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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE INTERDEPARTMENTAL CONTINGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting of the Interdepartmental Contingency Planning Committee, 24 March 1966, 11:15, Room 4E968, Pentagon

- REFERENCE: (a) Proposed Contingency and Cover Plan for PINWHEEL (draft) disseminated 24 March 1966, under control no. BYE 2014-66
- (b) Contingency and Cover Plan for CAROUSEL dated 30 November 1965, BYE 3092-65

A meeting of the NRP Interdepartmental Contingency Planning Committee, Dr. Alexander Flax presiding as Chairman, was convened on 24 March 1966 at 11:15 to consider referenced proposed PINWHEEL Contingency and Cover Plan. The mission of Operation PINWHEEL was described as the use of OXCART vehicles to obtain high resolution photographic coverage of priority targets in North Vietnam, on the Mainland of China, and elsewhere in the Far East and Southeast Asia. The following committee members were present:

- BGen Jack Ledford, CIA
- James Cunningham, CIA
- [redacted], DIA
- Col Ralph Steakley, JCS
- BGen David I. Liebman, OSD(PA)
- BGen Leo P. Geary, AF
- [redacted] State Dept
- Mr. Jessup, White House
- Mr. James Reber, DDNRO
- Col Paul Worthman, NRO Staff
- Mr. Louis Mazza, NRO Staff

(b)(3)

The Chairman, with the assistance of the Committee, made a detailed analysis of the proposed plan. Following this analysis, the Chairman directed a redraft of the plan to incorporate specific detailed changes made by him with the advice

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and consent of the Committee. A revised draft was to be disseminated to Committee members at the earliest opportunity in order that they might obtain the approval and/or comments of their principals.

General Ledford had available at the meeting and provided to the Chairman for his reading a copy of a document described in the proposed contingency plan as HD-50-1055-24. General Ledford explained the content of this paper, which had been approved by the 303 Committee, stating that it prescribed a very detailed overall standard of conduct and a method of handling of OXCART pilots. The paper recognized that, in the event of unfriendly interrogation of the pilot, through the very cleverness of the interrogators, the pilot would divulge information. The pilot was provided guidance as to what things not to divulge under any circumstances and a pattern for providing only that information essential under the conditions of the interrogation. Under this policy paper the initial reaction of the pilot to such circumstances would be to immediately provide his name, date and place of birth, his U. S. home address, and his employment as a CIA civilian employee.

The major portion of the discussion during the meeting focused upon the following matters:

(1) The Chairman pointed out that the plan prescribed a wide variety of actions to accommodate varied contingencies. Through the variation of responses to fit the particular contingency, a situation might be created which would have a prejudicial effect upon our ability to conduct operations following any contingency occurrence. General Ledford defended the overall plan as being as near to "no comment" on the part of the U. S. Government as was realistic to the particular contingency. He pointed out that a strict no comment posture in some situations might provoke a climax out of proportion to the incident.

(2) Question arose as to the requirement contained in the plan that, in the event of mission incident involving Communist China, all inquiries be referred to the Department of State. It was pointed out that this response was unnatural in that it did not follow usual channels which might provide an immediate clue as to the gravity of the situation. This might have the effect of cutting down time available to the U. S.

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Government necessary to assess the situation and develop an appropriate response. It was subsequently agreed that the plan should provide for referral to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs if the inquiries were made of military authorities, and the Department of State if a matter of diplomatic or other U. S. civilian officials. Following appropriate coordination, a statement would be made by an appropriate U. S. spokesman. This provision was subsequently expanded to include an incident involving Cambodia.

(3) The Committee discussed at some length that portion of the proposed plan involving emergency landing in Japan, Laos, Cambodia, or Burma, in which case the pilot would state that he was a Hughes Aircraft test pilot and that he had encountered mechanical (expanded by the Committee to read "mechanical and/or navigational") difficulties while conducting field tests for the U. S. Air Force. It was agreed that the credibility of such a statement in some situations might be in doubt. General Ledford defended the plan by pointing out that such a statement, although weak from the standpoint of credibility in some situations, nevertheless provided the offended government with a choice of accepting it and thereby not provoking a major international incident. The Chairman sustained this position. The Department of State representative withheld full endorsement of the rationale presented by General Ledford.

(4) Discussion was also held with respect to the prebriefing or lack of prebriefing of the Japanese Government with respect to the OXCART mission and the effect that this might have upon that portion of the plan related to emergency landing in Japan. General Ledford advised that the prebriefing or lack of prebriefing of the Japanese Government was a matter on which he needed specific guidance from the 303 Committee. Such a briefing might have a prejudicial effect upon our ability to station the aircraft on Okinawa. With respect to a suggestion made by General Geary that the pilot might bail out rather than land the aircraft intact in such a situation, it was agreed that a prebriefing of the Japanese Government might provoke a reaction by them which would force the type of direction to be given to the pilot. General Ledford also pointed out the small likelihood of an emergency landing in Japan.

(5) The Chairman asked whether or not, in the opinion of the Committee, the plan adequately provided for the security protection of the aircraft and related hardware in the event

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of a contingency situation. It was agreed that this was a matter which should be given careful consideration in relation to operational procedures and that it was not necessary that it be further dealt with in the proposed contingency plan. General Geary stated that he would prefer that, with respect to any possibility of an emergency landing in such areas as Communist China, North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and possibly Japan, the pilot be directed to bail out and thereby cause the aircraft to crash and hopefully be destroyed.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45.

James T. Stewart
James T. Stewart
Brigadier General, USAF
Secretary
ICPC

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