

When I reached the house, I telephoned Charlie's mother. At one hundred years of age, Grace McGonegal Blair was still a lion of a woman. I started to cry, but she put an end to it quickly. "Stop that right now. He died doing what he loved to do."

A few hours later, the phone rang. When I answered it, a man whose voice I did not recognize said, "Mrs. Blair, I'm calling from Washington, D.C. We'd like to know the true story of the assassination of General Blair." I went into shock and started to cry. "I don't know what you're talking about," I blurted out through tears, then hung up the phone.

The idea that Charlie's death had been anything other than a horrible accident was inconceivable to me. I don't know who made that call. The man never identified himself, nor did he say who the "we" was. I called a friend in New York who was connected with the Secret Service and told him about the call. He warned me to keep my mouth shut. I was told, "Maureen, act dumb and ignorant if they call again. Have hysterics. Don't say anything about this to anyone. It's too dangerous. Keep your mouth shut!"

After that, I received two more calls about Charlie's "assassination." It was not the same person, but it was a man each time. Both times I did exactly as I'd been instructed and got off the phone as quickly as I could.

A few days after that, I was standing at the airport in St. Croix looking through a Cyclone fence at some planes coming in. Both of my hands were raised, my fingers gripping the Cyclone fence wire. I suddenly felt a presence behind me. Then a man—whose voice I did not recognize—said, "Mrs. Blair, I know who killed General Blair." His words turned my blood cold and my instincts warned me not to look back. I answered, "If you do, don't tell me. I'll have to kill whoever it was." The man walked away and I didn't turn to see him. I was too terrified.

I was never able to get any more information about Charlie's death. Nobody was willing to get involved, and I was told not to ask. And so I never did. I have never discussed it with anyone until now, not even my own daughter. For twenty-five years, I have kept my mouth shut, but I cannot remain silent forever. I owe it to Charlie and to myself at least to ask the questions. I honestly don't know if Charlie's death was an accident, as is the

official explanation, or whether he was assassinated. I will say that I have serious questions and suspicions about how he died.

Why did Charlie end up on that flight? He wasn't scheduled to fly it. An important air force pilot was supposed to fly the plane that day, but just as it was ready to take off, he suddenly changed his mind and didn't want to fly it. Since it was a full flight, Charlie didn't want to disappoint the passengers, so he said he'd take it. I can't help but wonder why that pilot backed out just minutes before they were scheduled for takeoff.

Why was the engine replaced in Puerto Rico before it exploded, and what happened to the plane after it crashed? When I arrived in St. Croix, I asked to see the plane that had killed Charlie. They told me, "Oh, it's gone. It doesn't exist anymore." I was never told why. I don't know where it is or who has it. Is it still at the bottom of the sea? I also found it strange that almost immediately after the accident, many of the pilots left the company. Within weeks, they were gone, scattered around the globe, some to Africa, some to the Middle East, and others to the Pacific Rim.

Why would someone want to kill Charlie? Perhaps Charlie simply knew too much. One thing I was told about Charlie by someone who knew his military background well was that he not only worked for years in a nuclear weapons think tank, but actually helped place the small nukes for the United States. I was told that Charlie knew where they were—their precise location—and that was very serious information during the Cold War.

I remembered a completely unrelated event, years earlier, which confirmed this for me. Pan Am was about to fly the first American commercial flight into the Soviet Union. Naturally, Charlie wanted to be the pilot to fly into Moscow because he loved being the first in everything to do with aviation. He requested that he be allowed to pilot the flight, but his request had to be made to Washington for approval. Washington refused and offered a warning as an explanation, "If Charlie Blair goes into Moscow, we'll never get him back."

There are just too many loose ends, too many unanswered questions. Something is fishy. I'm not looking to blame anyone, I'd just like to know what happened.

*I can't speak to the mysterious phone calls and approaching strangers but this was not an assassination. Was Charles Blair involved with top secret military exercises...yes. If he went to Moscow would he return...most likely.*

- *The NTSB investigation was thorough with all aspects of the engine installation and time in service is noted in their report. The engine malfunctioned, with #5 cylinder separating from its base. If you were in that aircraft it could be considered an explosion. Reading the report it is clear that engine failure was not the cause of the crash. If he was targeted for an assassination by foreign or domestic factions by causing an engine failure, it would be considered a very low percentage of success.*
- *Charles Blair was scheduled to fly that aircraft per his instructions not only on that date but for the previous few days. There were only a few pilots that would fly the aircraft and not log time. See N7777V accident reports and comments.*
- *The engine wasn't replaced in Puerto Rico before the "explosion". It was installed on N7777V the previous March (nearly six months before its failure).*

*The statements make for a "good" book but as stated before... accidents are usually caused by more than just one thing. On review of the ACCIDENT, you can say it "was waiting to happen" . I will stand with NTSB report.*