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00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:16,000

Flying saucers have invaded our planet. Washington, London, Moscow are key targets. The whole

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00:00:16,000 --> 00:00:22,000

world is under attack. Can it survive?

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00:00:22,000 --> 00:00:27,000

For more than 50 years, reports of flying saucer sightings have been met with both ridicule

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00:00:27,000 --> 00:00:34,000

and passionate belief. To skeptics, the sightings have logical earthly explanations. But to

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00:00:34,000 --> 00:00:41,000

believers, the truth has yet to be revealed. We now know that the British government has

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00:00:41,000 --> 00:00:50,000

kept secret files on each and every reported sighting. In these files are Britain's best

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00:00:50,000 --> 00:00:57,000

documented UFO incidents, including what two pilots saw on a mission over southwest England.

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00:00:57,000 --> 00:01:04,000

I didn't know what I was looking at. I've certainly never seen anything like it since.

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00:01:04,000 --> 00:01:11,000

The mysterious shapes in the sky spotted by two Devon police officers.

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00:01:11,000 --> 00:01:16,000

It was something that we couldn't actually logically account for.

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00:01:17,000 --> 00:01:23,000

And the flying machine seemed by American servicemen in a forest and suffered.

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00:01:23,000 --> 00:01:30,000

It moved through the trees. The whole time it was appeared to be shedding something like molten metals.

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00:01:30,000 --> 00:01:38,000

But Britain's ex files wouldn't be complete without the strange case of the Royal Euphologist.

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00:01:39,000 --> 00:01:48,000

He was tremendously excited about flying saucers. But the mere fact that he was talking to people

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00:01:48,000 --> 00:01:54,000

who had seen these things just increased his interest because it made it that much more real.

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00:02:09,000 --> 00:02:18,000

In October 1952, at an airfield in Gloucestershire, an RAF flying instructor took off on a routine training flight.

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00:02:18,000 --> 00:02:23,000

It was his third flight of the day and everything was business as usual.

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00:02:25,000 --> 00:02:32,000

We climbed up Thursund Cloud and we broke through at about 14,000 feet.

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00:02:33,000 --> 00:02:43,000

I was somewhat allowed to see right in front of the aircraft, framed in the windscreen,

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00:02:43,000 --> 00:02:50,000

three circular white discs and I thought, my goodness.

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00:02:51,000 --> 00:02:56,000

Mick suddenly said to me, David, did you have anything to drink at lunchtime?

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00:02:56,000 --> 00:03:01,000

And I said, no. He said, well, take a look right ahead.

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00:03:05,000 --> 00:03:10,000

I grabbed the control and turned the aircraft away to one side.

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00:03:11,000 --> 00:03:19,000

As they moved out and got further apart, they began to look as if they were that sort of...

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00:03:19,000 --> 00:03:25,000

This is a magnifying lens, but they were that sort of shape.

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00:03:25,000 --> 00:03:33,000

Even for a trained pilot with seven years of flying experience, this was an unusual and disturbing incident.

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00:03:34,000 --> 00:03:45,000

Frightened, yes, and I was subsequently told that when I got down from the aircraft cockpit,

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00:03:45,000 --> 00:03:51,000

that I looked somewhat shaken almost as if I'd seen a ghost.

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00:03:52,000 --> 00:03:58,000

A Swinney and Croft sider was also picked up by a local radar station.

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00:04:03,000 --> 00:04:11,000

They could see clearly three unidentified blips on their tube.

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00:04:14,000 --> 00:04:17,000

Now, that surely is a bit unusual.

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00:04:18,000 --> 00:04:24,000

This is among the first of Britain's officially recorded and documented UFO sightings.

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00:04:27,000 --> 00:04:30,000

There's no such thing, of course, as an infallible witness,

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00:04:30,000 --> 00:04:35,000

but when you look at, for example, police officers and pilots,

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00:04:35,000 --> 00:04:42,000

you are dealing with trained observers who, in terms of perception and in terms of not panicking

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00:04:42,000 --> 00:04:46,000

and in terms of the ability to tell a story straight and factual,

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00:04:46,000 --> 00:04:49,000

these people really are excellent witnesses,

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00:04:49,000 --> 00:04:55,000

and of course the MOD pays more attention to them than, say, a report from a member of the public.

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00:04:56,000 --> 00:05:01,000

Pilots are required to fill out reports for each flight in a logbook.

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00:05:01,000 --> 00:05:04,000

This is Michael Swinney's.

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00:05:04,000 --> 00:05:12,000

His entry reads, Three flying saucers sighted at height confirmed by GCI, meaning radar.

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00:05:13,000 --> 00:05:16,000

But David Croft's was cautious in his entry.

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00:05:17,000 --> 00:05:26,000

I felt that if someone picked up my logbook and saw that I had written that I'd seen unidentified flying objects,

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00:05:26,000 --> 00:05:30,000

they'd think I was due for the funny farm.

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00:05:31,000 --> 00:05:39,000

And so I just made three ellipses and a query to indicate to me privately

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00:05:39,000 --> 00:05:44,000

that that was the sortie on which we saw these objects.

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00:05:44,000 --> 00:05:46,000

And I should never forget it.

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00:05:47,000 --> 00:05:56,000

Swinney and Croft's is a fascinating example of a case where there really isn't an agreed explanation for this within the MOD.

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00:05:56,000 --> 00:06:01,000

And it perhaps demonstrates the dichotomy that the department faces.

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00:06:01,000 --> 00:06:05,000

On the one hand, it cannot find an explanation.

