

Carter's Broken Promise - II

By Larry W. Bryant

My article in the December, 1979, issue of Just Cause has prompted some reader response. A well-known researcher on the West Coast writes:

"I have been completely unable to find any evidence whatsoever that Carter ever made the statement that he would 'make every piece of information this country has about UFO sightings available to the public and the scientists.' It was printed in the National Enquirer, as have been innumerable misquotations about UFO's from all kinds of people, including myself. Bill Pitts NE reporter provided me with a transcript of the actual statement made to the Enquirer reporter; it was in March 1976:

'Reporter: If you were President, would you reopen inquiries into UFO's?

'JC: Oh, no, but I would make information we have in regard to sightings available to the public.

'Reporter: The U. S. used to have a body that investigated UFO's. That's been discontinued. Would you reopen it?

'JC: I don't know yet.'

"In another campaign press conference (on Steve Tom's new 2-record set):

'I don't see any reason to keep information like that secret. But there may be some aspects of the UFO information that, uh, with which I am not familiar that might be related to some secret experiments we were doing that might involve our national security or new weapon systems. I certainly wouldn't release that, but if it was something removed from our national security, you know, in my opinion as President, I'd go ahead and release it. I see nothing wrong with that.'

"I think there can be no doubt that the duplication of the flight capability of flying saucers by us or any other nation would have an enormous impact on national security. I for one do NOT want all data about flying saucers released to the public. I do think a statement should be made that some UFO's are ET spacecraft and that the technology could have a substantial impact and that we should all turn our attention to what it means for us to be visited . . . I do not think it appropriate to beat the dead horse of a nonexistent campaign pledge. A passing comment in a press conference situation cannot be taken to be a pledge.

"I'm looking forward to your response or a first-hand demonstration that Carter did make the pledge you attribute to him."

PRESIDENTIAL FOLKLORE

Simply stated, my response is that it matters little, now, whether Carter actually made a campaign pledge to free-up all official UFO data. Since numerous citizens apparently believe he made the pledge, the effect of that collective belief is that he did make it -- especially when you consider that he's never denied making it. So it's not a question of beating a dead horse; it's a question of keeping the beast alive so that we may reach a diagnosis of his malady.

To that end, on December 19, 1979, CAUS sent the following letter to President Jimmy Carter:

"It has been widely and frequently reported in the news media that you made the following promise/pledge during your first-term presidential election campaign:

'I will make every piece of information this country has about UFO sightings available to the public and the scientists.'

"Since that time, scores of persons have written to the White House to voice their sentiments about that alleged statement. Most of these persons have received a form-letter reply that neither confirmed nor denied whether you actually made the statement that prompted their inquiries. As a consequence, there is a growing controversy over whether your alleged promise/pledge actually was worded as quoted above and whether it has been fulfilled or forsaken in the course of your presidency. In order to clarify the issue, therefore, we pose the following two questions:

"(1) What is the true content of the alleged promise/pledge (assuming it ever was made)?

"(2) Do you consider that your administration has fulfilled all or any part of it? If so, please explain.

"We realize that this letter likely will be forwarded to an agency or official designated to respond to UFO-related inquiries addressed by the public to your office. But we as a public-interest group feel entitled to substantially more than a form-letter response from a functionary who has neither the time nor inclination to assist in the clarification of this issue."

THE MACHINERY FOR UFO-CORRESPONDENCE REFERRAL

Fully expecting the White House to forward that letter to the newly appointed dumping ground for citizens' UFO-related inquiries -- the National Aeronautics and Space Administration -- I got a bit of surprise. It came in a letter from Daniel M. Chew, Director of Presidential Correspondence, on March 19, 1980:

"This is to acknowledge your letter to President Carter. Please accept my sincere apology for the delay in my replying.

"Since the volume of mail prevents the President from responding personally to each communication he receives, he has asked the departments and agencies of the Federal government to reply on his behalf in those instances where they have special knowledge or special authority under the law.

