An Air America C-46 – probably N9458Z – making drops somewhere over Laos
(with kind permission from Frank Bonansinga)

The types of missions flown by Air America’s C-46s:

Like the C-47, the C-46 was one of the types of aircraft Air America had inherited in March 59 from the times of CAT Inc., but in larger numbers. At that time, much of Air America’s operations was still concentrated in Japan and in the Republic of China. All that changed in 1960: Already in the fall of that year, four of Air America C-46s had been transferred to Central America to fly arms and supplies to anti-Castro guerrillas in Cuba, but only two of them plus one replacement aircraft returned the following year. At about the same time it became evident that Communist support to Neutralist and Pathet Lao forces in Laos made it necessary to strengthen the pro-Western forces in that country. So in the fall of 1960, an endless stream of Air America C-46s moved thousands of tons of arms and supplies from the secret base at Takhli (T-05) in Thailand to General Phoumi Nosavan at Savannakhet. In January 61 Vang Pao was added to the CIA’s list of receivers, and since that time, some of the supplies flown out of Takhli were delivered to a drop zone near Vang Pao’s headquarters at Pa Doung in Laos (Trest, Air Commando One, pp. 109 and 116). Such numerous air drops were possible because Air America had inherited from the times of CAT Inc. an agreement with the Civil Aeronautics Administration of Taiwan which went back to the early fifties. No less then 7 CAA-owned C-46Fs were leased to Air America to supplement their own aircraft. When CAA-owned C-46 B-130 was lost in November 1960, it was even replaced by another CAA-owned C-46: B-156.

Although Air America C-46s continued to fly in other theaters as well - two of them were used out of Japan to deliver the Stars and Stripes to Korea in the early sixties; two of them were used by Scheduled Air Services Ryukyu out of Naha, Okinawa between 1964 and 1967; one to two of them were used on CAT domestic flights until 1968; and two of them were apparently destined for another use against Cuba, but eventually flew for the Aviation
Research Center of India (Conboy / Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, p. 191) -, South East Asia became the center of Air America’s C-46 activities. In Laos C-46s were used for all types of airdrops, especially to drop palletized rice and salt, but also other types of supplies and even arms and ammunition were flown in by C-46s. Those C-46s had rails inside on which the pallets were rolled to the door. Some C-46s had a 39 standard seat configuration, but nearly all of them could also be equipped with 68 high density and centerline seats to serve as troop carriers or for refugee airlifts (Aircraft and avionics information as of 1 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14). Two C-46s should particularly be mentioned: XW-PBV and XW-PBW. They were former Air America aircraft that had been sold to USAID-Laos in 1963 and then to the Royal Lao Government in 1964, who leased them first to Bird & Sons and their successor Continental Air Services and then in 1969 to Air America, who transferred them to Royal Air Lao in December 73. Because of their Laotian ownership, they always bore an Erawan on the fuselage, that is the symbol of the Kingdom of Laos consisting of three white elephants in a red circle. In South Vietnam Air America’s C-46s flew the usual mix of passengers and supplies for both USAID and military customers, except for some scheduled services like the one linking Saigon and Danang. Although USAID was officially the main contractor to Air America in South Vietnam, all CIA missions in South Vietnam were flown as part of the USAID contracts, and within those contracts, all CIA requirements were handled with priority. Since 1965, Air America’s services in South Vietnam were also supplemented by some C-46s owned and operated by China Airlines, whose aircraft adopted serials like CA-1 or EM-2 when they flew for Air America. The reason is evident: They were under operational and contractual control of the CIA (Harnage, A thousand faces, pp. 81/2), and they were also used on secret missions for the Studies and Observations Group (see the photo in: Plaster, SOG, p. 72). So “EM-” probably meant something like “operated under the control of the US Embassy at Saigon.” Already in the early sixties, Air America was involved in secret flying in South Vietnam – not as a transport company, however, but with maintenance, as they supported the C-46s of VIAT or Vietnamese Air Transport (see: Conboy / Andradé, Spies and commandos, pp. 33-44), that is of Bureau 45B – Northern Service (Biet Kích So Bac; see: http://ngothelinhtripod.com/Tribute.htm or http://ngothelinht.web1000com/Tribute.htm#4). VIAT or Biet Kích So Bac was a front used between 1961 and 1964 by the Government of South Vietnam and by the CIA for a secret unit whose task was to drop agents into enemy territory outside South Vietnam that is especially into North Vietnam and to support them. The secret unit was commanded by Colonel Ngo The Linh and William Colby. At the end of the Vietnam War, Air America’s C-46s shared the destiny of other Air America aircraft: Many of them were scrapped, but at least N67984 was given the honor of being operated by ICCS Air Services.

