

THE BBC TELEVISION INTERVIEW WITH ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET THE LORD HILL-NORTON, FORMER FIRST SEA-LORD AND FORMER CHIEF OF THE BRITISH DEFENCE STAFF

Timothy Good

READERS of FSR who were unable to see the BBC TV 'Out of Court' programme, transmitted on 10th March 1982 (1), which included an item on the legal aspects of the cover-up of UFOs by the British Government, may be interested in a résumé.

The Earl of Clancarty, Chairman of the House of Lords All Party UFO Study Group, began by referring to his 'starred' question on the subject, which took place in the Lords on 4 March 1982 (after his interview was recorded). There followed a brief interview with the Earl of Kimberley, an active member of the Lords Group, who alluded to the statistical probability of life in our galaxy, stating his conviction that the withholding of information on the subject by the Government was likely to be more harmful than the release thereof.

Documents shown

As an independent researcher assisting the UFO Study Group, I was interviewed, and showed two hitherto classified documents obtained from the U.S. under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, supplied to me by the Scientific Bureau of Investigation Inc (2). The first item I showed was the now famous FBI memorandum, in which former Director J. Edgar Hoover referred to the fact that the U.S. Army had retrieved a crashed disc in 1947, and had denied the FBI access to it (3).

The second item I showed was a little-known cablegram from former U.S. Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, to the U.S. Embassy in La Paz, referring to a report of a 'fallen space object' in May 1978. Although the object referred to may only have been part of a satellite or rocket, the cable stated: "... No direct correlation with known space objects that may have entered the earth's atmosphere near May 6 can be made..." I stressed the fact that copies of this cablegram had been sent to the National Security Council (NSC), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Depart-

ment of Defense (DOD), National Security Agency (NSA), as well as NASA, and that this was a clear indication of the seriousness with which the subject is treated at top level.

Lord Hill-Norton

The most significant interview on the BBC programme was with ex-Admiral of the Fleet and former Chief of the Defence Staff, the Lord Hill-Norton, an outspoken member of the House of Lords UFO Study Group. I reproduce the interview verbatim. The interviewer was Sarah Caplin:

CAPLIN: As a former Chief of Defence Staff, wouldn't you have known if there was information available which hadn't been released to the public?

HILL-NORTON: Well, let me put it like this: I think I ought to have known, but I certainly didn't, and, had I known, I would not of course be allowed on an interview like this to say so. So that in itself seems to me significant. What I do believe is that information has come to the Ministry of Defence — probably over a period of 20 years or even longer — which is not available to the public, and was not available to me while I was in office. Information has been released in the United States under the Freedom of Information Act — which we don't have — which gives credence to the fact that there has been an elaborate investigation there, and also in France. What we want to do is to get our own Government to tell us the results of an investigation which simply must have happened here too.

CAPLIN: What do you think is the best way that you can obtain the information you want?

HILL-NORTON: I suspect the best way is to pursue the American line where a lot of information is now having to be released by law, and, with the aid of that sort of information from other countries, we must be able to say to our Government: 'Surely you have a similar set-up? Please tell us what it's all about.'

Plans of the House of Lords Group

Concluding the programme, the Earl of Clancarty stated that the Lords Group is considering introducing legislation in the U.K. similar to the Freedom of Information Act. Alternative considerations, he said, are a Private Members' Bill or another debate on the subject in the Lords. (4)

Programme by BBC (Bristol)

As a consequence of the 'Out of Court' programme, BBC TV (Bristol) included an item on UFOs in its 'RPM' programme, which was transmitted on 24 March 1982. Lord Hill-Norton's interview was shown once again, and a telephone interview with Mr. Peter Gersten, the lawyer representing the Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS), in the U.S. was relayed.

I was again interviewed, and discussed the role of the secret services in the cover-up, mentioning that in the U.S. alone there are about eight intelligence agencies, most of which are engaged in UFO research. (5) I pointed out that the National Security Agency was withholding 135 documents on UFOs, and that both the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia (18 November 1980) and the U.S. Supreme Court (7 March 1982) had ruled that the Agency was fully justified in withholding the documents in their entirety. (6) I also drew attention to the allegation that the NSA has excellent liaison with its British counterpart, the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), based at Cheltenham, which also specializes in electronic intelligence gathering, as well as code-breaking. (7)

I also mentioned that I had been reliably informed, by sources which I cannot name, that there is indeed an elaborate cover-up by officialdom in this country.

My interview in Bristol was not edited in any way, and the BBC are to be congratulated for their presentation. Let us hope that more such programmes will be forthcoming.

Notes & References

- (1) See FSR Editorial, Vol 27 No 5 (Postscript)
- (2) Scientific Bureau of Investigation Inc., PO Box 193, Staten Island, N.Y. 10312
- (3) See *The Roswell Incident* by Charles Berlitz & William Moore (Granada Publishing, 1980).
- (4) On 7 April 1982 another 'starred' question on UFOs was asked in the House of Lords by the Earl of Cork & Orrery. I had the honour of attending the debate, at the invitation of the Earl of Clancarty. The question was as follows:

"To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the 2,250 sightings of UFOs reported to the Ministry of Defence in the years 1978-81 were, and still are, classified for reasons of security."

