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2 December 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director for Special Activities
Deputy Assistant Director for Special Activities

SUBJECT : Summary of OSA Activities for Week Ending
23 November 1963

1. THE ASSASSINATION OF THE PRESIDENT

On 22 November 1963 at approximately 1330 hours EST, President John F. Kennedy was fatally assassinated in Dallas, Texas. Our foreign detachments were notified and placed on an emergency alert basis until further notice. They were directed to be prepared for deployment from their assigned bases within twelve hours after receipt of a final directive. All leaves were cancelled until the end of the emergency. This action was a precautionary measure.

2. OPERATIONAL MISSIONS

a. IDEALIST

(1) Tao Yuan, Taiwan: Based on the alert message, the detachment at Tao Yuan immediately increased its readiness condition. The currently available aircraft was completely torn down and was undergoing a periodic inspection and installation of the BIRDWATCHER equipment. A Lockheed Aircraft Corporation project engineer arrived on 21 November with the BIRDWATCHER kit to assist in the installation. No estimated-time-in-commission was available for the aircraft during the early modification stages.

(2) Ban Takhli, Thailand: Redeployment of the FLAMINGO/THREE staging team has been completed. This was begun on 19 November at 1310 hours EST when the C-133 cargo aircraft left. The KC-135 and the U-2 departed shortly thereafter. Things went smoothly until nearing Hawaii where the KC-135 lost number four engine, but landed safely. A replacement engine has been located, but suitable airlift was not immediately available. The U.S. Air Force substituted a C-118 to transport the remaining members of the FLAMINGO team to Edwards Air Force Base. All hands have arrived safely with the exception of the KC-135 crew who are to follow later.

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(3) Edwards Air Force Base, California: Our detachment at this base was placed on an alert status for deployment to Puerto Rico to support operations over the Northeastern part of South America. Edwards Air Force Base has reported that one of the aircraft is out of commission because of the BIRDWATCHER installation which is now in progress. The other aircraft has only 24.8 hours of operating time remaining before it must undergo an engine change and periodic inspection.

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(4) Ramey Air Force Base, Puerto Rico: In preparation for possible deployment of the Edwards Air Force Base detachment to cover Venezuelan targets, a Headquarters team of Operations, Security, Communications, and Materiel personnel visited Ramey Air Force Base to coordinate facility requirements for staging at that station. Several conferences and a Tactical Air Command exercise were scheduled for later this month. The team met with the Ramey Air Force Base Commander and a report on the meeting is now in preparation.

b. BRASSKNOB/GOLDEN TREE

(1) On 20 November, BRASSKNOB Mission #3777 was lost on its return from a flight over Cuba. This aircraft was an Agency U-2 (#350) which was on loan to SAC. The pilot, Captain Hyde, reported operations normal on the coast out point at mission altitude (69,000 feet) and after passing Key West, Florida, the aircraft made a rapid descent to below 2,000 feet where it was lost by radar. A recovery team was immediately dispatched to the area and the aircraft was raised by a Navy salvage vessel for inspection by a flight safety team. It is understood that the pilot ejected through the canopy, but the seat and the pilot have not been found to date. Additional information obtained by the accident investigation team will be reported after a detailed analysis has been made.

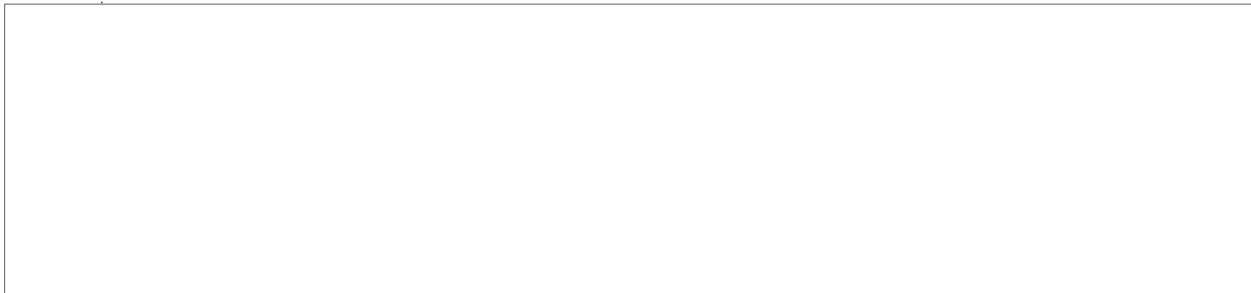
(2) As of 22 November 1963 the code word "BRASSKNOB" has been changed to "GOLDEN TREE" because of a possible compromise of the former name during the ill-fated flight mentioned above.

