

Fresno Jet Pilot Dies In Crash

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Mr. and Mrs. Neal and their grandson, Ted Neal, 8, had left the house 10 minutes before the tragedy. When they returned an hour later, they found firemen plying the charred ruins with water.

Appalled by their narrow escape, Mrs. Neal clutched her husband's arm.

"We haven't left the house on Sunday in a long time because Ted is always going to the TV. Today we just decided to get out and visit friends in the country. If we hadn't—" She broke off and wept.

Military authorities declined to offer any theory as to the cause of the crash, but said the plane was fully combat equipped with ammunition for its six 50-caliber machine guns.

The jet struck an eight foot wooden barrier at the west end of the runway, and continued on through a cotton field and then became airborne.

"Witnesses reported it flew about an altitude of about 300 feet where it appeared to stall and then began falling with the left wing down," Austin's body was hurled about 300 feet as the plane exploded. Portions of the aircraft were scattered over a wide area.

Witnesses Crash
Philip Jenkins, a deputy county probation officer, lives at 4593 Garfield Avenue, said he witnessed the crash from his back yard.

"Our home is about three blocks away," Jenkins said, "and I heard the plane crash at a low altitude and off the pattern. The jet was in a steep angle when suddenly the left wing tipped down and almost immediately I heard the explosion as the ship went down."

When I reached the scene the house was blazing and live ammunition was going off like fireworks. I saw the plane was scattered all over the ground and even the trees were ablaze."

Chinchillas Unharmed
Firemen from the Mid Valley Fire District and a Fresno Fire Department battled the flames after laying long lines of water hose. Despite the intense heat, 60 chinchillas in a building back of the house escaped unharmed. Neal said the fur-bearing animals are valued at more than \$5,000.

Deputy sheriffs, city police and state highway patrolmen roped off the area to keep spectators away from the burning structure and trees. The fire was hampered in their work by motorists who jammed the streets throughout the neighborhood. One vehicle ran over and broke a hose laid from a city hydrant.

Gordon G. Dunn, who arrived soon after the crash, said the city firemen responded to the fire under the mutual aid agreement with the Mid Valley Fire District. The scene of the disaster is only two blocks outside the city limits.

Boys Take Shells
Gangster said that before firemen could recover all the ammunition some of the shells were picked up by 15 and 16 year old boys and were taken away as souvenirs. He warned these bullets are dangerous and urged parents to be certain the ammunition is returned to the city guard.

"This is the first time a jet plane has crashed and exploded in the Fresno vicinity," the major said. "All those people who drove out to the scene yesterday were taking an awful chance with their lives."

"There always is a danger of exploding fuel tanks and the live ammunition. It is fortunate no one was hurt or killed."

On Standby Duty
Lieutenant Thomas L. McGowan of San Francisco took off in another jet at the same time with Lieutenant Austin. Both were on standby duty for the weekend alert mission at the air base.

Austin was graduated from the air cadet school a year ago and came to Fresno from Redwood City, San Mateo County, with his wife, Patricia, three months ago. They have no children.

Guard officials estimated the value of the destroyed jet at \$150,000.

Family Keeps
Walter LaFleur, 4435 Curran Drive, his wife, Madeline, and their 5 year old daughter, Nadine, narrowly escaped being in the path of the plane as it ripped through the barrier at the end of the field.

"I was driving west on Shields Avenue when I saw the two jets coming over," LaFleur said. "The first plane crashed and the second one came in from the side and did not seem to be able to get off the air."

"We were about 60 feet away when the second plane crashed through the wooden fence on its wheels. The ship hit a ditch

bank and bounced into the air and began climbing."

"It seemed to me the pilot at that time had full power and was climbing at a steady angle. I lost sight of the plane as it banked and a few seconds later saw black smoke coming out of the air. Then I knew it had crashed."

LaFleur, a printer, declared the boards in the fence splintered and fell across the road.

First Since 1946
Wilmer J. Garrett, city airports superintendent, said the death of Lieutenant Austin is the first aircraft fatality from a terminal takeoff since 1946.

"We have taken every precaution to preclude this type of accident," Garrett said, "and last April we rerouted Shields Avenue to provide a 2,500 foot clear area between the end of the runway and the new location of Shields Avenue."

"The work was started and then stopped about the middle of June because the federal division of surplus properties in San Francisco would not allow the state to grant the city an easement to the corner of the Fresno State College farm."

The college officials agreed to the easement which was completed in the state department of education. All the papers were in order but the federal officials held up the matter.

"The surplus properties division agreed to the easement provided the state would drop its suit against the government on the 80 acres taken from FSC and given to Clovis for the sewage plant."

When the easement began, the state believed the rerouting of Shields Avenue would have been finished 60 days ago and this plane crash probably would have been averted."

Youngest In Squadron
Austin was the youngest pilot in the squadron. A native of Ravenshoe, he attended the Redwood City High School and the San Mateo Junior College where he was a track star.

Austin entered the air national guard in September, 1951, as an enlisted man. He received his commission as a second lieutenant and jet pilot wings in September, 1954.

Before his widow, Austin survived by an aunt, Mrs. Nellie J. Austin of Phoenix, Arizona. His grandmother, Mrs. Grace Austin of Ohio.

Private funeral services for the pilot will be held tomorrow evening in the Lisle Funeral Home, with an air force chaplain, Captain Emil G. Treysa, officiating. The burial will be in the Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Francisco.

