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Subject Drafts of statements for DCI & Public Affairs inre: CIA and TWA 800

the two drafts below are what you need .....

As you know, CIA missile analysts have been working with FBI investigators on the crash of TWA Flight 800 trying to determine if a missile was seen streaking toward the aircraft before the onboard explosions. Extensive analysis of the available technical data (radar tracking, satellite infra-red data), cockpit voice recordings, and more than 240 eyewitness descriptions has shown that what eyewitness saw was not a missile. An unclassified video showing CIA's work is in the final stages of completion. This video will be provided to the FBI along with detailed descriptions of our analysis (also unclassified) of each eyewitness report.

While neither the information used in CIA's analysis nor the anaytic methodologies applied are classified, CIA has treated its involvement in this work as sensitive. Last week, in letters to several congressmen and at a press conference, the FBI credited CIA with working on the investigation. In this week's edition of Aviation Week, CIA's assistance to the FBI is the focus of a full page article. (Copies of press articles are attached.)

We believe that public questions about CIA's involvement will soon begin.

The paragraphs which follow can be used as a response to media questions regarding CIA's involvement with the FBI on the investigation of the crash of TWA Flight 800.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 20-Mar-2012 At the request of the FBI, missile analysts at the CIA have been working closely with FBI special agents during the past year to examine the hypothesis that a missile was used to shoot down TWA Flight 800.

Of particular concern to FBI investigators were reports from dozens of eyewitnesses who, on the evening of July 17th, 1996, recalled seeing an object --- usually described as a "flare" or "firework" --- ascend and culminate in an explosion. Many people have postulated that these eyewitnesses saw a missile destroy the aircraft.

CIA's detailed technical analysis concludes that what these eyewitnesses saw was, in fact, only the burning Boeing 747 in various stages of crippled flight --- not a missile.

Using "sound propagation" analysis, more than 240 eyewitness reports, cockpit recorder information, and radar and infra-red data, CIA analysts have determined that the eyewitness sightings thought to be of a missile actually took place after the first of several explosions on the aircraft.

In addition to the information already provided by CIA to the FBI, detailed explanations of CIA's analytic methodologies and how they were applied to the eyewitness reports also will be furnished to the FBI within the next 60 days.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 30-Mar-2012



24 September 1997

NOTE FOR: DDI, ADDI

Director of Public Affairs

As you know, the FBI has begun to publicly acknowledge our involvement in analyzing events surrounding the crash of TWA 800 in July 1996. Attached is some background and suggested responses to questions about our involvement. Let me know if you need more information. Our analyst most directly involved on this project is

Christopher M. Holmes Director

Attachment

ntlice of Transnational Issues

#### CIA Involvement in TWA 800 Crash

#### For DCI Background

We anticipate that public questions about CIA's involvement will soon begin. Public hearings on the investigation are scheduled to take place in December.

While neither the information used in CIA's analysis nor the analytical methodologies applied are classified, CIA has treated its involvement in this work as sensitive. Last week, in letters to several Congressmen and at a press conference, the FBI credited CIA with working on the investigation. In this week's issue of <u>Aviation Week</u>, CIA's assistance to the FBI is the focus of a full-page article (see attachment).

In addition to the technical support provided by CIA to the FBI during the past year, the CIA has produced a 16-minute video ("TWA Flight 800: What Did the Eyewitnesses see?") which explains how this conclusion was reached. And, within the next 60 days, a detailed written report will be delivered to the FBI.

The paragraphs which follow are offered for your use in response to media questions regarding CIA's involvement with the FBI in the criminal investigation of the crash of TWA Flight 800:

At the request of the FBI, missile analysts at the CIA have been working closely with FBI special agents during the past 14 months to examine the hypothesis that a missile was used to shoot down TWA Flight 800. CIA became involved because of the possibility that this was an act of foreign terrorism.

Of particular concern to FBI investigators were reports from dozens of eyewitnesses who, on the evening of 17 July 1996, recalled seeing an object--usually described as a "flare" or "firework"--ascend and culminate in an explosion. Many people have postulated that these eyewitnesses saw a missile destroy the aircraft.

CIA's detailed technical analysis concludes that what these eyewitnesses saw was, in fact, only the burning Boeing 747 in various stages of crippled flight--not a missile. Based on "sound propagation" analysis using 244 eyewitness reports, radar data, infrared data, and cockpit recorder information, CIA analysts have determined that the eyewitness sightings thought to be of a missile actually took place after the first of several explosions on the aircraft.

24 September 1997

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|  | Subject TWA Flight 800: FBI Press Conference Sch<br>Thursday, 6 November 1997  | eduled for |
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| strom would like to use our video (""    | me that FBI Assistant Director James Kallstrom will esults of the Flight 800 "criminal investigation."  WA Flight 800: What Did the Eyewitnesses See?", e to have the option of releasing this video in its entire | says that  |
| ortunity to see our final version of the | or next Tuesday (14 October) at CIA Headquarters to video. I intend at that time to givecopies of bove Summary to take back to New York for Kallstrom  | th the     |
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| I will put the following note in our | If you have any suggested changes let me know.  |      |
|                                      | and and tFBI Director James Kallstrom at the FBI facility in Manhatten. The sthe use of CIA's analysis and video in Kallstrom's upcoming news |      |

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 19-Mar-2012

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Subject Note from D/OTI re TWA 800

Will you please pass the following information to the DCI and General Gordon.

An OTI team went to New York on 22 October to give the final briefing to James Kallstrom of the FBI on our work on TWA 800. Kallstrom was appreciative of our work and asked for a few changes to the video, which we will make. As you know, inquiries have come to Public Affairs and there have been Congressional requests for the results of our work--including requests to see the video. I believe strongly that the decision of when and where to show the video rests with the FBI, and that we should not show it to anyone outside until after the news conference O/A 13 November. I also believe the FBI is going to give substantial credit to CIA for its contribution when the time comes. I recommended to that Kallstrom call the DCI to express his gratitude and to make explicit his concerns about controlling the dissemination of the story. Chris Holmes

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 19-Mar-2012 APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 30-Mar-2012 CLASSIFIED DRAFT

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24 October 1997

| MEMORANDUM FOR:   |   | Chief of St                                    | taff/DCI                 |                    |
|---|---|--|--------------------------|--------------------|
| FROM:   | Christopher                                     | M. Holmes, D                                   | OTI                      |                    |
| SUBJECT:  | Fact Sheet -                                    | Access to CI                                   | IA TWA-800               | Analysis           |
|   |   |  |                          |                    |
| 1. OTI has analysis and the analysis, and no spokesperson on media. | CIA Public A                                    | f the video of the ded to anyone ffairs Office | on CIA's To              | NA-800<br>dia.     |
|   |   |  |                          |                    |
| 2. Sevent<br>and a shorter, a<br>distributed to t                   | ceen copies, we executive summer the following  | ary of the                                     | s the full<br>video have | video<br>been      |
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| OTI distributed.  | is holding 11                                   | copies, which                                  | ch have no               | been .             |
| 3. The scr<br>for the video wa                                      | ript, which was given to:                       | s used to gen                                  | nerate the               | language           |
| 1 - FBI*  |   |  |                          |                    |
| *OTI analys<br>provided a copy<br>Safety Board for                  | sts were infor<br>of the script<br>their review | to the Natio                                   | onal Tranci              | e FBI<br>portation |
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CLASSIFIED DRAFT

SUBJECT: Fact Sheet - CIA TWA-800 Analysis

| the video.           | is holding a broadcast-quality copy of |
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|                      |  |
| 4.                   |  |
| were the principle ( | TI analysts involved in the analysis   |
| provided to the FBI  | Support personnel involved in the      |
| making of the video  | are OTI, OSS,                          |
| OSS, and             | /OSS. In addition,                     |
|                      | were OTI                               |
| contractors that we  | e employed to work on the video.       |

5. The video, TWA Flight 800: What Did The Eyewintesses See, has been shown to OTI managers, a few OTI analysts, individuals responsible for the video's production, and CIA's Offices of Congressional Affairs and Public Affairs. The video was played for numerous individuals from the FBI and Die's Missile and Space Intelligence Center on 18 June 1997 and on 22 October 1997.

Christopher M. Holmes

CLASSIFIED DRAFT



SUBJECT: Fact Sheet - CIA TWA-800 Analysis

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| 29 (                         | October 1997   | CC          |  |                               |
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|                              |  | Subject     | TWA Flight 800: Meeting With FBI and NTSB in New York Next Monday  |                               |
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| OFFICE:<br>DATE:<br>SUBJECT: | OTI<br>10-28-97 08:20:21 PM<br>TWA Flight 800: Meet  |             | I and NTSB in New York Next Monday   |                               |
|                              | a meeting with the FBI's lanhattan at 9:30 AM.   | S           | and several folks from the NTSB next Monday (3   |                               |
| and me                       |  |             | ia Airport and take us to the meeting.   |                               |
| Eyewitnesses S               | se of this meeting is to some of this meeting is to some of their reache NTSB calculated the | ction/comme | TSB our video ("TWA Flight 800: What Did the ents. We'll also be discussing several technical issues first explosion.            | 5,                            |
| As an asi                    | de,  |             |  |                               |
| Kallstrom and o              | ther senior managers in<br>onber news conference of  | n the FBI.  | He has conveyed his opinion on this to James also told me that our video will play a major role in 800 "criminal investigation." |                               |
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Here are a few questions and answers regarding the TWA Flight 800 analysis.

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 19-Mar-2012

#### TWA 800 Q&A

#### What was the CIA's involvement with the TWA Flight 800 investigation?

CIA's involvement with the investigation began with requests from FBI for technical information regarding portable surface-to-air missiles, capabilities of these missiles against civilian aircraft, and terrorist possession of these systems. Soon thereafter, the FBI requested CIA technical assistance in analyzing more than 200 eyewitness reports to determine what these eyewitnesses saw.

#### What did the eyewitnesses see that night?

A few eyewitnesses saw the burning aircraft ascend, just *after* the aircraft exploded. This ascent was caused by the sudden loss of the front third of the aircraft, including the cockpit, just after the aircraft exploded. But this was difficult to see against the relatively light sky. Most eyewitnesses saw only the most spectacular event, the burning aircraft shortly before it hit the water.

#### What did the "sound propagation analysis" entail?

The initial explosion on TWA Flight 800 produced a very loud sound which shook houses ten miles away. This sound took more than 40 seconds to reach the closest eyewitness. By correlating what eyewitnesses saw at about the time they heard this sound, CIA analysts were able to determine that almost all eyewitnesses saw only the burning aircraft near the end of its crippled flight.

#### What information did the analysis use?

The analysis primarily used the visual and audio observations of the eyewitnesses, as reported by the FBI, to determine the timing and direction of key events that occurred to TWA Flight 800. The aircraft's initial location and flight conditions, the air traffic control radar data, the location of the aircraft wreckage on the ocean floor, the Cockpit Voice Recorder, and Flight Data Recorder, all provided reference points that were used to refine the flight path of the crippled aircraft.

## We know the first loud boom was caused by the aircraft exploding. What caused the second series of 'booms' that some eyewitnesses reported?

At this time, we do not know for certain the exact source of the second series of "booms". We are certain that they were produced after the first loud "boom", and therefore could not be associated with events prior to the aircraft exploding.

### What are the analytical findings that allowed CIA analysts to determine the vast majority of eyewitnesses did not see a missile?

The CIA found that most eyewitnesses observations were limited to 10 to 15 seconds prior to the aircraft debris hitting the water. Two methods were used to determine this. First, since sound from the aircraft explosion takes over 40 seconds to reach Long Island, eyewitness visual observation that coincide with a loud "boom" are taking place well after the aircraft exploded. Second, sound propagation analysis show that the large fuel fire near the end of TWA Flight 800's flight, occurred about 40 second after the aircraft exploded. This fuel fire was the most spectacular visual effect, reported by eyewitnesses over 40 miles away. Since the sound propagation analysis showed that the aircraft took about 50 seconds to hit the water, any eyewitness observing events only during the final moments of TWA Flight 800 could not have seen events near the aircraft exploding.

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### Are there any eyewitness statements that disagree with the CIA analysis?

There are a handful of eyewitness reports that do not correlate with the other eyewitness accounts. For any event observed by several eyewitnesses, each eyewitness will relate a different version of the event. This analysis does not explain every observations made that night, but it does capture the main events reported by the vast majority of eyewitnesses.

Why wasn't this analysis released earlier to the public?

The CIA analysis is a only small piece of the overall investigation into the TWA Flight 800 tragedy. It is being released now, along with the total story of the TWA Flight 800 investigation.

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| MEMORANDUM FOR:                              | 6 November 1997   |
| FROM:  |   |
| OFFICE:                                      | ODDI  |
| SUBJECT:                                     | TWA 800   |
| REFERENCE:                                   | As promised, here is version of the TWA-800 developments. I'm going to suggest this evening to John that would be a good candidate to attend the press conference, if anyone. Should we go ahead and participate? Also, we need to think about the congressional notification issue (our oversight committees). |
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SUBJECT:

TWA 800

#### REFERENCE:

On 13 November, Assistant Director James Kallstrom of the FBI has scheduled a major news conference on results of the TWA 800 Flight criminal investigation. At that news conference he intends to release the unclassified CIA produced video that explains what eyewitnesses to the crash saw. OTI technical analysts have worked closely with the FBI on this investigation for over a year. On Monday the FBI permitted OTI managers and analysts shared our analysis for the first time with analysts from DIA/MSIC and analysts of the

National Transportation Board. The results were:

-- NTSB agrees with our analytical techniques and conclusions. We have together

agreed that we will make significant changes to the video in order to eliminate differences in terminology and some minor technical differences. (e.g. we have assessed the exact time of the original explosion to be 4 seconds earlier than the NTSB, a difference that is inconsequential to our analysis but if it

remained

would contribute to reduced public confidence in the analysis)

 DIA/MSIC analysts concur with our analysis except for two eye witnesses that they felt we could not adequately explain. Although they are unable to offer

any

alternative analysis, we agreed to a statement that Assistant Director Kallstrom

will

with

use at the news conference. That statement is: of the 244 statements

examined

in detail, the vast majority are consistent with the analysis presented here. As

any event of this nature there remain a few that cannot be fully explained.

OTI analysts will be re-editing and renarrating the video over the weekend. They are also drafting talking points and Q&As for use by the FBI at the news conference.