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c. SATELLITES. There was no satellite activity this week. The next launch is scheduled for a CORONA/MURAL Mission (9061) on 27 November.

3. OX CART PROGRAM

a. OX CART RECORD FLIGHT. On Flight #92 aircraft #121 attained a maximum speed of Mach 3.11 and an altitude of 76,000 feet. None of the roughness usually encountered at this speed was present. Aircraft #121 has been modified with aerodynamic shapes in the inlet which reduce air flow separation from the sides of the duct prior to entering the engine. While a low intensity roughness was encountered at Mach 3.08, the vibrations normally experienced were not present. Additional tests to verify the value of this inlet modification will be conducted before modification of the other aircraft are approved.



(b)(1)

4. GENERAL

a. REORGANIZATION AT THE LOCKHEED MISSILES AND SPACE COMPANY FACILITY: In discussions with OSA personnel during the past week, [redacted] who is manager of the Lockheed Missiles and Space Company, reported that a reorganization will take place about 1 December of this year. He indicated that the Systems Engineering/Technical Direction Committee for the CORONA Program will be disbanded. He further indicated that the systems engineering type of work for CORONA will be taken over and integrated into the Lockheed Missiles and Space Company's responsibility at the Advanced Projects Division of the Company. [redacted] stated that this organization has been approved by Colonel Worthington, Discovery Program Manager, Space Systems Division, United States Air Force.

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b. REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING. In response to a memorandum dated 25 October 1963 from the NRO Comptroller concerning Photographic Material and Processing, OSA has requested additional funds and explained why this funding is necessary. OSA has concurred in a revised estimate submitted by Eastman Kodak Company covering the period

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from 1 July 1963 through 30 June 1964. OSA requested that [redacted] be made available for obligation against this program within the second half of Fiscal Year 1964. It was stated that to proceed at a lesser contractual level would be considered a frustration of the terms of the contract with Eastman Kodak, and, over such a serious consequence, an immediate re-examination of the Government/Agency relationship would be required.

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(b)(3)

c. FISCAL YEAR 1964 BUDGET, PROGRAM B. A memorandum to the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office was forwarded expressing appreciation for relaxation of the terms concerning the obligation of funds required in the execution of Program B at the described annual levels. In keeping with the critical funding situation, it was stated that OSA will continue to request cash transfers on a quarterly basis. In the event of emergency requirements, OSA will apprise the DNRO of the details and recommend reprogramming or new funding, as required. It was also stressed that Program B continues to be significantly under-funded and the areas of critical interest were presented to the attention of the DNRO. In addition to these critical areas, the interface and possible legal implications of continuing these programs without contingency reserves to cover the possibility of contract terminations were also described as matters of concern. A request for consideration of these critical items was stressed.

d. ACQUISITION OF U-2 AIRCRAFT FROM DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. A memorandum was forwarded to the DCI by the DD/S&T outlining our current operational capability in the line of recent U-2 losses. The DD/S&T stated that we should not request additional U-2s until a new look could be taken some time next spring at our over-all commitments versus our currently operational aircraft. He feels that we are in good shape on cameras with the acquisition of three improved B cameras plus the current order for four high resolution CORONA-type cameras from ITEK. Because of high quality maintenance and experience in operating with the J75 engine, OSA is able to program more effective utilization of its current aircraft in 1963 than it was in 1958 when the J75 program began.

(b)(6)

[redacted]
WALTER T. LLOYD
Chief, Programs Staff
(Special Activities)

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