Like Names Three To Red Cross Unit

DENVER — AP — President Eisenhower today named three administration officials to three years on the board of governors of the American Red Cross.

He appointed Secretary of Welfare Folsom to succeed Mrs. Oreta Culp Hobby, who recently resigned from the cabinet post Folsom now has; W. Randolph Burgess, undersecretary of the treasury; and Robert B. Robertson, Jr., deputy secretary of defense.

The president also accepted the resignation of Byron Carpenter as examiner in chief. Kruse said, "to suggest I influenced Davis or any of his assistants in changing these regulations."

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"But 'pose we get attacked on the way to church!"

PGE Document Stirs Quiz Row

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The information to the committee that the document was prepared in the office of Idaho Power Company and not by the PGE.

Kruse admitted he gave the power company's statements to Clarence Davis, then solicitor in the department of interior and now undersecretary of the agency.

But Kruse emphatically denied he influenced the department of interior's policy on the rights of way issue. Kruse's statements attributed to spokesmen for the committee were false and misleading and had abused him unfairly.

He described his business with the department officials as routine and thoroughly proper. He said he had inquired into the status of some long standing appeals made by PGE to rulings of the bureau of land and management. The appeals, he said, were made in an effort to enable PGE to provide service but the company was unable to do so because the department had refused to give the necessary rights of way for transmission lines across public lands.

Consider Revision
Kruse declared Davis informed him the department was considering a revision of some of the regulations and requested him to provide a copy of the memorandum from a group of western utilities setting forth their views.

The PGE, he asserted, was a member of the informal group. Kruse said he later arranged to put James Geissinger, an interior department attorney handling the matter, in touch by phone with PGE attorneys in San Francisco to discuss further the regulatory revisions.

He had no other knowledge of the regulation, he continued, and declared he heard nothing further about the matter until he read in the federal register that some of the regulations had been revised.

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Certainly it was my right as well as my duty to my employer to inquire as to the status of our appeals and to discuss them with the proper officials of the department of interior.

"I have read a statement made to the press by the chairman of this subcommittee on or before June 8, 1955, in which it is strongly suggested, if not directly charged, that there was some improper action on my part in this matter."

"That statement was made before I was given any opportunity to appear or be heard, and it is utterly unfair to me to my family and to my company's reputation."

"I am glad to appear now and set the record straight." "Unwilling Arrangements" Earlier, Moss contended the national Republican administration's power policies are forcing public agencies into unwilling arrangements with private power companies.

Moss is a member of the house of representatives government operations committee's public works and resources subcommittee which is investigating complaints that marketing policies and practices of the interior department and other federal agencies no longer adhere to the public power preferences established in federal law.

"The hearings," Moss declared, "uniformly have shown an effort to force the rural electrification administration and other preference agencies into a partnership they themselves didn't figure an advantage to their operations."

In every city where hearings have been held, Moss said, the same story has been told, that practices of the federal administration make it increasingly difficult for public agencies to obtain their rightful share of federal power.

Representatives of Northern California communities interested in obtaining power from the federal government's Central Valley Project will be heard by the committee tomorrow.

Hunter Will Make Trip To Alaska Crowds Hamper Emergency Crew

By Harrison B. Humphreys
WASHINGTON — AP — Alaskan House member, Hunter, said he expects to be in Alaska about 10 days working on pretrial arrangements with the United States district attorney in Anchorage.

The trip, involving a \$50,000 federal loan, is the first of its kind for Hunter since he was elected to Congress last year. Hunter, a Republican, assumed his duties as the chief legal officer of the government's far flung housing operations in January.

Hunter said he expects to be in Alaska about 10 days working on pretrial arrangements with the United States district attorney in Anchorage.

Fall To Make Payments
The foreclosure suit was filed in federal district court in Anchorage when sponsors of the 450 unit Anchor Park Project failed to make payments with the loan made by the HHPA through the Alaska Housing Authority.

"Like any other mortgage holder," Hunter explained, "the government must take steps to protect its investment."

Hunter will be accompanied by William F. Abel, the chief of the special operations branch of the community facilities administration, one of six constituent agencies under HHPA.

Fails To Win Re-election
Hunter, 39, was appointed to his present position after being defeated for reelection to a third term in Congress last year as representative of California's 12th congressional district. The district now is represented by Congressman B. F. Slak, a Democrat.

Hunter will not seek to regain his seat in next year's elections. "I'm not going to run, and I don't know who is," he said. "The district, he added, 'Doesn't look like promising for a Republican candidate in the immediate future.'"

A Fresno attorney before his election to congress in 1956, Hunter retains his voting residence there. He also owns a home in Washington.

He said he has thought about returning to Fresno to practice law but politics is an interesting and satisfying job. "Headed Staff Of 15"

As general counsel of HHPA Hunter heads a staff of 73 attorneys in Washington and in six regional offices.

His office, he said, drafts all legislation which is prepared by the Eisenhower administration and is responsible for liaison with congressional committees on all housing matters.

Recent visitors to Hunter's office have come away with dignified commending the birth of a new nation. Hunter, on August 23rd, The Hungtins have another son, John, 4, and two daughters, Janet, 5, and Georgette, 12.

Canada Withdraws Vessel From Far East
OTTAWA — AP — Canada is ending its contribution to the United States naval forces in the Far East. The navy said HMS Stouk, a destroyer escort, was sailing from Korean waters after a nine month tour of duty.

At one time in the Korean War Canada had three destroyers, an army brigade and an air transport squadron in service there.

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