

CAUS

BULLETIN



#5

Ed. by L. Fawcett & B. Greenwood

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EDITORIAL

During the second week of July 1986, newspapers, TV and radio stations reported that an unidentified, top secret aircraft had crashed near the Sequoia National Forest outside of Bakersfield, California, killing the lone pilot. The area was immediately placed off-limits by the Air Force and the air space above the crash site was declared a restricted zone below 8,500 feet. Commercial airliners were re-routed around the area. The newspapers also spoke of a large tent being placed over the craft that had crashed.

Of course, the Air Force's response to the story was that the aircraft was not an F-19 Stealth fighter (as the rumor was circulating) but that they could not confirm what it was. I would like to draw a parallel here to the handling of UFO incidents and ask, "Where have we heard this before?" Remember, UFOs aren't supposed to exist either!

During August 1986, I had the opportunity to travel to Long Beach, California to do several TV shows and a day-long seminar. While there, a number of witnesses to the Bakersfield crash were available for me to interview. In one case, I was told that farmers, having cattle grazing in the area of the crash, were told by the Air Force that they could not use their property. The cattle should be kept near the farms with bales of hay for feed. If the cattle entered the restricted area, they would die.

Another person told of an incident where a gentleman who lived near the crash site had his truck checked with geiger counters by Air Force personnel. Yet another witness said that Air Force people guarded the area armed with M-16s and wearing blue berets, very reminiscent of Len Stringfield's quick deployment group used in crash retrieval UFO cases. The aircraft was said to have been removed from the area on flat-bed trucks, with the parts covered by large canvas tarpaulins, once again similar to the UFO retrieval stories. The Air Force left the area just a couple of days before my arrival on August 14th.

If this was a secret aerial device being tested by the Air Force, it brings up several questions. Usually a test vehicle is accompanied by other aircraft. Witnesses state that the crashed vehicle was the only one in the air at the time. Where were the support aircraft? Why would they test over the Sequoia National Forest, a public area, when safe and secure testing could be conducted over the vast ranges at Edwards AFB, California or the Tonopa Test Range in Nevada, the home of Stealth fighter research?

To sum up, there is a public relations problem here. If it wasn't some sort of unknown aerial object (since they don't exist!) and if it wasn't an F-19 Stealth test (since they don't exist!), then what was it that crashed? There is a terrible inconsistency in public handling of these matters which really doesn't allay suspicions but arouses them.

The similarities in the Air Force investigation of the Bakersfield crash to the reported details of UFO crash/retrievals of the past forces us to keep an open book on these older incidents. While an F-19 may have crashed in California, the procedures for investigating unusual aircraft are still flying high. Who knows what wonders are gathering dust in old government file cabinets!

Larry Fawcett

PROJECT AQUARIUS CONFIRMED?

Recently, we have received copies of two responses to FOIA requests by the National Security Agency which seem to indicate that there is a "Project Aquarius" that is highly classified. (see CAUS Bulletin #2.)

We gratefully acknowledge the help of Dale Goudie of the Puget Sound Aerial Phenomena Research group in obtaining this information. Goudie said that an FOIA requester, who prefers to remain anonymous, filed for material on Project Aquarius early in the year. An NSA response on March 3, 1986 says in part:

"Please be advised that Project Aquarius does not deal with unidentified aerial objects. We, therefore, have no information to provide to you on the subject."

The NSA referred to a "\$15,000 fee" to search for records pertaining to Aquarius, which of course the requester could not meet. The requester narrowed the scope of the search to reduce the absurd search fee imposed. We are not in possession of the follow-up request, but the NSA replied in an April 15th letter as follows (extracts):

"The document located in response to your request as stated in your 7 March letter has been reviewed by this Agency...
....(it) remains classified TOP SECRET as provided in section 1.1 of Executive Order 12356. The document is classified because it's disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security."

So at this point we know that there is a "Project Aquarius" and that it is a very highly-classified subject. We must also take with a grain of salt the statement that it has nothing to do with UAOs. The NSA had previously told CAUS that it knew nothing of a Project Aquarius! Knowing how literally high level agencies have interpreted our requests in the past, could Project Aquarius deal with "identified aerial objects?"

