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FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#2 report	Exempt NLJ 50-115 sanitized 10-23-09 summary record of NSC Meeting 530 top secret Exempt per NLJ 84-703 7 p	05/02/64	A
#3 report	record of actions open 3-30-92 NLJ 90-68 secret Exempt per NLJ 84-102 1 p	05/02/64	A
#5 report	SNIE 85-2-64 Secret 3 p Exempt per NLJ 84-101 Exempt NLJ 89-126 Declassified NLJ 016-001-5-1 9/6/02	05/01/64	A

FILE LOCATION

NATIONAL SECURITY FILE, National Security Council File
NSC Meetings, Vol. 2, Tab 2, 5/2/64, Overflights of Cuba

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NLJ Review For NSC Equities Required
NLJ Review For NSC Equities Required

Summary Record of National Security Council Meeting No. 530
May 2, 1964, 10:00 AM -- Overflights of Cuba

The meeting began without the President. Mr. McCone distributed, and the group read, the attached SNIE 85-2-64, "Likelihood of an Attempted Shoot-down of a U-2." The conclusion was that Castro prefers to try to halt the U-2 flights by pressure at the UN and elsewhere, but, failing this, there is a significant, and, over time, a growing chance that he will try a shoot-down.

Secretary Rusk said we need to deal with four questions:

- (1) What is our intelligence requirement for aerial reconnaissance?
- (2) What do we think Castro will do to prevent our overflights?
- (3) What is the best way to meet our intelligence requirements?
- (4) Are there any additional political actions which we could take in the immediate future to reduce the risk that Castro will try to shoot down a U-2?

Director McCone, reading from a paper, made the following points in response to Secretary Rusk's request for the views of the intelligence community:

(1) Aerial photography is the only dependable evidence we have on the status of Soviet military equipment in Cuba. All alternatives to aerial photography have been carefully studied and all have been found wanting.

(2) The intelligence community has concluded that overflights must be continued but the number of missions can be reduced from the number now flown. Three flights per week are considered essential. There have been [REDACTED] reports about missiles in Cuba since January 1, 1964. In order to check on these reports, we must have aerial photography.

(3) Castro will probably take over control of the SAM sites and he probably will try to shoot down a U-2 at some time in the near future.

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SANITIZED

Authority NLS 141 020 003/1
By J NARA, Date 10-23-09

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Secretary Rusk asked whether we had aerial photography which we had not read out. Mr. McCone replied that we did not. However, we have taken pictures of the same objects many times but we continue to have a requirement for current pictures in order to check on [REDACTED]

Mr. McGeorge Bundy said all agree that overflights are required. The number of flights could be reduced but this made little difference because the risk of a shoot-down remained approximately the same and the political cost of the overflight problem was not materially affected by the number of missions flown.

Secretary Rusk and Mr. McCone expressed the agreement of all those present that there is a requirement for from two to three flights per week -- two certainly and an additional one if cloud cover or other operational problems make the third flight necessary.

Ambassador Thompson commented that overflights of Cuba create a strain on Soviet-Cuban relations. The Soviets, in their May Day slogans, had downgraded the Cuban problem. The Soviets believed, however, that because we had sent a note on overflights to the Cubans via the Czechs, we were taking a new initiative and launching a new move against Castro. They felt we had concluded that we had interpreted the climate of improving U.S. -Soviet relations to mean that we had a free hand to do what we wished to Castro as far as the USSR was concerned.

Secretary Rusk said Dobrynin had asked him directly why we had raised the problem of the overflights in a note in writing. He had left the impression that we could have handled this in another way, thereby avoiding making a direct issue of a problem which had not been causing concern for months.

Secretary Rusk recalled that during the missile crisis of October 1962 we had discussed a nuclear free zone in Latin America and on-site inspection in Cuba by the UN. These ideas had been accepted by Khrushchev but flatly rejected by Castro.

Ambassador Thompson pointed out that Castro, in his recent speech, had made clear that the overflights issue was not of a nature to lead to the possibility of nuclear war. However, the Ambassador believes the danger of a Cuban shoot-down of a U-2 will increase.

