CAT and Air America in Japan  
by Dr. Joe F. Leeker

First published on 4 March 2013, last updated on 24 August 2015

I) A new beginning:

As has been shown elsewhere, Civil Air Transport, after its glorious days during the civil war in mainland China, had to go into exile on the Island of Formosa in late 1949. With only very few places left where to fly, CAT had enormous financial problems at the end of December 1949, although on 1 November 1949, CAT and the CIA had signed an agreement by which the CIA promised to subsidize CAT by an amount of up to $ 500,000.1 In order to prevent the fleets of China National Aviation Corp. (CNAC) and Central Air Transport Corp. (CATC) detained at Hong Kong’s Kai Tak airport from falling into the hands of Communist China, General Chennault and Whiting Willauer, the main owners of CAT, had bought both fleets from the Nationalist Government of China against personal promissory notes for $ 4.75 million – an amount of money they did not have2 – and registered all aircraft in the United States to Civil Air Transport, Inc. (CATI), Dover, DE on 19 December 1949. But it was not until late 1952 that the former CATC and CNAC aircraft were awarded to CAT by court decision,3 and so this long lasting lawsuit, too, meant enormous financial expenses to CAT. Finally, in order to prevent their own fleet from falling into the hands of Communist China, on 5 January 1950, the Chennault / Willauer partnership transferred their aircraft to C.A.T. Inc – not identical with CATI, although resident at exactly the same address, that is at 317-325 South State Street, Dover, Delaware.4 C.A.T. Inc. later changed its name to Willauer Trading Corporation.5

CAT’s first contact with Japan was a passenger service linking Tokyo and Singapore that was inaugurated on 20 April 50.6 The aircraft used on the run was a DC-4 chartered by CAT from POAS (Siam), with pilots drawn both from POAS and CAT ranks.7 On 6 June 1950, CAT inaugurated a weekly airfreight service linking Taipei and Tokyo, using one of their own C-46s.8 It was not this purely commercial operation, however, that created what was later called Air America Japan, but the Korean War, which began on 25 June 1950. This situation enabled Willauer to successfully negotiate the sale of CAT to the CIA, and in the summer of 1950, all details had been cleared: On 10 July 1950, the Airdale Corporation was incorporated in Delaware as a holding company for the operating entities in South East Asia. On 10 July 1950, CIA General Counsel Lawrence R. Houston incorporated CAT Incorporated under liberal Delaware laws, which was to become the operating entity. In August 1950, the Airdale Corporation acquired 100% of the assets and capital stock of Civil Air Transport from

---

1 Leary, Perilous missions, pp.66-99; Robbins, Air America, pp.52/3.
2 Leary, Perilous missions, p. 95, who quotes Willauer from a taped memoir of 1 December 1960.
4 Copies of the Bill of Sale and related documents kindly sent to the author by Martin Best in his e-mail dated 15 July 2009.
5 See Memorandum dated 19 April 1954, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 2.
Willauer Trading Corporation and transferred them to CAT Inc. the same day. From 21 August 1950 to 28 February 1955, CAT operated on 4 levels: both charter and scheduled airline services; contract work; covert missions; and maintenance.

II) During the Korean War: CAT Inc in Japan

1) Flights for the US Military

While CAT’s airline services were operated out of Taipei, and while most maintenance work was carried out at Tainan on Taiwan, flights that CAT made for the US Government mostly originated in Japan. Flights for the US Government were either contract work – and this was mainly done out of Tachikawa Air Base near Tokyo – or secret missions flown for the CIA, which often originated in Atsugi Naval Air Station south of Tokyo. All flights out of Tachikawa and Atsugi were operated by CAT Inc., making them nearly a separate entity to be distinguished from CAT, the Taiwanese flag carrier operating out of Taipei. So CAT Inc. was the real predecessor of Air America Japan, even if some of the contract work was not done out of Japan. Officially, CAT Inc. flew in the name of “Civil Air Transport, Inc.” of Dover, DE – because this company was clearly American (which was better for getting a USAF contract) and because, as the successor to CNAC, it had operating rights to Japan.

Most of the contract work CAT was involved in was related to the Korean War. When North Korea attacked the south on 25 June 1950, CAT operations had been cut back severely. “Only the skeleton of the organization existed. Most pilots were LWOP [= on leave without pay], and the aircraft were stored (preserved) at Tainan. July 1-19, 1950: Task Force Smith, 24th Infantry Division, arrives in Korea on July 1, the first American ground unit committed to the war. The unit engages the enemy on July 5. There follows a series of delaying actions as the North Koreans advance rapidly to the south. The 374th Troop Carrier Wing (C-54’s) was the only USAF air transport unit in the Far East at the outbreak of the war. A C-47 unit was formed at Ashiya in early July. These aircraft carried personnel and ammunition to Korea; used at first in evacuation of Korea, then for carrying wounded out (usually landing at Itazuke, near the large Army hospital in Fukuoka). July 20, 1950: Taejon abandoned following bitter fight. [...] August 1, 1950: By August 1, the UN forces establish the Pusan perimeter behind the Naktong River – 80 miles from north to south and 50 miles from east to west. There are three airfields within the perimeter, at Pusan, Taegu, and Pohang. The fields have thin asphalt surfaces and are soon unsuitable for C-54’s. The [USAF] C-54’s carry cargo and personnel from Tachikawa to Ashiya (3 hours), where they are transferred to [USAF] C-47’s for Korea.” By 7 September 50, more USAF aircraft had arrived in Japan: 3 Squadrons of C-119s had been assigned to Ashiya, and a C-46 outfit had been established at Tachikawa. On 10 September 50, General Tunner formed Combat Cargo Command (Provisional), which was redesignated 315th Air Division (Combat Cargo) on 25 January 51.

When the Korean War broke out in late June 1950, CAT was operating 3 aircraft flying Army supplies for “Operation AD” from Japan to Korea. However, several CAT planes showed the results of having been more or less inactive for several months, and so Willauer instituted a program of test hops to be flown. On 2 September 50, CAT’s Director of
Operations Joe Rosbert noted: “All CAT planes have been checked & test-flown, and are in good shape. As soon as word is received on expansion, all planes which have been flying will again be test-flown.”\textsuperscript{14} For since July 50, Whiting Willauer, Lew Burridge and others hoped that the Korean War would also mean business for CAT. But it was not until 25 August 50 that Willauer could cable to Chennault that the “Northern Project (Korea)” had been approved. The same evening he wrote to Corcoran and Brennan “that the contract for Okinawa, Japan and Korea [had] been approved by SCAP\textsuperscript{15} subject to negotiations of details. All this means [...] that we can look forward to a very busy and I hope profitable fall and winter and even more important that CAT will be used in the anti-Communist drive.”\textsuperscript{16}

In the December 1950 issue of CAT Bulletin, CAT’s President Whiting Willauer had an optimistic message for his readers: “Starting on the 15\textsuperscript{th} September of this year, CAT entered into a new phase of intense activity which is already taking planes and men to the limit of their facilities. We are all very happy to be busy again after a long period of idleness and are particularly gratified that the job we are doing is directly in support of the United Nations efforts to maintain freedom and democracy in the Far East. CAT is being called on by the United Nations Military Command for extensive airlift from Japan to Korea, and also in connection with rear echelon support of the Far East Air Force Command by carrying military cargoes between Japan and the other islands under SCAP’s command.”\textsuperscript{17} An anonymous article entitled “Operation Booklift” gives some more details: “On September 9\textsuperscript{th} of this year, CAT plunged into its most challenging and largest operation to date – ‘Operation Booklift’. This operation under the command of FEAMCOM (Far East Air Materiel Command) contracted for CAT to fly cargo and personnel to all parts of Korea, distinguishing CAT as the only civilian airline flying for the military forces in this theatre of operations. In order for CAT to undertake this tremendous operation, it necessitated, moving personnel from Tainan, Formosa, to Tachikawa, Japan, a distance of 1610 miles. Making this long range jump was only the first problem; setting up an operational base at Tachikawa was the next. Joe Orlowski, Assistant Director of Operations, was sent to Japan to take charge of this job. According to Joe, large boxes were used as desks in the beginning, small ones used as chairs. Each man sent up in the advance group was not only carrying out his assigned job but also was attending to every other detail that was necessary to keep the planes flying. Due to the shortage of beds, the ‘hot bed’ system had to be used. While all these headaches were taking place behind the scenes, four CAT planes started the operation of Booklift. By the end of September there were twenty planes flying, carrying cargo and personnel to Korea. In a little over a month’s time, cargo had built up to the three million pound mark and at present is nearing the five million pound mark. For CAT, ‘Booklift’ is the first twenty-four-hour operation since the days of Kunming, China. To keep the shuttle moving from Tachikawa and Ashiya to all points in Korea, CAT is using twenty five of its pilots who are averaging well over a hundred hours per month. Among the three hundred odd CAT personnel assembled for ‘Operation Booklift’, ten nationalities are represented. This small ‘league of nations’ is made up of Americans, British, Canadians, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Germans, Turks, Siamese, and Malayans, all working harmoniously. CAT’s rapid build-up and organizational hazards has been made much easier by the great cooperation received from the U.S. Air Force. Brigadier General John P. Doyle, Commanding General of FEAMCOM, has given us all the assistance possible, and Major G. L. Hicks, Liaison Officer between the Air Force and CAT, has been greatly responsible for the smooth coordination of the operation.”\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15} SCAP = Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, that is General McArthur’s headquarters.
How did it all begin? On 8 September 50, CAT signed a letter of intent with the FEAF [US Far East Air Forces] “for the use of all planes made available by CAT for an indefinite period.” The details of the contract – which was to be no. AF 92 (504)-5 – were still to be negotiated with the Air Force’ Far East Air Materiel Command (FEAMCOM) prior to the official signing. According to this contract, CAT was “to fly between points designated by the Commanding General of FEAMCOM. The government guarantees a minimum of 4-hour daily utilization for each aircraft requested. CAT [was] relieved of responsibility for loss of cargo (except in case of gross or wilful negligence), and CAT [was] protected against loss of aircraft and/or crew by enemy action. Payment is on sliding scale, based on monthly utilization, with a rate of $307/hr. for over 500 hours a month. [There was] no time limit on [the] contract. [The] expenditure of $1,500,000 [was] initially authorized. The intention is to use the aircraft to carry critical parts and supplies to USAF units in Korea. The use of CAT is ‘to alleviate a critical shortage in military aircraft during the early days of the Korean War.’

The first idea was that CAT would have to carry cargo and personnel between Tachikawa outside Tokyo – where FEAMCOM had a “sprawling complex” – and Korea using 28 planes effective 1 October 50, but then FEAMCOM asked for 6 planes already on 15 September. At the time of signing, all but 6 of CAT’s aircraft had been “pickled”, but apparently, this was not a problem, since already on 10 September, Rosbert could note that “there are now six aircraft available for FEAMCOM,” and on 19 September, Harry Cockrell, CAT’s man at Tachikawa, reported: “we are ahead of schedule” in build up. So on 15 September 1950, CAT started Operation Booklift, the massive air bridge from Tachikawa air base outside of Tokyo to the fighting forces in Korea. On 20 September 50, Joe Rosbert noted: “To date we have eleven planes (C-46’s) operating in Japan, eight having been officially called by FEAF, one for “AD” flights, and two as spares to maintain schedules.”

The problems that CAT faced with such a big build up, are well described in CAT’s Booklift Report dated 7 October 50, and besides pressure exercised by the US military, they had at least 3 faces: 1) building up a fleet that was big enough to meet the requirements, 2) building up a secondary maintenance facility in Japan so that the aircraft did not have to return to Tainan, and 3) getting enough personnel, that is flight crews and maintenance personnel. As to problem no. 1, that is building up such a large fleet of aircraft to be used in Operation Booklift was an enormous task for an airline that had “pickled” a great number of their aircraft for lack of business. Details of these efforts have been described in the file called CAT, Air Asia, Air America – the Company on Taiwan I: Structure and Development located within my History of Air America. As to problems nos. 2 and 3, Joe Rosbert, CAT’s Director of Operations, wrote on 20 September 1950: “With Operation Booklift, Engineering has the biggest of all department jobs. The most difficult problem is obtaining qualified personnel quickly enough. All but four CAT planes are flying. After these are operating the eight CAA planes will be unpickled and pressed into service. Also, de-icing equipment must be installed before the end of next month. For the Booklift project all 25, 50, and 75 hour checks will be performed at Tachikawa. 100 hour checks and engine changes will be done at Tainan. We have four Crew Chiefs and eleven Chinese mechanics at Tachikawa. […] Five pilots on LWOP [= on leave without pay] have been completely terminated. All Captains except Loane

---

21 Leary, Perilous missions, p.119.
and Shilling have returned for duty. The Chief Pilot has brought crew strength up to 23, and in view of a recent request to bring Booklift up to 25 planes, I have requested to bring up the crew strength up to at least 30.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{MEMO NO. RO-3.1.2211}

\textbf{Date:} 7 October 1950

\textbf{To:} President

\textbf{From:} Director of Operations

\textbf{Subject:} Booklift Report

1. The aircar has momentarily held us to commitment of 28 planes to be available as short notice. In original talks with Flagg several weeks ago an agreement was obtained to extend the lead we could give to be able to replace these planes operations.

2. During the first week in September, the starting date of combat was set for October 1st. Shortly after that Flagg asked if we could have our six planes at Taichung on September 10th which I agreed to. On September 30th the letter of intent was completed by Flagg. Flagg asked in a later letter if we agreed we could supply planes the day before. The Flagg may want 18 planes the day before, so you will come from the actual operational report that they may want 1 or 2 planes a day for the next few days. This actually gives me a false feeling of security.

3. On September 30, a message from Flagg stated, "We are afraid of this 10th," at this time the operation crew was being retrained. We are working with 63 planes available at Taichung. I have sent three more planes to Taichung to bring our planes to 60. In the event of no agreement in the contract, if it is Oct. 10th, they are not satisfied with what we have to go on.

4. The idea is to try and bring the planes available to Taichung. I am working with 63 planes available. General Winfield (Commander of Flagg) does not want to have any planes. I am working with 63 planes available. General Winfield does not want to have any planes. In the event of no agreement in the contract, if it is Oct. 10th, they are not satisfied with what we have to go on.

5. On September 30, a message from Flagg stated, "We are afraid of this 10th," at this time the operation crew was being retrained. We are working with 63 planes available at Taichung. I have sent three more planes to Taichung to bring our planes to 60. In the event of no agreement in the contract, if it is Oct. 10th, they are not satisfied with what we have to go on.

6. On 3 October 50, CAT’s Director of Operations Joe Rosbert added: “Lack of strategic parts and material, which even the Air Force does not have on hand, is also hampering operations both in Tainan and Japan.”\textsuperscript{28}

On 31 October, Rosbert’s words were even more


\textsuperscript{28} Periodic Report no. DO-1-1143 dated 3 October 50, in: UTD/Rosbert/B1F3.
dramatic: “The shortage of parts and personnel may prevent getting two of the CAA planes out of storage for an indefinite period. As each plane has been added to the active fleet, the number of 100 hour checks increases twice as fast. [...] In other words, the parts and personnel problems are increasing every day. This situation will become even worse as the planes come due for the first number four services in November. This is the heaviest service we perform and many items will ground the planes.”

But the Company was also struck by a number of accidents: On 27 September 1950, CAT C-46 XT-862 crash-landed at Iwakuni Air Base, and only some parts were subsequently salvaged and brought to Tainan to be used for spares. In December 50, 3 of CAT’s C-46s

---

30 Accident report of 27 Sept.50, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F15. In his letter dated 9 November 50 to Tainan’s Service Manager, CAT’s Chief Engineer Hugh L. Grundy states that “the original plan to ship part of the salvage to JTAC and part to TNN should be altered to ship all to TNN. Large items such as the undamaged right wing should be stored there, if possible, in such manner as to prevent corrosion and damage, just in case we should need one in that area” (in: UTD/Lewis/B1F15). XT-862 was former N8412C and XT-816, that is msn 22351.
crashed: On 8 December 50, C-46F XT-44, one of the aircraft leased from the CAA of Taiwan,\(^{31}\) crashed on approach to landing at Yonpo, Korea (K-27); one passenger was killed, the crew – Captain Paul J. DuPree, copilot Stan Pan, and F/O Ho Sai – and 5 military passengers were injured; because of enemy pressure the aircraft had to be destroyed.\(^{32}\) On 9 December 50, C-46 XT-852 crashed into the side of Mount Fuji in Japan, while en route Tachikawa to Korea: Captain Robert Heising, copilot Jimmy W.H. Chang, and radio operator T. W. Wen died in the crash.\(^{33}\) And on 10 December 50, C-46D XT-846 crashed on take-off from Taegu (K-2), Korea, when the landing gear had been retracted prematurely; but there were no injuries, and the aircraft could be repaired.\(^{34}\)

C-46F XT-44 after it had crashed at Yonpo, Korea (K27) on 8 December 50
(UTD/Lewis/B1F16)

Problems with building up a secondary maintenance base at Tachikawa and getting enough qualified personnel continued for some time. On 30 September 50, Joe Rosbert’s Periodic Report stated: “The Engineering Department had had insurmountable difficulties in obtaining personnel to cope with the buildup. Ninety percent of the maintenance difficulties are not the fault of the Department. […] The unpicking of the CAA planes is almost at a standstill due to the lack of manpower. We have barely enough people (with overtime) working 12 to 14 hours per day to handle the 100 hour checks, now up to a rate of about one everyday. If the CAF speeds up the approval of use of its personnel, this situation may be alleviated somewhat. Lack of strategic parts and material, which even the Air Force does not have on hand, is also hampering operations both in Tainan and Japan. In order to aid the personnel situation in

---

32 Accident report of this accident, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F16; Leary, Perilous missions, p. 122.
33 HQ 1954th AACS Sq., letter dated 25 January 51, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F17; Leary, Perilous missions, p.122. C-46 XT-852 was msn 22449, former N8370C. It was one of five former CNAC C-46s (XT-848, XT-850, XT-852, XT-854, and XT-856, also identified as N8372C, N8369C, N8370C, N8379C, and N8380C in a certificate issued by J. J. Brennan on 8 July 1950, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel 2) that had been in the hands of Free China and so were turned over by CNAC to CAT on 23 November 1949 (Letter dated 18 February 54 sent by CAT’s C.J. Rosbert to Ward French of CAT Incorporated, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel 2).
34 Accident report of this accident, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F18; Leary, Perilous missions, p.122.
Tachikawa, Grundy and Bradburn will make another trip to Hongkong to hire mechanics who can be sent directly to Japan. This eliminates the screening procedure by officials on Taiwan.”

On 7 November 50, the Hong Kong Standard reported that CAT had engaged some 100 pilots and mechanics – many of them former CNAC and CATC employees –, but that clearance had to be obtained first from the Nationalist authorities to make sure that all of them had a non-Communist background. Other steps undertaken were negotiations to obtain mechanics from the Republic of China Air Force: “This is necessary because Government restrictions will not allow sufficient personnel to come from Hongkong quickly enough.” CAT’s Chief Pilot Bob Rousselot had been instructed to spend 100% of his time engaging sufficient pilots – up to 50 entire crews – to meet the commitments.

On 2 December 50, Joe Rosbert reported that the Engineering Department “was able to employ thirty-one (31) men during the period bringing the total to 464 including 75 coolies. [...] Since the shortage of engines has developed we have had to fly three planeloads (2 each) of engines to keep the planes flying. It is hoped that nine more engines will be available within two or three days and ten more within a week or ten days.” Spare parts coming from USAF stocks were often delayed by red tape, as Rosbert continued: “Although the Chief of Supply has stated that the Air Force has a much bigger supply of parts than we could ever hope to have, we still lose much utilization because of red tape inefficiency in getting the parts from the Air Force, through our Supply section, and into the hands of Engineering to be installed on the plane. This situation will continue to exist until CAT has its own stock of parts where it can be used when needed quickly.”

On 16 December 50, Rosbert’s report was quite optimistic: The Engineering Department “was able to employ about sixteen (16) men during the period bringing the total to 480, including 77 coolies. The engine crisis seems to be over for the time being. With ten (10) new engines per month arriving from the States this situation should be more stable. However, there is still the question of Hongkong for we must rely on HKACEO for our additional requirements of seven or eight engines per month. If something happens to Hongkong, our flying potential will be cut almost in half until the additional engines can be obtained from the States. This is a serious problem for Management to work out. During the period, the Chief Engineer, along with the Director of Operations, inspected Ashiya and Tachikawa to iron out various difficulties. All shops are now quite well in order. We could be almost self-sufficient if the numerous parts required by each shop were in stock. A large effort is being put into improving this situation. In the meantime numerous shop items are being overhauled at Hongkong and Tachikawa.”

During the winter months, CAT Tachikawa Station introduced new winter stands for engine maintenance: “The stands are heavy – weighing about one ton each. However, since a tow bar has been provided and since the overall stand is mounted on three 600 x 16 wheels, it can be readily towed by power tug over rough terrain. On the ramp it can be maneuvered into working position by one man alone. Once jacked up, a thirty mile wind will not move it. Working inside the stand, you can reach every part of the engine and prop with ease and be protected from the elements. [...] It’s waterproof as well as fireproof.”

---

Another problem that lasted from September to December 1950 was Communications at Tachikawa, but this was more a bureaucratic than a technical problem. On 20 September, Joe Rosbert was still quite optimistic: “MOC officially approved the operation of the Taipeh and Tainan radio stations, but disapproved these contacting any CAT station outside of China. There will be no written agreement. Since FEAF has allowed us to install our radio station at Tachikawa, I applied for an exception to MOC’s ruling. We now have permission to operate this Taipeh-Tachikawa circuit, which will open up about September 21.” But on 3 October, Rosbert had to admit: “We thought MOC had approved the Taipeh-Tachikawa circuit, but the Minister is still demanding a letter from SCAP or FEAF stating that we are authorized to operate a station in Tachikawa. Of course, this cannot be done as we are operating the station unofficially on a verbal approval. I am working on this and with George Yeh’s assistance, expect approval momentarily.” This did not happen, however, as Joe Rosbert notes on 16 October: “Although the TPH-TACHI Radio Circuit has been in operation since September 27th, the MOC still has not given official approval. Recently N.N. Chen, of the CAA, approached this office and said that the Minister desired that he, (Chen) accompanied by a representative of the Tele-Communications Department of MOC, proceed to Tachikawa to inspect our station and determine for themselves that, first of all we have one, and second, that it is quite apparent that FEAF has given us approval to operate it.” Then things became even more complicated: “The biggest headache in this Department was the shut-down of the CAT Tachikawa radio station on Sunday, October 29th. This was all caused by the visit of N.N. Chen of CAA and General Feng of MOC to Japan. MOC insisted that they send these representatives to see if we actually had a station in operation. [...] Upon arrival in Japan they took a representative from the Chinese Mission to look at the station. This MOFA man could not understand what difficulty there was in the MOC and CAA seeing that the station was necessary and that CAT was doing a great thing in the name of China. We thought everything was well set when N.N. Chen and General Feng asked for a letter signed by a FEAF officer authorizing the station. When the letter was presented for signature, the C.O. [= Commanding Officer] of the Communications Squadron ordered the station closed because he was sure he would be court marshalled when he found that there were no written orders from FEAF for this station.” For several weeks, nothing happened, so that on 2 December, Joe Rosbert reports that “the Taipeh-Tachikawa circuit is still out.” It was not until 18 December 50 that Joe Rosbert could say: “Finally, on December 16, the USAF allowed our Tachikawa radio

---

station to go on the air. [...] This will assist immeasurably in coordinating Operations and Engineering.”

Apparently, this was not yet the end of the story, as on 17 February 1951, CAT C-46 XT-910 had left Tainan with 26 pieces of communications equipment, but was impounded at Sungshan Airfield, Taipei, because it had not been properly checked by the Tainan Airfield Joint Inspection Group. The purpose of the flight may only be guessed – probably the equipment was to be sent to Tachikawa to build up communications there. Although the outcome of this incident is unknown, it is believed that things improved soon afterwards.

---

Mailgram Ref.40-0421 Feb. 17, 1951

To: Civil Air Transport
From: Taiwan Peace Preservation Command
Subject: Stealthy Flight of XT-910

1) We received mailgram Ref.044 from Tainan Airfield Joint Inspection Group as follows:

"a) To-day February 1 at 1130L one SAT aircraft loaded with communications equipment stealthily took off without knowledge of the Inspection Group. When we discovered the flight, we immediately called up Sungshan Airfield Inspection Group by long distance and were informed that the aircraft landed at Sungshan airfield at 1500L without manifest. They pretended that they forgot to bring the manifest along with them.

"b) The aircraft is XT-910 loaded with 26 pieces of communications equipment weighing over 5,000 lbs. This is an action in context of government orders and evasion of regular Inspection. Kindly impound the aircraft at Sungshan airfield in order to find out actual condition.

"c) Kindly note and reply."

2) Please inform us the actual facts of this case.

3) Copy of this message sent to Sungshan and Tainan Airfield Joint Inspection Groups.

K. C. Wu
Commander
Pen. Meng-chi
Deputy Commander

cc: ENG. for action & reply

SIS

Scheffler
David Tseng
File

CAT C-46 XT-910 impounded on 17 February 1951
(UTD/Rosbert/B2F1)

---

After building up a fleet that was big enough to meet the requirements, after building up a secondary maintenance facility in Japan so that the aircraft did not have to return to Tainan, and after getting enough personnel, that is flight crews and maintenance personnel, that is with all of these problems solved in the meantime, what did CAT do during the Korean War? In order to better understand CAT’s role during the Korean War, it is necessary to outline the course of that war. The Korean War can be divided into 4 phases. The first phase comprises the invasion of South Korea by North Korean troops and the early reactions of the Western world. After the North Koreans had attacked the South on 25 June 1950, the United Nations Security Council determined on 27 June 50 by Resolution no. 83 that this was an action against peace and that North Korea should withdraw their troops to the 38th Parallel. As North Korea did not comply with it, United Nations Security Council Resolution no. 85, adopted on 30 July 1950, authorized the United Nations Command under General Douglas MacArthur to support Korea. Although 16 countries supported the military actions, about 90% of the troops were Americans. One of the first steps was that US President Truman ordered General MacArthur to transfer materiel to the Army of the Republic of Korea while giving air cover to the evacuation of US nationals. On 5 July 1950, Task Force Smith, which was a small forward element of the 24th Infantry Division, attacked the North Koreans at Osan, but without weapons capable of destroying the North Korean tanks. So they were defeated, and the North Koreans progressed southwards. By August 50, the North Korean Army had pushed back the UN forces including the 8th U.S. Army to the vicinity of Pusan, in southeast Korea. By September, the UN Command controlled only the Pusan city perimeter, about 10% of Korea. During the Battle of the Pusan Perimeter (August–September 1950), the US Army withstood North Korean attacks, while the US Air Force and the US Navy destroyed North Korean logistic depots, petroleum refineries, and harbors, while the US Navy air forces attacked transport hubs preventing the North Koreans from being resupplied in the South. At the same time, reinforcements and tanks arrived from several US garrisons. The turning-point, however, was the Battle of Incheon in September 1950. To relieve the Pusan Perimeter, General MacArthur had recommended an amphibious landing at Incheon, behind the North Korean lines. So, on 15 September 1950, a combined US Army, US Marines, and South Korean Army assault force attacked the city of Incheon southwest of Seoul, but found only few North Korean defenders.

This victory of the coalition forces marks the beginning of the second phase of the Korean War: The 1st Cavalry Division and other units began their northward advance from the Pusan Perimeter thru enemy territory to reach Osan, then defeated the Communist defenders around Seoul, and on 7 October 50, with UN authorization, the UN Command forces followed the Communist forces northwards even beyond the 38th Parallel. Other coalition forces landed at Wonsan in southeastern North Korea and at Riwon in northeastern North Korea, which had already been captured by South Korean forces. On 20 October 1950, Pyongyang city, the North Korean capital, was captured. The same day, on 26 November 50, the Chinese Army’s North East Frontier Force,47 redesignated as the Chinese People’s Volunteer Army, secretly crossed the Yalu River and attacked the advancing UN forces at several places near the Sino-Korean border, causing many casualties.

These Chinese assaults marked the beginning of the third phase, which was characterized by many battles and ambushes, whose result, however, was a slow, but steady retreat of UN forces towards the south. By 30 November 50, the Chinese Army “Volunteers” managed to expel the US Eighth Army from northwest Korea, and in mid December 1950, the Eighth Army crossed the 38th Parallel. On 4 December 50, Pyongyang had to be evacuated, and

---

USAF aircraft mounted an all-out effort in support of the retreating UN forces. Another episode was the defensive perimeter established by US forces at the port city of Hungnam in northeast Korea on 11 December 50; it lasted only for 2 weeks, as by 24 December, they were forced to evacuate in order to reinforce other troops in the south. During the Hungnam evacuation, about 193 shiploads of UN Command forces and materiel (approximately 105,000 soldiers, 98,000 civilians, 17,500 vehicles, and 350,000 tons of supplies) were evacuated to Pusan by ship. Between January and June 51, there was a lot of fighting around the 38th Parallel. On 4 January 51, the Chinese New Year's Offensive over-whelmed the UN Command forces, and Seoul was conquered by the Communists. UN forces retreated to Suwon in the west, Wonju in the center, and the territory north of Samcheok in the east, where the battlefront stabilized and held. But then the Chinese forces had logistic problems and abandoned the battle lines, whereupon coalition forces proceeded to re-conquer lost territory. In the last two weeks of February 51, the territory south of the Han River was re-conquered, and on 14 March 51, the Communists were expelled from Seoul. On 11 April 51, the controversial General MacArthur, the Supreme Commander in Korea, was relieved of duty, and General Ridgway was appointed Supreme Commander, Korea. Organizing a serious of successful counterattacks, he slowly repelled Communist forces to “Line Kansas”, north of the 38th Parallel in March. Massive Chinese counter-attacks were halted by 20 May, and at month’s end, the US Eighth Army regained “Line Kansas”.

During the rest of the war, that is during its fourth phase running from July 51 to July 53, the UN and the Chinese forces fought against each other in many battles – the Battle of Bloody Ridge (18 August - 15 September 51), the Battle of Heartbreak Ridge (13 September - 15 October 51), the Battle of Hill Eerie (21 March - 21 June 52) or the Battle of Pork Chop Hill (23 March - 16 July 53), to mention just some of them –, but exchanged little territory; the stalemate held. On 27 July 53, an armistice proposed by India put an end to hostilities, with the battle line approximately at the 38th Parallel.

