

پروازهای جاسوسی و شناسایی فانتوم های آراف ۴ سی نیروی هوایی ایران در دوران پهلوی بر فراز خاک شوروی سابق و سرنگونی دو فروند آنها

شاید جالبترین اتفاق در این سلسله عملیات مشترک بین ایالات متحده آمریکا و ایران بر فراز آسمان شوروی تعقیب یکی از این هواپیماهای آر اف ۴ سی ایرانی به خلبانی مجید شکوه نیا و کاپیتان ساندرز آمریکایی توسط یک فروند جنگنده میگ ۲۱ شوروی به خلبانی کاپیتان گنادی ایسلف و در نهایت عملیات انتحاری خلبان روس که منجر به سقوط جنگنده ایرانی و مرگ خلبان روس شد می باشد

لطفا شرح ماجرا را در زیر بخوانید

Project Dark Gene and Project Ibx

For many years little if any information could be found anywhere about Project Dark Gene and Project Ibx, although both projects played a significant role in the ongoing programme of intelligence gathering targeted against the Soviet Union in the late 1960's and 1970's. Now, thanks to the efforts of Tom Cooper and Art Kremzel, some details of these projects are slowly beginning to emerge. There must be many personnel still alive who were involved in supporting these projects and I hope they will also eventually choose to contribute to our knowledge of what actually happened. In particular, I would like to try and obtain copies of any photographs showing the aircraft that actually took part in either project, as well as images of the Tracksman 1 and Tracksman 2 sites in Iran and the elusive USAF Col John Saunders.

گرچه هر دو پروژه نقش بسیار عمده ای در جمع آوری اطلاعات امنیتی بر علیه رژیم کومونیستی روسیه در سال های ۱۹۶۰ تا ۱۹۷۰ بدست داد ولی آگاهی های بسیار کمی در باره پروژه ژن سیاه و آیبکس وجود دارد. با سپاس از تام کوپر و آرت کرمزل برخی از این آگاهی ها مربوط به پروژه کم کم ظاهر می گردد. شاید برخی از نفراتی که در اجرای این پروژه شرکت داشته اند هنوز زنده باشند و بالاخره تصمیم بگیرند دانش خودشان را در آنچه گذشته در اختیار بگذارند، مایل هستم هرگونه فرتوری [عکسی] که در این باره در هواپیما هایی که در پروژه شرکت داشته اند را بدست آورم، همچنین فرترو منطقه تراکسمن ۱ و تراکسمن ۲ در ایران و سرهنگ جان ساندرز نیروی هوایی آمریکا را بدست آورم

پژوهش زیر نظر تام کوپب و آرت کرمزل

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Project Dark Gene

بقیه را در اینجا بخوانید

Throughout the Cold War the US conducted almost daily sorties around the edge of the USSR and Warsaw Pact countries, as part of a long-standing programme to identify and classify radars, SAM sites and any other electronic emissions of interest. The information gathered would then be used to try and establish the safest ingress routes to various targets for US and NATO bombers and fighter-bombers should WW3 ever break out. Given the huge landmass of the USSR, it was hardly surprising that some gaps in their radar coverage would be identified by these ELINT sorties and that, once these gaps had been found, it was almost inevitable that they

would then be further exploited to try and gather even more useful intelligence.

در سرتاسر دوران جنگ سرد آمریکا روزانه در پی پکت (قرارداد) ورشو با روسیه و دیگر کشورها در باره رادارها موشک‌های سام و محل استقرار آنها و دیگر وسایل الکترونیکی تحقیق و گزارش می‌کرد. آگاهی‌های بدست آمده برای راهنمایی و انتخاب بهترین راه برای ردیابی هدف‌ها و بمب افکن‌های ناتو و جت‌های جنگی در صورتیکه روزی جنگ جهانی سوم رخ بدهد بکار گرفته می‌شد. به دلیل وسعت خاک روسیه بسیار دشوار بود باور شود که آنها درزی در سیستم رادار خود و دیگر عملیات داشته باشند، هرآنگاه که آن درز پیدا می‌شد تقریباً غیرممکن بود که بتوانند اطلاعات بیشتری بدست آورند.

Iran has a long border with what was then the southern part of the USSR and during the 1970's, before the revolution that saw the Shah deposed, Iran maintained a good relationship with the USA. As part of this close relationship it was agreed that various long-range radars and listening posts could be established in Iran to enable the USA to monitor activities behind the Iron Curtain. However, it was also realised that, as the border between the USSR and Iran contained a number of significant gaps in overlapping radar cover, a low-flying reconnaissance aircraft could easily get over the border and take some useful photographs of areas of interest. When these cross-border flights were eventually detected they would have the added advantage of stirring up a hornets nest of activity by other radar and SAM sites, allowing valuable intelligence on their location and operating frequencies to be scooped up by high-flying ELINT aircraft and listening posts positioned just the other side of the border. This ELINT activity was probably part of 'Project Ibx', but a more pro-active reconnaissance programme also took place around the same time.