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00:06:05,000 --> 00:06:13,000

On the other hand, it doesn't want to start public panic or really admit that there's anything operating in our airspace

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00:06:13,000 --> 00:06:16,000

that we simply don't know about.

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00:06:16,000 --> 00:06:21,000

Over 10,000 UFO sightings have been reported to the British government.

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00:06:21,000 --> 00:06:27,000

These reports have been shrouded in mystery and rumor for 50 years.

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00:06:28,000 --> 00:06:33,000

They are now widely referred to as Britain's X-Files.

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00:06:34,000 --> 00:06:41,000

The X-Files is a phrase that conveniently describes the British government's investigation of aerial phenomena,

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00:06:41,000 --> 00:06:45,000

UFOs, flying saucers from 1950 or around 1950 to present.

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00:06:46,000 --> 00:06:54,000

It contains sort of a database of reports, of comment, of internal discussion, policymaking.

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00:06:54,000 --> 00:06:59,000

They are the accumulated knowledge that has been gathered by the Air Ministry

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00:06:59,000 --> 00:07:04,000

and later the Ministry of Defence, the files that contain the truth.

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00:07:04,000 --> 00:07:09,000

The birth of Britain's X-Files dates back to 1950.

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00:07:09,000 --> 00:07:14,000

There had been some sightings of aerial phenomena reported by aircrew during World War II.

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00:07:14,000 --> 00:07:21,000

But in the United States, a rash of sightings resulted in one newspaper coining the phrase, flying saucer.

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00:07:21,000 --> 00:07:28,000

In response, the British government established one of the most bizarre committees in political history.

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00:07:30,000 --> 00:07:33,000

The Flying Saucer Working Party.

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00:07:36,000 --> 00:07:43,000

All through this period, there were various rumors that the British government had set up a secret investigation section

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00:07:43,000 --> 00:07:45,000

that was dedicated to flying saucers.

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00:07:45,000 --> 00:07:50,000

But throughout the 50s, the British government said virtually nothing in public about this

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00:07:50,000 --> 00:07:55,000

because they simply did not want people to know that they were taking the subject seriously.

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00:07:55,000 --> 00:08:05,000

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent.

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00:08:08,000 --> 00:08:13,000

In the years following World War II, a new threat to world peace emerged.

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00:08:13,000 --> 00:08:19,000

Two new superpowers, America and Russia, stared at each other over a fearful Europe.

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00:08:19,000 --> 00:08:26,000

The power struggle of the Cold War would dominate the world's political stage for the next three decades.

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00:08:32,000 --> 00:08:41,000

Because the Cold War is not fought in conventional terms and looming in the background of the Cold War

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00:08:41,000 --> 00:08:47,000

all the time is this fear of a nuclear holocaust coming from above.

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00:08:47,000 --> 00:08:55,000

That adds up to a fear of alien culture, a fear of communist subversion,

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00:08:55,000 --> 00:08:59,000

fear of people coming from other worlds and other planets.

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00:09:00,000 --> 00:09:05,000

As the Cold War intensified, sightings of UFOs became more frequent.

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00:09:05,000 --> 00:09:11,000

Both the British and the American governments believed the Russians were developing weapons of mass destruction.

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00:09:11,000 --> 00:09:17,000

Could sightings be evidence of secret Russian technology or just Cold War paranoia?

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00:09:19,000 --> 00:09:23,000

In a climate of fear, the West attempted to see through the iron curtain

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00:09:23,000 --> 00:09:28,000

with the world's most powerful radio telescope at Jadro Bank.

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00:09:29,000 --> 00:09:36,000

It is an amazing thing to reflect on that at that time, the degree of technological knowledge

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00:09:36,000 --> 00:09:41,000

in the Soviets of British and American state of technology

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00:09:41,000 --> 00:09:47,000

and with us, the state of Soviet advance was very small indeed.

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00:09:48,000 --> 00:09:54,000

And I think this engendered a fear and a desire to look at the sky.

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00:09:54,000 --> 00:10:00,000

We then had enormous numbers of people in the world gazing at the sky in a way they'd never done so before

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00:10:00,000 --> 00:10:03,000

because they were expected to see something to happen.

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00:10:07,000 --> 00:10:12,000

In 1952, Britain's war leader Winston Churchill was re-elected.

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00:10:12,000 --> 00:10:17,000

Seven years after World War II, he found himself leading in a different kind of era

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00:10:17,000 --> 00:10:21,000

and facing the prospect of yet more conflict.

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00:10:24,000 --> 00:10:32,000

The cabinet at that time were fully expecting that a third world war could occur at any moment.

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00:10:33,000 --> 00:10:38,000

British policymakers and politicians, Churchill himself, were really worried

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00:10:38,000 --> 00:10:48,000

that the Americans were so jittery that any incident could trigger this kind of transition to war.

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00:10:53,000 --> 00:10:55,000

The threats soon seemed very real.

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00:10:56,000 --> 00:11:01,000

It was reported that a swarm of UFOs had been sighted over Washington.

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00:11:01,000 --> 00:11:03,000

The city was on high alert.

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00:11:04,000 --> 00:11:09,000

Winston Churchill was forced to elevate the matter of flying saucers to the highest level.

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00:11:09,000 --> 00:11:14,000

What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to?

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00:11:14,000 --> 00:11:17,000

What can it mean? What is the truth?

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00:11:17,000 --> 00:11:20,000

Let me have a report about your convenience.

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00:11:21,000 --> 00:11:26,000

An event like this in Washington, which seems so extraordinary,

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00:11:26,000 --> 00:11:32,000

is symptomatic of that level of nervousness in Washington at the time.

