



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
 OLD WAR OFFICE BUILDING
 WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2EU

21

Telephone 020 7218 [redacted]
 020 7218 [redacted]
 Fax 020 7218 [redacted]

MINISTER FOR
 DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

FROM: THE LORD BACH

D/MIN(DP)/ WB 3005 & 2632-3/01/P

9 September 2001

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Further to my letter of 3 August, I am now in a position to provide a substantive reply to your letters of 2 July and 24 May about the events in Rendlesham Forest in 1980.

I have listened with care to the compact disc and it does indeed provide a graphic account of the comments contained in Lieutenant Colonel Halt's letter dated 13 January 1981.

But notwithstanding the fact that the recording will no doubt be of great interest to those who have made a study of these matters, I do not believe it offers any clear evidence that the UK's Air Defence Region was compromised by whatever occurred all those years ago. As has been said before, following examination of Lt Col Halt's memorandum and contemporary records, the conclusion at the time was that this was not the case and that is the key issue for us in any investigation of reported UFO sightings. Given this, and the length of time that has elapsed, I do not believe it would now be appropriate to commit MOD resources to any further enquiries that would be unlikely to be productive.

Nonetheless, in light of the passing of the Freedom of Information Act, my officials are undertaking a review of UFO files in anticipation of an increase in enquiries on these matters. In the course of this review they will consult the Home Office, although it seems unlikely that they are holding any papers of defence interest. Please be assured that I will write to you again should anything new on the Rendlesham Forest incident be revealed.

In the meantime, I understand that you intend to table questions in the House in the forthcoming session and I shall, of course, answer as fully as I can the points you raise.

*Yours sincerely,
 William Bach*

DAS SEC
 DAS
 102No.
 13 SEP 2001
 Private Office

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB





MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
OLD WAR OFFICE BUILDING
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2EU



Telephone 020 7218 F [REDACTED]
020 7218 [REDACTED]
Fax 020 7218 [REDACTED]

18

MINISTER FOR
DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

FROM: THE LORD BACH

D/MIN(DP)/ WB 2632-2/01/P

3 August 2001

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

I wrote to you on 23 June about your compact disc and photographs of the events in Rendlesham Forest in 1980.

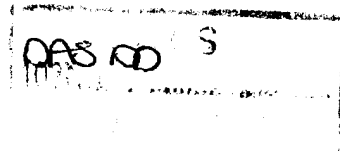
I very much regret that I have still not had the opportunity to give the disc the attention it warrants and I am now going on holiday for the next three weeks.

I assure you that I will listen to the disc upon my return to the office and provide you with a more substantive response.

Yours sincerely,

Willy Bach

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB



Private Office



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
OLD WAR OFFICE BUILDING
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2EU

14/3

Telephone 020 7218 [REDACTED]
020 7218 [REDACTED]
Fax 020 7218 [REDACTED]

MINISTER OF STATE FOR
DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

FROM: THE LORD BACH

D/MIN(DP)/ WB 2632/01/P

23 June 2001

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

Thank you for your letter of 24 May to Baroness Symons enclosing a compact disc and some photographs of the events in Rendlesham Forest in 1980. I am replying as the new Minister for Defence Procurement and the Government's Defence Minister in the House of Lords.

I have only recently been appointed to this post and have yet to have the opportunity to listen to the recording. However, I intend to do so and to reply more fully as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Willy Bach

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DAS 3
26 JUN 2001
FILE

Private Office



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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



14/1
This for info only.
Lord Bach will adapt
draft provided for me.

MINISTERIAL CORRESPONDENCE DP 2632/01.*

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: DAS4A1 (Sec)

MC REF NUMBER: 3005/2001

Copy to:

MINISTER REPLYING: DP

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: N/A/2001

DATE: 10/7/2001

FROM: [Redacted] Ministerial Correspondence Unit

Room [Redacted]

TEL: [Redacted]

FAX: [Redacted]

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

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET: THE DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO ANSWERING 90% OF IT'S MINISTERIAL CORRESPONDENCE WITHIN 15 WORKING DAYS; OUR PERFORMANCE IN FY 2000/01 - WHILE MUCH IMPROVED - WAS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THIS.

