

Tim Ventura, from American Antigravity, interviews Bill Ryan

1. Let's start out with the origin of the story: it originally comes from Victor Martinez's mailing list, which is a bit like a black hole from which no-one can escape. However, he occasionally does break some interesting news, and as I understand it he's the person that broke the Serpo story. Can you tell us about the origin of this story online?

It's exactly as you've stated. Victor received the initial e-mail from "Anonymous" (who we now know to be someone who called themselves "Sylvester McCoglin", with the e-mail address thewizardofzin@lycos.com) on 1 November 2005. To be doubly sure of protecting his source, he removed the name and substituted it with "Request Anonymous", and streamed the message to his list the following day. It all started from there.

2. One notable about this story is that "Anonymous" claimed to have been taking notes from a report in a government library and typing them into email from memory, right? Can you tell us a bit about "Anonymous", or in lieu of that, maybe a bit about what you've been able to piece together about them?

That's not entirely accurate. The provenance of the information – taking it at face value – has never been clear. It was Paul McGovern who first made reference to the information being taken from a 3,000 page highly classified report, but it soon became evident that this (if it existed) was not sitting on someone's coffee table like a Sears Catalog.

There are indications – again, taking the releases at face value – that the first postings were essentially non-technical summaries taken either from memory or from someone else's relayed account; the style and terminology is nowhere near the precision and quality one would expect from a formal report. I'd say that the person writing this did NOT have direct to a formal report.

Later, the releases came increasingly in the form of a kind of stream-of-consciousness style "Team Commander's Log". To many readers, this appeared strange, and very atypical of the formal (if abbreviated) style one might expect from a real mission log, which one would expect to be updated, say, at the end of each day, rather than in the form of a continuous running commentary of events.

However, there were some interesting clues to be found in the releases, which indicated that they were unedited transcripts of audiotapes: for instance, "hostel" for "hostile", and other basic spelling errors such as would be made by an administrator who was just rapidly transcribing as a tape was played. This would be at a much earlier stage than any final release to a formal report, and indicates the possibility that what whoever was releasing this had available to them was NOT the polished final article, but some much earlier version of the collation of information.

It's also been suggested – intelligently, in my view – that the "stream-of-consciousness" form of the audio debriefings was the transcript of a hypnosis session to aid recall. After I suggested this to Victor Martinez, he confirmed that Anonymous had told him that earlier: that the original mission logs had been lost or destroyed, so they were recreated during the year-long mission debriefing, 13 years after their departure. That's a long time to recall precise day-to-day detail, and it's reasonable to assume that hypnosis may have been utilized as an aid to recall and memory. There would have been a lot to recall, and the debriefers would not want to have missed a single detail from such an important and unique mission.

3. The Serpo story seems to have gone through some phases: initially it was a couple of postings by "Anonymous", and then it gained a bit of momentum in the Sarfatti mailing list, and eventually ended up becoming a much larger story that's currently making rounds on both the internet & radio circuits. Did the Sarfatti group contribute anything to this story -- because I understand there were some debates involving the physics of the story relating to a binary star system...

I may not have been party to those Sarfatti postings; but it was certainly debated at some length on the Martinez list, and on subsets of it. Certainly the binary star issue was part of the discussion.

There were two astrophysical problems which were obvious to all. One was that according to current astronomical knowledge, Zeta Reticuli is what's known as a "distant binary" – the two stars being a tenth of a light year apart; that would mean that the other star would only be a bright dot in the sky, rather than a second sun like our own. The other problem was that the orbital period (Serpo's "year") and the stated distance from the star it orbited did not jive with Kepler's Laws. An intriguing part of the Serpo story – which also generated a great deal of discussion, let us say – was that physics was in some way different in that system and that no less an authority than the famous Carl Sagan himself had been involved in the debriefing and had

eventually reluctantly signed off the final report as accurate – despite the apparent astronomical anomalies.

This suggests to me a couple of important things: One, that a simple hoaxer would have been sure to have got the basic numbers right: one can go to any bookstore and find dozens of well-written Sci-Fi stories which describe very credible worlds; the first thing an author does in that instance is find a physics undergrad to get the math right for them. Yet in this case the math seemed to be wrong. A simple hoaxer would not do that, before releasing the information to an e-mail list which included hard-nosed scientists who would be sure to pounce on the anomalies.