CAT’s participation in the Korean War began on 15 September 50, when the Company started Operation Booklift, the massive air bridge from Tachikawa Air Base outside Tokyo to the fighting forces in Korea, using 6 aircraft. On 20 September 50, Joe Rosbert noted: “To date we have eleven planes (C-46’s) operating in Japan, eight having been officially called by FEAF, one for “AD” flights, and two as spares to maintain schedules.” From the very beginning, the main problem was the pressure exercised by the US military, as Joe Rosbert, CAT’s Director of Operations, complains in his Periodic Report of 3 October 50: “During the first half of September, our operation was doubled, and in the second half, re-doubled. It is expected to again be re-doubled during the first half of October. This is a tremendous rate of buildup, but still FEAF is not pleased, because they are demanding twenty-eight planes, even though it is impossible to produce this number immediately. The reasons are: 1. CAT owns only 19 C-46’s and 1 C-47.CAA owns only 8 C-46’s (one previously owned, given to TAA). This made a total of 27 C-46’s and 1 C-47. 2. One C-46 to be salvaged due to a ground accident [i.e. XT-862]. CAT needs 1 C-47 for the Round-the-Island flight, and 2 C-46’s for its commercial operation. This leaves only twenty-four (24) C-46’s for Booklift. [...] 5. We still have ten (10) planes at Tainan which are not yet flyable. Three of these will be in service by October 10. The remainder not flying by then will be covered by the TAA planes, and the

---

48 Leary, Perilous missions, p.121.
52 This date, 10 October 50, was the deadline for CAT’s buildup set by FEAMC: The threat was that, if the military wasn’t satisfied by what CAT had done to that date, they would cancel the contract (see CAT’s Booklift
CAF planes (if we get them).”

Lt. Gen. George E. Stratemeyer, Commanding General, FEAF, exercised even more pressure, when in his message of 8 October 50 sent to General Chennault, he quoted from a letter from the USAF officer under whom CAT operated: “... Our success with CAT airlift has been spotty.’ While CAT personnel are ‘enthusiastic and capable’, the chief problem has been the failure of CAT to provide the number of aircraft promised, plus the high out-of-commission rate of those supplied – CAT personnel are cooperative – ‘The difficulty seems to be that CAT overcommitted itself with a lot of optimistic assertions of what they could do.’ – CAT claimed that they could provide up to 28 aircraft – however, it is important to remember ‘that what they were able to furnish helped us over a very tough period...’”.

On 16 October 50, CAT had 15 of their own C-46s plus 2 of the CAA C-46s plus 6 chartered C-47s in Japan, making a total of 23 aircraft, but one of the chartered C-47s was out for an engine change. The report continues in a very optimistic manner: “Since the tenth of October, we have been able to maintain an average of twenty-six (26) planes in Japan, with 16 or 17 of these flying per day. By the end of October this number will be increased by five operating planes. [...] Things have been running very smoothly especially since October 10th and FEAMCOM has been provided with sufficient planes to meet its needs.”

So for the first half of November 50, CAT projected the following aircraft assignment for Booklift: 15 CAT C-46s, 8 CAA C-46s, plus 3 chartered C-47s, making a total of 26 operable aircraft for Booklift, to which have to be added 7 aircraft destined for Booklift, but still non-operable: 1 CAT C-46 and 6 Chinese Air Force C-46s.

The following day, this optimism was gone. “The biggest catastrophe of this period was the cancellation on October 17 of the carriage of passengers on the Booklift Operation, because pilot Dudding violated several safety regulations all of which were reported to FEAF. Mr. Willauer ordered the cessation of C-47 operation until we could use our own crews and improve the condition of the planes. This immediately decreased our fleet by six badly needed planes, but it had to be done to save the contract. In spite of this trouble we have flown an

---

*Report dated 7 October 50, in UTD/Hickler/B4F10, published above.*


54 Statement in: UTD/Leary/B18F8, apparently copied from Chennault Papers, reel 8.

55 “As of this date the plane situation is as follows: 1. All but one of the eighteen (18) C-46’s are in operation. (Two of these are needed for commercial business). XT-874 (the last plane) requires a large amount of work and is waiting on the powerplant parts from the salvage of XT-862 at Iwakuni. 2. Two of the eight (8) CAA C-46’s are flying. [...] 3. Six chartered C-47’s are in operation in Japan, but one of these is out for an engine change” (Periodic Report no. DO-1-1192 dated 16 October 50, in: UTD/Rosbert/B1F3).


average of sixteen (16) planes per days. Subtracting two per day for commercial flying we had an average of fourteen (14) planes flying per day on Booklift. However during the first part of the period there was difficulty in maintaining our eleven (11) daily schedules out of Tachikawa. On 31 October 50, CAT had 21 aircraft on Booklift: 16 CAT C-46s, 4 CAA-owned C-46s, and 1 C-47 chartered from IAT; the C-47 CAT had purchased from Hong Kong Airways was to be in operation “momentarily”. For mid-November 50, CAT projected the following aircraft assignment for Booklift: 16 CAT C-46s, 8 CAA-owned C-46s, 1 CAT C-47 and 1 chartered C-47, making a total of 26 planes.

The month of October 1950 brought still another challenge for CAT: “On Sunday, October 22 we were ordered to send a detached operation of six (6) planes with personnel to Ashiya in western Japan to shuttle supplies to Korea for about two weeks.” Ashiya was on the northern end of Kyushu Island, only 90 miles from Pusan, Korea. On 24 October, CAT C-46 XT-840 arrived at Ashiya with Operations Manager Jim Stewart, Jim Tyler, Ark Lee, George Lee, H.J. Tseng, and James Holt. The aircraft landed at 1730 hours, the men ate dinner, and slept. On the following day, on 25 October, the 24-hour schedule was established. CAT’s Director of Operations Joe Rosbert could proudly report: “We not only had the planes there before the deadline but flew fifteen (15) round trips the first day at 11,000 lbs. per trip. Incidentally the Air Force couldn’t believe it.” Indeed, the proximity of Korea gave CAT pilots turnaround, and CAT aircraft averaged 2 ½ trips daily. After General MacArthur had taken North Korea’s capital Pyongyang on 20 October 50, the CAT planes based at Ashiya were to shuttle between Ashiya and North Korea, servicing principally the cities of Wunsan and Pyongyang, as well as Kimpo airport at South Korea’s capital Seoul. James Holt later recalled the excellent mess hall and the cold wind at Ashiya: “The field is located on the north end of the island of Kyushu facing an open area from which the wind blew with considerable frequency. In fact about every ten days it blew in accompanied with ice and snow. This made

---


---

63 Leary, Manuscript, p.16, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
64 Leary, Manuscript, p.18, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
riding a bicycle hard and walking even harder.”\textsuperscript{65} The reason for this move was that by this time, General William Tunner had set up a highly efficient operation at Ashiya, based on recent experience with the Berlin Airlift: “Control of all transport aircraft was vested in a headquarters transport movement control center [TMC] at Ashiya, a control which pilots quickly learned was tight and inexorable. Flight orders came from the TMC through the wings and groups. The TMC was directed to schedule all flights, record all departures or reasons for late departures, record landings, and divert or cancel flight by radio if it was necessary to pick up air evacs or emergency cargo.”\textsuperscript{66} Indeed, CAT’s Ashiya detachment, operating only 25% of CAT’s aircraft in Japan, was doing 75% of all Booklift flying within three weeks after arrival.\textsuperscript{67}

On 9 November 50, J. L. Orlowski, CAT’s representative in charge of the Booklift operation, could report that FEAMCOM had requested that funds be made available for an indefinite period for the CAT operation.\textsuperscript{68} Nevertheless, during the first half of November, flying time went down to 1,725 hours from the 2,000 hours that had been reached during the second half of October. The reason for this decrease was that many planes had been grounded for a day or more due to the lack of some critical part, i.e. due to CAT’s poor stock position on many items. “There was an average of just under fifteen (15) planes flying per day compared to an average of sixteen (16) per day for October 16-31. However, on November 12, previous records were broken when twenty-one (21) planes were flown for a total of 206 hours. This shows that operationally a potential of over 5,000 hours per month exists, but planes cannot be kept flying at a steady pace, as yet. To further complicate our troubles, toward the end of the period, FEAMCOM said we could only use six (6) specific planes on the Ashiya operation, whereas previously we sent as many planes as necessary to keep six flying. Under the latter circumstances, Ashiya produced about 75% of the Booklift flying because of the efficient operation. Now when planes are out for maintenance Ashiya will suffer by a great percentage. It is hoped that the other bottleneck, inefficient loading at Tachikawa, can be eliminated by getting permission for CAT to do its own loading and unloading at this key point.”\textsuperscript{69} On 20 November 50, CAT had 16 CAT C-46s, 6 CAA-owned C-46s, 1 CAT C-47, and 1 chartered C-47 (IAT’s C-47 VR-HEX), that is a total of 24 aircraft assigned to Booklift, and for the first part of December 50, CAT projected the assignment of even 27 aircraft to Booklift: 16 CAT C-46s, 7 CAA-owned C-46s, 1 CAT C-47, and 3 chartered C-47s (believed to have been IAT’s VR-HEX as well as Trans-Asiatic Airlines Siam’s HS-TAC and HS-TAD, both due on 1 December).\textsuperscript{70}

The month of November 1950 also meant two changes that were even bigger: As early as 10 November 50, intelligence sources had detected large numbers of Chinese that had crossed the Yalu River, still hidden in the snowy mountains of north-central Korea. On 28 November, they came down the mountains, throwing MacArthur’s campaign into reverse. USAF and CAT aircraft assisted the retreat of the 8th Army southwards, carrying wounded and equipment.\textsuperscript{71} The other change was the beginning of a hard winter. “Siberian weather such as most Americans had never known moved into the war zone, blanketing the region with snow and sending blasts of arctic wind to benumb the extremities of the living and freeze the dead


\textsuperscript{67} Leary, \textit{Perilous missions}, p.120.


\textsuperscript{69} Periodic Report no. DO-1-1279 dated 20 November 50, in: UTD/Rosbert/B1F3.

\textsuperscript{70} Periodic Report no. DO-1-1279 dated 20 November 50, in: UTD/Rosbert/B1F3.

\textsuperscript{71} Leary, \textit{Perilous missions}, pp.120/1.
where they fell.”

Looking back at aircraft utilization, CAT’s Periodic Report of 2 December 50 states that “there was an average of fourteen (14) planes flying per day November 16-30 compared to fifteen (15) for November 1-12 and sixteen (16) for October 16-31. However, on November 21, the daily record was again broken when twenty-two (22) planes were flown for a total of 208 hours.” On 2 December 50, a total of 23 aircraft was flown on Booklift, i.e. 15 CAT C-46s, 6 CAA-owned C-46s, 1 CAT C-47, and 1 chartered C-47 (VR-HEX); two more C-47s, HS-TAC and HS-TAD, “should be ready early in December.” For the middle of December 50, CAT again projected the assignment of 27 aircraft to Booklift: 15 CAT C-46s, 7 CAA-owned C-46s, 1 chartered C-46 (TAA C-46 XT-902, due on 4 December) 1 CAT C-47, and 3 chartered C-47s (apparently again VR-HEX, HS-TAC, and HS-TAD).

During the first half of December 1950, flying time went down to 1,775 hours. This decline was caused by two main reasons: “One, because of the military deterioration in Korea our planes were often grounded awaiting a decision from commanders as to where cargo should be sent. This had a most serious effect on utilization. In this connection, the situation has not improved too much and utilization will remain low during the second half of December. The second main reason for the decline was due to the fact that the Company suffered a serious blow as a result of three major accidents.” As has been shown above, these were the loss of C-46 XT-44 on 8 December, the loss of C-46 XT-852 on 9 December, and the take-off accident of C-46 XT-846 on 10 December 1950. On 18 December 50, CAT’s Director of Operations Joe Rosbert could say that “two of the planes lost by accident have been replaced by two out of storage”, so that there was still “an average of sixteen (16) planes

72 Leary, Perilous missions, p.121.
flying per day December 1-15, compared to fifteen (15) for November 16-31.” On 18 December, 21 aircraft were assigned to Booklift, i.e. 12 CAT C-46s, 6 CAA-owned C-46s, 1 TAA C-46, and 2 chartered C-47s (VR-HEX and HS-TAD). For the end of December 50, CAT projected the assignment of 24 operable aircraft to Booklift: 12 CAT C-46s, 6 CAA-owned C-46s, 2 Chinese Air Force C-46s, 1 C-46 chartered from TAA (XT-902), and 3 chartered C-47s (probably VR-HEX, HS-TAD, and PI-C181/XT-811).76

In spite of those crashes, FEAF authorized an additional expenditure of $ 1,500,000 on the contract with CAT due to the heavy usage of aircraft.77 But it was about this time that the USAF decided “that CAT Commandos should be utilized to airlift cargo, rather than people, particularly on long over-water flights. Later, [military] passengers were absolutely forbidden to fly CAT missions to Iwo Jima, Guam, and Okinawa.”78 On 19 January 1951, Major General William H. Tunner, Commanding General, Combat Cargo Command, wrote to Whiting Willauer that “the time has now come when I must release the aircraft and personnel of Civil Air Transport from their temporary duty with this command”, thanking CAT for their precious assistance.79

78 Leary, “CAT and the Korean War, 1950-1951: A Chronology”, p.14 (in: UTD/Leary/B18F8), quoting from an unknown Air Force History. The quotation continues: “Starting in early 1952, the Combat Cargo prohibition on the CAT C-46’s was lifted, and the civilian airline was directed to carry passengers, mail or cargo in the same manner as the military aircraft of the Korean Airlift.”
Indeed, although on 4 January 51, the Chinese offensive captured Seoul, the city was recaptured by UN troops on 15 March 51, and the front stabilized in Korea around the 38th Parallel. The Air Force could release many of the CAT aircraft, as there were now enough USAF transport units available. However, CAT continued to fly to Korea, Japan and the Pacific Islands for the Air Force.  

The situation of early February 1951 is well illustrated by CAT’s Flight Control Board at Tachikawa, as of 7 February 1951. The Booklift fleet seems to have been reduced to 12 aircraft: 10 C-46s (XT-850, XT-854, XT-856, XT-872, XT-876, XT-36, XT-46, XT-902, XT-908, and XT-910) were still based at Tachikawa (TAC), and C-47s XT-807 and XT-811 were based at Iwakuni (IWA) that day. Only 3 of these aircraft had missions to fly that day, C-46 XT-850 was to go from Tachikawa via Iwakuni to Pusan, Korea (K-9) and the same way back to Tachikawa, C-46 XT-46 also flew from Tachikawa to Pusan (K-9), and C-46 XT-908 was to fly from Tachikawa to Okinawa via Iwakuni; the rest was probably waiting for a mission to

---

81 Photo no. 1-TM1-1-PB11, in: UTD/Matis.
fly. C-46s XT-38 and XT-904 as well as C-47 XT-809 were based at Taipei, apparently for commercial service, and no less than 11 C-46s were at Tainan that day (XT-842, XT-844, XT-846, XT-858, XT-860, XT-864, XT-874, XT-30, XT-48, XT-912, and XT-914), some of them probably for maintenance. The most interesting point on that Flight Control Board of 7 February 51, however, is a group of 4 C-46s (XT-840, XT-866, XT-868, and XT-870) and C-47 XT-813, all of which are marked “P-FLT”. This abbreviation probably stands for “Paper Flight”, that is for Operation Paper, the furnishing of CIA weapons from Okinawa to northern Thailand to support General Li Mi in Burma, an operation that began on 7 February 51. All of these 5 aircraft were on their way from Tachikawa (TAC) to Kadena, Okinawa (KAD), and 3 of them (XT-840, XT-866, and XT-868) had already continued their way to Clark Air Base in the Philippines (CRK).83

When the Korean front moved northward, the Ashiya operation was stopped in January 51, and CAT planes and personnel moved to Tachikawa or to a new base at Iwakuni, Japan.84 This is the reason why CAT’s Flight Control Board of 7 February 1951 does no longer list any flights out of Ashiya, but 2 CAT C-47s based at Iwakuni. What did CAT aircraft carry during the Korean War? Already on 16 June 1950, SCAP, i.e. General MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, had permitted civilian airlines to bid for domestic transport licenses, and CAT was among the airlines that had submitted a proposal. CAT and Philippine Airlines had jointly received a contract to transport freight within Japan. This included the right to carry non-service personnel (newspaper correspondents, Red Cross workers and operational personnel) between Japan and Korea.85 During the Korean War, CAT carried all types of cargo – high-priority cargo like mail, all sorts of war supplies like weapons, ammunition (artillery shells, machine gun and small arms bullets), bombs or napalm tanks, all sorts of combat support equipment like gasoline, rations, barbed wire and fence pickets, tents and cots, machinery, kitchen equipment or medical supplies as well as aircraft parts and engines when needed – to practically every airstrip in Korea where a C-46 could land. On the return flights, CAT aircraft carried wounded accompanied by nurses and medics.86

82 Leary, Perilous missions, p.129.
83 Leary (“CAT and the Korean War, 1950-1951: A Chronology”, p.16, in: UTD/Leary/B18F8) notes that in early February 51, 4 aircraft were drawn from Booklift for Paper.
84 Leary, Manuscript, pp.16/7, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
85 Leary, Manuscript, pp.7-8, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
86 Leary, Perilous missions, p.119. In his book The Greatest Airlift – the Story of Combat Cargo (Tokyo 1954), Capt. A.G. Thompson writes: “CAT civilian pilots, including Americans and Chinese carried all types of cargo to practically every airstrip in Korea capable of landing a C-46, including ammunition, gasoline, rations, aircraft parts and engines, medical supplies, tents and cots, machinery, kitchen equipment, weapons, barbed wire and fence pickets. Ammo airlifted included bombs, machine gun and small arms bullets, artillery shells, and napalm
A typical mission is described by William Leary. It would begin before dawn at Tachikawa. After the pre-flight checks of the aircraft, the CAT C-46 would be loaded with a mix of mail and cargo. Having been checked on weather, loads, and operating conditions, the crew would board the aircraft and take off for Pusan in Korea, where the aircraft would touch down 4 hours later. While the crew would take some coffee and sandwiches, the cargo would be offloaded and the aircraft would be prepared to carry wounded soldiers. After less than an hour of flight, the C-46 would reach Itazuki Airbase at the northern end of Kyushu, where ambulances would wait to take the wounded to a nearby army hospital at Fukuoka. The aircraft would then fly to nearby Ashiya to pick up a load of artillery shells or other ammo for another Korean airport, for example for Taegu, whose gravel runway had been covered with pierced steel planking in the meantime. More wounded may have waited at Taegu so that the crew might not return to Tachikawa for several days.

CAT C-46 XT-840 somewhere in Korea in 1950/51, probably at Pusan
(Photo no. 1-TM1-1-PB8 in UTD/Matsis)

Operation Booklift: Gas drums being unloaded from a CAT C-46 at a Korean airport and a CAT C-46 ready to take off from Korea for the return trip to Japan
(CAT Bulletin, vol. IV, no.1, January 1951, pp.17 and 16)

Leary, Perilous missions, pp.119-20.
After General MacArthur had taken North Korea’s capital Pyongyang on 20 October 50, the CAT planes based at Ashiya were to shuttle between Ashiya and North Korea, servicing principally the cities of Wunsan and Pyongyang, as well as Kimpo airport at South Korea’s capital Seoul. CAT pilot “Doc” Johnson flew to Wunsan (K-25) on 1 and 2 November 50, to Yonpo (K-27) on 3 November, and to Pyongyang East (K-24) on 11 and 12 November. Former CAT pilot Connie Seigrist recalls some flights to Pyongyang: “I had just joined CAT hired on as a co-pilot flying C-46’s in November 1950 during the Korean Conflict. I flew a few flights into K-23, the Military designated number for Pyongyang, the Capitol City for North Korea while temporarily occupied by the UN Forces. One of my duties when on flight was to see the aircraft was properly fueled. The last flight I flew on into Pyongyang originated out of Tachikawa, Japan. Our first stop landed at K-9, Pusan. A Major met our aircraft and asked if we had enough fuel to continue to Pyongyang and return to Seoul. We assured him we did but we would have to refuel in Seoul before we could return to anywhere in Japan. I brought this to his attention to remind him CAT was not permitted to refuel in Seoul due to the shortage of fuel there. He changed our schedule and said to proceed to Pyongyang to help evacuate Air Force sensitive cargo back to Seoul and that fuel would be arranged in the meantime. We landed in Pyongyang as directed and after parking we were informed the Communist Chinese and North Koreans were already in the north side of the City in a massive push south to take Seoul. We accomplished the flight without incident, landing in Seoul after dark with only minimum fuel remaining. Seoul airfield was starting to evacuate down to a skeleton crew in preparation for its possible closure. We were instructed by a Base Ops airman who met our aircraft to leave our plane when he found we needed fuel. He further added our aircraft would be destroyed and we would be evacuated by land to Taegu. He said there wasn’t fuel available on the field because all the tankers had left long ago going south. I immediately started searching for fuel anyway. I found a small fuel tanker by a previously bombed out hangar. The driver said he had 600 gallons aboard but we could not have any because it was emergency fuel only. He also said it would be hopeless but we could try talking to his Sergeant. I found the Sergeant. I suggested to talk to the Ops Officer. I found the Officer, a Major, in the Ops Building and asked him for 300 gallons. He refused. While he was refusing I noticed a General Officer standing beside me listening. It was General Tunner. He asked where we had been and where we were going. I answered his questions and assured him all the fuel needed was to get to the nearest airfield south. He instructed the Major to give us the entire 600 gallons and have the tanker driven to the dump to be destroyed. He proceeded to tell the Major we CAT pilots were the workingest pilots that had served in his Command anywhere and in the future to give us full support while he was in Command. We continued to Ashiya, Japan for rest.”

The following extract from Connie Seigrist’s log book illustrates two things. In November 1950, he flew to several North Korean airports including Pyongyang (K-23), Pyongyang East (K-24), Wunsan (K-25), and Yonpo (K-27). And then, Ashiya Air Base was indeed the gateway to North Korea: On 6 November 50, Connie Seigrist flew C-46 XT-840 Ashiya-Wunsan-Ashiya-Pyongyang-Tachikawa; on 7 November, he flew C-46 XT-852 Ashiya-Pyongyang-Ashiya-Pyongyang East-Ashiya; on 23 November 50, he flew C-46 XT-860 Ashiya-Pyongyang East-Ashiya-Pyongyang East-Ashiya; on 25 November, it was the same route; and on 26 November 50, he flew Ashiya-Yonpo-Ashiya, all the time using CAT C-46 XT-860.

---

88 Leary, Manuscript, p.18, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
89 Pages from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013.
90 The last plane evacuating Pyongyang departed on 4 December 50 (Leary, Perilous missions, p.121).
A page from Connie Seigrist’s log book kindly supplied by his son Steve: flights to North Korea – Pyongyang (K-23), Pyongyang East (K-24), Wunsan (K-25), and Yonpo (K-27) –, many of them out of Ashiya in Japan.

“A couple of days later I was back in Tachikawa scheduled off for a few days. I searched for any of my friends to get together. While looking for First Officer Bill Shaver I was shocked to hear he and Capt. Wells were on a flight to Pyongyang. I contacted CAT flight ops and informed them I had been on the last flight out of there and Pyongyang was surely in North Korean control. Our ops said not to be concerned because the flight had been authorized by the Customer out of their Atsugi station. [...] Later Bill related his experience on his flight. It was a Special flight. A Special flight plan then when submitted to the Air Force Traffic Control did not require the destination to be entered on the flight plan. The flight continued to North Korea. F.O. Shaver said they were over a lower cloud layer and could not see the ground. When they flew out their time they descended down thru the clouds breaking into the clear nearly over the airfield. The North Korean gunners began firing at their plane with flack getting close. They climbed back into the clouds, reversed course, and returned safely to South Korea. Some years later I saw Shaver in Bangkok and was kidding him about the flight. After a few laughs he said he had finally found out what had caused the goof-up. He met one of our Agents there in Thailand that had made a request for the flight. The Agent had been working out of Korea at the time and needed immediate transportation back to Atsugi. He requested air transportation thru Agency channels. He didn’t know if he would be in K-2 or K-3. According to him when he got back to Japan he found that in passing the message from office to office the final request to CAT turned out to be K-23 and that is where Harold and Bill had been dispatched.”

The last CAT flight from Seoul was made by Lew Burridge: “Lew and some of the gang including pilot Bob Snoddy were en route to Seoul when they were told that they might find the Seoul City Airfield (a former L-5 strip on an island in the Han River along the northwest section of Seoul), about ten miles closer to the center of Korea’s embattled capital than Kimpo, either in the hands of the enemy or too close to their grasp for safety. This kind of talk being old hat to CAT, Lew and his companions landed on the field to find it still functioning in friendly but somewhat puzzled hands. A commercial plane was about the last type of transportation, even if it was under contract to the US Air Force, that the surviving friendly personnel expected to see. [...] The city of Seoul which is large geographically was in almost total flames. At the airfield all non evacuated equipment had either been destroyed or was in the last stages of destruction. Along the roads leading out of Seoul past the airfield hundreds

of refugees trudged wearily – silhouetted against the fires – as they sought safety in slow flight. Meanwhile heavy artillery was increasing in the north section of the city. As the Communists widened their flanking movement this artillery fire moved closer to the northeast bank of the Han River in which the field is located. Kimpo was already in the process of being abandoned. It too was soon to fall in enemy hands. So in the early hours of the morning with little between himself and the Communists but half of the Han River, Lew decided to say Anyunghee keh sipseeyah (goodbye in Korean) to the Seoul City Airfield. Once airborne and away from the immediate area it became pitch black. However the smoke from the burning city could be smelled at an altitude of 3000 feet."

At Pusan, Korea in late June 1951: CAT Captains Gaddie and Seigrist and a Danish correspondent they had flown there for a story about a hospital ship (with kind permission from Steve Seigrist)

CAT Asst. Director of Operations Joe Orlowski talking to FEAMCOM officers in early 1951 (CAT Bulletin, vol. IV, no. 3, April 1951, pp.22 and 20)

After the Chinese had arrived in the war zone in late November 1950, UN forces had to retreat to the south. Carrying wounded and equipment, USAF units throughout Japan and

---

CAT aircraft mounted an all-out effort in support of the retreating UN forces. In the east, two US Marine divisions were cut off by Chinese troops near the Chosin reservoir and had to be supported by air. Finally, they fought their way to Hagaru, where they carved a crude airstrip out of the frozen ground so that USAF C-47s could carry them to Yonpo. Although CAT did not participate in the Hagaru-Yonpo shuttle, they did assist in the evacuation of wounded from Yonpo, and it was here that CAT C-46 XT-44 crashed on 8 December 50. In the meantime, the USAF and CAT evacuated personnel and equipment from Yonpo, and a maximum effort was launched on 14 December. “In four days of round-the-clock flying, frequently in bad weather, Air Force and CAT aircraft carried to Japan 228 casualties, 3,891 passengers, and 2,088.6 tons of cargo.”

Busy Tachikawa in 1950/51 with 2 CAT C-46s (XT-850 and XT-910) in the foreground (Photo no. 1-TM1-1-PB62 in UTD/Matsis)

But the Booklift operation comprised more than just flying cargo into Korea: it also included other destinations in Japan as well as Guam, Okinawa, and Clark Air Base in the Philippines. By mid-October, CAT was flying 15 schedules daily serving Japan-Korea-Iwakuni-Guam-Okinawa-Clark Air Base for a total of 4,000 hours monthly, including 3,500 for Booklift and 500 hours for CIA operations. For many years, Booklift flights served to carry all types of military cargo and later also passengers between US bases in the Far East and in the Pacific Ocean. From January 1951 onwards, FEAF relegated CAT to milk runs, i.e. primarily to scheduled flights within Japan and to Okinawa, Iwo Jima, Guam, and elsewhere throughout the Far East. In order to have an idea of the extent of this operation, it is useful to have a look at the list of Air Force Base Refueling Codes handed over to CAT so that their aircraft could get fuel at these stations. This list includes 17 locations in Japan, 12 locations in Korea – temporary CAT destinations like Pyongyang are not listed –, 3 locations on

---

95 Leary, Perilous missions, p.121.
96 Leary, Perilous missions, p.122.
97 Leary, Manuscript, p.18, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
98 Leary, Perilous missions, p.124; it seems that this new type of operation was covered by Contract no. 90(504)-50 – called the old FEAMCOM contract (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for September 53, pp.1/2, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7) – with the last invoices settled only on 30 June 1954 (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for June 54, p.1, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7), more than a year after the new Booklift contract had been signed.
99 Air Force Base Refueling Codes, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F8.
Okinawa, and 1 location each on Guam and Iwo-Jima as well as Clark Air Base in the Philippines. More destinations were to follow later.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JAPAN</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>KOREA</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J-1</td>
<td>Ashiya</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>K-2</td>
<td>Taegu</td>
<td>603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-5</td>
<td>Brady</td>
<td>2294</td>
<td>K-4</td>
<td>Sacheon</td>
<td>604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-6</td>
<td>Tachikawa</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>K-8</td>
<td>Kunsan</td>
<td>605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-13</td>
<td>Itazuke</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>K-9</td>
<td>Pusan</td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-36</td>
<td>Tsuiki</td>
<td>2298</td>
<td>K-10</td>
<td>Chinhae</td>
<td>803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-21</td>
<td>Komaki</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>K-13</td>
<td>Sujemy</td>
<td>607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-12</td>
<td>Itami</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>K-14</td>
<td>Kimpo</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-25</td>
<td>Miho</td>
<td>3001</td>
<td>K-16</td>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-14</td>
<td>Iwakuni</td>
<td>2295</td>
<td>K-18</td>
<td>Kangnung</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-30</td>
<td>Niigata</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>K-17</td>
<td>Chungchow</td>
<td>611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-24</td>
<td>Matsushima</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>K-55</td>
<td>Osan</td>
<td>612-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-27</td>
<td>Misawa</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>K-16</td>
<td>Hoengsong</td>
<td>613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-4</td>
<td>Chitose</td>
<td>583</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-16</td>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>732</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-38</td>
<td>Yokota</td>
<td>739</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-19</td>
<td>Kisaruu</td>
<td>588</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-9</td>
<td>Haneda</td>
<td>422</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MISCELLANEOUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kadena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yontan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Air Force Base Refueling Codes in the Far East that could also be used by CAT
(in: UTD/Lewis/B1F8)

CAT assisted the United States Air Force also in other areas, and on 1 March 1951, operational control of the CAT aircraft in Japan passed from FEAMCOM to the 315th Air Division (Combat Cargo). So it was from the 315th Air Division that the airline received another commendation on 28 June 1951, signed by Brigadier General John P. Henebry.

---

Commendation from Brigadier General John P. Henebry, Commanding General of the
315th Air Division (Combat Cargo)
(CAT Bulletin, vol. IV, no.7, August 1951, p.17)

“With the addition of the 1st Provisional Group, the 314th Group, the 437th Wing and the
61st Group to the Korean Airlift organization in late 1950, under the control of the newly
organized Combat Cargo Command, the demand for civilian aircraft flights lessened
somewhat, but did not drop off altogether. It was always considered desirable to have the
CAT operation as a back-up for emergency demands, and to have some contract flights flown
daily to maintain that capability. No one could predict the future requirements of the Korean
War, and the demands for airlift which might be made. For some months, most of CAT’s
flights for Combat Cargo were to the Far East islands, rather than to Korea, particularly as the
war stabilized following the first truce talks, and the emergency airlift requirements of the 8th
Army and the 5th Air Force declined somewhat. CAT missions for the airlift averaged out at
about two or three aircraft per day, generally flying multi-stop commitments with a variety of
cargo. CAT planes were inevitably loaded to the limit on each leg of their flights, the Air
As the situation on 30 August 1951 shows, by that time, Booklift’s part of CAT’s activities had been further reduced: 10 C-46s are now assigned to Booklift and “general use”, that is 5 of the CAA-owned aircraft (B-130, B-136, B-148, B-150, and B-153 standing for B-154) and 5 C-46s owned by CAT (B-840, B-854, B-856, B-864, and B-866). As C-46 B-840 is known to have been used on long range charters frequently, “general use” probably means charter work.