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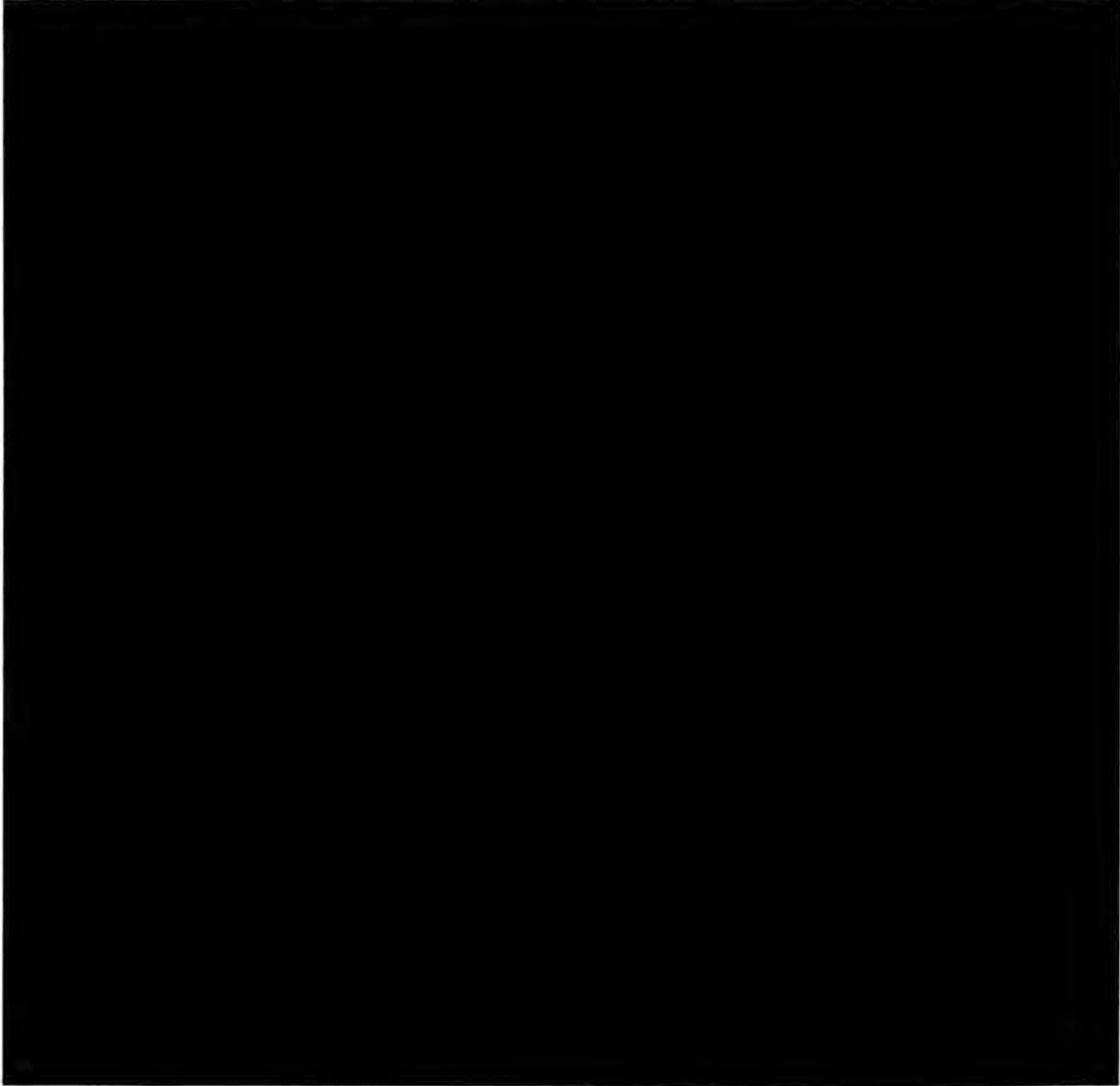
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Secretary Rusk said that a shoot-down was not imminent. Assistant Secretary Mann also agreed with this view which is expressed in the SNIE. However, there is a strong possibility that Castro will raise this question in the UN.

