

~~SECRET~~

11 April 1954

MEMORANDUM: For the Record.

SUBJECT : Circumstances leading to the dispatch of 11 April Black Flight to [ ] Honduras.

1. Cowden received LINC 1778 and DIR 46069 at 1600Z. On the basis of LINC 1778 the aircraft was loaded and the crew briefed.
2. At 1844Z Cowden received a telephone call from Brodfrost in Miami. Brodfrost stated, "we want you to proceed as directed in LINC 1778, and to disregard DIR 46069 on the basis that it is only INFO to you and you take your orders from LINC." At this point I asked, "is this being recorded?" Brodfrost answered, "No, I'm calling from Jack's house." I replied, "I can't disregard DIR 46069 on the basis of a phone call, and asked if Dunbar was there." Brodfrost replied, "No, we dropped him off at the club, but these are his orders. He takes full responsibility." I replied, "OK, Remallo is on the other line and Soliday is listening too, so with them as witnesses if you want to make this call a matter of record I'll send the flight out." Brodfrost replied, "OK these are your orders from LINC". Remallo then asked Brodfrost to have Jack send his mail down and that ended the conversation. On the basis of the above telephone conversation the flight was dispatched and took off at 1910Z.
3. At 1936Z Soliday and Cowden received a telephone call from Jack E. Esterline in Washington who stated, "I'm calling for J.C.K. Did you receive DIR 46069?" Soliday replied, "Yes, we definitely received DIR 46069." At this point Cowden identified himself and asked, "Does this flight definitely have to be stopped?" Esterline replied, "Yes, for two or three days."
4. Immediately after receiving the Washington Phone call I called Panama ATC and requested that they attempt to contact "Fireball" on 4724.5 the frequency the crew was briefed to guard in the event of a re-call, and tell "Fireball" to return to base.
5. Capt. May called at 1905Z, 2005Z and again at 2050Z and stated that they had been unable to contact "Fireball" on either 4724.5, 2862 or 6738. Cowden then requested that they continue trying at 10 minute intervals until notified otherwise.
6. A cable was sent on the departure of the aircraft and that an attempt was being made to recall the flight.

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

[ ]  
WALLACE C. COWDEN  
PBCABOOSE Air Ops Officer

2003

~~SECRET~~