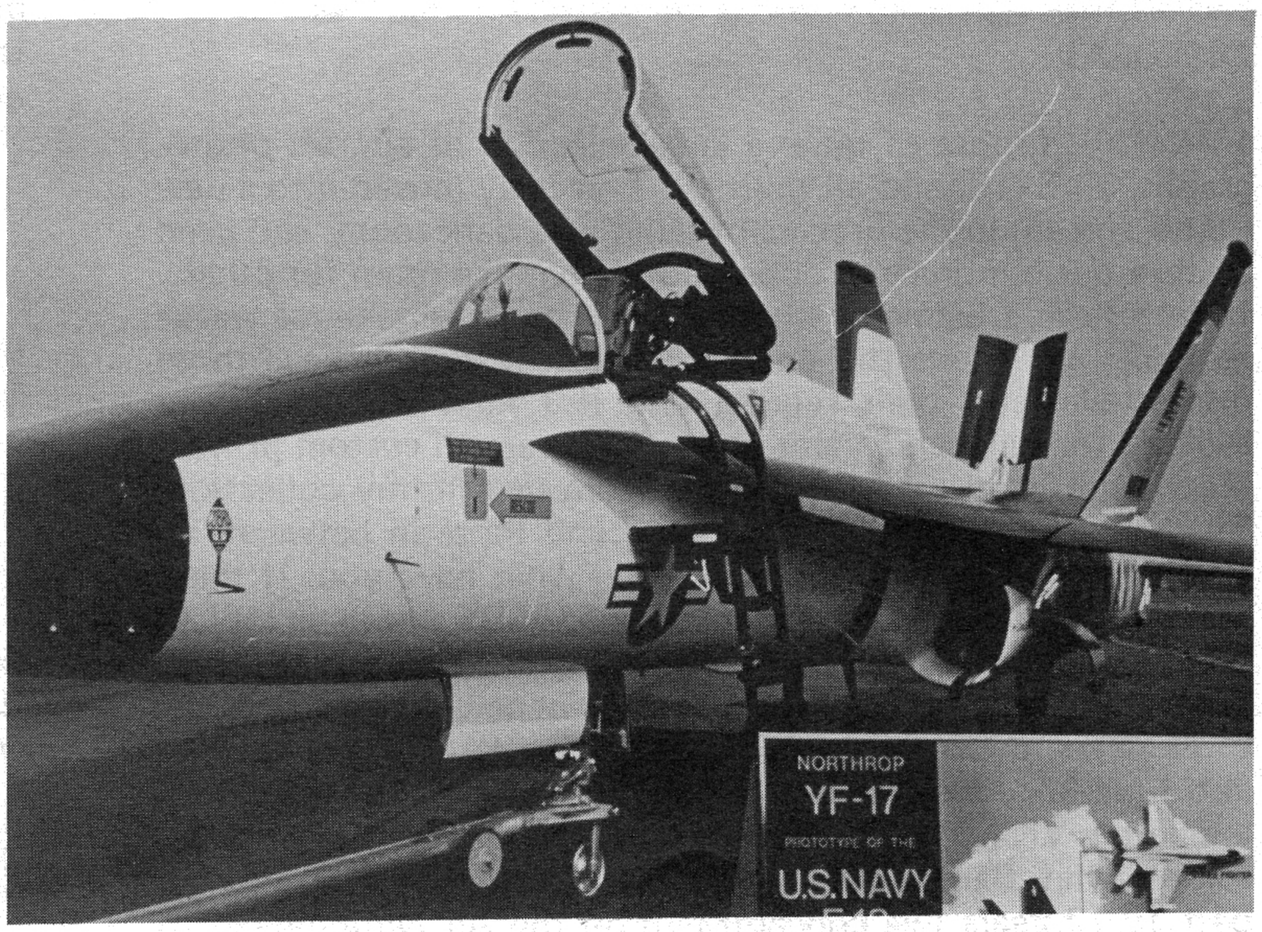
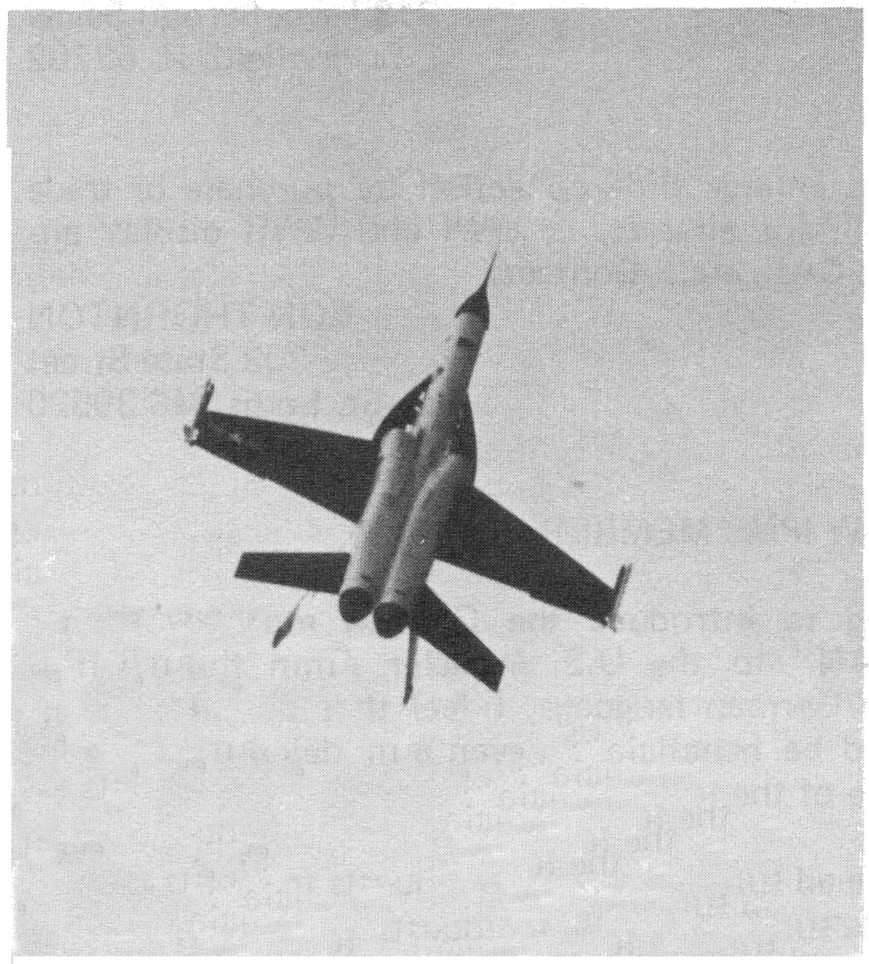
