

PY90016-1826

January 31, 1979

Dear Ms. Hillenbrand:

This is in answer to your letter of January 9 regarding the flight and disappearance of Amelia Earhart and Frederick Noonan in 1937, which was referred to this office for reply.

Various reviews of the Department of State's records have disclosed no indication that the flight was an intelligence mission or indeed a government mission of any kind. There is, furthermore, no evidence in the Department's files that this Department or any other branch of the Government know the whereabouts of the two aviators after their disappearance or believed anything except that Earhart and Noonan had died in or immediately following a plane accident.

The Department of State file on arrangements for the Earhart flight and on diplomatic aspects of the search which followed her disappearance is in the National Archives here in Washington. It is entirely open for research (file 800.79611 Putnam, Amelia Earhart). Inquiries about obtaining copies of documents in this file and about other pertinent documents that may be available in the National Archives should be sent to the Diplomatic Branch, Civil Archives Division, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C. 20408.

This Department has still in its files a few papers dated 1960 relating to a review of the Earhart case and an investigation by the Japanese Government of allegations that Miss Earhart was imprisoned on Saipan in 1937. This investigation, we were told,

Ms. Margot Hillenbrand,
416 Cottage Street,
Freemont, Ohio 43420.

-2-

included a search of all available Japanese records and questioning of Japanese officials assigned to Saipan in 1957 and of former Saipan residents repatriated to Japan after World War II. This Government was informed officially by the Japanese Government that the investigation had failed to disclose any basis for the allegations. Copies of the 1960 documents can be obtained for a fee by writing Mr. William Price, Director, Foreign Affairs Document and Reference Center, Room 1239, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520. You should refer to file 200.115 Earhart, Amelia.

I hope that this information will be of assistance to you.

Sincerely yours,

fa
Fredrick Aandahl
Director, Operations Staff
Office of the Historian

DJH
PA/HO:DJJohnson:bjm

Dear Mr President

In writing this letter to you on the classified files on Amelia Earhart. Why cant the Navy documents be made available? The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence and the World War two Records Division National Archives and Record Service failed to locate any pertinent information and/or any body in the government who knew of the mission wouldnt release any. Now the reasons for the secrecy on the files of Earhart and Noonan her navigator, during that time was that president Roosevelt, seeking his fourth term, was having a duel with Thomas E. Dewey and therefore the fate of Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan remained classified, for President Roosevelt was afraid that if the Republican Forces had found any thing as volatile as the abandonment of Earhart and Noonan in 1937, during the mission, Dewey could well have become president. After Roosevelt's death in 1945, President Truman wasn't going to jeopardize his own chances for the presidency in the 1945 election, so the matter of Earhart and Noonan had slipped even deeper into the classified files, and later, there seemed little sense in releasing it. And the files that are shown to the public, have nothing to do with the Earhart World flight.

My hypothesis is that Amelia was on a mission for the government which was very vital to the U.S. military, when Amelia and Fred Noonan tookoff from Lae New Guinea, they didnt fly directly toward Howland Island, they headed North to Truk in the Central Carolines, they were to observe the number of airfields and Japanese Fleet Servicing facilities. Now the plane was equipped to do this mission, for it was powered by Wasp Senior Engines, capable of a 200 mile per-hour cruising speed at 11,000 feet. Now my question is, why cant the government release her files, its been well over 40 years and I think that the public after all these years, should know the truth, for Earhart and Noonan were just serving their country.

Could you kindly reply as soon as possible?

Sincerely,

Margot Mollenbrand