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00:11:36,000 --> 00:11:40,000

Fear of invasion was intensifying on both sides of the Atlantic.

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00:11:40,000 --> 00:11:45,000

Sightings of strange lights and shapes in the sky were on the increase in Britain.

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00:11:45,000 --> 00:11:50,000

Suspicious that the flying saucer sightings were actually new Soviet aircraft,

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00:11:50,000 --> 00:11:56,000

Britain and America embarked on a top secret project to develop their own flying saucer.

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00:12:10,000 --> 00:12:16,000

It was a seemingly impossible aircraft design, but the scientists were determined to bring the saucer to life.

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00:12:17,000 --> 00:12:23,000

The flying saucer project was so important that the team worked for more than a decade to perfect its flight.

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00:12:23,000 --> 00:12:29,000

Eventually, the US Army pulled their funding from the project and grounded the saucer.

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00:12:29,000 --> 00:12:32,000

But as science facts struggled with flying saucers,

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00:12:32,000 --> 00:12:37,000

science fiction was fueling the imagination of the public for all things alien.

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00:12:46,000 --> 00:13:03,000

If you put a flag in the map and say, on this day British Cold War science fiction culture took off,

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00:13:03,000 --> 00:13:10,000

you would pick July 1953 and the first showing on British television of Quatermass.

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00:13:11,000 --> 00:13:18,000

A BBC drama serial about a scientist fighting against alien invasion.

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00:13:21,000 --> 00:13:33,000

Quatermass was a cultural event and people watched and they saw a British scientist confronting aliens from another world

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00:13:33,000 --> 00:13:36,000

and it was an electrifying experience.

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00:13:37,000 --> 00:13:45,000

Just a few months after the Quatermass debut, a BBC television news report would cause controversy.

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00:13:45,000 --> 00:13:49,000

The X-Files were about to become top secret.

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00:13:49,000 --> 00:13:56,000

Flying officers Terry Johnson and Jeffrey Smythe had decided to go public with their UFO encounter.

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00:13:56,000 --> 00:14:02,000

Could it have been any sort of meteorological instrument or balloon?

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00:14:02,000 --> 00:14:11,000

I don't think so. We've gone into this business, we've argued out amongst ourselves and we haven't yet arrived at anything conclusive.

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00:14:11,000 --> 00:14:16,000

What do you think about this whole flying saucer story or this event?

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00:14:16,000 --> 00:14:22,000

After this, this time I was confirmed sceptic but now I think I have an open mind.

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00:14:22,000 --> 00:14:40,000

Late morning on a clear autumn day in November 1953, Smythe and Johnson's vampire jet had been cleared for takeoff from the RAF airbase at West Malling in Kent.

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00:14:41,000 --> 00:14:53,000

Their plan was to carry out a routine reconnaissance mission over southeast England.

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00:14:53,000 --> 00:15:12,000

Well the whole incident and the whole sighting is as clear in my mind as I today as it was 50 years ago.

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00:15:13,000 --> 00:15:21,000

We were flying at about 20,000 feet, daylight, late morning, absolutely clear sky just like today.

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00:15:21,000 --> 00:15:34,000

And on practised interceptions we were over Kent, I turned onto a northerly heading and saw this bright light which I thought was a star or a planet.

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00:15:35,000 --> 00:15:42,000

It was like a doughnut with a centre filled but bright light around the doughnut area towards the periphery.

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00:15:42,000 --> 00:15:46,000

I watched it for about 20 seconds, I gave Jeff a nudge.

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00:15:46,000 --> 00:15:53,000

I was operating the radar looking actually at nothing at all, I had nothing on the tubes.

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00:15:53,000 --> 00:15:59,000

And his introduction, I was a bit annoyed actually because I interfered with my concentration.

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00:16:00,000 --> 00:16:07,000

So I came from under the hood if you like and confirmed that there was something there, there was something there.

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00:16:07,000 --> 00:16:12,000

And at that point it flew across the right hand side.

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00:16:12,000 --> 00:16:21,000

It was something a bit odd, it was something odd which has never been proven to us either way right or wrong.

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00:16:22,000 --> 00:16:32,000

Smyth and Johnson's sighting is to this day unexplained, it's another case where there was some corroborative evidence on radar.

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00:16:32,000 --> 00:16:42,000

And these cases, well in fact there are a whole string of them which have been going on from the 50s and indeed continue to the current day.

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00:16:52,000 --> 00:16:56,000

It was claimed that Smyth and Johnson's sighting had been confirmed by radar.

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00:16:56,000 --> 00:17:01,000

As the 1950s wore on, radar reports of UFOs became more frequent.

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00:17:01,000 --> 00:17:08,000

The new technology seemed to provide hard evidence for believers while skeptics and the Ministry of Defense

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00:17:08,000 --> 00:17:13,000

cited that the newness of the technology made it unreliable evidence.

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00:17:14,000 --> 00:17:25,000

Back then because it was so crude and people didn't really know what all the signals they were receiving were,

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00:17:25,000 --> 00:17:31,000

you ended up with spurious signals, you ended up with spoof signals based on atmospheric conditions

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00:17:31,000 --> 00:17:36,000

and at times you couldn't see the side of a house and at other times you could.

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00:17:36,000 --> 00:17:41,000

For want of a better thought it might be something from outer space.

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00:17:42,000 --> 00:17:50,000

When RAF officer Smyth and Johnson reported their own close encounter on the BBC, the government decided to act.

