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Mandrake: The admiral who believes in UFOs
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Is retired Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton preparing to join Mr Spock in the higher echelons of Starfleet Command? The question is not as far-fetched as might be imagined. The former

Chief of the Defence Staff believes that the earth may have been

visited by creatures from other worlds.

In a forward to Alien Liaison, a new book on the subject of unidentified flying objects by session musician Mr Timothy Good,

Lord Hill-Norton writes that the "astounding revelations" Mr Good

makes are "impossible, certainly for me, to dismiss unless they are

. . . publicly disproved". He invites the many scientists and political figures quoted to "either put up or shut up" if they feel

they have been misrepresented.

Among Mr Good's odder revelations are that aliens have been cutting off slices of cow - usually rump - for analysis in their

intergalactic laboratories. In addition to the distasteful practice

of bovine lo-bottomy, is the claim by a well-known rocket scientist

that several US presidents may have been visited by a spaceman called Alan and that a Brazilian man was once seduced by a four-and-a-half-foot tall alien woman ("beautiful, though of a different type from the women I had known") from whom he contracted

"what can only be described as a type of cosmic 'clap' ".

Lord Hill-Norton is not put off by Mr Good's extraordinary tales. "The plain fact is that either what he reports here is true,

or it isn't. If his accounts of recovered UFOs and their alien occupants being in the hands of United States government agencies

(and perhaps those of the Soviet Union too) are not true, then it

seems that many important and distinguished former public servants

have perhaps lied, or have been grossly mis-reported. In the latter

event, one must expect and hope that they will take the appropriate

legal action to set the record straight."

Fighting talk, suggesting genuine conviction. And the admiral is not alone in his beliefs. At least three former US presidents,

Mr Richard Nixon, Mr Jimmy Carter and Mr Ronald Reagan are UFO converts (somehow one just knew it would be them) while the Soviet

leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, has stated for the record that the phenomenon "does exist and must be treated seriously".

The index to Mr Good's book does not list any British prime ministers who have expressed interest in flying saucers, but this

can probably be explained by the allegation that our putative aliens are power groupies and make instinctively for the White House. Mr Kinnock's views are similarly unrecorded. In this country

the admiral, whose chosen title is Baron Hill-Norton of South Nutfield, appears to be the only leader to whom a protocol-conscious alien could reasonably turn.

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