



American Embassy Oral Statement

A space vehicle found at La Fria, near the Colombian border, has been identified by U. S. military officers as belonging to the United States.

Two officers who flew to the area to authenticate the discovery said the three-foot space craft, weighing some 175 pounds, was badly damaged on impact, and had been further damaged by inquisitive campesinos.

There still is no indication as to when the vehicle came down.

Identification was based on contract numbers of a radio transmitter made for the Lockheed Aircraft Company. The radio bore a "12/11/63" inspection date.

The space vehicle also contained two U. S. quarters and a nickel --probably left inside by workers at the factory as a joke.

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La Esfera
Caracas, Venezuela
6 August 1964

PERSONNEL OF THE U. S. WILL RECOVER SPACE CAPSULE FOUND IN GUAMARITO (TACHIRA STATE)

San Cristobal, August 5 (IHHAC). Three military attachés of the Embassy of the United States of North America arrived in this city yesterday in order to recover from civil and military authorities the parts of the space capsule found by campesinos of the Guamarito area.

The military mission is composed of the U. S. Army Majors Sifford, Smith, and Gilbert E. Morgenstern, Assistant Attaché of the Army, pilot, and representative of the North American Air Force in the Embassy in Caracas, respectively. The military officials expressed to this correspondent that they were awaiting the respective permission of the military authorities of the jurisdiction in order to transfer the part of the capsule found by the campesinos to Caracas and immediately send it to the Kennedy Base where it will be studied by technicians in special affairs.

Later they added that many parts of the cone found in the "Guamarito" land parcel are missing, but they did not give any details in respect to that.

Ultimas Noticias
Caracas, Venezuela
5 August 1964

U. S. EMBASSY DENIES IMPORTANCE TO STRANGE OBJECT FOUND IN TACHIRA

Mission Sent To Investigate

The North American Embassy in Venezuela attributed no importance to the information concerning the appearance of a "strange apparatus converted into scrap iron which they say fell on a peasant farm in Táchira State", the officials who gave the declaration upon being consulted by reporters of Ultimas Noticias noting that until now, "no detailed knowledge about the affair is available". The officials of the North American Embassy stated that the only information concerning the appearance of the strange object was obtained through the press and that in order to know effectively if there was any truth to the report a delegation of North American officials composed of Majors William Sifford, Assistant Military Attaché, and R. W. Smit, member of the North American Military Mission of Venezuela, traveled yesterday to the zone indicated in the report.

"That mission", the Embassy said, "should bring back an official report and indicate if there really is seriousness in the report."

The information which arrived from San Cristobal indicates that "the appearance of a strange object in some campesino farms of that jurisdictional area provoked a certain alarm in the rural sector upon confusing it with fragments of the Ranger rocket recently launched at the moon by the United States".

According to the same report, the strange object bore the almost obliterated initials "U.S.A."

In serious scientific circles of this capital, it was noted while commenting on the notice originating in San Cristobal that there is no possibility that fragments of objects launched into space can arrive back to earth as when those (fragments) on returning arrive at a certain altitude, they disintegrate.

Photo caption No. 1:

A round object of golden color which the peasants believed was gold, the reason for which they destroyed the upper part of the space capsule.

Photo caption No. 2:

Captain Celestino Gamboa makes a statement to Reyes Maita in the presence of Flight Engineer and Photographer Freddy Barrieta.

(San Cristobal Radio Ecos del Torbes Spanish 2100 GMT 3 August 1964--P)

SPACE CAPSULE'S RECOVERY--Several peasants living in Guarapito, located near Colon on the Colombo-Venezuelan border, found a space capsule belonging to the U. S. Air Force. The report was given 3 August by Capt. Celestino Gamboa, a commercial airline pilot. Several military have been sent to the area to investigate.

La Republica
Caracas, Venezuela
5 August 1964

U. S. EMBASSY SENDS MILITARY OFFICIALS TO TACHIRA

Two officials of the North American Military Mission left yesterday in the early morning hours for the Colombian-Venezuelan frontier region in order to obtain a report on the space capsule which fell on the property "Guaramito" and which was launched last November from the now-named Cape Kennedy.

The two officials are Major William Philbrod, Assistant Military Attaché of the U. S. Embassy, and Major A. W. Smith, Air Attaché. With them traveled various officials of the Directorate General of Police as a guard force.

Sources connected with the North American Embassy revealed that a technician from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has been urgently requested who will possibly be sent tomorrow and who will be chosen from those officials who participated in the launching of the atomic rocket in November of last year.

El Nacional
Caracas, Venezuela
4 August 1964

SATELLITE SPACE CAPSULE FELL IN TACHIRA
The Venezuelan Flyer Celestino Gamboa Went to the Site of the Discovery
A Parachute Distinct From Those of Normal Use Was Found
Peasants of Táchira Broke It Up With Hammer Blows
The National Government And The U. S. Embassy Notified

Maiquetia, 3 (Special). In a region of Táchira State was found a space capsule which technicians have identified as the principal part of a satellite, according to declarations formulated in this airport by the pilot, Celestino Gamboa, who carries out aerophotography in that zone.

The satellite capsule was found by peasants in the Guarasito zone in the border area of Táchira and Zulia. Captain Celestino Gamboa explained to reporters that the capsule measures one meter in height and one in width.

Inside were found two rolls of taped photographs for re-transmitting information from space. They also found two transistors. The base of the film is a soft red.

In the upper part appeared a parachute with nylon belts different from those which aviators and parachutists use. Attached to a panel were found three U. S. coins: two twenty-five cent pieces and one five-cent piece. The capsule fell on land owned by a man identified by the name Facundo, which is situated two kilometers from the Colombian border.

The word "secret" appears written in red on the instruments on board.

On a small apparatus, placed very close to the spot where the rolls of film were found, appeared written the words, "Ok, To tested", which means: "ready for the test".

A DIGEPOL commission billeted in La Fría was sent to the area. It was precise from that airport that Captain Celestino Gamboa, accompanied by Flight Engineer and photographer Freddy Biarrieta, and Navigator Humberto Fuchs, left for the Guarasito site.

The Governor of Táchira State was notified of the fall of the satellite, as well as the North American Embassy in Caracas. Captain Gamboa explained that until now no publicity had been given to this case as the Venezuelan authorities were carrying out an investigation.

The peasants who found the satellite capsule subjected it to hammer and machete blows believing that the golden instruments of a round shape, the size of a five-bolivar coin, were gold.

In one round part the following date is read: 24-11-63.

It has not been established whether that pertains to the date on which the satellite was launched into space or whether, on the contrary, it identifies the launching project.

The coins, it is understood, are "mascot" insignias of the technicians who worked in the launching of the satellite.

The upper part of the capsule appeared slightly burned. The peasants dismantled the parachute in order to use it in the fabrication of clothes.

The man identified as Facundo took possession of the nylon belts in order to make reins for a horse. All of these items were passed to the DIGEPOL which has placed them at the disposition of the Governor of Táchira State.

Captain Celestino Gamboa declared that the satellite is one of those which the United States of North America uses to carry out special investigations.

The place where the capsule fell is in a mountainous zone which only can be entered on foot. The members of the mission who traveled there had to walk two hours after leaving the plane which transported them to a ranch in the area.