Memorandum dated 11 September 51, sent by CAT’s President to the Board of Directors, p.3 (in: UTD/Leary/B20F9)

A group of Army officers, rotating back to the US after the completion of their combat tour, prepares to board a CAT C-46 at Seoul for airlift back to Japan


“Starting in early 1952, the Combat Cargo prohibition on passengers flying on the CAT C-46’s was lifted, and the civilian airline was directed to carry passengers, mail or cargo in the same manner as the military aircraft of the Korean Airlift. CAT operations were also changed to include some of Combat Cargo’s daily scheduled flights, including missions to northern Japan, Korea and the Far East islands. Military passengers, mail and cargo travelled on these flights on the same paperwork as on military aircraft, and planes were controlled in flight by the Transport Movement Control Center at Fuchu. CAT scheduled flights often carried air evacuated sick or wounded on an emergency basis, just as the military aircraft did.”

This meant that survival equipment for passengers and later also clocks had to be carried on CAT aircraft in accordance with Frag orders.

From at least January 52 onwards, CAT’s Monthly Reports for Tachikawa Station give 2 different numbers of hours flown during the month: Apparently the flights listed under the heading “Booklift” are the scheduled flights flown for Booklift. The second type of flights first appears as “ADS” or “ADDS”, then as “Air Force Special” flights. These were “AD” or “Advertisement” flights operated for the CIA under Booklift cover and could mean a

106 Outside the Flight Time records, “ADS” or the “Air Force Special Contract” are seldom mentioned in the Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports, and apparently, this “Air Force Special Contract” had never to be extended or renewed and there were never any negotiations about the rates to be paid to CAT Inc per flying hour. From Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for August 1955 (in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7) we can see that CAT’s Mr. Herd “made out the invoices and submitted them to ADS people for payment. This subject was checked with Mr. Mason and we can see no reason why C.T. Tsao cannot do the entire job” (pp.3/4). John H. Mason was the chief of the Joint Technical Advisory Group (JTAG – “Jay Tag”), the CIA cover organization that handled the “third
special load or a special route within the Booklift pattern. In September 52, a new type of flights was inaugurated under the Booklift system, called “Project flights”: “They carry the name ‘project’ flights since their exact route and cargo is not known until approximately 12 hours prior to their departure. The frequency of this type of flight is still uncertain. Complete briefing by letter has been given to all Captains and foreign First Officers in regard to details of handling of passengers on such flights. The fact that these flights carry passengers has brought Booklift back into the passenger-carrying business [...]” Some flights were even more spontaneous: In January 53, CAT C-46 B-856 “was at [Tokyo–]Haneda with no commercial load to return to Taipei, and through the initiative of Mr. McCann a Booklift flight was obtained from Division returning this aircraft to Taipei on a one-way flight with passengers! This caused some very favourable comment from TMC-Tachi as well as from the passengers.”

Details of these flights have survived in E.C. Kirkpatrick’s Flights Time Records for the months running from May 1952 to April 1953. All flights operated for the US military under the Booklift contract do not begin with the short hop from Tachikawa to Atsugi Naval Air Station, headquarters of the CIA’s JTAG, that was so typical of all flights operated for the CIA, and do not stop at Atsugi on the return flights. A typical Booklift flight was Tachikawa-Iwo Jima AFB-Tachikawa made by Kirkpatrick on 30 May 52 in C-46 B-866; another one was Tachikawa-Naha (Okinawa)-Clark Air Base (Philippines) that Kirkpatrick made on 7 and 8 June 52 in C-46 B-846. Another Booklift flight seems to have been Kirkpatrick’s Tachikawa-Iwo Jima AFB-Guam-Iwo Jima-Tachikawa run on 7 and 8 August 52: neither Atsugi nor Saipan was touched. There were also several Tachikawa-Naha-Tachikawa and

A CAT C-46 at Anderson Air Force Base, Guam, in 1951/52
(UTD/Kirkpatrick, Slide Box A2, slide no. 1KP-A2-SC 1956)

Tachikawa-Iwo Jima-Tachikawa runs during that period of time. From November 52 onwards, Kirkpatrick flew a lot of Booklift trips to northern Japan on routes like Tachikawa-Matsushima-Chitose-Misawa-Matsushima-Tachikawa on 15 and 16 November 52 in C-46 B-850 or Tachikawa-Matsushima-Misawa-Chitose-Misawa-Matsushima-Tachikawa on 19 November (in C-46 B-138) and on 21 November 52 (in C-46 B-136). On 15 December 52, his
C-46 (B-130) touched Niigata for the first time, namely on the Tachikawa-Niigata-Chitose-Niigata-Tachikawa run, and on 24 and 29 December 52, we see Kirkpatrick fly his C-46 B-850 on the Tachikawa-Niigata-Misawa-Tachikawa run. Between 24 and 27 January 1953, Kirkpatrick and his C-46 B-146 were temporarily based at Sokcho-ri in eastern Korea (K-50), close to the front line. The strange flight patterns – Sokcho-ri – Pusan - Sokcho-ri - Chinhae (K-10) – Pusan - Sokcho-ri on 25 January; Sokcho-ri – Pusan - Sokcho-ri – Seoul - Sokcho-ri – Pusan - Sokcho-ri on 26 January; and Sokcho-ri – Pusan - Sokcho-ri – Chinhae – Pusan - Tachikawa – suggest urgent resupply missions to the front line or an evacuation of wounded. In the spring of 1953, Kirkpatrick still flew Booklift flights from Tachikawa to Pusan and back (e.g. on 28 March in C-46 B-148), but also Booklift missions to Clark Air Base (Taipei-Clark on 12 April and Clark-Taipei-Kadena-Tachikawa on 14 April), the Tachikawa-Kadena-Clark-Kadena-Tachikawa mission in C-46 B-872 from 19 to 21 April 53, or the Tachikawa-Iwo Jima-Guam-Iwo Jima-Tachikawa Booklift mission that Kirkpatrick flew in C-46 B-864 on 4/5 May 53.\footnote{Kirkpatrick Flight Time Records, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B2F13.}

In February 53, a new contract – no. AF 62(502)-606 – was signed with the USAF, and the signed contract was received by CAT Inc, Tachikawa on 20 March 53.\footnote{Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for March 53, p.1, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.} This contract’s period of performance was 1 January thru 31 December 1953 with an option to extend for an additional year, and this option was executed with Change Order no.7 signed by Captain Gambucci. When the funds were increased, the Contracting Officer, i.e. Capt. Gambucci notified CAT Inc by Change Orders 3, 4, 6, 8, and 10.\footnote{Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for March 54, p.1, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.} Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for March 54 notes that there were sufficient funds to carry this contract with CAT Inc on the basis of 650 flying hours per month for Fiscal Year 1954.\footnote{Kirkpatrick Flight Time Records, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B2F13.} Sometimes, there were changes in the route network: “On 10 January [1953], FEAF [= US Far East Air Forces] advised us of a new requirement which stipulates that two (2) landings per week would be made by Booklift aircraft at J-13 [= Itazuke], J-25 [= Miho], K-9 [= Pusan], and K-16 [= Seoul]. We now have two scheduled Flight 22’s per week – one on Monday and one on Wednesday.”\footnote{Kirkpatrick Flight Time Records, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B2F13.} In March 53, “a change in Flight 8/9 has been made to return via Kadena. This change will add approximately 25 flying hours per month in addition to giving us the advantage of an extra stop at Kadena.”\footnote{Kirkpatrick Flight Time Records, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B2F13.} On 27 July 53, the Korean War ended with an armistice.

To sum up the early years of Booklift: During the entire Korean War, CAT flew more than 15,000 missions for United States Combat Cargo between Korea, Japan, Okinawa, Guam, Manila and many other cities in eastern Asia, airlifting 27,000 tons of supplies and mail, 80,000 passengers, and many air evacuated sick and wounded. For 1953, the Booklift contract was even extended to include 2 round trips a week from Tachikawa in Japan to the Philippines via Taiwan and Okinawa, one round trip a week between Tachikawa and Chitoose on Hokkaido and one weekly service between Tachikawa and Guam via Iwo Jima.\footnote{Kirkpatrick Flight Time Records, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B2F13.}
2) Flights for the CIA

Flights for the CIA in Korea began with establishing a rescue system for American pilots who had been shot down behind enemy lines. Already in July 1950, CIA’s OPC (Office of Policy Coordination) headed by Hans V. Tofte established its main base in Japan at Atsugi Naval Air Station south of Tokyo with a training camp at Chigasaki on Sagami Bay. Although there were also some special flights, when the CIA had a requirement at its secret bases at Okinawa, the Marianas Islands and elsewhere, operations at that time concentrated on the rescue of American pilots who had been shot down behind enemy lines. For that purpose, a network of OPC agents had to be established on both sides of the 38th Parallel who helped the downed US airmen and who had to be supplied by air. Three CAT C-46s entered service in Tofte’s “AD” operations in July 1950, followed by a CAT Cessna 195 in September the same year. This was Cessna XT-981 flown to Japan by E. V. Wong on 5 September 50, following Flight no. 700. The aircraft had been specially fitted out with VHS. On 23 September, a second CAT Cessna 195 was flown to Tachikawa for “AD” operations – apparently XT-983, which also had VHS installed. On 7 August 50, CAT flew 3 “AD” planes to Korea and brought back 150 people. Then, during the first half of the September, “AD” flights were stepped up. At Atsugi Naval Air Station, CAT planes picked up OPC personnel and material to Korea without undergoing Japanese customs and immigration procedures. A close working relationship developed between CAT and the stations at Tachikawa and Atsugi for support of the Korean operations. In Korea, a CIA base and a large training area were established on Yong-do Island in the Bay of Pusan. It was here that operational flights arrived from Atsugi, and it was from here that CAT aircraft made operational flights into North Korea. But on 15 September 50, Operation “AD” was officially cut to one aircraft.


---

118 Leary, Perilous missions, p.129.
probably did not include the 2 Cessna 195s, as they are believed to have been used for building up the network of OPC agents flying from one location to another – comparable to the way Air America would use the Helio Courier in Laos in the early sixties. Indeed, the official history of Civil Air Transport written by Alfed T. Cox for the CIA describes these activities as “establishing propaganda activities, developing contacts as possible sources for intelligence and later guerrilla action on the mainland, and following out other actions as requested and approved by Headquarters”. This explains why Cessna 195 XT-981 – and possibly also XT-983 – posed as a Korean National Airlines aircraft. In this way, CAT “performed hundreds of transportation errands, large and small, as OPC quickly became the largest American paramilitary force since OSS.”

A classic example of how CAT helped OPC in a pragmatic and unbureaucratic way was the transportation of one-ounce gold bars from Taiwan to Korea: Tofte needed those gold bars for the escape-and-evasion program, i.e. for pilots to carry and use them to pay Koreans for assistance if they were forced down. When Major General Willoughby, SCAP intelligence chief, objected that such an importation of gold bars would be a violation to currency regulations, Tofte took a CAT plane to Taiwan, purchased $700,000 worth of gold bars and returned to Japan within 24 hours.

By the end of 1950, the escape and evasion network had been established, and OPC had more than 1,000 men in Japan. When the battlefield stabilized at the 38th Parallel in mid-1951, OPC operations shifted to guerrilla operations in North Korea. For the main objective of CIA’s Far East operations during the Korean War was to weaken North Korea and the big

Korean National Airlines, i.e. CAT “AD” operations Cessna 195 “K-05”
(Photo no. 1-TM1-PB69 in: UTD/Matis, possibly taken in Korea)

124 Leary, Perilous missions, p.125.
125 Leary, Perilous missions, p.125.
126 Leary, Perilous missions, p.125.
supporter of North Korea, i.e. Communist China. As to North Korea, the Operational Review of Combined Command Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK) dated 6 March 1952, written by the Senior CIA Representative, Far East Command, describes the Mission of the CIA Mission Korea in October 1951 as follows:

“Status of the CIA Mission Korea, October 1951
A. Mission
1. In October 1951 the mission of the CIA Mission Korea had been defined by Washington as the implementation of NSC Directive 5 and NSC Directive 10/2 in Korea. [blank] The CIA Mission Korea was also directed to support 8th Army, Korea, 5th Air Force, and 7th U.S. Fleet Navy. The CIA Mission Korea was a joint Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) – Office of Special Operations (OSO) Mission and was assigned personnel from both offices.”

NSC Directive 10/2 of 18 June 1948 describes the tasks of the CIA as “conducting espionage and counter-espionage” and “to plan and conduct covert operations.” Covert operations are then defined as “activities […] conducted against hostile foreign states or groups or in support of friendly foreign states or groups” the responsibility for which the US Government could plausibly disclaim. “Specifically, such operations shall include any covert activities related to: propaganda, economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberations groups, and support of indigenous anti-communist elements in threatened countries of the free world.”

What the CIA did in North Korea during the Korean War, is also described by the same Operational Review of Combined Command Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK):

“A. Mission
2. There were in the CIA Mission Korea files many National Intelligence Directives and Guides, as well as numerous Essential Elements of Information. In existence was the beginning of a good effort in Guerrilla Warfare in Northeast Korea and a splendid black Psychological Warfare Program effected in cooperation with G-3 Psywar, EUSAK. An Evasion and Escape Program was being carried out on an advisory basis with the 8086th Army Unit, G-3 Section, EUSAK. North Korea had been divided into two parts for purposes of Guerrilla Warfare concentration: OPC having the eastern portion, and the 8086th Army Unit having the western portion. There was no geographical division established for psychological warfare. At that time the CIA Mission Korea did not have a program in political, resistance, or economic warfare.”

A more detailed description of CIA activities in Korea during the Korean War can be found in the CIA documentation The Secret War in Korea that was created in 1968 and released in 2007. Agents were dropped into North Korea and then resupplied by air drops:

---


“Air Operations

For the first ten months of the war, CIA used U.S. Far East Air Force (FEAF) aircraft to drop agents and material into North Korea. CIA first began dropping agents in the twelfth week of the war. A detachment of the 21st Troop Carrier Squadron eventually redesigned as Flight ‘B’ of the Fifth Air Force provided most of the support. FEAF also provided photo intelligence support to Agency operations.

U.S. Army unconventional warfare air operations began when an airborne ranger first lieutenant with the Theater Intelligence Liaison Group in Korea asked an Air Force captain to drop some G-2 (Army Intelligence) agents into North Korea. That flight was the genesis of Flight ‘B’ which made hundreds of C-47 night flights over North Korea in the first two years of the war. Despite frequent adverse weather conditions and fog in the valleys, there were a minimum of abortive flights. The Flight ‘B’ aircrews always did a fine job and with no loss of aircraft. One pilot made more than 108 night flights over North Korea, dropping agents, propaganda leaflets, and supplies.

When the enemy retaliated against CIA guerrillas in the winter of 1951-1952, drop zones and drop times had to be laid on and changed on short notice. Simultaneously the Air Force increased its air support to the more vital conventional warfare making aircraft difficult to get. A civilian Cessna and a Beechcraft C-45 were obtained by the Agency. Two of the best pilots were transferred to CIA from Flight ‘B’. Cargo aircraft from a CIA-controlled civilian airline were used to support the guerrilla forces. The U.S. Air Force-CIA relationship throughout the war was particularly profitable, close, and cordial.”

Supporting and controlling guerrilla activities in North Korea was shared with the 8th United States Army Korea (EUSAK): While the US Army program covered the western part of North Korea, the CIA supported the guerrillas working in the eastern part of North Korea, but also had some advisors with the EUSAK west coast guerrillas:

“Eighth United States Army Korea (EUSAK) Guerrillas

In early 1951, CIA and the G-3 Eighth United States Army Korea (EUSAK), working in harmony, divided North Korea into two parts for guerrilla warfare action and control. The Agency already had established the nucleus for a trained guerrilla movement in the mountains in the extreme northeast. The Army took the western portion where a spontaneous pro-U.N. guerrilla movement developed after the U.N. offensive crossed the 38th parallel on 7 October 1950. By October 1951 the G-3 EUSAK program had about 8,000 guerrillas on the west coast above the 38th parallel organized into sixteen units of varying capabilities depending on how they were recruited and their state of training. However, no safe bases were established on the flat, muddy mainland estuaries and indentations as the effort was dependent upon island bases lying off the west coast, protected by the U.S. Navy which controlled the sea. […] CIA advisors worked with the EUSAK west coast guerrillas from January to April 1952. […] The over-all CIA/Army relationship at that level was eminently satisfactory and mutually advantageous.”

Of course, intelligence-gathering was an important task of CIA agents, and those inserted by air along the North Korean border had to look for Chinese and Soviet assistance arriving from abroad by trucks, railroad or ships. They, too, had to be supplied by air drops – apparently another task for Civil Air Transport aircraft:

131 Apparently, CAT’s Cessna 195 XT-981, operating in Korean National Airlines colors as “K-05”.
132 The identity of this C-45 is unknown.
133 Civil Air Transport, of course.
135 (Anonymous), The Secret War in Korea, June 1950 to June 1952, CIA (Clandestine Services History) 1968, pp.20/1; CIA document no. Korea DOC_0001459071 (CREST), kindly e-mailed to the author on 23 February 2011 by Leif Hellström.
Supplying spy teams and guerrilla groups did not only mean flying in and dropping food and medicine, but of course, CAT also supplied the CIA guerrillas with arms and ammunition:

“Arms and Munitions: In 1951, enemy weapons and ammunition were issued to CIA guerrillas from a captured weapons dump near Pusan. CIA armed guerrillas with light U.S. infantry weapons: M-1 rifles, tommyguns, carbines, BARs, .30 caliber light machine guns, 2.36 rocket launchers (bazookas) and no weapons heavier than the 81 mm mortar.”

In any case, cooperation between CIA and the US military was excellent and included borrowing without reimbursement things like parachutes, improving drop techniques or providing small gold bars for escape and evasion kits, also without reimbursement:

“Well – A Two-Way Street: Sensible two-way support arrangements evolved through necessity and cooperation. In the tenth week of the war, CIA was given [blank] parachutes by the Far East Air Force to drop [blank] agent teams along the Manchurian-Soviet border of North Korea. In 1951 agents of the Army Far East Command Liaison Group were dropped with CIA parachutes when all military airborne materiel in the theater was frozen for use by the 187th Parachute Infantry. No reimbursement was required in either case. […]

The predecessor to the present CIA roller conveyor air cargo drop system was developed by an Air Force officer assigned to the Agency Mission in Korea. Concerned with the time delays civilian parachute dispatch officers took to get cargo out over the drop zone, he borrowed some roller conveyor rails from an Air Force storage warehouse and made an effective and faster exit mechanism. CIA provided small gold bars [blank] to the Far East Air Force (FEAF) for Escape and Evasion kits.”

When OPC / CIA activities in Korea shifted to guerrilla operations in mid-1951, Tofte had the thousands of North Korean evacuees he had found in refugee camps around Pusan checked by South Korean officials in order to find out who of the young men could be trained for guerrilla activities against the Communists. So hundreds of them were sent for training to Yong-do Island, and CAT flew the leaders and especially skilled men to Chigasaki in Japan for advanced training. Between April and December 1951, no less than 44 guerrilla-teams and intelligence units were sent into North Korea – a total of about 1,200 men. Most guerrillas went in by sea, but some were parachuted in by CAT aircraft. “Operating south of the Yalu
River from Antung in the west to Rashin and Yuki in the northeast, the guerrillas sabotaged trains and ambushed truck convoys, disrupting the flow of supplies from Manchuria and Eastern Siberia.” In January 52, CIA man Thomas G. Fosmire arrived in Korea and remained until December 52. He recalled: “I became the CIA deputy station chief in Korea with the mission of deploying military intelligence, espionage, and resistance agents in North Korea.” As these operations were very successful (sabotage, interception of messages, some of them coming from Peking), the number of CAT aircraft used on those flights was sensibly increased in 1951. A CAT aircraft carried the first captured MIG fighter to Okinawa. It seems that in many cases, CAT’s airlift allowed OPC to ignore SCAP’s restrictions. Indeed, Hans Tofte told William Leary: “CIA could never have accumulated an outstanding record in the early stages of the Korean War without CAT.” For the CIA, the acquisition of CAT was a success, as the CIA memorandum of 2 January 52 notes: “On operational grounds, it has been one of the most successful projects CIA has undertaken. It was invaluable to the Army in sustaining the early operations in Korea. It is still considered essential by the Army for Korean operations and in addition has won the commendation of the Joint Chiefs in other specific missions it has accomplished.”

As to CIA activities against Red China, they mainly consisted in supporting anti-Communist resistance groups and so creating local conflicts that might force the Red Chinese Government to withdraw troops from the Korean front line. These operations concentrated on four areas: 1) the southwestern province of Yunnan; 2) North Korea and Manchuria; 3) coastal areas in southeastern China; and 4) anti-communist resistance groups in northwestern China. CAT was involved in supporting all four operations by dropping agents who were to help organize local resistance and or by dropping supplies to those resistance groups. 1) Conflicts in Yunnan province were to be created by remnants of Kuomintang troops that had fled to Burma; CAT’s activities in this context are described in my file entitled Working in remote countries. 2) Anti-communist resistance groups in North Korea and Manchuria were supplied out of Atsugi Naval Air Station in Japan and out of Korea; that is why CAT’s activities in this context are described in this file. 3) Conflicts in the coastal areas of southern China were supported out of Taiwan; CAT’s activities in this context are described in my file entitled CAT: Air Asia, Air America – the Company on Taiwan III: Work for the US Government. 4) Anti-communist resistance groups in northwestern China were supplied by CAT’s long overflights over Mainland China; as these flights were carried out by CAT’s airline DC-4 or by a Western Enterprises B-17, they originated in Taiwan; so CAT’s activities in this context are also described in my file CAT: Air Asia, Air America – the Company on Taiwan III: Work for the US Government.

In 1950, “the Agency had established a base of operations on the Navy Atsugi Air Base. It was a main flights operations center for Courier flights, flying personnel or sensitive cargo to Korea, Saipan, Guam, Okinawa, and Clark Air Base plus being used for secure anchorage of aircraft flown on sensitive flights. Atsugi lies west of Tokyo located about 15 miles east and south of Tachikawa Air Base.” Former CAT pilot Connie Seigrist recalls flights out of Atsugi from 5 January 51 onwards “flying to all the stations mentioned above”. On 10 February 51, he flew C-46 XT-858 from “Atsugi to Saipan during Saipan’s inception as a

139 Leary, Perilous missions, p. 125.
140 Thomas G. Fosmire, Interview, conducted by Prof. Bill Leary at Florence, SC, on 28 December 92, transcript in: UTD/Leary/B82F21.
141 Interview with George Stevens conducted by Prof. William Leary at Santa Barbara, CA on 11 September 1985, written resume, at: UTD/Leary/B43F5.
142 Tofte to Leary on 8 March 1982, quoted from Leary, Perilous missions, p.126.
143 Memorandum dated 2 January 52, p. 4, i.e. document no. c05261065 published online on the website of the CIA at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/15/c05261065.pdf.
As Atsugi Naval Air Station, headquarters of the CIA’s Joint Technical Advisory Group (JTAG), was not a CAT base, CAT aircraft to be used for CIA missions had to be based at Tachikawa, and so CIA operations out of Atsugi do appear in CAT’s Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports – albeit in a very cryptic way. From at least January 52 onwards, CAT’s Monthly Reports for Tachikawa Station give 2 different numbers of hours flown during the month: Apparently the flights listed under the heading “Booklift” are the scheduled flights flown for Booklift. The second type of flights first appears as “ADS” or “ADDS”, then as “Air Force Special” flights. These were the “AD” or “Advertisement” flights operated for the CIA under Booklift cover146 and could mean a special load or a special route within the Booklift pattern147 – or even covert flights of whatever nature. Outside the Flight Time records, “ADS” or the “Air Force Special Contract” are seldom mentioned in the Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports, and apparently, this “Air Force Special Contract” had never to be extended or renewed and there were never any negotiations about the rates to be paid to CAT Inc per flying hour. From Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for August 1955148 we can see that CAT’s Mr. Lindsey Herd “made out the invoices and submitted them to ADS people for payment. This subject was checked with Mr. Mason and we can see no reason why C.T. Tsao cannot do the entire job”. John H. Mason was the chief of the Joint Technical Advisory Group (JTAG – “Jay Tag”), the CIA cover organization that handled the “third force” and other clandestine programs out of Atsugi Naval Air Station near Tokyo.149

Flight Time records given in the Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for those CIA flights listed as flights for “ADS” or “Air Force Special” run from 404 hours, 40 minutes flown in November 51 via an all time maximum of 602 hours, 08 minutes in March 52150 to 522 hours, 44 minutes in May 52.151 With the exception of June 52 with only about 202 hours and August 52 with only about 220 hours, the average number of hours flown per month on “AD” missions for the CIA between July 52 and April 53 is between 300 and 400 hours per month.152

Details of these flights have survived in E.C. Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records for the months running from May 1952 to April 1953.153 All flights for the CIA begin with the short hop from Tachikawa to Atsugi Naval Air Station, headquarters of JTAG, for briefing by the CIA. There were 2 main routes, one running Tachikawa-Atsugi-Pusan-Tachikawa, remaining overnight at one of the airports, like the trip Kirkpatrick made on 17 and 18 May 52 in C-46 B-870, and the other one running Tachikawa-Atsugi-Iwo Jima AFB-Saipan-Guam and the same way back to Tachikawa, like the trip Kirkpatrick made on 19 and 20 May 52 in C-46 B-148. Sometimes, Kadena – the CIA’s main supply center in the Far East – was added as a stop between Atsugi and Iwo Jima AFB, apparently picking up some extra supplies for the CIA’s Saipan station, as in the trip Kirkpatrick made from 21 to 23 May 52 in C-46 B-130.

146 Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for May 52 and for June 52 (both in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7) give the same number of hours flown in May 52 (522:44) under two different headings: In May 52, they appear as flights for ADS, and in June 52 as flights made under the provisions of an Air Force Special contract – so both names refer to the same type of flights, i.e. to the CIA’s “AD” flights.
150 This was the period, when CAT began overflights over mainland China in DC-4.
151 The exact numbers are: 404:40 hours in November 51, 595:43 hours in December 51, 288:40 hours in Feb.52, 602:08 hours in March 52, 324:16 hours in April 52, and 522:44 minutes in May 52 (Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for these months, in UTD/Lewis/B1F7).
152 The exact numbers are: 201:85 (sic) hours in June 52, 351:25 hours in July 52, 219:21 hours in August 52, 312:04 hours in September 52, 303:49 hours in October 52, 377:34 hours in November 52, 378 hours in Jan.53, 384:36 hours in Feb.53, 363:05 hours in March 53, and 390:12 hours in April 53 (Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for these months, in UTD/Lewis/B1F7).
Sometimes, the C-46 seems to have spent several hours on Saipan, as on 28 and 29 May 52, when according to his log book, Kirkpatrick’s C-46 B-148 only flew the short hop from Guam to Saipan on 28 May, and then on 29 May 52 all the long way back from Saipan to Tachikawa via Iwo Jima. This makes believe that on Saipan, at the CIA’s training center, the C-46 was also used for parachute training on 28 May. There were also some variants in the routes flown to Korea: On 1 June 52, Kirkpatrick flew C-46 B-846 Tachikawa-Atsugi-Pusan (K-9) and returned the same way on 3 June. But on 2 June 52, he flew Pusan-Seoul (K-16)-Pusan, although several other times, his C-46 could fly non-stop from Tachikawa to Seoul. This makes believe that the intra-theater flights (Pusan-Seoul-Pusan) of 2 June were used for dropping arms, ammunition and other supplies to CIA guerrillas inside North Korea or even for dropping agents, as described above. A similar mission is probably hiding behind the route pattern that Kirkpatrick flew in C-46 B-130 on 26 and 27 June 52: Tachikawa-Atsugi- Seoul-Pusan-Seoul on 26 June and Seoul-Pusan-Atsugi-Tachikawa on 27 June 52. In September 52, Miho Air Base (J-25) in southern Japan was added as a stop on flights between the CIA’s Atsugi station and Pusan or Seoul: For example, on 9 September 52, Kirkpatrick flew C-46 B-850 from Atsugi to Miho, remained there all day long – possibly for parachute training – and proceeded to Seoul on 10 September, returning Seoul-Miho-Atsugi- Tachikawa the same day, that is possibly bringing trainees from Pusan to Miho. From 19 to 21 January 53 that is after the end of Operation Tropic, Kirkpatrick seems to have flown a similar mission in C-46 B-130: Tachikawa-Atsugi-Miho on 19 January, remaining there for the rest of the day; on 20 January, he continued Miho-Pusan-Seoul-Miho-Pusan-Atsugi- Tachikawa the same day, that is possibly bringing trainees from Pusan to Miho. Miho was to be used as a training camp for Chinese agents to be infiltrated inside Manchuria during Operation Tropic, but as CAT passed thru Miho also after November 1952, i.e. after the end of Operation Tropic caused by the loss of C-47 B-813, it must also have been a training camp for Korean agents to be dropped inside North Korea. Another mission of this type Kirkpatrick flew seems to have been that of 24 and 25 February 53, when he flew C-46 B-150 Tachikawa-Atsugi-Miho-Pusan (K-9)-Seoul (K-16)-Seoul (K-16) – with obviously a drop between the 2 entries of K-16 – on 24 and the same way back on 25 February. Interestingly, from October 52 onwards, Kirkpatrick’s entries in his

Two flights for the CIA in Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B2F13):


2. Tachikawa–Atsugi–Miho–Pusan (“K-9”)–Seoul (“K-16”)–“K-16” and back to Tachikawa

Flight Time Records begin to hide the identity of the CIA station: from that time onwards, Atsugi does no longer appear as “ATS”, but as “X” (on 1 October 52), “XXX” (on 29 October 52) or “XXA” (on 17 December 52), and the CIA station on Saipan no longer appears as “SPN”, but as “Pt.N” – appropriately alluding to the CIA installation that posed as the Naval Technical Training Unit.

As to the number of hours flown for the CIA between May 53 and September 53, we always have between 200 and 300 hours per month. With the armistice concluded on 27 July 53, we still have 283 hours, 35 minutes in July 53, 272 hours, 25 minutes in August 53, and 233 hours, 53 minutes in September 53. But then, people apparently began to believe that the truce would hold, and so in October 53, the number goes down to 163 hours, 50 minutes, and for most of the time until the end of 1955, the number of hours flown per month for the CIA’s “AD” operations remains below 200 – just routine, as it seems.