"For this reason we are forwarding your correspondence to officials of the Department of Defense. You may expect to hear from them shortly if they are able to help you in any way.

"You may be interested to know that President Carter asked the National Aeronautics and Space Administration about the advisability of reopening formal investigations into reported unidentified flying objects.

"Officials of NASA reported back to the President that such investigations do not seem warranted. However, they also indicated that they would be willing to reconsider the question if evidence from credible sources is presented in the future."

What surprised me, of course, in Mr. Chew's form-letter response, was his decision to forward our letter to the Air Force rather than to NASA. Isn't the Air Force out of the UFO public-relations business? I wondered. Not exactly.

There seems to exist at the White House mailroom an unpublicized Standing Operating Procedure that goes like this: "If the inquiry addresses the issue of UFO secrecy or censorship of sighting data, send it over to the Air Force; if it dwells on the technical or scientific aspects of UFOlogy, send it to NASA."

As if confirming this processing policy, the Air Force, on March 28th, had its Col. F. W. Hausmann write me a letter that not only contained the stock phraseology of its expected formletterese but also artfully avoided providing me direct answers to our specific questions:

"Thank you for your recent letter to President Carter concerning unidentified flying objects (UFOs).

"As you are no doubt aware, with the termination of Project Blue Book in November 1969, the Air Force regulation establishing and controlling the program for investigating and analyzing UFOs was rescinded. Project Blue Book documents have been selected for inclusion in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and are readily available to any interested parties.

"In this regard, the Air Force has no information which is being withheld from the public. Since the termination of Project Blue Book, no evidence has been presented to indicate that further investigation of UFOs by the Air Force is warranted and I must report that in the current circumstances, the Department of Defense is not likely to renew involvement in this area. As you are aware, the considerable and fruitless Air Force commitment of resources in the past, and the extreme pressure on Department of Defense funds at this time, preclude such renewed effort.

"Additionally, I have no knowledge of any federal agency tasked with or funded for further investigation of UFO phenomena. This is not meant to deny or refute the experiences various individuals allege to have had with UFOs; rather, it appears to be a pragmatic use of our federal resources in the face of the many pressing needs and problems confronting our Nation.

"I hope this information will clarify the Air Force position as an investigating agency on this matter."

A PRESIDENTIAL FINGER STILL IN THE PIE?

Aside from the USAF-NASA pigeonholing, the White House does have at least one other option in its art of dodging citizens' inquiries pertaining to the role of the Presidency in official UFOlogy: it sometimes chooses to dispatch its own form-letter response, as in the case of Mr. Chew's reply of March 28, 1980, to a letter from CAUS member Richard W. Heiden:

"As promised in my February 12th letter, I have looked further into your concerns about President Carter's efforts to clear up the recurring question about the existence of unidentified flying objects.

"The attached NASA Information Sheet /No. 78-17/ is self-explanatory. The President's science adviser agreed with the space agency that, in the absence of tangible or physical evidence of the existence of UFOs, there is little to be gained from mounting another full-scale investigation along the lines of the U. S. Air Force Project Blue Book.

"Although NASA to date has not received one piece of physical evidence for laboratory analysis, NASA officials are keeping an open mind on the subject."

Whether you view it as a promise that as misconstrued, a promise that as summarily broken, or a promise written only on the fantasies of the hard-core UFOphile, Jimmy Carter's inoperative entry into the politics of UFOlogy will linger on even after the presidential election in November. In the meantime, of course, Mr. Carter has a chance to revive the comatose stallion of his promise and thus redeem himself to those citizens (and voters) who, fairly or unfairly, have attributed to him a new hope for objective governmental treatment of the UFO enigma.

• • • • •

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATE . . .

The Fund for UFO Research

The newly established Fund for UFO Research, Inc., a privately directed, nonprofit organization chartered to do for serious UFO research what the Ford Foundation, say, does for basic research (with only a fraction of the Ford-style monetary outlay), is incorporated in Washington, D. C (mail address: P. O. Box 277, Mt. Rainier, MD 20822).