A NAMED OFFICIAL AT PAY BAND B2 LEVEL OR ABOVE MUST CLEAR ALL DRAFTS. OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS OR MOD DIVISIONS SHOULD BE CONSULTED AS NECESSARY.

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

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

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

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

Number of pages sent by fax: 3

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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

SEMI TYPED IN IMPORTANT MATTERS

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

- do we respond?

W.I.

8-7-01



Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Lord Bach
Ministry of Defence
Old War Office Building
London SW1A 2EU

2nd July 2001

Dear Lord Bach,

Thank you for your letter of 23rd June.

May I welcome you to the Defence Department, which is still much more important than many now listed above it. Defence Procurement has been a mess, and worse, ever since I have known it, and I first served in one of its Naval Staff Divisions in 1943, before you were born I suspect.

My correspondence with Lady Symons about the UFO landing at Rendlesham Forest twenty years ago is important, although your officials pretend not to think so. I use the words "UFO landing" because that is how the Deputy Commander of the USAF base described it at the time.

I really would be glad if you would personally read the last half dozen written exchanges between me and Lady Symons, because this is going to go on and on until the gravity of the incident to the Defence of the Realm is officially recognized. That is my only purpose on pursuing it.

May I also beg you to listen yourself to the tape, with a truly open mind? I do not believe that any one who does so can fail to conclude that the people in action and speaking on the tape, made officially at the time, had no doubt whatever that they were investigating the site at which some thing physical had just landed and taken off again. I have tried it on several individuals, including one former Chief of the Air Staff. They all agree with what I have written above.

Yours sincerely,
Hill-Norton



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone (020) 774
(020) 7216
Fax (020) 7218 6625

12

MINISTER OF STATE FOR
DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

FROM: THE RT HON BARONESS SYMONS

D/MIN(DP)/ECS 2391/01/P

16 May 2001

Dear Lord Hill-Norton.

- April

Thank you for your letters of 17 and 22 May about the events at Rendlesham Forest and the recording you have received from Ms Georgina Bruni.

I note your comments in your letter of 17 April. These events occurred over 20 years ago, and my earlier responses to you have necessarily been based on the surviving official records held by the Ministry of Defence. These records show that on receipt, Lieutenant Colonel Halt's memorandum was examined by those responsible for air defence matters and they concluded that there was nothing of defence interest in the report. No further investigation was made and to date we have seen no official documentation which gives us reason to believe that the original assessment made by the Ministry of Defence was incorrect. Nevertheless, if you would like to send me the compact disc I shall, of course, be happy to listen to it with a completely open mind.

Moreover, I would be grateful if at the same time you would provide what information you have on the, "very recent disclosures by a former prison officer at Hollesley."

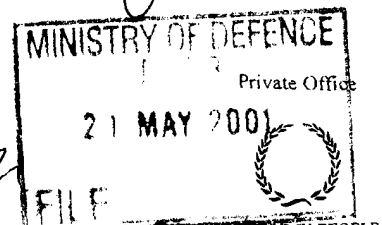
In the meantime, I enclose for your information a number of papers on the Rendlesham Forest incident that have recently been released to a member of the public under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Some have been sanitised to protect the privacy of those who have corresponded with the Ministry of Defence.

I will write to you again once I have received and listened to the recording.

Thank you for your personal letter, which I appreciated very much. Look forward to listening to the facts.

*Yours sincerely,
Elizabeth*

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton CB KCB



D 1A1(SEC)

11

From: ASST PARLIAMENTARY CLK2 on behalf of PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
To: DAS4A1(SEC)
Sent: 17 May 2001 12:41
Subject: Read: PE DP2391/2001

Your message

To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: PE DP2391/2001
Sent: 17/05/01 12:21

was read on 17/05/01 12:41.