The second thing it suggested was a confirmation of my hypothesis above: that this was written by someone with maybe third-, fourth-, or even fifth-hand access to the primary information. When the writer (“Anonymous”) said that the laws of physics didn’t seem to apply – and which caused such a howl of outrage – this might have been simply a Chinese Whispers way of relaying the information that Kepler’s Laws didn’t apply in a binary star system – which we know to be true.

The binary star issue itself is fascinating. If Zeta Reticuli is in fact a distant binary, then Serpo could not have been in the Zeta system, unless one of the two Zeta stars was *itself* a close binary (i.e. there were actually three stars in the system – two close, and one distant). But maybe it wasn’t Zeta Reticuli at all – it could have been Alpha Centauri, for example. The Zeta information could have been disinformation, or a confusion.... the latter especially if the information was, say, reported fifth-hand, from memory of what another person told him who’d been told by someone else, who’d read the report twenty years ago... etc. These are all good questions, but not reason to dismiss the story.

4. Now the Serpo story itself basically states that an alien-exchange program was established with the Ebens, and that a team of Americans left on an Eben ship in the late 1960's to spend 12 years exploring an alien planet. Can you give us an overview of the story itself?

Here’s the “elevator speech” version – though it’s still quite a long elevator ride. Essentially the story is:

Contact with the “Ebens” was made following communication established with the Roswell survivor (“EBE”, later to be “EBE-1” when

more came along). An exchange program was agreed. A meeting with the Ebens at the famous "Holloman landing" in April 1964 finalized the details, and the exchange program was scheduled for the following year. A number of astronauts were selected for training and 12 passed muster; the Serpo story says 10 men and 2 women, though at times this seems to be contradicted, and it may have been 12 men.

They departed in mid-1965, ostensibly for a 10 year trip. One died on the way there from an embolism, another died on Serpo in an accident, two chose to remain, and eight returned – 13 years later in 1978, the team having somehow lost track of time, a problem caused by the 45 hour days during which there were only 3 hours of relative darkness. The team found the planet to be hot, and the Ebens friendly, a low-population society (just 650,000) living in a strange mix of low- and high-technology. The team mapped the planet extensively, eventually settling in the cooler northern hemisphere, and even visited Otto, one of the other Zeta planets. They encountered difficulties when the Ebens, without seeking permission or authority, cloned the team member who had died en route, producing a strange hybrid being.

5. Interestingly, despite the implicit assumptions in this story about advanced alien technology, it seems that Anonymous has posted very little about the technology of the Ebens in his/her writing. Can you give us any insight into advances that were discussed that might help humanity?

The principal high-tech device that was referred to is the Eben "Energy Device" or "ED", the stated specifications of which seem extremely similar to those described in Robert Collins' book *Exempt from Disclosure*. In the book, a stable fifth isotope of hydrogen is referenced, which somehow extracts what we'd call zero point energy from the surrounding space. It was also said to have the capacity to be used to power any device, automatically producing the correct output required, no matter how large or small.

I was actually shown, in a private meeting a few months ago, a purported X-Ray of the device – though it was impossible to say with certainty what it actually was. All I can say is that what I saw was consistent with it being an X-Ray of a small object of complex design. I wasn't permitted to copy or keep the photo.

This is how the Energy Device was described in one of the releases:

Dimensions: 9" x 11" x 1.5", weight 26.7 oz. The ED [Energy Device] is clear and made of something similar to hard plastic.

On the bottom left, there is a small square metal plate, possibly a chip. It is one of the connector points.

On the bottom right, there is another small square metal point, which is the second connector point.

Viewed from an electron microscope, the ED contains small circular-shaped bubbles. Within these bubbles are extremely minute small particles. When a demand for electric power is applied to the ED, the particles always move clockwise at a great speed, not measurable. There is also some type of unidentified fluid located around the bubbles. When a demand is placed on the ED, this fluid turns from a clear color to a hazy pink color. The fluid becomes warm between 102° – 115° F.