With a distinguished board of directors and a growing corps of supporters and contributors, the Fund shortly will begin consideration of formal research proposals. For guidelines on the formatting and evaluation criteria of any soundly thought-out and adequately justified proposal that you might have toward bringing the UFO subject into objective focus, you are invited to write direct to the Fund.

Should any such proposal have a bearing on the issue of official UFO secrecy policy/practices, you might wish to compare notes with CAUS. Citizens Against UFO Secrecy is available to help you in defining terms, checking cross references, determining adequacy of data sources, and otherwise improving the articulation of the proposal before you commit the final draft to consideration by the Fund. Once that commitment is made, it's up to you and the Fund to negotiate an acceptance of the proposal. If you need further assistance from CAUS during the course of this negotiation and/or during execution of the accepted proposal, we will try to work out an arrangement.

FUNDING FOR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Fund will consider proposals to use the U. S. Freedom of Information Act (and any lawsuits deemed advisable thereunder) to pry loose from Federal confines any policy/technical information identified as essential to public understanding of the UFO controversy. In this connection, you may wish to contribute directly to the Fund any donations previously contemplated for the CAUS Legal Pursuit Fund; your donations will then be tax-deductible.

Assuming that the Fund will support FOIA actions -- as it has indicated an interest in doing -- this new relationship between the Fund and CAUS will help assure proper fiscal management of contributions to future legal activism, and will serve as an example of how organized private UFOlogy can work toward common goals. It is expected that the progress of any UFO-secrecy-related proposal accepted by the Fund will be publicized regularly in the pages of Just Cause for the remainder of your subscription, and thereafter in the monthly MUFON UFO Journal.

A NOTE ON THE FUTURE OF JUST CAUSE

This issue of Just Cause represents not so much a rebirth of CAUS activity as it does an effort to deal with the unfilled portion of current subscriptions. Negotiations for a leading UFO-research organization to acquire the CAUS mailing list and to fill our outstanding subscription orders with issues of the organization's journal have been suspended because of unresolved financial aspects. In the meantime, we'll try to publish as many future issues as available resources (including printing funds and newsworthy material) will allow. Though we have ceased solicitation of new subscription orders, we still offer for sale xerographic copies of all back issues -- at \$2.00 per copy, postpaid. Please address your orders to:

Citizens Against UFO Secrecy
P. O. Box 4743
Arlington, VA 22204 - U.S.A.

Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS)

P. O. Box 4743
Arlington, VA 22204

MAIL FIRST CLASS TO:

UFOs? What UFOs? Records? What records?

THE PLAIN DEALER
NOV. 8 1981
CLEVELAND OHIO

By Ward Sinclair

WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON

The U.S. government says it keeps no records on unidentified flying objects, because they don't exist.

But 131 secret documents about UFOs in the files of the National Security Agency (NSA) have become the subject of an intense legal battle.

Would the documents disclose startling details about the flying saucers, or UFOs, that more than 10 million Americans claim to have seen? Would disclosure compromise NSA's sophisticated eavesdropping techniques? Is it all buncombe? Or is it all too frightening to contemplate?

Apparently only NSA can answer those questions and NSA isn't talking. NSA, in fact, refuses to talk and its reticence is being challenged in the federal courts.

Eleven months ago, U.S. District Judge Gerhard A. Gesell held that the documents were so sensitive that their release might endanger national security. Gesell did not review the documents. His decision was based on a 21-page top-secret affidavit given him in chambers by NSA.

The battle last week reached the U.S. Court of Appeals, where a small organization known as Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS), arguing for release of the NSA documents, told a three-judge panel that the government cannot have it both ways.

If UFOs do not exist, CAUS attorney Peter A. Gersten of New York told the court, then Uncle Sam has nothing to hide. If they do exist, then we may be in big trouble — and we ought to know about it. But NSA's lip stays buttoned.