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00:17:52,000 --> 00:17:59,000

There was an order that was sent out to all RAF stations basically saying that this subject to an aerial phenomena

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00:17:59,000 --> 00:18:03,000

was something that should not be discussed in public by members of the armed forces

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00:18:03,000 --> 00:18:07,000

and that by doing so they were in breach of the Official Secrets Act.

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00:18:07,000 --> 00:18:15,000

It just was not good to have members of Her Majesty's forces saying that they'd seen things in the sky over British Isles

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00:18:15,000 --> 00:18:20,000

that couldn't be tracked, we couldn't do anything about them, they were outside our control,

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00:18:20,000 --> 00:18:28,000

it just did not give a good impression so the cover-up really seems to stem from that, that it was a cover-up of ignorance.

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00:18:28,000 --> 00:18:36,000

Just weeks after the Smyth and Johnson incident, the Ministry of Defense issued its first formal report procedure for UFOs.

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00:18:38,000 --> 00:18:47,000

All reports are to be classified restricted and personnel are warned that they are not to communicate to anyone other than official persons.

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00:18:47,000 --> 00:18:54,000

Any information about any phenomena they have observed unless officially authorized to do so.

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00:18:54,000 --> 00:19:02,000

In March 1955, after two more years of UFOs making the news, the government issued further guidelines.

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00:19:03,000 --> 00:19:09,000

These offered a list of rational and simple explanations for the various lights, shapes and objects

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00:19:09,000 --> 00:19:13,000

that seemed to be getting the British public so excited.

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00:19:14,000 --> 00:19:19,000

Its title, The Secret Intelligence Summary on Flying Saucers.

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00:19:20,000 --> 00:19:27,000

Explanations ranged from present-day jet aircraft flying at great speeds and great heights

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00:19:27,000 --> 00:19:36,000

to the more fanciful such as bright meteors and fireballs and meteorological phenomena like mock moons and mock suns.

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00:19:46,000 --> 00:19:50,000

But these attempts to explain UFO reports may have backfired.

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00:19:50,000 --> 00:19:58,000

A new breed of believer, Euphologists, were convinced that the government had established its own X-Files on mysterious cases,

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00:19:58,000 --> 00:20:01,000

but was stonewalling the British public.

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00:20:05,000 --> 00:20:13,000

The UFO debate in Great Britain captured the attention of the public, the media, the government and even the royal family.

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00:20:14,000 --> 00:20:22,000

It was a very deferential society and things the royal family were into, the public at large tended to take seriously as well.

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00:20:22,000 --> 00:20:30,000

Throughout the period that the military were trying to keep a lid on the subject, there were various stories that were filtering through to the newspapers,

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00:20:30,000 --> 00:20:36,000

to the gossip columnists about Prince Philip's interest, about Lord Mountbatten's interest.

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00:20:37,000 --> 00:20:44,000

He was tremendously excited about flying saucers and he'd read several books including Donald Keyhurst's book The Flying Saucers are Real.

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00:20:44,000 --> 00:20:51,000

He felt it was very arrogant to assume that we were the most advanced planet in the whole of the system.

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00:20:53,000 --> 00:21:03,000

My father also had a slight out here, he was a very good pilot, he was a very good pilot,

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00:21:03,000 --> 00:21:10,000

but my father also had a slight out here emotive in that it was the height of the Cold War,

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00:21:10,000 --> 00:21:14,000

when America and Russia were absolutely at each other's throats.

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00:21:14,000 --> 00:21:24,000

And my father thought, well, maybe if there are visitors from outer space, Earth will have to get on with each other,

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00:21:24,000 --> 00:21:27,000

if they're going to confront people from another planet.

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00:21:28,000 --> 00:21:37,000

He then asked navigators of the ships and pilots of the fleet, our arm and any RAF pilot he came across,

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00:21:37,000 --> 00:21:42,000

to record what, if they ever did see anything.

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00:21:44,000 --> 00:21:51,000

Very often the decryptations did vary, I mean there were the cigar shaped ones as well as the ordinary saucer kind.

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00:21:52,000 --> 00:21:56,000

He took it very seriously.

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00:21:56,000 --> 00:22:04,000

Lord Mountbatten's influence with one newspaper editor ensured that the flying saucer debate was headline news.

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00:22:11,000 --> 00:22:16,000

But not only was the Queen's cousin a believer, her husband, Prince Philip, was as well.

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00:22:17,000 --> 00:22:26,000

His equity, Sir Peter Horsley, was often sent out on behalf of Prince Philip to talk to flying saucer eye witnesses about what they'd seen.

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00:22:26,000 --> 00:22:35,000

Following one extraordinary event in 1955, he began to believe that an extraterrestrial had already arrived in Chelsea.

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00:22:47,000 --> 00:23:04,000

Peter Horsley was introduced to someone called Mr Janus, who he met one night in a flat in Smith Street, Chelsea.

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00:23:04,000 --> 00:23:11,000

He entered this room, there was this character sat in a high back chair, we couldn't see properly,

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00:23:11,000 --> 00:23:16,000

it was sort of half hidden in the shadows, it's definitely ex files territory.

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00:23:22,000 --> 00:23:30,000

He claims that this wasn't an ordinary person, it was someone from another world, and that this person was able to read his thoughts,

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00:23:30,000 --> 00:23:37,000

and that he knew an awful lot about flying saucers, about the British establishment and also that he wanted to meet the Duke of Edinburgh.

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00:23:38,000 --> 00:23:39,000

What about UFOs?

