

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, USN, Ret.

Dear Fellow American:

July 17, 1998, will mark the second anniversary of the mysterious crash of TWA Flight 800 off the coast of Long Island, killing 230 men, women and children. This tragic accident has been the object of the longest and most costly investigation of a commercial aircraft crash in history.

The FBI and National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) say that they have spent over \$43 million on this investigation. Despite that, they have failed to come up with an explanation that will square with the evidence that has been made public. They insist that neither a bomb nor a missile was involved.

Their theory is that the crash was initiated by an explosion of fuel in the plane's center tank, but the evidence they cite to support this is so weak that many people have been unwilling to accept it.

As a former Navy aviator and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I am puzzled and disturbed by the inconclusive results of this investigation.

Blaming the crash on an explosion in the fuel tank does not ring true for several reasons. First of all, modern aviation fuel is designed for safety. It does not readily burn, much less explode. There is no precedent for a mid-air fuel tank explosion in a modern jet airliner using Jet A-1 fuel without the involvement of a high explosive device.

In the case of TWA Flight 800, there is considerable evidence that shows that the crash was caused by a very powerful explosion that literally broke the huge plane in two.

My interest in this matter was intensified when I attended a press briefing in January by several retired aviation professionals brought together by Cmdr. William S. Donaldson, a retired Navy attack pilot. Bill Donaldson has been carrying out a private investigation of the crash of TWA Flight 800 since April, 1997.

His work has been supported by Accuracy in Media, the media watchdog

organization founded by Reed Irvine in 1969. I have been a member of the National Advisory Board of Accuracy in Media for many years.

At the briefing, Donaldson and his associates revealed that there is a great deal of important evidence bearing on the crash that apparently has not been given the attention that it deserves by either the official investigators or the news media.

The most obvious and inexplicable example is the evidence provided by 183 eyewitnesses interviewed by the FBI who saw a streak of light heading toward the plane immediately before the explosion. According to an FBI report, 96 of these eyewitnesses said they saw the streak of light rising from the surface. A hundred of the witnesses said the color of the streak was orange, red or orange-red. Ninety-six of them said that it ended in an explosion or a flash, and 32 said it ended in a fireball.

Two of these highly credible eyewitnesses told their stories at the press briefing last January.

One of them, Maj. Fred Meyer, a Vietnam combat veteran, was in his Air National Guard helicopter approaching Grabeski Airport on Long Island when he saw directly in front of him the explosion that brought down TWA Flight 800.

Here is Maj. Meyer's description of what he saw:

I was looking right straight down the runway at this streak of light. It was right in front of me. It was at a good distance, somewhere between 10 and 15 miles, and I estimated it at the time at somewhere around 10,000 feet. The streak of light lasted for 3 to 5 seconds. Then it stopped. Then just about a second later, further to the left and approximately on the same line I saw an explosion. A high velocity explosion. It looked all the world to me like ordnance, a warhead.

About a second to two seconds after that ordnance explosion, there was a second high velocity explosion of brilliant white light like nothing I've seen before or since, and then about 2 or 3 seconds after that there came a petrochemical explosion, which was the fuel burning-bright orange, mottled color and a lot of black.

Another eyewitness, local businessman Richard Goss, was sitting with friends that evening on the porch of the West Hampton Yacht Club, looking out over

the bay and Fire Island. He and his friends were attracted by what they thought was a flare or a Roman candle streaking skyward from Fire Island. But when it reached its peak it didn't explode and release a beautiful pyrotechnic display. Instead, it leveled off and then veered sharply to the left. Richard Goss said, "It was only a second or two later that I saw a massive explosion in the sky."

He didn't know it at the time, but what Richard Goss described fits the behavior of a sophisticated missile. And the explosion he saw fits what Maj. Fred Meyer described as ordnance.

Maj. Meyer and Richard Goss both told the FBI what they had seen. They are responsible, sober, articulate citizens. Maj. Meyer is a decorated Vietnam veteran who knows what an ordnance explosion looks like. Based on their firsthand knowledge of the situation, you would think that their testimony, along with that of other eyewitnesses, would be invaluable to the government's investigation.

When the NTSB held its hearing in Baltimore last December to discuss the causes of the crash of TWA Flight 800, neither one was invited to tell what he had seen that evening. In fact, not a single one of the eyewitnesses who had similar stories to tell was permitted to testify. The many reporters who attended the NTSB hearing did not protest the exclusion of this important body of evidence from discussion. Nor did any political leader.

The disregard of the evidence provided by all these eyewitnesses raises a number of questions.