ایران مرز درازی با جنوب روسیه تا سال‌های ۱۹۷۰ داشت. پیش از (انقلاب) شورش که منجر به سقوط شاه شد، ایران روابط بسیار خوبی با آمریکا داشت. از جمله این روابط نزدیک موافقت شده بود تا بسیاری رادارهای با برد بلند و شنودهای گوناگون در ایران مستقر شود تا آمریکاییان فعالیت پشت پرده آهنین را کنترل کنند. گرچه، به این امر مستحضر بود که مرز بین ایران و روسیه دارای درزهای احتمالی بین پوشش‌های راداری که روی هم می‌افتاد وجود دارد و شاید بتوان برخی هواپیماها که قادر به پروازهای در ارتفاع پایین باشند بتواند برخی عکس برداری‌ها از نقاط حساس را بدست آورند. آن هنگام که این پروازهای برون مرزی شناخته و کشف می‌شدند شاید امتیاز بیشتری هم بدست می‌آمد که

بتوان با به صدا در آوردن و هم زدن بوق هایی دیگر سایت های موشک های سام را هم رد یابی کرد و اطلاعات ظریف امنیتی و جایگاه و فرکانس برخی پرواز های در ارتفاع بسیار بالا را رد یابی و برخی شنود های پنهانی انجام داده و آنسوی مرز را شناخت. این فعالیت ها از جمله پروژه ابکس بود اما برنامه پیشرفته تر پروژه دیگری بود که همزمان بکار بسته می شد.

بقیه را در متن انگلیسی بخوانید

From 1968 onwards, in recognition of the good relationship between the USA and Iran, 12 Northrop RF-5A aircraft were delivered to the IIAF, however, all was not quite as it seemed. In fact it appears that officially these aircraft never actually existed – their serial numbers were deleted from Northrop's production list to make them 'deniable'. In addition, the aircraft were actually flown by USAF pilots until 1971 under an operation known as Dark Gene and were used to make covert reconnaissance sorties across the border into the USSR, gathering mainly ELINT. It is understood that two of these aircraft were actually shot down inside the USSR whilst being flown by USAF pilots – they ejected and, presumably after pleading that they were actually training IIRAF pilots and simply got lost, they were quietly allowed to return to Iran, although this has yet to be confirmed. The RF-5A's were also 'A' wired and had a secondary war role to carry a nuclear weapon and if necessary attack various targets in the USSR.

However, although the sub-sonic RF-5A's were useful and presumably helped generate some interesting intelligence, it wasn't really what the USAF pilots wanted to be piloting when they crossed over the border into the USSR – something with a little more grunt was called for and the RF-4 fitted the bill nicely. In addition, the Shah, who presumably was kept informed of the intelligence obtained by the RF-5A overflights, was keen for Iran to play an even more active role in this activity and offered to pay for the RF-4s. A solution was agreed – Iran would pay for the RF-4s and they would be flown by mixed crews of USAF and IIAF personnel, allowing the IIAF crews to gain valuable operational experience. In 1971 the first six RF-4s arrived in Iran, officially these were RF-4Es, however, sources involved

have indicated that the airframes were actually highly unusual RF-4Cs. In fact it appears that these aircraft had been specially built for this operation and contained various specialised ELINT equipment and cost over \$12 per airframe, making them the most expensive F-4s ever built. To date no authentic photos of these unique RF-5As and the expensive RF-4Cs have been discovered.



A number of these first six aircraft were delivered without the production number being officially listed and are generally referred to as UKIs – Unknown Iranians, some others were probably part of the 72-0266 to 720269 serials later acknowledged as delivered to Iran. Eventually, somewhere between 22 and 25 RF-4 airframes were delivered to Iran, the precise number is impossible to determine. As with the RF-5As, the RF-4Cs were also 'A' wired and could if necessary carry a nuclear weapon as a secondary role. Flown by mixed USAF and IIAF crews, the six RF-4Cs averaged two missions a month over the USSR from 1971 through to 1978. If they were shot down, the cover story was that the USAF crewmember was training the IIAF crewman and that they were on a navigation-training sortie, had got lost in bad weather and had inadvertently strayed over the border into the USSR. In actual fact it is understood that at least two of these 'Iranian' RF-4Cs were shot down inside the USSR by Soviet fighters, the first in 1973 and the second in 1976.

