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OXC-6026-63

TAB B

OXGART SURFACING PRESS RELEASE

The capability to conduct aerial reconnaissance has proved of vital importance to the United States and the Free World. In 1959, the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and others urged that a successor to the U-2 aircraft be developed which could fly at three times the speed of sound. The Central Intelligence Agency was directed to proceed with such a development, and the program has been continued by both the Eisenhower and present administrations.

This aircraft was successfully developed by the CIA at a secret test site in the west where it has been flying since the spring of 1962. It has never been used to overfly foreign territory but gives the United States a powerful latent capability to examine promptly crisis situations which endanger world peace such as that created in Cuba by the Soviet Union one year ago.

The development of this remarkable MACH 3 airplane has created an entirely new aircraft technology, which is now being turned to other uses. The Department of Defense is purchasing additional aircraft of this type to be used as long range interceptors for defense of the United States and Canada. These will begin to appear at normal Air Force installations in 1964 and 1965. The development of a MACH 3 supersonic transport aircraft will benefit greatly from the lessons learned here and arrangements are fixed to make the important technical developments, under appropriate safeguards, available to all contractors who are bidding for this contract.

The detailed performance of the CIA airplane will remain strictly classified and no further statements will be issued on this matter.

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NRO & USAF REVIEWS COMPLETED

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23 October 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Project OXCART
(Magnitude of Security Problem)

1. This Fall will mark the fourth anniversary of "Production go-ahead" for the OXCART vehicle. During the intervening years the initial covert development of ten OXCART aircraft has expanded into a group of separate developments of far greater magnitude and complexity than was ever anticipated. Projects KEDLOCK, TAGBOARD, and EARNING, individually representing a sizeable development, have their origins in Project OXCART. Simultaneously, with increased developments, the OXCART operational readiness date has slipped. On the premise that the Project OXCART mission must be concealed the associated Projects identified above have remained under the Security cognizance and control of CIA through Project OXCART Headquarters. It is the purpose of this memorandum to outline, in summary, areas of growth which are of continuing Security significance.

2. The procurements resulting from new developments have occasioned significant increases in the following Security areas:

A. Clearances

There are currently [Redacted] actively participating in Project OXCART. KEDLOCK clearances have been granted to [Redacted] personnel. The increase in OXCART clearances granted is reflected as follows:

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October 1960
August 1961
March 1962
August 1963

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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[redacted]
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The current total is broken down as follows:

U.S. Government
Industry

[redacted]

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All Government personnel cleared for Project OXCART are aware of CIA participation; approximately five per cent (5%) of the cleared industrial personnel are aware of CIA participation.

In addition to the personnel currently participating, approximately [redacted] have been cleared and debriefed from the Project.

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During the past six months an average of [redacted] requests for OXCART clearances and [redacted] requests for KEDLOCK clearances have been submitted each month to Project OXCART Headquarters.

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Attachment #1 to this memorandum lists the breakdown of U.S. Government OXCART clearances by Agency.

B. Industrial Contractors

By October 1960, Project OXCART Headquarters had granted clearances to individuals within [redacted] Industrial firms. Currently there are personnel cleared within [redacted] firms.

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Full OXCART clearances (Awareness of CIA) have been granted to individuals within approximately [redacted] of the above firms. Security cognizance of Project activities within these facilities is maintained by [redacted] assigned to Project OXCART Headquarters; each facility is visited three or four times per annum for a review of personnel and physical security procedures.

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Security cognizance within the other industrial firms (wherein there is no knowledge of CIA) is maintained by Project Headquarters through prime contractor Security officers.

[redacted]
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In addition to [redacted] firms with cleared people, there are more than [redacted] vendor facilities contributing to the program on an unclassified basis.

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C. Hardware Production

From the original order of ten (10) OXCART vehicles in 1960, production orders are now in being for the following vehicles:

OXCART - 10 (A-12)
KEDLOCK - 3 (AF-12)

[redacted]
EARNING - 31 (R-12)
TAGBOARD - 20 (DRONE)

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The industrial speculation aroused by the large procurements required to support this many aircraft constitutes a most vulnerable area.

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D. [redacted]

The personnel buildup at the flight test location has also greatly exceeded expectations. The latest increase has been occasioned by the decision to conduct the KEDLOCK flight test program at that location. Current manning figures predict a population of [redacted] personnel [redacted] by December 1963.

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[redacted] population growth is reflected as follows:

January 1961
August 1962
April 1963
August 1963

[redacted]

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The separation of [redacted] from their permanent homes and transportation of the majority of them [redacted] constitutes a primary area of security concern. Every effort is being made to thoroughly brief each individual before

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[redacted]

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he departs [redacted] and access to all aircraft entering [redacted] is strictly controlled by CIA Security Officers assigned at the Burbank, California [redacted] terminal points.

In addition to the permanent personnel reflected in the above table, numerous individuals from Industry and Government visit [redacted] each month.