The suit brought by CAUS under the Freedom of Information Act is another in a series of challenges to the powers of spy outfits such as NSA, the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency to withhold virtually anything they want under the guise of national security.

"The government position is that UFOs are not a threat and that the government does not study UFOs," Gersten told the appeals panel. If the panel does not order disclosure, he said, Gesell at least should be directed to review the 131 UFO documents and decide for himself just how sensitive they really are.

Arguing for NSA, attorney Cheryl M. Long said there is no way the documents, no matter what they show, could be released without exposing and compromising the intelligence-gathering techniques of the agency, which include global electronic snooping and code-breaking.

CAUS' appetite for government documents was whetted by the 1978 release of Air Force and CIA reports on UFO sightings that were deemed to have no national security implications. Ground Saucer Watch, a Phoenix-based UFO monitoring organization, forced the release through freedom-of-information suits.

Those documents revealed that in October, November and December of 1975, reliable military personnel saw unconventional and unexplained aerial objects hovering around nuclear weapons storage sites, aircraft alert areas and missile-control complexes at installations across the northern United States.

In some instances, as radar sightings of the objects were made, Air Force fighter planes were sent aloft in unsuccessful pursuit, although the records gave no indication that the fighters fired on the intruders.

CAUS and the Fund for UFO Research, based in Mount Rainier, Md., noting the sixth anniversary two weeks ago of a celebrated series of sightings over Loring Air Force Base in Maine, brought a wit-

ness to Washington to tell his story at a news conference.

Stephen B. Eichner, a now-retired sergeant who was on duty when a strange object hovered over the Loring ammunition dump, described in some detail what he saw in 1975 and said that officials at the base tended to discount his and other witnesses' reports.

Eichner told how he and fellow airmen had seen a football-shaped reddish orange object, three or four car-lengths long, hovering over the Loring dump. He said the object suddenly vanished, then reappeared some distance away at the end of a runway.

Numerous other visual and radar sightings were made at Loring. Air Force planes were scrambled in a luckless attempt to track down the object. The Air Force generally theorized that the object was an unidentified helicopter, but Eichner said last week it made no noise and could not be mistaken for a helicopter.

Gersten said CAUS intends to file another freedom of information suit against the Air Force this month in an effort to force disclosure of more data on the series of still unexplained 1975 sightings over Strategic Air Command bases.

Local News

THEODORE G. SAUPPE - Chairman; ALLAN J. MANAK - Vice Chairman and Group Astronomer; CAROL J. HILBERG - Secretary and Treasurer; RICK R. HILBERG - Public Affairs Director; ELMER F. SCHUTT - Technical Consultant; MERRY J. TROYER - Membership Chairman; JOHN P. TIMMERMAN - Consultant, United States and WERNER WALTER - Consultant, West Germany, CENAP

Meetings
4 March 1982
1 April 1982
6 May 1982

At the 4 March meeting Robert S. Easley will discuss, in a new illustrated slide lecture, the controversial subject of "UFO Contactees". This lecture will look at early "contactees" such as George Adamski, Howard Menger, Dan Fry, Woody Derenberger, and others in an attempt to determine whether their claims of alien contact are true or not. If time permits, a seventeen minute color science film entitled "The Solar System" will be shown. This animated film, narrated by Richard Basehart, looks at the origin of the solar system and the make-up of the planets. The regular monthly features, which include the "UFO Sightings Map" and "UFO-Comp", the group's Computer Project, along with a run-down of local, national and world-wide UFO sightings, will also be given. NOUFOG meetings are held the first Thursday of each month beginning at 7:30 PM at the Parma Regional Library, 5850 Ridge Road (just south of Ridge/Snow intersection).