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00:23:39,000 --> 00:23:49,000

All the clues and the background to the story seems to suggest to me anyway that this was some kind of intelligence attempt to find out how much Peter Horsley knew about the subject of flying saucers,

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00:23:49,000 --> 00:24:02,000

about how deeply Prince Philip was interested in the subject, and whether in a certain situation that any official secrets might be leaked out inadvertently in one of these situations that Peter Horsley found himself in.

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00:24:02,000 --> 00:24:08,000

They don't amount to a great deal really, what he is interested in is UFOs and aliens.

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00:24:12,000 --> 00:24:22,000

By 1957 technological developments and an increasing interest in space exploration led the Russians to launch Sputnik, the Earth's first satellite.

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00:24:22,000 --> 00:24:25,000

It sent shock waves around the world.

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00:24:26,000 --> 00:24:32,000

British people had been feeling vulnerable from the air for a long time, going back to the Zeppelin raids in the First World War.

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00:24:32,000 --> 00:24:38,000

In the 1930s they'd had Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin telling them that the bomber will always get through.

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00:24:38,000 --> 00:24:47,000

They'd experienced air attack in the Blitz, and invasion from UFOs was part of the same historical continuum.

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00:24:48,000 --> 00:24:55,000

The launch of Sputnik seemed to trigger something far stranger than a few unidentified flying objects.

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00:24:55,000 --> 00:25:01,000

A young woman called Cynthia Appleton was alone in a house one day just messing about with her young children,

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00:25:01,000 --> 00:25:08,000

and all of a sudden she heard some strange sounds, the atmosphere went slightly sulphurous I think she said,

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00:25:08,000 --> 00:25:11,000

and all of a sudden someone appeared in front of her.

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00:25:11,000 --> 00:25:15,000

She was quite shocked obviously and she described this person as looking a bit like a Greek god,

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00:25:15,000 --> 00:25:21,000

yet he was dressed in a one piece space suit with some form of goldfish bull type helmet on his head.

205

00:25:24,000 --> 00:25:27,000

This person made a prediction, he said you're pregnant with a space baby,

206

00:25:27,000 --> 00:25:33,000

whilst it will be born of your husband, it will actually be spiritually belonging to the planet Venus.

207

00:25:33,000 --> 00:25:40,000

He predicted that he will be born on May 31st, and that the baby would be 7lbs 3oz and he would have fair hair,

208

00:25:40,000 --> 00:25:44,000

and he would develop into a leader of men, and his name would be Matthew.

209

00:25:44,000 --> 00:25:52,000

She became pregnant shortly afterwards, and the baby was born to her on June 2nd 1959, who was 7lbs 3oz and had fair hair.

210

00:25:53,000 --> 00:26:00,000

I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal before this decade is out,

211

00:26:00,000 --> 00:26:04,000

of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth.

212

00:26:10,000 --> 00:26:36,000

Music

213

00:26:37,000 --> 00:26:39,000

America joined the space race.

214

00:26:39,000 --> 00:26:44,000

It became a regular occurrence to see pictures of earth from space on our TV screens,

215

00:26:44,000 --> 00:26:48,000

and astronauts were becoming almost as famous as pop stars.

216

00:26:51,000 --> 00:26:59,000

Throughout the 1960s UFO sightings continued to grow in numbers, up to 362 in 1967.

217

00:26:59,000 --> 00:27:04,000

At the same time new religions and cults were attracting devotees.

218

00:27:05,000 --> 00:27:07,000

To skeptics the two trends were linked.

219

00:27:09,000 --> 00:27:15,000

One of the great features of modern Britain is the public drift away from organised religion.

220

00:27:15,000 --> 00:27:22,000

This leaves people with a lack in their lives, and you could call it a God shaped hole in their lives,

221

00:27:22,000 --> 00:27:29,000

and they're going to try all sorts of things to fill this God shaped hole, including UFOs.

222

00:27:30,000 --> 00:27:37,000

Blessed are the wise ones, for they walk through a dark and ignorant world spreading their light.

223

00:27:40,000 --> 00:27:46,000

One new cult that gained prominence in Britain during this period was the Atherias Society.

224

00:27:46,000 --> 00:27:53,000

Its creator was a taxi driver called George King, who claimed he'd been visited by an alien.

225

00:27:54,000 --> 00:28:03,000

When he left I definitely saw him move to the side, and a craft similar to this hovering above the ground,

226

00:28:03,000 --> 00:28:10,000

and there was a green beam of light came from the bottom here, down to the ground,

227

00:28:10,000 --> 00:28:15,000

and he just moved to one side into the green beam and was gone.

228

00:28:15,000 --> 00:28:21,000

During the 1960s people became more and more open about disclosing their alleged contacts with extra stress drills

229

00:28:21,000 --> 00:28:25,000

and flying saucer occupants, and of course the claims got more and more bizarre.

230

00:28:25,000 --> 00:28:29,000

Besides people who were just meeting them and chatting to them and receiving messages from them,

231

00:28:29,000 --> 00:28:32,000

you got people who claimed to actually be able to speak their language.

232

00:28:37,000 --> 00:28:39,000

What does that mean, actually?

233

00:28:39,000 --> 00:28:41,000

That means how are all you?

234

00:28:41,000 --> 00:28:45,000

I am very pleased to see you this afternoon.

235

00:28:45,000 --> 00:28:48,000

How many languages can you speak?

236

00:28:48,000 --> 00:28:52,000

I can speak all together three of the space languages.

237

00:28:52,000 --> 00:28:56,000

But for some, the subject of UFOs was serious business.

