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24 August 1966
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BRIEFING

Perhaps it would be appropriate to summarize briefly the history of the U-2 program which was, of course, the forerunner to our present OXCART program.

It began back in 1953 when there was formed what was called the Surprise Attack Committee, headed by Dr. James Killian. This committee had a panel on intelligence, chaired by Dr. Edwin Land. One of its primary objectives was to find ways and means narrowing the existing intelligence gap with regard to the Soviet Union. We were essentially ignorant of the major economic, military and political activities within the interior of the Soviet Union.


In the course of its explorations in late 1954 the Land Panel came across Lockheed's rather rough proposal for a high altitude reconnaissance aircraft that could be used for overflight of the Soviet Union.

Concluding that it would be rather dangerous for one of our military arms to engage directly in extensive overflight, Doctors Killian and Land recommended that CIA, as a civilian organization, undertake (with Air Force assistance) a covert program of development and selected flights.

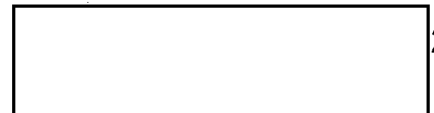
In November of 1954 the proposal was laid before President Eisenhower and he endorsed these views and authorized the project.

Using money from the Director's Reserve Fund to get the project underway, Lockheed was given the go-ahead in December of 1954. The first U-2 was flown just eight months later.

The first U-2 detachment was deployed to Germany in June of 1956 and flew its first operational overflight the same month. A second detachment went to Adana, Turkey, that fall, and another to Atsugi, Japan, the following spring.

In the ensuing four years, the U-2's were used periodically over the Soviet Union. They were ended in May of 1960 after the Frank Powers incident. U-2's were also used extensively during this period to obtain photo coverage in crisis situations such as occurred in the Middle East,  Formosa Strait, etc. (BOX SCORE CHART).

NRO review(s) completed.

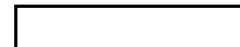


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Since 1960, the U-2 has been used in many parts of the world for covert overflight including Cuba,  operating from an aircraft carrier.

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Although it was initially believed that the life span of the U-2 program, from a survivability standpoint, was 18 months to two years, it is still producing intelligence today.

The outstanding success of the U-2 program which resulted in the changing of National Estimates and an entirely new assessment of Soviet capabilities, made it obvious that a follow-on aircraft of higher performance would be essential. Accordingly, an exploration of design approaches was set in motion in August 1957.

Once again, a committee chaired by Dr. Land was established to review design proposals. Presentations to this committee always included representatives from the Air Force and the Navy, as well as CIA.

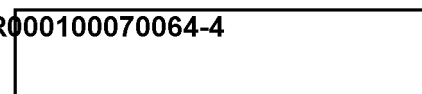
In June 1959 the choice of a new design was narrowed to two proposals, one from CONVAIR the other from Lockheed. A source selection board unanimously selected the Lockheed design. Presidential approval was obtained and in September Lockheed was given a preliminary go-ahead affirmed in February 1960. Our accomplishments to date will be noted later in this briefing.

I would like to stress that in both programs, U-2 and OXCART, the programs were explicitly set up as joint Air Force/CIA projects and the personnel directing them were responsible jointly to the DCI and the Chief of the Air Staff for their conduct.

So much for history.

The OXCART aircraft is operationally ready today. Although not quite as flexible as the U-2, it still has the capability to obtain high resolution photo coverage almost anywhere in the world, political approval granted. Unlike some other reconnaissance systems, (notably satellite) it has a quick reaction capability, it can go where the weather is suitable, and it can return its take within an acceptable time frame. It is eminently better suited for tactical and crisis situations. From an intelligence standpoint, there is no question that it is an extremely valuable asset.

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If we can, for the moment, stipulate the continuing need for this capability, I would like to examine the problem of utilization and management. This, in essence, raises the question of whether we should maintain a non-military overflight capability.

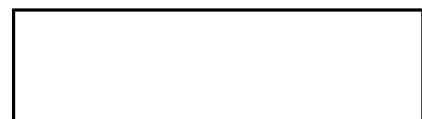
The principal reason for developing the U-2 and OXCART capabilities originally within the CIA framework (but as a joint Air Force/CIA project) was to maintain greater security, employ deeper cover, use civilian pilots, keep the aircraft outside of military control, and therefore, make possible more plausible denial of U. S. military responsibility charges. These objectives have been met over the past 10 years.


It has been argued that an operation of this character can be conducted as securely by military units operating under military cover as by the CIA, that the distinction between military and civilian control is irrelevant to the possibility of denial and therefore that this tool is politically no more useful for overflights in the hands of CIA than in the regular military establishment. We do not agree, however, this is a determination which must be made by the political authorities. In the past, they have always opted for the civilian operation.

In conclusion, may I add that even should the political authorities in a non-crisis atmosphere find military pilots acceptable for overflights, they might conceivably have second thoughts at some future date when vital intelligence is needed.

We believe that the President and the country should not be deprived of this asset.

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