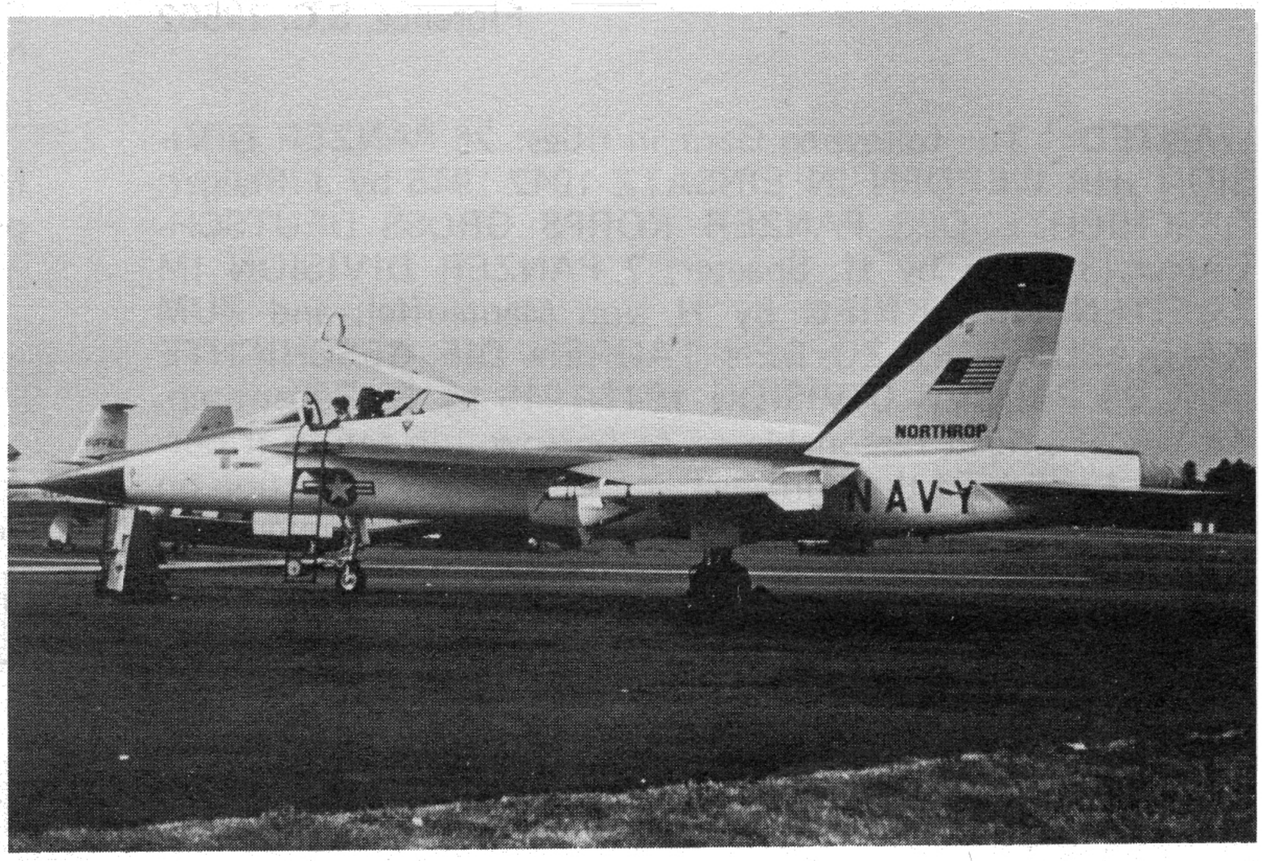
YF-17 (F-18)