Statistics according to official Air America documents:
1962: 3 surplus Chinese AF C-46As were offered to AAM in October 62 (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 9 October 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1)
1963: - Total in February 63: 8 + 6L (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 26 February 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2)
- USAID-Laos wants to buy 2 C-46s from AAM for use in Laos, to be maintained and operated by AAM (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 22 January 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2) B-914 + B-918 were sold to them in March 63
- wanted to sell up to 6 C-46s to the customers in February 63, but to continue to operate and maintain them (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 26 February 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2) > 4 C-46s were to be sold in July 63, i.e. B-846, B-854, B-858 and B-910, but only B-846 and B-854 were actually sold (Minutes ExCom-AAM of 14 May 63, in: UTD/CIA/B3F4; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 10 September 63, in:
UTD/CIA/B7F2)  
- 1 C-46F (to become B-) was bought in July 63 (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 25 June 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2) (= B-920)  
- **Total of C-46s in July 63 after the loss of B-148:** 5 + 5L (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 23 July 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2)  
- 6 more C-46Ds were to be bought in 63 (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 13 August 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2)  

1964:  
1 C-46F was added in August 64 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 11 August 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3) (= N67984)  

1965:  
2 fuselages were bought in March 65 at $14,000 each to be rebuilt (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 25 February 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4); this is not the properties of former VIAT (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 6 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4), but former Chinese National Air Force C-46s “001” and “006”, for the acquisition and repair of which $ 80,000 were approved in June 65; bought in June 65 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 8 June 65 and 13 July 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4); these were probably the two fuselages that had remained at the Air America ramp at Udorn and were given to the Royal Thai Army at Udorn and to the Royal Thai Border Police at Udorn for training purposes in 1973 and which were airlifted to their new homes by Air America CH-47C “016” in 73 (photo in: Air America Log, vol. VII, 1973).  

1966:  
purchase of + 1 C-46 approved (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 26 January 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1)  

1966:  
Inventory of 1 February 66 (in: UTD/Herd/B2): 10 under B-registry and 5 under N-registry with 2 more for contract 1092 planned  

1967:  
the purchase of 2 more C-46s was approved in January 67 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 24 January 67, in: UTD/CIA/B8F2); in late 1967, 6 + 1 XW-regd. (= XW-PFL) C-46s were to be assigned to contract AID-439-342  

1972:  
Air America inventories of 31 March 72 > 30 November 72 (UTD/CIA/B1F10): 9 + 5L > 9 + 2L  

---  

Letter dated 16 September 60, sent by Robert E. Rousselot, Vice-President Operations, to George Doole, Managing Director, and showing the use of Air America’s C-46s  
(UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4)
The individual aircraft histories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>registration /serial</th>
<th>c/n (msn)</th>
<th>date acquired</th>
<th>origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) C-46s owned by Air America Inc. or Air Asia CoLtd:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Service history:** owned by Air Asia CoLtd; plush aircraft being assigned to the Booklift contract out of Tachikawa in September 1960 (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)

**Fate:** transferred to the Civil Aeronautics Administration of Taiwan in December 1960 as B-156 as a replacement for the CAA’s B-130, which had crashed on 26 November 60 while in service with Air America.
C-46D XW-PEJ over Laos in 1970

(Air America Log, vol. IV, no. 6, 1970, p. 7)

Curtiss C-46D B-846 22215 (31 Mar. 59) B-846 of CAT Inc since June 51; previously USAF 44-78392, then “392”, then XT-T504, then XT-802, then N8406C, then XT-846

Service history: owned by Air Asia CoLtd; a photo showing B-846 with Air America titles can be found in the photo collection at http://geta-o.maxs.jp/CIVIL/US/ETC/b-846(air%america)c-46-118.jpg; plush aircraft being assigned to the Booklift contract out of Tachikawa in September 1960 (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); still assigned to the Booklift contract in March 63 (Memorandum no. CFO-63-127-A/6 dated 3 April 63, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4); de-registration of B-846 was requested by Air Asia on 1 April 63 for sale to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama; a conditional Sales Contract to sell C-46s c/n 22215 and c/n 33372 was stipulated on 25 April 63 and accepted by Los Hermanos on 30 April 63 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4).

Fate: sold on 1 May 63 to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 9 April 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2; Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); on 18 May 63, the interests of Los Hermanos were transferred to TASA (Turismo Aéreo SA), Panama, with concurrence of Air Asia (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); probably the aircraft had been intended to participate in some sort of harassment against Cuba or some sort of training of anti-Castro Cubans that took place in 1963 (see Prados, Presidents’ secret wars, pp.215/6), but the aircraft did not leave Tainan; still at Tainan on 15 July 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 15 July 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); sold in July
63 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 27 August 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2); on 23 August 63, it was registered as HP-315P (Cable of August 63, DGAC Panama to CAA, Taiwan, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel 4), and on 29 August 63, delivery began to India (Petition no. A-52-12001, sent by Air Asia to the CAA, Taiwan, on 28 August 63, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); regd. to the Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, as VT-DRH on 5 October 63; operated by the ARC or Aviation Research Center, Charbatia Air Base (“Oak Tree”), India, on clandestine supply missions (see Conboy / Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, pp. 188-95); cancelled on 23 September 64 (Letter dated 11 September 2000 sent by Charan Dass, Office of the Director General of Civil Aviation, India, to the author).