238

00:28:56,000 --> 00:29:05,000

In October 1967, one of the most famous cases occurred, involving two Devon policemen on a quiet night shift.

239

00:29:07,000 --> 00:29:12,000

Devon's unidentified flying object, the two policemen who chased it in their car near Ocampton early today,

240

00:29:12,000 --> 00:29:15,000

said later they're certain it wasn't an aircraft or a planet.

241

00:29:15,000 --> 00:29:19,000

They watched the object, a bright light in the shape of a cross, for nearly an hour.

242

00:29:19,000 --> 00:29:23,000

Well, back in those days, I don't know whether it still applies today,

243

00:29:23,000 --> 00:29:30,000

but the traffic department would always be double crewed at night.

244

00:29:30,000 --> 00:29:36,000

And on this particular night, my colleague was either sick or on leave,

245

00:29:36,000 --> 00:29:43,000

and Clifford was a country bobby, and I went out and picked him up as an observer that night.

246

00:29:45,000 --> 00:29:49,000

I remember making our way back between Holmeswood and Hatherley,

247

00:29:49,000 --> 00:29:55,000

when we saw this unusual bright white light in the sky.

248

00:29:55,000 --> 00:29:59,000

What's that light over there?

249

00:29:59,000 --> 00:30:02,000

Over there? Can you see it?

250

00:30:02,000 --> 00:30:07,000

My view of it was that it was moving slowly,

251

00:30:07,000 --> 00:30:14,000

but I thought as the way we were travelling, it would have been on our right when I first saw it.

252

00:30:15,000 --> 00:30:18,000

It was not a star, it was white.

253

00:30:18,000 --> 00:30:26,000

It was bright. It had, if you look at glass, which is got rain on,

254

00:30:26,000 --> 00:30:31,000

and you would see the same sort of inference that it's a splash.

255

00:30:31,000 --> 00:30:33,000

I've never seen, I can't describe it, I've never seen it.

256

00:30:33,000 --> 00:30:36,000

We've both registered that we'd seen something.

257

00:30:36,000 --> 00:30:42,000

It was something that we couldn't actually logically account for.

258

00:30:42,000 --> 00:30:46,000

There it is again.

259

00:30:46,000 --> 00:30:52,000

We said, well, maybe it's going to go back up in the sky, but it didn't.

260

00:30:52,000 --> 00:30:58,000

It was just too eerie.

261

00:30:58,000 --> 00:31:03,000

It was something that I haven't seen before, I haven't seen since,

262

00:31:03,000 --> 00:31:09,000

and something that nobody can explain exactly what it was.

263

00:31:10,000 --> 00:31:15,000

Whatever appeared in the sky that night prompted interest from a much higher level.

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00:31:15,000 --> 00:31:21,000

The two police officers were called back to their station to explain their sighting once again.

265

00:31:21,000 --> 00:31:25,000

I've never seen anything like it. It was so bright.

266

00:31:25,000 --> 00:31:33,000

We were visited by a boffin from the M.O.D. who told us that we were still officers under the Official Secrets Act,

267

00:31:33,000 --> 00:31:37,000

and they would rather us keep it to ourselves.

268

00:31:37,000 --> 00:31:48,000

The new outbreak of sightings forced the Ministry of Defence to find a new approach to the whole issue of UFOs.

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00:31:48,000 --> 00:31:56,000

In response to continued UFO sightings in the late 60s, Britain's Ministry of Defence issued a detailed briefing

270

00:31:56,000 --> 00:32:03,000

regarding the media's influence on the increasing number of UFO reports.

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00:32:03,000 --> 00:32:09,000

When popular interest is stimulated in UFOs, people look for UFOs.

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00:32:09,000 --> 00:32:12,000

Indeed, they wish to see them.

273

00:32:19,000 --> 00:32:24,000

Another sign of the times was echoed in an official memo to the Defence Secretary.

274

00:32:24,000 --> 00:32:29,000

It simply stated that it is now becoming fashionable for people to see UFOs.

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00:32:29,000 --> 00:32:38,000

Flying saucers, UFOs and aliens began to invade popular culture, often linked with hallucinogenic drugs like LSD.

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00:32:44,000 --> 00:32:49,000

From the mid-sixth Fissalimage, you have what would have to be called LSD consciousness.

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00:32:49,000 --> 00:32:56,000

It permeates the whole of the counterculture side of British society.

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00:32:56,000 --> 00:33:08,000

You get it in the songs of the Pink Floyd, of Jimi Hendrix, of Mark Bowle and all these bands incorporate LSD-inspired imagery,

279

00:33:08,000 --> 00:33:16,000

which involve dancing gnomes and flying saucers and lay lines and mystical experiences.

280

00:33:17,000 --> 00:33:25,000

That's when really you started to get these sort of spin-off movements that actually went out and, you know, were actually looking for them.

281

00:33:25,000 --> 00:33:33,000

And, you know, they took their sandwiches and their flasks and they sat out on the hillside and looked for objects.

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00:33:34,000 --> 00:33:51,000

As if to cement pop culture's love affair with aliens and flying saucers, a new nightclub in London's Soho became the most fashionable place in the capital.

283

00:33:51,000 --> 00:33:54,000

It was simply called UFO.

284

00:33:55,000 --> 00:34:03,000

The idea of it was to trip people out and that was the whole idea of the secondary name, the Night Tripper.

285

00:34:03,000 --> 00:34:12,000

Now, a lot of people think that UFO meant unidentified flying object, it did, but it was also underground freak out.

286

00:34:12,000 --> 00:34:20,000

It didn't necessarily mean, you know, there's a spacecraft with an alien in it. The thing that was alien was in your head.