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAS(Sec)64/4

17 May 2001

PE Unit

(through DAS AD⁴)

17/5

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY – DP2391/2001 – ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET THE LORD HILL-NORTON GCB

1. Lord Hill-Norton has a long standing interest in 'unidentified flying objects' and in January 2001 he tabled ten PQs on the subject of a well known 'UFO' sighting in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in December 1980. In February 2001 the Department received a PE from Lord Hill-Norton in which he expressed his dissatisfaction with the answer to PQ0392L.
2. In his letter of 17 April, the Peer disagrees with the Minister's reply to his previous PE, particularly as he claims a wealth of new evidence has been uncovered in the intervening 20 years by 'UFO' investigators. It is true that several books have been written about these events and a number of people have claimed to have been involved. However, the only documentary evidence the Ministry holds is that which is contained in our files and written around the time of the event. These documents show a clear chain of events which have already been explained to Lord Hill-Norton and many others.
3. Also in his letter of 17 April, the Peer asks the Minister a number of direct questions about "very recent disclosures by a former prison officer at Hollesley about the apparently unauthorised removal of certain pages of records covering the time of the incident". Rather than attempt to answer questions about something of which we were not aware, the draft reply asks Lord Hill-Norton to forward what information he has on these disclosures.
4. In his letter of 22 April, the Peer says that Ms Bruni has given him a recording which she claims was made at the time of the incident and contains the voice of Lieutenant Colonel Halt, the Deputy Base Commander at RAF Woodbridge. He asks the Minister to agree to listen to the recording. It is likely that if the Minister did not agree to his request, Lord Hill-Norton would probably say that the Department was not being open-minded and, accordingly, we suggest that the Minister should agree to listen to the recording.

5. The papers we hold on this incident have recently been released to a member of the public who requested them under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Although Lord Hill-Norton has not actually asked to see these documents, as they are in the public domain, it may now be appropriate to make them available to him. In due course, the Minister may wish to meet with the Peer to discuss these issues, although the potential for any such meeting to diffuse a volatile situation will need to be weighed against the fact that there is unlikely to be anything new to say. For this reason, the prospect of a meeting has not been raised in the draft reply.

6. I enclose a draft reply, together with the papers referred to in the previous paragraph, for Min(DP) to send to Lord Hill-Norton in response to his letters of 17 and 22 April.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
DAS 4a1
[REDACTED]

Drafted by:
Authorised by:

[REDACTED]
DAS 4a1
DAS AD4

DP 2391/2001

May 2001

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

Thank you for your letters of 17 and 22 May concerning the events at Rendlesham Forest and the recording you have received from Ms Georgina Bruni.

I note your comments in your letter of 17 April. These events occurred over 20 years ago, and my earlier responses to you have necessarily been based on the surviving official records held by the Ministry of Defence. These records show that on receipt, Lieutenant Colonel Halt's memorandum was examined by those responsible for air defence matters and they concluded that there was nothing of defence interest in the report. No further investigation was made and to date we have seen no official documentation which gives us reason to believe that the original assessment made by the Ministry of Defence was incorrect. Nevertheless, if you would like to send me the compact disc I shall, of course, be happy to listen to it with a completely open mind. Moreover, I would be grateful if at the same time you would provide what information you have on the "very recent disclosures by a former prison officer at Hollesley".

In the meantime, I enclose for your information a number of papers on the Rendlesham Forest incident that have recently been released to a member of the public under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Some have been sanitised to protect the privacy of those who have corresponded with the Ministry of Defence.

I will write to you again after I have listened to the recording.

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



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: DAS 4(Sec)

PE REF NUMBER: DP 2391/2001

Copy to:

MINISTER REPLYING: Min (DP)

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 17/5/2001

DATE: 4/5/2001

FROM: [REDACTED]

TEL: [REDACTED]

FAX: [REDACTED]

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

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET: THE DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO ANSWERING 90% OF IT'S MINISTERIAL ENQUIRIES WITHIN 15 WORKING DAYS; OUR PERFORMANCE IN FY 2000/01 - WHILE MUCH IMPROVED - WAS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THIS.