B-924 22215 3 Sept. 64 Govt. of India VT-DRH

**Service history:** acquired by Air Asia in “53/8”, that is in August 64 according to Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 66 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); officially regd. on 3 September 64 (e-mail sent by the Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to Martin Best on 18 October 2012, kindly forwarded to the author by Martin Best); regd. to Air Asia Co Ltd as B-924 on 8 September 64 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); current on 1 November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); used out of Vientiane on USAID contract AID-439-342 at least 20 September 64 to 18 December 64, replacing N1383N which was still at Tainan (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); based at Vientiane in February 65 (Aircraft manning VTE as of 1 February 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F1); still in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and in May 66, called thru 30 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 5 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); a rice bag struck the stabilizer during an air drop over Laos on 16 November 64 (Aircraft accidents 1964, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; when a fully armed RLAF T-28 exploded on the ramp of Vientiane airport on 24 January 65, several more bombs cooked off, and flying metal also caused damage to a number of Air America aircraft parked nearby; D. Fisher, whose statement is part of the report sent by Dave Hickler to the President of Air America, notes that “924 […] apparently escaped unscathed while sitting on the South ramp” (Report “Blow up”, that is document no. GML-65-036H sent by Dave Hickler to Air America’s President on 28 January 1965; copy in the possession of Joe Hazen who kindly faxed it to the author on 9 May 2005); ferried back Tainan-Hong Kong-Danang-Vientiane on 13 June 65 (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 13 June 65, copy kindly supplied by Joe Hazen); photos in UTD/Hickler/B28+B32; transferred from Vientiane to Saigon and assigned to contract AID/VN-23 on 15 June 66, still in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); a photo taken at Danang (V-03) in September 66 by Tom Hansen can be seen in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 22; on 26 February 67, the left engine of B-924 caught fire upon landing at Saigon (V-01), but was extinguished (XOXO of 26 Feb. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16).  

**Fate:** sold to Air America on 28 November 68 and reregd as XW-PEJ; the registration B-924 was cancelled on 5 December 68 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4)

XW-PEJ 22215 Dec. 68 B-924, reregd.

**Service history:** bought by Air America from Air Asia on 28 November 68, and re-registered as XW-PEJ in early December 68 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); photo in Davis, Across the Mekong, p. 24; assigned to contract
AID-439-342 at least 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-15 July 71, but released from the contract on 15 July 71 for storage at Tainan (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); on 16 July 69, a pallet of four rice bags got away from an Air Freight Dispatcher on XW-PEJ near Houei Sang (LS-206), Laos, and landed in a Lao village killing one indigenous person on the ground and breaking the leg of another (XOXO of 16 July 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F9; Minutes ExCom-AAM/AAACL of 22 July 69, in: UTD/CIA/B8F3); in the Air America documentary; rice dropper; current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); photos in UTD/Anthony/F9 and Air America Log, vol. IV, no. 6, 1970, p. 7; put into inactive storage at Tainan without reg. on 20 July 71; still there on 1 December 73 (F.O.C.s of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, 1 November 73, and 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C; Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4).

**Fate:** broken up at Tainan on 8 February 74 and scrapped (F.O.C. of 1 April 74 and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C; Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4; Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6).
Curtiss C-46A B-848 427 24 Oct. 60 CAT B-848; previously USAF 43-47356, then CNAC XT-T41, XT-138, then N8372C, XT-848

**Service history:** acquired by CAT CoLtd in March 55 according to CAT CoLtd’s Statement of Property of 31 March 66 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); leased from CAT CoLtd as B-848 on 24 October 60; subleased to Air Asia on 24 October 60 (Letter by A. Hiatt dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1); plush aircraft being assigned to the Booklift contract out of Tachikawa in September 1960 (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)

