

The Groom Lake Desert Rat

"The Naked Truth from Open Sources."

AREA 51/NELLIS RANGE/TTR/NTS/S-4?/WEIRD STUFF/DESERT LORE

An on-line newsletter. Written, published, [copyrighted](#) and totally disavowed by [Psychospy](#). Direct from the "UFO Capital," Rachel, Nevada.

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Media Violence Hinted In F.R. Incident

Two reporters from separate television affiliates nearly came to blows on May 21 over exclusive broadcast rights to a UFO outing.

The incident, witnessed by this reporter, occurred at about 8 pm on Freedom Ridge, a viewpoint on public land overlooking the unacknowledged Groom Lake air base. About half of the approximately thirty campers were a group of mostly first-time UFO watchers from Fresno, Calif., accompanied by a reporter and cameraman from a Fresno TV station. Most of the others were refugees from a lackluster UFO conference in Rachel, accompanied by a reporter and cameraman from Salt Lake City. To avoid conflicts with the authorities, the two crews were photographing the campers on the ridge but not the secret base itself.

The conflict occurred when the crew from Salt Lake attempted to interview the leader of the Fresno UFO group. The reporter from Fresno intervened, saying that his station had been granted exclusive rights to the story of the Fresno people and that the Salt Lake City station could not interview any of them. The Salt Lake reporter said he didn't see what the problem was, since his story would air only in Utah. The Fresno reporter replied that the Salt Lake crew could interview the Fresno people only if they guaranteed, in writing, that their report would not go out on the satellite to any other station. The Salt Lake City crew said they could not make that guarantee.

Harsh words were then exchanged, including the word "asshole" spoken more than once.

No physical blows were struck, however. The Salt Lake City crew halted their interview with the Fresno leader, but they later interviewed a different member of the group without seeking permission of the Fresno reporter. In that case, the Fresno crew did not attempt to intervene. The tensions ended when the Salt Lake crew completed their shooting at about 9 pm and left the area.

The Fresno crew stayed until morning but ruined everyone else's night vision with their brightly lit interviews of adventurous Fresnoans hunting for UFOs. Also spending the night on the ridge were three employees of a MAJOR CABLE NETWORK on a scouting mission. They and this reporter--sophisticated Eastern intellectuals--sat around the

campfire telling Ted Turner jokes and making clever and uncomplimentary remarks about the Fresno reporter just out of range of his hearing.

No UFOs were spotted.

ANALYSIS: Psychospy was greatly amused by the above conflict. Not only have news outlets discovered Area 51, but enough of them are now coming here that they are starting to gouge each other's eyes out to protect their turf. The "Asshole Incident" must be a milestone of some kind. It could signal the beginning of a MEDIA FEEDING FRENZY (MFF). This is a rare confluence of public scandal, tawdry human interest, unresolved legal charges and sufficient prior publicity that renders a story self-perpetuating and turns respectable reporters into back-stabbing bastards. Did you think the Groom Lake story was overexposed already? Just remember Harding-Kerrigan, Fisher-Buttafuoco and the amazing Bobbitts. Too much is never enough when an MFF has crossed the threshold.

Land Grab Update

The Air Force request to withdraw Freedom Ridge and White Sides from public use appears to be mired in BLM bureaucracy. Local BLM officials tell the Rat that they do not expect the technical requirements of the application to be fulfilled for at least five months (late October). This means that these popular viewpoints will continue to be accessible through at least the busy summer tourist season.

The principle task facing the Air Force at present is to modify the required Environmental Assessment Report (EA) to address many of the concerns raised during the public comment period. When completed, a draft version of the EA will be made available to the public for a separate 30-day comment period before the final report is issued. It is expected that the public will raise numerous objections to the EA which could further delay the application.

BLM Area Manager Curtis Tucker and District Supervisor Gary Ryan say that a meeting took place between BLM and Air Force officials in late April. BLM offered three options to the Air Force: (1) They could proceed with the current application, based on 43 CFR Part 2300; (2) they could request an immediate emergency withdrawal through the Secretary of the Interior, or (3) they could take the issue to Congress. The Air Force representatives indicated that they would proceed with the current application.

ANALYSIS: Contrary to popular conception, the federal government can't simply "do whatever it wants." The government may be big, but it consists of many agencies pursuing different agendas which are often in conflict with each other. Whenever one part of the government tries to engage in a controversial public action, it usually has to obey the regulations and procedures of another part of the government. The Air Force can't take land without applying to BLM and completing the appropriate application and assessments, and this process is probably no less frustrating to the Air Force than it would be to a private citizen.

