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**Skunk Works Mailing List****RE: [Fwd: Sad Days]**

Date: Fri, 27 Aug 1999 23:18:01 -0400 (EDT)  
 From: Mary Shafer  
 Subject: RE: [Fwd: Sad Days]

On Thu, 26 Aug 1999 gregweigold@pmc.com wrote:

> Mary might have a comment on this..... please say it ain't so, Mary!!

Mary said it was so weeks ago, when Fast Eddie flew his last flight. The last flight has slipped to 27 Sept and we'll probably keep the planes for more than two years, just not in flyable storage, but it's so.

You want the Blackbirds to keep flying, write to your congress-critters to increase the NASA aeronautics budget, particularly for Mach 3+ flight. Not the space budget, the aeronautics budget, and be sure to mention the Blackbirds and Dryden. Get your friends to write. Don't send e-mail; send real typed letters by snailmail. They've cut our budget so deeply that we have had to lay up all but three research programs using piloted aircraft and those three aren't very expensive. We can't even take advantage of a golden opportunity to acquire and operate the only high-performance variable-stability in-flight simulator in the US (the USAF is abandoning it because they don't think there's anything left to learn about aircraft dynamics and handling qualities, which is why they've also disbanded the flight dynamics organization at Wright-Pat, the folks who write the mil specs and sponsor the research).

Don't rant and rave, don't threaten, don't mention I told you about this, but be cool and logical and point out that the US needs a government organization that knows how airplanes fly but doesn't have a political agenda in producing an accident report to fix the blame and that can investigate new technologies that may do as much for aviation as the swept wing, the supercritical airfoil, winglets, area ruling, and highly-augmented fly-by-wire flight control systems, to name just five NASA or NACA discoveries that have revolutionized civil and military aviation.

Mary Shafer DoD #0362 KotFR shafer@ursa-major.spdccc.com  
 "Some days it don't come easy/And some days it don't come hard  
 Some days it don't come at all/And these are the days that never end...."

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