

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 07/27/1996

On 07/24/1996, [redacted] E-6, BM-1, assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Adak, [redacted], Home address: [redacted], Highlands, New Jersey 07732, [redacted] was interviewed by Special Agent CHRISTOPHER M. PIEHOTA who identified himself and the purpose of the interview.

During the interview, [redacted] provided the following information:

[redacted] stated that he was below the bridge of the Adak and, as such, did not witness the crash or any incidents leading up to the crash.

[redacted] stated that, upon arriving at the site of the wreckage, he viewed what he believed to be a part of an engine, various wreckage in the water and a whole rest room (lavatory) from the aircraft floating intact.

[redacted] could not recall any other details or provide any further information regarding this matter.

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Investigation on 07/24/1996 at Sandy Hook, New Jersey

File # 265A-NY-259028

by SA Christopher M. Piehota (60) Date dictated 07/27/1996

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Note the viewing upon arrival of a part of an engine and a whole lavatory floating intact.

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 07/27/1996

On 07/24/1996, [REDACTED] MK-2, assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Adak, [REDACTED] Home address: [REDACTED] Highlands, New Jersey 07732, [REDACTED] was interviewed by Special Agent CHRISTOPHER M. PIEHOTA and Investigator ED KARASEWICZ who identified themselves and the purpose of the interview.

During the interview, [REDACTED] provided the following information:

[REDACTED] stated that he was below the deck of the Adak checking out the ship's water conversion system with EM-1 [REDACTED] and, as such, did not witness the crash or any incidents leading up to the crash.

[REDACTED] came to the deck to prepare for search and rescue operations. Upon arriving at the crash site, [REDACTED] stated that he saw what he believed to be the tail section of the aircraft.

[REDACTED] could not recall any other details or provide any further information regarding this matter.

Investigation on	<u>07/24/1996</u>	at	<u>Sandy Hook, New Jersey</u>
File #	<u>265A-NY-259028</u>		
by	<u>SA Christopher M. Piehota</u>	Date dictated	<u>07/27/1996</u>
	<u>Inv. Ed Karasiewicz</u>		

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Note the viewing upon arrival of the tail section of the aircraft.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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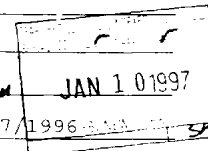
On 07/24/1996, [REDACTED] E-5, Petty Officer 2nd Class, assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Adak, [REDACTED], Home address: [REDACTED], Highlands, New Jersey 07732, [REDACTED] was interviewed by Special Agent CHRISTOPHER M. PIEHOTA who identified himself and the purpose of the interview.

During the interview [REDACTED] provided the following information:

[REDACTED] stated that he was below the bridge of the Adak sleeping and, as such, did not witness the crash or any incidents leading up to the crash.

[REDACTED] that, upon arriving site of the wreckage, he viewed what he believed to be the tail section of the aircraft.

[REDACTED] could not recall any other details or provide any further information regarding this matter.

Investigation on 07/24/1996 at Sandy Hook, New JerseyFile # 265A-NY-259028by SA Christopher M. Piehota (67)Date dictated 07/27/1996

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Note the E5 Petty Officer 2nd Class viewing upon arrival of the tail section of the aircraft.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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On 07/24/1996, [REDACTED] of the U.S. Coast Guard [REDACTED] Highlands, New Jersey 07732, [REDACTED] was interviewed by Special Agent CHRISTOPHER M. PIEHOTA and Investigator ED KARASIEWICZ who identified themselves and the purpose of the interview.

During the interview, [REDACTED] provided the following information:

[REDACTED] stated that the Adak went out on fishery law enforcement patrol on Tuesday, 07/16/12996, and was approximately 90 miles of the New Jersey shore and since about 1:00 PM on 07/18/1996, was about 12 miles from the site of the crash.

[REDACTED] stated the he was on the bridge of the Adak communicating with an unidentified fishing vessel while GM-3 Ward was driving the ship when Seaman Apprentice Parrales alerted him [REDACTED] to the crash.

[REDACTED] stated that he viewed what appeared to him to be a ball of flames and he immediately thought that it was a plane crash. [REDACTED] immediately turned the ship, proceeded to the crash site at approximately 30 knots and arrived there in approximately 15 minutes.

[REDACTED] stated that a Navy airplane reported a life boat floating in the water. When the Adak arrived at the site of the floating object, it was found to be the escape chute from the downed airplane.

[REDACTED] stated that, when he was on active duty with the U.S. Navy, he served on a missile boat. As such, [REDACTED] said he knew what missile trails looked like and saw no missile trails at the scene of the crash. [REDACTED] said that he did not hear or notice anything peculiar before the crash.