**Fate:** rereg'd. B-910 in November 60

**Service history:** officially rereg'd. on 1 November 1960 (e-mail dated 17 January 2011, kindly sent to the author by Yin Chen-Pong, Director General, CAA, Republic of China); owned by CATCL; subleased to Air Asia since Nov. 60 (Letter by A. Hiatt dated 11 November 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1); on 7, 17, and 18 December 61, Ed Eckholdt operated B-910 out of Vientiane, on 18 December dropping rice and chutes to troops near Paksane (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); suffered from unfriendly action over Laos on 18 March 62 (Aircraft accidents 1962, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; struck by an improperly controlled forklift at Bangkok, Thailand, on 4 August 62 (Aircraft accidents 1962, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; used out of Bangkok under contract no. AID-493-8 at least from July to 11 September 63, when it returned to Vientiane (AAM Aircraft Availability of 4 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); used out of Vientiane on USAID contract AID-439-342 at least between 7 October 62 and 1 October 64 (Availabilty list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); in March 63, it was assigned to contract 493-8 out of Bangkok (Memorandum no. CFO-63-127-A/6 dated 3 April 63, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4); was to be sold to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama in April 63 (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 9 April 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2); not taken up; still in use with Air America in May 63: On 8 May 63, improperly packed
supplies hit the stabilizer during an airdrop over Laos (Aircraft accidents 1963, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; owned by CAT in September 63 (Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); made a miscalculated rice drop over Laos on 29 January 64 (Aircraft accidents 1964, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); still assigned to contract AID-439-342 in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; Operations Circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4), in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); transferred to Saigon base on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignment for January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); had an incident in Laos on 5 January 65, because the loading crew had incorrectly tied down the cargo (List “Aircraft accidents/Incidents 1965”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); based at Vientiane in February 65 (Aircraft manning VTE as of 1 February 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F1); in use out of Vientiane at least between 10 November 65 and 24 December 65 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B12F1; Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); photos taken at Vientiane in the mid-sixties in UTD/Hickler/B29; assigned to contract AID-430-1092 for use out of Saigon in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and in May 66, called thru 8 June 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); assigned to contract AID/VN-41 at least 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); on 10 January 67, the engine of B-910 was damaged at Loc Ninh (V-31); repaired (XOXO of 10 Jan. 67 in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); in use out of Saigon at least between 7 January 69 and 28 August 71 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); on 12 June 69, in a fourteen knot crosswind, the wing tip of B-910 contacted a tree, while landing at Tuy Hoa (V-19), South Vietnam; there were no injuries and the damage was minor, so that the aircraft was repaired and returned to service (XOXO of 12 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F9); Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 24 June 69, in: UTD/CIA/B8F3); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); a photo taken at Saigon on 18 May 70 can be found in: UTD/Misc.Mat./B4F4; seen at Hong Kong in the summer of 1971 (photo in: Aviation Letter, no. 64, p. 16); on 23 November 70, B-910 made an emergency landing at Nha Trang (V-07) due to hydraulic problems; the aircraft had been en route from Saigon to Danang and was later repaired (XOXO of 23 Nov. 70, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F10); in use out of Saigon at least between 20 April 71 and 24 July 71 (Saigon daily flight schedules, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1); used as a spare aircraft out of Saigon 1-31 July 71; put into inactive storage at Tainan on 22 January 72; still there on 1 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, 1 November 73, 1 December 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B).

Fate: in January 74, the cost of restoration of this aircraft far exceeded the current market value (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); officially cancelled on 16 October 1974 (e-mail dated 17 January 2011, kindly sent to the author by Yin Chen-Pong, Director General, CAA, Republic of China); sold for scrap at Tainan on 13 November 74 (Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6).
Curtiss C-46F  B-850  22451  (31 Mar. 59)  CAT B-850; previously USAF 44-78628, then, CNAC XT-T15, XT-132, then N8369C, XT-850

Service history: leased from Air Asia; offered to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama, a CIA front (Letter dated 12 August 1960, written by Air Asia to Los Hermanos, preserved at UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); equipped with a large “Cadillac door” for drops; arrived at Retalhuleu, Guatemala (“Rayo Base”), in September 60 (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); B-850 departed Tainan on 3 September 60 and arrived at Oakland on 6 September 60; the point of hand-over was San Antonio (Memorandum dated 7 October 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4); at that time, the paperwork for 3 of the C-46s had not yet been ready for transaction (Memorandum dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4); so, B-850 was officially deregistered only on 19 October 60 (Memorandum dated 15 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4), but the aircraft was deleted from all Company reports already on 7 September 60 (Memorandum dated 21 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); used to fly airdrops of arms and ammunition to Cuban guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains near Trinidad in central Cuba from late September 60 to March 61, as a preparation to the invasion of the Bay of Pigs on 17-20 April 61. During this time, i.e. from 20 October 60 to 9 March 61, it was officially regd. to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez, Panama, as HP-316, a CIA front, but was painted as “857”; a photo can be found in Hagedorn, Central American and Caribbean air forces, p. 146, where the identity is given on p. 148; at an unknown date, probably in November 60, this aircraft was damaged by ground fire over Cuba and made an emergency landing in Guatemala, where its left main landing gear collapsed and a wing was wrapped around a utility pole; but it was later repaired (Hagedorn, Central American and Caribbean air forces, p. 148); so this aircraft probably did not take part in the Bay of Pigs operations itself, as it was under repair.

