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FM FBI NEW YORK (265A-NY-259028) (RAPID START)

TO DIRECTOR FBI/IMMEDIATE/

ALL FBI FIELD OFFICES/IMMEDIATE/

ALL LEGATS/IMMEDIATE/

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UNCLAS E F T O

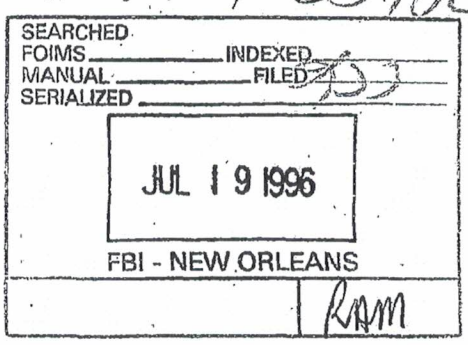
CITE: //3540//

SUBJECT: UNSUB(S); EXPLOSION OF TWA FLIGHT 800, 29 MILES SOUTHWEST OF HAMPTON, NEW YORK; JULY 17, 1996; ATO-IT-EOD; OO:NY.

INVESTIGATION IN NEW YORK IS PROCEEDING AS SET FORTH BELOW.

THE NYO IS CURRENTLY CHECKING ALL APPROPRIATE MANIFESTS OF FLIGHTS THAT MAY HAVE CONNECTED WITH TWA 800 WITH INDICES CHECKS BEING CONDUCTED.

265A-NY-259028



PAO-062

THERE ARE OVER 1400 PAY TELEPHONES CURRENTLY IN USE AT JOHN F. KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (JFKIA) ALL OF WHICH ARE SERVICED BY TELEPORT. NYO IS FOCUSING ON THE TELEPHONES LOCATED IN THE TWA TERMINAL AREA. THE RECORDS, WHICH ARE RETRIEVABLE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BEING OBTAINED. TELEPORT MAINTAINS NO RECORDS FOR INCOMING CALLS.

THE NYO DETERMINED THAT EL AL AIRLINE HAS A REGULARLY SCHEDULED FLIGHT DEPARTING DAILY FROM JFKIA TO TEL AVIV. THIS FLIGHT GENERALLY DEPARTS AT APPROXIMATELY 11:50 PM. HOWEVER THIS FLIGHT WAS CANCELED ON JULY 17, 1996 FOLLOWING THE EXPLOSION OF TWA FLIGHT 800. ON JULY 18, 1996 THIS FLIGHT DEPARTED JFKIA AT 10:30 PM.

EFFECTIVE AT 8:00 AM, JULY 19, 1996 (SUBSEQUENT TO FBIHQ ANNOUNCEMENT,) A TIP HOTLINE WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE NEW YORK OFFICE UTILIZING TOLL FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER 888-245-4636. IT WILL BE STAFFED BY NYO SA'S DIVIDED INTO THREE EIGHT HOUR SHIFTS OF TEN SA'S EACH.

NYO INTERVIEWED [redacted] CO-PILOT ON A C-130 OPERATING IN THE AREA OF THE EXPLOSION SITE DURING ROUTINE TRAINING. HE STATED AT APPROXIMATELY 8:35 PM HE OBSERVED A FIREBALL DESCENDING FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 4000 FEET

INTO THE SEA.

[redacted] AN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER INTERVIEWED SAID HE WITNESSED A RED FLASH ACCOMPANIED BY A LARGE CLOUD OF SMOKE ABOVE THE AIRCRAFT. HE WAS ALSO IN CONVERSATION WITH AN AS YET UNIDENTIFIED PILOT, WHO WAS IN THE VICINITY OF THE CRASH, AND ADVISED [redacted] HE OBSERVED A BOAT DEPARTING THE AREA AFTER THE EXPLOSION.

