

Phone Conversation with Ken Evans, Nevada Commission on Tourism

Report by Glenn Campbell

On March 28 at about 5pm, Ken Evans of the Nevada Commission on Tourism returned my call and we talked for about 15 minutes.

The talks could be described as "cordial but frank." Neither side was willing to give in on their positions.

I summarized my position: I said that I had worked for three years to bring credibility to the Area 51 story, and then the Governor steps in and almost overnight turns the issues into a farce. I said that in imposing this action without notifying or consulting affected parties--both supporters and opponents--the state was violating every principal of representative government.

Evans said that the E.T. Highway was not meant to belittle the important issues. It was merely an attempt to market the state's attractions. He pointed out that additional press coverage would help my government accountability cause in the long run.

I said that I was interested in the quality of press coverage, not the quantity. I said I had no interest in promoting alien ambassadors or bringing in more of the kind of visitors who pull slot machine handles in Las Vegas.

Evans said that visitor safety issues would be addressed by the state putting warnings in its publicity material.

I said that 90% of the visitors to the highway would never read the state's publicity material. All they would hear is the "E.T. Highway" designation as distributed in the press.

Evans seemed to imply that the civil rights cases in my report--like the kidnapped trespassers and film seizures from journalists--were not conveyed accurately by me. He suggested that even if the cases were authentic the victims probably bore the blame for challenging the military authorities.

In response to my request for his media list for the E.T. Highway, Evans said I could get a copy by contacting Cecilia Hackman at the Nevada Tourism Commission. Evans said I could also get copies of past press releases from her.

Evans said I was on the invitation list for the unveiling and Las Vegas gala. I asked why I had not received this invitation, and he said they had not been sent out yet.

I reiterated my request to be allowed to participate in any planning meetings for the unveiling between the state and Fox or any other outside entity. Evans pointed out that I wanted to take part in the planning process only to collect intelligence for my counter events. I replied that whether I was a supporter or opponent of the unveiling had no relevance. I said that the state is not merely a marketing entity, and that it had an obligation to serve a variety of interests. I was an affected party who should not be excluded from the planning process because of my political views.

In the end, there was no accommodation by either side. We each said we had a job to do, and our battle would proceed.

The Research Center has announced April 1 as its commitment point for its E.T. Highway counter-offensive.

Published at http://www.infi.net/~psyspy/area51/events/highway_bill

3/29/96