Holy Mother of the Dirigible Crowd!

Description

Good ideas come and they go and other ideas seem to just keep recycling themselves.

From *Popular Mechanics* comes this â€œTech Notesâ€• on â€œProject ISIS.â€•

Project ISIS in Flight

> â€œProject ISISâ€• has the ring of a James Bond movie, but it actually comes from an acronym (albeit a clumsy one) for a new curved radar array being developed by Raytheon and DARPA, the Pentagonâ€™s research arm. The Integrated Sensor Is Structure concept calls for such arrays running along the wings, tail and underbelly of military or commercial aircraft. Eventually, it could replace the flat-panel radar antennas typically found in a planeÃ¢â‚¬â„¢s nose, providing improved surveillance capabilities and better 360-degree threat detection. ISIS technology is set to debut in 2009 as part of a colossal unmanned airship parked at more than 65,000 ft. over combat zones.

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I wonder what the staff at DARPA has been smoking on their spare timeâ€¦

Frank Luke with his Spad XIII

Frank Luke with his Spad XIII (Credit: Wikipedia)

Hmmmmâ€¦.I began reading a little about flight history when I was but a young guy. Tales of the top aces of WWI were pretty exciting, but I do recall the daring do of a man named Frank Luke. He liked balloons, but not to fly them, to â€œbustâ€• them. His exceptional skills at downing enemy observation balloons earned this young man from Phoenix, AZ the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Gary Powers

Gary Powers (Credit: Wikipedia)

I also recall a story about a man named Gary Powers about a day in May 1960. The 1st, to be exactâ€¦

SA-2 Guideline in transit

SA-2 Guideline/ missile on Transporter (Credit: Wikipedia)

It seems we thought flying â€œhighâ€• over enemy territory made us invulnerable, yet, a missile named by NATO the â€œSA-2 Guideline,â€• fielded in 1957 for the purposes of engaging our B-52 Stratofortresses, had an operational capability between the altitudes between 1500 and 82K ft. Gary Powers found out the hard way, and I believe our intelligence agencies had a lot of egg on their faces in

the aftermath of the Powers shoot down. Call it an intelligence failure, for thatâ€™s what it was.

Oh, and yes, the SA-2 Guideline is still in service with countries around the world. It was used very effectively by the North Vietnamese to do what it was designed for: Shoot our B-52â€™s out of the sky, much to the dismay of my fellow Air Force vets.

Some basic issues, that even a Black Shoe like me can understand: If you have an active radar system to find things, sensors on the other end of the search can find the radar. back in the Vietnam War days, we had developed and deployed missiles that could be told to find a signal and home in on it, then, upon arrival at the source of the signal, to detonate (and thereby destroy the radar). Those are called â€œanti-radiation missiles.â€• The technology has generally been used to go from an air platform to a surface (slow/not moving) target. In the case of an airborne platforms making the emissions, if the target is not moving very fast, it doesnâ€™t take a whole lot of calculations to get a weapon to the targetâ€¦

Soâ€¦my point? All you need is a dedicated pilot in an aircraft that can get to 65K ft, or a Surface to Air Missile with the same altitude capability to sort of ruin our day. Of course, of you have Klingon type cloaking systems in development to pair up with ISIS, I may have to change my tune on the topicâ€¦

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'Nuff Said...

Credit: Ace Pilots

Category

1. Air Force
2. Army
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