Outstanding issues: The FBI has asked CIA to consider who would be an appropriate representative from the Agency to participate in the Press Conference on 13 November. I recommend either you or Kallstrom also will pre-brief the HPSCI and SSCI chairman and ranking member the day before the press conference. The details, however, of our participation with congress have not been finalized. We also need to ensure that public affairs is prepared to handle questions from the press following the news conference. The FBI has demanded that our Public Affairs Office refer all calls to their press office. Finally, NTSB will be drafting a letter to the DCI requesting our assistance on their investigation of TWA 800.

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Sent on 6 November 1997 at 06:06:46 PM

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| the press conference.              | give this a read as I have taken the past ones and modified it |                    |
| slightly for the change in events. | TWAQ&A.DOC - FBIPBLM3.DOC - FBIPBLM4.DOC                       |                    |
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#### TWA Flight 800: What Did the Eyewitnesses See?

Missile analysts at the Central Intelligence Agency have been working closely with special agents at the Federal Bureau of Investigation during the past 16 months to examine the hypothesis that a missile caused the TWA Flight 800 disaster on 17 July 1996.

Of particular concern to FBI investigators and CIA analysts are accounts from dozens of eyewitnesses who reported seeing an object—usually described as a "flare" or "firework"—ascend and culminate in an explosion. These eyewitness reports are the sole reason for speculation that a missile may have been used to shoot down TWA Flight 800.

CIA analysis demonstrates that the eyewitness sightings of greatest concern—the ones originally interpreted to be of a possible missile attack—took place <u>after</u> the first of several explosions aboard the aircraft.

- Most eyewitnesses can be shown to have seen only events occurring just before the crippled aircraft hit the water, ruling out the possibility that these people saw a missile initiate the destruction of the aircraft.
- CIA analysts believe that the ascending object seen by a few eyewitnesses was the burning aircraft itself, rising several thousand feet after the first explosion.
- The aircraft climbed rapidly because the front third of the aircraft, including the cockpit, separated within four seconds after the initial explosion, and all four engines continued to operate for at least 15 seconds thereafter. The significant, sudden loss of mass from the front of the aircraft created an imbalance that caused the rapid pitch upward and ascent.

The CIA's analysis was based on:

- 244 eyewitness reports provided by the FBI
- radar data
- satellite infrared data

SUBJECT: TWA Flight 800 "Missile Sightings": What Did the Eyewitnesses See?

- information provided by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) from Flight 800's "cockpit voice recorder" and "flight data recorder"
- sound propagation analysis

Detailed results of CIA's analysis were provided on 28 March in a memorandum from the DDI to FBI Assistant Director James Kallstrom. On 18 June, CIA analysts provided a briefing of CIA conclusions as well as a 16 minute video explaining what the eyewitnesses saw at the FBI's New York Bureau to James Kallstrom and about 30 others from the FBI and the Army's Missile and Space Intelligence Center (MSIC). On 22 October, CIA analysts provided a second briefing and edited video to Kallstrom which incorporated information from over 30 reinterviews of eyewitnesses to the tragedy.

• At the conclusion of the briefing, Kallstrom expressed strong support for the professionalism and thoroughness of CIA's work, specifically citing the video production. He stated that he intends to use the video when the FBI issues its final conclusions concerning its criminal investigation on 13 November. This video includes coordinated edits from FBI, the NTSB, and MSIC.

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#### TWA 800 Q&A

#### What did the eyewitnesses see ascend that night?

Most eyewitnesses saw only the most spectacular event, the burning aircraft shortly before it hit the water. What eyewitnesses describe as a "flare or firework" ascending occurred in these final moments and therefore could not be a missile sighting. Hypothesis of possible explanations for this "firework or flare" include a fuel related event just prior to and after the aircraft debris hit the water, emergency flares fired off nearby, and fireworks fired from the beach near the time of the incident. A few other eyewitnesses saw the burning aircraft ascend, just *after* the aircraft exploded. This ascent was caused by the sudden loss of the front third of the aircraft, including the cockpit, just after the aircraft exploded. But this was difficult to see against the relatively light sky. This may also have looked like a "flare or firework" ascending skyward.

#### How do CIA analysts know that the eyewitnesses did not see a missile?

The CIA found that most eyewitnesses observations were limited to 10 to 15 seconds prior to the aircraft debris hitting the water. Two methods were used to determine this. First, since sound from the aircraft explosion takes over 40 seconds to reach Long Island, eyewitness visual observations that coincide with a loud "boom" are taking place well after the aircraft exploded. Second, sound propagation analysis show that the large fuel fire near the end of TWA Flight 800's flight, occurred about 40 second after the aircraft exploded or about 10 seconds before aircraft debris hit the water. This fuel fire was the most spectacular visual effect, reported by eyewitnesses over 40 miles away. Since the sound propagation analysis showed that the aircraft took about 50 seconds to hit the water, any eyewitness observing events only during the final 10 to 20 seconds of TWA Flight 800 could not have seen events near the aircraft exploding over 30 seconds earlier.

#### Are there any eyewitness statements that disagree with the CIA analysis?

Of the 244 eyewitness statements examined in detail, the vast majority are consistent with the analysis presented here. As with any event of this nature, there remain a few that cannot be fully explained.

#### What was the CIA's involvement with the TWA Flight 800 investigation?

CIA's involvement with the investigation began with requests from FBI for CIA information on terrorist threat information, terrorist possession of portable surface-to-air missiles, technical information on the systems, and capabilities of these missiles against civilian aircraft. Soon thereafter, the FBI requested CIA technical assistance in analyzing more than 200 eyewitness reports to determine what these eyewitnesses saw.

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#### What did the "sound propagation analysis" entail?

The initial explosion on TWA Flight 800 produced a very loud sound which shook houses ten miles away. This sound took more than 40 seconds to reach the closest eyewitness. By correlating what eyewitnesses reporting seeing at about the time they reported hearing this sound, CIA analysts were able to determine that almost all eyewitnesses saw only the burning aircraft near the end of its crippled flight.

#### What information was used in the analysis?

In order to do the analysis, CIA analysts primarily used the visual and audio observations of the eyewitnesses, as reported by the FBI, to determine the timing and direction of key events that occurred to TWA Flight 800 . The National Transportation Safety Board provided the aircraft's initial location and flight conditions, the air traffic control radar data, the location of the aircraft wreckage on the ocean floor, and the Cockpit Voice Recorder and Flight Data Recorder.

We know the first loud boom was caused by the aircraft exploding. What caused the second series of 'booms' that some eyewitnesses reported?

At this time, we do not know for certain the exact source of the second series of "booms". We are certain that they were produced after the first loud "boom", and therefore could not be associated with events prior to the aircraft exploding. Several hypothesis exist for the cause of the second series of "booms" including possible engine stalls sometime after the aircraft ascended as well as reverberations of the first large "boom" produced by the aircraft exploding heard by so many eyewitnesses.

#### Why wasn't this analysis released earlier to the public?

The CIA analysis is a only small piece of the overall investigation into the TWA Flight 800 tragedy and it has only recently been concluded. It is being released now, along with the total story of the TWA Flight 800 investigation.

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### Eyewitnesses Which Potentially Challenge the Agency Scenario All of these 5 eyewitnesses of 244 analyzed are potentially witnessing events near the time of the first explosion based on their reports. We still believe all 5 are witnessing events after this initial explosion, and thus could not have seen a missile attack the aircraft. All 5 statements are inconsistent with one another. In events of this nature, we expect that some statements will vary from a majority in description of events. It is possible that some of those below have done this in parts of their reporting. observations reportedly lasted about one minute in 3 stages: 1) red "glowing" object rising vertically, E to W, on steep angle, ascending for about 30 seconds, 2) object arced downward for about 10 seconds, and 3) object sped off quickly on flat, horizontal course for about 15 seconds. Then there was an explosion followed by a tremendous explosion and two pieces falling from the sky. This portion took about 15 seconds. reported total observation time suggests that he might have seen something ascend before the initial explosion aboard flight 800. We believe overestimated the time of all his observations. He describes a 30 second ascent time for the object which is inconsistent with any possible missile attack as well as other eyewitness accounts for the duration of ascending motion. If this ascent time was shorter, he could not have seen anything ascend toward flight 800 before the initial explosion. His description of an almost vertical ascending object is very similar to dozens of other eyewitness statements that CIA is confident witnessed an ascending phenomenon near the end of the crippled flight. What he possibly saw ascend was either the crippled aircraft briefly ascending just after the initial explosion or he witnessed the ascending motion near the end of the aircraft's crippled flight as a vast majority of eyewitnesses did. saw a bright white light ascend almost vertically with no

apparent direction at moderate speed, then arced off to right in south west direction. The

chain of events took approximately 7 seconds from the time he first sees the object until

object was headed toward a second stationary object which glittered in the sky.

explained that the light impacted the object but must have done it when he blinked,
because he did not see the impact. \_\_\_\_\_\_ then observed a white "puff" and put of the
puff came two objects which arched upward., The objects appeared to turn into large

rectangular balls of fire descending past the horizon of trees.

the explosion occurred.

believes the entire

| <ul> <li>We believe is observing the final moments of the aircraft's crippled flight. His report of two burning objects which descended to the water is likely the separation of wing and fuselage in the final moments before the aircraft hit the water.</li> <li>Since he states that his ascending observation lasted about 7 seconds and we know that the descending portion was about 10 seconds, he could not have observed a missile attack the aircraft.</li> </ul> |  |
|--|--|
| saw a red flare arcing across sky and then came straight down as if it had a parachute on it. Suddenly the flare burst into a large ball of red flames, descended half way down the sky and then burst into a larger ball of flames.  heard the second explosion, but not the first. The second explosion caused the object to separate and plummet to the ocean. After losing sight of objects, she heard 2 more explosions.  |  |
| <ul> <li>What we lack in statement is the total time of her observations, which can not allow us to establish exactly what portion of the crippled trajectory she witnessed.</li> <li>Her observations and timing of when she heard the first sound can not be correct based on where she was when she made her observations. Sound from the first explosion would reach her moments after the aircraft hit the water, not as she described.</li> </ul>                      |  |
| observed flare ascending which traveled at a 10:00 angle from perpendicular. Approximately one minute following this observation, saw two large sections descending to the ocean.  |  |
| • We question recollection of timing from the point of the wing separation, which we know occurred in the final moments before the aircraft hit the water. We believe that it is possible that instead of one minute after first sighting the flare, actually meant one second. If true, his statement would be very consistent with so many other eyewitnesses describing something ascend near the end of the crippled flight.   |  |
| <ul> <li>Ifactually stated one minute, we can not determine from what little<br/>description is given if a missile could or could not have been observed.</li> </ul>   |  |
| saw a flare rise straight up into the air for about 10 seconds, reached its highest point, and a bright orange fireball which fell fluttering back and forth into the ocean for about 30 seconds.  |  |
| • If is not mistaken in the time it took for the fireball to reach the ocean, then he may have seen the initial aircraft ascent.   |  |
| <ul> <li>Based on his description of the ascent as almost straight up (as the end ascending<br/>phenomenon is described by so many eyewitnesses), he may have seen something<br/>ascend closer to the end event.</li> </ul>  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

### Eyewitnesses With Extensive Past or Possible Future Media Coverage

| because of past or possible future media attention. They are  |
|---|
|   |
| was co-pilot of a UH-60 helicopter, first noticed what he thought was a flare. Then there was a succession of multiple explosions which grew int a huge fireball. As the fireball descended, he saw large pieces break off and strike the water in about 8 seconds.   |
| • is observing the end event, so vividly described by so many eyewitnesses. He could not have seen a missile attack TWA-800 which would have occurred much earlier.   |
| reported that she saw an object angle to the right with a bright orange glow with a white streak behind it. She then lost sight of the streak because of the clouds. She first thought it was a fireworks, but later said "no way, it was a missile". She then saw a orange fireball, which doubled in size, and broke shortly after into two pieces. It fell straight down behind the tree line. It should be noted that described the object as having come from a 45 degree angle further east than the description of her walking partner,  |
| <ul> <li>It is important to note from statement that her immediate disposition is to 'believe' she has witnessed a missile.</li> <li>is observing events near the end of the aircraft's crippled flight only. She reported that the ascending motion took about 5 seconds and then an explosion whice grew and split into 2 pieces. We know this event occurred in the last half of the crippled aircraft's flight, and thus could not possibly be observations of a missile which would have occurred over a half minute earlier.</li> <li>From her description, the ascending object would have had to travel tens of miles to the aircraft in seconds, performance not demonstrated by any known missile.</li> </ul> |
| saw an object fly into the air, which looked like it came from land. The object was relatively slow in flying up and took about 4 or 5 seconds before hitting the airplane. It looked like a flare or roman candle and flew at an angle. There was one flame which came from the object and then a second once it struck the plane.   |
| <ul> <li>may have has a predisposition to think a missile attacked flight 800 as he said that the object actually hit the aircraft. We believe that observations were of the last half of the aircraft's crippled flight.</li> <li>gives no timing for the complete observations made other than for the ascending object.</li> </ul>   |

| - was watching an aircraft when, while keeping an eye on the  |
|---|
| aicraft, saw a red streak moving up from the ground toward the aircraft at an                         |
| approximate 45 degree angle. The streak went past the aircraft before arching back                    |
| toward the aircraft's right wing. At the instant the smoke trail ended at the aircraft's              |
| right wing, heard a loud sharp noise which sounded like a firecracker had just                        |
| exploded at her feet. then observed a fire at the aircraft followed by one or two                     |
| explosions which had a deeper sound. observed the front end of the aircraft                           |
| separate from the back and burning pieces of Debris falling. believed that she                        |
| witnessed a missile, which had been fired from a boat which was located somewhere on                  |
| the Atlantic Ocean.   |
|   |
| <ul> <li>Sound propagation analysis shows several inconsistencies in her statements. Based</li> </ul> |
| on how long it would have taken for sound from the first and succeeding explosions                    |
| to have reached her, she could not have been observing anything related to the demise                 |
| of flight 800 in that time. Sound from these explosions would not reach her till after                |
| all observations of the last half of the crippled aircraft's flight, after it finally hit the         |
| water.  |
| • We believe she probably saw the end of the event as so many do, but can not put                     |
| much weight on everything she says because of the obvious inconsistencies present.                    |
| It is important to be aware of these inconsistencies in her report and the impossibility              |
| that she observed a missile because of the fact that she reported that she believed                   |
| strongly that a missile attacked flight 800.  |
| <i>y</i> ,  |
| - , piloting a UH-60 helicopter, saw a red streak of light moving                                     |
| very fast from his right to his left (west to east) with the trajectory of a shooting star            |
| moving from a higher elevation to a lower elevation in a gently descending curve. He                  |
| observed the streak for one or two seconds after which he saw an explosion and one to                 |
| two seconds later a larger explosion.   |
| and the supposition   |
| • who mentioned no ascending motion whatsoever, clearly could not have seen                           |
| a missile attack flight 800. His observations are limited to the last half of the crippled            |
| aircraft's flight close to the large, final fireball in the last 10-20 seconds.                       |
| 200000000000000000000000000000000000000   |
| observed an orange colored arc moving upward from behind trees.                                       |
| The arc continued to travel upward and appeared to bend to the left a little at the end.              |
| Then the arc appeared to dissipate for 2-3 seconds, ending in a large explosion.                      |
| sure that what she saw was a missile, based on what she has seen on TV and the movies.                |
|   |
| • description is consistent with dozens of other eyewitness statements whose                          |
| observations we are confident occurred in the last half of the aircraft's crippled flight.            |
| We believe the lack of any description beyond the fireball suggests her observations                  |
| likely ended moments after this explosion as the fireball descended into the ocean                    |
| over the next several seconds.  |
| over the next several seconds.  |