In hindsight, the AF application to take the viewpoints was an extraordinary blunder. Instead of protecting the secrecy of the nonexistent base, it launched it into the public eye. Now mired in multiple scandals, the options available to the AF are limited. A direct petition to Congress could trigger an embarrassing public interrogation and even a flat rejection, while an application for emergency withdrawal--for reasons of immediate "national security"--would be seen as an admission of defeat in the political process. Either action would further intensify the publicity and public outcry.

Even with no change of tactic, the pressures on the AF continue to build. In the past, the Air Force has taken on Saddam, napalmed the jungles of 'Nam and stared down the Soviets across the Iron Curtain. Now it must tangle with an enemy it is totally unprepared to face: American tourists. The MFF has already hit millions of households, and Freedom Ridge has earned a reputation as this year's adventure destination. Here's an attraction the whole family can enjoy, where you can see the forbidden and challenge the authorities while never breaking the law. Combine the Area 51 publicity with that generated by a slew of equally unreal fantasy attractions just opened in Las Vegas, and you have what could be a KILLER tourist season. At this moment across America, thousands of Momma Bears, Poppa Bears and little pimply Baby Bears are sitting over their porridge deciding what to do with their summer vacation. Goldilocks, this is the place!

Tourism has the effect of keeping the nonexistent base in the public eye, while continued stonewalling by the Air Force attracts still more attention. In the absence of reliable facts, the secret base becomes a tabloid writer's dream. New scandals emerge with regularity and are fueled by the official refusal to respond. Sooner or later, some Congressman who has lost a military base in his district is bound to jump on the bandwagon: How can the military justify closing his base when it is still pouring untold billions into this nonexistent one? That's when the Air Force is really going to bleed.

It's hard to imagine the impasse continuing for long. Very soon, we predict, the Air Force will break its silence and reveal that the Groom Lake base is there. Until then, the tensions continue.

"Bombing Runs" On Public Land?

Unable to control public lands legally, the Air Force may be tempted to do it by other means. Many land-use advocates are upset by the road sensors installed by the Air Force on public land and by the regular "stalking" of visitors by unidentified contractors in white Jeep Cherokees. This presence seems to imply that the AF, not BLM, is the controlling power on these lands. More upsetting, though, are persistent reports of the anonymous security patrols physically interfering with visitors.

On May 19, two tourists from Texas, Richard Bailey and Ray Addington, reported being stopped on a public road by a white Jeep Cherokee. They say they were driving down Groom Lake Road toward the Freedom Ridge area at about 4:30 pm when they encountered a patrol blocking the road. Although they were on public land still seven miles from the military border, an armed guard in camouflage fatigues told them they could go no further. The two witnesses later filed a formal complaint with the Lincoln County Sheriff in which they recalled the following exchange.

ARMED GUARD: "We are not allowing anyone beyond this point."

VISITING DRIVER: "Why?"

GUARD: "We have things going on."

DRIVER: "What kind of things?"

GUARD: "We are having bombing runs."

We find it highly unlikely that the Air Force was having bombing runs on public land (except, perhaps, to bomb Freedom Ridge and White Sides into oblivion). We think that a more likely (but still unproven) explanation is that some secret hardware was being moved around at the base, and the guards were trying to keep people off the viewpoints so they wouldn't see it.

This incident presents a disturbing echo of the past. In 1984, the Air Force, without notice, set up guard posts and took control of the entire Groom Mountain Range when it did not legally control the land. Some irate citizens equated the action to an armed invasion, and the public outcry resulted in this exchange in a House of Representatives committee hearing...

CONGRESSMAN SIEBERLING: "Is it true the Air Force has already acted to restrict public use of the Groom Range area?"

ASST. SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE RITTENHOUSE: "...Yes, it is true. We have asserted the right to control the surface access and egress to the extent of requesting people not to go in and out."

SIEBERLING: "Under what legal authority was that done?..."

RITTENHOUSE: "As far as I know, sir, there is none; except the decisions were made at a much, much higher level than mine..."

SIEBERLING: "There are no higher levels than the laws of the United States."