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3. It is indeed extraordinary that to date the existence of the OXCART vehicle and its state of development have received no compromising notoriety from the news media.

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[redacted]

When feasible the Subject is interviewed and debriefed by a CIA Security Officer.

OXCART awareness has been and will be generated by four principal causes:

A. Industrial Competition

The aircraft industry, highly competitive, is generally aware of the "skunk works" activity at Burbank. Mr. C. L. "Kelly" Johnson is notorious by reputation, conspicuous by his unavailability to the industry and invariably associated with the "skunk-works," giving rise to considerable speculation about a new vehicle at LAC.

The large purchase orders already generated in support of OXCART and associated Projects represent an enormous development, recognizable within small vendor facilities and large contractor plants to sophisticated buyers and salesman.

Of increasing concern is the problem of conflicting priorities currently being encountered within many sub-contractor facilities. Small

[redacted]

[Redacted]

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vendors manufacturing parts for OXCART, B-70 and TFX are experiencing difficulty in explaining slow delivery to the B-70 and TFX people. Furthermore B-70 and TFX representatives visiting vendors can observe similar hardware being manufactured for "another customer."

B. Technical Press

There have been several speculative references in Aviation periodicals to "U-2 follow ons" and "Kelly Johnson's SKUNKWORKS." However no substantive articles of a compromising nature have appeared.

Information has been received at Project OXCART Headquarters that Mr. Robert Hotz, Editor, Aviation Week is aware of the existence and nature of the Program.

C. Accidents

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[Redacted]

D. Sightings of OXCART Vehicle

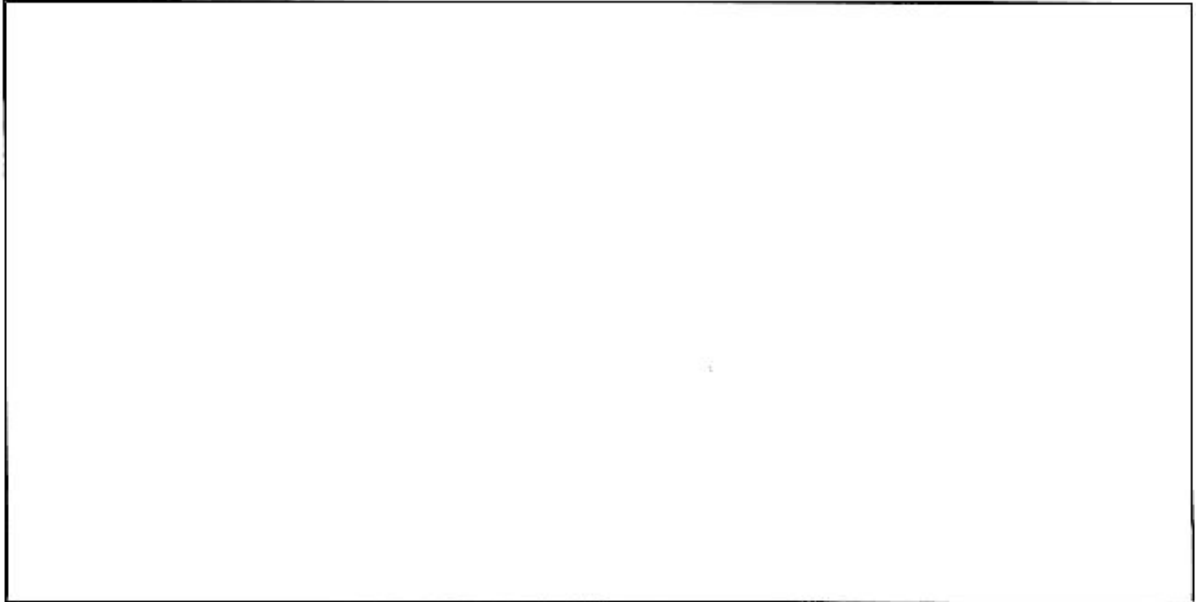
The flight lines utilized by the OXCART vehicles during test flights unavoidably, on occasion, transverse the flight lines of commercial and military jet aircraft with possible exposure of the OXCART vehicle. When the proximity is such that safety is involved and the non-OXCART pilot expresses a desire to file a "near miss report" with FAA, or if the non-OXCART pilot verbally reports an unidentifiable, exotic aircraft, procedures are activated to interview and debrief the pilot.

4. The successful concealment of Project OXCART must be attributed to the individual responsibility of the thousands of people participating and particularly to the cooperation of contributing industrial organizations.

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Currently every effort is being made to rescrutinize the need to know of all Project participants both in Government and Industry. The primary concern of SS/OSA during the coming year will be the continued effort to protect the OXCART mission and compartment OXCART from Project KEDLOCK, EARNING, and TAGBOARD.