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| 11/11/1997 05:34 PM   | cc   |                                   | (b)(6)  |
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| and for the state of the state | bcc  |                                   |         |
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| and I are p<br>lid the Eyewitnesses See?"). It should<br>copy that we can show internally to wh<br>morrow (Wednesday) in the AM, we can<br>be day.  | be finished in about two hours on<br>nomever needs to see it (OGC, O | CA. DCI, etc.). If we can do this |         |

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 19-Mar-2012

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**EVENT: QUICK COM** 

DATE: 11/18/97 TIME: 1100

STATUS: COMPLETE

FOR: HPSCI, SSCI SUBJ: TWA 800 VIDEO

**ASSOC** 

NAME

(PARTICIPANTS)---

STAFF

engebreth, Mary C (HPSCI)

ROLE

STAFF STAFF CIA

HEALEY, LOUISE CHRISTINE (HPSCI) STRAUB, CHRISTOPHER (SSCI)

(DCI/OCA)

SPRT

---- ( EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ) ----

With FBI prior approval, both HPSCI and SSCI were told that the FBI was to conduct a news conference at 1330 on the 18 November. During the conference the FBI was to highlight the work done by CIA to include a video produced by the Agency that helped the FBI explain that a missile did not take down TWA 800. On the 19th copies of the video were provided to the HPSCI, SSCI, Sen Kay Bailey Hutchinson and Congressman Upton. HPSCI requested a followup briefing, currently scheduled

/s/

Liaison Officer Congressional Liaison Group Office of Congressional Affairs

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 19-Mar-2012

--- (FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS) ----

There were no Action Items on file for this event.

UNCLASSIFIED



APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 19-Mar-2012

November 24, 1997

No. 475

# CIA Analysts Explain Mystery of TWA Flight 800 "Missile Sightings"

DI/OTI Work Instrumental in Helping FBI Close Most Extensive "Criminal Investigation" in US History

At the request of the FBI, a team of DI Office of Transnational Issues (OTI) analysts has solved the mystery of the "streaks of light in the sky" many people saw just before TWA Flight 800 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Long Island on the evening of July 17, 1996. These observations had led to concerns that a missile may have been used to shoot down the aircraft, killing all 230 people aboard. Just what these eyewitnesses saw has been the subject of protracted speculation by investigators, in the print media, and on such shows as *Dateline NBC* and *Unsolved Mysteries*.

Using 244 eyewitness reports and some radar data provided by the FBI, along with limited information from the aircraft's cockpit voice

recorder and infrared data detected by a US satellite, OTI analysts were able to conclude that the so-called "missile sightings" took place after the aircraft exploded. What eyewitnesses saw was in fact the burning Boeing 747 in various stages of crippled flight.

The key to deciphering what the eyewitnesses saw was to associate their visual observations with what they heard. This was possible because a very loud sound, recorded by the aircraft's cockpit voice recorder when the aircraft exploded—and just before all onboard recordings ceased—was heard by many eyewitnesses dispersed along the coast of Long Island. This concussive sound was so loud that it shook a 70-ton concrete bridge 11 miles away. (continued on p. 2)

## Analysts Explain Mystery...(from p. 1)

Knowing that sound travels about 1,100 feet per second, it was possible to determine approximately what portion of the 49-second crash sequence each eyewitness observed (see story below and sequence of pictures on page 3)—and to conclude that the eyewitnesses' observations occurred too late for them to have seen a missile attack the aircraft. But it was also clear that some eyewitnesses' observations could have created the illusion of a missile attacking the aircraft, because most eyewitnesses were more than nine miles away from the sequence of events unfolding before them.

the senior analyst involved in the effort, told *What's News*, "The eyewitness accounts were the original cause for speculation that a missile may have been involved—speculation that, in the final analysis, proved unfounded. But these same eyewitness accounts permitted OTI analysts to reconstruct the path of Flight 800 after it exploded . . . after all onboard recorders ceased operating. Without eyewitness assistance, this would not have been possible."

## What Happened to Flight 800 after it Exploded?

When Flight 800 exploded, all onboard data recording ceased. As a result, the subsequent path of the aircraft was at first unknown. But, using eyewitness reports, radar tracking data, and aerodynamic modeling, OTI analysts were able to reconstruct the approximate path of Flight 800 from the instant its recordings ended until it struck the water. This flight path reconstruction, in turn, provided the basis for understanding what so many people saw on the evening of July 17—and what some people misinterpreted to be a missile attack.

The following sequence of events, based on OTI's analysis, depicts the current best estimate of what happened to Flight 800 after it exploded. The sequence is depicted in an unclassified 15-minute video created jointly by OTI and the DI Television-Multimedia Center. (This video can be seen on CIA's television grid on Tuesday, November 25, on Unclassified Channel 19 at 9 and 11 a.m. and 2 and 6 p.m.)

Just after the aircraft exploded, it pitched up abruptly and climbed several thousand feet, from its last recorded altitude of about 13,800 feet to a maximum altitude of about 17,000 feet. This is consistent with information provided by National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigators and Boeing engineers, who determined that the front third of the aircraft, including the cockpit, separated from the fuselage within four seconds after the aircraft exploded. This significant, sudden loss of mass from the front of the aircraft created an imbalance which caused the rapid pitch up and climb.

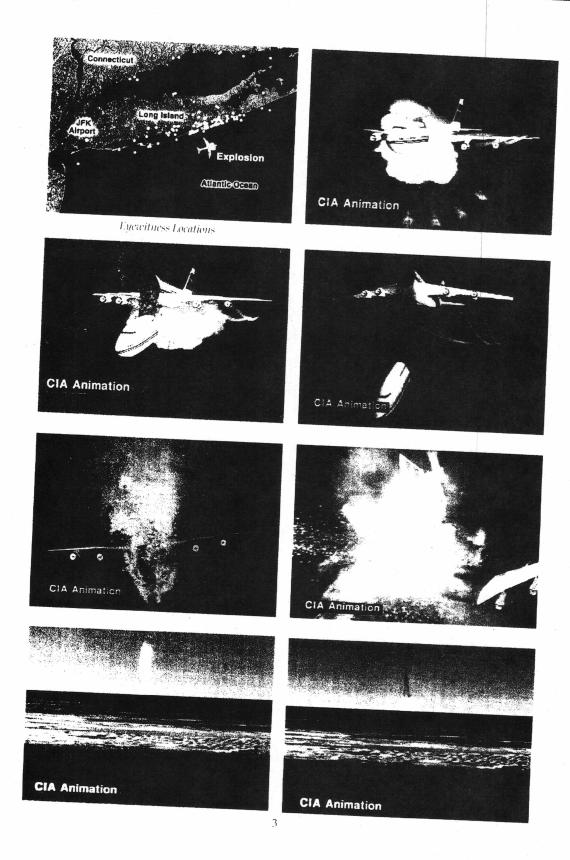
The explosion, although very loud, was not seen by any known eyewitness. However, the subsequent small fire, trailing from the aircraft, was visible to a few of the closest eyewitnesses on land, sea, and in other aircraft. It was repeatedly described as "an ascending white light resembling a flare or

firework." But it was difficult to see against the relatively light sky.

Shortly after Flight 800 reached the peak of its ascent, about 20 seconds after it exploded, a fireball erupted from the aircraft. This was clearly visible to many eyewitnesses. The aircraft then went into a very steep and rapid descent. As the aircraft descended, it produced an increasingly visible fire trail. When the jet reached an altitude of roughly one mile, about 42 seconds after it exploded, its left wing separated from the fuselage, releasing unburned fuel.

The fuel's subsequent ignition and blaze produced a dramatic cascade of flames, visible to eyewitnesses more than 40 miles away, and detected by an infrared sensor aboard a US satellite.

About seven seconds after the left wing detached, and 49 seconds after the initial explosion, the burning debris hit the water.▼



# Questions and Answers Concerning CIA's Involvement in the TWA Flight 800 "Criminal Investigation"

Q Why did the FBI request CIA's technical and analytical assistance in this "criminal investigation," and under what authority did the CIA respond?

A The possibility existed that the crash of TWA Flight 800 was caused by **foreign** terrorism, potentially one of the most lethal such acts ever perpetrated against the US. In full accordance with its charter, the CIA responded to the FBI's request for assistance by applying the technical and analytical expertise it normally uses to monitor and assess foreign weapons threats to US national security.

Q When did this joint relationship begin?

A Within 24 hours of the catastrophe.

Q Why did CIA analysts focus their efforts on the eyewitness accounts?

A Eyewitness accounts of something ascending and culminating in an explosion on the evening of July 17, 1996, were the initial (and only) reason for suspecting that a missile may have been used to shoot down Flight 800. So OTI analysts focused early attention on these reports, methodically dissecting and analyzing each one. This led to the realization that many eyewitnesses reported hearing a loud sound as part of their observations. The subsequent use of "sound propagation analysis" provided the basis for determining what the eyewitnesses saw, and for concluding that all eyewitness observations took place after the aircraft had already exploded.

Q What sources of information were made available to CIA analysts?

A The FBI ultimately provided reports from 244 eyewitnesses to the catastrophe. The NTSB, via the FBI, provided the aircraft's location, altitude, speed, and heading at the moment it exploded, some air traffic control radar data, and the times at which the aircraft's cockpit voice recorder and flight data recorder ceased operating. They also noted that a loud sound was recorded just before the recorders ceased operating, and that the front third of the aircraft was believed to have separated soon after the initial explosion.

Q When did CIA analysts first realize that eyewitnesses probably had observed only the burning aircraft in various stages of crippled flight, rather than a missile attacking the aircraft?

A Monday, December 30, 1996. But it took almost a month for OTI analysts to document a case solid enough to be formally presented to the FBI and NTSB.

Q When did CIA analysts decide to document their work in an animated video?

A About two weeks later. It was agreed by OTI analysts and line managers that such a production was needed to make a convincing case to non-technical audiences that eyewitnesses had seen only the burning aircraft, rather than a missile attack. OTI Front Office managers gave final approval—and allocated the necessary funding—on February 11, 1997.

Q When were the results of CIA's analysis provided to the FBI?

A Preliminary results were provided via telephone within 24 hours of the time the initial conclusion was made. Detailed results were provided on March 28 in a memorandum from the DDI to FBI Assistant Director James Kallstrom. On June 18, CIA analysts briefed their results to Kallstrom and about 30 others from the FBI and the Army's Missile and Space Intelligence Center (MSIC). They also showed an early version of their video ("TWA Flight 800: What Did the Eyewitnesses See?") at this time. On October 22, CIA analysts provided a second briefing, and edited video, to Kallstrom, incorporating information from more than 30 FBI reinterviews of eyewitnesses. At the conclusion of this session, Kallstrom expressed his appreciation for CIA's assistance, and his desire to use the CIA video at his news conference announcing the suspension of the criminal investigation, scheduled for the following month. CIA concurred, and undertook final changes to the video to prepare it for public release.

Q Why weren't the results of CIA's analysis released to the public earlier? A According to a mutual agreement between the FBI and the CIA at the beginning of their joint efforts, the CIA's role would be ancillary to the FBI's overall "criminal investigation." This successful relationship permitted the FBI to proceed with their investigation in a methodical manner, drawing upon whatever resources they deemed necessary as their investigation moved forward.

Q How much of the analysis portrayed in the CIA video was performed by CIA weapons analysts?

A All of it.

Q How many analysts were involved?

A Five, all in OTI—one full-time, two almost full-time, and two for protracted periods. But dozens of staffers and contractors throughout the DI helped make this project a success.

Q Will the CIA continue to support US airline safety issues?

A OTI will provide support to the NTSB during their Flight 800 public hearings, scheduled to begin on December 8. In addition, OTI analysts are working with the Federal Aviation Administration to assess the man-portable surface-to-air missile threat to commercial aviation.▼

## FBI News Conference on TWA Flight 800: The Aftermath

On November 18, the FBI held a major news conference to release its findings, and to suspend its worldwide criminal probe—the most extensive in FBI history. After discussing the exhaustive forensic work done by the FBI and other agencies, FBI Assistant Director James Kallstrom released a 15-minute unclassified CIA video which documented the CIA's conclusion that eyewitnesses to the disaster did not see a missile destroy the aircraft.

Within minutes, excerpts from the video were picked up by broadcast and print media worldwide. Judging from the initial reactions by the media and public, the video—particularly its clear explanation of CIA's technical analysis, and its graphic representation of the aircraft in various stages of crippled flight—was successful. In particular, several family members of victims of the crash expressed their strong appreciation for CIA's meticulous analysis. The reaction by Robert

Hager, on NBC's Today Show the following morning, was typical: "The work was riveting. CIA analysts prepared it after matching eyewitness accounts with precise data from radar, from the plane's recorders, and from [infrared data from a US satellite]. The result: A fascinating, highly informed CIA video representation of the plane's last 50 seconds."

## TWA Flight 800 Analysis: One OTI Manager's Perspective

Broadly speaking, the work done by OTI's technical weapons analysts on TWA Flight 800 is standard, multi-source DI analysis. Technical analysts have considerable expertise using radar tracking data and satellite infrared data as critical inputs to weapons performance assessments. The timing data obtained from Flight 800's cockpit voice recorder is similar to data that might be obtained from SIGINT or COMINT. The eyewitness reporting is similar to HUMINT data. For example, while the analysts were not concerned about eyewitness descriptions being "deceptions by a foreign intelligence service," they did have to evaluate each report and description in light of what other eyewitnesses described, and what the technical data showed.

