

# Secret air base no dream

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COX NEWS SERVICE

DAYTON, Ohio - Authorities have cracked down on journalists' attempts to photograph the secret air base in Nevada dubbed Dreamland.

On Friday, Lincoln County sheriff's deputies confiscated an ABC news team's camera gear. ABC producer Robert Haberl, who was with the team, said deputies seized about \$100,000 worth of equipment and handed it over to unidentified guards.

Deputies aided by an unmarked Blackhawk helicopter also seized film

from a New York Times news team on March 23, said Glenn Campbell, a Nevada resident and anti-secrecy advocate.

Campbell said he was with both groups when the incidents occurred.

The crackdown comes in the wake of increasing publicity about Dreamland, a large facility on the edge of Groom Dry Lake 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

Since the 1950s, Dreamland has been a test site for the government's most secret aircraft projects, including the U-2 and SR-71 spy planes and the

F-117 Stealth fighter.

Dreamland is located deep within a vast military training range controlled by Nellis Air Force Base near Las Vegas. Officially, the base doesn't exist. But it's plainly visible from a rocky outcrop called Freedom Ridge a dozen miles away.

Campbell said both news teams were stopped by sheriff's deputies after visiting the ridge. He said the deputies claimed they had been seen photographing the base.

Haberl said the ABC crew was on the ridge to interview Campbell

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## to journalists

and other Dreamland observers for ABC World News Tonight. He said the photographer deliberately avoided aiming his camera at the secret base, "but they chose not to believe us."

He said the deputies handed the items over to the unidentified guards, who disappeared in the direction of the secret base. Since the base isn't supposed to exist and the guards carry no identification, Haberl said he doesn't know where to go to get the equipment back.

Nellis Air Force Base spokesman

Force Office of Special Investigations is "assisting in a security review" because the sheriff's department lacked the means to do it.

Freedom Ridge's view of Dreamland has made it a minor tourist attraction. The Air Force has asked the Bureau of Land Management to remove it and other nearby overlooks from public use, but the action has only increased publicity.

Signs posted near the ridge claim photography is prohibited by federal law.