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

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

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

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

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

Number of pages sent by fax: 8

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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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

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

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

- *Ministers place great importance on the content, style and speed of replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.*
- **DEADLINES:** It is important that your draft is with us by the date shown at the top of this notice, as Ministers must send a written reply within 15 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS ENQUIRY. The Department's performance is reported each year to Parliament. If you cannot meet the deadline, you should therefore provide an interim reply that apologises for the delay, sets out the action being taken to answer the enquiry, and advises when a substantive reply can be expected. You should aim to provide a substantive draft reply within a further 8 working days. Interim replies should be used infrequently, as every effort must be made to reply to correspondence from MPs (and others) promptly.
- Action at official level on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts, or other policy aspects, direct with the relevant Private Office.
- **LAYOUT:** Draft replies should be double-spaced. Always include the full reference number at the top left of the draft. Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.
- **OPENING AND CLOSING:** All Ministers prefer to start: *"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... about ..."*
If a Minister is replying on behalf of another, start: *"Thank you for your letter of ... to Geoff Hoon/Liz Symons/John Spellar/Lewis Moonie on behalf etc"*
For Mr Spellar, add: *"I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."*
For Baroness Symons, add: *"I am responding because of my responsibility for this issue."* (or, in the case of letters from fellow Peers: *"I have been asked to respond."*)
For Dr Moonie, add: *"I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility."*
Choose an appropriate ending (except for Dr Moonie, who will add his own) - such as: *"I hope this is helpful"; "I hope this explains the position/situation"; "I am sorry I cannot be more helpful";* or *"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply"*.
- **OPEN GOVERNMENT:** Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. It is set out in DCI 223/99. If you are recommending to a Minister that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld - eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice. Further information is available from DG Info on x88140MB.

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

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



DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

Revised 2 April 2001

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **

** TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES **



**MINISTER OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE
PROCUREMENT**

PB - for PE action.
Two PEs to be answered
together. DAS Sec
to draft.

For DAS Sec: Min (DP)
will give undertaking to
listen to CD recording
held by Hill Norton.
Clearly others will
want/need to listen
to it too.

DP 

~~DAS (Sec)~~
UFO:
① 11/1/01
1/2/01 10/1/01
too.

Lord HILL - NOTION



Cress Cottage

Personal

Hythe

22. iv. 01

Dear Lady Symonds,

This is partly an olive branch and partly an invitation. I have no wish to quarrel with you - we have never met, nor to continue our tit for tat across parliament. But I am sure that as Minister of State at Defence you must, for various reasons, be as anxious to know the truth of what happened at Reading than 20 years ago, as I (and hundreds of other serious people) am. I am deliberately writing this by hand, but my sight is now poor so I hope you can read it.

A couple of days after I sent you my last letter I received from G. Brown a tape, which is both astonishing, and highly relevant, to the incident - so much so that it is strange that it has not come my way before.

The tape was made at the time of the incident as a routine practice in the US Air Force. It contains the voices of Colonel Hill and a number



of his men, as they first investigated the landing site which they had marked down, for traces of radio activity on indications in the ground, and on adjacent trees. These findings were, beyond dispute, positive. The second part of the tape, taken at the same time, records their observation of, and comments upon, two objects in the air carrying out activities

which included projecting beams of light down on water, steady light and some energy release, probably heat.

You will hope acquit me of undue credulity, or my love of life and with my track record, and I have to tell you that it has left me in no doubt that they were watching something (or) physics in our air space, and of no known origin.

The tape I have has been authenticated by Col. Holt who has confirmed that it was made at the time, at his orders, and has not been tampered with since.

My invitation is to ask you to listen to the tape yourself. I know that you are busy, but it runs for only 25 minutes and I think it is important that you should form your own opinion of it, and thus I think I, and many others, are saying

If I send you the tape (it is actually a Compact Disc) will you do me the courtesy of listening to it.



