircraft crashes in the Morecambe Bay or surrounding area on 26 October. Enquiries with the Civil Aviation Authority have also confirmed that there were no crashes involving civil aircraft in the area on that day.

THE EARL HOWE

Nigel Evans, MP

Section 40

As a first step, can someone ask the "RAF Radar Tracking Station in the North West" if they did see something and what they thought it was please

Section 40

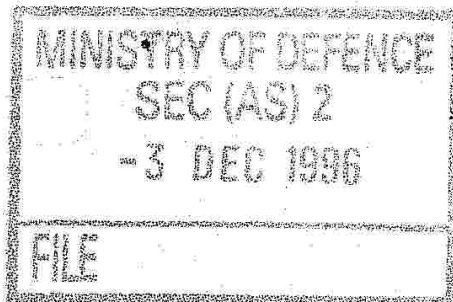
~~NOA~~

- Showed letter to

Section 40

ADGEI.

- There are no RAF AD radar sites in the north west of England. The UFO group would have to be more specific about who their representatives spoke to.



64/4

ENCLOSURE
1
NUMBER

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

TO: SEC(AS)2APE REF NUMBER: US 4752/96MINISTER REPLYING: USO/SDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 12/12/96DATE: 3 /12/96FROM: **Section 40** PE UnitTEL: **Section 40****GUIDANCE NOTE**

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

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

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

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced.

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

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

Opening and closing All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ..., Toytown about"

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... addressed to Michael Portillo/ Nicholas Soames/James

Arbuthnot/Frederick Howe on behalf etc"

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

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

Alternatives are:

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREVER POSSIBLE DRAFTS SHOULD BE SENT ON CHOTS E-MAIL TO: Parliamentary Enquiries

other wise send drafts by fax to **Section 40**
PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD

NIGEL EVANS MP



USGS
Sec (As)
WFO

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Hon Nicholas Soames MP
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

26 November 1996

Dear Nicholas

RE: **Section 40** [redacted] Preston, Lancs **Section 40** [redacted]

I enclose for you a letter from my constituent regarding the air crash into the North Sea near Morecambe Bay on 26th October 1996. In view of the concerns expressed I would be thankful for any comments you may have.

Yours truly

Section 40 [redacted]

WORKING FOR FULWOOD AND THE RIBBLE VALLEY. IF YOU WOULD LIKE A SURGERY DATE
PLEASE TELEPHONE MY CONSTITUENCY OFFICE ON 01200 25939
MY INTERNET PAGES CAN BE ACCESSED ON: [HTTP://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/town/square/hi13/](http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/town/square/hi13/)



Section 40

Preston.
Lancs.

Section 40

11-11-96

Dear Mr Evans,

I am interested in any information you may be able to find me on a reported air crash into the North Sea near Morecambe Bay on 26th Oct 1996.

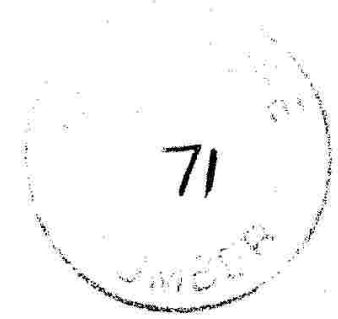
Could the Ministry of Defence give you any details on this.

My local U.F.O. group in Morecambe contacted the R.A.F Radar Tracking Station in the North West and they confirmed that they had seen the object on their radar. They could not confirm what this object was.

Yours faithfully

Section 40

57/13



PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

MINISTER REPLYING: MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PQ REFERENCE: 2280H
PQ TYPE: Ordinary Written

SUPPLEMENTARIES ARE REQUIRED? NO

DATE FOR RETURN TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH: 12:00 ON THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER 1996

LEAD BRANCH: SEC(AS)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S):

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

MP'S DETAILS: MR CALUM MACDONALD (LABOUR) (WESTERN ISLES)

12|To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether there was any military exercise activity either by United Kingdom forces or by non-United Kingdom forces in the vicinity of the Western Isles on the evening of Saturday 26th October. [1343]

DRAFT ANSWER:

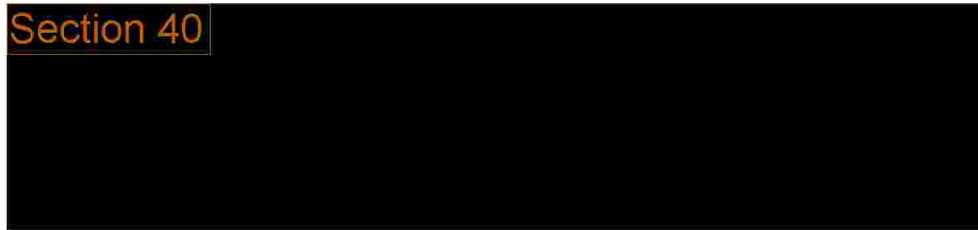
My Department is not aware of any such activity off the Western Isles on the evening in question.