**Operation Tropic**

About half of the guerrillas in mainland China were anti-Communist groups that did not have any connection with the Nationalists and did not desire any connection with them. “Efforts to support these groups and to introduce new agents with direct ties to American intelligence formed an important part of the secret war against China.” The CIA lists the following objectives of anti-Communist propaganda in China:

“All U.S. action was to be such as to encourage initiative by the non-Communist forces, and to encourage action which would appear to the inhabitants of the area as compatible with their national interests and worthy of support. Activity should be directed at the negation and eradication of Soviet influence in China, and the diffusion and diversion of Chinese communism to the point where it would be replaced by Chinese Nationalism and some form of indigenous democracy.”

This type of operations was known as the “Third Force” project and concentrated on two Chinese provinces that were close to Korea – Liaoning and Kirin. Beginning in 1951, recruitment of “Third Force” Chinese was made in Hong Kong. “Under the guise of employment with the Far East Development Company for work on Guam, the new agents were flown to the $28 million CIA training complex on Saipan (‘Navy Technical Training Unit’)


161 The exact numbers are: 233:52 hours in May 53, 209:27 hours in June 53, 283:35 hours in July 53, 272:25 hours in August 53, and 233:53 hours in September 53 (Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for these months, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7).

162 Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for these months, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.


165 Leary, *Perilous missions*, p.138; the code was HTMERLIN (Leary, Manuscript, p.41, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1).

166 The memorandum (July 1961) from Brig. Gen. Edward G. Lansdale, Pentagon expert on guerrilla warfare, to Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, President Kennedy’s military adviser, on *Resources for Unconventional Warfare, SE. Asia* (at: https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pentagon2/doc100.htm) says: “4). Saipan Training Station. CIA maintains a field training station on the island of Saipan located approximately 160 miles northeast of Guam in the Marianas Islands. The installation is under Navy cover and is known as the Naval Technical Training Unit. The primary mission of the Saipan Training Station is to provide physical facilities and competent instructor personnel to fulfill a variety of training requirements including intelligence tradecraft, communications, counter-
small arms, demolition, radio operation, and other basic guerrilla skills, the men were organized into teams and taught how to set up secure bases, prepare drop zones, and establish secret communications networks.”

Former CAT pilot Felix Smith recalls one of his flights to Saipan, probably made in 1951, as his C-46 still had the aged camouflage of the CAA-owned aircraft: “I didn’t blame the furious Air Force major who skidded his jeep to a stop to demand, ‘What the hell are you doing here?’ ‘Here’ was a secure airport called Anderson Air Force Base on Guam, among the Mariana Islands in the central Pacific Ocean, about fourteen hundred miles due south of Tokyo. […] Before I could invent a respectable answer, a weapons carrier drove up with about fifteen civilians in aloha shirts or plain khakis; ten-gallon hats, sun helmets, or no hats; cowboy boots, rubber sandals, or tennis shoes. One of the guys led the fuming major away from the airplane and produced a plastic card from a shirt pocket. The major drove off without another word. My rescuer, a calm, soft-spoken, trim man, stuck out his hand and said, ‘Gilbert’. By this time his buddies had loaded crates of stuff, and we filed a local VFR flight.

‘To Saipan’, they said. We flew north, over a hundred miles of Micronesia’s coral reefs and islands and ocean, and when we sighted Saipan, Gilbert said, ‘Ignore the main runway. I’ll point out the strip.’ We reached their camp via a narrow road covered with migrating snails that popped when we ran over them. We crewmen were given separate rooms in a corrugated metal-Quonset hut on a beach. […] The customers, some with their wives, lived in larger Quonset huts. A central building, decorated with shells, was a dining room and bar intelligence and psychological warfare techniques. Training is performed in support of CIA activities conducted throughout the Far East area. In addition to the facilities described above, CIA maintains a small ship of approximately 500 tons’ displacement and 140 feet in length. This vessel is used presently to provide surface transportation between Guam and Saipan. It has an American Captain and First Mate and a Philippine crew, and is operated under the cover of a commercial corporation with home offices in Baltimore, Maryland. Both the ship and the corporation have a potentially wider paramilitary application both in the Far East area and elsewhere.” The NTTU complex was built in 1951 and functioned until the late sixties as a training camp for agents to be sent to Indonesia, Korea, China, Tibet and elsewhere. Descriptions of the complex with photos, maps and personal memories can be found at http://www.pacificworlds.com/cnmi/memories/memory3.cfm, http://www.saipanstewart.com/essays/coldwar.html, http://www.deq.gov.mp/artdoc/Sec8art80ID698.pdf (about ordnance storage) and http://www.saipantribune.com/newsstory.aspx?newsID=429177 (the complex today). Saipan and Okinawa were the places where “Third Force” agents were trained (Lilley, China Hands, p.78).

CAT C-46s in the old camouflage worn by the CAA-owned aircraft, around 1950/1
(in: UTD/Leary/B30F2)

168 This was Kagman Air Strip on southeastern Saipan. See the map of the CIA installation on Saipan (NTTU – Naval Technical Training Unit) at http://www.saipanstewart.com/essays/coldwar.html.
where we found casualness and camaraderie. […] On the return flight, we carried nine blindfolded passengers and three customers who were flight attendants. Over the Pacific at night I was relaxed as only a pilot can be when watching the sky and listening to the engines and the peaceful whistle of the slip-stream that says everything is in equilibrium. […] The passengers were Chinese Nationalists who had been trained as spies. Blindfolding was a way of keeping the location of the training base secret. Guerrillas of a few other free nations in training had their own ethnic mess halls, which the customers enjoyed sampling. They taught techniques of blowing up all kinds of structures, escape and evasion, the Morse code, the vagaries of small radio transmitters. Gold bars to be used for bartering or bribes were inscribed with the logo of whatever mint existed in the area. […] The customer’s protection lay in a policy of rationing information on a need-to-know basis. We were dissuaded from asking each other questions. […] A rumor around Saipan said a CHINAT general claimed to be disillusioned with Chiang Kai-shek and had volunteered to organize a powerful Third Force. […] Worrying over Chennault’s loyalty to the CHINATS, customer headquarters invented reasons for him to be in Washington during a Third Force operation.”

As the CIA wanted these “Third Force” operations to be kept secret from the Nationalist government on Taiwan, and as General Chennault always insisted on “a relationship of complete confidence with Chiang Kai-shek”, these “Third Force” operations had to be kept secret also from General Chennault. Flights from Hong Kong to Japan that were part of the “Third Force” project were arranged by Conrad E. LaGueux at Hong Kong, who was a CIA-man within the CAT administration. Apparently, for reasons of secrecy, these “Zebra flights” were not allowed to touch Taiwan: In his memo dated 12 January 51, LaGueux requested a “Zebra” flight from “HKG [Hong Kong] to Tachikawa” via Naha (no other stops) […] with one of our old trusted pilots on Tuesday 16 Jan[uary 51].” On 22 January 51, LaGueux asked CAT’s Director of Operations Joe Rosbert for “another Zebra-type flight departing HKG Tuesday 30 Jan at about 0830 hrs and bound for Tachikawa or some other Japan field which may be named later. The flight will overhead Taipeh and refuel at Naha.” As it seems, LaGueux also arranged for cargo flights to Saipan that had to do with building up the CIA training complex on that island.

Memos of 12 and 22 January 51, sent by Connie LaGueux to Joe Rosbert (both in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1)

169 Smith, China Pilot, pp.215/6.
170 Leary, Perilous missions, p.137.
171 Leary, Manuscript, p.43, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1; Leary, Perilous missions, p.128; LaGueux was Al Cox’s deputy from fall 1949 to spring 1952 (“CAT and Covert Operations, 1951-1953”, p.4, in: UTD/Leary/B18F11).
As the “Third Force” project was approved by the Department of State only in late January 51, these “Zebra” flights probably took people from Hong Kong to Okinawa and on to Japan, who said to have contacts with resistance groups in mainland China – possibly representatives of the Free China Movement or other anti-Communist groups. Apparently, selected persons were then flown to Chigasaki or Saipan for training. Preparations continued in 1951, but it is not known, when the first “Third Force” agents were dropped into mainland China. Missions would depart Atsugi Naval Air Station in Japan, headquarters of the CIA’s JTAG or “Joint Technical Advisory Group”, initially probably as an aspect or an extension of “Ad” flights to Pusan (K-9) or Seoul (K-16) in Korea. For the Operational Review of Combined Command Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK) of 6 March 1952 says that in October 1951 CIA agent teams were dropped “along the Manchurian-Soviet border of North Korea” – apparently as part of CAT’s “Ad” missions. “Once in Manchuria, they [= Third Force agents] would recruit local dissidents, collect and transmit intelligence and weather information, and rescue any downed American airmen.”

Probably around October 51, a new program was conceived by the CIA: Operation Tropic. This project was to involve specially equipped C-47s that would drop agents into Manchuria and later pick them up again. One of the earliest known surviving documents that mentions Operation Tropic is a handwritten report called “Report on Tropic Operation” that CAT’s Director of Operations (DO) Joe Rosbert sent to CAT’s Vice-President - Assistant General Manager (VPAGM) Clarence Schildhauer on 26 December 51. It says:

“To: VPAGM
From: DO

Report on Tropic Operation

Dec.26, 1951

175 The Memo dated 22 January 51, sent by LaGueux to Joe Rosbert (in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1) had said: “Tachikawa or some other Japan field which may be named later”.
177 Leary, Perilous missions, p.138.
About the end of October, 1951, the VPAGM and the DO made a trip to Tokyo. During the visit, a meeting was held with Burridge, Green, and Chatham Clark.\textsuperscript{179} The latter asked several questions:

1. CAT/KNA setup. Could it be used for Tropic Operation.
2. Availability of C-47’s.
3. Did CAT have access to indigenous crews.
4. Modifications to C-47’s.

After the trip to Tokyo, I checked the C-47 availability and found that TAA was going to sell its four planes. This info was passed on to Burridge. In the meantime, the latter arranged to obtain a list of indigenous crew members.

During November, several memos were written principally concerning crew training. On Nov.29, the DO took over the office of the J/K Regional Director. During December, several cables went to the States and to Hongkong concerning the purchase of the TAA planes for the Tropic Operation. About the middle / [p.2:] of the month the purchase of three TAA C-47’s was approved.

In the meantime, four CAT pilots made several indoctrination flights with the Air Force.”

As it became necessary for those covert missions out of Atsugi Naval Air Station to install some modifications into the C-47s to be used, CAT bought C-47s B-813, B-815, and B-817 from Trans-Asiatic in January 1952\textsuperscript{180} – aircraft that CAT had already leased since late 1950. The second point of interest is that again, Korean National Airlines (KNA) was to serve as cover for CIA operations in Korea. This point is confirmed by a confidential memo that Chief Pilot Bob Rousselot sent to Director of Operations Joe Rosbert on 27 November 51 about Operation Tropic:

“Chief Pilot has designated following four captains to be the initial pilots assigned to subject operation: R. C. Snoddy, N. Schwartz, M. D. Johnson, E. F. Sims. It is planned that two of the above-mentioned pilots will proceed to K country and report to Major Neighbors at Pusan. Maj. Neighbors will arrange scheduling these two pilots on proposed flights for initial survey and familiarization purposes. It is desired that each of the pilots make one flight in order to familiarize themselves and gain any beneficial information regarding such operation. It is further desired that upon completion of such flight that the individual pilots be returned to Tokyo FAP on Ad flight as deadhead crew. Upon returning TYO, these individuals will continue to be scheduled on our normal scheduling section at Tachikawa until Operations at Tachi is further advised by the Chief Pilot. All concerned have been briefed by the Chief Pilot regarding the emphasis of absolute security of this project. Should any question arise as to the reason for these pilots being deadheaded to and from Korea, their answer is that they are being sent on such an exercise to familiarize themselves with KNA operations and these pilots will act as fill-in pilots until permanent pilots are assigned. These pilots have further been requested by the undersigned not to discuss among themselves in the presence of any other pilot of CAT other than those assigned to this operation and myself any phrase, comments, etc. regarding this operation. […] It is requested that these individuals wear civilian clothes in conducting such flights in order not to excite or promote any predictions or comments originating from the Group with whom they will make the survey flight.”\textsuperscript{181}

\textsuperscript{179} Chatham Clark was chief of JTAG (Joint Technical Advisory Group), the CIA cover at Atsugi Naval Air Station (Leary, \textit{Perilous missions}, pp. 138 and 248, note 37).

\textsuperscript{180} For details see my file \textit{CAT, Air Asia, Air America – the Company on Taiwan I}.

As it seems, not only General Chennault, the ordinary CAT pilots, and the USAF people with whom the pilots made their familiarization flights had to be kept in the dark about the real nature of Operation Tropic, but also – at least partially – CAT’s Vice-President - Assistant General Manager (VPAGM) Clarence Schildhauer. For in his handwritten report to Schildhauer, Rosbert describes Operation Tropic as some sort of cooperation between CAT and Korean National Airlines for a Korean airline network to be run out of Miho in Japan, where the training of Korean (“indigenous”) crews was to be set up. This KNA network apparently was to be used as cover for espionage flights (hence the modifications requested by CIA-man Clark) north of the ceasefire line:

“On Dec. 18, Green and I were asked to attend a meeting at Atsugi with Clark, Dyke [?], Col. Knowland [= William Nolan]182 and Major Naibors [=Neighbors ?]. The latter is to be in charge of the operation at Miho.

We discussed in detail the complete operational setup. They [?] were going to attempt to have facilities available at Miho by Jan.5, 1952, and asked if we could have at least one C-47 there available for training. I said we probably could.

As far as I can determine, Burridge’s office has not attempted to negotiate a contract, nor has the DO. All discussions have been carried out on the assumption that contract negotiation and final approval would come from higher authority. Duly technical and operational details have been discussed so far. Clark did ask about a contract and I said I would arrange for him to see a copy of the PBY contract so that / [p.3:] he can discuss contract terms with the proper people in CAT.

I asked Clark about security in case a plane were lost. He said that the primary importance would be to protect CAT and see that any of its connections with the operation were covered, even if he himself had to come out and make the explanation.

Incidentally KNA planes would only be used between Pusan and Miho. As soon as the indigenous personnel could be trained, they would fly all other operations out of Miho. KNA

---

182 Leary, Perilous missions, p.138.
would be operating under charter to CAT for the Pusan-Miho flights. The indigenous crews would be trained for KNA (if any question arises).

I presume that everyone concerned is aware that the reason CAT was asked to take on this job is because of the imminent ceasefire in Korea which would preclude any air force operation north of the ceasefire line.

The aircraft modifications have been discussed with Grundy, but no instructions to do any work have been issued as yet.”

Joe Rosbert, “Report on Tropic Operation”, p.2 (extract)
(in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1)

Much of what Rosbert wrote Schildhauer sounds like the cover story mentioned by Rousselot in his letter to Rosbert, and it is unknown, if Miho Air Base in Japan – home of the 452nd Bombardment Wing between December 50 and May 51 and after that a very quiet station, i.e. an ideal place for preparing covert operations – was really ever used as a training station for Operation Tropic, as Rosbert’s report to Schildhauer says. Apparently, the “indigenous” crewmen requested by Chatham Clark according to this report were Chinese who were to operate the winch, but even in November 52, these people had not been fully trained.

The next step in preparing Operation Tropic was to perform the modifications requested by the CIA. In January 52, CAT bought C-47s B-813, B-815, and B-817 from Trans-Asiatic.

---


184 “In December 1950, the United States Air Force 452d Bombardment Wing moved B-26 Invader light bombers to Miho Air Base. They moved to Pusan-East AB (K-9), South Korea in May 1951 for combat duty during the Korean War. The only other operational USAF unit to use the airfield was the 17th Bombardment Wing, which also flew B-26s from the field between October 1954 – March 1955 before returning to the United States. Miho AB, however was used primary a Radar Station by the 618th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron beginning in December 1950, operating defensive radar sites as part of the air defense of Japan until May 1957. The 6135th Support Squadron maintained airfield facilities and the small ground station. The Air Weather Service 15th Weather squadron also used the airfield, along with transient C-47 Skytrain transports carrying supplies and personnel. USAF units were withdrawn and Miho Airport was returned to Japanese control in May 1957 as part of a general drawdown of American forces in Japan.” (“Miho-Yonaga Airport”, in: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miho_AB).


186 Leary, Perilous missions, p.138. Although the Equipment List of February 54 published by Leary (pp.217-224) still gives C-47s B-815 and B-817 as “leased” at that time, they were actually owned. This is confirmed by a fleet list of July 1953 (in: Leary, Manuscript, p.343, in: UTD/B19F2), which notes 3 C-47s owned by CAT Inc (apparently B-801, B-815, and B-817, as B-813 had already been destroyed) and 3 C-47s leased from commercial organizations (apparently B-809, B-811, and B-823). Officially, B-817 was bought by CAT in “41/1”, that is in January 52 (Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 73, in: UTD/CIA/B26f5), and this was probably also the official date of acquisition for C-47s B-813 and B-815.
and on 2 February 52, Rosbert asked Schildhauer to instruct CAT’s Director of Maintenance Hugh Grundy at Tainan to perform the necessary work on the aircraft. These modifications included static lines, drop signal systems, flame suppressors, and other items. Three of the items on the list were to be supplied from CIA stocks. But on 27 May 52, several items were still not available.

**Memo of 2 Feb. 52, Rosbert to Schildhauer, plus List of modifications requested** (both in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F)

**Memo of 6 Feb. 52, Schildhauer to Grundy, and Status of modifications as of 27 May 52** (both in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F)

The installations and modifications were to facilitate drops and pickups in remote areas that could be reached only with additional fuel, to allow orientation and communications over cold enemy territory and to make the aircraft less visible from the ground at night. By early April 52, the aircraft were painted olive drab with a very small registration number on the tail as only identification. CAT’s “Doc” Johnson was one of the pilots who tested C-47 B-815 on

---

187 Memo no. DO-3 of 2 Feb. 52 (Rosbert to Schildhauer), Memo no. VPAGM-401 of 6 Feb. 52 (Schildhauer to Grundy; radiograms of 11 Feb.52 and 23 Feb.52 (Rosbert to Grundy) regarding the olive drab (OD) paint scheme of B-813, B-815, and B-817, all in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F.

188 List dated 27 May 52, in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F.
multiple flights between Tachikawa and Atsugi on 3 and 4 April 52.\textsuperscript{189}

\begin{center}
\textbf{CAT C-47 B-815 in regular airline colors, probably in 1951 (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29)}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textbf{CAT C-47 B-815 at Tachikawa on 5 April 1952, painted olive drab (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29, photo no. 97-17)}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textbf{“Doc” Johnson testing CAT’s C-47 B-815 out of Tachikawa on 3 and 4 April 1952 (Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013)}
\end{center}

The pick-up system to be used was not yet the Fulton Skyhook system developed only several years later, but “at that time, the technique for aerial pickup involved flying an aircraft

\textsuperscript{189} Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013.
at low altitude and hooking a line elevated between two poles. The line was connected to a harness in which the agent was strapped. Once airborne, the man was to be winched into the aircraft. This technique required specialized training, both for the pilots of the aircraft, provided by the CIA’s proprietary Civil Air Transport (CAT), and for the two men who would operate the winch.”

The article by Dujmovic uses this drawing to illustrate how the system works, and several video tapes and images showing aerial pickups of mail and of persons can be found at [http://wn.com/All_American_Aviation](http://wn.com/All_American_Aviation). William Leary gives the history of the system: “An innovative extraction method, reportedly used by the British toward the end of the war, involved the use of a modified version of a mail pickup system that had been invented by Lytle S. Brown during the 1920s and perfected before Pearl Harbor by All American Aviation. The All American system used two steel poles, set 54 feet apart, with a transfer line strung between them. An aircraft approached the ground station in a gentle glide of 90 mph, while a flight mechanic paid out a 50-foot steel cable. As the aircraft pulled up, a four-finger grapple at the end of the cable engaged the transfer rope, shock absorbers cushioned the impact, and then the flight mechanic winched the mail pouch on board. […] Lt. Alex Doster, a paratrooper, volunteered for the first human pickup, made on 5 September 1943. After a Stinson engaged the transfer rope at 125 mph, Doster was first yanked vertically off the ground, then soared off behind the aircraft. It took less than three minutes to retrieve him. […] The Air Force continued to improve the system, even developing a package containing telescoping poles, transfer line, and harness that could be dropped by air. The first operational use of the system came in February 1944, when a C-47 snagged a glider in a remote location in Burma and returned it to India. […] During the Korean War, CIA became interested in the All American system. In the spring and summer of 1952, CIA tried to establish a resistance network in Manchuria. Civil Air Transport (CAT), its air proprietary, dropped agents and supplies into Kirin Province as part of a project known to the pilots as Operation Tropic. The All American system seemed to answer the problem of how to bring

---


191 The illustration of the snatch pickup seems to come from an old US Army Air Force manual (see: [http://www.heresnemo.com/2010_06_01_archive.html](http://www.heresnemo.com/2010_06_01_archive.html)).
people out of Manchuria. […] In the fall of 1952, CAT pilots in Japan made a number of static pickups, then successfully retrieved mechanic Ronald E. Lewis.192

Training began during the winter months of 1951/52, and Operation Tropic got off the ground in spring 1952193 involving 3 CAT C-47s and the CAT B-17 bailed from the USAF.194 “Crews assigned to the project lived at the bachelor officers’ quarters at Tachikawa or off base if married. Alerted for a mission by telephone, the crew ferried a C-47 from Tachikawa to nearby Atsugi Naval Air Station, headquarters of the Joint Technical Advisory Group. John H. Mason […] had replaced Colwell Beers as chief of JTAG (“Jay Tag”), the CIA cover organization that handled the “third force” and other clandestine programs. The crews usually stayed overnight at Atsugi, where they were briefed by Mason and his air officers, Colonel William Nolan and Captain Art Dietrich. Flights involved airdrops of supplies or Chinese agents, generally in eastern Manchuria. The aircraft […] departed Atsugi for Pusan (K-9) or Seoul (K-16). Cargo door removed to facilitate the drop, the C-47 left Korea at dusk, heading east over the water to avoid detection by U.S. Air Force radar. Beyond radar range, the crew turned north and climbed to ten thousand feet. Near the coastline, the lights of Vladivostok often could be seen off the right wingtip. The crew were careful to avoid large cities because noise was more likely to betray the plan than Chinese radar. Establishing the drop zone by loran, dead reckoning, or a visual signal from the ground, the aircraft came in at low altitude. At a signal from the cockpit, the two or three CIA agents who were on board as PDO’s (parachute dispatch officers) pushed the cargo or people out the side. The crew then retraced the route back to home base and debriefing.”195

“During the summer of 1952, [erased, probably the chief of JTAG] discussed with CAT the possibility of developing a capability for successfully exfiltrating an agent or agents by an aerial pickup or ‘snatch’ operation at night. It was decided to introduce a test program to determine whether such operations were feasible. It was decided initially to try out a system that had been developed and successfully employed in tests during the latter part of World War II and immediately thereafter. This called for a line stretched between two poles, with both ends of the line hooked into a special harness that was tightly worn by the individual

194 Kirkpatrick’s color slide no. 2056 shows B-26’s and the B-17 on the parking ramp at K-1 Pusan, Korea on 13 October 52 (information kindly sent to the author on 16 November 2012 by Patrizia Nava). According to Kirkpatrick, the B-17 was mostly flown by Snoddy, Schwartz, and Pinkava – “Snoddy and Schwartz would often fly solo – some flights were as long as 1,200 miles.” (Leary, Interview with E.C. Kirkpatrick dated 26 April 80, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B15F3).
who was to be picked up. The aircraft, coming in at low altitude, picked up the part of the line running between the two poles, by means of a hook lowered from the aircraft. The aircraft immediately ascended, and the man in the harness being pulled into the air was reeled up and into the aircraft by means of a winch installed near the rear side door. After practicing first by day and then by night, it was determined that the system was practical, and that selected CAT crews had the capability to perform such missions successfully.”

“The first Third Force team to be airdropped did not deploy until April 1952. This four-man team parachuted into southern China and was never heard from again. The second Third Force team comprised five ethnic Chinese dropped into the Jilin region of Manchuria in mid-July 1952. The team quickly established radio contact with [the] CIA unit outside of China and was resupplied by air in August and October. A sixth team member, intended as a courier between the team and the controlling CIA unit, was dropped in September. In November, the team reported contact with a local dissident leader and said it had obtained needed operational documents such as official credentials. They requested airexfiltration of the courier, a method he had trained for but that the CIA had never attempted operationally.”

“In the month of November 1952, [erased, probably the head of JTAG] advised that one of his operations had reached the point where it was highly desirable to exfiltrate one of the agents in north China by such an operation. The writer [= Alfred Cox] and the chief pilot, Captain Robert Rousselot, discussed this with one of the crews we deemed most highly proficient, Captains Norman Schwartz and Robert Snoddy. Both advised that, in addition to having the requisite proficiency, they were willing to undertake the mission.”

“Schwartz was the lead pilot. He had seniority over Snoddy so it fits. […] The CIA mission designator wasn’t TROPIC. That was something CAT called it. The actual CIA designator was STAROMA. ‘ST’ stands for China and ‘Aroma’ was just randomly selected.”

Among the CAT crew members who were assigned to Operation Tropic was First Officer Enos C. Kirkpatrick whose Flight Time Records for the months from April 1952 to May 1953 have survived. In an interview conducted by Prof. William Leary on 24 August 1980, Kirkpatrick states that he “began overflights in the spring of 1952 – made four or five, dropping supplies and personnel mainly in eastern Manchuria, in C-47.” From his Flight Time Records we learn that Kirkpatrick left the airline service to Hong Kong and Bangkok, flying C-46 B-840 from Taipei via Kadena and Atsugi up to Tachikawa on 29 April 52. For the following months – at least until May 1953 – he was stationed at Tachikawa, but his Flight Time Records show many blanks and often note that the first entry per month that we can see in those Records was not the first flight he had made during that particular month. So the blanks cover flights that were not recorded – probably because of their secret nature. Kirkpatrick’s first entry for the month of May 52 was a flight from Tachikawa-Atsugi on 17 May and on from Atsugi to Pusan in Korea and back to Tachikawa on 18 May 52. This entire flight – forth and back – is listed as his 17th log during that month. We can only guess that during the first 2 weeks he made test and training flights out of Tachikawa using the modified C-47s of Operation Tropic, and perhaps he was also the First Officer in a first Tropic mission to Manchuria.

---

199 E-mail dated 23 December 2010, kindly sent to the author by Erik Kirzinger.
200 They are preserved at: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B2F13.
For June 1952, Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records show some more oddities: There is a blank between 13 and 26 June, and his flight from Tachikawa to Seoul (K-16) on 26 June is given as his 36th log during that month. The last flight period before that blank starts with a 12 minute-flight on 11 June, i.e. a flight from Tachikawa near Tokyo to an airport coded “QAC” – as there is no such airfield in the Tokyo area, the code only means an airport that the pilots were not allowed to name. At 12 minutes from Tachikawa, the aircraft would probably have reached the CIA base at Atsugi Naval Air Station. According to Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records, the entire flight crew consisting of pilot Snoddy, co-pilot Kirkpatrick and First Officer Wong, would have deplaned at QAC and would have started a very long trip the following day, i.e. on 12 June, flying the same C-46 B-846 that they had abandoned at QAC the day before, but again from Tachikawa (how did it get back?) to Kadena, Okinawa, then via Iwo Jima Air Base and Saipan to Guam, and back from Guam via Saipan, Iwo Jima and Atsugi to Tachikawa. 203 There is no doubt that this report is a fake. As Bob Snoddy was one of the pilots of the Tropic program and as these flights usually began with the short hop from Tachikawa to Atsugi, where the crew was briefed and stayed overnight, this fake itinerary probably covered another Tropic mission, allowing the flight crew to log the same flight time, but for a route that wasn’t secret.

For the month of July 52, Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records show another large blank between 19 July, when he returned from Iwo Jima, and 30 July, when he flew C-46 B-840 to Saipan; between these 2 dates, the records only list a 45-minute test flight of C-46 B-840 out of Tachikawa, crewed by pilot Wells, co-pilot Kirkpatrick, and First Officer Hsu. Again, this report sounds strange, but may have covered test and training flights for Operation Tropic using their modified C-47s. While Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records do not show anything special for August 52, 204 there was another Tropic mission in September 52 hidden in a similar way: On 12 September, Kirkpatrick flew one of the Tropic C-47s, B-815, from Tachikawa to Atsugi. But from 13 to 15 September, Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records show him on another long trip from Tachikawa (!) via Iwo Jima to Guam in C-46 B-136, then back via Saipan to Iwo Jima and from there even to Pusan and Seoul in Korea, before he seemed to return to Tachikawa in the same C-46 – a long trip around the Orient allegedly flown in the same C-46 B-136, but probably destined to cover another Tropic mission flown to Manchuria in C-47 B-815. 205 For the month of October 52, Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records do not show any significant blanks, but the same procedure as in the September records: On 14 October, he flew Operation Tropic C-47 B-815 from Tachikawa to Atsugi, with Tropic pilot Eddie Sims at the controls, and the following day, he allegedly departed on a 3 day-flight in C-46 B-864 – again from Tachikawa (!) – to Guam via Atsugi, Kadena, Iwo Jima, and Saipan, and then all the way back to Tachikawa, a round trip that was probably once more destined to cover a Tropic mission flown to Manchuria in C-47 B-815. 206

---

The Tropic mission of October 52 in E.C. Kirkpatrick’s Flight Time Records

There was still another aspect: “This type of operation requires two men in the rear of the aircraft to operate the winch, and to assist the agent into the aircraft. Several CAT ground personnel had been checked out on the procedures required in the rear of the aircraft. Our

---

chief of operations at Tachikawa Air Force Base, “Doc” Lewis, and an operations officer, James Stewart, also volunteered for the mission. (Stewart had accompanied Li Mi into Southern Yunnan in an earlier operation and, although without military training except as a Naval noncom during World War II, had performed excellently). [erased, probably the head of JTAG] was then notified that CAT was prepared to accept the mission. – The necessary operational planning proceeded, and a tentative date was set for the operation. At a very late stage of planning, [erased, probably the chief of JTAG] notified CAT that it had been decided to withdraw Lewis and Stewart from the operation and replace them with two U.S. Army (CIA) civilian employees, John T. Downey and Richard Fecteau; both were hurriedly trained in carrying out the duties involved in the rear of the aircraft for such an operation.”

“On 20 November, Downey’s CIA unit radioed back to the team: ‘Will air snatch approximately 2400 hours on 29 November.’ […] Late on 29 November, Downey and Fecteau boarded Schwartz and Snoddy’s olive drab C47 on an airfield on the Korean peninsula and took off for the rendezvous point in Chinese Communist Manchuria, some 400 miles away. […] The C47, with its CAT pilots and CIA crew, was heading for a trap. The agent team, unbeknownst to the men on the flight, had been captured by Communist Chinese security forces and had been turned. […] Reaching the designated area around midnight, the aircraft received the proper recognition signal from the ground. Downey and Fecteau pushed out supplies for the agent team – food and equipment needed for the aerial pickup. […] As the C47 came in low for the pickup, flying nearly at its stall speed of around 60 knots, white sheets that had been camouflaging two antiaircraft guns on the snowy terrain flew up and gunfire erupted. […] The pilots directed the aircraft’s nose up, preventing an immediate crash; however, the engines cut out and the aircraft glided to a controlled crash among some trees, breaking in two with the nose in the air. […] Other than suffering bruises and being shaken up, Downey and Fecteau were extremely fortunate in being unhurt. […] Whether due to gunfire, the impact, or the fire, the pilots died at the scene.”

