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Air Force F-16 collides with smaller airplane in Florida

One person killed, fighter pilot parachutes to safety

SARASOTA, Fla. (AP) — An Air Force F-16 collided with a small plane Thursday and crashed in flames. One person aboard the small plane was killed, while the fighter pilot parachuted to safety onto a golf course and walked to someone's house to use the phone.

Pieces of the small plane, a Cessna, landed on the golf course. The wreckage of the fighter jet started a fire in the woods a few miles away.

No injuries were reported on the ground.

A man aboard the Cessna was killed, said Henry Sheffield, a district fire chief. The fighter pilot ejected safely.

"He's very, very shaken up, obviously," said Manatee County Sheriff spokesman Dave Bristow. "He's fine. He doesn't have any scratches."

Gerald Rivera was working on a construction site nearby. "We asked the pilot if he was OK and he said, 'Yeah,'" Rivera told the *Sarasota Herald Tribune*.

The Air Force said the jet was from Moody Air Force Base in Val-

dosta, Ga., but was on a training mission that originated from Florida's MacDill Air Force Base, about 20 miles from the crash site.

Sheriff Charles Wells said two F-16s were on the training mission but only one was involved in the crash.

"They flew overhead. Then all of a sudden, boom. It looked like the little plane came in from the side."

— Bob Morrow
eye witness

Larry Leinhauser, spokesman for the Manatee County Department of Public Safety, said several witnesses reported seeing two Cessnas circling each other and "playing tag" shortly before the crash.

Witnesses said one of the planes pulled away and the other headed north into the path of the F-16, Leinhauser said. Authorities did not have any information on the Cessna.

David Buyher, who lives at home on the golf course, said he and his wife were on their patio when they heard the F-16s fly overhead, making a loud "pop."

Moments later, they saw the Cessna raining down on a golf course and around their home.

"We weren't sure what happened at first," Buyher said. "We thought it was the F-16 exploding, until we saw the pieces coming down."

Bob Morrow, a golf instructor at Rosedale Golf and Country Club, saw two military jets flying overhead while he was giving a lesson on the tee.

"They flew overhead. Then all of a sudden, boom," said Morrow. "It looked like the little plane came from the side."

In August, there were three crashes involving an F-16.

Thousands turn out at night to welcome Clinton to Vietnam

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — President Clinton began a historic visit Thursday to Vietnam, stirring painful memories back home of America's longest and most unpopular war and promising a former enemy "to build a different future."

Clinton arrived in the communist capital late at night, the first U.S. president ever in Hanoi, a city once bombed by American warplanes. The welcoming ceremony was put off until morning, but that did not stop thousands and thousands of Vietnamese from turning out at mid-

night to catch a glimpse of Clinton's limousine and jam the square in front of his hotel.

Even though the visit received scant advance publicity, the Vietnamese lined the streets, some just looking on and others waving and clapping when the president's motorcade passed.

"This only happens once in a thousand years," said homemaker Tran Thi Lan, 50.

Clinton was to be formally welcomed Friday by President Tran Duc Luong at an honor guard ceremony in the courtyard of the French-built presidential palace on Ba Dinh Square.

Reaching out to a generation of students born after the war, Clinton will speak at Hanoi National University to describe his vision for a new chapter in U.S.-Vietnamese relations. State-run television, in an unprecedented move, was to broadcast the address live.

More than 50 U.S. corporations sent executives to Vietnam during Clinton's visit in hopes of gaining a foothold in what they believe is a

vast untapped market of 78 million people.

As a young man, Clinton "opposed and despised" the Vietnam War, organized protest marches and avoided the military draft. As commander in chief three decades later, Clinton acknowledged that "a lot of people still bear the wounds of war" in both countries.

The war cost 58,000 American lives and tore the nation with suffering and turmoil. The U.S. military buildup began in 1961, growing to 60,000 combat troops within four years and to 543,000 by 1969.

U.S. forces in 1973 made a humiliating withdrawal that still haunts the Pentagon. North Vietnam's army captured Saigon in 1975, leading to the unification of the country under communist control.

The losses to the Vietnamese people were staggering: 3 million dead and thousands missing.

"The best thing that we can do to honor the sacrifice and service of those who believed on both sides that what they were doing is right, is to find a way to build a different future, and that's what we're trying to do," Clinton said in an interview with the Associated Press.

In a cautious rapprochement, Clinton lifted a trade embargo against Vietnam in 1994 and the next year restored diplomatic relations. He opened the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi in 1996 and in 1998 issued his first waiver of a law that bars trade relations with communist nations that deny citizens the right to emigrate. In July, the United States and Vietnam signed a sweeping trade agreement.

"This only happens once in a thousand years."

— Tran Thi Lan
Vietnamese homemaker on Clinton, the first president to ever visit Hanoi

News in Brief

High-speed rail debuts in U.S.

ABOARD THE ACELA EXPRESS (AP) — High-speed rail travel in the United States debuted Thursday with the maiden run of the sleek Acela Express, which hit an Amtrak-record 151 mph during the New York to Boston leg of a trip that began in Washington.

A full load of VIPs nibbled on salmon, filet mignon, prosciutto and caviar hors d'oeuvres as they made history aboard the train that Amtrak and high-speed rail advocates hope represent the future of U.S. ground travel.

DaimlerChrysler has overseas woes

DETROIT (AP) — After two years of trying to make its transatlantic merger work, DaimlerChrysler AG is still two companies divided by an ocean of troubles.

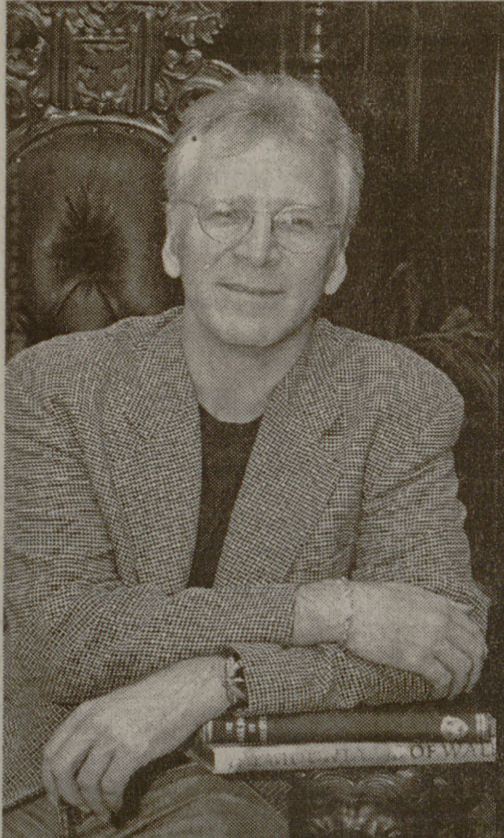
As a German executive prepares to replace Chrysler's American president, Jim Holden, on Friday, U.S. workers worry what the new regime will bring. Their distrust is stirred by statements from DaimlerChrysler's chairman that he never intended a merger of equals.

Chrysler's performance has not met Stuttgart-based DaimlerChrysler's expectations, with sales incentives erasing profits and production of the hot new PT Cruiser falling short of demand.

Fujimori loses Congress control

LIMA, Peru (AP) — President Alberto Fujimori lost control of Congress on Thursday, further eroding his power, while aides tried to dispel rumors that he was seeking political asylum in Asia.

With Fujimori in Brunei to attend a Pacific Rim trade summit, opposition lawmakers succeeded in wresting control of Congress from him for the first time since 1992.



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