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U R G E N T

DN (220)

JEFFERSON CITY, MO., MARCH 12 (AP)-FOUR MEN FROM THE DALLAS, TEX., AREA WERE KILLED TONIGHT IN A LIGHT PLANE THAT CRASHED ON A MISSOURI RIVER BLUFF WHILE TRYING TO LAND AT THE JEFFERSON CITY AIRPORT.

THE HIGHWAY PATROL SAID THE PLANE'S FLIGHT PLAN LISTED THOSE ABOARD AS WILLIAM F. HODGES, (2907 ERMINE WAY); BEN F. SLAUGHTER, AND RONALD DEAN SMITH, ALL OF DALLAS; AND TRACY D. CLICK, (2121 WEST IRVIN BOULEVARD), IRVING, A DALLAS SUBURB.

PAPERS SHOWED SLAUGHTER AND SMITH WERE CONNECTED WITH THURON INDUSTRIES (12200 DENTON DRIVE) DALLAS.

THE JEFFERSON CITY CONTROL TOWER HAD JUST GIVEN THE PILOT LANDING INSTRUCTIONS WHEN IT HIT THE BLUFF NORTH OF THE CITY, ABOUT A MILE AND A QUARTER FROM THE AIRPORT.

WILLIAM WHEELER, WHO LIVES NEAR THE SCENE, SAID HE WAS WATCHING THE PLANE WHEN IT PLUNGED INTO THE BLUFF AND EXPLODED IN FLAMES. THREE FIRE TRUCKS WERE CALLED TO BEAT DOWN THE FLAMES AND PUT OUT A GRASS FIRE.

DON SCHAEPPERKOTTER, A TAXI AIRLINE PILOT, SAID HE WAS FLYING BACK FROM ST. LOUIS WHEN HE HEARD THE TEXAS PILOT ASK THE COLUMBIA, MO., TOWER FOR A ST. LOUIS WEATHER REPORT.

THEN THE TEXAN TALKED TO SCHAEPPERKOTTER BY RADIO AND FOLLOWED HIM TO JEFFERSON CITY. THE TEXAN WAS INSTRUCTED TO LAND AFTER SCHAEPPERKOTTER GOT DOWN. THE CRASH FOLLOVED.

THE PATROL SAID GROUND VISIBILITY WAS GOOD, BUT CONDITIONS WERE FOGGY ALOFT AT THE TIME.

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