When CAT C-47 B-813 was overdue on the morning of 30 November 52, “CIA worked with Civil Air Transport to concoct a cover story – a CAT aircraft on a commercial flight from Korea to Japan on 3 December was missing and, as of 4 December, was presumed lost in the Sea of Japan. Downey and Fecteau were identified as Department of the Army civilian employees.” CIA agents Richard G. Fecteau and John T. Downey remained in Chinese prison for many years, until they were finally released in December 71 and March 73 respectively. While Fecteau had served 19 years and 14 days of his 20 year sentence when he was released, Downey’s sentence of lifetime imprisonment was only revoked after a diplomatic intervention at the highest level: “When President Nixon reached Peking early in 1972, he took the opportunity to discuss Downey’s case with Chinese leaders. At the dawn of what was hoped to be a new era of friendly Sino-American relations, a compromise was struck. At a press conference in February 1973 Nixon acknowledged that Downey was a CIA agent who became a prisoner after his military aircraft had been forced down in Chinese waters.”


208 CAT’s Norman A. Schwartz and Robert C. Snoddy were the pilots on this CAT C-47 B-813.


 territory. Satisfied, Peking set Downey free on March 12, 1973.”

The fate of the two CAT pilots was less fortunate: For many years, the US Government did not recognize their death and role: It was only in December 1998 that the US government acknowledged the men by adding their names to the Book of Honor at CIA Headquarters.213 “China did not mention Snoddy and Schwartz until 1975, “when officials told President Gerald R. Ford the missing pilots had been found dead and ‘badly scorched’ at the crash site, and that it would be impossible to locate their remains.” 214 “Undaunted, a Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command team visited the crash site in July 2002 and found the aircraft wreckage, but no human remains.” 215 “In June 2004, a Pentagon search team, with authorization by China, excavated the crash site and found remains later identified216 as Snoddy’s.217 Schwartz’s remains were not found.”218 What was also found at the crash site in the Jilin region of Manchuria was a Rolex watch that had apparently belonged to one of the two pilots, probably to Robert Snoddy.219

The photos of the crash site of C-47 B-813 and of the Rolex found there were kindly supplied by Erik Kirzinger

On 25 March 2005, a memorial service was held at Evergreen Cemetery’s Normandy Chapel, Louisville, KY, to honor Schwartz and his sister Katherine Gordon. On that occasion, Rod Smith, chief of special operations for the CIA, recognized Schwartz’s efforts on behalf of his country, saying: “None of us come to work without being mindful every day of the torch
that was passed to us by men like Norm.”220 The long and complicated history of Bob Snoddy’s remains finally coming home to Oregon has been covered by several newspapers all over the United States.221 On 18 June 2005, The Register-Guard reported that his remains were buried in his mother’s plot at Rest-Haven Cemetery, Eugene, OR: “A grave that has lain unmarked for decades will have two names on it now that a mother’s son has finally come home. With a Navy honor guard standing by and a lone jet creasing the sky overhead, the family of Robert ‘Bob’ Snoddy laid the pilot’s remains to rest last Friday. His daughter, born three weeks after his death, laid them in his mother’s grave 53 years after the Roseburg native died when his airplane was ambushed by Chinese communists on a clandestine mission in Manchuria. [...] A last wish of Snoddy’s mother, Myrtle Boss, was that no marker be placed on her grave until her son came home. [...] A new stone with the names of both mother and son will mark the long-delayed reunion. [...] John Downey flew to Oregon for the funeral. ‘It’s been a long time’, he said afterward. ‘He was a great man and an outstanding flyer. They were both very good at what they did.’ The service included a 21-gun salute by the Navy honor guard and a flyover by a single A-6 Intruder jet, dispatched from the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station in Washington. Several high-ranking Navy officers also took part.”222

As to the other infiltration missions into Red China, on 24 November 54, the US Consulate General at Hong Kong forwarded the following note that had been released by Peking the day before: “John Thomas Downey organized Chang Tsai-wen, Hsu Kwan-chih, Yu Kwan-chou, Niu Sung-lin into a team called ‘Team Wen’, and secretly air-dropped them from a U.S. C-47 plane into Kirin Province of Northeast China in July 1952. John Thomas Downey also organized Luan Heng-shan, Wang Wei-fan, Wang Shin-sheng, Chung Tien-hsing and others into another team called ‘Team Shen’ and secretly air-dropped them from a U.S. B-17 plane into Liaoning Province of Northeast China in September 1952. Besides, he had Li Chun-ying air-dropped from a U.S. plane into Kirin Province in October 1952 to keep in contact with the other agents and to conduct subversive activities. In August 1952 John Thomas Downey himself secretly intruded into Kirin Province of Northeast China in a U.S. plane to air-drop food and supplies for the agents of ‘Team Wen’, who had been air-dropped into Kirin Province.”223 The same report also speaks about how the Chinese agents were trained: “They were taken up in 1951 by the ‘Free China Movement’, a U.S. espionage organization at Hongkong. Under the guise of being employed by the ‘Far East Development Company’ for work on Guam Island, they were flown in groups to espionage training centers of the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency in Chigasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan, and on Saipan Island for secret training. The training courses were mainly how to carry out assassination, demolition, armed riots, intelligence collection, secret communications and other espionage activities in China. After the training, they were selected by John Thomas Downey and another U.S. special agent to receive training under the personal direction of Downey. They were later organized into groups and air-dropped in succession from U.S. planes into Kirin and Liaoning Provinces of Northeast China to set up there ‘bases’ for armed agents and


222 See http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Remains+of+CIA+pilot+are+buried+in+mother+s+grave.-a0133423274; a shortened version of that article appeared in OregonLive.com on 19 June 2005 and can be found at http://www.airamerica.org/newspaper_articles/Snoddy_Buried.pdf.

‘safety points’ for sheltering agents, build ‘parachuting grounds’ to receive air-dropped supplies and agents, establish secret communication lines connecting the ‘bases’ with Mukden, collect information about the national defences of our country, location of industrial areas and meteorological conditions, rescue intruding American airmen who were shot down and gather remnant elements of the Chiang Kai-shek traitorous gang for armed riots.” This was not Communist propaganda: According to Peking, of the 212 agents who parachuted into Mainland China between 1951 and 1953, 101 were killed and 111 were captured, so that these drops were a failure.

CAT B-26s

During the Korean War, CAT also flew at least 3 CIA B-26s dropping agents and leaflets into North Korea and mainland China. In November 1952, at least 2 CAT pilots – Ted Leete and Bob Maguire – flew 2 black B-26s with USAF insignia around Mount Fuji in Japan. As has been seen above,

“This in early 1951, CIA and the G-3 Eighth United States Army Korea (EUSAK), working in harmony, divided North Korea into two parts for guerrilla warfare action and control. The Agency already had established the nucleus for a trained guerrilla movement in the mountains in the extreme northeast. The Army took the western portion where a spontaneous pro-U.N. guerrilla movement developed after the U.N. offensive crossed the 38th parallel on 7 October 1950. [...] CIA advisors worked with the EUSAK west coast guerrillas from January to April 1952. [...] The over-all CIA/Army relationship at that level was eminently satisfactory and mutually advantageous.”

This makes believe that the missions flown by the CAT B-26s were mostly the same as those flown by USAF B-26s, but in eastern North Korea, while the USAF B-26s flew in western North Korea. On 1 April 52, the US Air Force activated B Flight, 6167th Operations Squadron, 5th Air Force, at Seoul City Air Base. This unit was equipped with black painted B-26s as well as C-46 and C-47 transport aircraft. Its mission was “transporting and re-supplying personnel and units operating behind enemy lines [...] for the purpose of gathering intelligence information and covert activity [...] or for aiding rescue, escape, or evasion”, but also flare drops, psywar operations like leaflet drops and personnel snatch with transport aircraft. “Experience soon led the crews to conclude that the glass-nosed (unarmed) B-26, modified with a jump platform in the bomb bay, was the ideal aircraft for these missions. The platform modification to the bomb provided wood benches on the bomb racks on which a maximum of six parachutists could sit en route to the drop zone. There was still another modification not briefed to the parachutists. As former B Flight navigator Maj P.G. Moore recalls: ‘When we gave the green light for the parachutists to jump, they simply slid off the wood bench. In the event they hesitated, we had a toggle switch in the cockpit that dropped

---

225 Leary, Perilous missions, pp. 140/1.
226 Leary, Perilous missions, pp. 140-42; Robbins, Air America, pp. 79/80; Hagedorn/Hellström, Foreign Invaders, pp. 169/70.
228 (Anonymous), The Secret War in Korea, June 1950 to June 1952, CIA (Clandestine Services History) 1968, pp.20/1; CIA document no. Korea DOC_0001459071 (CREST), kindly e-mailed to the author on 23 February 2011 by Leif Hellström.
229 Haas, Apollo’s Warriors, p.40.
230 Haas, Apollo’s Warriors, p.42.
the whole lot... bomb racks, benches, and parachutists from the aircraft.’ [...] Major Moore also recalls taking American parachutists further north – across North Korea’s northern border and into Manchuria itself. [...] When going that far north, the B-26s would generally take off from K-16\textsuperscript{231}, fly east out over the Sea of Japan and, using a navigation beacon on one of the US Navy’s carriers, fly north as far as possible turning inland to search for the small fires that would mark the drop zone.’’\textsuperscript{232}

Probably, the CAT B-26s flew similar missions into eastern North Korea, although “B Flight eventually dropped early attempts to use its B-26s and C-47s for psywar loudspeaker missions.”\textsuperscript{233} As the aircraft known to have been flown by CAT pilots had USAF markings, these were probably training flights made out of Tachikawa. But CAT did fly B-26s on covert missions during the Korean War.\textsuperscript{234} In what looks like a civil corner of Seoul airport, E. C. Kirkpatrick photographed some reconnaissance RB-26Cs on 21 September 1952 – these may have been some of the USAF B-26s flown by CAT pilots during the Korean War.

USAF RB-26Cs at Seoul airport on 21 September 52 taken by E. C. Kirkpatrick (photos nos. 1KP-10-SC2004 and 1KP-10-SC 2010)

On 16 February 1953, 3 USAF B-26Cs – 43-22622, 43-22633, and 43-22634 – were even transferred from USAF stocks in Korea to “Top Secret”, which certainly means the CIA.\textsuperscript{235} “Some of the crews of the 67\textsuperscript{th} TRW carried out a number of night-time training missions, dropping people from the bomb bays, and the same technique was very likely used by CIA B-26 crews to infiltrate agents into mainland China and North Korea. The CIA air unit in Japan also employed the B-26 in various tests, aimed at finding new methods of infiltration. One of these trials involved towing an L-20 Beaver behind a B-26. Since the L-20 did not use its own

\textsuperscript{231} That is Seoul.
\textsuperscript{232} Haas, Apollo’s Warriors, pp.42/3.
\textsuperscript{233} Haas, Apollo’s Warriors, p.47.
\textsuperscript{234} Rosbert, The Pictorial History of Civil Air Transport, p.175.
\textsuperscript{235} Hagedorn / Hellström, Foreign Invaders, p.173.
engine until the target location was reached, the range of the aircraft was in effect doubled.**236**

One of these aircraft – 43-22633 – returned to the USAF at Clark AFB on 5 March 56 and was subsequently scrapped. The other 2 aircraft were apparently transferred to Western Enterprises Inc. on Taiwan around March 1954, where they possibly became “622” and “634” with the RoCAF’s “Special Operations Unit”.**237**

---

**236** Hagedorn / Hellström, *Foreign Invaders*, p.169.

**237** Hagedorn / Hellström, *Foreign Invaders*, p.173.
3) Assistance to Korean National Airlines

As early as late July 1950, Lew Burridge, CAT’s manager for Japan, was looking for new business in Korea. On 20 June 50, he had sent to General Chennault an “argument draft” of a future agreement between CAT and Korean National Airlines that CAT should assist KNA in building up airline services, among others providing KNA with “two plush C-53’s” – that is Skytrooper C-47s with higher gross weight and 28 seats installed – as well as maintenance and ground equipment, to be payable at 20% of the purchase price agreed at the time when the agreement became effective and the remaining 80% to be “held in mortgage by CAT”.

MEMORANDUM

CONFIDENTIAL

20 June 1950

TO: A. L. Burridge

FROM: General Chennault

SUBJECT: Korea Domestic Operations

I am enclosing the “argument” draft of our contract with KNA for both domestic and operational development. After many conferences, this draft has been approved in principle and I expect signature within a day or two without any major amendment. This contract will not bind CAT until signed by CAT. Any alterations which differ from previous negotiations will be explained in detail when KNA has agreed on the signature.

We should do everything possible to have two plush C-53’s, necessary station maintenance equipment, two AW-2 ground sets, necessary weather equipment for one station and crews available as soon as possible, as speed is their main consideration at the moment.

The present desire of the President is for CAT and KNA to establish a joint operation in which CAT selects a General Manager of Operations and Training who is acceptable to KNA. However, they don’t want to leave any impression that CAT is taking over KNA and, therefore, prefer the 50-50 arrangements on operating expenses, profits and losses.

They are going to plump very hard for a plush DC-4 and may make this a stipulation of the final agreement. Their proposal for a plush DC-4 is that CAT purchase same and hold a mortgage for 80% for the duration of the contract or until such time as KNA pays the unpaid balance. I am trying to get them in, if the case of the C-54, to pay 60% or 60% down, the plane I have in mind in these negotiations is the PAL DC-4 which we have been quoted a price of US$185,000.00.

When the contract is signed on the part of KNA, I will return to Hongkong and explain the situation in detail.

A. L. Burridge

CAT assistance to Korean National Airlines
Letter dated 20 June 50, sent by A. L. Burridge to General Chennault
(in: UTD/Rosbert/B1F3)

---

CAT assistance to Korean National Airlines

“Draft agreement” sent by A. L. Burridge to General Chennault on 20 June 50
(in: UTD/Rosbert/B1F3)

CAT was to make its first flight to Seoul, Korea, on 28 June 1950, but 3 days before that date, North Korean Communists crossed the 38th Parallel and encircled Seoul’s main airport. This attack also inactivated Korean National Airlines, which now lacked the equipment and the personnel to undertake commercial operations. So CAT’s Whiting Willauer offered his assistance to KNA, but for political reasons, KNA did not deal directly with CAT Incorporated, but with a wholly-owned CAT subsidiary called Burridge Associates, which entered into a contract with KNA to furnish flight service to KNA. The idea was to provide KNA with 2 C-47s, 2 Cessna 195s, personnel, communications, weather equipment plus a certain amount of money. On 15 September 50, Operation “AD”, which had had 3 C-46s and one Cessna 195, was cut down to one aircraft, probably freeing the Cessna for other tasks. It was probably in November or December 1950 that at Tachikawa, Japan, one CAT Cessna 195 – believed to have been XT-981, the one that had been flown to Tachikawa on 5 September 50 for “AD” operations – was prepared for service with Korean National Airlines. At the end, it emerged as “K-05”, painted in full Korean National colors and baptized “Pusan”.

---

240 Leary, Manuscript, p.102, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
On 18 December 50, CAT’s Director of Operations Joe Rosbert reported that 1 CAT-owned C-47 was being operated by Korean National Airlines and projected the same for the end of December 1950. On CAT’s Flight Control Board at Tachikawa photographed on 7 February 1951, CAT’s first C-47, that is XT-801, is not listed; so apparently, XT-801 was the CAT C-47 leased to Korean National Airlines at that time. In the Memorandum dated 11 September 51, sent by CAT’s President to the Board of Directors, only XT-801 is mentioned among the C-47s owned by CAT, so it apparently returned from service with Korean National Airlines. C-47 XT-807, the one bought from Hong Kong Airways in September 1950, is no longer in the fleet, and another C-47 that is known to have been bought from Hong Kong Airways in early 1951 is also missing: C-47 XT-821 (msn 11921) ex Hong Kong Airways VR-HDP had been bought in January 51 and was cancelled probably on 16 April 51. So between September 50 and 31 August 51, CAT bought 2 C-47s that were sold only a couple of months later – XT-807 (msn 12019) and XT-821 (msn 11921) –, while the C-47s leased from TAA and IAT remained in the fleet for several years. There is only one explanation: These were the 2 C-47s that Korean National Airlines bought from CAT (via Burridge Associates) on 10 February 1951 under a lease-purchase agreement and that later became HL-05 and HL-06.
Korean National Airlines C-47s HL-05 and HL-06 at Pusan on 18 May 1952
(UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29, photo no. 98-5)

But when CAT began flying on behalf of KNA between Seoul and Iwakuni, Japan in February 51, SCAP vetoed these flights as unauthorized and ordered an investigation. Thru Burridge Associates, CAT had advanced a lot of money to Korean National Airlines in order to enable KNA to start operations, and the advantage for CAT was to be that in that way the company was able to obtain rights for scheduled flights in Korea. But only a year later, after the Sino-Korean Bilateral Air Transport Agreement had been signed on 29 February 52, weekly flights between Korea and Japan could begin.247 By July or August 1951, the Cessna seems to have returned to Tachikawa, as these photos of B-981 and B-983 show:

Apparently the same scene: CAT Cessnas B-981 (in the foreground) and B-983 at Tachikawa in July or August 1951
(CAT Bulletin, vol. IV, no.8, Sept. 51, p.22 and photo. no. 1-DH64-3-PB9 in UTD/Hickler)

But it was not until April 1952 that CAT sold three of its Cessna 195s: “In fact they are the first planes to be sold outright to Japanese buyers. The three purchasers are Tokyo and Osaka’s leading newspapers, Asahi Shimbun, Yomiuri Shimbun in Tokyo and Mainichi Shimbun, Osaka-Tokyo. It is also noteworthy that CAT gave refresher courses to long grounded Japanese pilots enabling them to take over the controls of the Cessnas after the 28th of April.”248

As to airline services to Korea, CAT was scheduled to make its first flight to Seoul on 28 June 1950. On 25 June 1950, the North Korean Communists crossed the 38th Parallel, and Seoul’s main airport, Kimpo, fell to the invader in the night of 29th June. Of course, CAT did not give up the idea of acquiring landing rights in Korea again, and after many months of successful negotiations – for which much credit must be given to CAT’s Japan-Korea Regional Director Lew Burridge – CAT worked out an interline agreement with Korean National Airlines (KNA), and on 30 March 1952, CAT started scheduled airline services to Pusan in South Korea.\(^\text{249}\) In this way, it became possible to board a CAT plane at Bangkok and fly to Pusan via Taipei, Iwakuni and Tokyo. Upon arrival at Pusan, CAT passengers could transfer to a KNA plane and reach Seoul, Kwang-ju or Kunsan. KNA also serviced CAT planes at Pusan, while KNA planes were serviced at any CAT base outside Korea. The initial schedule called for four flights a week: The Bangkok plane would leave Thailand on Monday afternoon, reach Tokyo on Tuesday morning, and then proceed to Pusan via Iwakuni. Another flight would originate in Pusan on Friday and return to Pusan on Saturday. Two weekly flights between Taipei and Pusan via Iwakuni were also in operation in order to give both passengers and cargo the best connections possible with KNA flights.\(^\text{250}\) A detailed report about the inauguration of those flights was published in the CAT Bulletin issue of May 1952: The negotiations were concluded and the Sino-Korean Air Agreement was signed on 26 March 52. On 28 March 52, Korean National Airlines made its initial flights from Pusan to Taipei. After several receptions, the Korean party flew down to Tainan on 29 March, where KNA’s aircraft would receive major maintenance in the future. On 30 March 52, the Korean party left for Pusan, followed by the Chinese delegation in CAT C-47 B-801. After several receptions, the Chinese party was taken to Seoul, before they returned to Taipei.\(^\text{251}\)

One might ask if the 2 C-47s that CAT had sold to KNA in February 51 also did some work for the CIA as the CAT Cessna 195 leased to KNA had done in 1950. This seems indeed to be the case: During the October 51 meeting at Tokyo about establishing Operation Tropic, JTAG chief Chatham Clark had already asked if the CAT/KNA setup could be used for Tropic.\(^\text{252}\) In May 52, CIA man James Lilley was transferred to a small intelligence unit on Taiwan, which had connections with Taiwan intelligence, to help with the training and insertion of intelligence agents into China. Lilley recalls: “My first task was to prepare a team of Chinese agents from Taiwan for an airdrop into Manchuria. We selected two men in their

---


twenties who were originally from northern China. [...] I then retrained the team and accompanied them through Tokyo to Seoul. To make sure there was no evidence of American participation in the covert action should the team be caught, we recruited foreign pilots to ferry the Chinese agents from Seoul into China on C-47 transport planes. In accordance with instructions, I stayed on the ground in Seoul. After a first mission was aborted because the aircraft ferrying them missed the drop zone by more than 100 miles, my team successfully parachuted into Manchuria in October 1952."253 This was not a USAF C-47 nor a CAT C-47 of Operation Tropic, as Tropic used American flight crews, and Western Enterprises Inc, the big CIA cover on Taiwan, dropped their agents flying C-54s or B-17s and even CAT C-46s out of Taiwan, but they did not fly C-47s out of Seoul. So it was most probably one of the 2 Korean National Airlines C-47s.

The big problem that CAT had with Korean National Airlines – a problem that was to remain for many years – was the financial situation. KNA had been re-established by funds advanced by CAT Inc thru Burridge Associates so that KNA could begin its operation, which had also procured scheduled rights for CAT into Korea. By March 52, KNA owed CAT already over $100,000, i.e. about 75% of KNA’s known assets, and more money was advanced later upon request, until the CIA stopped further loans to KNA in late 1952 and prohibited CAT to accept Korean won for settlement of KNA’s indebtedness.254 In February 53, KNA repaid $30,000, and at about the same time, they announced their intention to buy a DC-4 for services between Korea and the United States. In June 53, KNA paid their remaining debts of $130,000 to CAT, or so it seemed at least, but then it turned out that part of the sum had been paid in Korean won.255 In August 53, the CIA founded a committee that was to inquire into the Burridge Associates/KNA fiscal situation and to liquidate the indebtedness towards CAT Inc. In November 53, this committee reported that a plan for liquidating Burridge Associates had been developed.256 At the same time, CAT’s President Cox asked CIA Headquarters that credit arrangements with KNA be continued, and as Headquarters reluctantly agreed, by the end of 1954, KNA’s debts had reached $385,457 towards CAT and another $61,894 towards Burridge Associates. As it seems, nothing was ever repaid to CAT, and the entire debt was finally dropped from the Balance Sheet in 1957 as a bad debt.257

Two KNA DC-3s at Pusan, Korea in 1952 (HL-05) and on 6 May 1953 (UTD/Kirkpatrick/nos. 1KP-34-PB 563 and 1KP-19-SC 1942)

253 Lilley, *China Hands*, pp. 70 and 80 (quotation; emphasis is mine).
An unknown KNA C-47 and KNA DC-4 HL-108 painted in later color scheme, both probably taken in late 1953
(UTD/Hickler, photos nos. 1-DH53-8-PB65 and 1-DH53-8-PB103)
4) CAT and commercial aviation in Japan:

CAT’s commercial flying in Japan began with a charter flight on 15 and 16 August 1951, as CAT Bulletin noted in September 51: “With Captains Stuart Dew and Stephen Kusak at the controls, Flight Engineers Mayor and Canlas on deck, Flight Attendants Eugene Wolfe and Harry Kwan taking care of the passengers’ needs and the Bulletin’s M/E [Managing Editor] on board as tail ballast, CAT’s old faithful # 848 took two days off from its regular run to make a charter flight that made aviation history in post war Japan. The charter was made by the Yomiuri Shimbun, one of Japan’s largest daily newspapers, through one of CAT’s Tokyo Agents, The Nankai Air Traffic Corp. It called for three separate trips to be made in two days carrying 35 passengers on each flight. For the first time since the war, a commercial aircraft was chartered to a Japanese company for the purpose of making a survey flight over the four main Japanese Islands. The passengers were officials of Yomiuri Shimbun, prominent Japanese businessmen, artists, writers and movie and stage actresses. Taking off from Tokyo’s Haneda Airport for the first lap of the trip on the morning of August 15th, the party headed north to the island of Hokkaido. [...] Over Sapporo, the island’s capital, the first airdrop was made. Part of the promotion connected with the trip was the dropping of leaflets telling the purpose of the trip and of numbered cards. A drawing will take place and the lucky ones who will pick up the winning cards will receive a free ride on Japan’s Domestic Airline when it starts service in the near future. Landing at Chitose Air Base, the party was given a reception by both the American Military Authorities there and local Japanese dignitaries. [...] Leaving Chitose and following the southern coast of the island, we headed for Nemuro, Japan’s most eastern town. Here another airdrop was made and we headed west again over the southern half of the island making several more airdrops. [...] Making airdrops on several prefectural capitals [...] we reached Tokyo just at dark. [...] Landing at Haneda for an hour’s rest and refueling, tired as some of the passengers were after a day long flight, they all returned aboard for a moonlight trip down Tokyo Bay and a view of Mt. Mihara on Oshima Island. [...] The third lap of the trip got off at dawn on the 16th. [...] Heading due east across the Izu Peninsula, the weather was clear. [...] With Osaka as the first stop the flight followed the southern coast of Honshu. [...] The flight westward from Hiroshima [...] reveals another of Japan’s scenic wonders. [...] At Fukuoka, the first signs of the future operation of the Japan Domestic Airline were found. After a rousing welcome extended to all by both the American Air Force Base Personnel and the local Japanese officials [...], everybody rode down to two wooden buildings which will be JDA’s Fukuoka operations office. [...] Three more airdrops and then Tokyo bound. [...] The Japanese people are definitely air-minded and when JDA
commences service it will not lack for passengers.”

Already on 15 June 1950, General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan (SCAP) had issued a directive “authorizing the seven foreign airlines having landing rights in Japan prior to January 1, 1950 to join forces and submit an operational and managerial plan covering a domestic airline within the boundaries of post-war Japan.” These airlines were British Overseas Airways Corporation, CAT, Canadian Pacific Airlines, Northwest Airlines, Pan American World Airways, Philippine Airlines, and Qantas Empire Airways. After BOAC and Qantas had pulled out, the remaining five airlines, by the summer of 1951, had reached a general agreement, which was presented to SCAP, FEAF, CAA and other interested government agencies both foreign and Japanese. “The big five agreement calls for CAT, NWA and PAL to furnish the crews; CAT and PAL to furnish between them the six DC-3s that will constitute the original fleet; CAT and PAL to handle major maintenance and necessary overhaul; PAA will handle line maintenance and NWA will take care of dispatching.”

On 3 July 51, CAT’s Joe Orlowski wrote to Joe Rosbert: “The Japanese Domestic Airline is back in the limelight. CAT is committed to supply three plush C-47’s, five crews: consisting of foreign captains and co-pilots, and heavy maintenance, plus a few minor details and service. We can supply two plush coach-type C-47’s immediately. The third one will take some time. This JDA news just broke yesterday morning and I believe I will have to do some fast stepping to meet our commitments.”

The schedule planned was to comprise 3 round trips daily Tokyo-Osaka; 2 round trips daily Tokyo-Osaka-Fukuoka; 1 round trip daily Tokyo-Sapporo, with a Tokyo-Nagoya-Osaka-Hiroshima-Fukuoka run and a Tokyo-Sendai-Aomori-Sapporo run to be added later. “When the first JAL-JDA flight takes off, CAT’s Captain Weldon Bigony is slated to be at the controls.” In October 51, CAT Bulletin could also report: “Work almost completed on JDA’s plush ’47.” Apparently, this had been too optimistic, as – apparently upon a CIA decision to limit CAT’s activities – CAT withdrew from the program, and so the November 51 issue of CAT Bulletin had to tell its readers: “CAT and three other airlines bowed out of the Japan Domestic Airline set-up and left the job to Northwest. Also left the guy who wrote the JAL-JDA story in the October Bulletin hanging from a wing tip at high altitude.”

The C-47 that had been plushed for service with Japan Airlines was apparently B-801. On 13 September 51 work had been finished at Tainan, including a new paint job. But after a gala tea party to celebrate CAT’s first plush C-47, B-801 was put on the Round-the-island service in October 51.

---

B-801 newly painted and ready for the new round-the-island schedule.

(*CAT Bulletin*, vol. IV, no.10, November 1951, p.1)

Later, C-47 B-801 was repainted in the colors that CAT had introduced in December 1951:

B-801 in CAT’s new standard colors, taken in the mid-fifties

(UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29)
III) CAT Inc. from the End of Korean War to the new Company Structure:

1) Flights for the US Military

**Booklift**

While the official airline activities of CAT were very modest in the years following the end of the Korean War (27 July 53), the contract side of CAT Inc. remained very important: In Japan the Booklift operation was continued serving US air bases in Korea mostly with C-46s. At the end of the Korean War, CAT Inc continued to operate under the provisions of Booklift contract no. AF 62(502)-606, which had been signed with the USAF in February 53. The period of performance of this contract was 1 January thru 31 December 1953 with an option to extend for an additional year, and this option was executed with Change Order no.7 signed by Captain Gambucci. When the funds were increased, the Contracting Officer, i.e. Capt. Gambucci notified CAT Inc by Change Orders 3, 4, 6, 8, and 10.

What had to be changed after the end of hostilities were the schedules. Consequently, in September 53, “a revision and change of the scheduled flights of CAT Incorporated have resulted in new aircraft and crew requirements. It is believed that five (5) aircraft will satisfy the requirements of this organization with existing schedules and a crew complement of 12 full crews. The change in schedule of flight 4/5 requires that a crew be based in Taipei in order that sufficient crew relief is available to operate this flight from Tachikawa to Clark and return.” In November 53, Booklift scheduled flight no. 4/5 was revised to eliminate one of the Taipei-Clark legs per week due to insufficient needs, resulting in a reduction of approximately 35 hours in scheduled flying time. Sometimes, CAT aircraft had to fly USAF schedules: In November 53, “we were called upon at three different times to fill in on flights where USAF aircraft were normally scheduled; this came out as a result of Air Force aircraft developing mechanical trouble and an insufficient reserve of aircraft to meet their schedule.” “On February 17th through 21st [1955] when a 315th Air Division Fighter Wing was transferred from Taipei to Okinawa and Clark, CAT Incorporated took over the 315th C-54 scheduled flights. This gave us 12 additional flights (approximately 100 hours).”