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Director McCone commented on the following alternative methods of fulfilling our intelligence requirements:

(1) Peripheral photography. This is useful for targets on the coast but it does not cover inland targets and will not provide the intelligence we require.

(2) Drones. They do not produce as good coverage as the U-2. They are more vulnerable. The shooting down of a drone would call for a different response by the U.S. because no pilot is involved.

(3) Balloons. These could operate at 90-100 thousand feet with good cameras and would be relatively invulnerable. However, they cannot be controlled without an elaborate setup which does not exist but which could be constructed. The coverage depends on the control of the balloons. Thus, the coverage is not as good as the U-2 and the American public, learning of this, could complain that we were not adequately covering the island. Secretary Rusk said that a balloon is different only because it is unmanned.

General LeMay, responding to Secretary Rusk's question, said the pilot of a U-2 cannot outmaneuver a SAM missile. To do so keeps the plane in the area a longer time, and, therefore, increases the risk. Sam missile guidance makes them lethal.

(4) OXCART. This plane is not ready to fly at its peak capacity and will not be for several months. It is now able to fly mach 2.2 at 75 thousand feet. It could not be shot down but its presence would be detected. The propaganda difficulty would not be relieved because the plane makes a loud sonic boom which would be heard by many people on the ground. Secretary Rusk commented that we might use the OXCART with its sonic boom and then ask Castro if he preferred that we go back to the silent U-2. This might be something to talk about.

(5) Satellites. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

no satisfactory alternative to the U-2.

In answer to a question, General LeMay said the B-58 could not do the job [REDACTED]. The plane is capable of a supersonic burst and the first mission would get through, but following missions would have great difficulty.

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Secretary Rusk discussed political actions which might be taken:

(1) Negotiations on the overflight problem with Castro would be fruitless.

(2) The UN Security Council might be asked to vote against the overflights. We could probably prevent an adverse vote by telling Council members that the problem was being dealt with by the OAS. If we could persuade the Council that the OAS was seized of the problem, we could avoid an adverse vote but we could not possibly get a favorable vote.

(3) The General Assembly, which will not meet until Fall, could be kept from a 2/3 adverse vote. We would probably get more "yes" than "no" votes but many countries would abstain.

(4) We might revise the October 1962 proposals for on-site inspection in Cuba. The risk here is that the Cubans might accept and then we would have to give up overflights in return. Would a UN on-site inspection system meet our intelligence requirements? In October 1962 we answered this question in the negative.

Director McCone said he was not prepared to answer the question but he would look at it carefully. He personally doubted the value of a UN on-site inspection in Cuba.


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(5) World Court. Secretary Rusk is not too sanguine about what we would do if Castro took us to the World Court in an effort to disprove our right to overfly Cuba. We could show that our authority for the overflights was given us by the OAS but is an OAS ruling binding on Cuba which refused to accept the OAS decision? We say it is, but the International Court of Justice might not say it is. One way to deal with an effort by Castro to use the World Court would be for us to offer to adjudicate all outstanding legal issues with Cuba. We could thus confuse the overflight issue by talking about the legality of the nationalization of American property in Cuba, etc. There is always the possibility that Cuba could formally withdraw from the OAS and denounce the treaty, thereby claiming that it was not bound by any OAS action. One action we could take would be to go again to the OAS to request a reaffirmation of the 1962 resolution.