Yourself, and with an open mind? I can conceive of
 no good reason why you should decline. It could be
 of great importance, not just to this matter, but to many
 others.

The only way I can see to proceed, is to ensure the safe
 defence of the Realm, so I do hope that you will agree

Yours sincerely,
 Peter Hain-Martin



Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

The Rt. Hon The Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
House of Lords
Westminster
SW1 OPW

17th April 2001

Dear Lady Symons,

I have now had time to have a proper look at your letter dated 22nd March, and I find it not so much disappointing as absurd. This is for various reasons but mainly because you seem unable to grasp what we are arguing about.

The gravamen of my letter of 12th February is that you have not answered the Question I put down (HL 354). This is a matter of the English language and has nothing to do with Defence. I am seeking a remedy through official channels; and you will hear more later.

In the meantime I am bound to make the following points arising from your reply:

- a. You assert that you do not agree that the (only) two possible explanations for what actually happened, and was reported by the Deputy Commander at the base at the time, but although I asked you to say why, you did not in the PQ you have not done so.
- b. You assert that your Department has no reason to disagree with the judgement which was published at the time, that the events were of no Defence interest. But over the past 20 years a wealth of new evidence has been uncovered by serious, diligent, and experienced investigators. At least half a dozen books have been published about the incident, one of them by one of the US armed men who took part at the time. If, indeed, your Ministry has taken no steps to re-open the alleged military investigation at the time, that would amount to gross dereliction of duty. But I know that your assertion is simply untrue.

Continued:



- 2 -

c. Are you personally aware of very recent disclosures by a former prison officer at Hollesley about the apparently unauthorised removal of certain pages of records covering the time of the incident? If not, why not? I and a great many others are privy to this astounding new evidence. Has it been tested and accounted for in your Ministry? If not why ever not? Do you genuinely believe that this does not matter?

I suggest that all this, and there is a great deal more, now in the public domain which makes it beyond any possible doubt that the incident most certainly was of considerable Defence interest, and it is absurd of you to pretend otherwise.

But my Question has not been answered and I have a right to an Answer, and you have the duty of providing it. I might have supposed that my former appointments and track record since would have entitled me to rather more intelligent consideration, if you had been treating the matter as seriously as you should.

*Yours sincerely,
Hui-Martin.*

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAS(Sec)64/4




28 February 2001

PE Unit

(through DAS AD4(Sec)  27/2

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

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



DAS 4a1(Sec)


Drafted by:  DAS 4a1(Sec)
Authorised by:  DAS AD4(Sec)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE BARONESS SYMONS OF VERNHAM DEAN

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: DAS 4(sec)

PE REF NUMBER: DF 1197/2001

Copy to:

MINISTER REPLYING: min(Def)

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: S 13/2001

DATE: 21/2/2001

FROM: [REDACTED] PE Unit

TEL: [REDACTED]

FAX: [REDACTED]

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

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

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

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

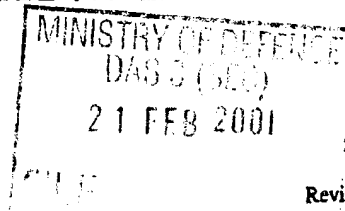
**E-MAIL DRAFTS TO 'PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES',
NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES.**

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

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

Number of pages sent by fax: 5

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



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

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

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

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

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

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



DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

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

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



Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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

RECEIVED BY
PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH

ON: 20/2/01

MIN: G:MIN(DP)

ufo's

DAS 4(sec)

12th February, 2001

RELATED CASE:

CLERK: [REDACTED]

Dear Lady Symons,

PQR Reference 03921

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continued:



- 2 -

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

Yours truly

Hui-Kun



Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Cass Cottage, Hyde, Fordingbridge Hants SP6 2QH

The Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
House of Lords
London SW1A

2nd February, 2001

Dear Lady Symons,

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,

Hill-Norton

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



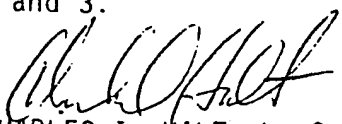
REPLY TO
ATTN OF: CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT: Unexplained Lights

TO: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.
2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.
3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky; two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10° off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.