However, the little bubbles would not heat up, ONLY the fluid. The bubbles maintained a constant temperature of 72° F. The boundary of the ED contains small (micron sized) wires. When a demand is placed on the ED, the wires expand in size. This expanding process depended on the amount of demand placed on the ED. We did extensive, exhaustive experimentation with the ED. We could power everything from a 0.5 watt bulb to an entire house.

The ED automatically detects the required demand and then outputs that exact amount. It worked on everything electrical except equipment that contained a magnetic field. Somehow, our magnetic field interferes with the output demand of the ED. However, we have developed a shielding process to correct this.

6. The experiences of this team on the alien planet seem remarkably mundane: instead of a culture immersed in technology like our own here on Earth, the Ebens seem more like a tribe of natives living in the desert. They dance, sing, and have rituals that seem like something out of the history channel... The technology described in the story seems sparse at best, and certainly isn't the focus of Eben life. Would you agree with this, and does it represent an actual picture of the type of civilization that could develop interstellar travel?

It's a good question, and all I can say is that of course we have a natural tendency to anthropomorphize everything: i.e. we would automatically expect any alien species to behave like ourselves in most major ways. That's an unwarranted assumption. There's no *a priori* reason why an alien race would not develop space travel and yet live simply in domestic terms; in fact, many futurologists have argued that

that is the way that a post-industrial society must develop if it is to survive, and have mapped that scenario on our own future development, if we make it that far.

7. There was a mitigating factor to this story that nobody seems to have addressed yet: the story hints that Eben society had been devastated in the recent past by some kind of war with another world, which raises several interesting questions. Can you elaborate on this for me?

That was one of many intriguing snippets of information – just a few words among the tens of thousands that were released – which were never enlarged on. We’re just left speculating about that, as we are about almost everything else. I suppose it’s not unthinkable that apparently advanced species might openly war with one another (and that the weapons used might be almost beyond our imagination) – a case, actually, when the anthropomorphizing might be justified.

8. Is it possible that the Ebens may have been some type of colony from another world themselves? Picture America in the 1700's -- the settlers had "advanced" technologies, but didn't have the infrastructure to produce them, and relied heavily on England & Europe for the products that required heavy infrastructure to produce. Could it be that the Ebens had originated somewhere else?

Another good question. Yes, I’d agree with that. It’s always possible that they may have learned their space-faring technology from another race, and not developed it themselves. We do know, incidentally, from the story told by Anonymous, that Serpo was not their home planet, and they had migrated there after their original homeworld was made uninhabitable in the hundred-year war. That might explain the low population, and the strange combination of low- and high-tech that defined their society.

9. Can you tell us about their vehicles, weapons, and spacecraft? Would you say that they have a "technology base" that their tools are based around -- perhaps something pervasive like gravitational control or our use of fossil fuels?

Their vehicles seemed to be typical "alien craft" as we’ve come to envisage them; one of the team members is said to have thought, on the trip to Serpo and having examined the power plant, that it was a "negative matter" propulsion system. The exact log entry read:

It contains large, very large metal containers. They are in a circle,

with the ends of each pointing into the center. Many pipes or some type of large tubes connects them. In the center of these containers is a copper colored coil or something looking like a coil. There is a bright light being shined [sic] from a point above into the center of the coil. We hear a very dull hum, but no major loud sounds. 661 [the designation for one of the team scientists] thinks it is a negative matter versus positive matter system.

In a previous release of information (not a purported commander's log), it was reported:

The ground transportation used by our team was similar to a helicopter. The power system was a sealed energy device that provided electrical power and lift for the craft. It was very easy to fly and our pilots learned the system within days. The Ebens did have vehicles, which floated above the ground and did not have any tires or wheels.

The Energy Device seems to have been the principal societal "fossil fuel equivalent", as you put it – for local use on and around Serpo. The interstellar craft (see above) may have been powered on a different principle.

All that's reported about their weapons is that they purportedly had a very powerful kind of particle beam weapon – sufficient to destroy their enemies' planet in the hundred-year war.

10. How far ahead of our technology do you think the Ebens are? From what I've read, it surprising seems like this space-faring race is only a few years ahead of us in most of their technologies, and in terms of others it reads as though they may in fact be behind us. Any thoughts on this?

