



US Govt. May Have Shot Down Illinois Hobby Club's \$12 Balloon With \$400k Air Force Missile

Description

USA: The United States government may have frivolously shot down a balloon belonging to a hobbyist group.

A member of the Northern Illinois Bottlecap Balloon Brigade told Politico the government may have accidentally gunned down an object that “could have been our balloon.”

On Thursday, the balloon group wrote in a blog post that one of their balloons was “missing in action.”

The balloon was located in Alaska on the same day U.S. forces used a \$400,000 Air Force missile to shoot down three unidentified aerial objects floating around the Canadian border

President Joe Biden said Thursday the three objects were “most likely balloons” used for research or owned by private companies. “Nothing right now suggests they were related to China’s spy balloon program” or other foreign countries, Biden added.

The FBI reached out to the club, a North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) spokesperson said.

John Kirby, the spokesperson for the National Security Council, said Friday it was unclear who the balloons belonged to. “We haven’t recovered it so it’s very difficult until you can get your hands on something to be able to tell. I mean we all have to accept the possibility that we may not be able to recover it.”

An anonymous member of the group explained to Politico how their balloon went offline in concurrence with news reports of the U.S. missile launch. “Think about it. We know where the balloon was off the coast of Alaska. We know where it was, if all was well. We know that it didn’t wake up that morning”

“We know [American forces] shot something down, and the thing they described as having shot down is not inconsistent with what we’re flying out there. So, that’s that,” the member added.

A member of the hobbyist group, Northern Illinois Bottlecap Balloon Brigade, said the object shot down by U.S. forces over the Yukon last weekend “could have been our balloon.”

<https://t.co/CZScsTsqdo>

— POLITICO (@politico) [February 17, 2023](#)

“The descriptions of all three unidentified objects shot down Feb. 10-12 match the shapes, altitudes and payloads of the small pico balloons, which can usually be purchased for \$12-180 each,” AviationWeek reported.

by Paul Aubert

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1. Army-Wars-Conflict Zones-Military Tech.
2. Main
3. Politics-Geopolitics-Gov.-Events

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