Air Force Warplanes Spraying Poisons on America?

(Ref: NOAA Image g10sat.gif, dated 4/24/99)
By Ronald S. Regehr
10 May 1999

Air Force warplanes spraying poisons on America? That's the claim of Ken
Welsh of Houston, Texas, on Jeff Renses' website "Sightings"
(http://www.sightings.com) using as evidence the satellite image NOAA
g10sat.gif. The photo shows anomalous cloud formations--"contrails"? Yet
careful analysis, at least of that, image shows the contrail-like cloud
forms are orders-of-magnitude too large to have been created by military or
any other aircraft.

I have been an aerospace engineer for 36+ years specializing in satellite
technology. The NOAA image on "Sightings", which gave rise to controversy
shows several strange configurations which indeed resemble aircraft
contrails. However, as the analysis below indicates, the size and volume of
the vapor contained in the configuration is far too large to have been
created by any aircraft. Thus Walsh's claim, in his article Spraying of
Cities is Real, cannot be true. And although I cannot explain the strange
cloud formations, Walsh's allegation that the image proves "fuel aerosol
poisoning of America" is without merit.

Circulation of satellite images showing what appear to be contrails have led
to rumors about alleged USAF involvement in some type of "chemical warfare"
against citizens of this nation. Walsh contends KC-10 aircraft
 McDonnell-Douglas DC-10 aircraft converted to perform in-flight refueling)
are engaged in dispersing chemical/biological aerosols over the United
States, resulting in illness and possibly deathto some people.
"Sightings" recently posted an image (g10sat.gif) with about a dozen of
these phenomena Walsh calls "contrails," located roughly 350 km west of the
northern California/southern Oregon coast. It is this image that seemingly
proves the existence of a heinous poisoning operation.

My examination of the NOAA satellite image consisted of measurement of the
"contrails," their distance from the coast, and simple mathematics to
determine the possible volume of the "contrails." This examination
convinced me the phenomena observed in image g10sat.gif are not created by
aircraft dispensing aerosols.

Several other factors, more visceral than cerebral, also convince me of the

absurdity of this particular image being evidence of any covert action. One thing leaders (be they parents, corporate heads, or USAF generals) assiduously avoid is surprises. They want predictability and repeatibility. Without these two factors they are vulnerable to exposure--or worse. It makes no sense for the military to engage forces so far off the coast. Wind and weather patterns could easily cause the aerosols to drift far from their intended target--or miss it altogether! Further, dissipation of the aerosols could render them benign, further negating any effect. Lastly, for the exercise to be of any value it must have tactical applications--meaning the ability to repeatedly perform similar "attacks" should the need arise. The "fuel aerosol poisoning of America" scenario fails to satisfy these basic military criteria, further leading me to the conclusion the cloud formations shown in the NOAA image are not manmade.

The Data

The State of California border with Oregon is roughly 320 kilometers (km). The NOAA image shows the border to measure 31 mm, resulting in approximately 1 mm = 10 km.
The "contrails" on the image measure about 1.5 mm by 30 mm, yielding a cloud approximaty 15 km wide and 300 km long
The KC-10 carries about 350,000 pounds of liquid (43,750 gallons of water)

The Assumptions

The "contrails" are cylindrical (again, to simplify the math)
The "contrail's" behavior approximates that of ordinary clouds
The "chemical agent" being dispersed is waterborne
The KC-10 is flying at 40,000 feet (near its service ceiling)

The Math

The volume of a cylinder is calculated using the equation
$$V = \pi r^2 l$$
 where: V = the volume of the cylinder
   r = the radius of the cylinder, 7.5 km
  l = the length of the cylinder, 300 km
 hence: V = 3.14 x (7.5km2) x 300 km
     = 3.14 x 56.25 km2 x 300 km
   V = 53,000 km3
We want to use the minimum amount of water vapor per cubic meter required to create a cloud at an altitude of 40,000 ft. At this altitude, the temperature is -53C, which yields a vapor density of 10^{-4} kg/m3. This, in turn, results in a "contrail" containing about 1.1×10^{10} pounds of water. Recall a KC-10 has a 350,0000 pound capacity. Thus, to create each typical "contrail" as represented on image g10sat.gif would require 334,285.7 KC-10 tankers. Total USAF procurement of KC-10 was 59.

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