It's so hard to estimate how far ahead of us an advanced society may be; that's essentially because the growth curve is logarithmic. If our grandparents, living in (say) 1900, could see ahead to our society now, they might guess with justification that they were looking many hundreds of not thousands of years into the future. Yet it's only 106 years. We also see those kinds of disparities on our own planet in present time: we still have tribal peoples living in literally the Stone Age – the Andaman islanders, for instance, and some Australian Aborigines and Native Amazonians – while on the other side of the same world, in the same time frame, we have scientists splitting the atom, decoding the human genome, and who knows what else. Those aboriginal peoples might think us thousands of years ahead of them,

as well... and yet we're exact contemporaries.

11. I don't know if this came from Sarfatti's list or "Anonymous", but it's been said that the Ebens are one of many species or groups of ET's, and that they aren't the stereotypical "greys" that we see on the X-files. Does this sound accurate from your perspective & beliefs, or is it just one group?

This is another tantalizing question that remains unanswered. Anonymous not once described what the Ebens looked like. This is one of those strange anomalies that bears examination. A hoaxer would have been sure – wouldn't they? – to have included a detailed description of the Eben physiology. Yet none was forthcoming. But a plausible explanation for this might be that in the original report there was little verbal description of the Eben physiology... because the report would have been amply illustrated with photographs and diagrams.

12. Speaking of multiple alien races, it's hard enough for most people to imagine one group of ET's visiting the Earth, much less several groups simultaneously -- I've been wondering if maybe the birth of the atomic bomb sent out a signal that raised some interest, but that's just speculation. Why so many, all at once?

I think this is very clear, personally. The real question is not "Why aren't they here?" (because they surely are...) but given the size of our galaxy, let alone the known universe, the question becomes "Why aren't hundreds of alien races visiting us?" Given that once you've mastered interstellar travel, a journey of 100 light years might be no less daunting or problematic than a journey of 10 light years; the analogy on our own planet might be that once you've mastered heavier-than-air flight, there's no difference in principle between a short hop to a local airport 200 miles away, or a long haul flight to Australia. It's the same technology.

So given the number of advanced alien races living on planets orbiting G-type (sun-like) stars within the sphere with a radius of several hundred light years, it'd be *expected* that we'd be receiving large numbers of different types of visitors. And various "insider" leaks over the years name large numbers of known alien races. I've heard the figures 50, 70, and 165. That rings true to me. If the number were 2 or 3, I'd be really worried that either the universe was indeed thinly populated, or that we simply weren't of any interest to anyone.

13. I've also heard references to Steven Spielberg's "Close Encounters

of the Third Kind" -- if I remember right, the movie was loosely based on a landing at Holloman AFB, which might also have been the same event in which the Serpo exploration team boarded and left as part of the exchange program. I think you mentioned a scene involving "men in red jumpsuits", that might have represented this team. Can you elaborate?

No, that wasn't me... I've actually not seen the movie for many years, so I can't shed any light. Maybe the jumpsuits were part of that final scene? One of your readers may be able to clarify. What I have been told is that in that CE3 boarding scene, besides the hero (played by Richard Dreyfuss), there are indeed twelve astronauts: ten men and two women. Whether this is an invented story following art, or art following a true story -- or whether the close similarity is mere coincidence -- I leave others to speculate.

14. At the end of "Close Encounters", a bunch of abductees walk out of the alien craft after being gone for what appears to be decades, and none of them are carrying bags. However, the team going to Serpo was apparently anything but -- the story says that they took several tons of rations, equipment, vehicles, weapons, and other materials with them to this alien planet. Can you tell us a bit about this?

One of the early releases stated that the team took 9,000 lbs of equipment with them, and then this was amended to 90,500 lbs in a subsequent correction. Because of the way the early releases were compiled, collated and edited by Victor Martinez, it's impossible to know whether this apparent typo was the error of "Anonymous" or of Victor. Interestingly, the very last release, on 3 April 2006, contained a huge breakdown manifest of equipment, right down to the music that the team brought with them on the trip. I did a back-of-an-envelope calculation about what it all may have weighed, and it was all just about right... about 40 tons.