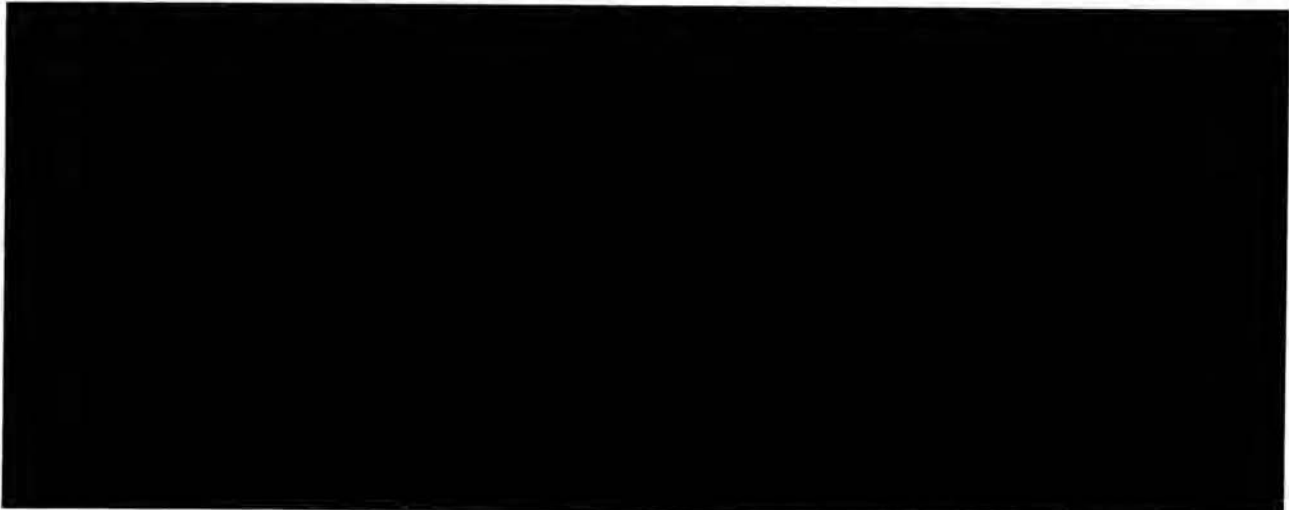
Secretary Rusk concluded by saying that inevitably we must continue the U-2 flights. We should look again, perhaps at a later date, at the possibility of using OXCART.

The President entered the meeting at 10:45. Secretary Rusk summarized the earlier discussion and Secretary McNamara summarized the conclusions, 

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Mr. Bundy said that everyone agrees that overflights are necessary.

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Secretary Rusk raised again the feasibility of using the A-11. Mr. McCone described the sonic boom problem with the A-11 which the U-2 does not have. When the A-11 is flying at maximum altitude and maximum speed,

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it is dubious whether the SAM missile could hit it. It might not even be seen by Cuban radar,

The President said we had no choice but to continue our overflights. However, we should take every precaution to avoid a U-2 being shot down.

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[REDACTED]

We will meet again Tuesday to discuss the matter further. A careful study of the use of the A-11 as an alternative would be available then. We must provide the required intelligence, but we must make every effort to increase the security of the overflight planes. We should get our information in a most secure way and make the overflights as secure as possible. In the meantime, we should continue our present program.

Secretary Rusk said we might consider a mix of overflight instruments such as U-2s, interspersed with the A-11.

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[REDACTED]

Mr. Bundy said the contingency plan was available for the President's reading. It provided for military reaction under certain circumstances.

The President expressed an interest in the contingency plan, particularly in view of the fact that he had read in the press all about what it was supposed to contain. He expressed his irritation that war plans leak to the press. He had gotten almost to a point where he hated to meet with Foreign Ministers because he read in the press the following day everything he had said to the Minister and some things he hadn't said. Only four people were present at a recent meeting, but reports of what went on appeared in the press. (This apparently referred to a conversation with Foreign Minister Butler.) We must tighten up security and put an end to such press leaks.

