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ONE HOPEFUL FACTOR FOR DETROITERS

STRATTON

Parents Fear for 2d U-2 Pilot

By Bernard Mullins

The Detroit parents of a U-2 pilot, who is a close friend of Francis Powers, Russian-held spy-plane pilot, said Saturday:

"We would rather he go back to his job as a paperboy than become a spy pilot."

Although the job of a Central Intelligence Agency pilot is lucrative and may seem to be glamorous and adven-

turous, the job of waiting and worrying is "no fun."

Capt. Charles B. Stratton, 31, the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Stratton, of 2605 Elmhurst, is the pilot of a U-2 reconnaissance jet stationed at the Strategic Air Command Base in Del Rio, Tex.

The fact that their son is an air force U-2 pilot instead of a CIA flier is some comfort, but not a great deal.

"Sometimes, from his let-

ters, you try to put two and two together and then you wonder," Stratton said.

"THE PARENTS of Stratton couldn't be more proud of their son if he were President of the United States. But the worry is still there.

"As far as we know," Mrs. Stratton said, "he has flown all over every country in the world — except Russia. But sometimes I wonder."

In typical mother fashion, Mrs. Stratton worries.

"Now I'm more worried," she said.

Stratton told of his friendship with Powers in a letter to his parents only two days ago.

"That sure was too bad about Powers," he wrote.

"I don't think you met him or his wife, but we were in the same squadron at Turner (Turner Air Force Base, Albany, Ga.).

"IT'S NO secret now that I'm flying U-2s, but we only use them here for air sampling.

"There's nothing I can add to what the radio and newspapers have already said (about the Powers case)."

"I feel so sorry for his (Powers') mother," Mrs. Stratton said. "When I saw her picture in the paper I cried. And think of his poor wife."

The elder Stratton, 51, said:

My heart really goes out to his parents and wife. It may sound selfish, but I'd rather it be her than us.

"She could cry on my shoulder anytime."

Of the spy plane incident, the Strattons agreed:

"The government should have told the straight story first."

"It has to go on," the senior Stratton said. "It's just too bad that we got caught at it."

CAPT. STRATTON was a Detroit Times carrier in his youth as was his brother Harold, 28, now an engineer and government rocket expert.

Capt. Stratton is married to the former Ann Vova, also of Detroit. They have two sons, John Charles, 5, and Robert Bryan, 3. They live at Laughlin AFB, Del Rio.

The Strattons were adamant in their reaction to the possibility of their son following in the footsteps of Powers and taking a CIA pilot's job.

"He wouldn't do that to Mrs. Stratton said.



JOHN STRATTON, WIFE READ COMS LETTER ABOUT PILOT POWERS

DETROIT TIMES PHOTO BY EDWARD HEYNE