The sound propagation analysis is a much simplified form of the complex technical analytical tools used by weapons analysts to assess foreign systems. Flight reconstructions of missiles and aircraft are done routinely. Furthermore, using video as the medium for explaining a complex technical assessment, or for graphically representing a weapons test, is not unusual for analysts in OTI. (And yes, the Flight 800 video script went through iteration after iteration of review and wordsmithing by peers and managers.) In a nutshell, the Flight 800 work is just another example of what DI analysts do every day, although usually in a much more highly classified domain. (continued on p. 6)

## One Perspective...(from p. 5)

With more than three decades in the technical analysis business, I know that weapons analysts gain a great deal of inner satisfaction from the knowledge that their work supports and impacts US defense policy and the DoD's weapons acquisitions process. For all those involved in the Flight 800 analysis, the inner satisfaction came from different, though more emotionally powerful, directions.

First, during the initial phases of their research, analysts believed there was the very strong possibility that the aircraft was downed by a terrorist act. The opportunity to be involved—to apply one's professional expertise—in analyzing what could have been the most horrific terrorist act ever perpetrated against the US provided strong motivation.

Second, and in the end most important, was the fact that above all else, the crash of Flight 800 was a human tragedy. As the analysis progressed, those involved were strongly motivated by the knowledge that their work and expertise might help in some small way to bring closure for many of the families of the crash victims. The statements to this effect by several family members after they saw the video were just as satisfying, no—more so, than the kudos analysts receive after publishing an assessment for DoD or State.

If you look at the total effort expended by the FBI and all other agencies worldwide on the investigation over the past 16 months, the CIA's level of effort was relatively small. Without an explanation of what the eyewitnesses saw, however, the FBI would have been hard pressed to end its criminal investigation. The public, having been treated to 16 months of unchallenged theories, would never have been convinced that the eyewitnesses had not seen a missile destroy the aircraft.

CIA's work was instrumental in helping the FBI close the most extensive "criminal investigation" in US history. Everyone at CIA involved with this investigation—from the early hours after the crash to the press conference on November 18—can be justly proud of their part. Those of us who were on the periphery, and those who just recently learned that CIA was involved at all, share in that pride. •

## TWA Flight 800 Work: The Bottom Line

The following note was posted to the DI Discussion Database after the FBI's November 18 news conference.

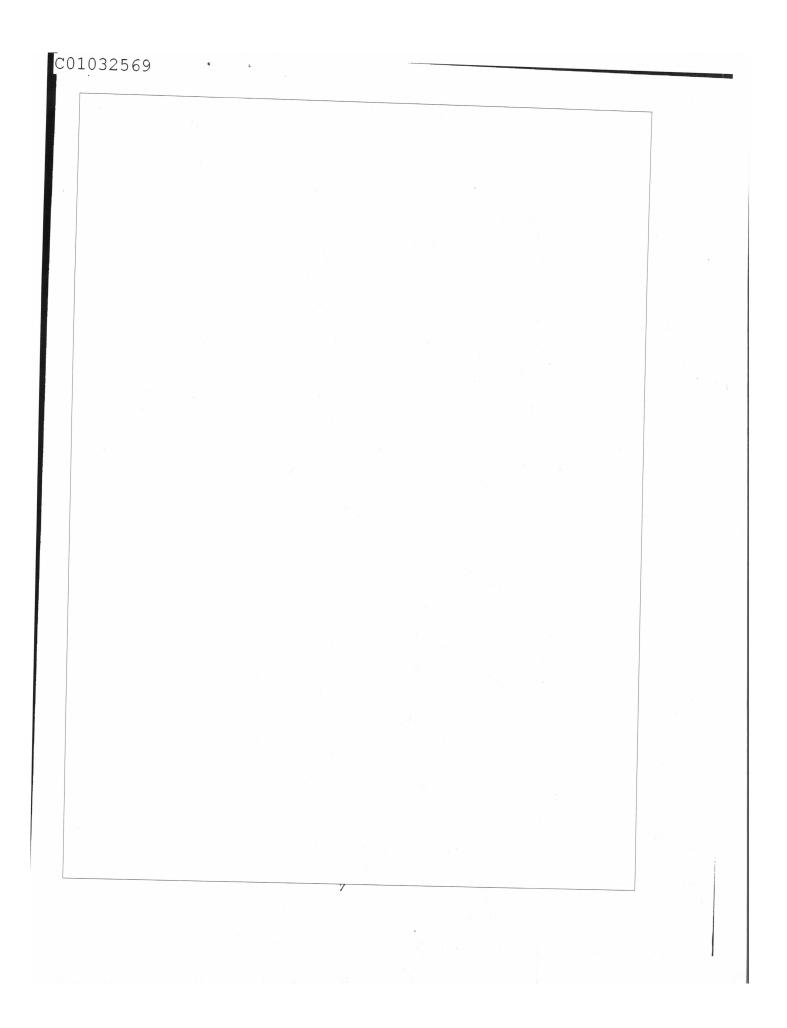
Although it is indeed tragic that our world requires such work on occasion, I would like to commend those CIA employees whose efforts helped greatly in solving the mystery surrounding the crash. I believe you have done an outstanding service to your country, your government, and—most particularly—hundreds of grieving loved ones searching for answers. I firmly believe you have helped those left behind to now live in peace.

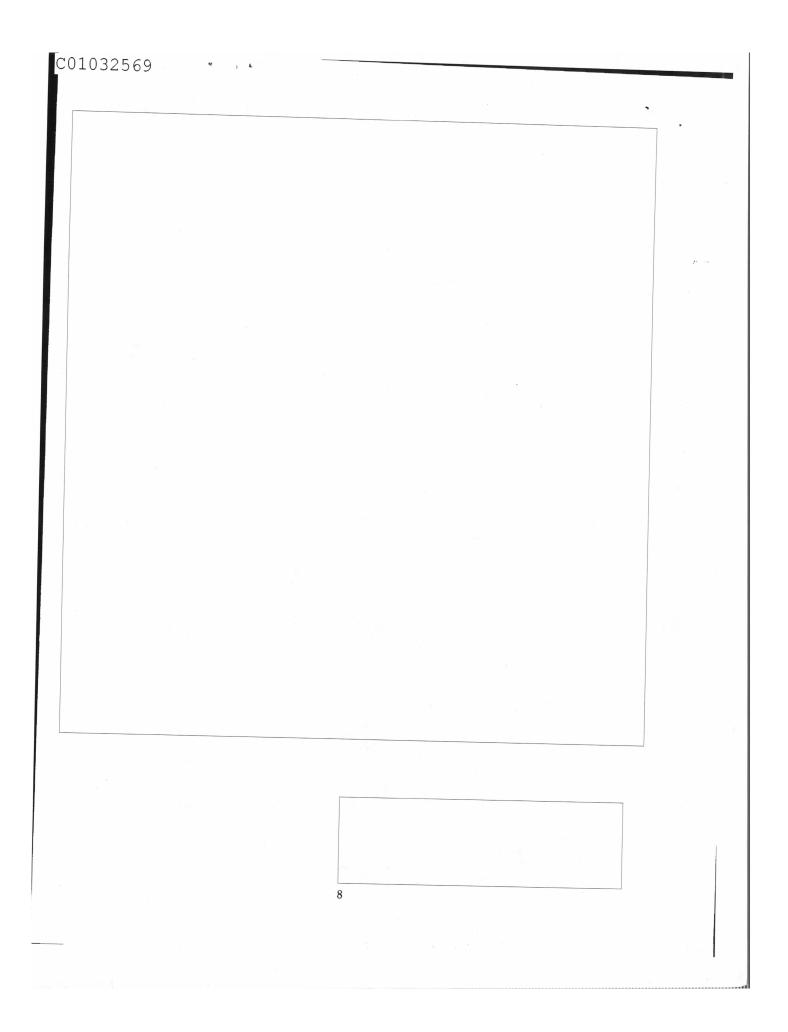
-Anonymous

#### Response

Your kind words are most appreciated. **Many** people at the CIA, FBI, and elsewhere helped make this project a success. And **anyone** who has stood in the TWA Flight 800 reconstruction hangar in Calverton, New York, knows what motivated us. After 16 months of work, our hope now is that family members and friends of the crash victims derive at least some small measure of solace knowing we put forth our absolute best effort trying to give them some answers to this almost unimaginable tragedy. Preliminary feedback suggests they do.

6





DEC 04 1997

Dec. 2, 1997 Representative John Kasich 2700 E. Dublin Granville Rd. Suite 525 Columbus, Ohio 43231

Dear Representative John Kasich,

I am extremely interesting in contacting the CIA but I suspect that the CIA does not respond to inquires from the general public, and therefore you may have to inquire on my behalf.

This past week, the Dispatch printed color pictures of the CIA reenactment of the TWA 800 crash. Newsweek published a full page spread of this re-enactment. This is curious because (1) I was not aware that the CIA was investigating the crash and am not sure they have investigative authority, and (2) I cannot imagine what evidence the reenactment was based, given that the FBI was unable to find any evidence to substantiate any theory. (Newsweek stated that the reenactment was a result of spy satellites trained on the east coast. Given the clarity of Gulf War satellite technology, actual photos of the crash could have been released long ago, if they exist).

I would appreciate answers to the following questions.

- 1. Upon what evidence was the recnactment based? If satellite technology was used, can the actual and evidence photograph/image be viewed by the public? If not, was it viewed by the FBI? Can members of congress view this evidence?
- 2. If the reenactment was NOT based on evidence, were other reenactment created to show other possible scenarios? Were alternative scenarios released to the press?
- 3. What investigative authority does the CIA have in this matter? Please be specific, referring to the appropriate legal language. When did the CIA begin and end its investigation? What other airline crashes have been investigated by the CIA?

| Respectfully, |  |
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JOHN R. KASICH

MEMBER:
COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

(b)(3) (b)(6)

> 131 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON, DC 20615-3612 (202) 228-2845

> > DISTRICT OFFICE

2700 EAST DUBLIN-GRANVILLE ROAD SUITE \$25 COLUMBUS, OH 43231 (814) 523-2555

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE:

30-Mar-2012

# Congress of the United States

House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515-3512

December 8, 1997

Chief, Congressional Affairs Central Intelligence Agency Room 7-B00 CIA Washington, D.C. 20205

Dear Sir:

The attached communication concerns a constituent who is requesting assistance in a matter with your office.

Please look into the statements contained within the attached documents and forward me the necessary information for reply. Please address your reply to my district office as listed

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Ralph Sandine at 614-523-2555. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter, and I look forward to your reply.

John R. Kasich

JRK/rs

enclosure

TED ON RECYCLED PAPER

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|                | APPROVED<br>RELEASE D<br>19-Mar-2012         | DATE:     | UNCLASSIFIED  (K VTC/Memorandum for the Record                      | D)(3) Page 1     |
|----------------|--|-----------|---|------------------|
| PLACE:<br>FOR: | STAFF BRI<br>H-405 CAP<br>HPSCI<br>TWA 800 V | ITOL      | DATE: 12/09/97 TIME: 1000   | STATUS: COMPLETE |
|                | ASSOC<br>STAFF<br>STAFF<br>CIA<br>CIA        | HUMPHREY, | (PARTICIPANTS) CATHERINE D. (HPSCI) CALVIN R. (HPSCI) NDY K (HPSCI) | ROLE             |

---- ( EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ) ----

CIA CIA

The HPSCI requested a briefing on the analysis and process behind making the TWA 800 video. The video had been provided to the committee after the FBI's press conference in November. The staff may want to present the TWA briefing to members at a later date. Copy of the video is attached.

# ----( ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ) ----

- 1. The DI became involved in the "missile theory" investigation the day after the crash occurred. The DI officers described the process and the relationship between themselves and the FBI during the almost year and a half long investigation. The effort took three man years to complete, the entire video was done in house and 150 copies were provided to the FBI for public dissemination at the press conference.
- 2. The briefers indicated that the cooperation between themselves and the FBI was very high. At the DI's request the FBI did several follow up actions to include re-interviewing witnesses. The process may have been somewhat smoother if the CIA had been able to talk to other agencies involved in the investigation (NTSB) earlier, but each agency worked separately.
- 3. Interaction between the CIA and the FBI was at the analyst and special agent level. Mr. Kallstrom (who headed the FBI investigation team) wasn't briefed until March 1997. He was not hard to convince that it had not been a missile, even though he initially believed it was a missile that took down the plane.
  - 4. The staffers were interested in knowing if there had been any pressure by the FBI to change analysis. The briefers

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indicated that two weeks before the press conference they finally met with NTSB who requested that some of the language be changed to be consistent with the NTSB language used to describe an accident. There was no pressure to change any substantive information, nor were there any differences of opinion that would have changed the outcome of the analysis.

Liaison Officer Congressional Liaison Group Office of Congressional Affairs

--- (FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS) -----

There were no Action Items on file for this event.

C01032566

AMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

COMMITTEE:
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEES:
RANKING DEMOCRAT: PUBLIC BUILDINGS
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 19-Mar-2012 AVIATION
COMMITTEE:
SCIENCE
SUBCOMMITTEE:
SPACE

Congress of the United States

(b)(3)

House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515–3517

December 9, 1997

2446 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON, DC 20515 (202) 225-5261

125 MARKET STREET ROOM 311 YOUNGSTOWN, OH 44503 (330) 743-1914

5555 YOUNGSTOWN-WARREN ROAD SUITE 503 NILES, OH 44446 (330) 652-5649

109 WEST 3RD STREET EAST LIVERPOOL, OH 43920 (330) 385-5921

The Honorable George Tenet Director Central Intelligence Agency Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Director Tenet:

I am writing in regards to the role played by the Central Intelligence Agency in assisting the Federal Bureau of Investigation in examining the possibility that the July 17, 1996 crash of TWA Flight 800 off the southern coast of Long Island, New York was caused by a missile, and the preparation of an animated simulation of the disaster.

As a senior member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Aviation, I have been closely monitoring the federal government's investigation of the accident. I have several questions regarding the CIA's role.

- 1) Under what statutory authority did the CIA provide assistance to the FBI in this investigation?
- 2) In preparing the animation, why didn't CIA personnel consult more closely with personnel from the National Transportation Safety Board and Boeing?
- The NTSB believes that TWA Flight 800 climbed to an altitude of no more than 15,000 feet following the explosion of the center wing fuel tank. The CIA animation discrepancy, and did the CIA consult with the NTSB prior to making this claim?
- 4) In preparing the animation, did the CIA consult any in-person interviews with any of the evewitnesses?
- 5) In analyzing the possibility that the crash was caused by a missile, did the CIA consult with any U.S. military personnel who have expertise on surface-to-air
- 6) How much did the animation cost to produce, and were any CIA funds used to prepare the animation?