One of the items that raised a howl of protest -- and several good jokes -- was the inclusion in the list of a military lawnmower. After the hubbub had died down, one or two more sober analysts -- including some who were ex-military -- pointed out that that was the kind of general item that could very well have been included, because it would have had a simple engine and basic moving-part mechanics that could be adapted to a myriad of uses in an challenging situation; rather like a useful machine to have on a desert island (or a desert planet) if one were ingenious and mechanically adept enough to adapt it.

15. In terms of verifiable evidence, the story is told in the form of a

logbook taken by the team sent to this other world, but I'm wondering if "Anonymous" has provided any information that might allow you to verify some facts that might not otherwise be known -- thus providing some confirmation for the story?

None at all: and there's the rub. I did, however, have an extraordinary personal experience which I kept confidential at the time but have recently taken it upon myself to make a public statement about. I wrote it up in full in the most recent Serpo update; <http://serpo.org/updates.asp> . Essentially, a third party had requested a meeting with me in a hotel room, which lasted about an hour. During that time I was given an envelope and invited to open it and view its contents. I wasn't permitted to make copies, keep the contents, or report to anyone else the encounter or what I'd seen.

There were five photos, three of which were in full color. One, in black and white, showed a rather indistinct, dark, rectangular, obelisk-like object; I was later told that it was the well-documented "tower" on Serpo. Another, also in black and white, I was told was an X-Ray image of the Ebens' Energy Device, as I described earlier. A third was a portrait of an Eben, but it was hard to tell whether or not it was a model. A fourth was a desert scene, with some oddly eroded rocks; but it could have been somewhere on Earth.

It was the fifth photo which took my breath away. It showed a desert landscape, with dark storm clouds in the sky, taken from a slightly elevated position, such as a small hill or a high sand dune. *And on the horizon were two suns setting.*

I stared at that photo for a very long time and can remember every detail. It didn't look to me like anything created by Photoshop; I examined it very carefully. The emotional impact was considerable; I was surprisingly moved – and remain so every time I recall the event.

I was instructed not to tell anyone that I had seen the photos, and that permission would be granted to publish them on the website "in the near future". That permission never came, and I never saw the photos again.

16. Author Whitley Strieber recounted somebody telling him they had proof of ET existence at a conference several years ago, and when he asked for details, they leaned in and whispered "Serpo" into this ear: what do you make of this claim?

It's a great story, and is easily the kind of thing that could have

happened. If the exchange program happened, then there were those who returned. Most of them would have been still alive back in the early 90s when this event took place, and this was soon after the publication of Strieber's best-selling book "Communion". I can readily imagine one of the team members being tempted, in a moment of mischief, to tell him that he had personally visited another planet (this is apparently the brief conversation which ensued) – and then stated its name, before ending the conversation and walking away.

17. Speaking of which, I've heard rumors that there may be more than one "Anonymous", meaning that part of this story could be factual, and the other part a product of a me-too style hoaxster. Any thoughts on this?

This has given rise to a huge amount of speculation. The facts are that Victor Martinez received reports from one source from 1 November up until 21 December 2005... then the messages ceased. Everyone, including Victor and myself, thought that was it, and that it was all over.

Then on 24 January I was contacted personally, and Victor had been by-passed. The style of the releases seemed to be different: they were totally unedited, and I received, for instance, thousands of words of Team Commander's logs with no paragraph breaks and typos all over the place; and there were also elaborate security measures in place which I don't believe Victor had experienced. It did look like they were coming from a different source.

I just did as I was told and posted the information verbatim. Believe me, there was some information I didn't *want* to post, because the quality was so poor. But I did so nevertheless, and never made any additions or corrections. I was told, interestingly enough, that the way I posted the information – exactly as-is, with no editing whatsoever – was "just as they wanted it". Victor's services had, I was told, been dispensed with because he would edit and collate the information before posting, to ensure it was presented optimally. I never did that.

It's hard to say whether the original sources were different, because Victor modified the material he had so much before releasing it himself. So we can't do a direct comparison. But I do actually think they were different people, although from the same group. Below, I'll state a hypothesis for consideration about what may have occurred behind the scenes.

I suspect a considerable complexity, and what's happened – quite understandably – is that the patience of the UFO community hasn't been sufficient to stay with the story as it dragged out for so long, with the promised photos never materializing, the quality of the material being apparently so poor, with all the inherent anomalies and contradictions, and total lack of substantiation. Most people have better things to do and moved on to other areas of the UFO field, which after all is a labyrinth with a myriad of interesting corners to explore. After, say, January or February, there was no compelling reason for the audience to have stayed with the story.

