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The Real Fox Mulder  
Chat with UFO Investigator Nick Pope  
ABCNEWS.com

Nov. 20

Nick Pope

A recently released report from top French military and government officials suggests that the French government should begin taking questions surrounding UFOs seriously.

The report says the best explanation for at least 5 percent of unidentified flying object sightings is "the extraterrestrial hypothesis."

ABCNEWS' Chris Wallace interviews Nick Pope, an official with the British Ministry of Defense, known as "the real Fox Mulder" from The X-Files, for his investigations into the UFO phenomenon in the latest edition of ABCNEWS.com's Internet Exposé UFO2000: The Search Continues.

<<http://abcnews.go.com/onair/correspondents/wallace/internetexpose/>>

Nick Pope joined us today in an online chat. The chat transcript is below.

Moderator at 1:55pm ET  
Welcome Nick Pope.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nick Pope at 1:56pm ET  
I'd like to welcome everyone, and hope that I'll be able to answer your questions in an informative and interesting way.

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Moderator at 1:57pm ET  
Thomas Denny asks: Nick, some time ago on a television show here in the UK you seemed to deny the existence of UFOs. Are you now saying that GCHQ denials are cover-ups, for security reasons. If the truth as you put it is given to the public would this not cause deep alarm to some. I've long known about you and would like to think you are truthful, Nick, thank you for your time. Kind Regards, Thomas Denny

Nick Pope at 1:58pm ET

I am a believer that some UFOs are extraterrestrial in origin. That does not, however, mean that I believe there to be a systematic cover up on the part of governments. The denial you recall was, I suspect, simply a denial that the British Government were involved in any cover up or conspiracy with regard to the UFO phenomenon.

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Moderator at 1:58pm ET

What exactly did you do for the British Government in terms of UFO investigation?

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Nick Pope at 2:00pm ET

Between 1991 and 1994 my job at the British Ministry of Defense was to research and investigate the UFO phenomenon so that we could judge whether any sightings suggested a threat to the defense of the United Kingdom. I received about two or three hundred reports each year, of which around 90% could be explained as misidentifications of ordinary objects or phenomena.

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Dan Reichel from rkeng.com at 2:01pm ET

Do you agree with statements such as those in the book by Philip Corso, "The Day After Roswell", and from ham radio operators who supposedly have recordings (and transcripts) of Apollo-11 astronaut conversations with Mission Control, that tell of seeing extraterrestrial beings and flying saucers on the Moon?

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Nick Pope at 2:02pm ET

I am familiar with that book. I'm aware of these rumors, but have not investigated the allegations personally. I try to confine myself to those areas of the subject with which I have been directly involved. So while these stories are interesting, I have no way of evaluating the data.

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Rambis at 2:03pm ET

Mr. Pope, although scientifically it is possible to have some form of life in some planet circling around some star in some galaxy, it is highly unlikely that they have developed a system to travel faster than light to travel such vast distances. What do you think?

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Nick Pope at 2:06pm ET

While I appreciate your view, it is just an assumption. Who is to say that faster-than-light travel isn't feasible? A few hundred years ago, the greatest minds on the planet probably thought that powered flight was impossible.

Another interesting point is the possibility that interstellar travel at sublight speeds could also be a factor. Scientists at the Czech Propulsion Laboratory are studying exotic propulsion concepts such as fusion systems, and those using matter-antimatter annihilation.

If we could get to 0.3 or 0.4 of light speed, we could reach numerous nearby stars without offending against Einstein.

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Ben Moger-Williams from 209-70-100-242.apil.net at 2:07pm ET  
What is the most compelling evidence you have to believe that aliens have visited earth?

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Nick Pope at 2:09pm ET

A case that I investigated involving a sighting that took place on the 31st of March, 1993 - a UFO flew directly over two air force bases in England. The object was the size of a jumbo jet, emitted a low-frequency humming sound, and fired a narrow beam of light at the ground. It flew very slowly over the bases, before shooting off at several times the speed of an air force jet.

This object was nothing in our own terrestrial inventory, and it, therefore, seems entirely reasonable to conclude that it was the product of another, extraterrestrial, civilization.