Full Membership in the NORTHERN OHIO UFO GROUP is \$10.00 per year, and entitles you to attend all monthly meetings for free besides receiving the UFO JOURNAL each month. Full Members will also receive discounts on special lectures, conventions or shows that the Group may sponsor. To join see the Membership Chairman at one of the meetings.

Associate Membership in NOUFOG is \$6.00 per year or \$11.50 for two years. This entitles you to receive the UFO JOURNAL monthly, mailed in an envelope via first class mail.

* * * * *

Be sure to listen each and every Sunday night to the "UFO JOURNAL" on FM radio WBWC at 88.3 on your dial. America's only weekly talk show on UFOs features host John Basalla interviewing Robert S. Easley, Allan J. Manak and Rick R. Hilberg. The show, from 5 to 7 PM., also takes your call-in questions, by dialing 826-2145 or 826-2187.

* * * * *

For the latest information on the 19th Annual NATIONAL UFO CONFERENCE, to be held in the Parma Memorial Auditorium on 29 May 1982, be sure to attend the March NOUFOG meeting! This convention, being sponsored by the "UFO JOURNAL" and UAPA, will be the biggest one of 1982! Featured speakers include Gray Barker, James W. Moseley, Tom Benson, Edward Biebel, Werner Walter, Larry Blazey, and many more! Tickets for the afternoon (1 - 4) session and the evening (7 - ?) session will be available at the March meeting at a special "Pre-Convention Discount Price" so be sure to attend this important meeting!

Local News

THEODORE G. SAUPPE - Chairman; ALLAN J. MANAK - Vice Chairman and Group Astronomer; CAROL J. HILBERG - Secretary and Treasurer; RICK R. HILBERG - Public Affairs Director; ELMER F. SCHUTT - Technical Consultant; JOHN P. TIMMERMAN - Consultant, United States and WERNER WALTER - Consultant, West Germany, CENAP

Meetings
1 April 1982
6 May 1982
29 May 1982

At the 1 April meeting, to honor the "Holiday", UAPA will present a special never-before-shown illustrated slide lecture on little known UFO photographs, many of which are extremely rare. These photographs will both amaze and startle you! A 22 minute color science film entitled "Mars Minus Myth" will be shown. Using photographs made by the Mariner and Viking satellites, a scientist explains major findings of the expeditions; discusses origins of land forms, discovery of ice in the polar caps, and the improbability of life on the planet. Should be a highly interesting film. The regular monthly features, which include the "UFO Sightings Map" and "UFOCOM", the Group's Computer Project, along with a run-down of local, national and world-wide UFO sightings, will also be given. NOUFOG meetings are held the first Thursday of each month beginning at 7:30 PM at the Parma Regional Library, 5850 Ridge Road (just south of Ridge/Snow intersection).

For the latest information on the 19th Annual NATIONAL UFO CONFERENCE, to be held in the Parma Memorial Auditorium on 29 May 1982, be sure to attend the April NOUFOG meeting! This convention, being sponsored by the "UFO JOURNAL" and UAPA, will be the biggest one of 1982! Featured speakers include Gray Barker, James W. Moseley, Tom Benson, Edward Biebel, Werner Walter, Larry Blazey, Robert Goerman and many more! Tickets for the afternoon (1 - 4) session and the evening (7 - ?) session will be available at the April meeting at a special "Pre-Convention Discount Price" so be sure to attend this important meeting!

CAUS Files For Appeal To U.S. Supreme Court

The Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS) legal action against the National Security Agency has moved to the court of last resort. Peter Gersten, attorney for CAUS, on February 1, 1982, filed a petition for "writ of certiorari" with the Supreme Court to call up from the United States Federal Court of Appeals the records of their decision and those of the District Court of Appeals the records of their decision and those of the District Court of Appeals pertaining to this case, both of which decided in favor of the National Security Agency on the grounds that to release the documents would not be in the interests of "national security." The Supreme Court agrees to hear only about one in a thousand cases appealed, so the probability of a hearing must be regarded as a "long shot."