Bromley Smith

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

RECORD OF ACTIONS

NSC
Action

2486. OVERFLIGHTS OF CUBA

- a. Noted the President's acceptance of the Council's view that our intelligence requirements necessitate continuation of overflights of Cuba.
- b. Noted the President's request for further discussion of all methods of obtaining the required aerial photographs.
- c. Noted the President's instructions to increase efforts to prevent leaks to the press.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NIJ 90-68
By WJG NARA, Date 3-25-92

May 2, 1964
530th NSC Meeting
NSC Action 2486

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NSC Control No. 163

ATTENDANCE LIST FOR THE 530th NSC MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1964 at 10:00 A. M.
IN THE CABINET ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE

The President of the United States, Presiding

Speaker of the House of Representatives

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Robert F. Kennedy

CIA

John A. McCone, Director

DEFENSE

Robert S. McNamara, Secretary
Cyrus Vance, Deputy Secretary
John McNaughton, Assistant Secretary
Eugene Fubini, Deputy Director, Research & Engineering

JCS

General Curtis E. LeMay, USAF, Chief of Staff, U. S. Air Force

OEP

Edward A. McDermott, Director

STATE

Dean Rusk, Secretary
George W. Ball, Under Secretary
Ambassador Thompson
U. Alexis Johnson, Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs
Thomas Mann, Assistant Secretary

TREASURY

C. Douglas Dillon, Secretary

USIA

Carl T. Rowan, Director

WHITE HOUSE

McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President
George Reedy, Press Secretary to the President
Major General Chester V. Clifton, Military Aide to the President
Walter Jenkins, Special Assistant to the President
Bill Moyers, Assistant to the President
Jack Valenti, Special Assistant to the President
Bromley Smith, Executive Secretary, National Security Council

SNIE 85-2-64
Advance Copy of the Estimate
1 May 1964

SPECIAL NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

LIKELIHOOD OF AN ATTEMPTED SHOOT-DOWN
OF A U-2

NOTE: This is an advance copy of the estimate as approved by the United States Intelligence Board. The printed text will be circulated within five days of this issuance.

Central Intelligence Agency

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NLS 016-001-5-1
By [signature] NARA, Date 6-12-02

Submitted by the

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Defense, and NSA.

Concurred in by the

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

on 1 May 1964. Concurring were the Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State; the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; and the Director of the National Security Agency. The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USIB and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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SERVICE SET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

2 May 1964

SUBJECT: SNIE 85-2-64: LIKELIHOOD OF AN ATTEMPTED SHOOT-DOWN OF A U-2

THE PROBLEM

To estimate Cuban and Soviet intentions with regard to US overflights of Cuba.

1. When we last reviewed this general subject in December 1963, we estimated that the Soviets would probably relinquish control of the SAM system in Cuba, perhaps shortly after the Cubans were able to operate the entire system. We further estimated that Castro might endeavor through diplomatic and propaganda means to force a political solution with regard to the overflights, beginning such a campaign even before final transfer of the system.

2. Castro is now engaged in a campaign of this sort; we believe that he still prefers to try to force the cessation of U-2 flights by

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political pressure at the UN and elsewhere. Because he expects to gain complete control of the SAM system within the next few weeks he hopes that, with Soviet support, his warnings will be taken seriously and the US compelled to abandon U-2 flights over Cuban territory.

3. The Soviets must for obvious reasons give strong political support to Castro, yet they almost certainly wish to avoid the major crisis which would follow a shoot-down. They could escape such a crisis by withholding control of the SAM system, and we do not rule this out despite the high political cost to the USSR. The US, however, can have no assurance that Khrushchev will take this way out. Indeed, we continue to estimate that the odds favor the complete turnover of controls to Cuban personnel. Moreover, the Soviets probably still hope to persuade the US to discontinue or modify the overflight program. Recent Soviet approaches to the US may have been designed to gain time and probe for a possible settlement. Probably also the Soviets will strongly urge Castro to try all possible political actions before shooting.

4. If Castro obtains control of the SAM system and becomes convinced that agitation and pressures are ineffective, we believe that there will be a significant and, over time, growing chance that he will order a shoot-down. Indeed, he may believe that any US military reaction will be a limited one, and could even help

his case by incensing world opinion. We think this general estimate is supported by his May Day speech.

5. There is, of course, a possibility of an unauthorized shoot-down attempt; in view of the importance to Castro of this matter we believe the chances of such an occurrence are small.