287

00:34:25,000 --> 00:34:33,000

As people spent a lot of time taking drugs, and it's a very important part of this, different ideas emerged.

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00:34:33,000 --> 00:34:42,000

One of which was that lay lines must have a function, one of which was thought to be as a sort of energy source for flying saucers.

289

00:34:42,000 --> 00:34:52,000

And this was why there were so many sightings around Glastonbury and Glastonbury Torgh was that this was a major connection point for, I don't know, how many, a dozen lay lines or something.

290

00:34:52,000 --> 00:34:57,000

And so it was like a gas station, you know, they would come in and get charged up and off they would go.

291

00:34:57,000 --> 00:35:03,000

And a huge number of people would go from the Kings Road off down to Glastonbury and quite a lot of them did see flying saucers.

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00:35:10,000 --> 00:35:18,000

But space exploration had now reached a pivotal moment. NASA's Apollo program made history in July 1969.

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00:35:18,000 --> 00:35:25,000

Just as predicted by President Kennedy, man took his first tentative steps into a new world.

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00:35:25,000 --> 00:35:40,000

The 1960s is a period of belief in science and technology. Once science fact has overtaken science fiction, then inevitably people become interested in other things.

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00:35:41,000 --> 00:35:50,000

The science fiction doesn't really bear relationship to the science fact once we've seen pictures from the moon.

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00:35:50,000 --> 00:36:02,000

They no longer look quite the exciting places that films back in the 50s or comic strips such as Dandere and so on, had really visualized them to be.

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00:36:03,000 --> 00:36:15,000

In the 70s, official UFO sightings continued, but were largely unremarkable until 1980 when the most famous UFO sighting in Britain occurred.

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00:36:18,000 --> 00:36:27,000

Britain's most notorious UFO sighting took place in 1980 near the twin U.S. air bases at Bentwaters

and Woodbridge in Suffolk.

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00:36:27,000 --> 00:36:40,000

The bases are bordered by Rendlesham Forest. At almost midnight on Christmas Day, U.S. servicemen on duty at one of the perimeter fences reported seeing strange lights deep in the forest.

300

00:36:41,000 --> 00:36:49,000

I turned to Sergeant Stephens and I said, well, what exactly is going on? And he pointed over to the, you know, tree line in the woods adjacent to the gate.

301

00:36:49,000 --> 00:36:55,000

It appeared to be an aircraft that had crashed, had been downed. It was like it was on fire.

302

00:36:55,000 --> 00:37:02,000

And I turned to the buddy, so how long, how long ago did it crash? And he says, he says it didn't crash, he says it landed.

303

00:37:04,000 --> 00:37:10,000

I got permission from Security Control to go ahead and proceed off base with at least two security policemen.

304

00:37:11,000 --> 00:37:21,000

We started to go back down to the log and roam me and one other airline. And we got to the point when we couldn't go any farther than cheap.

305

00:37:25,000 --> 00:37:32,000

Went up to about the tree line, hovered momentarily, and in a blink of an eye it was gone.

306

00:37:33,000 --> 00:37:37,000

Our concerns were the fact of our careers could be in jeopardy.

307

00:37:38,000 --> 00:37:45,000

But how do I explain the report from the East Gate and the 45 minutes in the woods? I mean, I have to report it.

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00:37:47,000 --> 00:37:53,000

Two nights later, we were having the annual combats support group Christmas party.

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00:37:53,000 --> 00:38:00,000

We had just finished the main course and we're getting ready for dessert and the on-duty flight commander came in, the security policeman.

310

00:38:00,000 --> 00:38:08,000

And he was just white as a sheet. And he said, it's back. And we said, what's back? He said, the UFO is back.

311

00:38:09,000 --> 00:38:16,000

At that time I'd pocketed my small micro cassette recorder, so I started taking notes, so to speak, on the tape recorder.

312

00:38:16,000 --> 00:38:25,000

It is working directly overhead where I can see an opening in the trees plus some freshly broken pine branches on the ground underneath.

313

00:38:26,000 --> 00:38:31,000

Looks like someone came off about 15 to 20 feet up. Some small branches about an inch or less in diameter.

314

00:38:32,000 --> 00:38:38,000

We moved forward and came to a spot where the flight lieutenant told me this is where it had landed.

315

00:38:38,000 --> 00:38:47,000

We climbed a small forest. It looks like a blasted earth. Scruffed up there right here. We've got pretty positive readings.

316

00:38:47,000 --> 00:38:50,000

See, is that here the center? Yes, it is. It's the one in the middle.

317

00:38:51,000 --> 00:38:55,000

He was quite alarmed because he was getting higher readings than normal background radiation.

318

00:38:56,000 --> 00:39:01,000

That's when I started getting a little bit nervous and how did I get into this and what am I doing here?

319

00:39:02,000 --> 00:39:09,000

And I noticed off to the side some activity and the lieutenant started hollering, look over there, look over there, and we could see something.

320

00:39:10,000 --> 00:39:16,000

It's like we're right at this position here, straight ahead in between the trees where there it is again.

321

00:39:17,000 --> 00:39:24,000

There, I see it too. What is it? We don't know, sir. Looks like an eye winking at you. It's going from side to side.

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00:39:25,000 --> 00:39:28,000

It moved through the trees as though it were under some type of intelligent control.

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00:39:29,000 --> 00:39:32,000

The whole time it appeared to be shedding something like molten metals.

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00:39:32,000 --> 00:39:36,000

It just moved to the right. Yeah.