[Redacted]
Chief, Security Staff
OSA

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[Redacted] SS/OSA

Handle via
Control System

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Approved For Release 2003/01/24 : CIA-RDP63-00313A000500040040-9

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CLASSIFIED
By: JKS
Date: 4/6
NAD 00090

9 JAN 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Surfacing of RX-12

1. The decision to surface the existence of an A-12 type vehicle jeopardizes the actual A-12 program to a point that it will not likely be possible to maintain the covert character of this program, especially since the decision and the proposed DOD press release are tied directly to the B-70 controversy which is most likely to involve considerable political controversy and examination. The question then is: What line of action in the initial press releases would be in the best interests of the Nation and most advantageous in salvaging the future of the A-12 and its mission.

2. In this respect, the proposed DOD press release (Attachment #1) is basically true and forms a creditable story which per se cannot be disproved. Should public and press be receptive to the proposed release, then some cover for our present and future OXCART activities will be achieved. The only general criticism is that the present first sentence of the first paragraph lacks details about the schedule of procurement mentioned; hence, it is not a meaningful start to the story.

3. We should consider an alternative to the proposed DOD statement which would incorporate an admission of CIA participation in the program. To accomplish this, we would propose changing the last sentence of the first paragraph to read as follows: "It can now be revealed that the proposed R-X is to be developed as an outgrowth of a secret experimental aircraft of very high performance and advanced technical concept." Additionally, the first sentence of the second paragraph would be changed to read as follows: "The development of the aircraft designated the X-21 was undertaken jointly by the Air Force and the Central Intelligence Agency in mid-1959 as the result of a proposal by Lockheed that was notable for its advanced technical concepts."

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4. Arguments for inclusion of the CIA as a participant in the development of an A-12 type vehicle include the following:

A. The mention of Lockheed and methodology employed in the X-21 development will draw a comparison to the U-2 program and speculation of CIA's involvement and possible true purpose of the present program. Realistically it must be assumed that technical people in the aircraft industry as well as the technical press are aware of the true elements and have refrained from comment in National interest. The proposed release may be interpreted by them as an attempted deception and may relieve them from their voluntary censorship and invite all-out reporting, which will inevitably result in the CIA being involved.

B. By reference to the involvement of the CIA in the initial undertaking, the U. S. Government will be in a better position to maintain the veil of secrecy around methods employed in the development of the aircraft through legal CIA security prerogatives.

C. By use of this release, we cannot be accused later of attempting to hide CIA participation to avoid normal controls.

D. Provides a legal explanation for procurement methods.

E. Tends to enhance CIA prestige.

F. Provides more lead time to surface a non-AR model first.

G. Would tend to provide more direct security to the remaining aspects of the A-12 Program.

H. Takes advantage of present favorable public opinion environment as to reconnaissance.

I. No CIA affiliation story:

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- (1) Will give rise to more questions than it answers.
- (2) Tie the hands of CIA by attempting to pretend no CIA affiliation.
- (3) Will raise question of procurement practices that cannot be answered.
- (4) Although true, is an attempt to misrepresent and may cause embarrassments.

5. Arguments against inclusion of the CIA as a participant in the development of an A-12 type vehicle include the following:

- A. Such admission of CIA participation would be a departure from a basic tenet of Intelligence philosophy and could well result in widespread criticism in this country and abroad.
- B. The proposed DOD release is basically true and forms a creditable story which per se cannot be disproved. Should public and press be receptive to proposed release, then some cover for our present and future OXCART activities will be achieved.
- C. It might be possible to keep CIA out of the picture and, therefore, preclude criticism of CIA involvement in such operations and would eliminate Soviet opportunities for propaganda against CIA motives.
- D. Official admission of CIA involvement may result in:
 - (1) Compromise of deception techniques utilized in industry to disguise the true nature and purpose of work performed (in house cover stories).
 - (2) Compromise of methods and techniques used by CIA in "black" contracting and maintaining industrial and operational security.

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- (3) Giving the R-X a CIA taint that might be extremely difficult to purge from the R-X aircraft and its utilization possibly putting it in the notorious U-2 category.
- (4) Compromising the cover of CIA Special Agents who investigated numerous personnel associated with the program.
- (5) Provoke Soviet propaganda.
- (6) Invite certain Congressional and editorial criticisms on scope of CIA activities.
- (7) Suggest probability of future covert operations.
- (8) Exposing other CIA developments.

6. The decision as to whether to disclose CIA affiliation in the initial press release under the present circumstances is one of value judgment to be made at the highest levels where all of the above ramifications can be carefully weighed.

7. In any event, we feel that it is imperative to:

A. Prevent the disclosure of the AR aspects and capabilities of the vehicle.

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B. To protect the scope and nature of

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SIGNED

for

HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.
Deputy Director
(Research)

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Attachment as stated

Signature recommended:

cc: DDCI
Exec. Dir.

[(Signed) Jack C. Ledford
AD/OSA

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AD/OSA:JCL:js (8 Jan 63)

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