(next page)

THIS STATIONERY PRINTED ON PAPER MADE OF RECYCLED FIBERS

The Honorable George Tenet December 9, 1997 Page Two

- 7) If the answer to question number six is yes, what part of the CIA's budget was used to finance the animation?
- 8) Was the CIA's role in preparing the animation and the expenditure of funds authorized by the House and Senate intelligence committees?
- 9) Could the CIA provide my office with a video of the CIA animation?

Thank you for your time and cooperation. I look forward to your expeditious

Respect ally,

ar es A. Traficant, Jr.

JAT/pm

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C: The Honorable Porter J. Goss
The Honorable Bud Shuster
The Honorable James Oberstar
The Honorable John J. Duncan, Jr.
The Honorable William Lipinski

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| FROM:     |     |
| OFFICE:   | OTI |

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 30-Mar-2012

DATE:

12-19-97 12:18:17 AM

SUBJECT:

TWA Flight 800: Response to Query from House Representative James A. Traficant, Jr.

The following are suggested responses to questions posed by Representative James A. Traficant, Jr., to the DCI (memorandum, dated 9 December 1997) concerning the role of the CIA in the FBI's criminal investigation of the TWA Flight 800 disaster:

## 1. Under what statutory authority did the CIA provide assistance to the FBI in this investigation?

Answer: The possibility existed that the crash of TWA Flight 800 was caused by foreign terrorism, potentially one of the most lethal such acts ever perpetrated against the U.S. In full accordance with its charter (cite reference here), the CIA responded to the FBI's request for assistance by applying the technical and analytical expertise it normally uses to monitor and assess foreign weapons threats to U.S. national security.

2. In preparing the animation, why didn't CIA personnel consult more closely with personnel from the National Transportation Safety Board and Boeing?

Answer: Both were consulted to the fullest extent possible commensurate with FBI guidelines dictated by the nature of the criminal probe underway. The senior CIA aerodynamic analyst involved in the project consulted Boeing engineers to obtain some of the Boeing 747 parameters used in CIA's modeling, and to obtain Boeing's reaction to the CIA's conclusion that the aircraft pitched up abruptly and climbed following the loss of its forward section. (Boeing engineers fully concurred with this CIA conclusion.)

The National Transportation Safety Board reviewed the CIA video script and made more than 40 recommendations concerning the video's content. Also, NTSB managers and senior technical personnel collaborated with CIA analysts during the final preparation of the video, and fully concurred with the version aired during FBI Assistant Director James Kallstrom's news conference on 18 November, at which he suspended the FBI's criminal investigation into the tragedy.

3. The NTSB believes that TWA Flight 800 climbed to an altitude of no more than 15,000 feet following the explosion of the center wing fuel tank. The CIA animation claims that the plane climbed to an altitude of 17,000 feet. Why is there a discrepancy, and did the CIA consult with the NTSB prior to making this claim?

Answer: (See also response to question #2 above.) CIA analysts did consult at length with NTSB

analysts concerning this discrepancy, and all agreed that the issue was not a significant one. This number can only be <u>approximated</u> given the limited information available. The important point here is that CIA and NTSB analysts (as well as Boeing engineers) agree that the aircraft rose significantly just after it exploded. This brief ascent explains the observations of the few eyewitnesses who saw "an ascending light" just after the aircraft exploded. The extent of the difference between the CIA and NTSB models is inconsequential to CIA's overall conclusion that "to date, there is no evidence that anyone saw a missile shoot down TWA Flight 800."

Incidentally, the source of the difference between the NTSB and CIA models is that NTSB analysts assumed the aircraft turned slightly to the left just after it exploded, whereas CIA analysts assumed the aircraft initially flew at a constant azimuth. Consequently, some of the lifting forces in the NTSB's model are used to turn the aircraft, diminishing its maximum achieved altitude when compared to the CIA's model. (Also of possible interest to you, several important numbers used by the NTSB for their model were in fact derived from the CIA's model. These include the time at which the left wing detached from the fuselage, and the duration between when the aircraft exploded and when it hit the water. The derivation of these numbers is explained in detail in the accompanying video.)

4. In preparing the animation, did the CIA consult [sic] any in-person interviews with any of the eyewitnesses?

Answer: No. Such a procedure was discouraged by the FBI because it posed the risk of "tainting" the eyewitnesses' statements. Indeed, missile experts from the Army's Missile and Space Intelligence Center accompanied FBI agents during some of the early interviews, and this may have convinced some eyewitnesses that they were involved in a "missile investigation."

As an alternative, FBI agents re-interviewed more than 30 eyewitnesses and provided the results to the CIA. These re-interviews strengthened FBI and CIA confidence in the CIA's conclusion that the eyewitnesses had not seen a missile.

5. In analyzing the possibility that the crash was caused by a missile, did the CIA consult with any U.S. military personnel who have expertise on surface-to-air missiles?

| Answer: Yes, extensively. And each of the CIA analysts involved in the Flight 800 investigation had considerable experience analyzing foreign surface-to-air missiles.   |
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| This siles.  |
| 6. How much did the animation cost to produce, and were any CIA funds used to prepare the animation?   |
| Answer: This includes money spent for computer hardware and software to support the Flight 800 animation. (This hardware and software also will be used to support future projects.) All funds were provided by the CIA. |
| 7. If the answer to question number six is yes, what part of the CIA's budget was used to finanche animation?  |
| Answer: The funding was part of the FY-97 budget for the Directorate of Intelligence/Office of Fransnational Issues  |
| 3. Was the CIA's role in preparing the animation and the expenditure of funds authorized by the  |
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### House and Senate intelligence committees?

Answer: No. The CIA routinely uses video animation to document important analytical findings. Decisions concerning what media to use to convey analytical results --- written memoranda and reports, briefings, multimedia presentations, narrated and unnarrated videos, etc. --- are made by analysts and their supervisors on a daily basis. In the case of the Flight 800 work, it was agreed by CIA analysts and their managers that a narrated, animated video was needed to make a convincing case to non-technical audiences that eyewitnesses had seen only the burning aircraft, rather than a missile attack.

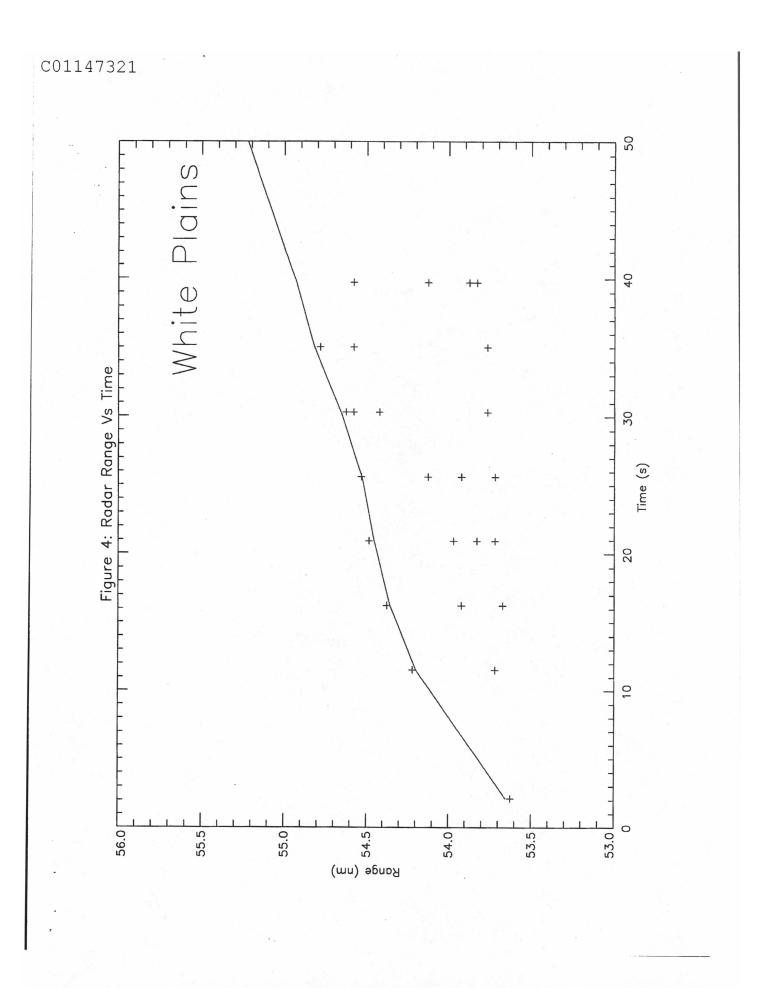
# 9. Could the CIA provide my office with a video of the CIA animation?

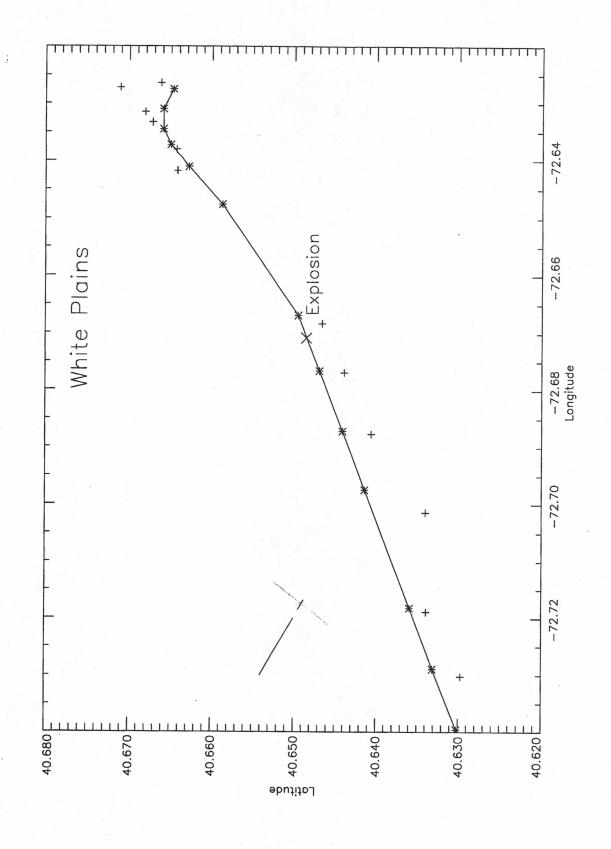
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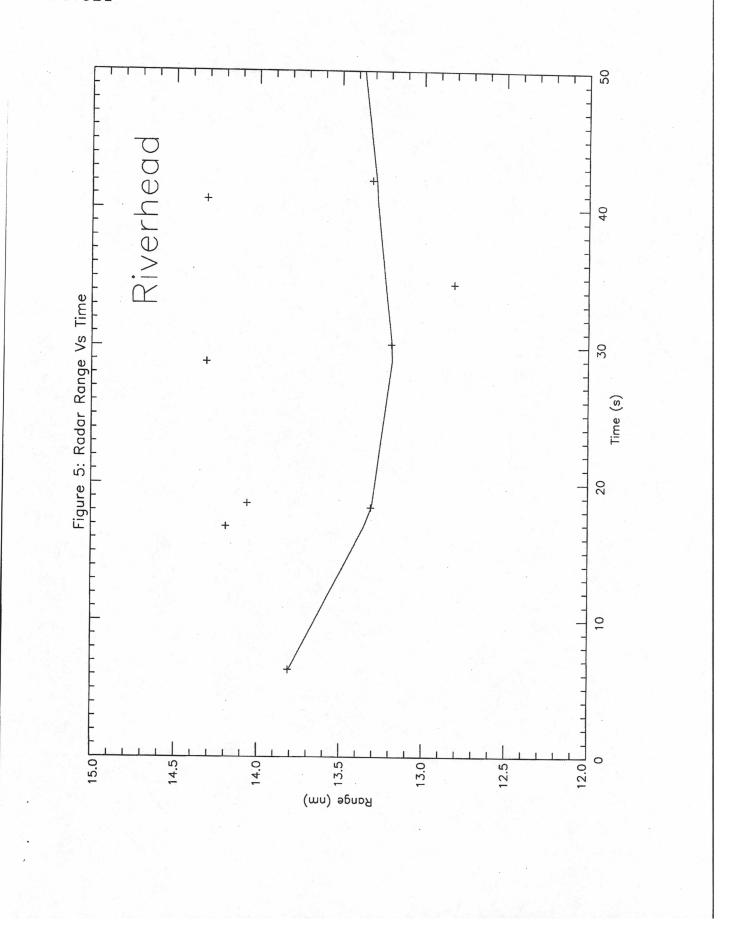
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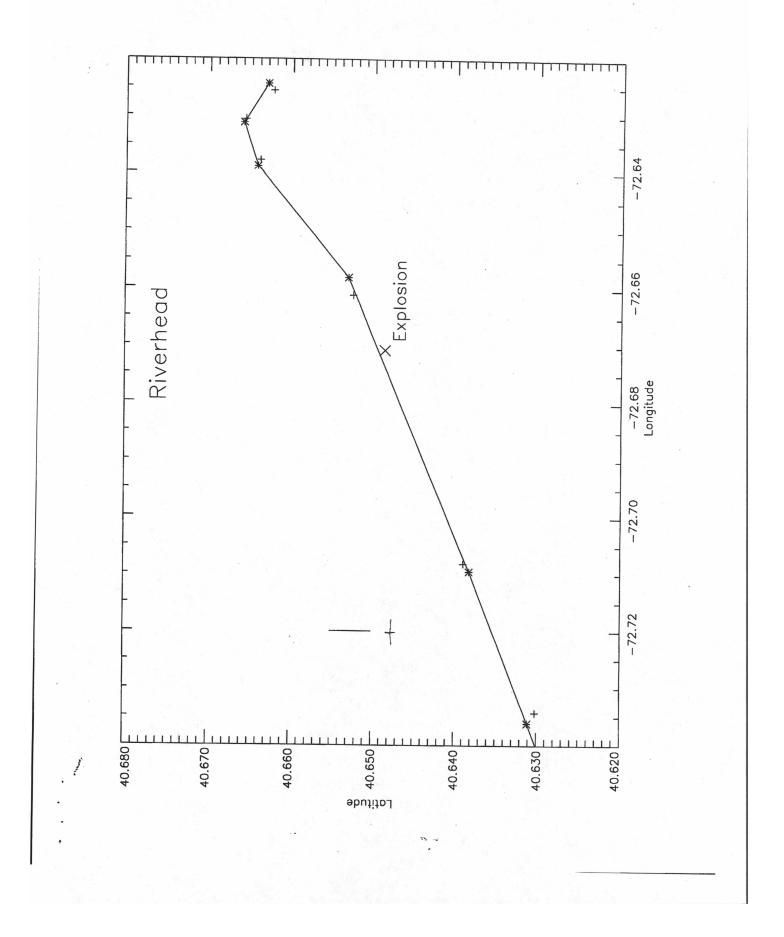
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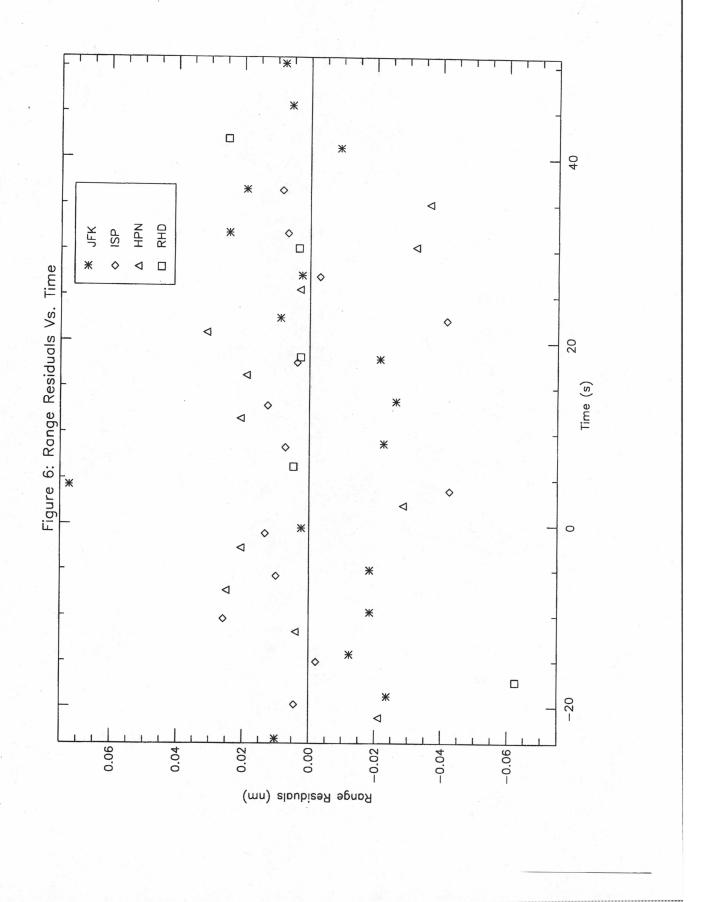
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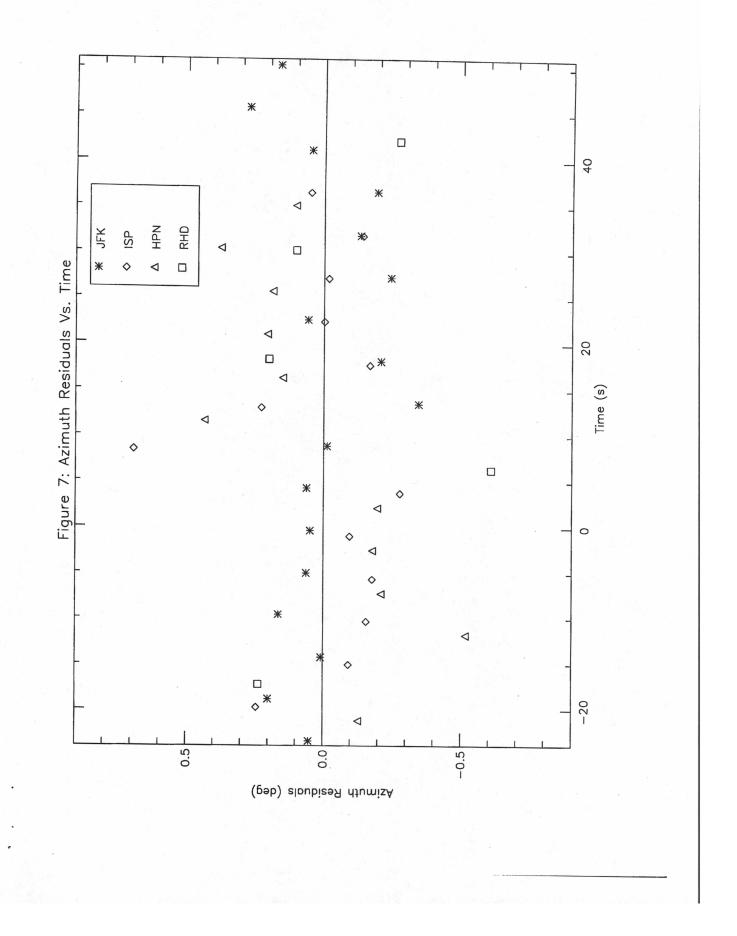


