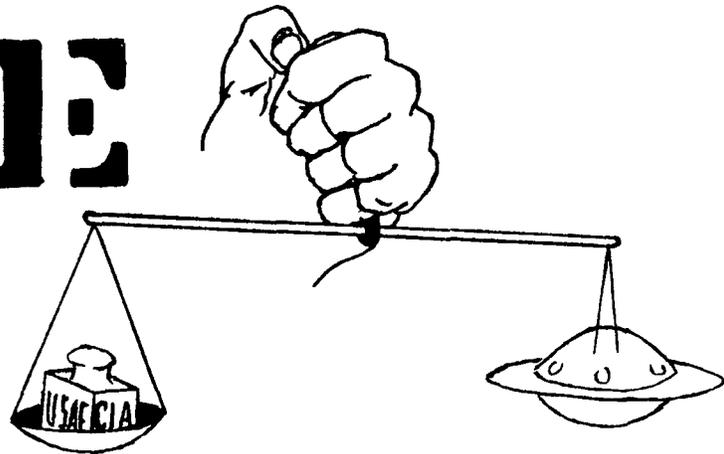


JUST CAUSE



MAY 1978

VOL. 1 - No. 2

The official newsletter of Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS)

JUST CAUSE - Editor: W. Todd Zechel

Legal Consultant: Peter Gersten

Associate Editor: Steve Stoikes

Technical Consultant: Brad Sparks

Offices: 191 E. 161st St., Bronx, N.Y. 10451

CAUS Files Appeals to NASA and State Department - On May 8, 1978, Citizens Against UFO Secrecy filed appeals to Robert Frosch, Administrator of NASA, and to Charles Hinkle, Director of Freedom of Information and Security Review, Department of Defense.

The NASA appeal pertained to a reply received to a CAUS FOIA request of March 18, 1978. On April 26, Miles Waggoner of NASA's Public Information Services Branch had responded to CAUS's request with what seems to be a capricious and flippant letter. Waggoner, whom had earlier indicated a NASA report entitled "UFO Study Considerations" had been prepared in cooperation with the CIA, this time denied CIA involvement by stating: "...there were no formal meetins (sic) or any correspondence with the CIA."

Despite evidence to the contrary, the NASA spokesman also denied there were records available pertaining to efforts by other agencies to suppress a UFO project, stating: "As far as input from other agencies, we have supplied you with all the correspondence we have regarding NASA's decision not to undertake a UFO study project."

The May 8th appeal by CAUS asks Administrator Frosch to examine Waggoner's conduct in accordance with subsection (4) (F) of the FOIA, submitting that the spokesman's response is both capricious and arbitrary—besides being inaccurate and inadequate. To date, Frosch has not replied.

The State Department appeal is the latest move in an escalating struggle to obtain release of classified UFO documents being held by State. It all began with a CAUS request on January 19, 1978, by Peter Gersten. In spite of the fact Gersten included the date-time-group, the transmit numbers and message serial number with his request, the State Department's FOIA Center replied that it could not locate the document despite repeated researches. On Feb. 28, 1978, the CAUS Director provided additional information about the message, including a detailed description of its text.

Over a month went by without the State Department acknowledging the follow-up letter. A phone call was made to Mary Spruell, FOIA Center employee. She stated that three messages had been found and sent to the Department of Defense's Office of Security and Review for clearance, adding that her department had no objection to their release. Spruell promised to call back in

a week or so and advise when the documents would be released, plus ask for advance payment of search/reproduction fees. No such call was received. After another two weeks had transpired, a call to the Security and Review Office was made. It claimed not to have received any documents from the Department of State for clearance. Back to the State Dept. Spruell asserted she had sent the documents over to DOD and promised to check into it. Again, no notification was received from either department even acknowledging they were considering CAUS's request. Thus, more drastic action became necessary.

A copy of an undated NICAP UFO Investigator was included with CAUS's May 8th appeal. The lead article of the Investigator, entitled "UFOs Force Government Action," indicates NICAP had access to the three documents CAUS is seeking. The article quotes extensively from State Department documents describing UFO incidents in Morocco on the same evening (morning) as the now-famous Iranian incident, September 20, 1976. The NICAP publication also refers to a message sent by Henry Kissinger, then Secretary of State, to the Moroccan government in response to their query.