[REDACTED] stated that another individual on the bridge of the ADAK, Petty Officer [REDACTED] stationed on the U.S. Coast

Investigation on 07/24/1996 at Sandy Hook, New Jersey

File # 265A-NY-259028

by SA Christopher M. Piehota Date dictated 07/27/1996
Inv. Ed Karasiewicz

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Lt Dunn states the Adak arrived in approximately 15 minutes.

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Date of transcription 07/27/1996

On 07/24/1996, [REDACTED] E-5, SS2, assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Adak, SSN: [REDACTED] Home address: [REDACTED] Highlands, New Jersey 07732, Telephone: [REDACTED] was interviewed by Special Agent CHRISTOPHER M. PIEHOTA who identified himself and the purpose of the interview.

During the interview, [REDACTED] provided the following information:

[REDACTED] stated that he was on the bridge of the [REDACTED] when, after being alerted by Seaman Apprentice [REDACTED], he witnessed flames coming out of the sky and heading towards the water. After this, [REDACTED] said that he saw a large plume of smoke and flames coming from the water. Prior to being alerted by [REDACTED] did not notice anything out of the ordinary.

[REDACTED] stated that, upon arriving at the site of the wreckage, he viewed what he believed to be the tail section of the aircraft, various wreckage in the water and a whole rest room (lavatory) from the aircraft floating intact.

[REDACTED] could not recall any other details or provide any further information regarding this matter.

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 File # 2125 285A-NY-259028 340 CC3
 by SA Christopher M. Piehota Date dictated 07/27/1996

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Note the E5 SS2 viewing upon arrival the tail section of the aircraft and a whole rest room floating intact.

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 07/27/1996

On 07/24/1996, [REDACTED] Seaman's Apprentice/Officer Candidate, temporarily assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter [REDACTED] permanently assigned to Battery Park MIO, SSN: [REDACTED] Home address: [REDACTED] New York, New York, Telephone: [REDACTED] was interviewed by Special Agent CHRISTOPHER M. PIEMOTA and Investigator ED KARASEWICZ who identified themselves and the purpose of the interview.

During the interview, [REDACTED] provided the following information:

[REDACTED] stated that he was on the starboard side bridge of the [REDACTED] when he alerted the Captain and the X-O to a flame in the air. At first [REDACTED] thought the flame might have been from a National Guard flare exercise that was being conducted in the area. After first spotting the flames, [REDACTED] followed them from the sky to the water. [REDACTED] stated that the [REDACTED] was approximately 20 miles from the crash site.

[REDACTED] stated that the [REDACTED] had stopped approximately 4 to 5 boats while it was out to sea. Most of the boats in the area were fishing boats.

[REDACTED] stated that, when the [REDACTED] finally arrived at the crash site, fishing boats in the area had already begun to set off flares. [REDACTED] viewed what he believed to be the escape chute from the downed airplane. [REDACTED] stated that the [REDACTED] traveled at approximately 30 knots and took approximately 30 minutes to reach the crash site.

[REDACTED] could not recall any other details or provide any further information regarding this matter.

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Date of transcription 07/24/1996 at Sandy Hook, New Jersey

File # 2126
1065A-NY-259028 SUB 103

by SA Christopher M. Piemota Date dictated 7/27/1996
 Inv. Ed Karasiewicz

Seaman Apprentice/Officer's Candidate stated the Adak was approximately 20 miles from the crash site and it took 30 minutes to reach the crash site.

- * Ruggieri, a Coast Guard bosun's mate from California, had been stationed at Sandy Hook, N.J., aboard the Adak for only two months when a routine patrol brought him to the coast of Long Island during Wednesday's calm, dark night.

Then a fireball lighted the sky as the last of the sunset ebbed in the western horizon.

``Some people on board actually saw the fireball, and the captain headed toward it," Ruggieri said. ``We did not know it was actually a plane until we got on the scene."

During the **40 minutes** it took the cutter to reach the crash, the 16 crew members prepared for a rescue, assembling fire hoses, boat hooks, life rings and heaving lines and got an orange inflatable boat ready for launch. A rescue swimmer donned a wet suit and pulled a pair of fins close.

But as they neared the scene, it became apparent that this would be no routine rescue.

A scene of great carnage, eerily lit by the flames of burning jet fuel, spread before them.

``It was like a movie set," Ruggieri said.

Helicopters boomed overhead and rescue planes dropped parachute flares. Scores of fishing boats churned in a sea littered with flotsam from the plane.

And bodies, dozens of them, appeared to be everywhere.

Ruggieri climbed aboard the inflatable and headed into the floating wreckage. For the next several hours, it would be his task to salvage the dead.

``Few of them were intact," he said. ``Some were missing limbs or were decapitated. We tried not to look at the faces. If you didn't look at the faces, it wasn't personal, but we treated the bodies with dignity."