Here's my hypothesis. It matches with some data I've been told off the record, and it's a plausible picture, I suggest. But I can't offer a grain of solid proof, without breaking confidences which I'm not prepared to breach.

There are three surviving members of the squad of astronauts who prepared to go to Serpo – who never went on the mission, being reserve members. I've been told the names of two of them and the location of all three. They're elderly, and wanted to get the story out before they died. They sought approval from the DIA, who assented – subject to certain conditions. The three had to toe the line, as, although elderly, are still in the DIA's pay.

They essentially recalled the information between themselves (hence the gaps in the story, holes in the science, and anecdotal writing style) and compiled the initial releases. These were channeled to a senior DIA official – again, I have been told his name, and he's a well-known public figure – who e-mailed them to Victor from the specially created thewizardofzin@lycos.com e-mail account. Interestingly, the moniker "Sylvester McCoglin" was derived from the names of two ancestors of another person – so this is five people currently involved so far, not counting Paul McGovern, Gene Lakes, or Rick Doty, who we'll come on to in a moment. And "The Wizard" was the nickname of the Team Commander of the mission, which is where the "WizardofZin" e-mail address came from – a kind of tribute to him.

So far, so good. Victor has confirmed that during that initial November-December period, he was actually receiving information from *three* sources: 85% came from "Sylvester", 13% came from Paul McGovern, and 2% came from Gene Lakes – McGovern and Lakes both being known ex-DIA "insiders". Victor would cut and paste all this, mixing and matching so that it all came out in much the same format.

In January, several of those of us who were following the story

closely realized that the IP addresses of Paul McGovern, "Sylvester", and Rick Doty, seemed to be similar or identical. This gave us considerable pause for thought. When challenged, Rick denied any complicity, and those people who knew him well believed him. At that stage I'd not met him, but I did meet him and talk with him at some length at the Laughlin, Nevada UFO conference, for the first time, and again a second time in LA in May, then with my partner Kerry Cassidy. I got to know him quite well, and as I've stated in several places, he was visibly irritated and frustrated – as we all were – with the turns and progress of events. He told Kerry and myself, with obvious frustration: "If I'd been managing this disclosure, it'd have been a class act." He went on to tell us that he had made a number of recommendations about how best to proceed, but they had largely been ignored.

Those of us who understand IP addresses well (and that does not include myself, or most other people, for that matter) insist that the apparent identity of those IP address means nothing, and that they can be easily fabricated; indeed, a colleague of mine, with significant insider experience and a current Top Secret clearance, who had been following the Serpo story very closely, was shown by an expert colleague of his how to replace one IP address with another in a sent e-mail in 30 seconds flat, and demonstrated this for my colleague to see.

It's part of my hypothesis that Rick – who as most of the UFO community knows, was involved in a disinformation campaign against Paul Bennewitz in the early 1980s, and now admits it, stating that he was under orders at the time as an agent of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations – was set up as part of the "fuse in the circuit": plausible deniability.

With Rick's IP address in place, the plausible deniability was built-in. That's now come home to roost, as several people have argued forcibly that the IP address similarity means that the entire story is a hoax. That doesn't follow, in my logic; I think that's simplistic thinking.

But the problem with evaluating all of this – and, to a degree, this mirrors what has always happened when considering the extreme claims that populate the entire UFO field – is that people will believe what they want to believe – or *need* to believe – to support their own value set or worldview. So the skeptics cry hoax, and others are willing to believe every word of the story... and so the show goes on.

That, of course, may be exactly what's intended... as I realized about six months ago that solid proof would *never* materialize, because of the need to provide an "out" for those whose worldviews would collapse if incontrovertible proof were to be presented. So the disclosure stories remain enigmatic and ambiguous... quite deliberately. That way, the War of the Worlds scenario, with panic on the streets, is avoided. The believers are prepared, and the deniers are not forced into a catastrophic change of worldview that would be threatening and damaging for them and possibly for society.