In a conversation with Attorney Gersten on January 28th, the details of current other legal actions were revealed. In a continuing effort to secure UFO-related documents from government agencies under the Freedom of Information Act, CAUS has been requesting each month from five or six NORAD regions copies of all documents involving UFO incidents. The Air Force through NORAD has had a standard procedure which involves a fee for the retrieval and copying of such documents, but any fees under \$30.00 were automatically waived. However, the several NORAD regions have now grouped their fees to CAUS so that the amount totals more than the amount they will waive, in an apparent attempt to discourage the continuing request for such documents. Working with the limited funds, monthly fees of approximately \$200.00 with no guarantee that documents will be found become a major obstacle for CAUS which must depend upon individual donations from the general public of interested persons for their total financial support.

For this reason, CAUS has discontinued requests to the NORAD regions for UFO documents until a decision can be made on the matter of fee waivers. A similar problem exists with the CIA and with the State Department. They, together with the Air Force, have all refused to waive fees for the document searches requested by CAUS. This precipitates a time-consuming administrative procedure wherein CAUS must request that each separate agency waive its fees. The denial of waiver is followed by an appeal to each agency. A denial of the appeal leaves a law suit as the next step. All three agencies are now in the process of considering the appeals by CAUS. If they deny the appeals, Attorney Peter Gersten will then put together a law suit naming all three agencies as defendants, suing for a waiver of fees and letting the courts determine whether in fact the public's right to information relating to government UFO documents merits a waiver of fees.

As far as the law suit against the Air Force is concerned, there will be one and it is just a matter of when. It will encompass the documents being withheld which concern radar tracks of unknowns during 1975 detected and recorded by NORAD.

In a related matter, the State Department has just acknowledged the existence of four documents previously unreported, one of which they are withholding in its entirety. Attorney Gersten added that CAUS intends to appeal for that document and, if necessary, sue for its release. A second of the four documents involved an incident over Kuwait during 1978 which was reported and discussed by Gersten during his press conference at the MUFON 1981 Conference at M.I.T. in Cambridge. The third document also involved Kuwait, but during 1980. Gersten said he had seen that document earlier, but doesn't think many others have. He is sending a copy of it to CUFOS for sharing with our ASSOCIATES in a future periodical. The fourth document relates to a 1980 UFO incident near Buenos Aires which Gersten had not seen before and this will also be published as soon as possible following its receipt. □

Washington News Conference Provides Perspective

Though a relatively small number of journalists turned out for a special news conference called by CAUS in Washington, D.C. on October 27, 1981, those who did seemed to be engrossed in what Attorney Peter Gersten had to say. The thrust of his presentation was that no longer can the Federal Government ignore its responsibility to (1) be honest with the public on the contents of official UFO documentation and to (2) bring its worldwide resources to bear upon revealing what Gersten called the "ultimate secret:" what are the so-called unidentified flying objects?

Gersten tied this two-fold obligation to the inherent weakness of the government's position on official UFO research, as evidenced by the failure of the Defense agencies to cope with the now-famous series of UFO fly-overs at some sensitive U.S. military installations in the Northeast back in 1975. With a geography-chronology "backgrounder" presented by colleague Dr. Bruce S. Macabee, an optical physicist working for the Navy, Gersten proceeded to let the 1975 "flap" evidence speak for itself, adding to it a surprise witness, as it were, in the person of a former Air Force sergeant, who countered the Air Force contention that the UFO sightings at Loring AFB, Maine, could be attributed to nothing more than "unknown helicopter" activity.

The government's "bee-sting" (or "isolated-incident," in USAF parlance) approach to formal investigation of UFO encounters should not be tolerated by the American citizenry, Gersten said. The nation's security is at stake, he averred, so much so that individual citizens like the UFO-victimized Betty Cash and others of Dayton, Texas are fast losing confidence in the ability of government authorities to come to grips with the UFO problem.

(Continued on Pg. 6, Col. 1)