Courtesy IPMS Toledo Chapter.

photos by Frank Domalski
art by Greg Bieszczad



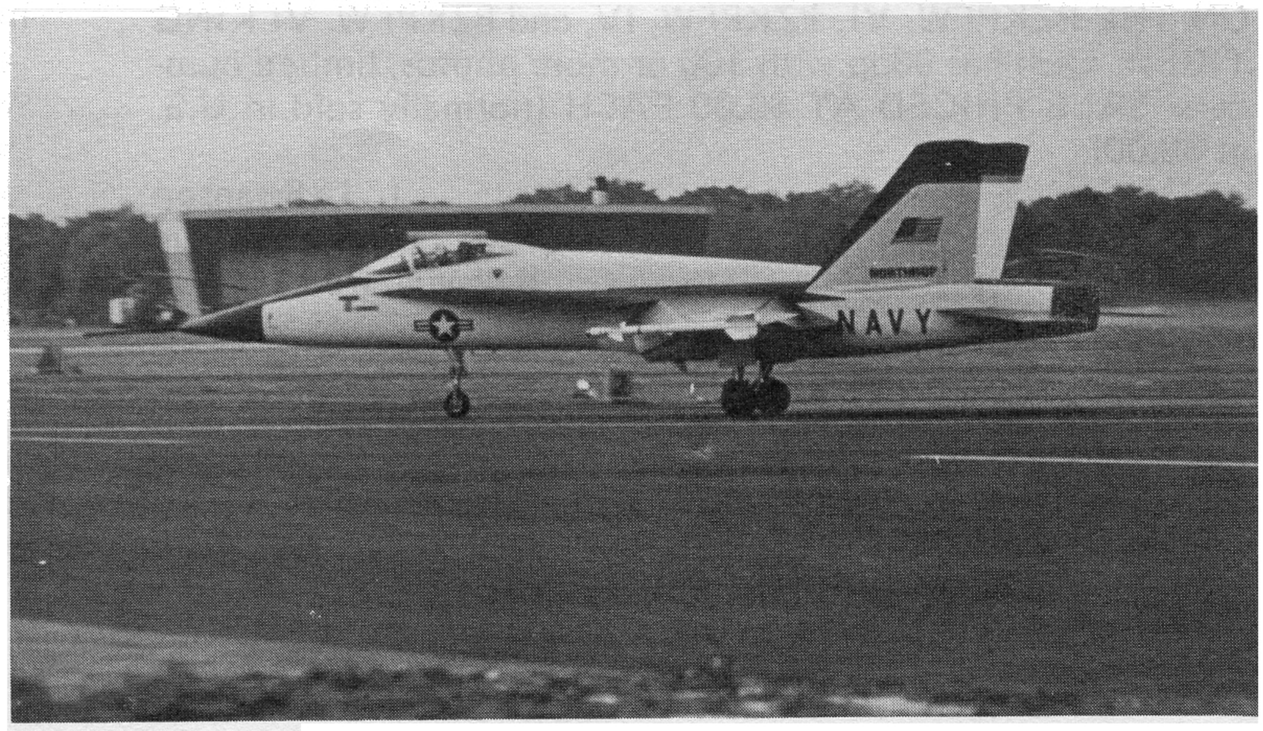




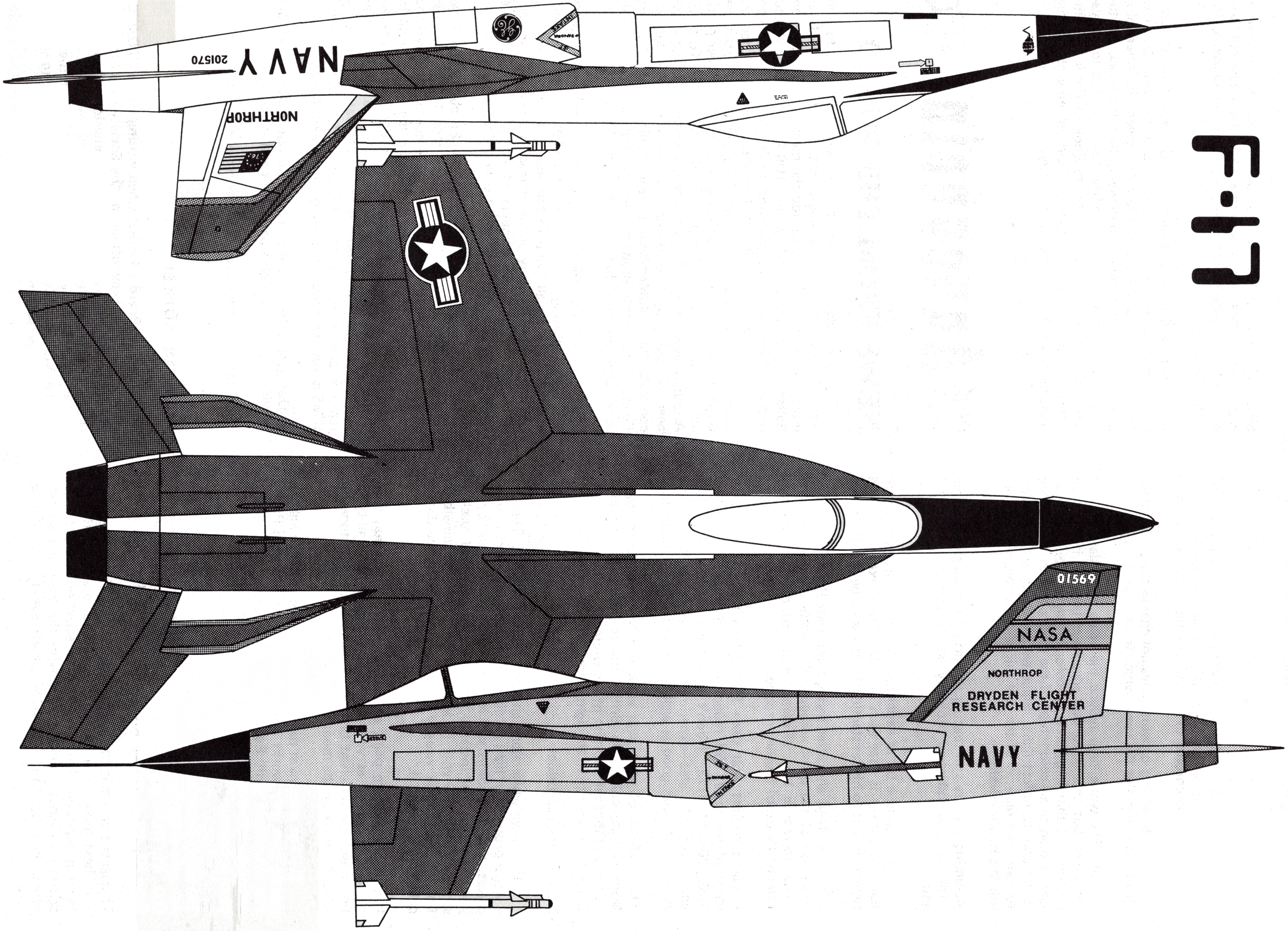
Since the F-17 lost out to the F-16 in the LWF fly-off, the U.S. Navy has decided to buy a modified version of the F-17, the F-18, for naval use. In this process, the two YF-17s have shed their Air Force markings for greener pastures in the Navy's testing program for the F-18. The second F-17, 72-1570 is illustrated here as it appeared at the Farnsborough show.

570 is overall gloss white with dark, glossy insignia blue wings and forestrakes. All lettering is black, as is the cobra motif near the radome. The radome has strakes on either side which are also black, but are shown in white on the drawings for clarity. The national insignia on the wing is outlined in white; on the wingtips are two old AIM-9B Sidewinders, with two red bands in front and a single wider black band in back. On the vertical tail, the dark blue is edged in gold; below that is a Bicentennial flag with six red stripes, seven white stripes, a blue field with "76" under an arch of eleven stars with two more above in each corner. The entire flag has a thin black border. The intake warnings are the standard Navy "Danger jet intake" type, with a General Electric symbol immediately in back. Look closely at the photos and you can see another Northrup fighter, a F-5E from the USAF aggressor squadron based in England. The landing gear is painted silver, the intake covers are yellow and the ejection seat head rest is blue-gray.

The first YF-17, 72-1569, now operating as a joint testbed for NASA and the Navy, still retains the same basic scheme it wore for the Air Force. Besides the new markings, the tail has a gold border outlining what we believe to be dark blue. The NASA band on the tail is yellow with black lettering. The overall color is silver, i.e., silver paint, not natural metal. AIM-9E Sidewinders are mounted on the wing tips; the bodies of the missles are probably blue. All information on 569 is from a photo in the August 1976 issue of Interavia.



F-17


NAVY
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