But back to my hypothesis. I said this was not simple! So far, we have the three ex-astronauts collating what they could remember and relaying it to Victor through a senior DIA figure, who adopted The Wizard's name for an e-mail address, and concocted "Sylvester McCoglin" at the suggestion of an insider colleague, who it is known had ancestors with those names.

Then, in December, pressure was brought to bear on them to stop the releases; there are insider factions which oppose disclosure, don't let's forget. So there was a hiatus. After five weeks, the releases resumed, this time coming from the astronauts themselves, this time by-passing the senior DIA figure. They adopted stringent security measures and changed their approach. The senior DIA figure ("Sylvester") had been happy for Victor to amend and edit the material, but the astronauts themselves wanted the material posted verbatim – and all they had available to them were unedited, uncorrected audio transcripts of hypnosis sessions, at a very early stage in the editing process that would have preceded publication in a report.

It can be surmised that the same problems that hit "Sylvester" in December then caught up with the astronauts a short while later. I've heard that there was a re-grouping again, and that plans were afoot to issue a large amount of information later in the year once "certain problems had been handled" – but it's now been a long time since I heard anything at all, and let's just say that I'm no longer holding my breath.

Can I prove any of this? No. Have there been components of this story which I've withheld? Yes, for certain good reasons. Do I think the above conjecture is accurate? Probably not... but I think it may be quite close. Will we ever know the whole truth? Possibly not.

18. Personally, I think that you've done a real service to this story by recording it: you stepped into what was otherwise a loose collection of

chain-emails & commentary, and collected the salient information into a website. What prompted you to get involved with this?

I was fascinated by the early releases, and one night I just couldn't sleep because all these questions were coursing through my mind. I got up, noted them all down, and then posted them to Victor's list. There were about a dozen of them, as I recall, such as how come the Eben population was so small, would it really be sustainable to comprise a planetary high-tech civilization, how come the team had lost track of time so easily, and so on and so forth. I can't even remember them all right now.

The next thing I knew, not only had "Anonymous" praised my questions and responded to them all in his next release, but others had contacted me privately telling me that my questions had impressed them and welcomed opening up a dialog with me. Soon after that it became apparent that there needed to be some way to ensure this information reached a wider public – not just the hundred or so people on Victor's list – and so I volunteered to build a website and archive the information. It was as simple as that.

19. As I understand things, your involvement in collating this information has made you the victim of attacks & slurs by several skeptics, despite the fact that you've never professed any deep belief in the story itself -- only the desire to document it for posterity. Can you elaborate a bit on this?

It's always been interesting to me that some people – which I later learned to be a tiny minority, but who presented themselves artificially on various forums to be a larger number, because they were posting under multiple identities – were so virulent and even vicious in their criticism. It was as if I aggravated some people so much – I'd displayed what I think was exemplary patience and courtesy under considerable pressure – that they just had to go for the jugular and discredit me by any means they could.

Anyone can see my sincerity if they view Kerry Cassidy's short March 2006 interview with me which can be streamed on <http://homepage.mac.com/jagbodhi/iMovieTheater3.html> . She asks me whether I'm an advocate of the story, to which I answer that I'm an advocate of people being willing to consider that the story may have merit. That remains my position.

20. Now you've been dealing directly with "Anonymous" for quite some time, right? Can you tell us anything about him/her? Any email

exchanges that haven't been posted that could provide us with more insight or credibility into this individual? Has this person privately revealed their true identity to you?

I think I answered this question earlier... I *have* been given some names, but I'm committed to keep those confidential. It's a frustrating paradox, that I can't take any steps to make my own life easier by disclosing the names of some of the alleged sources. But that would be the wrong thing to do: I'm very willing to do whatever I can to cover those up, and there are good reasons for that. But then I pay the price by taking the bullets myself, because the skeptics cry foul and insist I'm making it all up. I could defend myself easily, but then that would be to someone else's detriment. I'm not willing to do that.

21. What direction are your own thoughts or feelings taking on this story? How do you feel about the story itself, and how do you feel as the person taking responsibility building the website that maintains the information on it?

In the words I wrote in early November, and which can still be read on the website introduction page <http://serpo.org/intro.asp> :

Logically there are four possibilities:

1) Anonymous is a prankster and the reported data is either all invented or culled from other sources and added to a wild novelistic story.