Viscount Long, replying on behalf of the MoD, stated flatly: "None, my Lords." An interesting exchange followed, during which Viscount Long stated that he hoped that the MoD reports could be made available to the House of Lords Library. Although some of the ensuing questions were facetious, others were serious: these were asked by The Earl of Clancarty, The Earl of Kimberley, Lord Strabolgi, Lord Shinwell, Lord Besswick, and Lord Wade. (Hansard, Vol 429 No 71, publ. by H.M. Stationery Office, London)

(5) These agencies include:

- Central Intelligence Agency
- National Security Agency
- Defense Intelligence Agency
- Air Force Intelligence
- Army Intelligence
- Naval Intelligence
- State Department (Bureau of Intelligence & Research)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Atomic Energy Commission (Division of Intelligence)

(6) See FSR Vol 28 No 1: 'Continuing Evidence of Retrievals of the Third Kind' by Gordon Creighton. Also, in a letter to me dated 16 October 1981, the National Security Agency, in response to my enquiry as to the precise reasons for the documents being withheld, stated:

"... the United States District Court for the District of Columbia indicated that the communications intelligence documents withheld clearly related to NSA/CCSS activities and, thus, fell squarely within the protection of the claimed exemptions. The court found that release of this material could jeopardize the work of the Agency ..."

(7) Sunday Times, 14 March 1982: 'Secret UK base spies on telephone calls.' This article referred to a book on the NSA by James Bamford, entitled *The Puzzle Palace — A Report on America's Most Secret Agency*, (Houghton Mifflin, Boston 1982), which shows that "the relationship between the NSA and GCHQ is stronger than any between the NSA and other American intelligence agencies."

Note by Editor of FSR

Mr Good's original suggested title for this piece was "*BBC Covers the Cover-Up*", but in view of the more recent BBC *Horizon* TV programme, "*The Case of the UFOs*", we are driven to abandon the naive idea that in setting up such an interview anyone could have had it in mind to assist in revealing a cover-up! The only conclusion left to us is that on this occasion somebody blundered in permitting the interview with the Admiral to take place, and whoever this was will undoubtedly have been reprimanded later for it. Such blunders have not been unknown in the past, and we may have something to say about one of them in a future issue.

THE UFO CRASH/RETRIEVAL SYNDROME STATUS REPORT II: NEW SOURCES, NEW DATA. PART II: NEW SUPPORT DATA

Leonard H. Stringfield

I, OR any of my research contemporaries, may never live to see the day when all the facts are bared to either verify or completely squash the story of UFO crashes, retrievals, and of the little nondescript bipeds that are kept under official wraps in cryogenic catacombs. The whole truth is beyond my meagre range of inquiry. The data I present here are hardly sufficient to change the hard crust of our scientific community. And, if everything I know is true, then perhaps it is also true that other information unknown to me would "blow the mind," as the former C.I.A. employee once commented on tape. If, then, the real facts are so unsettling, is it socially wise to hide the truth until the day may come when disaster strikes or a docile segment of our humanity is converted to fear or worship a fetish that doesn't even exist?

In the meantime until the official facts can be bared, or if what I have revealed, short of documentation, can be believed, then UFOlogy must continue to live with the UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome until its frustrations can be relieved by seeing a humanoid, like King Tut, on exhibition. But my story is not yet finished. It is not all dominated by anonymous first-hand informants, whose reports of a UFO crash/retrieval may be diagnosed as syndromic of a sick mind. There are others of a growing legion of creditable people, in and out of research, who have provided valuable data. Consider the following:

ITEM B-1 (REVISED)

Clark McClelland, formerly Director of NICAP, Florida Unit-3, during the period he worked at the Kennedy Space Center as a member of the Apollo Programme, informed me on October 5, 1979 of an alleged UFO crash/retrieval incident occurring near Kecksburg, Pennsylvania, December 9, 1965. McClelland has since correlated old and newly acquired data, relative to the incident, which is contained in the following report for this paper:

Just before sunset on the evening of December 9, 1965, a fiery object causing a brilliant glow was observed by thousands of frightened and mystified residents of Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York and Ontario, Canada. A loud aerial explosion occurred causing several shock waves that were experienced by private and commercial aircraft pilots flying over Michigan and Lake St. Clair, east of Detroit. During the explosion, pilots and peo-

ple on the ground observed something detach from the glowing form and fall to earth near Lapeer, Michigan. Other parts of the object eventually came to earth near Elyria, Ohio; Midland, Pennsylvania, and finally the remainder fell into a rural wooded area near Kecksburg, in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Retracing the flight of this unidentified flying object reveals some startling facts. Looking at a map of the overflight one can trace the object's path in a straight line from its initial observation above Lapeer, Michigan, and as it continued over Lake St. Clair, to Elyria, Ohio, in a southeasterly trajectory. As the UFO flew over Elyria, it made an apparent course change of twenty-five degrees which appeared to be a controlled adjustment. This would obviously kill the usual explanation that it was a meteor or a bolide. This conclusion was later advanced by Dr. Paul Annear, professor of Astronomy at Baldwin-Wallace University, and immediately drew agreement from some Pentagon sources even though the witnessed fall of physical material from the object to the ground over several cities verified the actual flight path.

Calculations show that the UFO was most probably between 40 and 60 miles altitude when first observed over Michigan. Assuming the object was 60 miles high, it could easily have been observed from Indiana to Ontario.

Amassing all the distances where witnesses claimed to have observed the glowing mass we find that it was puttering along at about 17 miles a minute or, 1,062.5 miles an hour. This is considerably slower than the astronomically recorded speed of 27,000 miles per hour or the maximum, 144,000 miles per hour that meteors have been measured to be travelling during their plunges to earth. So the college professor and the Pentagon called this mysterious object a meteor or bolide, Hah! Ask yourself — who is kidding who?

Another possibility exists to explain the mystery object. An inquiry was recently made through the records maintained by the United States Air Force Space Defense Center which is the headquarters of the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD) in Colorado. On January 11, 1980, Mr. Del Kinchey, the Base Public Information Officer assisted in searching the satellite and space debris re-entry archives for recorded tracking data on the date of the Kecksburg impact. He discovered that on November 23, 1965, the Soviet Union launched one of their spy