A decade later, the Air Force may up to its old tricks. If it cannot control Freedom Ridge all the time, then it can use its anonymous contract security force to control it by force only when the need arises. It is true that no guns were drawn in the May 19 incident, but we know of no guns being used in 1984 either. The fact that these guards are carrying weapons, are traveling in a vehicle with government plates and a light bar and are issuing commands to civilians, conveys the implied authority of the U.S. government and a none-too-subtle threat of force. These guards do not officially exist, so they cannot easily be prosecuted for their actions. At the same time, their contract status provides the Air Force with a buffer of deniability. "It wasn't us," the Air Force can say when such incidents occur.

Flat Tire Problems Persist

Mysterious flat tires have long been part of the folklore of the Groom Lake border. In a typical story, a first-time tourist drives by one of the anonymous security patrols, and almost immediately experiences a blow-out, as though the security guards had shot out his tire.

We have been skeptical of these stories because there are a lot of sharp things in the desert that can cause flat tires anyway. Psychospys know from experience that cactus needles and hard-as-nails twigs can do a number on even the best tires. Shooting out tires would also seem an extremely hazardous undertaking for the nonexistent security dudes, since a miss could result in a messy legal case. As far as we know, no one has filed a complaint with the Sheriff for having their tires shot out, and no one has been able to produce the flat tire as evidence.

Still the flat tire stories persist, and more recent first-person accounts make us wonder if there might be something to them. Visitors hiking to Freedom Ridge on two different dates have reported to us that one of the tires was flat when they returned to their car. After changing the tire and returning to civilization, the flat tire was pumped up and replaced with no leak found. In both cases, an anonymous security patrol had been seen lurking near the vehicles, and guards were heard to make joking remarks about the flat tire.

The latest incident reported to us occurred on the afternoon of April 29. A visitor from Nebraska parked his car at the Freedom Ridge trailhead and hiked to the Ridge to camp for the night. As usual, he was tracked by the Cammo Dudes in the white Jeep Cherokees.

He reports: "As the afternoon went on and it became apparent to the 'Cammo Dudes' that I was staying over, I think they got mad. While the two [security vehicles] were parked together on the hill 305 degrees from my location [F.R.], one particularly rowdy individual yelled "Hey dick wad!" at me so I waved back. The air was so still I could easily hear them talking but [was] not able to make out exactly their conversation. I did hear one say something about having to change a tire with laughter following."

Sure enough, upon returning to his car the next morning, the visitor found his left rear tire to be flat. After being changed and reinflated later, the tire showed no signs of any leak.

In a previous report several months before, two Las Vegas residents claim a similar experience. Upon returning to their car after a hike to Freedom Ridge, one of the Dudes were good enough to point it out to them their flat tire--with what they felt was sarcasm. The visitors say that after returning to Las Vegas and reinflating the tire they had no problem with it.

Letting air out of tires is easier to believe than shooting holes in them. That sort of minor vandalism seems consistent with the "Hey dick wad!" personality reported by the Nebraska witness. That witness says that although the one Dude was laughing at his own tire remark, the others with him were not. This suggests that he could be a rogue, capable of taking matters into his own hands without the sanction of his colleagues or superiors. We have seen numerous acts of minor vandalism on Freedom Ridge, including the repeated destruction of cairns and trail markers, defacing of the "guest register" rock at the summit and some "Fuck You Asshole" graffiti at the breached roadblock. (The asshole being

Psychosp, we suspect.) Random acts like this seem more the product of one or two frustrated individuals than any organizational policy.

Still, the organization is responsible for the conduct of its employees while on duty. No complaint has been filed on the mysterious flat tires, since the evidence remains circumstantial, but notice is hereby given that Psychosp--irritating asshole that he is--remains on alert and won't let the next report pass unnoticed.

Landsat Images Available

For past few years, U.S. citizens who wanted information on what their government was up to at Groom Lake have had to go to the Russians for satellite imagery. These pictures are expensive, however, running from \$500 to \$2000 per frame. Now, cruder but far less expensive images of the nonexistent base are available from the U.S. Government itself. Landsat images that were blacked out during the Cold War are once again available for \$12-\$18 per frame. The Landsat pictures are of much lower resolution than the Russian shots: Their nominal resolution of 30 meters vs. about one meter for the Russian satellite makes us wonder why they were blacked out at all. However, the Landsat images do show the runway and the main block of buildings at the base--enough to prove that the base is there and perhaps violate the government's own photography restriction.