325

00:39:36,000 --> 00:39:38,000

Strange.

326

00:39:39,000 --> 00:39:41,000

What are we doing here?

327

00:39:41,000 --> 00:39:44,000

Let's approach to the edge of the woods up there. Can you undo our lights?

328

00:39:44,000 --> 00:39:46,000

Let's go carefully. Come on.

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00:39:46,000 --> 00:39:51,000

We moved forward to try and find out what it was. We were really concerned and wanted to know. We wanted some answers.

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00:39:51,000 --> 00:39:58,000

It suddenly exploded without a noise and broke into several objects, white objects, and they disappeared.

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00:39:58,000 --> 00:40:01,000

It's coming this way. It's definitely coming this way.

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00:40:01,000 --> 00:40:05,000

It looks like we're observing what appears to be a beam coming down over the ground.

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00:40:07,000 --> 00:40:08,000

This is unreal.

334

00:40:08,000 --> 00:40:15,000

Is this a signal? Is this a warning? Some type of weapon? What is it? We didn't know. We were really concerned.

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00:40:19,000 --> 00:40:26,000

Lieutenant Colonel Halt recorded the details of the Rendlesham incident in a memo to the Ministry of Defense.

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00:40:27,000 --> 00:40:31,000

The memo was never intended for public consumption. It was never intended to be a final report.

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00:40:31,000 --> 00:40:38,000

The memo was intended to get somebody from whatever department in the MOD to come in properly investigate.

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00:40:38,000 --> 00:40:43,000

The memo detailing the sighting arrived at the desk of the UFO investigation team.

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00:40:45,000 --> 00:40:55,000

So far as I was concerned at the MOD, looking back through the files, in many senses, it's one of the most compelling cases for some sort of exotic,

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00:40:55,000 --> 00:41:05,000

phenomenon at work. And clearly when you look again at the fact that the Defence Intelligence staff analysed the radiation readings taken from the landing site

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00:41:05,000 --> 00:41:14,000

and concluded that despite not being dangerous to Colonel Halt and his team, these readings were about ten times normal.

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00:41:15,000 --> 00:41:26,000

The only way the MOD were interested in UFOs is if they could correlate a visual sighting by a reliable source with something seen on radar.

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00:41:26,000 --> 00:41:35,000

But because they could say that there was nothing on radar at the time, therefore whatever the Americans had reported, they didn't need to take it seriously.

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00:41:36,000 --> 00:41:48,000

There was no official investigation into the incident, but a few years later an American journalist obtained a copy of Halt's memo under the USA's Freedom of Information Act

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00:41:48,000 --> 00:41:59,000

and flying saucers were back on the front pages. UFO believers looked to Rendlesham as evidence of both extraterrestrial contact and cover-ups.

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00:41:59,000 --> 00:42:02,000

However, skeptics see it differently.

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00:42:03,000 --> 00:42:12,000

The Rendlesham incident happened at the time at which the Cold War was at its coldest, certainly since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

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00:42:12,000 --> 00:42:18,000

It was expected during that very month, December 1980, that the Russians were about to invade Poland.

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00:42:18,000 --> 00:42:23,000

There was the Solidarity Crisis and there was a crisis in Afghanistan.

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00:42:23,000 --> 00:42:28,000

So it's the last time that those kinds of phenomenon are actually being officially reported.

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00:42:32,000 --> 00:42:36,000

The end of the Cold War seemed to mark the end for the flying saucers.

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00:42:36,000 --> 00:42:40,000

For decades they'd frightened, inspired and entertained.

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00:42:40,000 --> 00:42:47,000

The government had maintained its position of monitoring incidents, filing reports and avoiding speculation.

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00:42:49,000 --> 00:42:54,000

But in 2000, Britain's X-Files began to see the light of day.

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00:43:02,000 --> 00:43:18,000

After 50 years of looking into possible explanations for UFO incidents, the government has wound down its investigations.

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00:43:18,000 --> 00:43:22,000

So what is its position on the flying saucer debate?

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00:43:23,000 --> 00:43:31,000

What we've said is that there is no evidence to suggest an extraterrestrial explanation for the phenomenon.

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00:43:31,000 --> 00:43:37,000

But, however, you can't completely discount the idea.

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00:43:37,000 --> 00:43:42,000

Therefore, the department has always said, but of course we keep an open mind on the possibilities.

360

00:43:42,000 --> 00:43:48,000

I mean there was an object in the skies, as far as we were concerned.

361

00:43:48,000 --> 00:43:54,000

It was an identified and unexplained to this day.

362

00:43:54,000 --> 00:44:06,000

For 14 years I kept it quiet because one just doesn't tell people I've seen an unidentified flying object.

363

00:44:07,000 --> 00:44:13,000

No explanation really has been given to us by anybody at any time, and we haven't asked.

364

00:44:13,000 --> 00:44:17,000

We've just gently been asked to sweep it under the carpet.

365

00:44:17,000 --> 00:44:22,000

It didn't happen. That's what they say. We know what we saw.

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00:44:22,000 --> 00:44:27,000

And with the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act in Britain,

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00:44:27,000 --> 00:44:33,000

the remainder of the Ministry of Defence files on flying saucers will finally be made public.

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00:44:36,000 --> 00:44:42,000

There are around 190 files that are sitting in the MOD archive waiting for release.

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00:44:42,000 --> 00:44:48,000

I look forward to 2005 when we'll get to see what is really in Britain's X files.

370

00:45:06,000 --> 00:45:11,000

Sunday 9 at 9, 8 Central only on the History Channel.