

President Carter, Daniel Sheehan, and Donald Menzel: The Congressional Research Service UFO Studies for President Jimmy Carter

"Knowledge will Forever Govern Ignorance And a People Who Mean to be their Own Governors Must Arm Themselves with the Power Which Knowledge Gives" The Words of President James Madison as inscribed on the Madison Building in Washington D.C., where Daniel Sheehan claimed he was allowed to view the classified sections of the USAF UFO Project Blue Book in 1977, and where he said he discovered the picture of a crashed flying saucer.

"It's always difficult to strike a balance between the public's right to know and NASA's need for candor." Marcia Smith, a space policy senior analyst at the Congressional Research Service in Washington, DC., as quoted by James Oberg

Shortly after President Carter came to power in January 1977, Daniel Sheehan, then General Counsel to the United States Jesuit National Headquarters - National Office of Social Ministry in Washington, D.C., was reportedly approached by Marcia S. Smith, Director of the Library of Congress's Science and Technology Division of the Congressional Research Service from 1984-1985.

The Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress is a research group of more than 400 people who do research for congress and the White House. They have played more than a passing interest in the UFO problem over the years. Every one of these UFO research efforts has been led by Marcia Smith.

Sheehan reported that he was asked by Smith "to participate in a highly classified major evaluation of the UFO phenomena, and extraterrestrial intelligence." The person who made the offer was Marcia Smith. She made Sheehan a special consultant to the Congressional Research service.

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Marcia had in turn learned of Sheehan from her friend Rosemary Chalk, who at the time was the Secretary to the National Science Foundation. Chalk and Sheehan attended the same church in Washington. During one conversation between the two Sheehan had told Chalk that he had wanted to be an astronaut as a young man, but that the appointments he has sought to attain this goal had been given away as political prizes to others. He told Chalk that his goal had been, "to become an astronaut and to go out into outer space, and meet other civilizations."

When Sheehan was finished telling his story about how he ended up becoming a lawyer, Chalk was surprised. She said, "Wow, I never imagined that was true, but I have someone that you have to talk to." The person who called was Marcia Smith.

A part of this contact with Marcia Smith and the CRS involved Sheehan being asked to use his position inside the Jesuit community to obtain the UFO documents held in the Vatican library. Sheehan made an approach to his contact at the Vatican.

"She called," recalled Sheehan, "and asked me if as Legal Counsel for the Jesuit Headquarters whether I could get access for the Library of Congress from the Vatican library. The Vatican library has a fairly large section concerning the issue of extraterrestrial intelligence, and UFOs. I undertook to contact the Jesuit who actually runs the Vatican library, and much to my shock, they said we couldn't have access to it... I related this to Marcia Smith."

After the discussion with Marcia and Father Bill Davis, who was the Director of the National Office Sheehan made a second approach to the Vatican library.

I sent back a second letter to the Jesuit who was the head of the Vatican library, and explained to him that this was an official request that had come from the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress - that it had come from the Congress of the United States, and that the President himself had wanted to get this information. So I thought that would get us the information, but I received a second response from the Vatican Library saying no - the Jesuit National Headquarters would not be provided with this information. So I had to regretfully report that back to Marcia Smith letting her know that I was not able to get it."

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Sheehan recalled the encounter with Marcia where she related to him the reasons behind the study. "She (Marcia Smith) informed me that she had been contacted by the Chairman of the Science & Technology Committee of the House of Representatives, (Congressman Olin Earl Teague) who in turn had received a directive from the President of the United States, informing the Committee that he (Carter) in fact had personally seen a UFO while he was in Georgia."

Marcia further informed Sheehan that Carter had approached the House of Representatives Science and Technology Committee based on information he had obtained from former CIA director George Bush. Marcia Smith stated that Carter had approached Bush and stated, "I want to have the information that we have on UFOs and extraterrestrial intelligence. I want to know about this as President."

George Bush, according to Smith said, "no ... that he wasn't going to give this to him ... that this was information that existed on a need to know basis only. Simple curiosity on the part of the President wasn't adequate."