Stay tuned on this one!

NO CAUS WASHINGTON REPORT

Due to other commitments, Larry Bryant's D.C. report will be

NORAD EXEMPTS ITSELF FROM FOIA

Note the article below. NORAD, in seeking to exempt itself from FOIA requests, has declared that they are an "international organization", not subject to FOIA. Wake up! While you are watching "Dynasty" and "Wheel of Fortune", your right to know and be informed is being eaten away!

NORAD data placed off limits

By Fred Kaplan
Globe Staff

WASHINGTON - The Air Force has recently ruled that the Freedom of Information Act - under which citizens can request the government to declassify secret documents - does not apply to the command organization in charge of operations for antisatellite weapons and the Strategic Defense Initiative.

This far-reaching decision appears to have been motivated not so much by concerns about public disclosure of SDI activities as by efforts to save Canada's conservative government from political embarrassment.

The Air Force organization now protected from Freedom of Information requests is the North American Air Defense Command, known as NORAD. The SDI office in the Pentagon controls research and development of the program. But NORAD, headquartered in Colorado Springs, controls operational planning.

NORAD also controls tactics, alert postures and performance standards of the new US antisatellite weapons.

Thus the Air Force decision to exempt NORAD from the Freedom of Information Act - says William M. Arkin, a private nuclear-weapons researcher with the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies, who has uncovered much of NORAD's involvement with SDI

and antisatellite weapons - "is a back-door way to deny information" about those highly controversial programs.

Arkin says the Air Force made the decision, however, chiefly with the plight of the Canadian government in mind. Earlier this year, Arkin gave The New York Times documents indicating that the US military had been given presidential authority to deploy, in times of emergency, nuclear weapons to eight foreign countries that have no nuclear weapons of their own - without the knowledge of the host countries' governments. One of these countries was Canada, and the disclosure prompted a political and diplomatic crisis.

Then further documents drawing a link between Canada and the execution of US nuclear strategies in the event of war were uncovered. Many Canadian politicians were outraged that Canada had not been consulted and wondered to what extent Canada had surrendered its sovereignty to the United States.

Many of the documents had been obtained as a result of Freedom of Information requests Arkin had filed with NORAD.

According to Defense Department officials, shortly after these controversies broke out, the Canadian government asked the US government whether NORAD

could be exempted from the Freedom of Information Act so it could be spared further political scandal. Evidently, the US government has complied.

Last summer, Jeffrey Sands, another US researcher, received a letter from the Air Force that denied a Freedom of Information request for some NORAD documents and added that NORAD was now exempt from the Freedom of Information Act.

A memo supplied, dated Jan. 31, 1985, from the Air Force litigation director, Col. Seymour Coperman, to the Freedom of Information office, stated in part: "In our opinion, the appeal [for NORAD documents] should be denied, as Headquarters, NORAD, is an international organization not subject to the Freedom of Information Act."

The basis for this legal judgment was the fact that NORAD is nominally a joint US-Canadian organization. However, Arkin says over the years he has received numerous once-classified NORAD documents through Freedom of Information requests, with no such exemption ever cited.

It is unlikely that the exemption will finish controversy over US-Canadian military relations. In testimony before a Canadian parliamentary committee here yesterday, Arkin released a list of

364 never-before publicized cooperative arrangements, notes and memoranda signed by the two countries on a variety of military issues. Arkin also revealed that a similar list provided to the Parliament by the Canadian Department of National Defense omitted eight of these arrangements, because "they were too politically sensitive for Parliament to consider."

Four of these arrangements deal with the use, storage or exercise of nuclear weapons on or over Canadian soil; two deal with visits of nuclear warships and space-related cooperation, which Arkin called "politically explosive issues in Canada"; two are secret supplements to open agreements now under close scrutiny in Canada.

Arkin said that, mainly through NORAD, Canada is becoming increasingly and unavoidably "integrated" into US strategies and plans for US nuclear warfare, and yet the Canadian government "does not have access to the basic information necessary to assess its commitment and position, or to claim a great degree of control."

Arkin said the exemption of NORAD from the Freedom of Information Act was, in this respect, part of a general policy "to keep out of the public debate politically sensitive material."