2) Anonymous is operating to a planned agenda and the information is deliberately distorted, but contains a core of extraordinary truth.

3) Anonymous is doing his best to report data from an indirect source (personal notes, his own short or long term memory, or another person), but accidental errors, omissions and additions have occurred.

4) Anonymous is reporting everything faithfully and accurately as best as he can present it.

Only possibility (1) means everything should be rejected. The other three necessarily mean that the reports deserve close attention.

My own conclusion is (2), while the "core of extraordinary truth" belongs in category (3). In other words, there's a core of truth: an exchange program of some kind definitely occurred. Some of the

inaccuracies are accidental (gaps in memory, unedited audiotape transcripts, and other errors) and some are deliberate obfuscations, confusions or misdirections. And I say this knowing full well that I may be wrong, and that whatever I say, others will disagree.

22. I'd like to ask about publicity: you've done Coast to Coast AM, which has a vast global audience, and I understand that you're getting considerable web-traffic as well. Are you having a good run with the publicity, and is it causing any trouble for you?

Since I became involved with the Serpo story in early November, my life has completely changed. I met Kerry Cassidy in Laughlin – when she interviewed me a two or three days before the conference ended. We carried on talking for a couple of hours after she turned the camera off, and had dinner the next evening before the Convention ended. Three weeks later, she extended a planned trip to Egypt to stop over in the UK for four days. A week later I flew to California; and so here I am, and we share a beautiful apartment next door to an extensive park complete with mountain lions, bobcats and rattlesnakes. I love it here.

So, no trouble – and a totally new life, in which I've been privileged to have made contact and become friends with a host of courageous and exceptional people. To tell one story, I was contacted through the Serpo website by a man who rather unfortunately has subsequently become known as "Mr X" – someone who in his twenties worked for six months as an archivist working hands-on with classified UFO documents, photographs, films and alien artifacts, and who now, twenty years later, wanted to tell the world what he had experienced.

I helped him get his story to the public, and that was the serendipitous seed of the inspiration that has now become Project Camelot: do, everyone reading this, visit <http://projectcamelot.org> . It's still in its early stages, but Kerry and I envisage it as an umbrella organization that will help whistleblowers get their stories out, offer protection in the form of safety in numbers, and honor those who have paid a high price for their courage in challenging those with vested interests or who adhere to out-dated, closed-minded paradigms. Kerry and I are currently focusing a lot of time and attention on this, and it's both exciting and very hard work. But it has wonderful rewards.

For example, we've made contact with an elderly man who worked with Otis Carr, Tesla's student and protégé, when in his early 20s. In 1954-56 he was one of three pilots who "flew" a 45 foot diameter craft for several miles, reaching their destination instantaneously. It was

powered with contrarotating rings of electromagnets, with an additional component which involved shining light at various frequencies into a large crystal. The second, critical, component was the pilots' focused intention as a "conscious" part of the system. Soon after the dramatic test flight, their project was forcibly shut down by government agents.

This guy has a 6" thick scrapbook of diagrams, blueprints and photos. We made contact in March at which time I encouraged him to do a full written report which I promised to publicize. Shortly afterwards he went into hospital for a routine knee operation, "accidentally received the wrong treatment", and nearly died three times. He's just emerged, very frail, from intensive care – but is determined to tell his story. Prior to that he'd enjoyed perfect health for 71 years. This is exactly what Project Camelot is for.

23. What do you think comes next in the Serpo story? More postings, or maybe photos or video evidence? Do you think we'll ever get the definitive proof required to finally make a determination, or will this story end up as a big question mark like so many other stories?

My personal opinion is that we've now heard the last of it... but I hope to be surprised! My money, I'm afraid, is on the big question mark – as with so many other stories which are tantalizingly short of proof. I'll be waiting, along with everyone else, to see if anything else transpires; but I won't be holding my breath. In the meantime, as I said above, my commitments are to Kerry and to Project Camelot, and I have one of those feelings in my bones that the next year or two may be very interesting indeed.

*Written answers to questions posed by e-mail in April 2006 by
Tim Ventura of American Antigravity (<http://americanantigravity.com>)*

Bill Ryan, 26 July 2006