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The SR-71 [redacted] overflights of Cuba have been flown on a schedule of once every 56 to 70 days. The last mission was

[redacted] The next normal operating "window" would be 11-25 ~~December~~ ^{JANUARY}.

Because of the 20 January change in administration, the Department of State has recommended that this mission be flown in the time period of 6-13 ~~December~~ ^{JANUARY} -i.e., a few days earlier than expected. State believes this would be prudent and would permit the new administration additional time in which to contemplate its position on whether or not to continue these missions, or to use them as bargaining chips in any possible negotiations with Cuba.

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While useful intelligence is derived from the [redacted] mission their primary use is as a political signal. The USIB formally declared that sufficient intelligence was derived from other sources, and that there was no intelligence requirement for these flights. Thus, the determination of whether or not to continue these flights is mainly a political one.

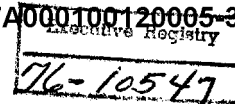
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The OAG is asked to approve the next [redacted] mission for the period of 6-13 ~~December~~ ^{JANUARY} 1976.

CU

Com F # 3

DOS, USAF reviews completed



30 November 1976

TO : Mr. Knoche
Adm. Murphy
Dr. Stevens

FROM :



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SUBJECT: SR-71 Overflight of Cuba

Immediately prior to last Friday morning's OAG meeting, the attached agenda item was LDX'd to OAG Principals by the Executive Secretary, OAG. It concerned the proposal of the State Department to advance slightly the schedule of the next regular SR-71 overflight of Cuba so that it will be flown prior to the change in administration. State refers to previously approved USIB requirements on Cuba which recognizes such SR-71 missions as a political requirement to maintain a continuing U.S. presence over the island.

Since SR-71 overflight is primarily a political signal and both the choice of aircraft and the schedule of overflight

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(over)

were established by Dr. Kissinger, it was recommended that the Director support the State Department in the OAG discussion of the proposal.

OAG approval was obtained.

Attachment:

a/s

cc: Chairman, COMIREX w/att
Chairman, ICRS w/att
CIA Member, COMIREX w/att
CIA Member, ICRS w/att
NIO/LA w/att
Recce Chrono w/att

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