Sometimes, there were plans that did not materialize: In January 54, “we were asked by the 315th Air Division to review the feasibility of CAT Incorporated operating another of the Air Force scheduled island flights from Japan to Okinawa and then direct to Guam and return. After consideration, we informed the Division that such a flight would require the installation of a long range fuel system and thereby reduce the allowable pay load to approximately 6900 lbs. We informed them that we were definitely interested in such a flight and would accept the opportunity to fly these flights for the period of one month on a trial basis. If the trial flights revealed nothing beyond our operating limitations, we would be able to equip and maintain the necessary aircraft to operate this schedule. To meet Air Force requirements regarding reserve fuel, each aircraft clearing to an island destination must have a fuel reserve of 2 ½ hours. In the case of the Okinawa-Guam flight, even with the long range tank installed, the C-46, according to our estimate, may fall a little short of this requirement. Providing the trial runs prove successful, it is possible that we could be given this flight since the loads of this route are very light and the Air Force seems to be more interested in maintaining a frequent courier service than in the available pay load.” The idea was never heard of again, but some

---

months later, in April 54, the Tachikawa Station Monthly Report notes that CAT Inc had received many comments from Air Force personnel regarding CAT’s passenger over water flights with no navigator. For Air Force regulations required that all over water flights carry a navigator, — perhaps the reason why the Okinawa-Guam flights did not materialize.

There were also some accidents: In October 53, CAT C-47 B-817 was damaged in Pusan, when an Air Force aircraft jumped its chalks in a wind storm, requiring removal and repair of the vertical fin and rudder and 41 man hours to do this. In November 53, CAT C-46 B-846 was damaged at Kadena by an Air Force forklift. The horizontal stabilizer and the stabilizer deicer boot were damaged, and it took 53 man hours to repair the aircraft.

A further reduction of CAT’s fleet for Booklift had taken place by January 1954, when only 6 C-46s (B-154, B-840, B-844, B-846, B-854, and B-870) and 1 C-47 (B-817) were assigned to Operation Booklift.

In April 1954, negotiations were under way to replace the C-47 assigned to the Booklift contract – no. AF 62(502)-606 – with a C-46 on Air Force special flights. This would be beneficial to CAT, as the requirement could be filled with the C-46s already assigned to the contract. At that time, the C-47 — apparently B-817 — was used only once weekly, which resulted in very poor utilization. The replacement would also simplify CAT’s maintenance.

---

and supply problems at Tachikawa.\(^{279}\) Also in April 54, the installation of Loran sets in all of the aircraft assigned to Tachikawa was urgently recommended: “On all over water flights to Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and Guam, many of which are made at night, it is extremely difficult to obtain any degree of accuracy in taking ADF radio bearings. In many cases on these flights ADF bearings are nearly impossible to take with any accuracy which in the case of VHF failure could result in serious trouble. We have also received many comments from Air Force personnel regarding CAT’s passenger over water flights with no navigator. To date no issue has been made of this; however, it is very likely with a new Operations Officer and the new Wing Commander this particular point might be questioned. Air Force regulations require that all over water flights carry a navigator; however, it is believed that we can effectively counteract any requirement for using navigators provided all of our aircraft are equipped with Loran and our pilots qualified in the use of these sets.”\(^{280}\)

There were also some changes regarding the Booklift schedules. In June 54, the contractor for Air Force Special flights informed CAT Inc that possibly scheduled flight 20 would be increased to three flights weekly from August to November 54.\(^{281}\) In August 54, CAT Inc sent a request to the Commanding General, 315th Air Division, to exchange CAT’s daily Booklift flight 12/13 (Tachikawa – Chitose and return) for Air Force daily Booklift flight 205/206 (Tachikawa – K-16 [= Seoul] and return), because in that way, CAT would be able to fulfil their commitments under Booklift with 4 instead of 5 C-46s.\(^{282}\) This request was accepted, and on 15 September 54, the route of CAT Flight 12/13 was changed from Tachikawa-Chitose and return to Tachikawa-Seoul and return. Nevertheless, a 5th C-46 was kept at Tachikawa as a stand-by aircraft.\(^{283}\) There were a lot of schedule changes at the end of the year: Effective 1 November 54, Booklift flights 8/9 to Guam and return and the Clark-Taipei leg of Booklift flights 4/5 was deleted, but a Booklift flight Tachikawa-Matsushima-Misawa-Chitose and return and a Booklift flight Tachikawa-Niigata-Misawa-Chitose and return were added. The two weekly Booklift flights Tachikawa-Taipei and return and a daily Booklift flight Tachikawa-Seoul and return were continued.\(^{284}\) During November 54, there were many deletions and additions to the Booklift schedule mainly due to the fact that the Military Air Transport Service (MATS) took over all of the 315th Air Division’s flights beyond Okinawa, with the exception of project flights: “Effective 1 December 1954, Flights 4 and 5, which previously went all the way to Taipei, will hereafter terminate at Okinawa and return the same day. Flights 4A and 5A which departs Tachikawa every Tuesday morning will continue all the way to Taipei and return”\(^{285}\) – leaving only 4 scheduled Booklift flights to Taipei per month. But this was corrected a little bit later: “Effective February 6th [1955] Flights 4 and 5 which previously terminated in Okinawa and returned the same day will continue on to Taipei.”\(^{286}\)

On 14 December 54, a new Booklift contract – no. AF 62(502)-1136 – was negotiated, at which time a rate of $261 per hour was established.\(^{287}\) Contract no. AF 62(502)-606 was concluded on 29 January 55, when the new Booklift contract – no. AF 62(502)-1136 – was consummated, and again, there were unpaid invoices from the previous contract, this time, because FEAMCOM declared these Change Orders illegal saying that the Contracting Officer had added funds to the contract beyond his limitation.\(^{288}\) On 24 March 55, CAT Inc informed


\(^{284}\) Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for October 54, p.4, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.


\(^{288}\) Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for January 55, p.1, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7; the matter was still unsettled in December 55 (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for December 55, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7).
the Contractor that in order to provide air transportation under the terms of this contract, some C-46s had been chartered from Asiatic Aeronautical Co Ltd. In May 55, a Supplemental Agreement added 868 hours to this contract, which had been for 6500 hours. But contract no. AF 62(502)-1136 expired on 30 June 55 with the end of the Fiscal Year, and on 1 July 55, Letter Contract no. AF62(502)-1332 became effective and remained effective until the definitive contract AF 62(502)-1332 was signed and manually approved on 15 August 55.

Contracts with the US Army

In April 1954, contract no. DA 92-557-FEC-19296 was consummated between CAT Inc, Tachikawa, and the US Department of the Army on an urgent basis to cover flights of a pressing nature which did not provide sufficient time to negotiate and conclude a more detailed contract. Flying for this contract was already completed by early May 54. This contract had covered only the first phase of an operation, i.e. 74:52 hours. A second contract requiring approximately the same number of flights was planned for a period of time shortly after this first contract, and that second contract was concluded along the lines of the Booklift contract. In May 54, CAT Inc at Tachikawa noted that “we have been advised by AFFE [= US Army Forces Far East, Japan] officials the second phase of this contract is scheduled to go into effect on June 7th. It will be similar to the first schedule in number of flights and hours involved.” The new contract – no. DA-92-557-FEC-19734 – was signed in June 54, with the option to extend it for another 90 days. In July 54, this contract was extended and an increased fiscal limitation was added. In September 54, this contract was extended to 31 December 54 and the fiscal limitations were amended from $46,756 to $95,000. In December 54, this contract was extended for another 90 days to 31 March 1955 and on 24 March 55, CAT Inc informed the Contractor that in order to provide air transportation under the terms of this contract, some C-46s had been chartered from Asiatic Aeronautical Co Ltd. Also in March 55, this contract was extended for 30 days until 30 April 55, and then for another 30 days in April 55 to the end of May. A draft contract was submitted on 28 May 55, but was returned to the Contracting Officer who wanted to prepare another contract effective 1 July 55 for a period of one year with a fiscal limitation not exceeding $50,000.00, which was General Browning’s warranty. In August 55, the new contract with the US Army Far East was signed and became effective – its number had become DA 92-557-FEC-21479, but during September, no work had been performed under it. In November 55, one flight amounting to approximately 23 hours was carried out under this contract, but no work in December 55.

289 Letter dated 24 March 55, sent by Hugh Grundy to the Contracting Officer, FEALOGFOR, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 2.
291 Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for July 55 and August 55, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7
300 Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for May and June 55, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.
302 Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for November and December 55, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.
2) Flights for the CIA

The tragic loss of CAT’s C-47 B-813 in November 1952 certainly meant the end of Operation Tropic, but did it also mean the end of CIA flights out of Japan? It certainly did not. Even after the end of the Korean War, i.e. after the armistice of 27 July 53, the Monthly Reports of CAT’s Operations Division list flights made for Operation “Advertisement” – Hans Tofte’s “AD” operations. As seen above, Flight Time records given in the Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for those CIA flights listed as flights for “ADS” or “Air Force Special”, still give 283 hours, 35 minutes in July 53, 272 hours, 25 minutes in August 53, and 233 hours, 53 minutes in September 53.\textsuperscript{303} But then, people apparently began to believe that the truce would hold, and so in October 53, the number goes down to 163 hours, 50 minutes, to 163 hours, 44 minutes in November 53, and to 188 hours, 49 minutes in December 53.\textsuperscript{304}

A 1953 request to arrange for an “ADS” / CIA special flight from Saipan to Bangkok, handled by H.B. Cockrell, CAT’s Acting Director of Operations (in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1)

\textsuperscript{303} The exact numbers are: 233:52 hours in May 53, 209:27 hours in June 53, 283:35 hours in July 53, 272:25 hours in August 53, and 233:53 hours in September 53 (Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for these months, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7).

\textsuperscript{304} Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for these months, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.
The Monthly Report of CAT’s Operations Division for January 54 lists a total of 119 C-46 hours plus 47 C-47 hours, the report for February 54 lists a total of 104 C-46 hours plus 44 C-47 hours, and the outlook for March 54 gives a total of 100 C-46 hours plus 40 C-47 hours for Operation “Advertisement”. These numbers for Operation “Advertisement” are more or less confirmed by the totals given in the Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for the flights for “ADS” or the “Air Force Special Contract”, and this means that no special equipment like the B-17 was used on these flights. From April 54 to December 55, the number of hours flown per month for the CIA’s “AD” operations remains below 200 most of the time, and this probably means that they were just routine flights.

The nature of these flights is unknown – some of them were probably destined to maintain the network of agents that had been built up in Korea during the war. The 1953 special flight requested by CAT’s Regional Director J. Orlowski in his letter published above seems to have been arranged for transporting agents who had been trained on Saipan (“Point N”) to supplemental training on Okinawa and an area or their future activities, Bangkok. Others were probably resupply flights for CIA installations in the Pacific area like Atsugi and Chigasaki in Japan or Kadena, Saipan, and Guam. Former Air America navigator Jim Keck recalls: “Daily flights to Korea, twice a day to Okinawa, on to Taipei, on to Clark field. […] We also had weekly trips to Saipan (supporting the CIA there), then on to Guam and return.” The nature of these flights can also be guessed from a note for April 1954: “January invoice to ADS has not been paid to date pending settlement of a method to obtain payment for two flights made under their auspices, but to be paid by another organization. One flight Tachikawa-K-9 [= Pusan]-Tpe [= Taipei]-Tachikawa and one flight, Tachi-K9-Tachi are included. Discussions have been held with ADS and action is being taken by them to clarify the matter. It appears that insufficient funds were allocated for these flights by the organization concerned, requiring payment to be deferred for the moment and made in another manner.”

As Tachikawa was home of CAT Incorporated, i.e. of that part of the CAT-complex that was responsible for most contract operations including all covert flights, many of the

---

306 January 54: 119 C-46 hours plus 47 C-47 hours, i.e. 166 hours (CAT Operations Division, Monthly Report, January 54, p. 8, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1) compared to 171:50 hours (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for January 54, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7); February 54: 104 C-46 hours plus 44 C-47 hours, i.e. 148 hours (CAT Operations Division, Monthly Report, February 1954, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1) compared to 147:58 hours (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for February 54, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7); March 54: estimated 100 C-46 hours + 40 C-47 hours (CAT Operations Division, Monthly Report, February 1954, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1) compared to 147:58 hours (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for March 54, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7), corrected to 167:33 hours for March 54 in the Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for April 54 (in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7).
307 The exact numbers are: 194:06 hours for April 54, 169:00 hours for May 54, 155:00 hours for June 54, 165:51 hours for July 54, 168:51 hours for August 55, 148:10 hours for Sept.54, 149:04 hours for Oct.54, 175:18 hours for Nov.54, 193:28 hours for Dec.54, 173:52 hours for Jan.55, 179:00 hours for Feb.55, 206:00 hours for March 55, 203:37 hours for April 55, 185:36 hours for May 55, 191:49 hours for June 55, 184:04 hours for July 55, 179:02 hours for Aug.55, 175:42 hours for Sept.55, 228:11 hours for Oct.55, 174:57 hours for Nov.55, and 187:35 hours for Dec.55 (Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for these months, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7).
308 A 1953 request to arrange for an “ADS” / CIA special flight from Saipan to Bangkok, handled by H.B. Cockrell, CAT’s Acting Director of Operations (in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1).
309 On 14 July 54, the nose of CAT C-46 B-854 was struck by a Navy P2V, when the C-46 was parked at Atsugi Naval Air Station. The nose section was completely replaced by the Navy (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for July 54, p.4, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7).
310 E-mail dated 11 September 2001, kindly sent to the author by Jim Keck.
operations listed in my file Working in Remote Countries: CAT in New Zealand, Thailand-Burma, French Indochina, Guatemala, and Indonesia should have been mentioned here, as from a purely administrative point of view, they were run by CAT Inc and not by the Taipei-based airline. Indeed, since at least March 1953, CAT’s Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports insist that CAT Incorporated and Civil Air Transport were two different companies.\(^{312}\) So, most CAT operations in Thailand-Burma,\(^{313}\) French Indochina, Guatemala, and Indonesia were run by CAT Incorporated. They are not included here but in a separate file, because it is clearer to describe them this way and also, because not all aspects of CAT Inc were connected with Tachikawa: Some operations like Paper had their origin at Tachikawa, but then were run out of temporary local CAT stations; at least since April / May 54, C-47 maintenance was always done at Tainan, not at Tachikawa;\(^{314}\) and the entire operation run for the CIA out of Taiwan, i.e. Western Enterprises, NACC etc, had nothing to do with the airline.

Of course, Tachikawa-based CAT Inc also felt the threat of severe cuts, already described in connection with the structure and development of the Company on Taiwan: In 1953, the CIA asked whether, after the end of the Korean War, the Company was really still necessary, as keeping such a large fleet operational at times when it was not used was quite expensive. What probably saved the Company, were the positive results of CAT’s paramilitary support to the French in Indochina in 1953/54: In April 54, the CIA came up with the idea to segregate 12 CAT C-46s from the rest of the operation as a stand-by fleet to be used for special emergency operations that might become necessary in the Far East. And so, on 5 May 54, the DCI created this stand-by fleet known as Project STAIR – with the idea that 6 of the C-46s should be available to fly to a new advanced base of operations on 24-hour notice, and the other 6 aircraft to follow within a week.\(^{315}\)

\(^{312}\) “Mr. Harry Cockrell, Director of Operations, Civil Air Transport and Mr. J. L. Orlowski, Regional Director of Civil Air Transport made a visit to Tachikawa Air Base on March 20th to coordinate details of the contractual arrangement between Civil Air Transport and CAT Incorporated” (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for March 53, p.1, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7). The April 53 report says: “Mr. Burkett of Civil Air Transport’s Maintenance Division paid a visit to CAT Incorporated on April 17th to effect liaison between the two companies” (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for April 53, p.1, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7). And the August 53 report insists: “Inasmuch as there is a valid contract between CAT Incorporated and Civil Air Transport regarding the charter of aircraft, and specific maintenance facilities, it is felt that it would be normal for this organization to correspond directly with the operating, maintenance and supply divisions of Civil Air Transport. […] All correspondence between the two companies is to be confined to the necessary routine correspondence normally required in the completion of the terms of the Civil Air Transport – CAT Incorporated contract” (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for August 53, Attachment #4, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7).

\(^{313}\) REPAT, the repatriation of Nationalist guerrillas from Burma to Taiwan, was probably run by the airline, although Paper, the operation that had supported these troops while still fighting against the Chinese Communists, had certainly been run by CAT Inc.

\(^{314}\) On 10 May 54, the Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for April 54 (in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7) notes (p.2): “Negotiations are now underway, but not concluded, to replace the C-47 with a C-46 on Air Force special flights 20. If the contractor agrees, it will be beneficial to CAT as the requirement can be filled with our present fleet of C-46 aircraft, and will result in an overall decrease of one aircraft at this station. It is now being used only once weekly which results in very poor utilization. It will also simplify our maintenance and supply problems if we can eliminate this aircraft from our fleet. Supplies maintained locally can be released and returned to Tainan” (emphasis is mine).

\(^{315}\) Leary, Manuscript, pp.188/9, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1; when 7 C-46s were to be sold in 1955/6, one of the questions was if this would violate the STAIR requirement (Leary, Manuscript, p.350, in: UTD/Leary/B19F2).
IV) CAT Inc from 1955 to 1959:

As can be seen in my file *CAT, Air Asia, Air America – the Company on Taiwan I: Structure and Development*, the entire CAT-complex was reorganized by the foundation of two separate companies in 1955: Civil Air Transport Company Limited (CATCL), the Taipei-based airline owning at least 3 aircraft, and Asiatic Aeronautical Company Limited (AACL), the Tainan-based maintenance facility and holding company owning all other B-registered aircraft of the CAT-complex. CAT Inc continued to exist as the Tachikawa-based part of the complex responsible for most of the contract work and for covert missions. This new corporate structure meant that, from now on, interchanges of aircraft between the different parts of the group of companies became quite frequent. CATCL became the owner of three C-46s (B-872, B-874, and B-876) on 1 March 55, but in 1956, the aircraft returned to Asiatic Aeronautical and then, in early 1956 and early 1957, they were sold to Delta Air Lines via a broker called R. Hewitt Associates. This is why CATCL became the owner of three other C-46s: On 1 August 58, these aircraft were B-864, B-866, and B-870.

As to the contracts, the *Booklift* flights were continued from Japan to South Korea, as was the operation of the repair and maintenance facility at Tainan. Even long after the end of the Korean War, *Booklift* continued to grow: Between July and December 1955, a total of 4767:04 hours was flown under *Booklift* contract AF 62(502)-1332, and a request for 9600 hours was budgeted for the subsequent fiscal year. In 1955, CAT was awarded a MATS contract, but without a third DC-4, the Company was unable to fly under this contract and so only retained the charter flying portion on a month-to-month basis. On 11 November 55, CAT C-46 B-150 experienced failure and collapse of the right main landing gear at the completion of a landing at Tachikawa Air Base. The aircraft was engaged by CAT Inc in carrying out a USAF scheduled flight known as CAT Flight No. 10/11. The flight had originally departed from Tachikawa as CAT Flight No. 10/11 enroute to Chitose Air Base and return scheduled to perform enroute stops at Niigata and Misawa Air Force Bases.

316 Leary, *Perilous missions*, p.208 and 259 note 50; The Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors of CAT Inc. of 9 February 1955 (in: UTD/CIA/B4F6A) state that the meeting “RESOLVED that this corporation sell to Civil Air Transport Company Limited three Curtiss C-46-type aircraft bearing registration numbers B-872, B-874 and B-876 for sixty thousand dollars ($60,000) each, payable on demand, without interest, and each secured by a mortgage or pledge on one of the said aircraft, and that the Vice-Chairman, Mr. George A. Doole, Jr., be and he hereby is authorized and directed to execute and deliver the necessary bills of sale.”

317 A “Resolution approving execution of mortgage agreement” by the Board of Directors of CATCL dated 31 December 1955 (in: UTD/CIA/B11F1) states: “WHEREAS this Company [that is CATCL] being the owner of C-46D type aircraft B-872 (Serial No. 32878), B-874 (Serial No. 33132), and B-876 (Serial No. 33153) has transferred such aircraft to Asiatic Aeronautical Company Limited in exchange for C-46D aircraft B-864 (Serial No. 23262), B-866 (Serial No. 22366), and B-870 (Serial No. 22322), formerly the property of Asiatic Aeronautical Company Limited; WHEREAS three aircraft Notes in payment and Chattel Mortgage of such aircraft so transferred were heretofore transferred by this Company in favor of CAT Incorporated, each in the amount of US $ 60,000.00, and thereafter were duly recorded with the Civil Aeronautics Administration of the Republic of China in accordance with law.” Yet, only in March 56 everything had been cleared: The Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors of Civil Air Transport Company Limited (draft of 3 April 1956, preserved at UTD/CIA/B11F1) report that during the meeting of March 1956 (the day is not readable), the Board of CATCL still discussed the exchange of those 6 aircraft: “After discussion and on motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously RESOLVED, that the exchange of the Company’s three C-46D type aircraft bearing registered numbers B-872, B-874 and B-876 with Asiatic Aeronautical Company Limited for its three aircraft of the same type bearing registered numbers B-864, B-866 and B-870 be and it hereby is ratified, confirmed and approved.” (I omitted the msns from this quotation).

318 See AACL’s fleet list of 1 August 58, where C-46s B-864, B-866, and B-870 are listed as “leased by AACL” (in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 3).


320 Leary, Manuscript, ch. IV, p. 353; in: UTD/Leary/B19F2.

accident occurred on 26 March 56, when CAT C-46 B-844 made a wheels-up belly landing on the airfield at Kimpo, Korea (K-14). This was CAT Flight no. 15, scheduled to operate from Kimpo (K-14) to Tachikawa non-stop. This flight was the return leg and final segment of the daily scheduled turnaround flight operated between Tachikawa and Kimpo. The Tachikawa-Kimpo flight was known as Flight No. 14 and the Kimpo-Tachikawa flight as Flight No.15. It was “operated by CAT Incorporated under Booklift contract no. AF 62(502)-1332 for the purpose of airlift of personnel, cargo and mail under the direction of the 315th Air Division, Tachikawa Air Force Base.” On 20 April 56, the aircraft flew back to Tainan via Tachikawa. Negotiations at Hong Kong in June 56 lead to a new Booklift contract effective 1 July 56, i.e. to contract no. AF 62(531)-176, whose schedule was approximately the same as that of the old contract no. AF 62(502)-1332. On 31 August 56, the right main wheel of C-46 B-864 came off at completion of the landing roll at Misawa Air Base, Japan. In March 57, it was reported that additional flight time amounting to approximately 1100 hours would be added to the contract and that they would have to be flown off in a three week period prior to 1 July 57. This three-week period was extended to one month in the new contract, which became effective on 1 July 57. This was contract no. AF 62(531)-494, for which surcharges were deleted by Supplemental Agreement no.2, but the final documents were signed and sealed only on 28 September 57, when they were sent to Honolulu for manual approval by the Air Material Force Pacific. As usually, more negotiations had to follow, and payments were withheld, so that it was not until February 58 that the final settlement of contract AF 62(531)-176, which had expired on 30 June 57, was concluded. The same can be said about contract no. AF 62(531)-494, which expired on 30 June 58, but whose final settlement was still not concluded in June 59. In February 58, CAT felt an unfriendly attitude from the USAF administration at Honolulu that the Company attributed to competitive action from World Airways. Nevertheless, there were follow-on Booklift contracts for CAT Inc – the next being contract no. AF 62(501)-639, effective 1 July 58 and expiring on 30 June 59, and then contract no. AF 62(501)-981, effective 1 July 59 and expiring on 30 June 60, which the Company already had with the USAF under its new name Air America Inc. Already in January 1959, C-46s B-860 and B-848, both plush aircraft, were assigned to the Booklift contract, which at that time was still called AF 62(501)-639. These were all regular Booklift flights.

And again, Booklift flights served as cover for CIA missions: In January 56, CAT Inc flew a total of 214:26 hours under the provisions of the “Air Force Special Contract” for “ADS Incorporated” – both denotations stood for the CIA. But this contract was terminated on 31 January 56, and then the CIA changed cover from the US Air Force to the US Army: For the successor to this contract was – effective 1 February 56 – contract no. DA-92-321 FEC.

---

324 CAT Inc Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for April and June 56, in: UTD/Leary/B2F1.
334 “ADS Inc” was probably inspired by “AD” or “Advertisement”, the denotation CAT used for flights operated for the CIA out of Atsugi. It will be remembered that originally, the Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports did not speak of flights under the provisions of the “AF Special Contract”, but of flights operated for “ADS”.
323 that CAT Inc had with the US Army’s First Composite Service Unit (FCSU).\footnote{336 Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for January 56, p.2, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} The FCSU was a CIA entity that fulfilled airlift requirements on a charter basis, connecting Atsugi, Okinawa, Saipan, Taipei, and Korea.\footnote{337 Leary, Manuscript, p.331, in: UTD/Leary/B19F2.} In February 56, CAT Inc flew a total of 151:20 hours under the provisions of this new contract with the FCSU,\footnote{338 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for February 56, p.2, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} in March 56 190:58 hours, and in April 56 even 209:13 hours.\footnote{339 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for March and April 56, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} In June 56, flying under this contract was 196:55 hours, although by 5 July, CAT had not yet received this contract so that all flights had to be conducted “on verbal instructions and requests from the user at Atsugi”.\footnote{340 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for June 56, p.2 (quotation), and for July 56, in: UTD/Leary/ B21F1.} By 8 August 56, CAT Inc had still not received a copy of the new contract – no. DA-92-321 FEC 414 with the US Army’s First Composite Service Unit (FCSU) –, but Operational Order No.1 requested CAT Inc “to establish scheduled flights.” Indeed, in July 56, CAT flew 207:14 hours, in August 170:31 hours,\footnote{341 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for November 56, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} in September 182:03 hours and in October even 208:47 hours,\footnote{342 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for July and August 56, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} but again only 193:13 hours in November 56\footnote{343 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for November 56, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} under this CIA contract.

While CAT’s Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for November 56 – the first sent to the Company’s Executive Field Office at Kadena – could still report that “the FCSU contract is functioning smoothly and no major difficulties are in sight”,\footnote{344 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for March and April 56, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} problems began in early 1957: In February 57, CAT had to report that their aircraft were lacking the radio frequency used at Point “N” (Saipan) and that the contractor had expressed dissatisfaction with the interior of DC-4 N2168 with respect to plushness and cargo tie-down facilities. More problematic were spontaneous changes of schedules, when flights were added or deleted without citing specific instances, and sometimes, these FCSU schedule changes created problems for CAT to meet commitments with the new MATS contract. Nevertheless, flight time under the FCSU contract totalled 197:54 hours in January and 232:40 hours in February 57.\footnote{345 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for February 56, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} During that month, CAT Captain Hicks made a flight from Kadena, Okinawa, to Saipan, and from there to Vientiane in Laos under the FCSU contract\footnote{346 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for November 56, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.} – probably an operation made in connection with the CIA’s support to the \textit{National Directorate of Coordination} of the Royal Laotian Government.\footnote{347 Mentioned in: Memorandum dated 30 May 57 for the Vice President – Operations from the Chief of Flight Operations, Captain Weldon D. Bigony, p.2, note 12, in: UTD/Walker/B7F4.} In March 57, CAT Inc, Tachikawa, received a request from Point “N” (Saipan) to visit that area in an effort to establish better Customs and Immigration procedures for flights operating there. CAT’s visit revealed that certain procedures were not being followed, which resulted in numerous violations, none of which had officially been submitted to the operation concerned. CAT Inc coordinated their measures with FEAF Headquarters and

\footnote{347 \textit{“National Directorate of Coordination.} This is the Intelligence arm of the RLG [= Royal Laotian Government]. Its operations are mainly in the Vientiane area at present. It has an armed unit consisting of two battalions and is under the command of Lt-Col Siho, a FAL [= Forces Armées Laottiennes] officer. In addition to intelligence operations this force has a capability for sabotage, kidnapping, commando-type raids, etc. [...] Three CIA officers plus 2-3 Vietnamese are working with the National Directorate of Coordination” (Memorandum of July 1961 from Brig. Gen. Edward G. Lansdale, Pentagon expert on guerrilla warfare, to Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, President Kennedy’s military adviser, on \textit{Resources for Unconventional Warfare, SE. Asia}, excerpts at: https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pentagon2/doc100.htm ).}
the contractor representatives in Tokyo, i.e. probably with JTAG at Atsugi NAS. From March 57 onwards, the total of hours flown under each contract is no longer indicated in the Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports. In April 57, the FCSU customer at Point “N” expressed dissatisfaction in regard to cleaning of the cabin and latrines of DC-4 N2168, when arriving at that station. But CAT pointed out that they did not have the personnel to do this so that future contracts should contain a paragraph stating that this type of work had to be done by customer personnel. Apparently as a consequence to this dissatisfaction expressed by the FCSU customer, CAT Inc replaced DC-4 N2168 on the contract by C-46s. But as it seems, this was also wrong, because for July 57, CAT Inc’s Tachikawa Station Monthly Report notes: “Considerable objection has been raised by the customer in regard to substituting C-46 type aircraft for the DC-4 on this contract; however, the local base commander has expressed an interest in using C-46’s where and when possible for exclusive cargo flights. Their main objection in the whole matter has been carrying passengers on two engine equipment. We firmly believe that we can arrange with the customer to eventually schedule C-46 aircraft every other week on their flight 6 going to K-14 [= Kimpo, Korea] which could leave the DC-4 available from Thursday morning to Sunday afternoon every other week for other work.”

This arrangement seems to have been made, as for August and September 57, CAT Inc’s Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports note that all phases of this contract are going smoothly.

Ward Reimer, who was Crew Chief at Tachikawa in the late fifties, describes the situation there as follows: “We had 3-4 C-46 aircraft and one DC-4, N2168, which were operating under CAT Inc. [...] One C-46 made the Tachi Kimpo run departing 1800 each night. Occasionally the DC-4 was used on this schedule. Mostly cargo with a few passenger seats. We also had an up and down Japan run leaving 0800 daily, returning at approximately 1700L. The special Atsugi deal with the DC-4 N2168 was on Thursday nite from Atsugi to Iwo Jima, bringing Chinese trainees for infiltration use thru Nepal and down into Red China. Very quiet operation – no sanitizing of the plane was ever done, just the usual blacked out buses and the ships windows along with the covered tunnel from the bus to the passenger door. This was carried out for at least 18 months.”

