

## **WORLD NEWS**

**3½ HOUR DEBATE IN HOUSE OF LORDS**

### **Britain rejects UFO inquiry**

#### **CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE THEORY 'A FICTION'**

**LONDON, Friday (AAP). —**  
The British Government categorically rejected last night moves to establish a major inquiry into unidentified flying objects.

A government spokesman told the House of Lords after a full-scale debate on UFOs, "The truth about UFOs is simple . . . there really are many strange phenomena in the skies".

Winding up a close encounter of an aristocratic kind which for 3½ hours had occupied the House of Lords in the first debate of its kind in either of the Houses of the British Parliament, the Government's Deputy Chief Whip, Lord Strabolgi, rejected theories of international conspiracies to withhold knowledge of the real nature of UFOs from the public.

"The idea of a conspiracy of silence belongs to the world of James Bond", he said. "There is nothing to have a

he said. "There is nothing to have a conspiracy about.

"It can be readily accepted that most UFO reports are made by calm, rational people.

"But there is nothing to convince Her

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Majesty's Government that there has ever been a single visit by an alien spaceship. We live in a huge universe of 100,000 million stars in our galaxy alone . . . there are many remarkable things to see in the sky".

Earlier, the debate had been launched by the Earl of Clancarty, author of several books on UFOs and founder of an international UFO-watching group.

Reports of sightings of UFOs had been made consistently since the days of the ancient Egyptians, said the 68-year-old peer without allegiance to any political party.

"It is true that occasionally you get the odd crank or hoaxer but many sightings are made by sincere people — trained observers like policemen and pilots", he said.

Tracing some of the more spectacular and well-documented sightings since World War II, Lord Clancarty accused

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the United States and the Soviet Union of deliberately suppressing facts about UFOs to avoid panic among their populations. Britain was also a party to this conspiracy of silence.

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The "UFO-nauts" had been largely friendly . . . "is it not time that Her Majesty's Government kept our own people informed? he asked.

The Liberal Party's aviation spokesman, Lord Kimberley, said that despite widespread scepticism, UFOs were "not a product of 20th century imagination".

Because UFOs defied the current state of modern knowledge on laws of matter "this naturally upsets our early scientists".

Lord Kings-Norton, who directed special projects for the Air Ministry during World War II, said the "New Zealand phenomenon" which virtually sparked off the debate, deserved far more serious study than it had so far received.

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"I remain sceptical", he said. "But we must seek the truth".

The Bishop of Norwich said UFOs and the mystery surrounding them were becoming the virtual equivalent of the persuasive superstitions of centuries ago, outside Christianity and perhaps attracting people away from Christianity.

One of the strongest condemnations of the debate came from Conservative Lord Hewlett, who told the House his speech was based entirely on a briefing from Sir Bernard Lovell, director of the Jodrell Bank radio-telescopic and one of the world's leading experts on astronomy.

Accusing his fellow-peers of putting the House of Lords "in danger of being

the House of Lords "in danger of being a laughing stock on a par with flat-earthers", Lord Hewlett said scientists at Jodrell Bank had maintained a 24-hour watch each day for the past 30 years.

"Every single thing which they have seen has been identified as an explicable scientific phenomenon", he said.

"Half a tonne of meteorite hits the earth somewhere each day, and an estimated 8,000 million pieces of stone and metal (including much debris from space vehicles like satellites) come to earth every year, many of them burning up in the atmosphere".

Conservative aviation spokesman Lord Trefgarne said the time had not yet been reached when UFOs could be considered certain enough to spend a large sum of public money investigating them.