

# Jimmy Carter's Roswell investigation

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*This is a sequel to 'Roswell, the CIA and Dr Edgar Mitchell' in Lobster 77.<sup>1</sup>*

**As** a US presidential candidate in 1976, James Earl (Jimmy) Carter Jr. attended a meeting at the Pentagon in Washington D.C., the aim of which was to seek official disclosure of the truth about the 1947 'Roswell Incident'.

The other participants in the meeting were NASA astronaut Dr Edgar Mitchell and – as revealed in *Lobster 77* – Bobby Ray Inman, then a Vice Admiral. Inman was later appointed director of the National Security Agency (NSA) by President Carter himself.

Approached for comment on this story, Jimmy Carter initially dodged the issue with an irrelevant response. He subsequently declined to comment when presented with another opportunity. He stated through his staff at the Carter Center, Georgia, that he would neither confirm nor deny his involvement in the matter.

During research for this story, Mr Carter was identified as the 'third man' at the 1976 meeting by the same source who had correctly identified Admiral Inman. But, when interviewed in 2018, Admiral Inman could not be drawn on specifics of the meeting. However, enough existing information can be assembled to substantiate the same source's claim about Carter's involvement in Dr Mitchell's quest for the truth.

The late Dr Mitchell alluded to his companion's identity in 2008 when he told US viewers of CNN's Larry King Live show how he had

' . . . asked for a meeting with the Intelligence Committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff which **I got with another naval officer who had had many similar experiences** and we told our story and this gentleman, a vice admiral, said to us, well, I don't know about that but I'm going to find out.'<sup>2</sup> (emphasis added)

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<sup>1</sup> <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster77/lob77-roswell-cia.pdf>>

<sup>2</sup> See <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpS6FY7krXU>> (with the specific exchange referred to occurring between 1 minute 28 seconds and 1 minute 50 seconds of the recording). A transcript of the whole show is also available at <<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0807/04/lkl.01.html>>.

Like Dr Mitchell, Jimmy Carter had served in the US Navy. Mr Carter enlisted during the Second World War, and eventually retired with the rank of Lieutenant in 1961.

However, Dr Mitchell misspoke when he referred to Carter's 'many similar [UFO] experiences'. In 1969, while serving as Governor of the state of Georgia, Mr Carter and (he now claims) 'about 25 others' were baffled by an incident which Mr Carter subsequently reported to the International UFO Bureau.<sup>3</sup>

Mr Carter described it as a ball of light, the apparent size of the Moon, moving through the sky before receding rapidly into the distance. As he subsequently recounted on many occasions, he did not believe he had witnessed an unearthly visitor. Carter, a keen amateur stargazer, was also adamant that his sighting did not involve any known astronomical object or atmospheric phenomenon.

At the time of the 1976 meeting with Dr Mitchell and Admiral Inman, Mr Carter was exploring the American Deep State as he began his run for the White House. Following his nomination as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate in July that year, Carter sought – and, surprisingly, was granted – access to key figures in the US intelligence system, who saw to it that Carter's understanding of world affairs was greatly enhanced. As a CIA history of Carter's candidacy summarised it:

'On several subsequent occasions during the campaign, [Carter] expressed the hope that by being fully informed he could avoid committing himself to positions that might later embarrass him as a candidate or as president.'<sup>4</sup>

This shrewd move was to pay off memorably during the televised presidential debates with Gerald Ford in late 1976. During the second debate on 6 October, President Ford – never noted for his verbal dexterity – inexplicably denied that there was any Soviet domination of Eastern Europe. Whether or not this harmed Ford's prospects, it certainly allowed Carter to look more of a statesman than the incumbent to a TV audience of some 63 million.

The briefings served a less obvious secondary purpose for candidate Carter, enabling him to take stock of the personalities in the intelligence community, and to personally assess their efficiency. One of those personalities

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<sup>3</sup> At the time of the incident, reports had it that Carter had been joined by '10 members of the Leary Lions Club'. See <<https://tinyurl.com/y6jvmwnw>> or <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1977/04/30/ufo-over-georgia-jimmy-logged-one/080ef1c3-6ff3-41a9-a1e4-a37c54b5cbca/>>.

<sup>4</sup> <<https://tinyurl.com/y4bgohd4>> or <<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/getting-to-know-the-president/pdfs/U-%20Chapter%204-Carter.pdf>>

was CIA Director George H. W. Bush, later to become America's 41<sup>st</sup> President, with whom Carter met on several occasions. While he was receiving briefings from Bush, Carter was careful to praise him. The CIA noted:

'The governor [Carter] noted that Bush had previously been involved in Republican politics but added that he had "brought the CIA a good background as former UN ambassador and US representative to China.'" <sup>5</sup>

However, as his campaign developed, Carter pointedly claimed that the Nixon and Ford administrations had used important government positions as though they were a 'dumping ground for unsuccessful candidates, faithful political partisans, out-of-favor White House aides and representatives of the special interests.'<sup>6</sup> A leaked memo identified Bush as one of the loyal has-beens that Carter had in mind.<sup>7</sup>

An intriguing possibility, then, is that CIA Director Bush personally intervened to thwart Jimmy Carter's Roswell-related inquiries in 1976. When Admiral Inman sought to release information on the 1947 Mogul balloon project to Carter and Mitchell, someone with considerable authority in the CIA told Inman that he would not be allowed to do so.

Bush had abandoned his seat in the House of Representatives on behalf of President Nixon in 1970. He then became Nixon's one-man defence team as Chairman of the Republican National Committee, before being parachuted into the CIA director's chair by President Ford. Perhaps feeling which way the wind was blowing, Bush quit as CIA Director after just 357 days in the position, on the day of President Carter's inauguration.

By contrast, Admiral Inman – whom Carter met for the first time in 1976 with Dr Mitchell – evidently impressed Carter. In July 1977 President Carter appointed Inman as Director of the National Security Agency (NSA).

The 1976 meeting with Dr Mitchell and Admiral Inman is, then, entirely congruous with candidate Carter's ongoing exploration of the Washington D.C. intelligence circuit. Furthermore, the apparent consequence of that meeting – Inman's new job as director of the NSA – is consistent with Carter's search for dependable intelligence figures upon whom he could rely during his time in the Oval Office.

As I have already mentioned, Jimmy Carter was asked for comment on

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<sup>5</sup> See note 4.

<sup>6</sup> <<https://tinyurl.com/yxkny5e6>> or <<http://tarpley.net/online-books/george-bush-the-unauthorized-biography/chapter-15-cia-director/>> – a text search for 'dumping' finds the quote.

<sup>7</sup> <<https://tinyurl.com/y6ym78wd>> or <<https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP99-00498R000100030025-4.pdf>>

this story via the Carter Center, Georgia. In a handwritten non-sequitur, he replied: 'In the 1960s, I (and about 25 others) saw an unidentified flying object. I never thought it was extraterrestrial.'

Carter was subsequently asked, therefore, to confirm or deny that he was the third person at the Pentagon in the 1976 meeting with Mitchell and Inman. A Carter Center spokeswoman replied on his behalf: 'We are unable to comply with your request.'