Some details of the 1973 incident have emerged. On 28 Nov 73 an Iranian RF-4C, flown by an IIAF pilot Maj Shokouhnia with USAF Col John Saunders in the rear seat, was detected inside the USSR. The RF-4C made a run for the border and was at Mach 1.4 when it was intercepted by a MiG-21 flown by Capt Gennady Eliseev. Col Saunders began firing out decoy flares to try and prevent the MiG from locking on a heat-seeking missile, eventually using all the 54 flares carried. The MiG-21 finally managed to launch two R-3S missiles at the RF-4C, but both missed. However, whilst turning hard to limit the chances of the MiG achieving a good lock-on, the RF-4C had lost some airspeed, allowing the MiG-21 to suddenly cut a corner and close up. It is presumed that Capt Gennady Eliseev then made a conscious decision to ram the RF-4C to prevent it escaping, as the MiG-21 aircraft rammed the aircraft from the left and below, near the engine nozzles, probably cutting off the tail of the RF-4C, throwing it into a high-speed dive.

Capt Gennady Eliseev was killed in the collision and was posthumously decorated with the 'Hero of the Soviet Union' medal. Maj Shokouhnia and Col Saunders both ejected and were captured by Soviet ground forces. They used their cover story as briefed and, as the RF-4C had impacted the ground at something like Mach 2, there was little if any evidence the Soviets could use to prove otherwise.

It was quietly agreed that Maj Shokouhnia and Col Saunders would be returned to Iran in exchange for a cartridge from a Soviet reconnaissance satellite that had accidentally landed in Iran. Both Maj Shokouhnia and Col Saunders were decorated for their exploit. It is believed that Maj Shokouhnia, left Iran during the revolution in 1979, but later returned and was executed in 1980. Col Saunders returned to more normal duties and has never spoken officially about his activities in Iran during this period. In response to these overflights, the USSR began overflying Iran with the

MiG-25RBSH and various attempts were made to intercept the aircraft with the IIAF F-4D and F-4E. Apparently, sometime in 1976, one IIAF F-4E eventually managed to hit a MiG-25RBSH, but it made it back over the border into Russia before it crashed. The loss of the second RF-4C over Russia later in 1976 may well have been in response to this incident.

The arrival of the IIAF F-14 Tomcat put an end to the overflights of Iran by the MiG-25RBSH, particularly after one had been intercepted over the Caspian Sea in Oct 1978 by two IIAF F-14s, who then maintained a radar lock-on to the MiG-25 for over a minute, no doubt giving the MiG-25 pilot something to think about.

At present that is all that is known about Operation Dark Gene, but hopefully as time goes on more details will emerge of the project in general and about the loss of the two RF-5As and the second IIAF RF-4C in 1978 in particular.

Project Ibx

Project Ibx was launched in around 1974, with Iran and the USA as equal partners, however, Iran paid almost the entire cost of the project, some \$500 million, to the main US contractor - Rockwell Inc. Project Ibx was a joint CIA+NSA / Iran enterprise for building and operating a series of observation and listening posts along the Soviet border, as well as for the purchase and operation of a number of reconnaissance aircraft.

There were five ground stations; three jointly run by the IIAF/USAF crews and two operated by the CIA or, more likely, the NSA. The CIA-crewed stations were established at Bushehr (Tracksman 1) and at Kapkan (Tracksman 2). The most distinct functions of these five intelligence-gathering stations were: to monitor the radio and telemetry traffic of the Soviet armed forces in southern USSR, especially to find evidence of heightened military activity; to monitor Soviet missile testing; and to receive high resolution photographs from the orbiting spy satellites.

USAF aircrews flying ELINT missions out of U.S. bases in such places as Okinawa and Alaska were alerted by Tracksmen messages to watch for Soviet missiles. These sites were considered so sophisticated that Stanfield Turner described them as systems built for the 21st century. Certain elements of the IIAF were also included in Project IBEX and were tasked with providing air defense for all five stations; all the stations were also surrounded by barbed-wired and mine fields and could be quickly blown up in the event of some unauthorized personnel managing to gain entry.

Additionally, two DHC-4 Caribou STOL aircraft were purchased solely for the task of supplying logistics and transporting personnel to the remote IBEX stations. With this in mind it's interesting that, although the IIAF never operated the DHC-4 Caribou, one is still on display at the IIAF Museum, in Mehrabad, Tehran - in full IIAF markings! The fate of the other Caribou is unknown. The original plan for IBEX also called for two of IIAF's Boeing 707s and two of the six P-3F Orion patrol aircraft to be converted for ELINT roles. However, rather than the P-3F Orion, the IIAF opted instead to purchase four C-130E/Hs, mainly because they were capable of operating from rough airfields at high altitudes, whilst carrying a significant ELINT payload. The four chosen C-130E/Hs were modified by E-Systems, Greenville Division, while work on one Boeing 707-3J9C was started in 1975.