One of those flights for the CIA is mentioned in CAT’s Taipei Daily Flight Schedule of 7 June 57. That day, CAT C-46 B-146 was on a US Government charter flight from Taipei to Kadena, Okinawa, then to Guam, then to “N” and back to Kadena. Point “N” was the CIA training complex on Saipan (‘Navy Technical Training Unit’), as Saipan would be a good place to land on a flight from Guam to Kadena, Okinawa. In reality, this flight was a little bit longer, as apparently, it brought 18 Laotian trainees not only from Saipan to Kadena, but even back to Vientiane in Laos, where it arrived on 9 June 57 at 7.00 a.m. local time. On 30 May 57, Captain Weldon D. Bigony, Chief of Flight Operations, had sent a memo (“Proposed Schedule for FCSU “N”/Vientiane Flight) to the Vice-President Operations that proposed all details of this flight: The original idea had been to use C-46 B-146 from Taipei to Kadena and then make non-stop flights between Kadena and Saipan (8:30 hours) and back from Saipan to Kadena (8:00 hours). But this part of the schedule was refused for reasons already known, and handwritten notes on the margin of the memo recommend flying Kadena-Guam-Saipan or Kadena-Guam-Saipan-Guam, to refuel at Guam, and then proceed to Kadena. The Taipei Daily Flight Schedule of 7 June 57

---

351 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for August and September 57, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.
shows that this was done. The flight then left Kadena, Okinawa on 8 June 57 at 18:30 hour local time for Clark Air Base near Manila, where it arrived at 23.00 hours local time. Then CAT C-46 B-146 left Clark on 9 June at 0:30 hours local time for a 7:30 hour flight to Vientiane, where it arrived at 7:00 hours. After one day of rest, the return flight left Vientiane at 6:15 hours on 10 June for a 2:20 hour ferry flight to Tourane (= Danang), where it arrived at 8:35 hours, and after refueling departed 9:30 hours for a 5:30 hour flight to Tainan, where it arrived at 17:00 hours local time in the evening.355

Memorandum dated 30 May 57 for the Vice President – Operations from the Chief of Flight Operations, Captain Weldon D. Bigony, p.1 (in: UTD/Walker/B7F4)

From the details of this schedule, it is evident that this was a passenger flight for 18 passengers – apparently another flight in connection with the CIA’s support to the National Directorate of Coordination of the Royal Laotian Government. This is clear from the safety equipment, the passenger comfort items, and commissary supplies loaded on the plane and from the removable buffet, the wash basin, and the wash water that were installed. Of course, navigational aids (APN-9) and long range tanks were also installed; the Kadena-Saipan-Kadena segments were flown by a relief crew. But this schedule also gives additional information about other flights for the FCSU: Project Flight 07 ran Taipei-Kadena-Atsugi-Tachikawa on 30 May.

Effective October 57, a new flight schedule was established for CAT’s flights for the CIA, and under the new schedule, the aircraft were not to come to Tachikawa. The problem seen in that month’s Tachikawa Report was that CAT Inc could not send a Company vehicle to Tokyo to pick up crews and drive them to Atsugi so that mileage reimbursement for miles driven by the crew members seemed to be the best solution. But it seems that not flying to Tachikawa was only the second step undertaken by the CIA to shift the center of CAT’s operations for the Agency from the Tokyo area to Kadena, Okinawa. Already in July 57, the new contract had no longer been with the subordinate US Army’s First Composite Service Unit (FCSU), but with the higher US Army’s Composite Service Group (CSG), which was based at Okinawa. Apparently, already the US Army’s First Composite Service Unit (FCSU) was based on Okinawa, as several servicemen of this unit received the “Soldier’s Medal” on 19 April 56 because of their heroic action at Bucknerville, Okinawa when a USAF aircraft had crashed there on 28 April 1955. The US Army’s Composite Service Group (CSG) was based at Camp Chinen on Okinawa, and that was exactly the place, where the CIA had their main support base. As General Lansdale puts it:

“CIA: 1). Okinawa-Support Base
Okinawa Station is in itself a paramilitary support asset and, in critical situations calling for extensive support of UW [= unconventional warfare] activity in the Far East, could be devoted in its entirety to this mission. Located at Camp Chinen, it comprises a self-contained base under Army cover with facilities of all types necessary to the storage, testing, packaging, procurement and delivery of supplies – ranging from weapons and explosives to medical and clothing. Because of its being a controlled area, it can accommodate admirably the holding of black bodies in singletons or small groups, as well as small groups of trainees....”

This was the CIA’s main logistics base in East Asia, code-named ZRBLUSH, and it was here and on nearby Kadena Air Base on Okinawa that the Tibetans would receive parachute training in the late fifties and early sixties. Of course, CAT continued to fly to Atsugi and to

356 “National Directorate of Coordination. This is the Intelligence arm of the RLG [= Royal Laotian Government]. Its operations are mainly in the Vientiane area at present. It has an armed unit consisting of two battalions and is under the command of Lt-Col Siho, a FAL [= Forces Armées Laotiennes] officer. In addition to intelligence operations this force has a capability for sabotage, kidnapping, commando-type raids, etc.” Memo-


362 See Leary, Secret mission to Tibet, p.69.
Korea for the CIA, but after October 57, the CSG contract is no longer mentioned in the CAT Inc and Air America Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports that are available. The reason why the CIA excluded Tachikawa from their route network and so shifted the home base for operations under this contract from Japan to Okinawa may have been that Okinawa, after Saipan, was the real base of the Tibetan Operation, while Atsugi was more important as home of the U-2 spy planes, which – of course – were to be kept out of sight from the Chinese to be trained on Saipan and elsewhere. But Air America continued to have a contract with the CSG on Okinawa: For example, in a contract list dated 1 November 63 that Air America’s President Hugh Grundy sent to the FAA, we read: “Contractor: Headquarters U.S. Army Composite Service Group, Ryukyu Islands. Nature and Scope [of the contract]: Furnishing, within the capabilities of Air America, Inc., flying services, on a call basis, of up to five C-46 aircraft to be made available at Tainan Air Base, Tainan, Taiwan and DC-4, DC-6, De Havilland DHC-4A, Dornier Do-28A, C-45, and Helio Courier aircraft to be made available at the location of the aircraft when requested and additional flight crew personnel. Date: 31 Aug. 61. Duration: 1 July 61 – 30 June 64.”

In January 57, a new contract with the Military Air Transport Service (MATS) became effective, resulting in 124:06 hours of flying in January, but in only 23:34 hours of flying in February 57. CAT’s difficulties in meeting their MATS commitments had four main reasons: MATS flights were sandwiched in between FCSU schedules – in many cases without having enough margins for unforeseen delays due to weather or unscheduled maintenance. MATS schedules go thru Tokyo-Haneda, where JAMCO was doing the maintenance work also, but not primarily for CAT, and sometimes they apparently had other priorities. Unforeseen changes of the FCSU schedules caused a scramble to meet MATS commitments. Most problematic was the lack of qualified navigators for MATS overwater flights. In February 57, CAT had to rely on an Air Force Captain to operate the MATS flights during his off duty time. In April CAT Inc thought that MATS operations would move from Tokyo-Haneda airport to Tachikawa on 1 July 57, but in the remaining CAT Inc and Air America Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports, no mention is made of such a move or even of a contract between CAT Inc and MATS, so that it seems as if this project was terminated at a very early date.

The contract that CAT Inc had with the real US Army, i.e. with the US Army Forces Far East in Japan (AFFE) – contract no. DA 92-557-FEC-21479 – still existed in 1956, but it remained a very small operation with 22:06 hours flown in January, only 9:56 hours flown in February, nothing in March, and 51:01 hours in April 1956. In June it was 22:35 hours, 4:37 hours in July, one flight in August 56. A new contract – no. DA92-500-FEC-66 – was signed in October 56, but there were no flights under this contract in September and October and only 14:18 hours in November 56. In January 57, only 18:20 hours were flown under this contract, and in February 57 there was again no flying. From March 57 onwards, no totals for the number of hours flown under each contract are indicated in the Tachikawa Monthly Reports.

363 See my file Missions to Tibet.  
365 Letter dated 1 November 63 sent by Hugh Grundy to the FAA, in: UTD/Bisson/B5/microfilm reel no.2.  
371 CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Reports for October and November 56, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.  
In April 57, CAT Inc still hoped that AFFE might have a similar requirement for the Fiscal Year beginning on 1 July 57, and contract documents were finally signed in September 57.\textsuperscript{373} But in October 57 it came out that funding for this contract had not been resolved and that effective 1 November 57, all contracts for flight services would be transferred to the Commanding Officer, US Army Procurement Agency, Japan, which would mean “further contract negotiations of a more detailed nature”.\textsuperscript{374} As it seems, nothing came out of it, as in the next available Tachikawa Station Monthly Report, i.e. the February 58 report, there is no longer mention of any AFFE contract, nor does such a contract appear in any Tachikawa report available for the 1959-61 period.\textsuperscript{375}

It will be remembered that in late 1950, CAT built up a secondary maintenance station at Tachikawa. On 9 July 1952, a contract was signed between CAT Inc and the USAF’s FEALOGFOR (Far East Air Logistical Force) for one-time maintenance of USAF aircraft at Tachikawa.\textsuperscript{376} In August 53, a procedure of maintaining inventories of aircraft parts at Tachikawa for both Civil Air Transport and CAT Inc was established, and the old system of procuring parts from USAF sources was replaced. In September 53, a concrete ramp was ready for use and so increased the efficiency of pulling #2 aircraft services. Special permission had been obtained from the Commanding Officer of the 374\textsuperscript{th} Troop Carrier Wing to use an area which had previously been restricted.\textsuperscript{377} In March 54, the Tachikawa Maintenance Division encountered considerable difficulties by breakdowns en route that resulted in delays. Where local mechanics were not immediately available, personnel from CAT Tachikawa was sent to make the needed repairs: “On scheduled flights, indefinite delays required a non-revenue ferry flight to the point of trouble and return to fulfill our scheduled requirements. This included an engine change at point N\textsuperscript{378} and oil cooler change at Chitose. Work accomplished by outside mechanics included rudder repair at Guam and spark plug replacements at Iwo Jima and Okinawa.”\textsuperscript{379}

In October 1954, it became necessary to put an aircraft maintenance crew back on 24 hour watch. So 5 more mechanics were sent up from Tainan, and they arrived at Tachikawa in mid-November. At the same time, the Maintenance Division proposed “that Tachikawa be used as a training camp for any prospective chief mechanics. [...] Any man that has any possible potential should be placed at Tachikawa for a brief period of from three to six months and given an opportunity to demonstrate his ability. Also, this would put a man in a position of actually being a boss and looking at the company from the other side of the fence. During this test period we would be able to determine whether or not the man is capable of operating a station of his own, thus giving us an ace in the hole should an emergency come up as in the case of Operation Cognac.”\textsuperscript{380} This last point confirms that contract operations like Cognac were carried out by CAT Inc and so largely depended upon CAT Inc’s base at Tachikawa, but also that more local maintenance stations were needed in Southeast Asia, as these flights were made at places that were too far away from Tainan or Tachikawa.

For utilization during the early months of 1955, we have conflicting reports: In February 55, Tachikawa’s Maintenance Division proposed to also perform “routine automotive maintenance, [...] obtaining better utilization of aircraft maintenance personnel when aircraft

\textsuperscript{373} CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for April and September 57, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.
\textsuperscript{374} CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for October 57, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.
\textsuperscript{375} CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for February 58, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.
\textsuperscript{376} CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for July 52, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.
\textsuperscript{378} Probably the CIA training complex on Saipan (‘Naval Technical Training Unit’), as according to CAT’s Taipei Daily Flight Schedule of 7 June 57 (in: UTD/Walker/B7F4, Nov.55-June 57), CAT C-46 B-146 was on a US Government charter flight that day from Taipei to Kadena, Okinawa, then to Guam, then to “N” and back to Kadena. Saipan would be a good place to land on a flight from Guam to Kadena, Okinawa.
\textsuperscript{380} CAT Inc. Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for October 54, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7.
maintenance is at a minimum”. But the March 55 report speaks of a “lack of man power” during that month: “It was necessary to call on the Air Force for four airmen to accompany Mr. Matsis to Point ‘N’ to expedite an engine change on March 6, 1955. Necessary clearances for this action were obtained by the customer. This permitted all Chinese maintenance staff to remain at Tachikawa to handle the increased operation. Maintenance definitely suffered during March due to lack of man power; even so, they did a commendable job under this handicap as did everyone else.”

The CAT Inc. Maintenance Status Board at Tachikawa in 1958/9 (with kind permission from Ward S. Reimer)

This photo of the Maintenance Status Board at Tachikawa taken in 1958/9 illustrates very well the status of CAT Incorporated at that time. It lists most of the Company’s C-46s – except B-850 and B-856 as well as CAA-owned C-46s B-130, B-136, and B-146, all of them probably operated on airline service and on charter flights – and the US registered C-54 N2168. DC-4s B-1002 and B-1004 as well as DC-6B B-1006 (if it had already been acquired when the photo was taken) are not listed, as they were in airline use with CATCL, and none of the C-47s is listed, as since April or May 54, when the last C-47 was released from Booklift service, Tachikawa maintenance had been standardized on C-46s. As such a large fleet of

---

382 Probably the CIA training complex on Saipan (‘Navy Technical Training Unit’), as according to CAT’s Taipei Daily Flight Schedule of 7 June 57 (in: UTD/Walker/B7F4, Nov.55-June 57), CAT C-46 B-146 was on a US Government charter flight that day from Taipei to Kadena, Okinawa, then to Guam, then to “N” and back to Kadena. Saipan would be a good place to land on a flight from Guam to Kadena, Okinawa.
384 On 10 May 54, the Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for April 54 (in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7) notes (p.2): “Negotiations are now underway, but not concluded, to replace the C-47 with a C-46 on Air Force special flights 20. If the contractor agrees, it will be beneficial to CAT as the requirement can be filled with our present fleet of C-46 aircraft, and will result in an overall decrease of one aircraft at this station. It is now being used only once weekly which results in very poor utilization. It will also simplify our maintenance and supply problems if we
aircraft as shown on the above photo – 13 C-46s and one C-54 – was not needed to meet the Booklift requirements in the late fifties, it is evident that Tachikawa was considered to be the real base of CAT Inc’s contract and covert work at that time. In the period between 1955 and 1959, this also included Operation Haik, the CAT flights to support anti-Sukarno rebels in Indonesia in 1958 described in my file Working in Remote Countries: CAT in New Zealand, Thailand-Burma, French Indochina, Guatemala, and Indonesia, and support flights operated in Laos in 1955 and then from 1957 onwards, which are described in my file Air America in Laos I – humanitarian work, Part I. Indeed, the flights made out of Vientiane, Laos from 1957 onwards were flown under the provisions of contract no. 57-08 that CAT Inc and then Air America had with the United States Operations Mission (USOM)/Laos, but this contract also included services under contract to the CIA.  

---

V) Air America Japan

1) Air America Japan, 1959-1962:

On 26 March 1959, Hugh L. Grundy, President of CAT Inc., and Clyde S. Carter, Secretary of CAT Inc, signed a Certificate of Amendment of the Certificate of Incorporation of CAT Inc., pursuant to Section 242 of Title 8, Chapter 1 of the Delaware Code of 1953, whereby the name of CAT Inc was changed to Air America Inc with effective date of change 31 March 1959.

At that time, Air America officially owned only 2 aircraft, i.e. those with US registries: C-54 N2168 and Apache N3183P:

Letter dated 25 May 59, by which Air America informed the FAA of their new name  
(in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 2)

But of course, all Air Asia shares were owned by Air America except about 1 % held by individuals as qualifying shares, and Air America itself was 100 % owned by the Pacific Corporation, which was owned by the CIA. Civil Air Transport (CATCL) continued to be owned by the Pacific Corporation at 40 %, while the remaining 60% was in the name of Chinese citizens.

The new name also meant that the company’s contract and covert flying shifted from its traditional base at Tachikawa, Japan to more regional centers. Since the late fifties, we have an Air America Laos at Vientiane, an Air America Thailand at Bangkok and Takhli, and – to a certain degree – also an Air America South Vietnam at Saigon, while the traditional Tachikawa-based CAT Incorporated just became Air America Japan.

Among the many and varied aerial operations performed by Air America is the Booklift

---

386 The Certificate of Amendment of Certificate of Incorporation of CAT Incorporated, dated 26 March 1959 and bearing the signatures of Hugh L. Grundy and Clyde S. Carter, can be found at: UTD/CIA/B2F1. For further details see my file CAT, Air Asia, Air America – the Company on Taiwan I: Structure and Development.


388 In the early sixties, the CIA mostly relied on VIAT (Vietnamese Air Transport) in South Vietnam.
run, flown nightly between Tachikawa, Japan, and Kimpo Airport, Seoul, Korea. Starting in the early fall of 1950 – shortly after the beginning of the Korean War – Booklift flights were operated without interruption ever since and hauled countless millions of “Stars and Stripes” to US military forces in South Korea. In later times, these flights were even extended. Air America navigator Jim Keck reports: “Daily flights to Korea, twice a day to Okinawa, on to Taipei, on to Clark field. These carried the daily Stars and Stripes, the military daily newspaper, some passengers and some cargo. Then daily flights to Saigon and Bangkok. We also had weekly trips to Saipan (supporting the CIA there), then on to Guam and return. We might also have an occasional charter trip to anywhere asked. Navigators were only used on over water flights using US registered aircraft. The same trip might be flown in a Chinese registered airplane with just two pilots. Most of us flew about 100 hours a month. When we reached our yearly limit of 1,000 hours, we’d apply to the FFA for an additional 200 hours. As I was the one who would apply for the entire airline, I know that we were never refused extra time. Of course our overflight time was never included.”

Up to 1960, C-46s were used on the Booklift contract, and on 1 July 59 contract no. AF 62(501)-639 was replaced by follow-on contract no. AF 62(501)-981 for Fiscal Year 1960. In September 1960, no less than 6 plush C-46s were used on the Booklift contract. But on 10 December 60, that new contract was amended by a Supplemental Agreement to include four engine aircraft, and the very same day, DC-4s B-1004 and N2168 were put onto the Booklift run, and in August 1961, the Booklift contract was operated by one DC-4 and two C-46. In June 61, Booklift contract no. AF 62(501)-981 was extended to 30 June 1962.

But not all flights of Air America Japan were operated out of Tachikawa; some of them were still operated out of Atsugi, the CIA’s main station in Japan since the early 1950ies, mostly flights to and from Saipan and Guam. Air America Captain Jesse Walton, for example, logged flights from Atsugi to Saipan and Agana, Guam, and back to Saipan and Atsugi, using DC-4 N2168 on 15 July 59 and 9 December 59. On 16 August 59, he flew the same aircraft from Atsugi to Kimpo, Korea (K-14) and back to Tachikawa. As since 1 February 60, the runway at Atsugi was closed for repairs, later flights to Saipan departed Tachikawa. But at some time in the early sixties, Air America stopped flying to Saipan, possibly because the Tibetans were no longer trained there, but had moved to “The Farm”, that is to the CIA’s training base at Camp Peary near Williamsburg, Virginia, in November 58, and then to Camp Hale in Colorado in March 59. As late as 1962, the Booklift contract contained some flying

---

390 E-mail dated 11 September 2001, kindly sent to the author by Jim Keck.
392 That is plush C-46s B-844, B-846, B-848, B-854, B-858, and B-860 (Letter dated 16 September 60, sent by Robert Rousselot, Vice-President Operations, to George Doole, Managing Director, at UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4).
394 Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee of Air Asia Company Ltd of 27 June 61, at: UTD/CIA/B6F6.
395 E-mail dated 5 September 2002, kindly sent to the author by Jesse Walton.
397 Air America Captain Jesse Walton logged a flight to Saipan and Agana on 4 May 60, but this flight departed from and returned to Tachikawa (E-mail dated 5 September 2002, kindly sent to the author by Jesse Walton). Between 1958 and 1960, Walter P. Kuzmuk was one of the CIA men stationed on Saipan. One day, the station was visited by CIA Far East boss Desmond Fitzgerald, and they spent two days of bird watching (Transcript of an interview with CIA man Walter P. Kuzmuk conducted by Prof. William Leary at Shady Side, MD, on 28 August 1980, in: UTD/Leary/B43F1).
398 E-mail dated 19 September 2002, kindly sent to the author by Jesse Walton.
399 Conboy/Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, pp.86-89.
for the CIA in Japan and Korea – between 1 April 61 and 31 January 62 no less than 6,320 flying hours.  

There were also some contracts for maintenance to be performed at Tachikawa: Contract no. AF 62(531)-1263 covered maintenance (IRAN)\footnote{IRAN = Inspect And Repair as Necessary.} of USAF F-100 jet fighters beginning 1 April 59, with seven more aircraft added in June 59.\footnote{CAT Inc Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for January 59, p.1, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7; Air America Inc., Tachikawa Monthly Report for June 1959, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F9.} This contract for F-100 IRAN became no. AF 62(531)-1386 later in 1959.\footnote{Air America Inc., Tachikawa Monthly Report for November 1959, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F9.} We also have a MATS (Military Air Transport Service) Turn Around Maintenance contract with CAT Incorporated, Tachikawa: This was contract no. AF 62(531)-1081, which expired on 30 June 59, when it was replaced by contract no. AF 62(531)-1355 with Air America Inc Japan for MATS Turn Around Maintenance FY-60.\footnote{Air America Inc., Tachikawa Monthly Reports for June and November 1959, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F9.} Contract no. AF 62(531)-1355 itself was replaced on 30 June 60 by contract no. AF 62(531)-1609 for MATS Turn Around Maintenance in Fiscal Year 1961.\footnote{Air America Inc., Tachikawa Monthly Report for August 1960, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F9.} This was replaced by contract no. AF 62(531)-1672 for MATS Turn Around Maintenance in Fiscal Year 1962.\footnote{Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee of Air America Inc of 12 April 60, in: UTD/CIA/B3F1.}  

As a new Military Air Transport Service contract between Air America and the USAF became effective 1 April 60, two DC-6A/Bs (N90781 and N90782) were acquired from World Airways on 1 April 60.\footnote{Ten months ended 31 January 62”, p.15 (Tab A), i.e. CIA document no. c05260981, online readable on the CIA website at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/15/c05260981.pdf .} Between April and October 60, Air America indeed operated the MATS Inter-Island flights according to contract no. AF 11(626)-203,\footnote{E-mail dated 5 September 2002, kindly sent to the author by Jesse Walton; Air America Inc., Tachikawa, monthly report for August 1960, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F9.} that is the Tachikawa-Okinawa-Taiphi-Clark AFB run. In July 60, the two DC-6As were registered to Air America, Field Executive Office, Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, but already on 30 September 60, both aircraft were sold to Southern Air Transport for $ 865,000 each under Conditional Sales Contracts payable in sixty monthly installments of $ 16,726.10 per aircraft. The reason was that in October 1960, the Inter-Island contract had gone to SAT.\footnote{E-mail dated 5 September 2002, kindly sent to the author by Jesse Walton.} But probably due to financial difficulties of Southern Air Transport, this contract was amended on 31 December 62 so as to provide that the remaining sum was to be paid in three equal annual installments of $ 200,562 commencing only 2 January 65, and including an interest rate of 6 % per year.\footnote{Aircraft status as of 15 January 74 for N90782, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3; Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee of Air America Inc of 12 March 63, in: UTD/CIA/B3F4.} During the following years, Southern Air Transport operated these two former Air America DC-6A/Bs out of Tachikawa, Japan, on MATS contracts.\footnote{Unnamed list of Air America aircraft as of June 62, corrected to September 1963, and “Aircraft Status” as of 7 July 64, both in: UTD/CIA/B6F4.} For example, during the second half of December 60, the second half of January 61, as well as in February and March 61, SAT-pilot Tom Jenny flew N90782 on the Tachikawa-Kadena-Clark run several times, sometimes including Taipei as a stop.\footnote{List of accumulated costs for these 2 aircraft as of 31 December 67, in: UTD/CIA/B40F8. N90784 was at first rented at $ 25,000 per month, and was bought at $ 775,000 only on 1 October 61 (Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee of Air America Inc of 23 May 61, in: UTD/CIA/B3F2).} A little bit later, two more DC-6As were bought by Air America for use by Southern Air Transport, that is N90784 from World Airways on 31 May 61, and N90771 from Alaska Airlines on 30 April 62, but due to the
poor financial situation of SAT, both aircraft were only leased to them for MATS operations out of Tachikawa.\textsuperscript{414} Before that, however, N90771 was converted to DC-6A/B, and additional items for this aircraft amounting to $15,100 were requested in June 62.\textsuperscript{415}

2) Air America Japan, 1962-1968:

As to the Booklift flights from Tachikawa to Kimpo Airport, Seoul, Korea, they continued after 1962 as before, but the aircraft used were upgraded several times. Already on 1 July 63, C-46s B-858 and B-154 as well as 1 C-54 – B-1004 until 13 July 63, then B-1010 – were used on the Booklift contract.\textsuperscript{416} In April and July 64, the same aircraft – B-858, B-154, and B-1010 – were still used on Booklift contract no. AF62(562)-656.\textsuperscript{417} How important those Booklift flights were for the USAF, is underlined by the fact that Air America is even mentioned in the official history of the 315\textsuperscript{th} Air Division: The organizational structure of the Division as of 30 June 65 mentions the Company as an important factor, and the explanatory text says that “routine airlift support was supplemented by a contract with Air America, a commercial carrier operating DC-4 and C-46 aircraft.”\textsuperscript{418} William M. Leary summarizes the interview given to him by former Air America pilot John E. Lee on this point: “Lee flew with Air America at Tachikawa from June 1964 to June 1966. There was one DC-4 and two C-46s. It was routine flying: at 6 p.m. flight every evening from Tachikawa to Kimpo with the Stars & Stripes; a twice weekly (Tuesday and Friday) run from Tachi to a GCI site at Wakkanai in northern Japan (26 miles from the Russian border) via Misawa and Chitose; and a milk run to Iwakuni and Itazuke in the south. The planes carried Chinese copilots (no radio operators). Pilots included Williamson, Shaver, Stiles, and Chuck Grant. Truman Barnes (‘Barney’) was chief pilot. […] Flying got pretty boring, especially after SE Asia. Lee volunteered to fly the Wakkanai run in the winter (not very popular with pilots due to snow and ice), both for the challenge and because it was a good way to build up time.”\textsuperscript{419} When it became clear in April 65 that the USAF would request that “United States registered aircraft be utilized on the Booklift Contract for the coming fiscal year” and that “use of these aircraft on the Booklift

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{booklift_flights}
\caption{Wakkanai in the winter (with kind permission from Roger Fischer)}
\end{figure}

---

\textsuperscript{414} Unnamed list of Air America aircraft as of June 62, corrected to September 1963, and “Aircraft Status” as of 7 July 64, both in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1.
\textsuperscript{415} Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee of Air Asia Co Ltd of 12 June 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1.
\textsuperscript{416} AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8.
\textsuperscript{417} “AAM aircraft availability” as of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4, and “Aircraft status” as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1.
\textsuperscript{418} History of the 315\textsuperscript{th} Air Division, microfilm no. 23820, preserved at AFHRA, Maxwell AFB, p.11.
\textsuperscript{419} John E. Lee, interview conducted by William M. Leary at Watkinsville, GA on 27 May 1987; Prof. Leary’s notes are preserved at UTD/Leary/B46F10.
Contract under US registry would require that they be certificated as airworthy by the USFAA for passenger service”, on 6 April 65, the Executive Committees of Air Asia and Air America approved the modification of Air Asia-owned C-54s B-1010 (msn 36028) and B-1004 (msn 36072) and their subsequent transfer to Air America “at a cost of approximately $146,000”. 420 So both aircraft were converted to FAA standards, transferred to Air America on 27 September 65 and reregistered as N12190 (msn 36028) and N12191 (msn 36072) respectively on 13 October 65. 421 In November 65, C-54Gs N12190 and N12191 were used on the new Booklift contract no. AF62(S62)-1162, and that was still the case in April and May 66. 422 On 25 September 66, typhoon “Ida” blew the section of a building into N12190, so that the tail of the aircraft was badly damaged, resulting in the loss of more than 22 hours of flight time, as three flights had to be cancelled in September and two in the first week of October. “This loss in hours was held to a minimum by close coordination between Operations, Maintenance, and the 315th A.D. scheduling”, Ronald E. Lewis, Air America’s General Manager - Japan, states.423 But there was also some Customer maintenance carried out at Tachikawa in the sixties: In June 63, “the Executive Committee was informed that the US FAA Pacific Region has awarded a one-year contract (No. FA-HA-429) to the Company for the maintenance and modification of two Convair AT-29C and one or more Douglas C-54 or Lockheed L749A type aircraft at Tachikawa, Japan, and Tainan, Formosa. A preliminary estimate of the contract’s maximum revenue is $50,000.” 424 MATS Aircraft Turnaround Maintenance was also performed by Air America at Tachikawa Air Base in Fiscal Years 64, i.e. 1 July 63 to 30 June 64 (contract no. AF62(531)-1790), 65 (contract no. AF62(531)-1828), and 66 (contract no. AF62(531)-1875). 425

On 1 July 67, a further upgrade occurred, when Air America’s DC-6s N90771 and N90781 were put onto the new Booklift contract no. AF62562-67-C-0604, giving the flights pressurized capability. At that time, both aircraft were leased from Southern Air Transport. The situation of late 1967 is described by John McKenzie: “Every afternoon, 20,000 copies of STARS AND STRIPES start their airlift journey to Seoul with a truck ride from the publication’s Japanese headquarters in the Akasaka area of Tokyo to Tachikawa Air Base, some 22 miles to the west. At TAW, the bundles of papers are loaded aboard the aircraft by personnel from Air America and the USAF’s 315th Air Division. AAM ground personnel ensure against any types of delay – mechanical or otherwise. The aircraft also carry other high priority items; and quite often, senior officers of the military services. The flight departs Tachikawa regularly every evening at 1800L, arriving at Kimpo at 2150L. As soon as the props stop turning, the papers are off-loaded onto trucks, jeeps – or even bicycles – to be rushed to US armed forces personnel, wherever they might be located, from the DMZ in the North to Pusan, in the South.” 426 However, the two C-54s remained on the Booklift contract, and, together with the two DC-6As, they were still assigned to it in May 1968, 427 but they were also used on other flights. As to C-54 N12191, Air America Captain Jesse Walton recalls: “I note an entry in my log book of a flight from Tachikawa-Osan (Korea)-Kunsan-Osan-Tachikawa, Japan, on 28 June 1967.” 428

420 Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committees of Air Asia Co Ltd and Air America Inc of 6 April 65 in: UTD/CIA/B7F4.
422 “Status of aircraft” as of 1 November 65 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), 8 April 66 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and 4 May 1966 (in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2).
423 Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committees of Air Asia Co Ltd and Air America Inc of 28 September 1966, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1; Air America, Tachikawa monthly report for September 1966, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F10.
424 Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee of Air America, Inc of 11 June 63, p.3, in: UTD/CIA/B3F4.
428 E-mail dated 22 August 2002, kindly sent to the author by Jesse Walton.
As to Air America’s four DC-6As, they were still operated by Southern Air Transport out of Tachikawa in 1962, that is under MATS contract work: The first two of them (N90781 and N90782) had been sold to Southern in September 1960, but not yet been fully paid for, and the other two had only been leased to Southern in June 61 (N90784) and May 62 (N90771). This explains, why all four of them are listed in an Air America Aircraft status list of July 64, although they were actually flown under MATS contract no. AF11(626)-603 by SAT.\textsuperscript{429} Southern used these aircraft on its Inter-Island MATS contract, and on 31 March 64, the Executive Committee of Air Asia and Air America granted an extension of the lease of N90784 and N90771 to SAT until 30 June 1965.\textsuperscript{430} In November 1965 and in May 1966, all of the four DC-6As were operated out of Tachikawa under contracts with the USAF, that is with the Military Airlift Command under contract no. AF49(604)-699, and with the Logistical Support Group (LSG) under contract no. AF49(604)-4379.\textsuperscript{431} As Jesse Walton recalls, there were a lot of DC-6 flights from Tachikawa to Saipan and Guam in the mid-sixties, mostly passengers and cargo, and there were also DC-6 flights from Tachikawa to Guam, on to Iwo Jima, and back to Tachikawa.\textsuperscript{432} But some of the SAT DC-6 flights also ended at Saigon or Takhli. In May 64, Clifford A. Costa worked as Flight Engineer on N90771 when it made several LSG-flights transporting explosives, ammunition, and radio gear from Kadena to Takhli.\textsuperscript{433} Former Air America and SAT pilot Joe Hazen recalls: “I usually carried military personnel to Saigon from Clark AFB. […] On occasion the flights to Saigon also included MPC (military payment certificates) which I had to sign for and have an officer in Saigon sign for when I turned it over. Several million dollars were involved. […] The flights to Takhli sometimes were ammunition and arms other times cargo of another nature, such as air conditioners and refrigerators”.\textsuperscript{434} In late 1965 and early 1966, CAT pilot “Doc” Johnson also flew some missions for the LSG on the Kadena, Okinawa-Saigon route, apparently destined to build up the CIA presence in South Vietnam: On 25 October 65 and on 9 December 65, he flew DC-6B B-1006 Kadena-Saigon-Taipei, in the 19-25 February 66 period, he flew cargo C-54s B-1012 and B-1014 on the same routes on charter to the LSG.\textsuperscript{435}