CAUS's appeal asserts that since NICAP has already revealed most of the contents of the messages, the Security and Review office should clear them without delay. CAUS also asked for a waiver of search and reproduction fees, in light of all the delays and in line with subsection (4) (A) FOIA. As of this date, CAUS has received no response to its certified letter.

GSW Suit Against CIA Moving Along — Slowly But Surely - The Ground Saucer Watch, Inc., FOIA suit against the Central Intelligence Agency, despite being plagued by continuing funding problems, is headed for a showdown soon in Washington, DC.

CAUS legal consultant Peter Gersten, also under retainer by GSW in its clash with the CIA, recently disclosed plans to file a discovery motion in Washington during the first week of June. Gersten will submit to the U.S. Attorney's office an interrogatory comprising approximately 670 questions about the CIA's involvement with UFOs from 1946 to the present. Also included in the discovery motion are 100 separate requests for documents based on information provided by CAUS Director of Research Brad Sparks.

After filing the discovery motion, Gersten will give the CIA about 30 days to respond and will then move for summary judgement, asking the Court to rule in favor of GSW. It is anticipated that the discovery motion will force the CIA to delineate its role in the UFO cover-up for the first time.

In the meantime, GSW Director William Spaulding has reissued his appeal for donations to support the lawsuit, the lack of which has in the last two months caused some delays in preparing the interrogatory. Make checks payable to GSW, Inc., and specify the money is to be used for funding the lawsuit.

Recent Navy Radar/Visual Sighting Causes Press Flurry - By Steve Stoikes -

At the risk of offending the multitude who share UFO skeptic Ernest Taves' conviction that "simultaneous visual and radar sightings (of UFOs) have no value," CAUS takes the plunge and examines a recent radar-visual contact

which received a great deal of press attention.

The incident, details of which were carried on AP wires Tuesday, May 16, 1978, and by both wireservices, AP and UPI, on the following day, occurred the previous Sunday night, May 14, 1978, at the Pine Castle Electronic Warfare Tracking Station in central Florida.

Pine Castle is a restricted access U.S. Navy bombing range located near Orlando. The base is outfitted with an ultra-sophisticated "Tracking Acquisition" computer system, MSQ-102—one of only three such units in existence—that permits radar units to lock on and automatically track an object as well as provide information on range, elevation and so on.

Radar personnel at Pine Castle were first alerted to the presence of the UFO at approximately 10:30 in the evening on the 14th. The base was receiving phone calls from area residents who had been watching an object hovering in the area of the bombing range for an hour or so, and thought the lights were possibly from flares launched by the Navy facility. As a result of these phone calls, personnel from the mobile radar van went outside and noticed an object which was hovering just above the horizon at a distance of over 5,000 yards from the van. They watched the object for an hour and five minutes, then decided to warm up their radar and attempt to target the object. After the 20 minutes required to warm up the unit had passed, they managed to see the target for one sweep of the radar.

Ten minutes passed before the object—seen as a multitude of lights with the unaided eye, but resolved into three horizontal bands of red, green and white when observed through binoculars—was spotted visually from the observation tower 50 yards from the mobile van. The UFO was still just above tree-top level. Inside the van, radar personnel were in a bit of a technical dilemma. The radar unit could "see" the object but could not obtain a lock-on. Moments later the target again disappeared, both on radar and visually.

Several minutes elapsed before the object was again targeted. At around midnight the radar picked up the UFO again, target motion this time observed three to four miles northwest of the base at a somewhat higher altitude (clearing the trees), travelling southbound at a speed in excess of 500 knots. The UFO maintained this speed for five seconds, then accelerated two more seconds before it appeared to stop dead approximately 15 miles south of the base for a period of one second. While these antics were being witnessed on the radar scope in the mobile van, two men remained in the control tower, scanning the horizon with binoculars. The tower men witnessed both the stopping maneuver and closing run reported by radar personnel manning the scope.

Once the object had closed to within five miles of the base, it disappeared again, both visually and on radar, and for the last time.