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Moderator at 2:10pm ET

TJI asks: What do you think of the theory that UFOs are really military technology presently being used for experiments in psychological warfare, as outlined by Jacques Vallee?

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Nick Pope at 2:12pm ET

It's an interesting theory, but without going into too many details, I can say that this simply isn't the way that governments or the military do business. Of course we have experimental, prototype aircraft, but these are test flown exclusively in clearly defined areas, which were known to me, given that I was doing official UFO investigation.

But, in any case, the speeds and maneuvers of some UFOs go way beyond anything we have, including these prototypes, and some of these speeds and maneuvers have been validated by radar.

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Miodrag Micic from cox.miami.edu at 2:13pm ET

Mr. Pope, what is your opinion about recently discovered movie about "alien autopsy" ? Some actions seems unprofessional in this movie, like the position in which the pathologist is holding his scissors. Is this detail another intentional cover up in order to discredit the authenticity of this movie ?

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Nick Pope at 2:14pm ET

I'm not sure if the question relates to the so-called "Alien Autopsy" video first promoted by Ray Santilli, but, if so, I believe that the footage is a clever hoax. But, again, my personal involvement in this particular mystery has been very limited, so I can really say little more than that.

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Amy Epstein from phnx.uswest.net at 2:14pm ET

Should Americans demand to know the truth since we are aware they are hiding information from us? How can we do that? The government is hiding so much from us. Do they really think they are that much smarter than us that we just couldn't handle the truth? Thank you.

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Nick Pope at 2:15pm ET

Everybody has a right to the truth. I'm not an expert on the situation in America, but I would recommend aggressive use of the freedom of information act, coupled with vigorous lobbying of your political representatives.

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Moderator at 2:16pm ET

What are your feelings about abduction stories?

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Nick Pope at 2:17pm ET

I have personally investigated over 100 cases of so-called alien abduction. While I think that some could be explained as vivid dreams, hallucinations, or hoaxes, I am convinced that there is a real phenomenon here.

I believe that American researchers such as Doctor John Mack, Bud Hopkins, and David Jacobs, are doing some excellent work in this field, but I have cases in Britain, and it's clear that this is a global phenomenon.

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C. Peebles (ufoguy) at 2:18pm ET

Do you believe the U.S. and other governments have far more knowledge and involvement with UFOs and extraterrestrial entities than they will admit, based upon their obvious attempts to discount and debunk any information to the contrary. Is a government "release" of information anywhere on the horizon?

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Nick Pope at 2:20pm ET

I'm not a great believer in some sinister, nebulous conspiracy. I suspect that rather than having all the answers and covering them up, governments are embarrassed by their woeful lack of knowledge and

information on this issue.

I believe that the truths implicit in the UFO phenomenon run counter to the world view of many of those in power, so it's not so much a case of a cover up as opposed to people having their heads in the sand.

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Robt Morris at 2:20pm ET

Even if UFO's are full of smart aliens what can we do about it? After all, the US military says there is no threat to our National Security.

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Nick Pope at 2:21pm ET

Perhaps open contact with extraterrestrials will not involve government at all, but, rather, a direct approach to the people. Alternatively, scientists may find themselves in the front line.

It may be that proof of an intelligent extraterrestrial presence comes not from the files of the military, but from the research of astronomers, perhaps picking up signals sent using radio astronomy.

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Bruce Ackerman from ml.com at 2:22pm ET

Do you have a hypothesis as to the motive of these visitations? Are they just ET scientists as curious as we would be, or is there a more ominous agenda?

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Nick Pope at 2:23pm ET

I very much doubt that there is one simple answer to this question. Not least because I doubt that there is only one civilization visiting us. It's quite possible that we are being studied, or experimented upon, but it's also possible that others regard this Earth with envious eyes...

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Moderator at 2:24pm ET

What was the most convincing case you have ever encountered?

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Nick Pope at 2:26pm ET

Aside from the 1993 case that I mentioned, perhaps the best evidence for an extraterrestrial presence comes from the Bentwaters case from December, 1980. This involved a landed metallic craft witnessed by numerous United States Airforce personnel at the twin bases of Bentwaters and Woodbridge in Suffolk, England.

The UFO was tracked on radar, and left indentations in the clearing where it landed. Abnormally high radiation readings were taken from these indentations.

