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- b. Assuming, as I hope, that the Ministry of Defence does not ignore the reports reaching it (and we have been told in reply to Parliamentary questions that they amount to some hundreds a year from civilian sources alone), what steps are taken by the Department to investigate them? In particular:-
- i) Are they dealt with solely ad hoc, using routine staff channels? or is there some specialist group, either within the Whitehall establishment or elsewhere, which is charged with taking an expert view? If so, to whom do they report? And what is their composition? Do they include civilian advisers from outside your Department?
  - ii) What part is played, if any, by the Flying Complaints Flight at RAF Rudloe Manor?
  - iii) What part, if any, is played by Air Staff Secretariats 2 & 8?
- c. How many of the reports of unusual phenomena have been received from Defence establishments, including reports from the pilots of military aircraft?
- d. What material does your Department have of traces left on military radar or in photographic form either from sorties by military aircraft or from ground-based or ship-based facilities?
- e. Can any such material be released either to me or to responsible persons outside your Department for purposes of scientific study?

In troubling you with these questions I am well aware that their subject matter has often been thought easy to ridicule, especially when associated with some of the wilder notions which are current among the civilian research groups. I am not wedded to any particular theory myself. I do, on the other hand, believe that there is overwhelming evidence for a persistent phenomenon of a highly unusual character. This is, at the least, of considerable scientific interest; and I have not yet heard anything from your Department which convinces me that it is wholly without Defence significance. I would be reassured to know either that it is being adequately gripped as a Defence matter (and, if so, by precisely what means) or that material held by your Department can be release