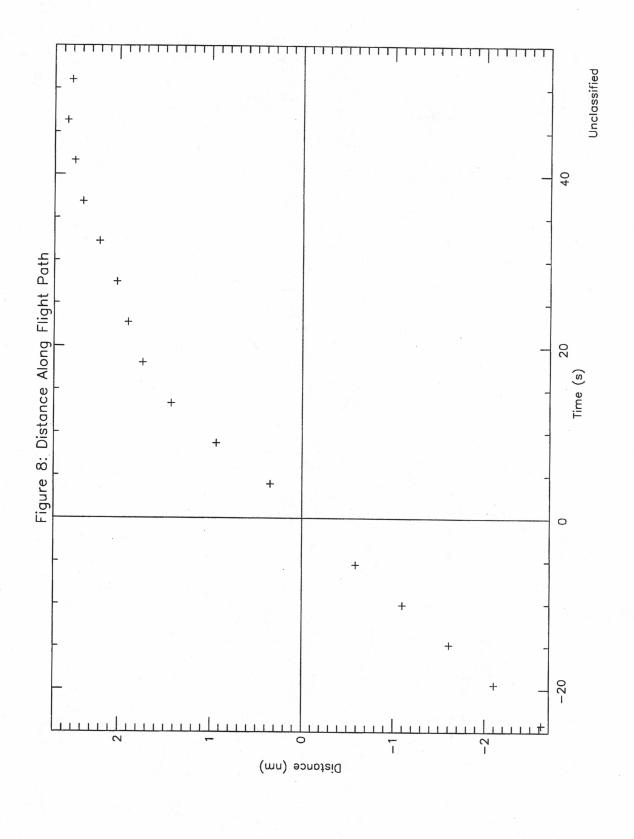


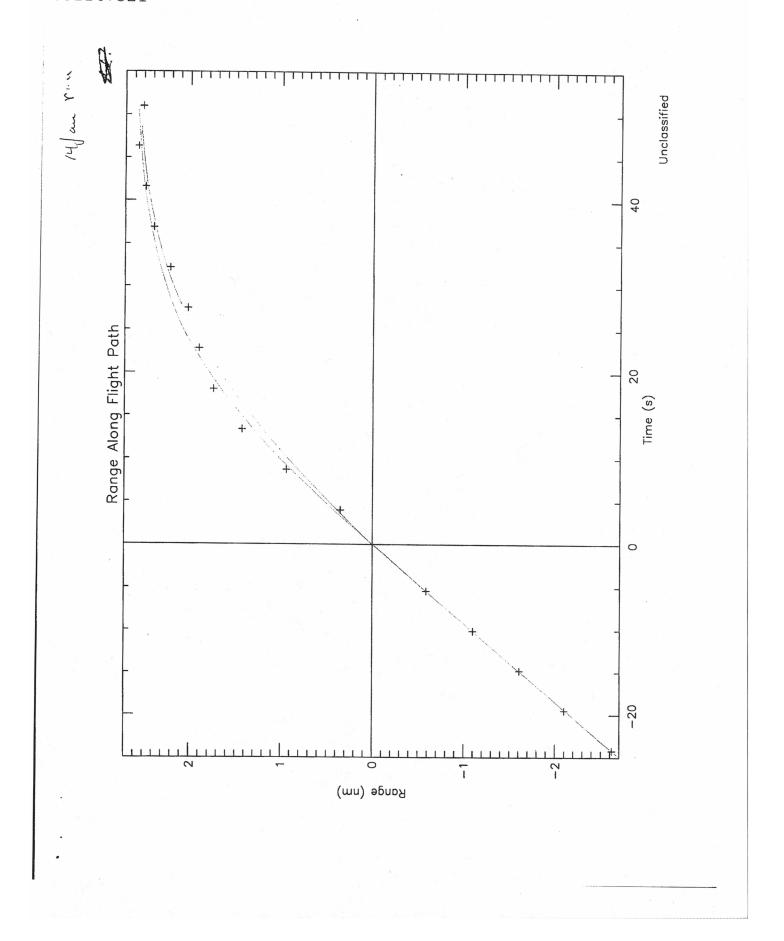


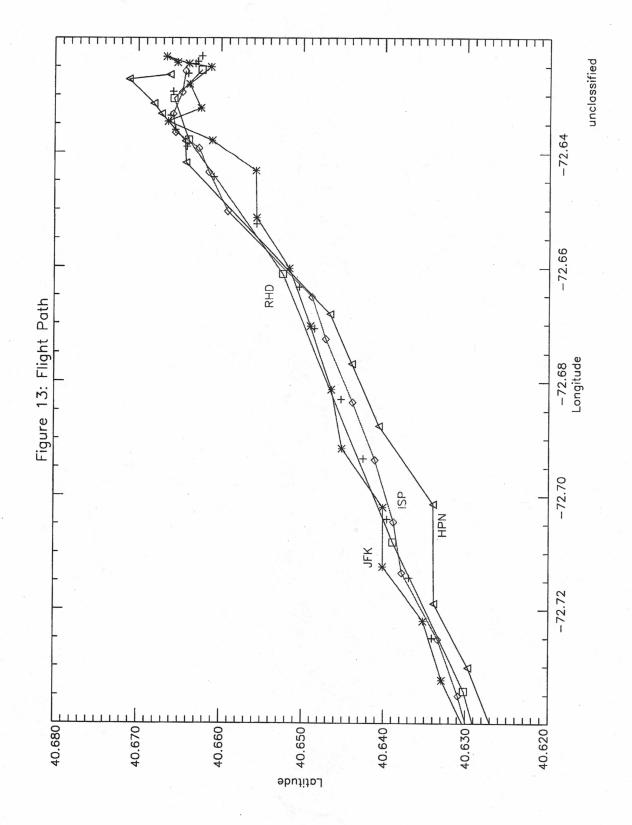


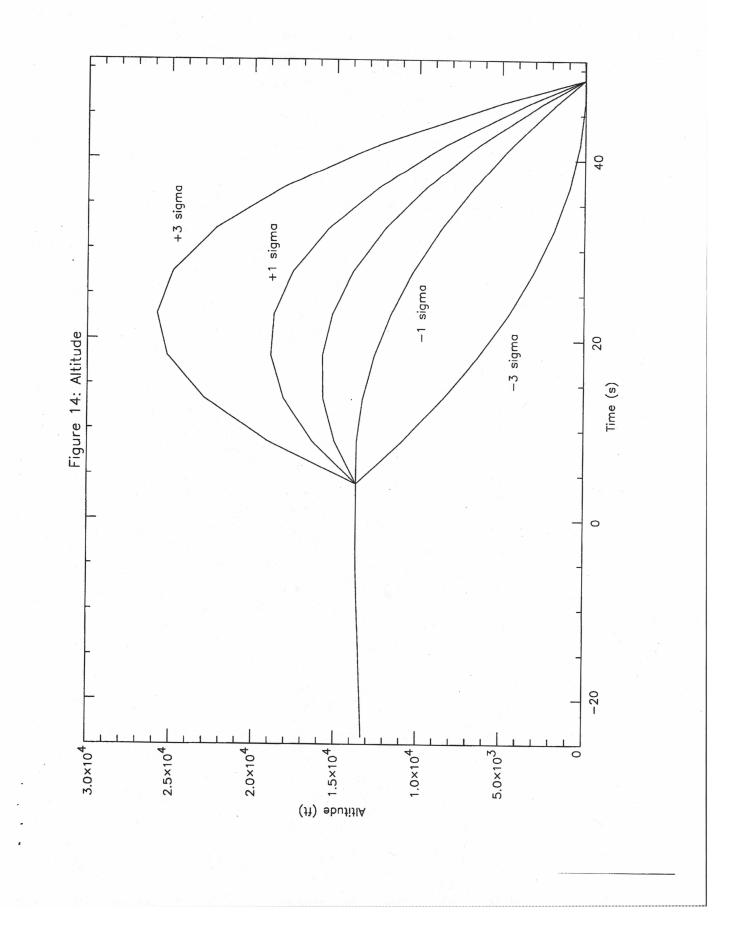












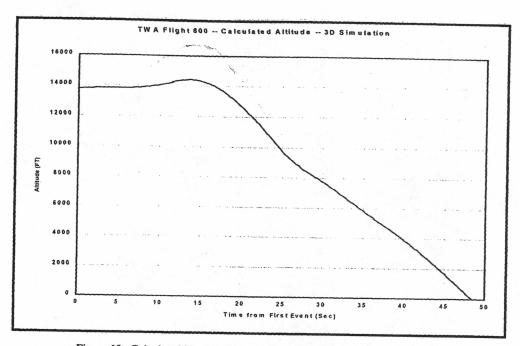


Figure 19, Calculated Variation in Altitude - Three Dimensional Simulation

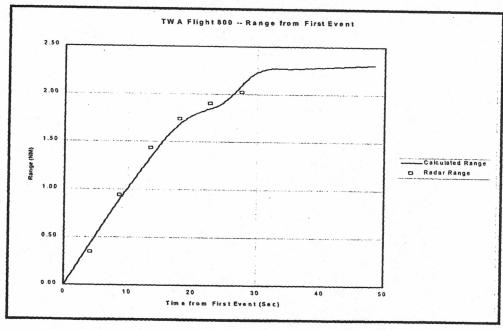
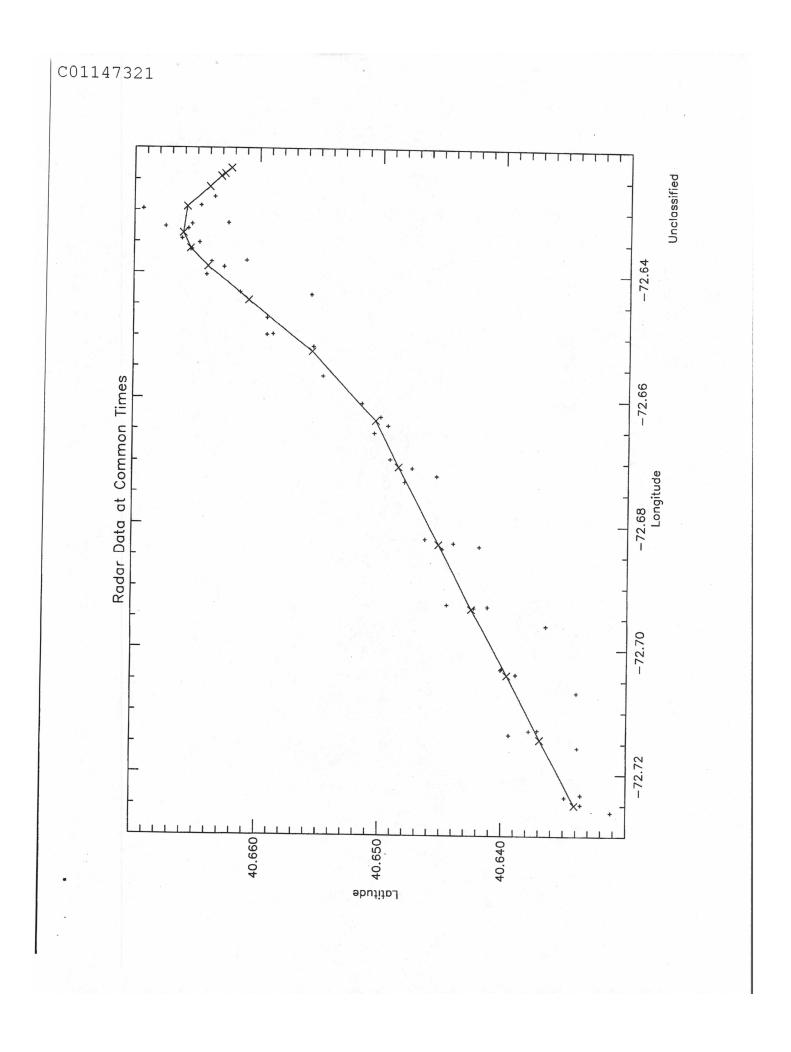
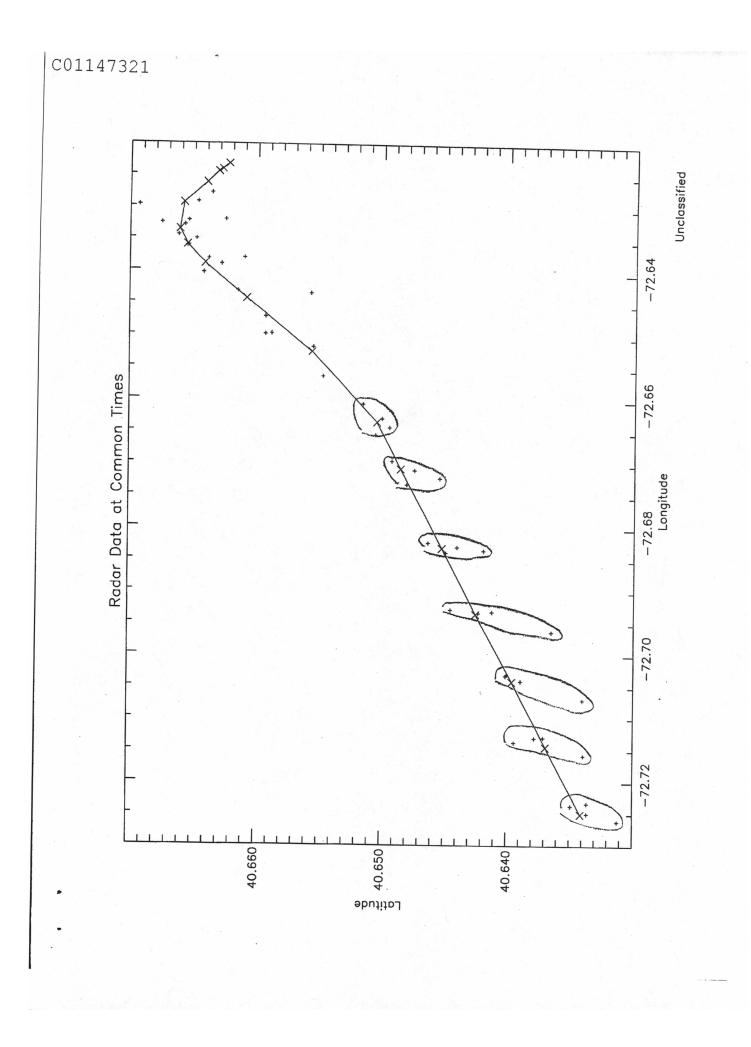
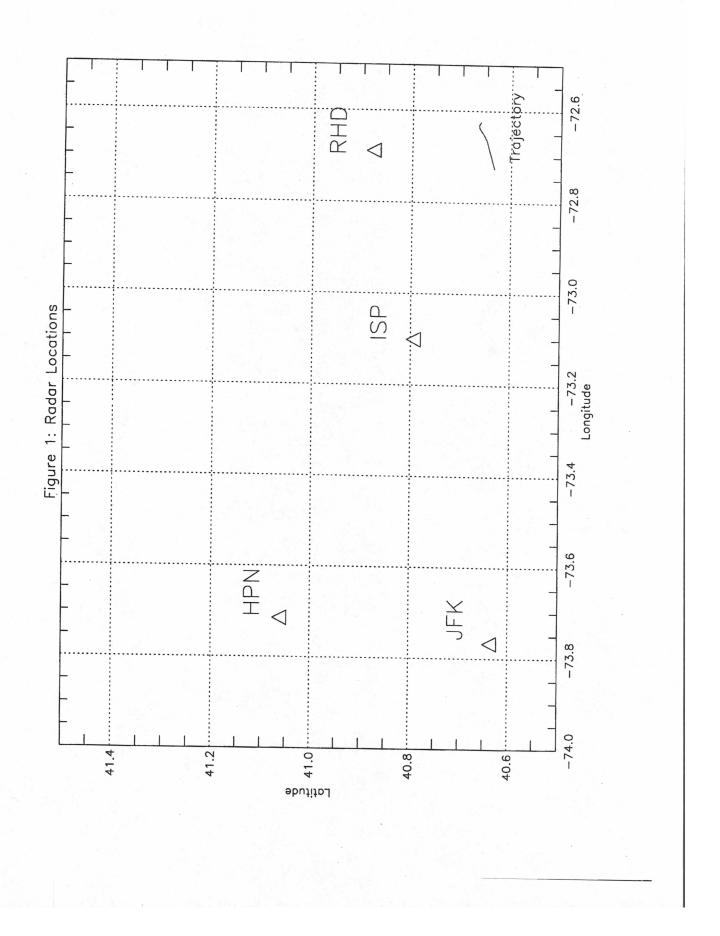
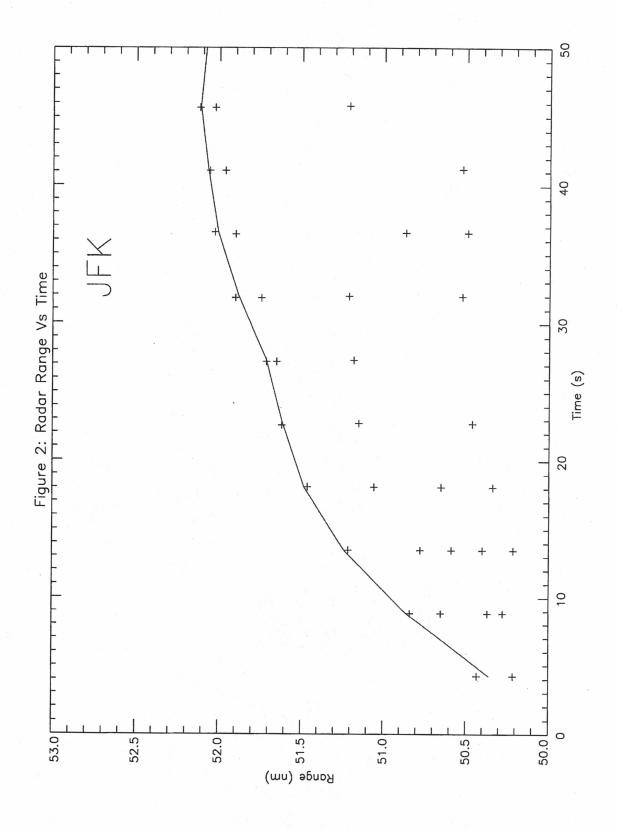


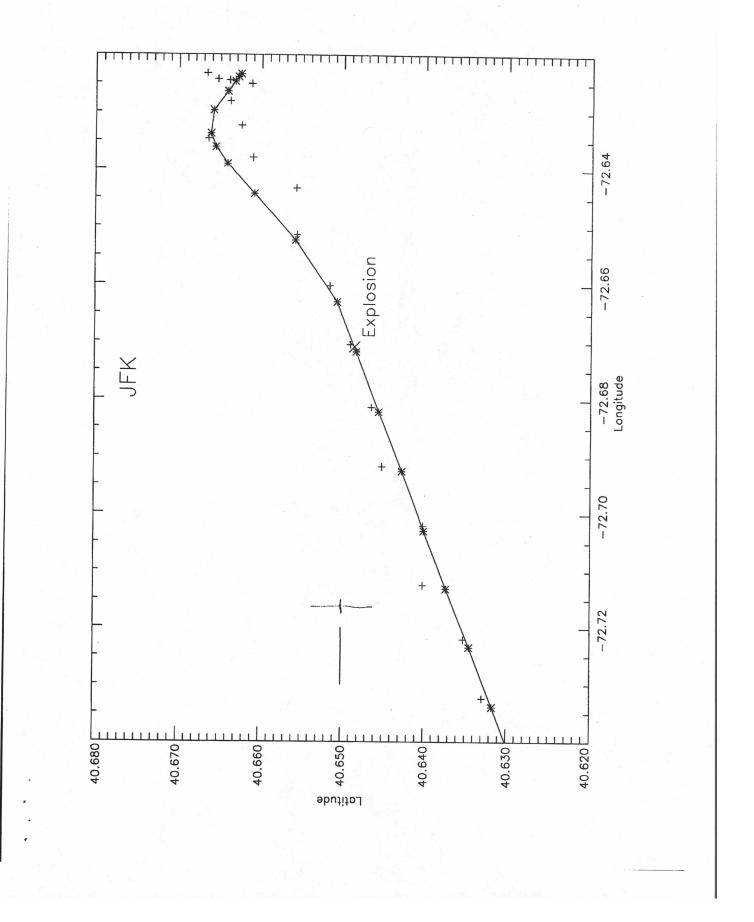
Figure 20, Calculated Range from First Event -- Three Dimensional Simulation

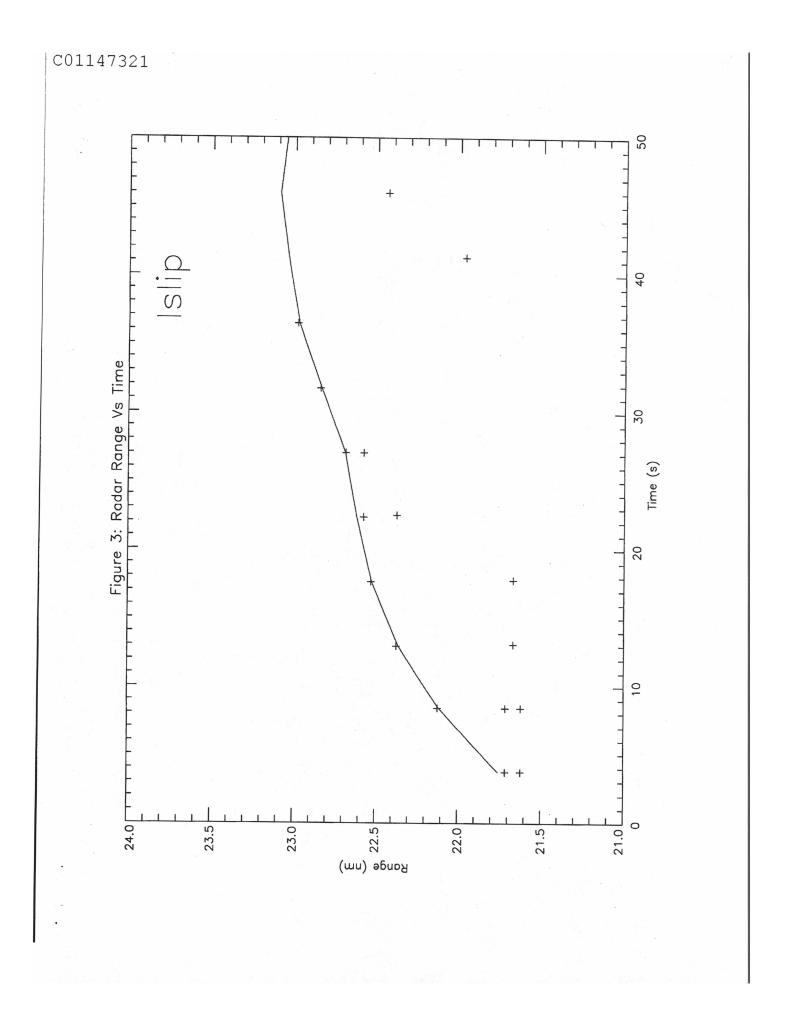


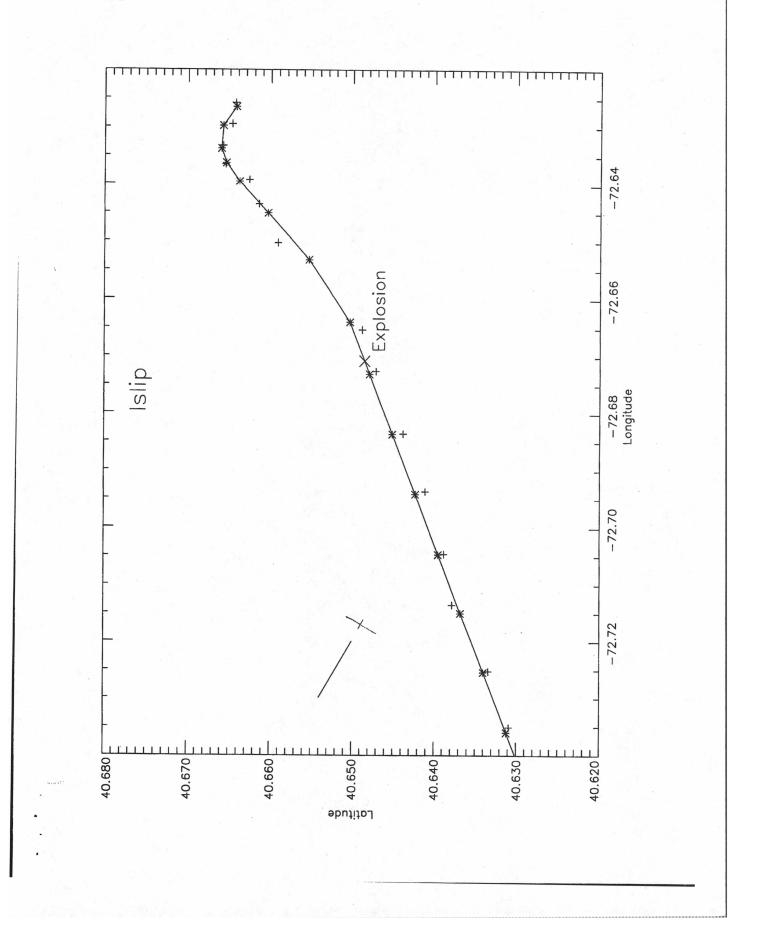












APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 19-Mar-2012

Central Intelligence Agency



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PMC Cowar

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Washington, D. C. 2050s

28 January 1998

The Honorable John R. Kasich U.S. House of Representatives 2700 East Dublin-Granville Road Suite 525 Columbus, Ohio 43231

Attention: Mr. Ralph Sandine

Dear Mr. Kasich:

This is in response to your letter of December 8, 1998 that forwarded correspondence from your constituent, requested your assistance in acquiring information regarding the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) video entitled, "TWA Flight 800: What Did The Eyewitnesses See?"

