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CONTROL SYSTEM

(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

August 17, 1970

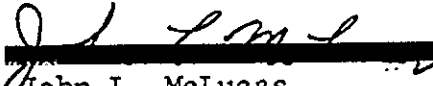
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Consolidation of the U-2R Fleet

Reference Mr. Helm's memorandum of August 4, 1970,  
subject: Idealist Program.

As you requested, I have had the attached paper prepared on U-2 fleet consolidation. It briefly summarizes the roles and missions of both the CIA and Air Force programs, presents cost and operational considerations and my recommendation for consolidation of the U-2 fleet within the Air Force (SAC).

  
John L. McLucas

1 Attachment  
CIA Idealist-Air Force  
Senior Year U-2 Programs

IDEALIST

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CIA IDEALIST-AIR FORCE SENIOR YEAR U-2 PROGRAMS

Background

1. Since early January of this year we have been reviewing both the need and desirability of maintaining two separate U-2 fleets, i.e., the CIA and the Air Force. A number of NRO/CIA studies have been made which identify:

- a. Costs of maintaining a dual fleet at varying force levels.
- b. Costs of maintaining a consolidated fleet.

2. The necessity for continuance of a U-2 fleet at some acceptable force level has been established.

3. The question of fleet consolidation can best be addressed by examining three specific areas: Roles and Missions, Today's Operating Environment and Cost Considerations.

Roles and Missions

1. CIA: The Idealist program consists of six U-2R aircraft providing the capability for world-wide deployment. Four aircraft are located at Edwards AFB, California, and maintain a quick reaction posture for response to world-wide contingencies. Two U-2Rs are located (b)(1)1.5c

(b)(1)1.5c  
pheral reconnaissance for the coast of China.

2. USAF: The SAC Senior Year program also consists of six U-2R aircraft. This program provides the capability for the following:

- a. Cuba overflight. One aircraft is located at McCoy AFB, Florida, for photo reconnaissance of Cuba.
- b. SEA reconnaissance. One aircraft is located at U Tapao, Thailand, for photo reconnaissance of SEA.

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c. Peripheral (b)(1)1.5c collection. Approval has been given for the immediate development of an improved (b)(1)1.5c collection capability. Four aircraft are presently located at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, which can be used in satisfaction of the requirement for one (b)(1)1.5c operating location. However, additional aircraft would be required for either a second (b)(1)1.5c operation or an extended overseas operation at one location.

3. Training, tests, etc. are applicable to both fleets and are conducted primarily at or from the two home bases at Edwards and Davis-Monthan.

Today's Operating Environment

1. As pointed out in Mr. Duckett's August 4, 1970 memorandum, the CIA IDEALIST program has provided a means of mounting

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(b)(1)1.5c On the other hand, the USAF (SAC) force is being used primarily for overt reconnaissance missions. In today's environment the ability to conduct a covert reconnaissance flight in a crisis area is becoming very questionable. Modern radar and SIGINT techniques provide the principal nations with the capability to know that we are coming and in some instances what we are doing. Hence, vulnerability and survivability have become the key points in the selection of new reconnaissance platforms where denied overflight is required. (b)(1)1.5c

(b)(1)1.5c

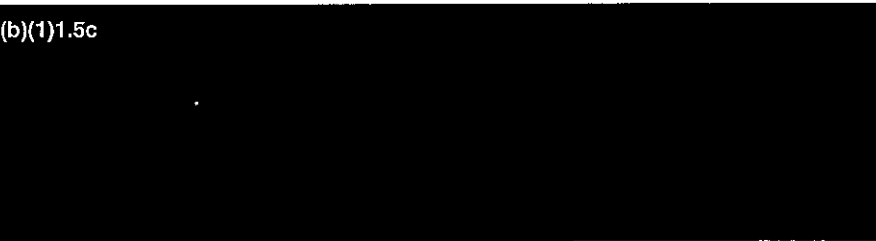
2. From these facts it would seem then that the original concept for the U-2 program is changing in two ways. First, from that of a covert overflight capability, to a more open peripheral or stand-off method of collection. Second, from a

primary photo reconnaissance capability to a combination  
(b)(1)1.5c Photo capability. In both of these areas it appears  
that both the USAF and CIA can accomplish the missions  
equally as well. To summarize briefly:

a. World-wide deployment, quick reaction: Both the  
USAF and CIA have such a capability in being today.  
The current operation was a good demonstration of  
this fact.

b. China missions:

(1) Peripheral reconnaissance. If the need for  
stand-off collection by the U-2 is still valid,  
the USAF could fly from the existing SEA operat-  
ing location or from some other suitable Far  
East base such as (b)(1)1.5c or Kadena,  
Okinawa.

(2) (b)(1)1.5c  


(b)(1)1.5c However, when  
considering the cost of the (b)(1)1.5c opera-  
tion (about (b)(1)1.5c annually) and the need today,  
it would seem that a gradual phase-down is pos-  
sible. A plausible approach might be a two-phase  
stepdown. First, reduce the number of aircraft  
from two to one, and provide the detachment with  
the Iris II camera system. The overt rationale  
here would be that the new Iris camera is better  
suited to the overflight capability. After a  
period of time the remaining aircraft could be  
withdrawn, and (b)(1)1.5c intelligence requirements  
satisfied by providing them with selected data  
from other reconnaissance platforms.

c. United Kingdom - British participation. Believe this program could be continued through normal State Department channels.

d. (b)(1)1.5c



3. The area of command, control and support should also be considered in fleet consolidation under the Air Force. An IDEALIST deployment today involves split responsibilities. CIA executes the deployment and the mission but support functions, airlift, logistics, rescue, etc., are provided from DoD assets. DoD has the capability to execute the command and control function through JCS/USAF command and operations channel. As the Air Force already is providing the support a consolidation within SAC would eliminate the need for splitting the responsibilities between the CIA and DoD. A CIA consolidation would require a continuation of this split responsibility.

Cost Considerations

1. Mr. Duckett's memorandum outlines several options of Operating Levels vs. projected annual costs. Three of these options are:

<u>Mode of Operation</u>	<u>Annual Cost</u>
a. Continue current split fleet (fly 6 A/C in each)	(b)(1)1.5c
b. Consolidate under CIA (fly 10)	(b)(1)1.5c
c. Consolidate under SAC (fly 10)	(b)(1)1.5c

2. There is an apparent savings of from about (b)(1)1.5 to (b)(1)1.5 likely under consolidation. The first increment of these savings is made possible by simply maintaining one fleet and one home base. Training requirements, alert postures, maintenance schedules, overhead, etc., are reduced by consolidation.

This enables 10 aircraft to satisfy the same requirements that now takes 12 aircraft. The second cost savings, as applies to the USAF, results primarily from the use of Air Force pilots and "blue suit" maintenance as compared to the costs of CIA pilots and contract maintenance technicians.

It is important to note however that both the current and planned increased utilization of the U-2R fleet will result in higher annual costs than now budgeted. These costs would be experienced independent of whether the fleet is consolidated and in fact consolidation may help minimize them. Additionally, the savings realized by a consolidation can be used to offset increased utilization costs and help stay within the overall budget.

Conclusions

1. The traditional role of the U-2 fleet is changing from covert photo reconnaissance overflight missions to more open peripheral photo (b)(1)1.5c collection type missions.
2. The Air Force (SAC) has the capability to satisfy today's missions requirements.
3. A savings of (b)(1)1.5c, (b)(1)1.5g is possible under fleet consolidation.

Recommendation

Consolidate U-2R fleet under SAC (fly 10).