This Carter-Bush UFO question, referred to by Smith, was probably asked during the first 45 minutes of a multi hour briefing on November 19, 1976. This is the only time that Bush and Carter met while Carter was President-elect. Bush was replaced as DCI, once Carter became President, so there was never a meeting between the two after Carter entered the White House.

The 45 minute segment of the briefing given to the President-elect, was described by the CIA as a briefing on certain "exotic weapons and very closely held items relating to sources and methods."

The then Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) for President Ford, George Bush, and his assistant Jennifer Fitzgerald, took Carter and Walter Mondale to the Carter living room to provide the selected sensitive information. The other six senior agents apparently weren't cleared for this part of the briefing. They remained waiting in the Carter study till this key part of the briefing was completed.

No matter where the Bush/Carter encounter had taken place, the fact remained that Carter was refused the requested UFO information from the CIA Director. Once Carter had been denied the requested information on UFOs, he decided to follow a suggestion that Bush had made for

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getting the information that Carter wanted on UFOs.

"If he was going to do this he would have to follow a different procedure," stated Sheehan, "that was going to involve all the different branches of government in authorizing this information, because they were afraid that President Carter was going to somehow publicly reveal this. Bush told him that he was going to have to go to the Science and Technology Committee of the House of Representatives, in the legislative branch, and have them ask the Congressional Research Service to issue a request to have certain documents declassified so that this process could go on."

"They were," said Sheehan, "trying to stall this thing. That was going to take a long time...the NSA, the CIA...all these groups were going to hold back documents. So the President much chagrined, decided that rather than having a major confrontation with Mr. Bush, (he) would follow this process. He contacted the science and Technology Committee of the House of Representatives. They in turn contacted the Library of Congress Research Service, and they undertook two major investigations."

1. To determine whether extraterrestrial intelligence existed in our galaxy.
2. Determine what the relationship of this UFO phenomena might be to extraterrestrial intelligence.

Marcia Smith was at the time Analyst in Science and Technology, Science Research Division, at the Congressional Research Service. She was not ignorant about the field of UFOs, and classified research. Records show she had been involved in at least five UFO or SETI related investigations by the Congressional Research Service.

- In 1976, just before Carter won the Presidential election Smith wrote "Extraterrestrial Intelligence and Unidentified Flying Objects: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography" for the Library of Congress Congressional Research Service.

- In 1975 and then in a 1978 update, Marcia Smith joined with Dr. George Gatewood, Director of the Allegheny Observatory and the NASA Ames research Center SETI Program office, to write a report for the Congressional Research Service called "Life Beyond Earth." This paper (later turned into a book), was not about UFOs. "The paper is," wrote Smith, "instead, a synthesis of past and current thought on the possibility that there is extraterrestrial life in the universe, together with discussions of the possible impacts of making contact with it."

- In 1976 Smith also co-authored a report called The UFO Enigma which was produced for the Congressional Research Service. The report was an overview of the U.S. government involvement in solving the UFO puzzle, and information that had been released under the

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Freedom of Information."

- In 1983 Smith produced an updated report by the same name updating the report with events that had occurred between 1976 and 1983.

These CRS UFO related reports were very basic UFO reports with nothing of a controversial or classified nature. Part of the reason for this is that the reports were publicly published, and also the fact that UFOs was not a popular subject to be writing about inside the government

James Oberg, a former NASA consultant, worked in the 1970s with Marcia on Congressional research reports. Both had an interest in UFOs, but they also shared an interest in Oberg's specialty - the Soviet space program. Aviation Week & Space Technology magazine eventually came to refer to Marcia Smith as "The Congressional Research Service Russian space guru."

Oberg recalled Smith's reticence to writing reports on UFOs. "Back in the late 1970s," Oberg told this writer, "we briefly discussed the overview of 'The UFO Enigma' (written the year before Carter became President) and she expressed exasperation at having to put something like that together, but basically the CRS researches what Congress asks them to do..."

When the story broke that Smith had done two reports for President Carter in 1977, Oberg contacted this author and provided him with Marcia Smith's E-mail so I could obtain her comment. Smith did not respond to the E-mail, but it appears that she and Oberg did discuss the two reports. In a second E-mail, Oberg wrote, "She is talking to me. Is she talking to you."