Fate: said to have been sold to Southern Air Transport, Miami, as N74811 on 14 September 61, but probably already in March 61, when its alias HP-316 was cancelled; regd. on 11 October 61; sold to Intermountain Aviation, Marana, AZ, on 11 July 69; sold to Rosenbalm Aviation, Medford, OR, on 24 November 73; to International Airlines Academy, Ypsilanti, MI, on 2 September 75; to Trans Continental Airlines, Detroit, MI, on 16 October 75; to F. A. Conner on 11 August 78; to Cryderman Air Service / Century Airlines on 11 August 78; sold to Air-Tram Leasing Inc, Bossier City, LA, on 31 August 84; regd. on 25 October 84; sold to American Airfreight Company Inc in July 85; rereg. N777AF in November 85; sold to Military Aircraft Restoration, Anaheim, CA, on 29 March 90; sold to Erickson Aircrane Co on 6 April 95; regd. on 13 July 95; rereg. N18AC in October 95; sold to Erickson Air Crane Co LLC, Central Point, OR, on 26 February 97; regd. on 7 March 97; rereg. N23AC on 15 October 97; rereg. to Tatonduk Outfitters Ltd, Fairbanks, AK, on 12 September 2002; current with them in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/).
Curtiss C-46D B-854 33372 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-854; previously USAF 44-77976, then NC51829, then CNAC XT-156, then N8379C, then XT-854

**Service history:** arrived at Tachikawa in a plushed configuration on 30 June 59 (Air America Inc., Tachikawa, monthly report for June 1959, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F9); plush aircraft being assigned to the Booklift contract out of Tachikawa in September 1960 (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); a photo is preserved in: UTD/Abadie/B2F2, taken in 1961; owned by Air Asia CoLtd; flown by Ed Eckholdt out of Vientiane on 27 December 61 and 2 January 62, making drops in the Paksane area, and on 12 January 62 on the Bangkok-Savannakhet-Vientiane run (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); in March 63, B-854 was used under USAID contract AID-439-342 out of Vientiane (Memorandum no. CFO-63-127-A/6 dated 3 April 63, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4); de-registration of B-854 was requested by Air Asia on 1 April 63 for sale to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama; a conditional Sales Contract to sell C-46s c/n 22215 and c/n 33372 was stipulated on 25 April 63 and accepted by Los Hermanos on 30 April 63 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4).

**Fate:** sold on to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama, on 1 May 63 (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 9 April 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2; Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); on 18 May 63, the interests of Los Hermanos were transferred to TASA (Turismo Aéreo SA), Panama, with concurrence of Air Asia (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); probably the aircraft had been intended to participate in some sort of harassment against Cuba or some sort of training of anti-Castro Cubans that took place in 1963 (see Prados, *Presidents' secret wars*, pp.215/6); but the aircraft did not leave Tainan; still at Tainan on 15 July 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 15 July 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); sold in July 63 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 27 August 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2); on 23 August 63, it was registered as HP-314P (Cable of August 63, DGAC Panama to CAA, Taiwan, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4), and on 29 August 63, delivery began to India (Petition no. A-52-12001, sent by Air Asia to the CAA, Taiwan, on 28 August 63, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); the aircraft was regd. to the Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, as VT-DRI on 5 October 63; operated by the ARC or *Aviation Research Center*, Charbatia Air Base (“Oak Tree”), India, on clandestine supply missions (see Conboy / Morrison, *The CIA’s secret war in Tibet*, pp. 188-95); cancelled on 23 September 64 (Letter of 11 September 2000, sent by the Charan Dass, Office of the Director General of Civil Aviation, India, to the author); returned to Air Asia CoLtd in September 64; was to be assigned to Saigon in August 64 (Planned pilot manning for August 64, in: UTD/Walker/B8F4).

B-922 33372 20 Aug. 64 Govt. of India VT-DRI

**Service history:** officially regd. to Air Asia Co Ltd as B-922 on 20 August 64 (e-mail sent by the Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to Martin Best on 18 October 2012, kindly forwarded to the author by Martin Best); believed to be the C-46 “22 Bravo” mentioned by Robbins, *Air America*, p. 163; on 22 December 64, Air Asia requested the Chinese CAA to transfer the title of this aircraft from Air Asia to Air America and then to CATCL, as it was to be a replacement for the ill-fated C-46 B-908 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); after some more paper work,
C-46 B-922 was sold by Air Asia to Air America and on to CATCL, and leased back to Air America, all transactions being made on 3 February 65 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4), and the aircraft was re-registered to CATCL as B-926 on 6 February 65.