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



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone (020) 7218 [REDACTED]
(020) 7218 [REDACTED]
Fax (020) 7218 [REDACTED]

46

MINISTER OF STATE FOR
DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
LONDON (SEC)
20 MAR 2001

FROM: THE RT HON BARONESS SYMONS

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

22 March 2001

Dear Lord Hill-Norton,

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

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

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

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

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

Private Office



INVESTOR IN



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

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

*Yours sincerely,
Elizabeth Symons*



DAS4A1(SEC)

From: DAS4A1(SEC)
Sent: 13 June 2001 08:41
To: PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES
Subject: PE DP2632/2001

Please see attached our reply to the above mentioned PE which is due today.

The copy of Lieutenant Colonel Halt's memorandum mentioned in para 3 of the covering letter will be walked over to you. You may wish to advise APS to Lord Bach that DAS have the CD and photographs when required. Lord Bach will need to listen to the CD in due course and the APS thought it likely that as he is new to the post he would probably want DAS to brief him personally about these matters.

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAS(Sec)64/4

12th June 2001

PE Unit

(through DAS AD

12/6

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY – DP2632/2001 – ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET THE LORD HILL-NORTON GCB

1. Lord Hill-Norton, Chief of Defence Staff from 1973 to 1976, has a long standing interest in 'unidentified flying objects' and this year he has tabled ten PQs and written two PEs on the subject of a well known 'UFO' sighting in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in December 1980.
2. In a previous letter, dated 22 April, the Peer said he had been given a recording which, it is claimed, was made at the time of the Rendlesham Forest incident and contains the voice of Lieutenant Colonel Halt, the Deputy Base Commander at RAF Woodbridge. He asked that the Minister listen to the recording. We concluded that should the Minister not agree to his request, Lord Hill-Norton would accuse the Department of not being open-minded and in her reply, Baroness Symons agreed to listen to the recording.
3. In his letter of 24 May, the Peer enclosed the compact disc and some photographs which he said are part of an "enormous mass of new evidence". He asked for an investigation to be opened in to these events. DAS staff have listened to the recording several times and while it provides a more graphic account of events described in a memorandum written by Lieutenant Colonel Halt on 13 January 1981 (copy attached), we do not believe that it constitutes clear evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised. It is now over twenty years since these events are reported to have taken place and we believe it would not be appropriate to commit MOD resources to further enquiries which are unlikely to produce any other conclusion than that which was made at the time; namely that nothing occurred which was of defence concern.
4. Lord Hill-Norton has also referred to records for Hollesley Prison in Suffolk. This prison is located in the vicinity of Rendlesham Forest and some of those who have written about these events have claimed that the prison was evacuated. A previous PQ answer from the Home Office stated that "records [for the period in question] were no longer available". The Peer is clearly suspicious about this, claiming that a former Prison Officer has been able to determine that the logs for Hollesley Prison "were available but the records covering December 1980 through to January 1981 are missing, although everything either side of these dates is intact". So far as we are aware, there is no mention of the prison in any papers held by the MOD. This is, therefore, clearly a matter for the Home Office and we would not wish to comment on their record keeping.

5. A reply, along these lines, is attached. The draft also makes the point that DAS are to undertake a review of UFO files in the context of the Freedom of Information Act. However, given that the Minister was appointed only yesterday, it is suggested that a holding reply is sent to Lord Hill-Norton to enable the Minister to be briefed more fully and for him to listen to the recording. A draft holding reply is attached.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DAS 4a1

[REDACTED]

Drafted by:

[REDACTED]

DAS 4a1

Authorised by:

[REDACTED]

DAS AD4

DP 2632/2001

June 2001

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

Thank you for your letter of 24 May 2001 addressed to my predecessor and enclosing a compact disc and some photographs of the events in Rendlesham Forest in 1980.

