

Shock claim by Yorks skywatchers

By Kathy Stott

YORKSHIRE UFO spotters believe a secret military operation may have taken place to pinpoint trouble spots involving striking miners.

They claim the operation — involving bright flashing lights and helicopters — took place on July 23, when dozens of UFO sightings were reported in the Bradford and Leeds area.

But so far, officials have denied any such activity.

President of the Yorkshire UFO Society, Graham Birdsall, says in his report on the July 23 sightings: "I would not be surprised if the operation to pinpoint power stations and mines in our region had not been repeated up and down the country."

Mr. Birdsall says he carried out lengthy interviews and research, included in his report, to back the claim.

He concludes: "All evidence points to there being some military goings-on at Leeds and Bradford Airport."

Dazzling

He claims the silent helicopters with dazzling bright searchlights may have already been used in police operations elsewhere and says the lights are so bright and powerful they can melt tarmac if used too near to the ground.

This would explain the burned areas of ground often associated with UFO sightings.

He adds: "By charting out the areas most likely at risk, be they mining areas or powers stations, that is probably what took place on July 23."

But he says: "To admit as much would be political dynamite, for the Government has said all along that it would not bring in military help."

Copies of his report have been sent to the airport director at Leeds-Bradford Airport, the Civil Aviation Authority, the Press and the

There were more than 20 reported sightings of a UFO over Leeds and Bradford on the night of July 23. Witnesses, including former T & A journalist Peter Brearey, spotted two bright lights hovering in the sky.

One witness was Bradford housewife June Clayton, who lives in Defarge Court, West Bowling.

She told the UFO researchers: "I went out into the garden to take the washing in and asked my sons to help. Then the bright object caught my sister's eye on the horizon.

It was a brilliant white oval shape with a reddish greenish mist or haze underneath the object. I then called my sister's boyfriend and neighbour to look.

"We all saw the object, then after two to three minutes it just quickly faded out. There were no clouds. I was quite shocked."

At Lightcliffe, near Halifax, witness Trevor Peel, said: "I think what I saw was a UFO. I saw the object appear in the West and disappear in the East."

Defence

He added: "I have seen similar objects in the area for a year or two now and I would like to know what is going on."

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "Ministers have repeatedly said there is no Ministry of Defence involvement in the miners' strike."

He added there were numerous Parliamentary questions and answers to that effect.

A police spokesman said only one UFO sighting in the Leeds area had been reported for the night in question.

"We would not use helicopters. That is a fact," he added.

Leeds-Bradford Airport had no comment to make on the alleged operation.