'Stealth' jet said to crash in California

By Eric Malnic and Ralph Vartabedian
Los Angeles Times

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. — An Air Force plane, believed to be one of Lockheed's top secret "Stealth" jet fighters, crashed and burned early yesterday in rugged terrain 15 miles northeast of here, killing the pilot and prompting authorities to impose an extraordinary news blackout.

The Air Force declared the crash site and the air space above it "a national security area" out of bounds to the press and public.

Military and civilian officials would say little about the craft, which crashed about 2 a.m. near Saturday Peak, a 4,100-foot mountain on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada.

Air Force spokesmen at the Pentagon and Edwards Air Force Base, about 65 miles to the southeast, and Nellis Air Force Base near Las Vegas, Nev., 210 miles east of the crash site, would confirm only that the plane had crashed and that its lone crew member had been killed. The crew member's name was withheld pending notification of family members.

Military officials would not identify the type of aircraft, the base from which it took off, its destination, or its mission.

Air Force Lt. Col. Jerry F. Guess, a public information officer from Edwards, did say the plane was not armed. "No weapons whatsoever were involved," he said.

However, congressional sources in Washington said the downed craft was apparently an F-19 Stealth fighter. The Stealth, built by Lockheed, uses the latest electronic technology and aerodynamic design in an effort to make detection by radar and infrared devices difficult.

"It is clearly the F-19 that crashed," said an investigator on the House Energy and Commerce Committee's oversight and investigations subcommittee.

The committee, chaired by Rep. John D. Dingell (D-Mich.) has been investigating alleged security leaks on the F-19 program at the Lockheed California Co. in Burbank, Calif.

The plane reportedly exploded in mid-air. This would explain why the pilot was not able to safely eject and why there was little wreckage at the crash site, according to an Air Force source knowledgeable about the crash and who discussed the accident on condition that his name not be used.

This source also said the explosion was witnessed by a pilot in a chase aircraft. The use of a chase plane would be normal procedure in flight testing, especially with an aircraft as secret as the F-19, the source said.

A committee staff member said that Dingell had requested a briefing on the crash from the Pentagon, but that Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger had denied the request.

At the Pentagon yesterday, high-level Air Force officials said the airplane that crashed in the Sequoia National Forest was not a Stealth bomber. But when asked if it was a Stealth fighter, they would not comment.

Any kid can buy a model of top secret jet plane

America's superscret stealth jet fighter is so hush-hush the Air Force won't even admit there is one — yet any kid or Russian spy can buy a scale model of it at most hobby shops.

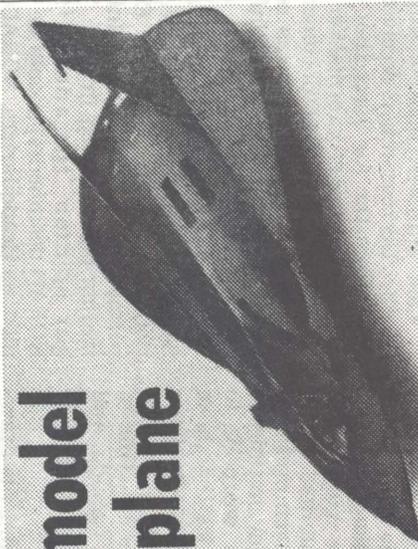
Testor company has produced a model of the F-19 stealth fighter that experts say could very well be the real thing.

The situation has outraged members of Congress who themselves can't get the security clearance necessary to find out about the plane.

"It's bizarre," said Rep. Ron Wyden (D-Oreg.). "What I as a member of Congress am not even allowed to see is now ending up in model packages."

Amazingly, the secrecy surrounding the stealth plane — which can not be detected by enemy radar — is so tight that military officials won't admit there is such a plane.

Testor says the stealth model is selling



MODEL of top secret Air Force plane is available at most any local hobby shop.

Like hotcakes and toy stores have ordered 100,000 kits, three times the amount usual for a new model.

Testor executive Steve Kass insists the model is harmless as far as national security is concerned. Testor experts designed the model solely on already-released information, he said.

Meanwhile, Rep. Wyden is working on a House subcommittee looking into a possible security breach.

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