- Why did the FBI insist that the NTSB not allow any eyewitnesses to testify at its public hearing on the causes of the crash?
- Why did the Justice Department, through an assistant U.S. attorney in New York City, order the investigative team assembled by the NTSB not to undertake any eyewitness interviews, but to leave that to the FBI?
- Why did the FBI refuse to let the NTSB investigators participate in its interviews of eyewitnesses?
- Why has the FBI refused to release its eyewitness interview reports to the press and public?

- Why has the government tried to discredit eyewitness testimony with the claim that all those people who said they saw a rocket-like object rising from the surface and exploding 14,000 feet up had really seen burning fuel spilling from the fuel tanks in the plane's wings?

The intelligent, sober people who saw a streak of light ascending shake their heads in disbelief when told that the government is saying that they really saw burning fuel falling.

There are many more questions I would like to see answered. The investigators conducted tests to determine what impact a missile would have on the plane, what kind of "fingerprints" it would leave on the wreckage. But their testing raises these questions:

- Why did they limit their testing of the impact of a missile to small shoulder-fired missiles such as the Stinger?
- Don't they know that these small missiles would not have been effective against a 747 flying at nearly 14,000 feet?
- Why didn't they look for the clues that would be left by the explosion of a large sophisticated missile detonating in close proximity to the target?
- Why did they ignore the compelling evidence that indicates that this is just what happened?

Here is one example of that evidence that is easy to understand.

The tires on an airplane are very tough. They have to be. They take a beating every time the plane lands. They survive crashes. But the nose wheel tire on TWA 800 was shredded. In addition, the doors that close when that wheel is retracted were blown from their hinges by external force, not by pressure from inside the plane. Here are the questions these facts raise:

- Why hasn't the public been shown photographs of the shredded nose-wheel tire?
- How could an explosion in the fuel tank between the wings blow in the nose gear doors that are 70 feet away?

- How could that fuel tank explosion shred the nose-wheel tire, but not the tires of the wheels close to it?

The public is entitled to an answer to those questions, but the mainstream media are not asking the questions. They have been content to accept the official explanation of the crash, disregarding all the evidence that casts doubt upon it. And there is a lot!

Most of that evidence is too technical to discuss in this letter. I could cite the proof that the fuel tanks of modern jets and the fuel that goes into them is remarkably safe. This is not high-test gasoline. It is essentially kerosene that has been engineered for safety. The NTSB searched long and hard for evidence that something in the center wing tank of TWA Flight 800 had created a spark that set off a powerful explosion in the nearly empty tank. They could find nothing that would have generated such a spark.

And unless the fuel was heated to at least 127 degrees Fahrenheit at sea level, you couldn't burn it with a match. That is why these modern jets using modern fuel have flown billions of miles with never an accident of this type unless a high explosive was involved.

There is no doubt that there was an explosion in the center wing fuel tank of TWA Flight 800, but the evidence indicates that it was the result of the explosion of a powerful missile outside the tank. Cmdr. Donaldson has found that this is confirmed by evidence found in the wreckage of the plane, including the location of the parts of the plane that were found in the ocean. He has also found confirmation in the cockpit voice recorder and the flight data recorder, which he believes must be analyzed with an understanding of how the explosion of a powerful missile near the plane's nose might be recorded by these instruments.

For example, analysts were unable to determine the cause of a very high frequency sound recorded on the cockpit voice recorder of a type they had never heard before. These analysts had no experience with cockpit voice recorders, recording a strike by a supersonic missile.

The questions I have raised in this letter are only a few of the many that have been raised by Bill Donaldson's investigation carried out with the support of Accuracy in Media. AIM has performed a great public service in publicizing these questions.

Readers of the twice-monthly AIM Report have been kept abreast of what

Donaldson and other investigators have revealed about the TWA 800 crash and other big stories the media have ignored. Their work has led me to call for a Congressional investigation of this tragic accident.

I have been a member of the Advisory Board of Accuracy in Media for many years. Reed Irvine, AIM's founder and chairman, has my support in his efforts to get the establishment media to get their facts right and quit suppressing important stories.

Accuracy in Media needs your help to carry on this important work. I urge you to give it your generous support. You will be allying yourself with thousands of other Americans whose support has kept Accuracy in Media in the battle for honest reporting since 1969.

Please let me know if you agree with me that a Congressional investigation of the TWA 800 crash is needed. Use the enclosed form to convey your views, and I will see that they are tallied and made known to Congress.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

With warm regards,

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, USN, Ret

P.S.: If your contribution is at least \$35 you will receive for one year Accuracy in Media's hard-hitting newsletter that reports the big stories such as the true cause of the crash of TWA Flight 800 together with a special bonus, a free copy of the report on Bill Donaldson's analysis of what the TWA 800 flight data recorder reveals.

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