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Moderator at 2:27pm ET

Tim asks: If there are UFOs, wouldn't that blow most religious beliefs

out of the water?

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Nick Pope at 2:28pm ET

Not necessarily. Doesn't it make more sense that an omnipotent God would have created a universe full of life?

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Gil Hamilton from lmco.com at 2:28pm ET

Has there been any credible, documented evidence of space craft or biological remains?

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Nick Pope at 2:29pm ET

I think there's a lot of evidence, but as these are the sorts of cases I've not investigated personally, I'm not going to claim that we have proof.

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Greta Nicoara from ght.airmail.net at 2:29pm ET

Mr. Pope, in what direction is UFO research headed in Britain? Is research there available to the public?

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Nick Pope at 2:31pm ET

In Britain, many UFOlogists are getting excited at the imminent introduction of a U.K. freedom of information act. At present, around 30 old government files on UFOs are available to the public. When the act becomes law, another 200 or so files may become available.

This is the big story that will effect British UFOlogy in the next few years. Also, there is pressure for more work to be done on the alien abduction phenomenon, where Britain is lagging behind America.

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Moderator at 2:32pm ET

Larry Taylor asks: If there are such things as UFOs it must be that their intelligence is much greater then ours. If so then why don't they do something to communicate with us instead of just flying around?

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Nick Pope at 2:32pm ET

Their technology may be ahead of us, but we can't make any meaningful assumptions about their thought processes or their agenda. Then again, seeing all the bad things that we do here on Earth, maybe they just don't want to know us.

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twanasek at 2:33pm ET

Are there any specific areas in the world where sightings or encounters are more common.....any particular times of the year??

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Nick Pope at 2:35pm ET

Sightings do seem to come in waves, such as the ones that affected the Hudson Valley in America in the late 80's, and the country of Belgium in 1990. That said, it's difficult to say whether this means that there was more activity, or where the media coverage of some sightings encouraged other people to speak out.

We have a few UFO hot spots in Britain, such as the town of Bonnybridge in Scotland, but it's very difficult to say what this might mean.

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McIabihh at 2:35pm ET

How many UFO sightings are reported in England yearly?

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Nick Pope at 2:37pm ET

The Ministry of Defense receives anywhere between 200 and 800 UFO reports each year. But, of course, not everyone reports their sighting to the MOD. So you have to add to that figure sightings reported to UFO groups and to the media.

It should also be borne in mind that many of those who have a sighting won't make a report at all, either because they fear ridicule, or because they simply don't know whom to contact. So the total annual figure probably runs into thousands.

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Moderator at 2:37pm ET

How much resistance have you met from peers within the Ministry of Defense?

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Nick Pope at 2:39pm ET

Most of my friends and colleagues at the Ministry of Defense have supported my speaking out on these issues. That's not to say that there haven't been some difficult moments, particularly regarding the publication of my books. But the objections to this, it has been suggested to me, may have sprung more from jealousy, ignorance, and prejudice than any meaningful problem with what I was saying.

Many people in the MOD believe in UFOs and many people in the air force have seen them or tracked them on radar, though, for obvious reasons, few of them have been prepared to go public.

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Moderator at 2:39pm ET

Were you always a believer?

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Nick Pope at 2:41pm ET

No, I wasn't, actually. When I took up my job, as UFO desk officer, I didn't know what to think. I had no detailed knowledge of the UFO phenomenon, and no strong opinions either way. But, at the end of my three year tour of duty, I emerged as a believer that some UFOs were almost certainly extraterrestrial spacecraft.

That conclusion was not arrived at via a blind leap of faith, but was based on my having read all the government's UFO files and having spent three years researching and investigating the subject officially.

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Moderator at 2:41pm ET

Nick, thank you for joining us. Do you have any final thoughts to share?

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Nick Pope at 2:42pm ET

Thank you for joining me for this online session, and I hope that people will continue to look for the truth on this important issue.

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Moderator at 2:42pm ET

Please take a moment to check out the latest installment of Chris Wallace's Internet Exposé UFO2000: The Search Continues.  
<<http://www.abcnews.com/onair/DailyNews/> <http://www.internetexpose.com>>  
Thank you Nick Pope for joining us.

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