Initially, it was supposed that the radar personnel who reported seeing the object from the control tower were, in fact, watching the planet Jupiter, which was right above the horizon. The radar target had exactly the same range

as the observation tower, and the scope, according to early speculation, could have been picking up a scattered reflection from the structure. Further investigation lessens the probability the sighting was attributable to such a set of circumstances. All personnel were cognizant of the positions of both Venus and Jupiter in the night sky and reported seeing both, in addition to the UFO. The radar-man denies the possibility that the object his scope painted was an anomalous propagation—a reflection of the tower used for radar calibration. He has been assigned to the same job for the past eight years at the base without any problems following calibration or confusion with the tower.

A follow-up investigation is being conducted at this time by (presumably) the Navy, and by Al Hendry of IUR and the Center For UFO Studies. In fact, this report is based on information provided by Hendry, who has interviewed many of the personnel involved in the incident and is in the process of securing a possible recorded radar image of the object from data storage tapes at Jacksonville Air Traffic Control Center, the airport facility responsible for the air corridor surrounding the Pine Castle area.

CAUS will keep an ear to the ground for further developments, and will try to ensure that no evidence is obfuscated or suppressed.

EME At Miramar and a UFO Crash Near Palm Springs? - On March 27, 1978, Navy officials were reportedly "stunned and puzzled" after three Navy planes suddenly and inexplicably crashed near San Diego. Within nine hours, an F-14 Tomcat

went out of control while making routine touch-and-go landings, an A-4 Skyhawk fell into the ocean 50 miles west of San Diego while on a routine training flight, and an S-3A anti-submarine plane from North Island Naval Air Station apparently exploded and crashed into the sea some six miles from its base.

The following day, March 28th, two men—one an art instructor at a nearby college and the other the owner of a packaging/shipping company—were on the phone with each other at about 8:30 in the evening discussing a business deal. The conversation, a local call between Laguna Beach and South Laguna, was interrupted shortly after it began by another call which had somehow crossed over into the line. Since the matter they had to discuss was fairly important, both men attempted to shout over the disruption. It wasn't until they heard one of the unwelcome parties say "...footprints leading from the site but none to it..." that the men decided to listen instead of talk.

The art instructor had a notepad handy and began recording notes. Both men listened carefully as the person speaking went on with his dissertation: "...In danger Geiger count readings...same footprints as before...one spotting, Palms Springs, eighth in three months...they dug eight feet down; everything in the area was dead...there were footprints leading from the site, but none leading to...they had it on radar for less than two seconds to touchdown... they don't know who they are or where they're from...it seems impossible that they can live unless they eject before they hit...they told the news media that it was a meteor...Miramar lost three planes...everything in the planes went haywire in the same part of the stratosphere..."

The person quoted from the art instructor's notes seemed to be giving a briefing to someone he addressed as "General." The "General" could not be heard, however, although there were pauses in the conversation in which he was presumably speaking. In addition, the speaker mentioned reporting all this to "Washington" and to a "General Kelly," whom he said would be out to investigate.

Shortly after overhearing this incredible conversation, the two men contacted a couple of newspapers and several television stations, hoping that someone in the news media could get to the bottom of it. To their dismay, no one seemed to believe them or be interested to the point of doing anything about it. In desperation they turned to the UFO Report Center of Orange County, an affiliate of Dr. Hynek's Center For UFO Studies, and called the Center's 24-hour hotline. Professor Alvin H. Lawson of California State University at Long Beach, sole owner and operator of the Center, listened to the men and became convinced they were sincere. Lawson began making inquiries and filing Freedom of Information requests to nearby Navy and Air Force installations, asking for logs and reports pertaining to the items listed in the art instructor's notes, which he quoted in his FOIA letters.

As of this date, Lawson has not received a single confirmation as the result of his requests that anything in the overheard phone call was based on fact. CAUS picked up the story about a month ago and made several queries to confidential sources. So far, responses have been negative. CAUS also placed a phone call to the pilot of the A-4 Skyhawk, Lt. Evan Chanik, who was rescued at sea and back on duty soon after the incident. Chanik did not react as though

he had experienced any unusual difficulty prior to crashing, such as EME or disruption similar to that encountered by the Iranian F-4s on September 20, 1976. In fact, Chanik said, the accident was being attributed to a malfunction unique to the A-4. He did not seem to be lying.