APPROVED BY:

Head of Sec(AS)

Sec(AS)1

Section 40



31 Oct 96

31 Oct 96

Copy to:

- PSO/ACAS*
- STC - ACS(Sec)
- Sec(NS)b*
- HQ Land - CS(Pol/Sec)
- MOD(PE) - Air 1(F&S)a

* by CHOTS

BACKGROUND NOTE: PQ2880H

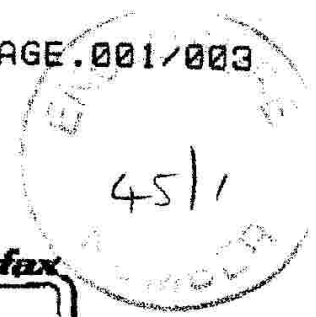
1. This Question has almost certainly been prompted by [media reports of an explosion in the air, initially attributed to a mid-air collision, north of the Butt of Lewis on the evening in 26 Oct question. As a result, an extensive search of the area was carried out by RAF and Coastguard Search and Rescue (SAR) assets but this search was later abandoned after it became clear that no aircraft had been reported overdue.] Other than the assets involved in the SAR operation, there was no other military activity off the Western Isles on the evening of 26 October. [Media reports have subsequently focused on the possibility that the incident was caused by space debris, although the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at RAF Fylingdales, which tracks all satellites in orbit within the UK's area of responsibility, has no evidence to support this theory.]

04 NOV '96 12:43 FROM Section 40

TO Section 40

PAGE.001/003

Section 40



D/MCA/33/2/1

1st November

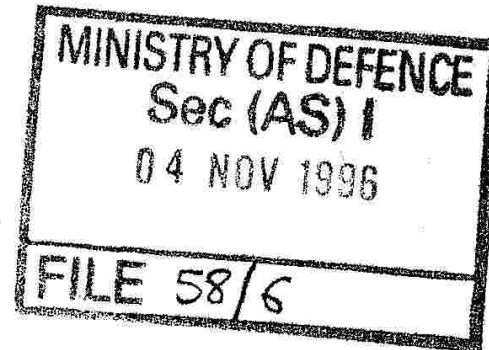
PE Unit

copy to:

DofC Air1
SEC AS1
D Flying PE
DSM1(RAF)
ACS(F&S)
PQS/B23

Telefax

To: Sec AS1	
Fax: Section 40	
From: Section 40	AT/MCA F&S
Date: 4.11.96	Pages: 2



PE REF NUMBER: DP 4079/96 FROM RHODRI MORGAN MP: TORNADO F3
CRASH AT BLACKPOOL 28TH SEPT 1996

1. Please find attached a self-explanatory draft reply to the above PE.
2. Rhodri Morgan MP has already asked three PQs about this incident.
3. This reply has been cleared with Peter Northen P/MCA F&S (34218AW).

Section 40

AT/MCA F&S

Section 40

NOV '96 12:43 FROM **Section 40**TO **Section 40**

PAGE.002/003

D/MCA/33/2/11st November 96DRAFT LETTER FROM MIN(DP) TO RHODRI MORGAN MP

Thank you for your letter of 17th October on the subject of the Tornado F3 that crashed near Blackpool on 28th September.

I can confirm that the flight, conducted by British Aerospace, was intended to be the final element of the company's work on the aircraft before its return to the RAF and to demonstrate that the work had been performed satisfactorily. No question of DASA approval arose as BAe act as the design authority for the UK for the Tornado F3.

To the date of the accident, eight Tornado F3 aircraft, of the sixteen for which such a programme was planned, had undergone recovery work at BAe Warton. All eight had been successfully returned to service with the RAF, and there are no plans to review the programme.

The loss of this Tornado aircraft is, as you know, the subject of a Ministry of Defence inquiry and it would not be appropriate to offer any speculation as to the cause of this accident.

Finally, this accident has no bearing on the Department's claim for damages, currently in preparation, to be lodged against Bricom, the former owners of Airwork.

I hope this answers your queries.

Rhodri Morgan MP