PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE 21 April 1957	2. LOCATION Phoenix, Arizona	12. CONCLUSIONS ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☒ Other Unreliable Rpt ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ Unknown
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local GMT	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☐ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar	
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	6. SOURCE Civilian	
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS	9. COURSE

10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING	11. COMMENTS
Letter requesting that the "facts" be published in the case where a missile knocked off part of an air-liners wing.	Unreliable report.

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

JENKIN LLOYD JONES
TULSA TRIBUNE
PRESIDENT

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMITTEE
HERBERT BRUCKER, CHAIRMAN
THE HARTFORD COURANT
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

April 26, 1957

Honorable James H. Douglas
Secretary of the Air Force
Pentagon
Washington, D. C.

Dear Secretary Douglas:

There has been some concern among newspaper people concerning the incident involving a Frontier Airlines DC3 near Phoenix, Arizona, last Sunday, April 21. As far as I know none of us on the outside has the facts. But since it appears that a collision knocked off a part of the plane's left wing, the assumption is that it collided with a straying missile.

The Associated Press has reported that the Air Force now requires all news of "national impact" about missile accidents to be cleared by the Air Force information office in Washington before being released.

Those of us interested in freedom of information have been greatly heartened in recent years by the inclination of the services, on the top level if not always out in the field, to respect the American public's right to know what is happening. But, obviously, none of us wants any service to disclose information that really should be kept secret. This particular incident may be a sticky one, somewhere along the border line. But from the outside it is hard to see why. And if accidents are going to happen, people are going to know about them. And here the old rule should apply: swift, honest disclosure of the facts is better than gossip and rumor. Therefore I hope it will be possible for you to do the following:

1. Make public the facts about this Phoenix incident, if indeed it has not already been done by the time this letter reaches you.

1957, Apr. 21-50 miles N. of Phoenix, Ariz.-Airliner strikes "something", said to have been Mt. top! (+10 Tornadoes in Texas!!)

SAF FILE 869-57

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2. Establish a system by which future incidents of this kind will be made public just as quickly, frankly, and freely--with due regard for security where it is actually involved--as are accidents to Air Force planes.

May I look forward to some word from you on all this?

Faithfully yours,

Herbert Brucker

HB:md

21 APRIL 57

SAFIS-3c/Maj Spence/jmd/55809/7 May 57

MAY 9 1957

Dear Mr. Brucker:

Your letter to Secretary Douglas has been referred to this office for action.

There is no evidence of any Air Force involvement in the Frontier Airline incident of 21 April. No missiles were fired on that date. Obviously, speculation that a stray missile was involved is inaccurate. Information concerning the airline should come from that organization.

The Air Force has no desire to restrict unclassified information on our missile program. The two recent events reported by the Air Force when test missiles escaped control indicate this. We have always operated under the assumption that swift, honest disclosure of facts at such times is the only proper way to handle this type of story.

Recent instructions to field commanders were designed to hasten the flow of information, rather than retard it.

Let me assure you the Air Force will continue to operate its information policies in an open and above-board manner, consistent with national security.

Sincerely,

ARNO H. LUEHMAN
Brigadier General, USAF
Director of Information Services

Mr. Herbert Brucker
The Hartford Courant
Hartford, Connecticut

COMEBACK-SAFIS-3c
READER-SAFIS-1
STAYBACK-SAFIS-3c