Asked what Smith had told him about the ETI and UFO studies, reportedly done by Smith in 1977, Oberg refused to say anything. A researcher out of Washington, D.C. wrote Oberg asking for smith's phone number, but this request was also ignored. Oberg, always ready with an opinion about anything and everything, was forced to a position of complete silence.

The reason for this silence was the fact that anything Oberg would say pro or con would simply increase the pressure on Marcia Smith to confirm or deny the Sheehan recollections. Smith had no intention to talk, and Oberg planned to do what he could to help his long time friend.

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Besides the high school level UFO - related reports listed by the CRS, as being authored by Marcia Smith, there were two that won't be found listed in an CRS directory. Those two reports were the two 1977 reports requested by President Carter on extraterrestrial intelligence and UFOs. These two reports, according to Sheehan, were also written by Marcia Smith.

From Sheehan's description of the reports, these two reports were no high school level reports. Sheehan had know of the writing of the two reports, due to his role as a special consultant for the CRS. Sheehan reported that he even was able to read the two reports before they were sent of to the Science and Technology Committee of the House of Representatives.

Sheehan's role for the CRS was to help obtain the Vatican UFO files, and a second more dramatic role in reviewing classified UFO files from the former USAF Project Blue Book which was closed in 1969. This incident occurred in a vaulted room in the basement of the Library of Congress Madison Building in downtown Washington, D.C.

The new Carter administration had reinstated funding for the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, and Marcia had phoned Sheehan asking him to speak to the scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, in the SETI program. The topic of the presentation would be "the potential theological religious implications of potential contact with extraterrestrial civilizations." Sheehan qualified for this because of his degree in religion.

Sheehan reported that he told Smith, "Look if I am going to be doing this, which I am totally delighted to do, I would like to be able to get access to some of the data that you might have available in the course of your doing this investigation for the Science and Technology Committee in Congress."

Asked what data he would like, Sheehan stated he wanted to see "the classified sections of the Project Blue Book."

Marcia, according to Sheehan stated she didn't know if she could get the Air force and defense department to release those files, but agreed to try. "She contacted them," recalled Sheehan, "and shortly thereafter she called me and she said, much to her surprise, 'They have agreed to do this.'"

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"She gave me a particular date and time and told me that I should go over to the new building at the Library of Congress," Sheehan stated, " this building had not even been opened yet. There were no people in it. She told me they are going to bring the files down to the new building...They had this big vault room downstairs."

Sheehan continued to tell what has now become a very controversial series of events that occurred two hours into the search. It is a story he told Marcia Smith just after it occurred, and a story he has told dozens of times since.

There was a room and these two security officers there at the door and there was actually a third, plain clothed, sitting at a desk to the right of them.

As I came in there I showed them all my identification, and they checked some documentation that they had, and said "Yes. I was supposed to be here."

As I started to go in, the man sitting at the desk told me I had to leave my briefcase there. I wouldn't be allowed to take any notes. It turned out I had a yellow pad under my arm, so I set the briefcase down, gave it to him, and I went into the room. I was in there for some time. There were a bunch of documents there. There was actually a film machine. It was like a little reel-to-reel - kind of a film machine there. I don't know if it was 35mm, or whatever those things were. So there was actually some little films there.

I looked at some of the films and they were like the classic films that you have seen, sort of far distant shots of strange moving vehicles. So I decided I wasn't making much headway on this, so I began to look into these little boxes, that had these canisters there. There was one of these overhead filmstrip machines that was sitting in the room. I began to take these little canisters out, and open them up, and put the filmstrips in and look through these things. I don't know how many I had gone through. I had gone through several, or at least a few of these boxes, when I hit upon this one canister that had film and pictures. I started going through, turning the little crank and there it was.

Again I have told people about this a number of times. There were these photographs of

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unmistakable - of a UFO sitting on the ground. It had crashed, apparently. It had hit into this field and had dug up, kind of plowed this kind of trough through this field. It was wedged into the side of this bank. There was snow all around the picture. The vehicle was wedged into the side of

this mud like embankment kind of up at an angle. There were Air Force personnel. As I cranked the little handle, and looked at additional photos, these Air Force people were taking pictures.