Ordering Landsat images can be complicated. The buyer must select a satellite, path, location, image date and image source color from a list of those available. For simplicity, an informed reader suggests ordering the following item number for a image covering Groom Lake, Papoose Lake, Rachel and much of the surrounding area. Ask for Scene Identification LM85088217433X0, Product F003. The price for this negative, including postage, is \$18. You can order by phone with Visa/MC by calling the USGS EROS Data Center at 605-594-6151. You can also ask for further ordering info for other dates and colors. The address is: EROS Data Center, Sioux Falls, SD 57198. Landsat images are available from USGS only a positive or negative transparencies.

For those interested in stories of alien craft and secret installations at Papoose Lake, south of Groom, neither the Landsat nor Russian images show any obvious ground installations or major roads near the lake bed. On one Russian image, used as the background for a promotional poster by Lazar and associates, a circular "flying saucer" appears to be hovering in the mountains northeast of Papoose Lake. Whether this is an actual object or a photographic artifact is a matter of debate.

Trespassers Trial Date June 8

After several delays, yet another trial date has been set for four of seven accused trespassers who crossed the Restricted Zone border on Jan. 2. The new date is Weds., June 8, at 1 pm in Alamo Justice Court in Alamo, Nevada. To recap, the seven tourists accidentally drove past the No Trespassing Signs on Groom Lake Road to the guard house just beyond, where they were immediately arrested. Three of the seven pleaded "no contest" at their arraignment and paid a \$300 fine. The other four pleaded not guilty, and their trial has been delayed by scheduling conflicts and difficulties in obtaining information from the government.

As Psychosp understands the situation, there could be three major arguments supporting the defense: (1) The border signs are located in a blind ravine where there is limited warning time, with no fence or gate and no place to turn around. Under these circumstances, driving ahead to the guard house for further information seems like a reasonable action. (2) A security patrol was parked at the border at the time the visitors crossed. The cammo-clad occupants made no attempt to stop the travelers, and one of them appeared to wave them on. (3) There are questions about whether an adequate defense can be raised when the guards who detained the visitors do not officially exist. Unidentified individuals cannot be subpoenaed for the defense, and the Air Force and D.A. have not been forthcoming in providing the names of the guards or their employer.

The arrest of these individuals was an exercise in overkill, and we would like to see them cleared.

New Mail Order Products

Psychosp's mail order arm, Secrecy Oversight Council, has added several new products to its mail order catalog. The Popular Science back issue for March 1994, featuring a cover story on Groom Lake, is available for \$4. We also now offer "Economy" photographic prints of the secret Groom Lake base as seen from Freedom Ridge: An 8"x10" print is available for \$5 and a giant 20"x30" photoposter is available for \$20.

The original "[The Lazar Tape](#)" video, recently reissued by a new publisher, is available from us for \$35 (discounted from \$39.95). Bob Lazar offers a science lesson on flying saucer propulsion systems, an account of his alleged experiences at "Area S-4" south of Groom and a review of the briefing papers he says he read concerning the alien presence. This tape has been retitled "Bob Lazar: Excerpts from the Government Bible," but it's the same produced by Lazar and Gene Huff in 1990. (A new, professionally produced Lazar Tape has long been rumored, but there is still no word on its release. For that matter, we have also heard nothing on the status of the Lazar theatrical movie since New Line Cinema acquired the rights last year.)

"[The Comprehensive Guide to Military Monitoring](#)," by Steve Douglass of Intercepts Newsletter, is available from us for \$19.95. This 280-page, large format book is packed with frequencies, code words, technical info and base profiles for both the novice and advanced radio buff. It's the best book we've seen on legal eavesdropping on military communications.

POSTAGE AND HANDLING within the U.S. for the above items is \$3.50 total per order for Priority mail, or \$2.00 for Fourth Class mail. Outside the U.S., consult us. NV residents, add local sales tax. Make checks to "Secrecy Oversight Council." Our catalog is available free by mail or email.

Other products are forthcoming and will be announced in future Rats.

A Pentagon Coup

As a courtesy to our military readership, the official unofficial [Groom Dry Lake cloth patch](#) is now offered for sale INSIDE THE PENTAGON in Washington, D.C. It should now be available at Fort America, a military memorabilia shop on the Outer Concourse. Turn left at the top of the escalator from the Pentagon Metro station, outside the security checkpoint. This is the same Groom Lake patch AS SEEN ON TELEVISION and in the March 1994 issue of Popular Science. Designed by James Goodall and Glenn Campbell with red- on-black lettering along the border. In the center, a mystery aircraft takes off from the world's longest airstrip at sunset.

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