C-46 B-926 at Saigon in the mid-sixties (with kind permission from Ward S. Reimer)

B-926 33372 6 Feb. 65 Air Asia CoLtd B-922

Service history: regd. to CATCL on 6 February 65 and leased to Air America the same day (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4); officially regd. only on 3 September 65 (e-mail sent by the Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to Martin Best on 18 October 2012, kindly forwarded to the author by Martin Best); based at Saigon in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); assigned to contract AID-430-1092 for use out of Saigon in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herdb/B2); on 8 March 66, the left aileron was damaged by a forklift at Saigon (XOXO of 8 March 66 in: UTD/Hickler/B26 F16); upon landing at Quang Ngai (V-23) on 15 December 65, B-926 damaged the rotor blade of a military UH-34 parked along the runway (XOXO of 15 December 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2); on 19 December 66, the right horizontal trim tab of B-926 was damaged, when the aircraft was towed on the ground at Nha Trang (V-07); repaired (XOXO of 19 Dec. 66 in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); on 29 July 67, B-926 taxied into C-47 “147” on the Air America ramp at Tan Son Nhat (V-01); the left wing tip of B-926 was damaged, but repaired (XOXO of 29 July 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1); on 18 January 68, the rotor wash of Bell 204B N1307X damaged the elevators of B-926, which was parked at Danang (V-03); repaired (XOXO of 18 Jan. 68 in: UTD/Hickler/B26F17); in use out of Saigon at least between
24 October 68 and 5 February 69 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); sold by CATCL to Air America on 30 May 69; reg. B-926 cancelled on 30 June 69 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4).

**Fate:** rereg'd. XW-PGD in May 69

XW-PGD 33372 May 69  B-926 rereg'd.

**Service history:** used as a spare aircraft out of Vientiane 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, *The aircraft of Air America*, p. 20); at Bangkok on 16 December 70; assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-15 July 71, but released from the contract on 15 July 71 for storage at Tainan (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); flown to Tainan and put into inactive storage there on 22 July 71; still there on 1 December 73 (F.O.C.s of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, 1 November 73, and 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C; Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4).

**Fate:** scrapped at Tainan in February 74 (F.O.C.s of 1 April 74 and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C; Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4; Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6).
Service history: had been transferred to CAT Inc as N8380C on 8 July 50 (UTD/CIA/B2F2), rereg'd. B-856 in 52 (?) and transferred to Air Asia in 56 (?); arrived at Tachikawa in a plush configuration on 30 June 59 (Air America Inc., Tachikawa, monthly report for June 1959, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F9); subleased by Air America to Air Asia since 7 September 60 (Letter by A. Hiatt dated 11 November 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1).

Fate: sold to CATCL on 7 September 60 (Bill of sale dated 7 September 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1); plush aircraft being assigned to the daily Domestic flight service on the “Round-the-Island” flight out of out of Tainan in September 1960 (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); rereg'd. B-908 in November 60.

B-908 32950 Sept. 60 B-856 rereg'd.

Service history: acquired by CAT in “44/3”, that is in March 55 according to Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 65 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); plush aircraft being assigned to the Booklift contract out of Tachikawa in September 1960 (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); appeared in Guatemala only once (Hagedorn, Central American and Caribbean air forces, p.148, where a photo can be found on p. 143); photo taken at Kusan, Korea (K-08) in ?? by Robert Mikesh in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 18; operated out of Bangkok into Laos on 29 May 61 (Vientiane Daily Flight Operations Log of 29 May 61, in: UTD/Lewis/B2F6); was being assigned to the Booklift contract in March 63 (Memorandum no. CFO-63-127-A/6 dated 3 April 63, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4); was to be sold in April 63 to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 9 April 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2); instead assigned to the Booklift contract for use out of Tachikawa at least 1 July 63 to 21 September 63 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); sold in July 63 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 27 August 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2); but current in September 63 (Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); assigned to Booklift at least 1 July to 21 September 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 4 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); assigned to contract AF62(562)-656 for use out of Tachikawa on Booklift flights in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; AAM Aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); still in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still used out of Tachikawa for Booklift in May 65 and out of Saigon on 27 October 65 and 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, 27 October 65, and 1 January 66, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4 and B7F8); used as B-858 out of Saigon as a spare aircraft for daily calls in

![Air America C-46 B-858 at Saigon airport in the mid-sixties](with kind permission from Ward S. Reimer)

November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and in May 66
(Aircraft status as of 5 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); assigned to contract AF49(604)-4395 from ? to 26 September 67 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); on 28 May 66, the tail wheel collapsed, when B-858 landed at Saigon (V-01), SVN; there was only minor skin damage, which was quickly repaired (XOXO of 28 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); on 13 January 67, a passenger walked into the prop, when B-858 was at Saigon (V-01), and was taken to hospital (XOXO of 13 Jan. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16).