LSG cargo charters Kadena-Saigon, 19-25 February 1966
(page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book, kindly sent to the author by James Johnson on 10 August 2013)

\textsuperscript{429} “Aircraft status” of 7 July 1964, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1.
\textsuperscript{430} Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committees of Air Asia Co Ltd and Air America Inc of 31 March 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3.
\textsuperscript{431} “Status of aircraft” as of 1 November 65 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and 5 May 66 (in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2).
\textsuperscript{432} E-mail dated 10 September 2002, kindly sent to the author by Jesse Walton.
\textsuperscript{433} Diary of Clifford Costa, pp.8/9, in: UTD/Leary/B44F5. On 12 and 15 June 64, he was aboard N90781 on similar flights to Saigon and Takhli (pp.14/5), and on 19/20 May 64, he was aboard N90781 on a flight Kadena-Taipei-Danang-Takhli-Kadena, carrying not only explosives etc., but from Taipei to Danang also 10 Chinese agents (p.13). On 29 June 64, Costa made another flight Kadena-Takhli-Kadena (p.19), and on 28/9 September 64 Kadena-Saigon-Takhli-Clark AFB-Kadena, also for the LSG (p.24).
\textsuperscript{434} E-mail dated 5 September 2004, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen.
\textsuperscript{435} Pages from “Doc Johnson’s log book, kindly sent to the author by his son James Johnson on 10 August 2013.
From time to time, these DC-6s were also used on “special” black flights: From 3 to 8 July 63, N90782 transported napalm and rockets from Kadena to the Incirlik USAF base near Adana, Turkey, and from there to a base outside Baghdad; on the flight between Incirlik and the final destination, the DC-6 used a fake serial (“HD-696”) that was possibly supposed to make it look like a Turkish Air Force aircraft.436 In April and May 1966, the situation is still the same – all four DC-6As are operated under the MAC and LSG contracts, except for the fact that two C-54Ds, which had been acquired in November 65 (B-1012), and in December 65 (B-1014),437 had been added to the LSG-contract, but were based at Taipei.438

But the DC-6As were also used on covert missions, especially to support the Tibetans, and it is believed that that was even the real object of contract no. AF49(604)-4379 with the USAF’s Logistical Support Group. During the sixties, Kadena Air Base on Okinawa continued to be the main CIA supply station for the Far East.439 As the Tibetan guerrillas continued to be supplied by the CIA after the end of the C-130 airlift flown by Air America crews until mid-1962, Air America/SAT cargo planes transported supplies from Okinawa to India many times. In India these goods were loaded into other planes, which then would make the trips close to Nepal and Tibet. The aircraft that carried those goods from Okinawa to India were the former Air America DC-6As that had been sold or leased to Southern Air Transport and were now flying under SAT contracts,440 but they were still based at Tachikawa, Japan. Indeed, Air America Captain Jesse Walton flew two DC-6 missions from Kadena via Takhli in Thailand to a destination known as “Oak Tree” on the East coast of India on 18 June 64 and on 25 August 64; each time, the flight was at night, and each time, the aircraft descended to 500 feet above the water to avoid radar detection.441 Another flight was on 3 February

436 “[N]90782, July 3, 63 to July 8, 63; Tainan-Bangkok-Calcutta-Karachi-Adana, Turkey (Incirlik USAF); HD-696 aircraft change; Project: 6+10 [hours]; Incirlik-Habbinia Plateau (Baghdad, Iraq)-Incirlik. Load: rockets, napalm, etc.; return: Adana-Karachi-Delhi-Bangkok-Tainan; [Crew:] Marsh, Sailer, McColomb, Costa, Condon, Gionet; total: 53 hours” (Costa, Diary, p.4, in: UTD/Leary/B44F5). Newspaper clippings of 11 July 63 also located within the material that Cliff Costa sent to Bill Leary, make clear that in July 63, the Iraqi government used napalm against Kurd rebels who were fighting against government troops in the Rowanduz valley in northern Iraq and who were said to be supported by the Soviet Union.

437 The statement of Property and Equipment of Air Asia Co Ltd as of 31 March 1966 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5) gives the acquisition dates as “54/11” for B-1012 and “54/12” for B-1014; but as in the same type of paper dated 31 March 65, the acquisition date of DC-6B B-1006 is given as “47/10”, which is transcribed as “October 58” in the American version of the CATCL list of 31 March 66 (also in: UTD/CIA/B26F5), you only have to add 11 to the year, in order to get the real year, while the month remains the same.

438 “Status of aircraft” as of 8 April 66 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and as of 5 May 66 (in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2).

439 Near Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, was the CIA’s main logistics base in East Asia, code-named ZRBLUSH and containing, among other supplies, arms and ammunition (see Leary, Secret mission to Tibet, p.69).

440 Conboy/Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, pp.216/7.

441 In his e-mail dated 30 June 2002 written to the author, Jesse Walton notes: “The [...] 1964 flights to ‘Oaktree’ were definitely the East coast of India and not East Pakistan. On 18 June 1964, I flew Air America DC-6, N-90784, from Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, to Tak Lei, Thailand, flight time 8:00 hours. Crew members were the late Hugh Marsh, Jesse Walton, Barretta, Cliff Costa, Ken LaPointe and navigator Sanders. On 19 June 1964, we flew the same aircraft (N-90784) Tak Lei to ‘Oaktree’ with the same crew members. The flight to India was at night 4 hours 26 minutes, the return flight to Tak Lei was daylight hours. My log book records another ‘Oaktree’ flight with crew members the late Harry Hudson, Jesse Walton, Burt King, Ken LaPointe, engineer Hanson and navigator Bob McKean. August 25, 1964 Air America DC-6, N-90781, departed Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, destination Tak Lei, Thailand, flight time 8 hours 37 minutes. August 25, 1964 Air America DC-6, N-90781, departed Tak Lei, Thailand, destination ‘Oaktree’ and return to Tak Lei, Thailand. The flight to ‘Oaktree’ was 5 hours 10 minutes at night. On both the flights recorded above I flew as co-pilot to the late Captains Marsh and Hudson. However, Captains Marsh and Hudson were the pilots-in-command. [...] We descended down to 500 feet above the water to avoid radar detection as we neared the East coast of India.” In his e-mail dated 10 July 2002, Jesse Walton adds: “The August 25, 1964 Kadena-TPE[Taipei]-TKL[Takhli]-India-TKL flight was recorded as AFC 509/25. The TKL-TPE-Kadena flight on 26 August 1964 was recorded as AFC 510/26.” In his e-mail dated 10 September 2002, Captain Jesse Walton confirms that these were in fact flights operated by Southern Air Transport.
“Oak Tree” was the code-name of Charbatia Air Base, located north of the city of Bhubaneswar in the east of India, base of the Aviation Research Center (ARC), an intelligence joint venture between the CIA and the Indian Intelligence Bureau, created on 7 September 63. Since 1964, this unit parachuted agents to launch sites close to the border of Tibet, dropped supplies to the guerrillas of Mustang, and was involved in other covert operations, using a number of C-46s and Helio Couriers. The dimensions of these operations at “Oak Tree” make believe that all Air America / SAT DC-6s owned at that time, that is N90771, N90781, N90782, and N90784, were used on such covert support flights. Officially, however, they were flown under MATS contract operations in 1964, which continued to be operated out of Tachikawa under Military Airlift Command contract -699 and under USAF Logistical Support Group contract -4379 in 1966 and probably on until 1967. On 15 May 65, a SAT DC-6 piloted by Eddie Sims departed Okinawa, made refuelling stops at Takhli in Thailand and Charbatia Air Base in India, and then, on 17 May 65, departed Charbatia and flew ammunition, weapons, and a small number of radios and inflatable rubber boats and dropped those supplies a few kilometres of Tangya inside Nepal. Other supply flights made by SAT DC-6s during that period ended at “Oak Tree”, that is Charbatia Air Base in Eastern India, from where ARC aircraft carried the supplies closer to the Tibetans. On 20 March 67 and on 27 April 67, Joe Hazen, former Air America pilot then working for SAT, flew DC-6 N90782 to “Oak Tree”.

Although the war between India and Pakistan created tensions between the USA and India, the CIA in 1966 offered a quiet continuation of its paramilitary projects. Four flights were scheduled, all to be conducted by CIA-operated Boeing 727s, staging between Okinawa and Charbatia, to be made at low level to avoid radar and anti-American opposition at New Delhi.

When, as has been noted above, Air America’s DC-6As N90771 and N90781 were put onto the Booklift contract on 1 July 67, further changes occurred: Already on 15 February 67, DC-6A N90784 had been sold to Pan Aero Investment Corp, who passed it on to Intermountain Aviation of Marana, AZ in April 67, with whom it was reregistered as N61267. N90781, which had initially been leased from SAT, was bought in 1968. N90782 is listed as leased to Southern Air Transport in May 68 for use under their contract AF49(604)-4379 with the LSG, but this time, it was based at Kadena, Okinawa. At that time, N90782 flew exclusively for the “Customer”, as Dale Williamson states who flew on the LSG contract from July 1967 to December 1968: At that time, it carried mainly ammunition from CIA stores at Kadena to Saigon and Takhli, and there, the aircraft had the second highest priority on the base – after the SR-71. As to the two C-54Ds which had been operated for the LSG in 1966, that is B-1012 and B-1014, they are listed as spare aircraft based at Taipei in

442 In his e-mail dated 20 July 2002 written to the author, Jesse Walton notes: “On 3 Feb. 1965, my log book records a flight Kadena-TKL-TKL-Hsin Chu, 20 hours 46 minutes, flight number AFC 531/03. On 4 February 65, I record flight AFC 532/04 TKL-Kadena 6 hours 38 minutes. Crew members were W. D. Gaddie, Jesse Walton, W. Cross, Thomas, Lopshire, and K. Rockwell. I believe this flight proceeded from TKL to Oaktree in India due to the 20 hours 46 minutes logged.”

443 Conboy/Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, pp.190/1.

444 Conboy/Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, pp.190-95, 200/1, and 206/7.

445 “Aircraft status” as of 7 July 64 in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1.

446 “Status of aircraft” as of 1 November 65 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and 5 May 66 (UTD/Hickler/B1F2).

447 Conboy/Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, pp.216-18.

448 E-mail dated 9 August 2004, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen.

449 Conboy/Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, p.210; the aircraft is believed to have been one of SAT’s 727s.


452 Dale D. Williamson, interview made by William M. Leary at Bellevue, WA, on 13 July 1987; Professor Leary’s notes are preserved at UTD/Leary/B43F5.
May 68. And N90771 had been owned by Air America all the time.453 This reduction of Air America’s DC-6 fleet had become possible, because since October 1966, Southern Air Transport had acquired 3 Boeing 727-92Cs via Air Asia, two of which were leased from Air America (N5055 and N5092), while one of them was immediately bought by SAT (N5093). When Southern Air Transport started Boeing 727 services out of Tachikawa in late 66, Air America maintenance people were faced with several problems. One was to break tires from wheel rims, as it was virtually impossible to do the job by hand because of the very tight fit between tire bead and wheel rim. As it would have taken too much time and cost too much money to ship a tire-breaker from the United States, a local team headed by C.L. Hsu, leadman of the Air America Tire Shop constructed its own tire-breaker in 1967.454 Then, these jets were put under the new Military Airlift Command contract no. F11626-67-C-0022 and worked out of Yokota,455 flying to South Korea,456 but also to South Vietnam,457 and to Udorn.458 From October 66 to at least January 68, these Boeing 727s were really stationed at Clark Air Base in the Philippines and flew up to Japan only from time to time – apparently for maintenance. Their main routes were Clark-Bangkok-Saigon-Bangkok-Cark, mostly carrying military personnel and cargo, and later Cam Ranh Bay, Pleiku, or Danang were added as destinations.459

Southern’s 727 routes out of Clark Air Base during the period from 4 to 14 November 66 (page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book, kindly sent to the author by James Johnson on 10 August 2013)

3) Air America Japan, 1968-1974:

In May 1968, two of Air America’s DC-6As (N90771 and N90781) and two of Air America’s DC-4s (N12190 and N12191) were being assigned to Booklift contract no. AF62562-67-C-0604.460 probably all of them since 1 July 67. For 1968, Air America’s operations at Tachikawa are best described by Tachikawa’s Acting Traffic Manager John Bond: “Tachikawa Air Base, located on the Kanto Plain 22 miles west of Tokyo and in sight of scenic Mt. Fuji, is the focal point for Air America’s operations throughout Japan and South Korea. From Tachikawa, missions are flown to United States Air bases at Misawa, Chitose,
and Wakkanai\(^{461}\) in Northern Japan; to Iwakuni and Itazuke in Southern Japan; and to Seoul, Osan, Kunsan, and various other bases in South Korea. Two DC-4s and two DC-6s presently provide the airlift for the passengers and / or cargo flights which are contracted for by the Pacific Air Forces’ intra-theater airlift organization – the 315\(^{th}\) Air Division. The cargo generally consists of mail, STARS AND STRIPES, and other high priority items needed at outlying bases. In addition, the flights are sometimes designated as aeromedical evacuation flights and personnel who cannot obtain the necessary specialized treatment at their own bases are flown to Tachikawa where facilities are excellent. Over the years our close relationship with the Division has led to the affectionate feeling among Air Force personnel that Air America is an integral part of the 315\(^{th}\). One aspect of the AAM operation at Tachikawa – which is unique within the Company – is the use of male and female flight attendants on passenger flights. It has been shown that these scheduled passenger flights are enhanced by the young men and young ladies who provide both the comforts and atmosphere of commercial air travel to the facilities and men on our flights. Air America’s facilities at Tachikawa are located on the base itself and are readily accessible to both Passenger and Air Freight Terminals. Aircraft parking and ramp areas for maintenance are located near the end of the runway, where a hangar has been made available to AAM’s Maintenance Department. The Traffic, Operations, Flying, Communications, Security, Accounting, Payroll, Supply, Technical Services, and General Manager’s offices are located in nearby ranch-style office buildings.\(^{462}\)

In July 68, however, the “Stars and Stripes” flights to Korea were dropped. As the Tachikawa monthly Report for July 68 states: “The schedule for the month of July has become somewhat awkward with the loss of the nightly Stars & Stripes flight to Korea. In its place we have been given other flights of a high priority nature which are referred to as PAD flights. The nature of these flights makes it difficult to fully utilize the entire aircraft and, therefore, the customer prefers for us to use a DC-4. When this happens it is necessary to put an additional Captain on in order to meet FAR requirements because of the duration of the flights. We can expect to get more such flights in the future as well as air evac and one-time-shot project flights.”\(^{463}\)

In 1969, the situation was similar: Two DC-6As (this time N90781 and N90782) and two DC-4s (still N12190 and N12191) were used on the Booklift flights,\(^{464}\) and these aircraft still carried Air America’s only flight attendants, usually two per flight; at that time, the Company had 21 flight attendants – 17 girls and 4 men, all of them Japanese except for one Chinese purser.\(^{465}\) But in late 1969, a change occurred: “At 1430 hours on 1 November 1969, an Air America DC-6 launched from Tachikawa Air Base, Japan, as flight 821, and became the last Company plane to depart that field, as flight operations were relocated at nearby Yokota Air Base. The move to Yokota was necessitated by a recent directive from the U.S. Department of Defense closing the Tachikawa runway to flight operations. The departure of N90782 saw over 19 years of continuous Company flight operations at Tachikawa draw to a close. [...] On the last day, a sequence of events had seemingly narrowed the field of competitors for the “last to leave” honor to Captain R. S. Richardson’s and Captain Dale Williamson’s crews. At first it looked as though Captain Williamson’s crew of First Officer Jim Davis, Flight Engineer Bill Cook, Flight Navigator Sam Seymour, Flight Mechanic V.K. Chung, Senior Flight Attendant Tomoko Ohzu, and Flight Attendant Trainees Mayumi Ono and Yoko

---

\(^{461}\) Misawa was an Air Force logistics center, and Wakkanai had an NSA listening post (Connie Seigrist Memoirs, p.83, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11).


\(^{464}\) Flight Operation Circulars of 15 June 69 (in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and of 15 August 69 (in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); DC-6 N90771 went to SAT, probably in May 69; it was no longer with Air America in June 69.

Sekikine were to be the winners by virtue of an 0800 departure. This, however, was not to be the case as a call from the Air Force to provide an unscheduled aeromedical evacuation mission from Itazuke to Tachikawa caused some juggling. Since excessive crew duty time precluded Captain Richardson’s crew from completing both the air evacuation mission and scheduled flight 821, a third crew was called for duty. This crew, Captain Jim Pearson, First Officer Larry Alsop, Flight Engineer Charlie Reber, Senior Flight Attendant Moichi Tsuchiya, and Flight Attendant Mary Adachi thereby became the winners of the “last to leave” honor in what finally proved to be an unpredictable contest. The move from Tachikawa to Yokota, however, did not mean another long period of operation, as the Booklift contract was terminated in 1970. On 30 June 1970 at 1900L, the last Air America Booklift flight departed Yokota Air Base, Japan. As usual, Air America flight 812, this time carried out by DC-4 N12190, blocked out on time bound for Iwakuni and Itazuke; it returned on schedule, seven hours later, to terminate this long-term operation, which, since 15 September 1950, had seen service by C-47s, C-46s, DC-4s, and DC-6s. The crew of this final Booklift flight was Captain M.W. Shaver, First Officer J.M. Bannerman, Flight Attendant R. Saito, and Purser S. Tong. Probably shortly afterwards, DC-6 N90781 went to SAT.

At least between 1970 and 1972, the flights from Japan to destinations in Korea, in Japan and to Guam that had previously been covered by Air America’s Booklift contract, were still operated, but now by the Boeing 727s of Southern Air Transport. Their routes can be seen from the log book of “Doc” Johnson:

Southern AT flights from Yokota to Kadena, Guam, Seoul, Saigon, Clark AB, Taipei, and to Itazuke in Japan in 1970


At the same time, the end of Booklift did not mean the end of Air America Japan: On 1 July 70, a new contract – F11626-70-C-0010 – was made with the Military Airlift Command, at the beginning apparently conceived only as an experiment, as it expired already on 30 September 70. On 30 June 71, a Contract Security Classification Specification was added to the original contract.\textsuperscript{468} This contract covered DC-4 flights from Yokota to Iwo Jima Island, Marcus Island, Misawa, and Chitose. Supplemental Agreement no. P0003 of 1 October 70 extended the contract to 30 June 71 and added that the “Contractor is authorized to substitute DC-6 for DC-4 aircraft at same rate per plane mile as for DC-4” and that the “total amount of the contract price for FY 71 is increased by $758,904.75 (EST).”\textsuperscript{469} At first, DC-4 N12191 was used on this new regular once-a-week passenger / cargo flight from Yokota Air Base, then, in October 70, DC-6 N90782 was put onto this 768 statute miles flight. And since that time, the DC-4 also flew to Marcus Island and the DC-6 to Wakkanai, Japan. Because there was no aircraft fuel available on Iwo Jima, all flights to the island had to carry enough fuel for a round trip plus reserves. Purpose of the operation was to provide almost complete logistics support to the United States Coast Guard Station on Iwo Jima, whose primary duty was to operate LORAN\textsuperscript{470} A and C master stations on the island; LORAN slave stations had been installed on several islands in the Western Pacific such as Marcus, Yap, and Okinawa, and were operated by Japanese. Including its television antenna added later, the LORAN C transmitting tower on Iwo Jima had a height of 1,470 feet. Air America’s weekly flights to Iwo Jima supplied the Coast Guard contingent on the island – two officers and 36 enlisted men in 1970 – with virtually every item they required, ranging from food to tooth-brushes, from spare parts of all kinds to cigarettes, from light bulbs to soft drinks. About the only

\textsuperscript{468} In: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 19.

\textsuperscript{469} Modification no. P00003 to contract F11626-70-C-0010, dated 1 October 70, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 reel 19.

\textsuperscript{470} LORAN stands for Long Range Aid to Navigation.
supplies Air America did not bring to Iwo Jima, were bulk diesel fuel for the diesel engines which drove the generators on the island. But as the island had been reverted to the Japanese in 1968, Iwo Jima Air Base was operated by a Japanese crew who had their own aerial logistics supply system. At the same time, Air America Japan continued their aerial medical evacuation missions out of Yokota Air Base. In early 1971, the 902nd Air Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron conducted a joint air evacuation training class with Air America at Yokota Air Base, including the demonstration of a new inflatable escape slide on Air America’s DC-4 N12190. On that occasion, Lieutenant Colonel Louis Architect, commander of the 902nd AMES said: “It seems […] that Air America always manages to deliver our patients on time, in time and in any type of weather.”

In 1971 and 1972, the scheduled services to Iwo Jima, Marcus Island and Wakkanai continued, at that time using DC-6A N90782 and DC-4s N12190 and N12191 under what was called contract no. AF-71-52 or – more completely – F11626-71-C-0052 dated 1 July 1971.

Immediately, a Supplemental Agreement was made between Air America and Air Asia, by which Air Asia “agrees that it will, upon call by Air America, furnish to Air America aircraft

---

473 Flight Operations Circulars of 1 and 15 July 71, both in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B.
and/or services, to assist it in the performance of its said contract.\textsuperscript{474} As Wakkanai is located on the northernmost tip of Hokkaido, Japan’s northernmost island, just some 30 miles south of the southern tip of Russia’s Sakhalin Island, the 3½ hour DC-4 flight made stops at Misawa on northern Honshu, and at Chitose on southern Hokkaido. As these were scheduled passenger flights, two or three Air America flight attendants were always on board.\textsuperscript{475} They took also care of babies travelling with Air America. Roger Fischer, who was stationed in Wakkanai in 1971-72, recalls: “We were stationed in Wakkanai, Japan from July 1971 through April 1972. During that time we used the services of Air America. The airport at Wakkanai was civilian but the US Air Force provided all the ground support for the Air America flights and snow removal in the winter. There was a small American hospital at Wakkanai, but pregnant women were sent to Misawa to give birth. This was the case with my wife. On the trip back, Air America provided us with a “baby carrier box” for our baby. As it turns out, the plane developed a problem in one of its engines after leaving Chitose and returned there since there was no maintenance available at Wakkanai. The plane went to Yokota for repairs. We spent two days at Chitose waiting for the plane to return.”\textsuperscript{476} Marcus Island is a tiny speck in the Pacific Ocean – a triangular island less than three-quarters of a mile per side – and probably one of the most isolated spots inhabited by men. Marcus Island was a U.S. Coast Guard Station, and the only contact its personnel – about 36 in 1972 – had with the outside world at that time, was a once-a-week (weather permitting) Air America DC-6 flight, which supplied logistics support and a Rest and Relaxation vehicle for Coast Guard people stationed on the island. The Coast Guard operated a LORAN C Station on Marcus. The runway on Marcus Island was only 4,500 feet long, but coast to coast: It started at the Pacific Ocean and ended at the Pacific Ocean, so that there was no over-run at either end. The flight left Yokota Air Base every Friday at 0800L, and the 1,049 nautical miles needed a flight time of about 4 hours and 40 minutes. For the Coast Guard contingent on Marcus Island, the weekly flight was so important that they called Friday the “Plane Day”; and Air America brought them not only food, fruit, vegetables, but also movies, and, probably most important of all, mail from home. The weekly flight was so important that mail arrived every Saturday. (weather permitting) Air America DC-6 flight, which supplied logistics support and a Rest and Relaxation vehicle for Coast Guard people stationed on the island. The Coast Guard operated a LORAN C Station on Marcus. The runway on Marcus Island was only 4,500 feet long, but coast to coast: It started at the Pacific Ocean and ended at the Pacific Ocean, so that there was no over-run at either end. The flight left Yokota Air Base every Friday at 0800L, and the 1,049 nautical miles needed a flight time of about 4 hours and 40 minutes. For the Coast Guard contingent on Marcus Island, the weekly flight was so important that they called Friday the “Plane Day”; and Air America brought them not only food, fruit, vegetables, but also movies, and, probably most important of all, mail from home, which also meant a source of information about what happened in the rest of the world, as it was difficult to get a Japanese radio station on Marcus Island. Diesel fuel for the generators arrived once a year by ship, and for fresh water, the men on Marcus depended entirely on rain water.\textsuperscript{477}

On these flights, Air America showed that it was not only a contract carrier hauling cargo as required by USAID, the US military or the CIA, but could also operate as a passenger airline. And so, Modification no. P00002 to this contract (dated 7 December 71) laid down some measures intended to guarantee a comfortable atmosphere and to make passengers feel at home: § a (6) of Attachment A now reads: “Aisles. Shall allow unobstructed passage to toilets, doorways, and other passenger-accessible positions.” § a (9) of the same Attachment now reads: “Cabin air temperature and ventilation will be maintained to insure a passenger comfort index, as indicated below, at all times. Aircraft will not be positioned for a flight unless the cabin environmental control systems are fully operational and are capable of maintaining a uniform in-flight cabin temperature between 68 and 74 degrees Fahrenheit without excessive drafts and a relative humidity of between 20 and 50 percent.” And on page F-A1-6 of the Schedule the following sentences were added to § b: “All attendants will be thoroughly familiar with the use of the public address system, required briefings and flight advisory information that is furnished passengers. The attendants must be able to speak the English language in a fluent and coherent manner.”\textsuperscript{478} Nevertheless, the number of flights

\textsuperscript{474} Supplemental Agreement dated 1 July 71 re contract no. F11626-71-C-0052, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 reel 19.


\textsuperscript{476} E-mail dated 3 August 2009, kindly sent to the author by Roger Fischer.


\textsuperscript{478} Modification no. P0002 dated 7 December 71 to contract no. F11626-71-C-0052, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 reel 19. 99
Modification no. P00002 dated 7 December 71 to contract no. F11626-71-C-0052 and Service Order dated 2 June 72 (both in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 19)

needed went down quite quickly, so that by Amendment no. 10A dated 30 April 72, the contract had to be changed “by decreasing [...] the total amount of the Service Order by $29,400.00.”

On some days, however, more than one aircraft were operated on the same route: For example, a Service Order dated 2 June 72 says that on 26 June 72, one Air America aircraft assigned to contract no. F11626-71-C-0052 was to fly Yokota AB (RTJY) – Misawa AB (RJSM) – New Chitose (RJCC) and return and the other one Yokota AB (RTJY) – Misawa AB (RJSM) – New Chitose (RJCC) – Obihiro (RJCB) and return.

For 19 May 72, even 3 aircraft – 1 DC-6 and 2 DC-4s – were scheduled: one aircraft flew Yokota AB (RTJY) – Misawa AB (RJSM) – New Chitose (RJCC) – Obihiro (RJCB) and return, the second one flew Yokota AB (RTJY) – Misawa AB (RJSM) – New Chitose (RJCC) – Obihiro (RJCB) and return, and the third one flew Yokota AB (RTJY) – Misawa AB (RJSM) – Obihiro (RJCB) and return.

But for these operations, Air America did not need 1 DC-6 and 2 DC-4s, and so on 8 October 72, DC-4 N12191 was put into inactive storage at Tainan. At that time, Air America’s remaining 2 Boeing 727s that had been leased to SAT to the very end, had already been or were in process of being sold. But Air America’s DC-4 N12190 and DC-6A N90782 still continued these flights according to the provisions of the new contract no. AF-72-36, more completely known as no. F11626-72-C-0036 dated 1 July 72. This contract was still valid at the end of 1973, when Air America’s flight attendants of Yokota even received new uniforms. At that time, DC-4 N12191 had already been sold.

480 Service Order of 2 June 72 to contract no. F11626-71-C-0052, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 reel 19.
482 N5055 and N5092 both returned to Air America on 30 June 72 (Minutes of Meeting of Board of Directors of Air America Inc. of 17 May 72, in: UTD/CIA/B4F2); N5055 was sold to Continental Air Lines, Los Angeles, on 3 October 72 for $3,570,000, and N5092 was sold to Maple Leaf Leasing Ltd., Ontario, for Pacific Western Airlines, Vancouver, on 26 October 72 for $3,600,000 (Letter by CS Carter dated 2 November 72, in: UTD/CIA/B15F4; Minutes of Meeting of Board of Directors of Air America Inc. of 17 October 72, in: UTD/CIA/B4F2; Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6).
483 Supplemental Agreement no. P0001 dated 1 August 72 to contract no. F11626-72-C-0036 notes that the mileage will be computed utilizing the route segment mileages listed in the MAC Mileage Manual, when stations have to be overflown due to weather conditions (in: UTD/Bisson/B5 reel 20).
484 Flight Operations Circulars of 16 April 73 (in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14, pp. B-11-19), 1 November 73, and 1
Senior Flight Attendants Mr. Aihara and Miss Park wearing new Air America uniforms

(*Air America Log*, vol. VIII, no. 1, 1974, in: UTD/Hickler/B10F12)

But the new uniforms had probably only been a last attempt to postpone the end, as in the beginning of 1974, all Air America flights out of Yokota Air Base were stopped: On 1 February 74, the last two aircraft that had been assigned to Air America Japan, DC-6A N90782 and DC-4 N12190, were based at Tainan as spare aircraft,\(^{486}\) where they remained until the end of Air America in South East Asia: Both aircraft were finally sold in April 1975: DC-4 N12190 on 2 April to Air Vietnam, and DC-6A N90782 on 7 April to Pacific Alaska Airlines.\(^{487}\) As to Air America’s operations at Yokota Air Base, there was still some maintenance to be done, but on 30 June 74, Air America’s Yokota operations were phased out.\(^{488}\)

© University of Texas at Dallas, 2013-15

\(^{485}\) On 13 November 73, the airframes only of C-54s msn 36072 (former N12191), 10655 (former B-1012), and 10869 (former B-1014) were sold to Air Distribution Inc., Honolulu, HI (Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1).

\(^{486}\) Flight Operations Circular of 1 February 74 in: UTD/CIA/B51F21.

\(^{487}\) Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1.

\(^{488}\) Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committees of Air Asia Co Ltd and Air America Inc of 9 July 74 in: UTD/CIA/B10F2.