A NEIGHBORHOOD CANVASS DETERMINED SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS WHO CLAIM TO HAVE SEEN THE EXPLOSION OF TWA FLIGHT 800. VARIOUS INCONSISTENCIES SURFACED IN THE INTERVIEWS. THOSE INTERVIEWS THAT DETERMINED AN EVENT PRIOR TO THE EXPLOSION ARE REPORTED: APPROXIMATELY 10 WITNESSES DESCRIBED A SOUNDLESS ORANGE PROJECTILE WITH A WHITE TAIL/TRAIL. TWO DESCRIBED THE TRAIL AS "WIGGLEY", THE REMAINDER AS A STRAIGHT LINE. MOST DESCRIBED THE FLAIR AS GOING UP, THEN TURNING INTO A HUGE RED BALL. TWO SEPARATE WITNESSES CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN A FLAIR, ORBIT/CIRCLE ANOTHER OBJECT. SUBSEQUENTLY, DEBRIS FELL FROM THE SKY. MOST STATED THE DIRECTION OF THE PROJECTILE WAS SOUTH OR SOUTHWEST.

INVESTIGATION REGARDING EYEWITNESSES WHO OBSERVED A PROJECTILE PRIOR TO SEEING A FIREBALL CONTINUES. TWO

REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (DIA), WHO HAVE AN EXPERTISE IN SURFACE TO AIR PROJECTILES, WILL JOIN THE INVESTIGATORS PURSUING INTERVIEWS OF EYEWITNESSES.

FBI DISASTER TEAM, RECENTLY ARRIVED AT THE NYO, IS BEING DEPLOYED WITH THE SUFFOLK COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER COMMENCING JULY 19, 1996.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD (USCG) HAS RECOVERED LARGE AMOUNTS OF WRECKAGE AND PERSONAL EFFECTS FROM THE EXPLOSION. SEVERAL OF THESE PIECES ARE EXTREMELY LARGE. THE SIZE OF THE VESSEL NECESSARY TO ACCOMMODATE THESE PIECES CANNOT USE THE SHALLOW PORTS IN LONG ISLAND. THIS NECESSITATES USE OF THE BROOKLYN DOCKS WITH FINAL OVERLAND TRANSPORT BY MEANS OF FLAT BED TRUCKS TO THE HANGAR, AT WHICH TIME EFFORTS TO REASSEMBLE WILL BE MADE.

THE NYO HAS OBTAINED ELEVEN PAGES OF "RADAR VIEWPOINT" SET FORTH IN TWELVE SECOND SEQUENCES COVERING TWA FLIGHT 800. A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS HAS IDENTIFIED OTHER AIRCRAFT IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA AT THE TIME OF EXPLOSION. INTERVIEW OF DIVISION MANAGER, [redacted] [redacted] FAA, AIR TRAFFIC DIVISION, EASTERN REGION INDICATES THAT THIS RADAR VIEWPOINT REQUIRES AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS BY EXPERT PERSONNEL TO DETERMINE THE TRUE

EXTENT OF A POSSIBLE ANOMALY. THIS RADAR VIEWPOINT INDICATES TWA FLIGHT 800, A US NAVY MILITARY P-3, AND AN UNIDENTIFIED ENTITY. VIEWING THE SEQUENTIAL RADAR VIEWPOINTS, THE UNIDENTIFIED OBJECT IS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO TWA FLIGHT 800 AT TIME AND POINT OF IMPACT. SUBSEQUENT TO IMPACT THIS UNIDENTIFIED ENTITY CONTINUES IN A REVERSE COURSE AND THEN APPEARS TO SPIRAL BEFORE BEING NO LONGER OBSERVED ON SCREEN.

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH MEMBERS OF THE NEW YORK AIR NATIONAL GUARD, 102ND RQS ALL SAID THAT THEY WERE FLYING AT APPROXIMATELY 1500 FEET IN THE VICINITY OF MORICHES BAY, NEW YORK. ALL REPORTED OBSERVING WHAT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY IDENTIFIED AS TWA FLIGHT 800 ERUPT INTO FLAMES AT APPROXIMATELY 14 MILES FROM THEIR OPERATION. THIS AIRCRAFT WAS DESCRIBED AS HAVING BROKEN INTO TWO LARGE COMET SHAPED ORANGE COLORED PIECES DISAPPEARING INTO THE OCEAN. THEY IMMEDIATELY PROCEEDED INTO THE AREA, MAINTAINING COMMUNICATION WITH THE USCG SUPPORTING THE RESCUE MISSION THROUGH THE UTILIZATION OF DROPPED ILLUMINATING FLARES.

INVESTIGATION CONTINUING AT NEW YORK.

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