Fate: regd XW-PFL in November 67


Fate: crashed into a hill near Bouam Long (LS-32), Laos, on 2 June 71, when it was hit by gunfire during a drop mission, killing the first officer, Trikit Thuttanon; the captain, Herbert W. Clark, is missing; the aircraft was destroyed (Accident report, in: UTD/Anthony/F4; Memorial; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3; List “Aircraft destroyed or lost”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; List in: UTD/CIA/B19F1).
C-46F B-912 at Saigon on 15 May 70
(UTD/Misc.Mat./B4F4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curtiss C-46F</th>
<th>B-860</th>
<th>22236</th>
<th>(24 Oct. 60)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAT B-860; previously USAF 44-78413, then “413”, XT-T508, XT-810, then N8410C, XT-860</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Service history**: officially acquired by CAT Co Ltd in March 55 according to CAT Co Ltd’s Statement of Property of 31 March 66 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); on 11 August 60, B-860 piloted by Captain Douglas R. Price, experienced landing difficulties on the Tachikawa runway, when a crosswind caused this aircraft to land on the left of the runway; but there was no apparent damage to the aircraft or the 11 passengers aboard (Air America Inc., Tachikawa, monthly report for August 1960, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F9); so it was operated by Air America at that time; plush aircraft being assigned to the Booklift contract out of Tachikawa in September 1960 (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); leased on 24 October 60 from CAT Co Ltd as B-860; subleased to Air Asia on 24 October 60 (Letter by A. Hiatt dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1; leasing agreements dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1).  

**Fate**: rereg'd. B-912 in November 60  
B-912 22236 Nov. 60 rereg'd. from B-860

**Service history**: officially reg'd. on 1 November 1960 (e-mail dated 17 January 2011, kindly sent to the author by Yin Chen-Pong, Director General, CAA, Republic of China); owned by CAT CL; subleased to Air Asia since November 60 (Letter by A. Hiatt dated 11 November 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1); used by CAT (photo in Airliners, summer 93, p. 15); owned by CAT in Sept. 63 (Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); used on CAT domestic flights in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in May 65 and October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in May 66 (Aircraft status as of 5 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2), and in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); flew Tainan-Taipei on 12 February 66 (Flight crew member monthly
movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); stored at Saigon 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); on 3 November 70, the rotor blast of a CH-53 taking off behind B-912 at the Air America ramp at Danang (V-03) damaged the elevators of B-912; repaired (XOXO of 3 Nov. 70, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F10); in use out of Saigon at least between 20 November 67 and 29 July 71; a photo taken at Saigon on 15 May 70 can be found in: UTD/Misc.Mat./B4F4; another photo taken at Tan Son Nhut by Peter A. Bird can be found at http://www.petester.com/html/AC030.html; assigned to contract AID/VN-100 for use out of Saigon 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); put into inactive storage at Tainan on 26 January 72; still there on 1 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 November 73, 1 December 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C).

**Fate:** in January 74, the cost of restoration of this aircraft far exceeded the current market value (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); officially cancelled on 16 October 1974 (e-mail dated 17 January 2011, kindly sent to the author by Yin Chen-Pong, Director General, CAA, Republic of China); sold for scrap at Tainan on 13 November 74 (Summary of aircraft sales in: UTD/CIA/B40F6).
Curtiss C-46D  B-864  22362  (31 Mar. 59)  CAT B-864; previously USAF 44-78539, then “539”, XT-T516, XT-826, then N8415C, XT-864

**Service history:** leased from CATCL (was leased from CATCL since 17 March 56 to CAT Inc and subleased to Air Asia) and subleased to Air Asia until 7 September 60, when it was sold by CATCL to Air Asia CoLtd and possibly leased to Air America (Bill of sale dated 7 September 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1; Letter by A. Hiatt dated 11 November 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1); offered to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama, a CIA front (Letter dated 12 August 1960, written by Air Asia to Los Hermanos, preserved at UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); equipped with a large “Cadillac door” for drops; arrived at Retalhuleu, Guatemala (“Rayo Base”), in September 60 (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); B-864 departed Tainan on 3 September 60 and arrived at Oakland on 6 September 60; the point of hand-over for all 4 C-46s was San Antonio (Memorandum dated 7 October 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4); at that time, the paperwork for 3 of the C-46s had not yet been ready for transaction (Memorandum dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4); so, B-864 of CATCL was deregistered on 21 September 60, reregistered to Air Asia as B-874 the same day and deregistered on 19 October 60 (Memorandum dated 15 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4), but the aircraft was deleted from all Company reports on 7 September 60 (Memorandum dated 21 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); used to fly airdrops of arms and ammunition to Cuban guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains near Trinidad in central Cuba from late September 60 to March 61, as a preparation to the invasion of the Bay of Pigs on 17-20 April 61. During this time, it was officially regd. to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez, Panama, a CIA front, to whom it was officially sold on 20 October 60, although it was flown as “864” (Seigrist, Memoirs, pp.47/8, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1); returned to Air Asia in 61; reregd. B-916 on 15 May 61.