Aircraft equipped with IBEX sub-systems are understood to have had 13 operator positions, an ELINT sub-system capable of detecting and classifying emitters, and an oblique and vertical camera subsystem for surveillance photography. The conversion involved extensive structural modification and reinforcement, including the installation of a range of antennas on the aircraft's wings and fuselage, a retractable direction-finding array under the belly, a new INS, modified power and cabin-environment systems, and special enlarged pods under the outboards of their outer engines. Hercules of the IBEX project carried oblique long focal length cameras to photograph Soviet radar transmitters from high altitudes, as well as equipment for monitoring and recording radio and radar signals. According to unconfirmed reports, some parts of the IBEX-equipment were built into at least two IIAA (Army Aviation) Aero Commander-560s. Note that both types - the C-130 and Aero Commander-560 - are known to have been used extensively for flying recce sorties along and possibly beyond the Soviet borders, since the early 1960s.

Aside from tracking Soviet missile testing, the Iranian government used the IBEX system to detect/locate, track and identify, and also characterize radar signals originating in most of neighboring countries, particularly Iraq.

Prior to Rockwell getting that contract, an Israeli project proposal had been rejected by the IIAF as "insufficiently advanced". Nevertheless, after the installation of IBEX in Iran, a rumour surfaced that the Shah was not particularly pleased with "malfunctioning equipment", which forced Rockwell to call the CIA for direct help. Additionally, at a very early stage, the project caused great concerns in Washington and elsewhere, because Rockwell employed some ex-NSA specialists to work alongside Iranian trainees, some of whom supposedly showed signs of mental disorder after working for some time with the equipment in the USA.

It remains unclear how the problems with the IBEX were solved, however, the system became operational and all four IBEX C-130H (nicknamed "Khofaash" or Bat whilst in Iranian service) were continuously flown along the Soviet border. Together with the five ground stations, they became part of the IIAF's Electronic Reconnaissance Wing, under command of Lt. Gen. Abdollah Assrejadid. The rest of this unit seems to have been composed of two squadrons equipped with RF-4Es and RF-5As, respectively. All the Khofaashs and the single Boeing 707 were normally stationed at Mehrabad AB, but there were prominent "forward bases" established at Tabriz and Hamedan, and possibly at other places like Shiraz and Zahedan as well. Although it is certain that dozens of operational missions were flown, details about only one are known: it occurred in October 1978, when a single Boeing 707 escorting two F-14s in an intercept of a Soviet MiG-25R over the Caspian Sea. This engagement was tracked from an immense range (over 200km) without any problems - and the CIA crews, as well as few USN people permitted to see some of result, were highly pleased with intelligence gathered.

The overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1978 -1979 and the creation of an anti-USA, hard-line Islamic Republic led by Ayatollah Khomeini, quickly brought an end to both projects. What became of the sites is unknown, but given the contingency plans already in place, I imagine both sites, in particular the equipment, were totally destroyed before the personnel were evacuated, probably to Turkey. I presume the planes involved remained part of the new IIAF, but apart from the single DHC-4 Caribou in the IIAF Museum at Mehrabad, Tehran, nothing is known about their eventual fate. From what has been pieced together to date, it would appear that both projects were a success and, had they continued, they would have more than justified the risk and expense involved.

The only survivor of Project Ibex still flying is the single Iranian ELINT Boeing 707-3J9C (ex 5-8316, c/n 20834) shown here. The aircraft is

believed to have been modified in 1975 by E-Systems Greenville Division from its original tanker/transport configuration. After conversion the aircraft was understood to have been equipped with 13 operator positions, an ELINT sub-system capable of detecting and classifying emitters, together with oblique and vertical cameras mounted behind a sliding door under the forward fuselage - the ELINT receivers were mounted in the wing root fairing. During its participation in Project Ibex the aircraft would have flown at high level close to the border with the Soviet Union gathering data on surveillance radars and air defence systems, looking for potential 'holes' that could be exploited by B-52s in the event of WW3.

The aircraft is currently assigned to the 1st Tactical Air Base, Tehran-Mehrabad International Airport. No titles are visible on the aircraft and it is assumed that it is still used to gather ELINT, however, it's not known whether the receiver systems have been continually updated, . Although the Iranians like to believe that their aerospace and electronic capabilities are quite advanced, in reality they lag some way behind the West, so unless they have managed to procure or more likely reverse engineer a relatively current ELINT system, its current capability would be fairly limited.

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<http://www.spyflight.co.uk/darkgene.htm>