

SECRET

7 July 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: DDS

SUBJECT : Developments To Date on Crash of B-908

1. After a take-off which appeared to be standard in all respects the aircraft climbed to approximately 1400 feet in some 6 minutes and all appeared to be normal. It then nosed down and struck the ground at an angle of about 30°. There was some fire after the crash but much of the remains were untouched.

2. All 52 passengers and 5 crew members were positively identified.

3. It would appear that the CAT organization has done a very good job of conducting relations with families. The press coverage has been very extensive on Taiwan and for that matter world-wide. The Taiwan press has carried out a lot of soul-searching including a demand for the Minister of Communications' resignation. The press has assumed that CAT must be at fault in some manner, but has, nevertheless, been sympathetic for the most part and has repeatedly pointed to this being the scheduled-airline's first fatal accident.

4. Each element of Government having any interest has set up its own investigation of the accident. The Chinese Government requested and the USCAB with our concurrence and assistance sent two of their professionals from Washington, Messrs. Hallman and Pehl.

5. Two pistols were found in the crash and it has been ascertained that neither has been fired. An autopsy of Captain Bengee Lin has not revealed anything of interest.

6. All of the wreckage has been removed to Tainan where a detailed analysis is being conducted. To date no cause has been discovered. The flight was apparently conducted in a legal manner in all respects including weight and balance. Two broken control cables were found amongst the wreckage but technicians have observed that this could have happened during the crash. The press has stated that the Chinese CAA has reported there was no engine failure.

7. CAT and the other two domestic airlines were grounded for three days after the crash, but operations are again normal. The Communications Committee of the Legislative Yuan is conducting a series of legislative interpolations. The Minutes of these interpolations give the impression that the proceedings are going on in an objective manner. CAT's Chairman, Dr. Wang Wen-San, has been treated throughout with dignity and respect. The Minister of Communications has been queried at length on the corporate set-up and financing of CAT and his responses reveal that he is quite well-informed

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