While both witnesses involved in the overheard phone call seem to be sincere and credible, no evidence has been found to substantiate any portion of what they say they heard. Lawson, meanwhile, continues with his investigation; CAUS will monitor and assist wherever possible.

Crashed UFO In Bolivia? - As usual of reports coming out of South America, details are still sketchy on an incident involving the crash of a purported UFO in Bolivia. CAUS first heard about it through a brief article in a Madison, Wis., newspaper on May 16, 1978, in which a UPI story reported that NASA was investigating a physical evidence case involving a UFO which had "exploded" somewhere in Bolivia.

On Thursday, May 18th, CAUS phoned NASA in an attempt to ascertain details of the incident. Curiously, there seemed to be a widespread attack of "Blue Flu" in the NASA Public Affairs Office, as spokesman after spokesman was reported being "home sick." Finally, Debbie Rahn, an assistant to NASA Public Affairs officer Ken Morris, provided information about a message originated by the U.S. embassy in La Paz. The message, La Paz #3804, date-time-group May 15/1920Z, was based on a Bolivian newspaper account reporting that an object had crashed near the Bolivia/Argentina border; the Bolivian Air Force would investigate to determine what it was and where it came from.

About UPI's allegation that NASA was in Bolivia investigating, Rahn said: "From what we have been able to determine, NASA has not sent anyone down there." Rahn labelled the UPI report "false." The La Paz message, she said, had NASA on the distribution because "...State Department wanted to know if anyone else knew anything." The object and the incident involved in sighting it were not described in any detail in the La Paz report, Rahn added, and then referred CAUS to a Colonel Robert Eddington in the State Department for further details.

CAUS contacted Col. Eddington; he said, "They (NASA) have had numerous inquiries and immediately contacted us." Eddington said his office was part of the "Bureau of Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs," and "kept track of launches." In regard to the purported crashed UFO, Eddington stated: "We have received communications from our people (in Bolivia) who have also seen newspaper accounts...What we do not have is any first-hand information that, in fact, the object does exist...I have second-hand information that the newspaper accounts indicate an object some four meters in diameter."

Eddington added that the object was described in some accounts as "egg-shaped," and there was some indication it might be "solid." The Colonel speculated that if that were the case, the object might be "...some bit of tankage—a near spherical liquid oxygen/hydrogen tank from a booster...four meters is a big tank." He added that his department could not correlate the reported object with the reentry of any known space debris. CAUS asked to be kept advised of further developments and subsequently sent a FOIA request for all La Paz traffic related to the incident.

Eddington's office was contacted again on the date of this writing (May 25, 1978); office personnel said they could provide no further information, that there were no further developments.

In the meantime, Len Stringfield, fast becoming the country's leading crashed saucer expert, provided CAUS with a few details about the Bolivian incident he had garnered from a recent Cincinnati Enquirer article. According to the newspaper account, the incident occurred near a village called "Padcaya," otherwise not identified or described. The object was said to have been "a large lighted object," which crashed somewhere on a 13,000 ft mountain on May 6, 1978. The article said an expedition of Bolivian scientists and military had been mounted to recover the object, but the operation had been delayed by bad weather.

Bob Pratt, the National Enquirer's UFO expert, is reported to be in Bolivia at the moment running the story down. (One can almost picture Pratt aboard a donkey, tape recorder in hand, attacking the slopes in search of the elusive booster tank.)

In any case, between relying on Pratt's diligence and hounding Eddington, CAUS anticipates getting the full story—eventually.

CAUS would like to express its gratitude to Al Hendry, one of the brightest lights in UFOlogy, for his kind mention in International UFO Reporter, and for his extensive cooperation in our investigations. Hendry is without a doubt one of the most objective and intelligent UFOlogists in the world, and his forthcoming book promises to be just what UFOlogy needed—a researcher's guide that will lay it out for us from A to Z.
