In Washington . . .



By Martha Angle and Robert Walters

'Whistle-blowers' beware!

WASHINGTON (NEA) - During a campaign visit to suburban Alexandria, Va. two weeks before the 1976 presidenof government "whistle-blowers." my Carter pledged his support on behalf tial election, Democratic candidate Jim-

mised on that autumn day. their superiors or others," Carter proout and report waste and dishonesty by protect our federal employees from narassment and dismissal if they find intend to seek strong legislation to

the Defense Department for reporting cost overrums, must never be repeated," he added. dedicated civil servant was fired from "The Fitzgerald case, where a

\$2 billion 5A cargo plane would cost the taxpayers blower. He was fired from his job as an Air Force cost management expert in A. Ernest Fitzgerald is perhaps the government's best known whistlecommittee that cost overruns on the C-1969, after revealing to a congressional

Force at the time of the embarrassing disclosures, asked his staff to prepare a Secretary of Defense. brought Brown back into government as zgerald, then presided over the firing memo outlining ways to dispose of Fit-When Carter was elected president, Harold Brown, Secretary of the Air

Fitzgerald also has returned to Ę

> After a four-year legal battle that cost an estimated \$400,000 to \$500,000, he won 1973 and was given a new title, Air Force Deputy for Productivity Management. reinstatement to the federal payroll in Pentagon, but he took a different route,

from scrutinizing any major weapons systems in search of waste, dishonesty or inefficiency. The president has lost interest in "the Fitzgerald case."

When Carrier recently was asked small office in the Pentagon attic and has been prohibited by his superiors But today Fitzgerald works from a

about Frank Snepp, the former Central Intelligence Agency analyst whose book revealed CIA bungling on a massive scale in the closing days of the Vietnam war, he offered a chilly response.

Snepp as one of the greatest whistlerevealing our nation's utmost secrets," the president said "I don't look on Frank blowers of all times." Criticizing those who "write a book

fess concern for the plight of what he Nevertheless, Carter continues to pro-

who expose gross management errors and abuses."

But the White House proposal includes calls "legitimate whistle-blowers."
When he recently unveiled his plan for Special Counsel . . . to protect (those) dent noted that it included "an Office of civil service reorganization, the presi-

Counsel to intervene in instances where or transferred — but not in cases of dismissal. Thus, the proposal ena whistle-blower is demoted, suspended tion against boat-rockers. courages firing, the most extreme sanc

power to enforce any order against a presidential appointee, the category of federal officials that includes all cabinet-level and sub-cabinet policyfiring in sensitive cases. makers — the people who usually do the The Special Counsel also lacks the

less to protect government employees who disclose wrongdoing. precious little to encourage and even

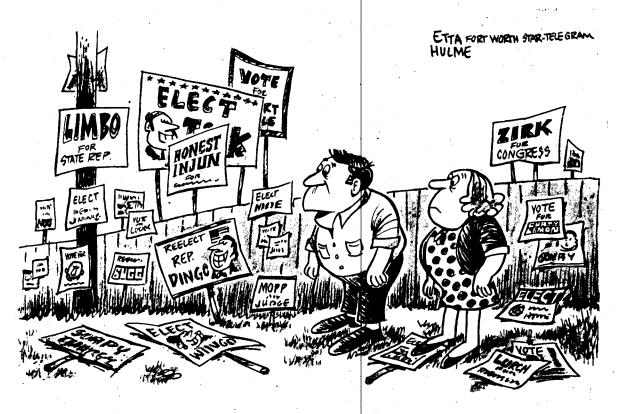
Carter's plan authorizes the Special

ciency or negligence.

Also unprotected is the disclosure of tion if they disclose an offense covered similar provision covering waste, ineffifraud or dishonesty. But there is no by law or regulation, such as corruption. Whistle-blowers have limited protec-

classified information, thus perpetuating a discredited system under which bureaucrats use a "top secret" status to forever hide their mistakes from the public.

during Fitzgerald's battle with the Air Force, "it would have hurt rather than strip away rights that I presently have." helped," says Fitzgerald. "It appears to (NEWSPAPER ENTERPRISE ASSN.) If Carter's proposal had been in effect F Part 3/2/78



"I'm waiting to see which ones are for cleaning up the mess they made proclaiming they were all for cleaning up the government."