I have only recently been appointed to this post and have yet to have the opportunity to listen to the recording. However, I intend to do so and to reply more fully as soon as possible.

THE LORD BACH

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

**FORWARDED AT THE REQUEST OF APS TO LORD BACH, BUT NOT TO
BE RELEASED WITHOUT HIS AUTHORITY**
(See paragraph 5 of covering minute)

DP 2632/2201

June 2001

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

Further to my letter of [] June 2001, I am now in a position to reply to your letter of 24th May concerning the events in Rendlesham Forest in 1980.

I have listened to the compact disc and it does indeed provide a graphic account of the comments contained in Lieutenant Colonel Halt's letter dated 13 January 1981.

But notwithstanding the fact that the recording will no doubt be of great interest to those who have made a study of these matters, I do not believe it offers any clear evidence that the UK's Air Defence Region was compromised by whatever occurred all those years ago. As has been said before, the conclusion at the time was that this was not the case and that is the key issue for us in any investigation of reported UFO sightings. Given this, and the length of time that has elapsed, I do not believe it would now be appropriate to commit MOD resources to any further enquiries that would be unlikely to be productive.

Nonetheless, in light of the passing of the Freedom of Information Act, my officials are undertaking a review of UFO files in anticipation of an increase in enquiries on these matters. In the course of this review they will consult the Home Office, although it seems unlikely that they are holding any papers of defence interest. Please be assured that should anything new on the Rendlesham Forest incident be revealed, I will let you know.

In the meantime, I am returning the compact disc and the photographs you sent with your letter of 24 May.

THE LORD BACH

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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



REPLY TO
ATTN OF:

CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT:

Unexplained Lights

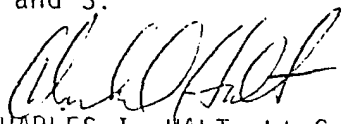
TO:

RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

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


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

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

PREVIOUS -
2391/01
1197/01



PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

IMPORTANT - YOU MUST READ THIS GUIDANCE

TO: DAS 4(SEC)

PE REF NUMBER: DP2632/2001

Copy to:

MINISTER REPLYING: Min (DP)

DRAFT REQUIRED BY: 6/6/2001

DATE: 4/6/2001

FROM: [REDACTED], PE Unit

TEL: [REDACTED]

FAX: [REDACTED]

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

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET: THE DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO ANSWERING 90% OF IT'S MINISTERIAL ENQUIRIES WITHIN 15 WORKING DAYS; OUR PERFORMANCE IN FY 2000/01 - WHILE MUCH IMPROVED - WAS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THIS.

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

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

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

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

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

Number of pages sent by fax: 9

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

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DAS 3
04 JUN 2001
FILE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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

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

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

- *Ministers place great importance on the content, style and speed of replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.*
- **DEADLINES:** It is important that your draft is with us by the date shown at the top of this notice, as Ministers must send a written reply within 15 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS ENQUIRY. The Department's performance is reported each year to Parliament. If you cannot meet the deadline, you should therefore provide an interim reply that apologises for the delay, sets out the action being taken to answer the enquiry, and advises when a substantive reply can be expected. You should aim to provide a substantive draft reply within a further 8 working days. Interim replies should be used infrequently, as every effort must be made to reply to correspondence from MPs (and others) promptly.
- **Action at official level on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts, or other policy aspects, direct with the relevant Private Office.**
- **LAYOUT:** Draft replies should be double-spaced. Always include the full reference number at the top left of the draft. Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.
- **OPENING AND CLOSING:** All Ministers prefer to start: *"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... about ..."*
If a Minister is replying on behalf of another, start: *"Thank you for your letter of ... to Geoff Hoon/Liz Symons/John Spellar/Lewis Moonie on behalf etc"*
For Mr Spellar, add: *"I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."*
For Baroness Symons, add: *"I am responding because of my responsibility for this issue."* (or, in the case of letters from fellow Peers: *"I have been asked to respond."*)
For Dr Moonie, add: *"I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility."*
Choose an appropriate ending (except for Dr Moonie, who will add his own) - such as: *"I hope this is helpful"; "I hope this explains the position/situation"; "I am sorry I cannot be more helpful";* or *"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply"*.
- **OPEN GOVERNMENT:** Replies MUST be drafted in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. It is set out in DCI 223/99. If you are recommending to a Minister that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld - eg *"I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information."* It is NOT acceptable to rely on past practice. Further information is available from DG Info on x88140MB.

