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Update: Giant Airships - Lewis

From: SMiles Lewis <elfis@austin.rr.com>
Date: Thu, 29 Jun 2000 18:21:29 -0700
Fwd Date: Fri, 30 Jun 2000 07:01:32 -0400
Subject: UpDate: Giant Airships - Lewis

Tho it isn't specificly UFO related.....

I think you see the relevance.

SMiles
www.elfis.net

From: "Martin Adamson" <martin@srv0.ems.ed.ac.uk>
Date: Wed, 28 Jun 2000 13:38:58 +0000
To: forteana@primenet.com
Subject: Giant airship could end famine

Evening Standard

Giant airship could end famine

by Richard Allen

The prototype for a gigantic airship the length of four Jumbo jets and capable of carrying 880 cars from London to New York in three days is due to be unveiled tomorrow.

The 100mph craft, SkyCat 1000, designed by British engineers, will use hovercraft technology to enable it to land anywhere, even on water, without the need for a ground crew.

In the days of the Graf Zeppelin more than 200 people were needed on the ground to bring it down. Now Aircraft Technologies Group is launching SkyCat's 50ft baby, SkyKitten, at Cardington in Bedfordshire, the home of the ill-fated R101 airship which crashed in France in 1928 with the loss of 40 lives.

But the design brains behind ATG, Roger Munk, is keen to point out that hydrogen, the highly flammable gas used in the R101 and the Hindenberg, which crashed in 1937, is a thing of the past. Modern airships use helium, an inert gas that is actually used to put fires out.

Mr Munk said: "SkyCat 1000 is basically a heavy lift platform that can be used for a whole stack of purposes. It is a transport system that's between slow-but-cheap shipping and fast-but-expensive jet aircraft.

"The fact it can land on any terrain of water or marsh makes it particularly flexible. In aid situations, with a 1,000-tonne payload, you could literally stop a famine in one go. That's a pretty powerful change in transport logistics. It has the same operating costs in tonne- miles as a lorry but when you take into account the logistic costs it's a lot cheaper.

"It would also make an enormous difference in mounting the expeditionary warfare which is so difficult these days. Some lunatic does something in some far- flung part of the globe and, as was demonstrated in Kosovo, the West cannot get in a sufficiently large ground force quickly enough to stop the threat.

"What troublemakers know is that the West has extremely slow response times. This kind of technology enables you to fly in a balanced force that can stop an outbreak in its tracks."

By the middle of next year ATG expects to have a 269ft, 15-tonne pay-load machine flying, which could be used for taking 100 people on low-level sightseeing trips or for carrying a huge TV advertising screen.

The year after that will see the production of a 200-tonne payload aircraft, carrying twice the load of a Jumbo jet, and two years after that the SkyCat 1000.

The C5, the largest military transport plane currently used by the US military, can carry one tank. The SkyCat 1000 would be able to carry 16.

It would be capable of crossing the Atlantic twice without refuelling at a speed four times faster than the world's biggest cruise ship. It is so vast it could not fit into Wembley Stadium. In fact, by volume, it could contain Wembley Stadium.

Although ATG is initially focusing on the potential for cargo transportation, the company says that once the technology is up and running, it could be used for a whole range of purposes.

Other possible military uses include naval mine sweeping or as an airborne radar platform. SkyCat 1000 is particularly suitable for the latter role as it could remain "on station" for days rather than hours as is the case with aircraft.

Its size means that, unlike existing airborne radar platforms, it can accommodate the large antennae needed to detect small, "stealthy" targets such as cruise missiles.

Around 450 passengers could travel in the SkyCat 1000 in comfort or 100 passengers in the kind of spacious elegance offered by an ocean liner. There could be silver- service meals, lounges, possibly a piano bar and state rooms for a comfortable night's sleep.

When conditions are right, the captain could descend to 600ft and cut the engines so that travellers could stroll on an outer promenade deck in complete silence.

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