

EVERY now and then up jumps a Lord and asks a question about UFOs in the House, the Lord usually being undistinguished by rationality and therefore able to conclude that if there is nothing to say that proves there is a lot being concealed.

The latest up-jumper was the Earl of Clancarty who believes, I remember, that there is a hole at the North Pole which UFOs dodge in and out of. It would hardly be worth mentioning the questions and answers except that the Aetherius Society, whatever that may be, issued a press release immediately afterwards that is a striking example of the way words are used to hint, imply and nudge the reader along to baseless suspicions.

Viscount Long, the government spokesman, is described in this as demonstrating with his "cynical and furtive replies that there is a persistent and determined policy . . . to conceal the facts about UFOs". All I can say is that, having read the *Hansard* report of the exchanges, one or two of the replies might be called understandably impatient, but that is all.

The release goes on, "What does it mean when the Ministry of Defence is unable to produce files on UFO sightings before 1962 because they were deliberately destroyed?" The subtlety here is the placing of the word "deliberately" giving it a sinister significance for the imagination to feed on. Most things that are destroyed are deliberately destroyed. The files could have been deliberately destroyed because they were of no interest or importance and not worth keeping. "Ha," the UFO nuts then say, narrowing eyes and looking darkly about, "but who decided they were of no interest, eh? Answer that." □