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

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



DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT



Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

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

24th May 2001

Dear Lady Symons,

Thank you for your letter dated 16 May, which reached me on 22 May, perhaps your Private Office will enquire what went wrong. I had begun to fear that you were not going to reply.

I enclose with this letter, the compact disc. I am confident that you, and anyone else who listens to it with an open mind, cannot fail to conclude that it is an official document, made at the time of the incident, which reveals that something most unusual was going on, and that Col. Halt and his men certainly thought so. Should the disc accidentally get lost, or wiped, as has happened more than once to UFO related material sent to Ministry people, do not despair, I have several copies, some of which are now being considered by persons better qualified than you, or I, or your Private Secretary to judge the content.

I do not want, until you have heard the tape and written again, to reopen our dispute but there is one observation that no one reading your letter could fail to make. You say that "no further investigation was made", and then go on to say "to date we have seen no official documentation to give us reason to believe that the original assessment was incorrect" Of course you haven't if no official work has been done on it. What I have been trying, for nearly 20 years now, is to persuade your predecessors, and now you, that in the light of an enormous mass of new evidence - none of which you have ever looked at, none of which your Ministry has ever rebutted - you most certainly should have investigated. The hard evidence is there, much of it from official or quasi-official sources both here and in the United States. On every other subject in the world the responsible Minister would have at once directed the appropriate people, officers or officials to look very carefully into it. Why on earth do you still refuse to do it?

Continued:

SEARCHED BY
INDEXED BY
FILED BY
PARLIAM. BRANCH
DATE: 1/6/01
BY: DP
RE WORDS: UFO'S
BRANCH: DAS 4
SENT TO:
RECEIVED NO: 239/01
CLERK:



- 2 -

As for Hollesley, the fact that you have to ask me for information might suggest that your own people have hardly been diligent in looking in to extremely disturbing allegations, made publicly by one whose bona fides are unquestioned. This thread of apathy, refusal to face well-documented facts has characterised every exchange I have had with the Ministry since first I started this Campaign about 1981).

The information is as follows

"A former Prison Officer has managed to obtain information regarding Hollesley Prison. Joe Soap (I will not reveal his name until I have to in case he should suffer some unexpected and most unfortunate mishap, like other evidence) has said that through his contacts within the Prison Service he was able to determine that the logs for Hollesley were available but the records covering December 1980 through to January 1981 are missing, although everything either side of these dates is intact."

library asked to search for

You may like to relate this to a Question I asked on 23 December 1997, when I was told that "the records were no longer available". Perhaps you do not think this matter is decidedly odd (I am aware that it was not given by you), I most certainly do. I also find, in the light of this disclosure that the Answer was certainly ingenuous, if not downright misleading. When I have taken the oath, I may have to return to it.

More or less of a P.S. I shall also enclose some photographs taken at the scene, at the same time as the compact disc was made. I shall be interested to hear what an official analyst makes of them and I am sure you will too.

I fear that my poor sight will not let me read the papers you sent to me, but I shall pass them to a thoroughly reliable UFO researcher.

I will let you know if he has any useful comments.

*Yours sincerely,
Hul. Nuttin
Parli. Branch
letter + photos for
DASSec to
draft reply.
I have the CD*

