

Air Force Experts Think That Refueling Of Jets While Flying Possible

By ELTON C. FAY
WASHINGTON, Aug. 2 (AP)—Some air force experts think that the refueling of jet fighter planes while in flight is entirely feasible.

If the aerial refueling technique—already in use for B-50 bombers—can be applied to jet fighters it will go a long way toward solving the problem of providing jet fighter cover for long distance bomber missions. The range of fighters thus can be extended by hundreds or thousands of miles.

Technicians say there is no mechanical reason why fuel can't be pumped from a tanker plane to a jet fighter, just as it is from the

B-29 tankers into the B-50 bombers. They point out that tanker planes can operate in the 200-300 mile an hour range and that the high speed jets can be throttled down to that speed without losing control or approaching the stalling point.

The aerial refueling system used by the USAF now is based on the British method of attaching a flexible hose line from the tanker to the receiving bomber, then letting it flow by gravity.

However, there have been recent reports that a new, faster and safer method of mid-air refueling has been perfected.

The trade publication Aviation Week reports it has learned that Boeing Aircraft company, makers of the B-29s, B-50s and other combat and cargo military planes, has developed its own refueling system.

As described by Aviation Week, the method is this: A Boeing C-97 cargo plane is equipped with tanks to carry between 8500 and 7000 gallons of fuel.

From the tail of the C-97 a hollow boom extends to carry the fuel.

At the tip of the boom are airfoils similar to the controls surfaces of an airplane. A man, riding in a basket of the transport, guides the boom as the transport maneuvers into position in front of the bomber, using controls to the airfoils to "fly" the boom into contact with the nose of the bomber where the fuel intake is located. Rapid transfer of fuel is obtained by the use of pumps to develop pressure.

The magazine says Boeing now is changing nose assemblies on B-50 bombers to take the new refueling equipment.

Air force officials declined to discuss the report, saying only that no orders have been placed with Boeing yet.

Columbia Basin Work 'Important'

By CHARLES D. WATKINS
WASHINGTON, Aug. 2 (AP)—National security demands prompt development of the Columbia river basin, Secretary of the Army Gray said Monday.

He told a house committee that how it's done—through creation of a Columbia valley administration or some other way—is for congress to decide. He said he did not believe that creation of a CVA was the only way the basin can be developed.

But for himself, he added, he felt that the CVA was the best approach.

Under any circumstances, he went on, "I urge that without delay and for the interest of national security this great program to develop the Pacific Northwest go forward."

Testifying before the public works committee, which is considering a bill to set up a CVA, Gray said the army long has been seriously concerned with the need for full development of the river basin, and added:

"It is essential to national defense that the hydroelectric potential of the Columbia river and its tributaries be fully realized and developed as soon as practicable. The power of the Columbia is needed for aluminum production and for atomic production."

He said the growing industries of the Portland, Ore., region and of other cities require effective flood control and that the river's navigation possibilities must be expanded.

'Buzz' Blamed For Crackup

FORT DIX, N. J., Aug. 2 (AP)—A public hearing by the civil aeronautics board appeared possible today as an aftermath of the crash of a navy fighter plane and a commercial airliner in which 16 persons died Saturday.

The possibility of a public hearing was suggested last night by William K. Andrews, director of the board's bureau of safety investigation. CAB representatives and navy officials are investigating reports that the naval pilot was "buzzing" the Eastern Airlines plane when they collided in the air near Fort Dix, N. J.

An account of the buzzing from a Piper cub pilot who witnessed the accident, George W. Humphries of Fairhaven, was backed up by pilots for Eastern Airlines and National Airlines. They said their planes had been buzzed by navy fighters in the same area shortly before the collision.

Airlift Begins Gradual Let-Up

BERLIN, Aug. 2 (AP)—The Berlin airlift begins its gradual retirement Monday.

British and American planes flew their last scheduled 8000-ton day Sunday. The new schedule calls for a daily August average of only 3700 tons.

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'49 Lamb Crop Smallest Yet

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2 (AP)—The agriculture department reported Monday that this year's lamb crop was the smallest since it started keeping records in 1924.

The crop was reported at 18,996,000 head. That was about 1,000,000,000 head, or six per cent, smaller than last year. The crop also was about 10,000,000 head or 35 per cent smaller than the 1938-47 average.

Texas, the leading sheep producing state, had a slightly larger crop than last year's, exceedingly small one, but elsewhere the reduction was general.

The lamb production in major producing states this year and last, respectively included:

Oregon 536,000 and 590,000.

drop 2100 tons daily in September and 1000 in October, the last month of the lift.

The first batch of airlift personnel will be returned to the United States in September. The redeployment program will be completed by the end of October, officials said.

Blonde Gives, Hygrometer Works Again

TOKYO, Aug. 2 (AP)—Thanks to the three-year-old daughter of Mrs. Frank Willis of Detroit, the Misusawa observatory has a delicate blonde hair for its hygrometer.

The hygrometer is used to measure moisture in the atmosphere. For extreme sensitivity a fine hair is used in the instrument. For 13 years the same hair has been used. It was supplied by a French woman.

Recently observatory officials decided a new hair was needed, since all Japanese have black, coarse hair, theirs was useless. So an appeal was made for a blonde hair.

Mrs. Willis read the appeal in the Detroit Times and sent several blonde hairs from her little daughter's head.

Observatory spokesmen said they won't need any more blonde hairs now for years and years.

The Boston Museum of Fine Arts' collection of Chinese and Japanese sculpture is the most important outside of Tokyo.

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Flyer Waits Clearance For Ocean Hop

BANGOR, Me., Aug. 2 (AP)—Mrs. Richarda Morrow-Tait, 26-year-old British flyer, Monday awaited customs clearance to hop off on the last stages of a round-the-world flight begun last August.

She landed her single-engine trainer type plane at Dow air field base here late Saturday after a flight from Burlington, Vt.

Accompanying her was Navigator Michael Townsend, 25, former British Royal air force flyer.

The Cambridge, Eng., woman flew to Burlington from Montreal. It was her second attempt to enter the United States. Last July 21 she landed at the Vermont community but was refused entry by immigration officials who said her papers were not in order.

The globe-girdling tour ran into trouble in Alaska, where Mrs. Morrow-Tait crashed but escaped without serious injury. She obtained another plane at Seattle.

She is now expected to head for Presque Isle, Me., Goose Bay, Labrador and then across the Atlantic to England.

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