In the photograph they were taking photographs of this vehicle. One of the photos actually had the Air Force personnel with this big long tape measure measuring this thing. You could see that they had these parkas on, with little fur around their hoods. You could see that they had the little name tags on their jacket. They were clearly U.S. Air Force personnel.

I was kind of in this strange state saying, "Here it is!" So I turned the crank for more pictures, and I could see on the side of this craft these like little insignias - little symbols. So I turned ahead a couple of pictures to see if there was a closer picture. Sure enough there was. One of the photos had kind of a close-up picture of these symbols. So what I did is, I was getting nervous. I looked around, and the guys weren't watching or anything. They were outside of the room, so I took

the yellow pad, and I flipped it open to the little grey cardboard backing and I flipped it under the screen. I shrank the size of the picture to the exact same size as the back of the yellow pad, and traced the actual symbols out in detail, verbatim of what was there.

Once I had actually seen these pictures, and actually chosen to copy down and trace these symbols from this craft, I just decided that I should get out of there. So I got up closed the little pad, and I put the film back in the canister. I put all the boxes back where they were, and put the yellow pad under my arm, and just walked out. As I came through the door, I went over to get my briefcase up, and the man at the little desk that was sitting there pointed to the yellow pad under my arm, and he said, "What's that you've got there?"

I said, "That's the yellow pad that I had with me."

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He said, "Let me see that." He reached out and I handed it to him. He flipped through the yellow pages, and never looked at the back, never looked at the inside cardboard backing, and handed it back to me. So, I just put it under my arm, got my briefcase and walked out of there. I took this with me, and I reported the details to Marcia. I also prepared my three hour seminar for JPL.

Marcia then drafted the two reports for the House Science and Technology Committee. "I ended up getting copies of the two reports," said Sheehan, "one on extraterrestrial intelligence, and the other on the phenomena of Unidentified Flying Objects.

"The first report on extraterrestrial intelligence," said Sheehan, "stated the Congressional Research Service of the official United States Congressional Library, in its official report to the President, through the House of Representatives Science and Technology Committee, concludes that there are from two to six highly intelligent, highly technologically developed civilizations in our own galaxy over and above our own."

"In the second report they had drawings of different shapes of UFOs that have been sighted," continued Sheehan. "They didn't site any particular cases, but they said that they believed there was a significant number of instances where the official United States Air Force investigations were unable to discount the possibility that one or more of these vehicles was actually from one of these extraterrestrial civilizations. They put this together, and sent it over to the President. I ended up seeing a copy of it."

Sheehan's contact with the CRS went only to Marcia Smith. It did not extend to Smith boss, Dr. Jack Gibbons. Sheehan told this writer that he was not even aware of whom Gibbons was. It is assumed that Gibbons knew, and approved of the UFO related reports that Smith was writing. This would extend to the secret UFO report prepared for the House of Representatives, and President Carter, if the story Sheehan tells is true.

This connection is important because following a long period as the head of the Office of Technological Assessment for the Congressional Research Service, Dr. Gibbons went on to become Assistant to the President for Science and Technology in the Clinton White House. As science advisor to President Clinton, Gibbons dealt with the Rockefeller White House UFO initiated by Lawrence Rockefeller. Despite his close relationship to the UFO investigations that were being conducted by Marcia Smith, during and just after the Carter administration, Gibbons strangely told Rockefeller in 1993, that he was totally ignorant of the UFO subject.

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According to 1,000 pages of UFO documents released by the Clinton Office for Science and Technology Policy, Gibbons quickly overcame his claimed UFO ignorance. He not only met with Rockefeller and his representatives about UFOs, but he headed up a White House initiative to declassify documents that it was hoped would reveal the true story of the events surrounding the crash of an object near Roswell, New Mexico in July 1947.

Finally, in research to discover if Smith produced a secret UFO report for President Carter, a strange discovery was made. As noted above, in 1976 Marcia Smith headed up a research report prepared by the Congressional Research Service titled "The UFO Enigma." Strangely, the very next year, 1977, a book using exactly the same title "The UFO Enigma" was published by Doubleday. The author was arch-debunker of UFOs, Donald Menzel.