

U.S. AIRCRAFT WAS ON ESPIONAGE MISSION

Newspaper Report

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(Text) Comparing the statements of U.S. spokesmen in Western news reportage on the circumstances of the air provocation, one gets the picture of a deliberate misleading of the world public regarding the violation of GDR air space by a U.S. espionage plane.

According to the version disseminated by U.S. Air Force headquarters in Wiesbaden on 10 March, the U.S. violator of air space was allegedly a "U.S. transport plane of the Hercules type, with three crew members on board." Western sources in this connection explicitly pointed out that the Hercules is a four-engined aircraft of relatively low speed.

However, the first version had to be dropped on the same day. "According to information received by U.S. headquarters, the missing plane is not a Hercules but an RB-66, DPA reported. What is hiding behind these two sober letters and figures now also came to light: "The tactical reconnaissance plane RB-66 has a top speed of over 1,000 kilometers per hour," the news agency explained.

Another characteristic detail consists in the fact that the U.S. aircraft did not take any notice whatsoever of the alleged orders from ground stations to turn around, although the statements of U.S. spokesman and the reports of Western news agencies fail to mention that at the time this order was issued radio connections had possibly been disconnected. UPI, for example, reported that the aircraft, "when asked by ground stations to change its course, failed to react." The aircraft the, according to the report, disappeared from the radar screens in the direction of the GDR.

Despite the alleged absence of any contact with the aircraft, a spokesman of the U.S. Air Force in Wiesbaden announced on 11 March, however, that the "unarmed U.S. reconnaissance bomber of the type 'RB-66' had been "caught and downed by a single aircraft" above the GDR. "The statement failed to report," an AP dispatch said, "on what grounds it is being assumed that the aircraft was possibly shot down."