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POWERS--WITH ABEL
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BURBANK, CALIF., MAY 5 (UPI)--FIVE YEARS AFTER FRANCIS GARY POWERS WAS SHOT DOWN IN A U2 PLANE BY THE SOVIETS AND ACCUSED AS AN AMERICAN SPY, HE IS STILL A FIGURE OF SOME MYSTERY--A MAN WHO TREASURES THE PRIVACY THAT ONCE WAS DENIED HIM.

AS A CENTRAL FIGURE IN A SPY CASE THAT TOPPLED A 1960 SUMMIT MEETING, POWERS RECEIVED INTERNATIONAL NOTORIETY. HIS PICTURE WAS ON THE FRONT OF EVERY NEWSPAPER, AND HIS TRIAL IN MOSCOW ON CHARGES OF ESPIONAGE ATTRACTED CORRESPONDENTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.

THE FLIER, NOW A TEST PILOT FOR LOCKHEED CALIFORNIA CO., WAS SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON BY THE RUSSIANS. BUT HE WAS FREED IN EXCHANGE FOR MASTER RUSSIAN SPY COL. RUDOLPH ABEL IN 1962.

A NEWS RELEASE OUT OF MOSCOW YESTERDAY FOCUSED ATTENTION AGAIN ON ABEL AND, COINCIDENTALLY, ON POWERS. THE RUSSIANS MADE A RARE PUBLIC ADMISSION THAT ABEL DID SERVE AS A SOVIET SPY AND WAS DECORATED AFTER THE EXCHANGE FOR POWERS.

POWERS, NOW 34 AND MARRIED A SECOND TIME, WASN'T AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT. AND THE ODDS ARE HE WON'T BE.

"HE'S NOT BEING MADE AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS," A LOCKHEED SPOKESMAN SAID, REVIEWING AGAIN THE STATUS OF THE U2 PILOT DOWNED OVER RUSSIA ON MAY 1, 1960. "HE PREFERS TO BE AS MUCH OUT OF THE PUBLIC EYE AS POSSIBLE."

POWERS HAS NOT CONSENTED TO AN INTERVIEW SINCE HE CAME HERE AS A TEST PILOT FOR LOCKHEED IN OCTOBER, 1962. THE LOCKHEED SPOKESMAN WOULD CONFIRM ONLY THAT POWERS STILL FLIES REGULARLY, AND POSSIBLY IN U2 PLANES MAINTAINED AND OVERHAULED HERE FOR A VARIETY OF PURPOSES.

BUT CONJECTURE REMAINED THAT HE HAD OTHER ASSIGNMENTS WITH LOCKHEED AIRCRAFT. THE LOCKHEED-CALIFORNIA DIVISION OF LOCKHEED AIRCRAFT CO. ALSO BUILDS ANTI-SUBMARINE PLANES, THE F104, AND THE RECORD-BREAKING HIGH-SPEED, HIGH-ALTITUDE YF12A (FORMERLY THE A11).

NO ONE WILL SAY JUST WHICH PLANES POWERS IS ASSIGNED TO FLY.

ABOUT ALL THAT IS KNOWN IS THAT POWERS LIVES SOMEWHERE IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES AREA, PROBABLY NOT FAR FROM BURBANK, AS THE HUSBAND OF THE FORMER MRS. CLAUDIA EDWARDS DOWNEY.

IN OCTOBER, 1963, ALMOST A YEAR AFTER HIS MARRIAGE TO MRS. BARBARA POWERS ENDED IN DIVORCE, THE AIRMAN TOOK MRS. DOWNEY AS HIS BRIDE.

THE NEW MRS. POWERS WAS AN EX-EMPLOYEE OF THE TOP-SECRET CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA) FOR WHICH POWERS FLEW HIS MISSIONS IN THE U2.

POWERS WAS 1,200 MILES DEEP IN SOVIET TERRITORY ON A CIA MISSION WHEN HE WAS DOWNED BY THE RUSSIANS.

NEVER BEFORE HAD THE U.S. GOVERNMENT DISCLOSED THE FACT THE U2S WERE MAKING REGULAR OVERFLIGHTS AS SUBSTITUTES FOR ON-SITE INSPECTIONS OR AN "OPEN SKY" POLICY THEN PROPOSED BY PRESIDENT EISENHOWER.

SOVIET PREMIER NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE POWERS FLIGHT TO SCUTTLE THE SUMMIT MEETING AND NOTICEABLY INCREASE COLD WAR TENSIONS.

Continued

THE POWERS TRIAL WAS A PROPAGANDA VEHICLE FOR THE RUSSIANS WITH THE PRESS OF ALL NATIONS INVITED. IT WAS CONDUCTED IN AN ORNATE BUILDING ESPECIALLY RENOVATED BY THE RUSSIANS BY A SOVIET MILITARY TRIBUNAL.

THE SOVIET-SPOKEN POWERS PLEADED GUILTY TO ESPIONAGE AND RECEIVED HIS 10-YEAR SENTENCE.

SINCE COMING TO CALIFORNIA AND WORKING AT LOCKHEED, POWERS HAS CULTIVATED ANONYMITY.

"OF COURSE, IT'S NOT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO BE COMPLETELY ANONYMOUS," A LOCKHEED SPOKESMAN SAID. "BUT IT IS HIS WISH TO AVOID ALL PUBLICITY."

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