This video, produced by the CIA and distributed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to the press, explains in detail how CIA analysts used the available data to conclude that the so-called "missile sightings" took place after the aircraft had already exploded. The analysis depicted in the video was based on 224 eyewitness reports (provided by the FBI); some air traffic control radar data and limited information from the aircraft's cockpit voice recorder (provided by the National Transportation Safety Board, via the FBI); and infrared data detected by a US satellite. No satellite imagery of the disaster exists.

The possibility existed that the crash of TWA Flight 800 was caused by foreign terrorism, especially considering speculation that a bomb or missile could have been involved. The CIA, in full accordance with the National Security Act of 1947 and Executive Order 12333, responded immediately to a request from the FBI for assistance. This assistance included support from CIA analysts who monitor and assess foreign weapons threats to US national security. CIA's assistance to the FBI concerning the Flight 800 incident is ongoing.

The CIA's work depicted in the video involved only unclassified information. Similar assistance has been provided by the CIA on other air disasters; however, since

The Honorable John R. Kasich

classified sources were used, the details of the Agency's involvement in these other instances cannot be released to the public.

I trust this information will be helpful in responding

Sincerely,

John H. Moseman Director of Congressional Affairs

(b)(3)

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 30-Mar-2012

NOTE FOR: FROM: OFFICE: OTI

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02-19-98 11:29:18 AM TWA Flight 800 Work

At the request of the FBI, a team of DI/OTI analysts solved the mystery of the "streaks of light in the sky" many people saw just before TWA Flight 800 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Long Island on the evening of July 17, 1996, killing all 230 people aboard. These eyewitness accounts were the initial — and only — reason for suspecting that a missile may have been used to shoot down Flight 800. And they were the major reason for the FBI's meticulous reconstruction of the Boeing 747's fuselage at Calverton, N.Y. [In the words of FBI Assistant Director James Kallstrom: "If TWA Flight 800's destruction was the result of state-sponsored terrorism, it was an act of war."] Just what these eyewitnesses saw had been the subject of protracted speculation by investigators, in the print media, and on such shows as Dateline NBC and Unsolved Mysteries. The CIA work was instrumental in helping the FBI close the most extensive criminal investigation in U.S. history.

Using 244 eyewitness reports and radar data provided by the FBI, along with limited information from the aircraft's cockpit voice recorder and infrared data detected by a U.S. satellite, OTI analysts were able to conclude that the so-called "missile sightings" took place after the aircraft exploded. What eyewitnesses saw was in fact the burning Boeing 747 in various stages of crippled flight.

The key to deciphering what the eyewitnesses saw was to associate their visual observations with what they heard. This was possible because a very loud sound, recorded by the aircraft's cockpit voice recorder when the aircraft exploded --- and just before all onboard recordings ceased --- was heard by many eyewitnesses dispersed along the coast of Long Island. This concussive sound was so loud that it shook a 70-ton concrete bridge 11 miles away. Knowing that sound travels 1,100 feet per second, it was possible to determine approximately what portion of the 49-second crash sequence each eyewitness observed --- and to conclude that the eyewitnesses' observations occurred too late for them to have seen a missile attack the aircraft. But it was also clear that some eyewitnesses' observations could have created the illusion of a missile attacking the aircraft, because most eyewitnesses were more than nine miles away from the sequence of events unfolding before them.

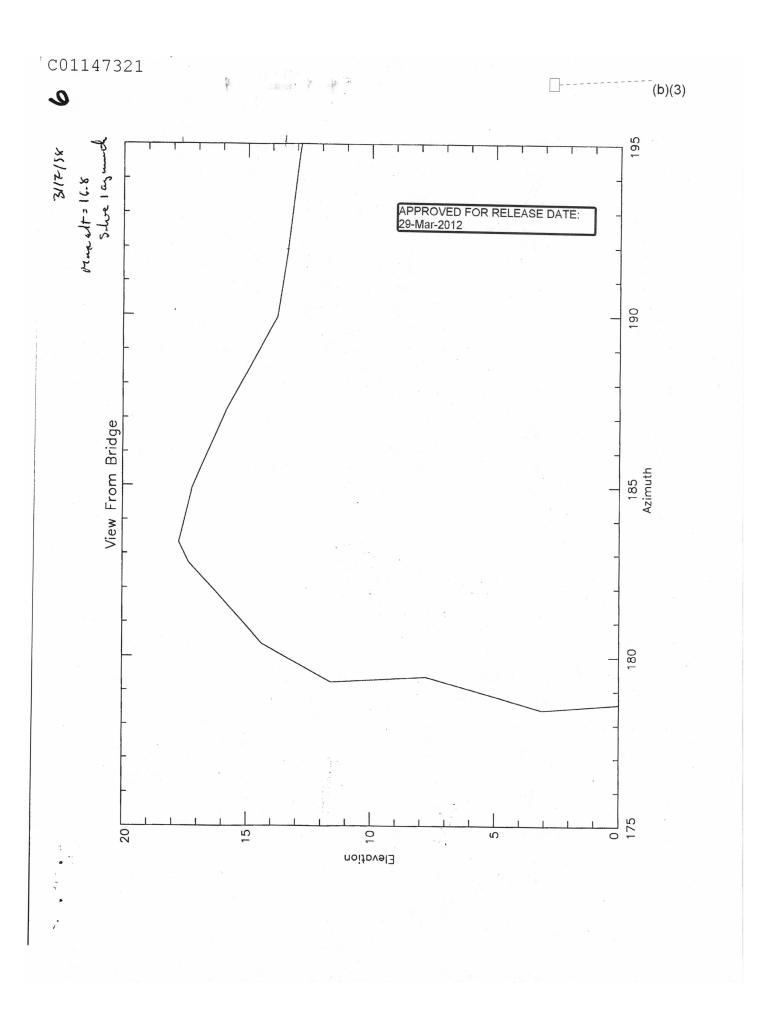
A key part of the CIA's assistance to the FBI was a 15-minute animated video which provided a clear and convincing explanation of the Agency's technical analysis. On November 18, 1997, the FBI aired this video in its entirety on national television during a major news conference announcing the suspension of its worldwide criminal probe. Within minutes, excerpts from the video were picked up by broadcast and print media worldwide.

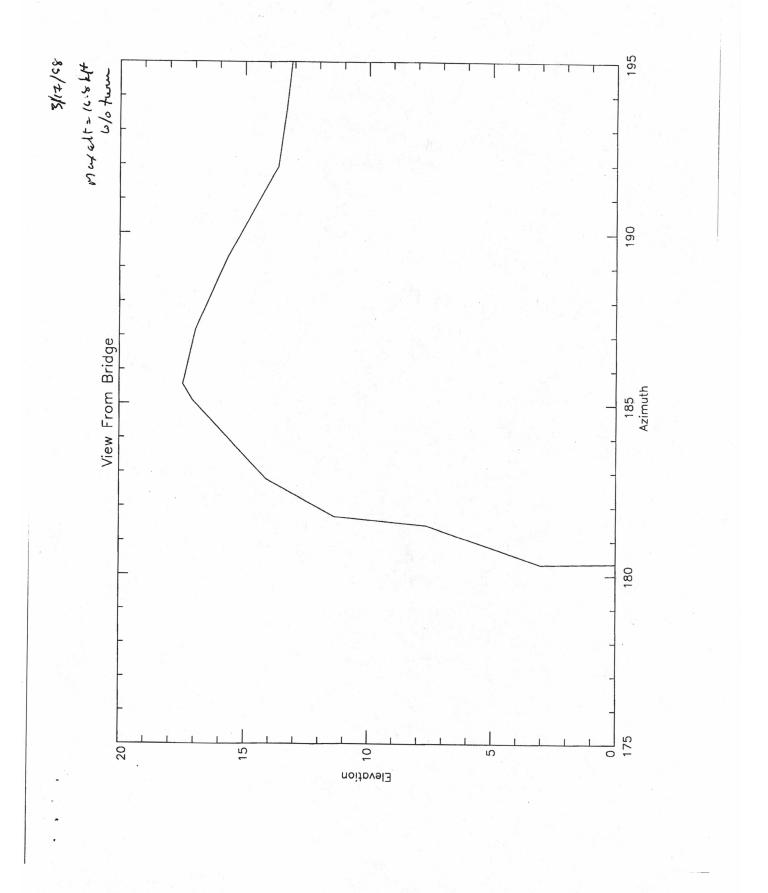
The reactions by the public, and in particular by family members of the crash victims, were universally favorable. News correspondent Robert Hager's comments, on NBC's "Today Show" the following morning, were typical: "The work was riveting. [It correlated] eyewitness accounts with precise data from radar, from the plane's recorders, and from [a U.S. satellite]. The result: A fascinating, highly informed CIA video representation of the plane's last 50 seconds." Shortly after the news conference, Kallstrom called CIA Director Tenet to express his personal appreciation for CIA's significant contribution in helping close the criminal investigation.

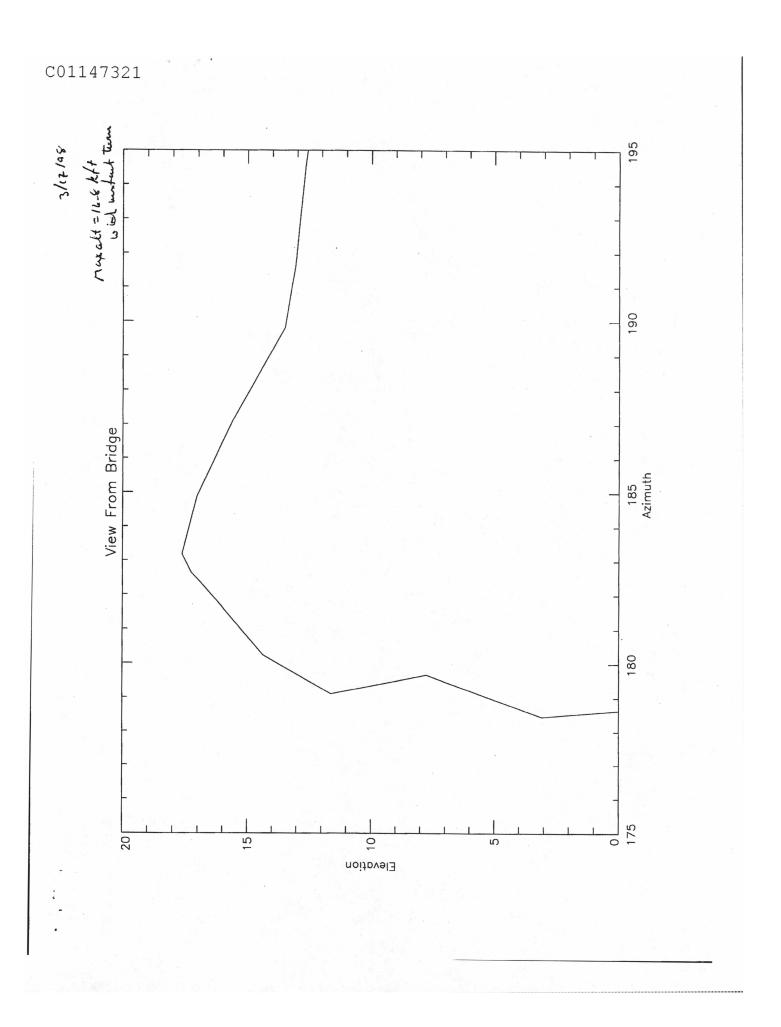
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|   | <del>UNCLASSIFIED</del>                                     |  |                |



### **National Transportation Safety Board**

Washington, D.C. 20594

February 25, 1999

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: 30-Mar-2012

Honorable George J. Tenet Director of Central Intelligence Central Intelligence Agency Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Director Tenet:

As part of its ongoing investigation of the crash of Trans World Airlines (TWA) flight 800, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is studying the eyewitness accounts of the accident. To evaluate these accounts, the Board has formed a witness group composed of NTSB investigators and a representative from each of the parties to our investigation (these parties include Boeing, the Air Line Pilots Association, the Federal Aviation Administration, the International Association of Machinists, and TWA). As part of its work, this group has reviewed hundreds of eyewitness accounts provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

As you are aware, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) conducted a study of the eyewitness accounts at the request of the FBI, and the witness group is generally familiar with the conclusions reached by the CIA. However, group members would appreciate learning more about the CIA's evaluation of the witness statements. Accordingly, I request your assistance in arranging a technical briefing for the witness group members by appropriate CIA staff at the earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,

Jim Hall) Chairpaan