Certificate of registration of Air Asia C-46 B-916, dated 15 May 1961 (UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4)
B-916 22362 15 May 61 rereg'd. from Bay of Pigs fleet "864" and B-864

**Service history:** flown Bangkok-Vientiane-Bangkok by Ed Eckholdt on 30 October 61 and Vientiane-Bangkok on 3 January 62 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13)

**Fate:** shot down near Xieng Khouang (L-22), Plain of Jars, Laos, and crashed at UG 4035, on 4 February 62, while flying under the provisions of contract 57-08 on a drop mission, killing Herbert S. Strouss (pilot), Howard F. Heinrich (co-pilot), Hsu-Chiu Lee (co-pilot) and 3 Air Freight Dispatchers (Memorial; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3; List “Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Total number of company employees killed in aircraft accidents”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; Aircraft accidents 1962, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; Aircraft destroyed or lost, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2).
Service history: had been fitted with long-range tanks for Operation Repat in October 1953 (Leary, Perilous missions, p. 221); owned by CATCL, leased to CAT Inc (Air America since 31 March 59) and subleased to Asiatic Aeronautical Co Ltd (Air Asia since 1 April 59) since 17 March 56; lease to Air America and sublease to Air Asia terminated on 24 October 60, when it was sold to Air Asia the same day (Letter by A. Hiatt dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1; Bill of sale dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1); offered to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama, a CIA front (Letter dated 12 August 1960, written by Air Asia to Los Hermanos, preserved at UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); had been regd. to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama, as HP-314 on 20 October 60; departed Taipei on 19 September 60 for the USA; equipped with a large “Cadillac door” for drops (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); arrived at Retalhuleu, Guatemala (“Rayo Base”), probably in September 60; B-866 left Tainan on 18 September and arrived at Oakland on 21 September 60; the point of hand-over for all 4 C-46s was San Antonio (Memorandum dated 7 October 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4); at that time, the paperwork for 3 of the C-46s had not yet been ready for transaction (Memorandum dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4); so, B-866 was deregistered only on 3 November 60 (Memorandum dated 15 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4), but the aircraft was deleted from all Company reports on B-866 on 23 September 60 (Memorandum dated 21 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); was to be used to fly airdrops of arms and ammunition to Cuban guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains near Trinidad in central Cuba from late September 60 to March 61, as a preparation to the invasion of the Bay of Pigs operation on 17-20 April 61. During this time, it was officially regd. to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez, Panama, a CIA front, and probably flying unmarked; this was one of the C-46s that crashed (Hagedorn, Central American and Caribbean air forces, p. 148) – probably the one that had a landing accident at Retalhuleu in October 60, when a trainee nearly tore off the transport’s landing gear while attempting to set down at Retalhuleu, so that the aircraft had to be taken out of service for extensive repairs (Leary / LeSchack, Project Coldfeet, p.113);

Fate: B-866 was cancelled by the Taiwan CAA on 3 November 60 (Memorandum dated 15 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4); in March 1961, Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez informed Air Asia that C-46 c/n 22366 (form B-866) had been destroyed by a crash with subsequent fire; as a first reaction, on 4 April 61, Air Asia requested immediate payment of the remaining balance of $ 51,000 for this aircraft (Letter dated 4 April 61, sent by Air Asia’s Amos Hiatt to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); so the aircraft did not take part in the Bay of Pigs operation itself, but it was later repaired; the subsequent history of this C-46 (to Feb. 65) was kindly supplied by Steve Darke from the FAA file: sold to Aviation Sales & Engineering in March 61 (?), possibly unregistered; to Tormac Associates, Fort Lauderdale, FL, as N8417C on 20 Nov. 61; to Gulf Air Inc., Miami, FL, on 16 March 62; to Intermountain Aviation, Phoenix, AZ, on 12 July 62; to Corsair Aircraft Services Co, Miami, FL, on 15 February 65; rereg'd N9279L on 16
February 65; cancelled on 23 February 65 on sale to Liechtenstein; the “owner” may have been “Anstalt Wigmo”, a CIA front registered in Liechtenstein on 21 Sept. 64 to manage Agency operations in the Congo (Hagedorn / Hellström, Foreign invaders, p.150); they had several C-46s including former SE-CFA (c/n 30483, then 9Q-CWN), SE-CFD (c/n 26713, then 9Q-CRP), and SE-CFG (c/n 26710, as scrap); N9279L was seen at Dakar in March 65; probably rereg. as 9Q-C?? in 65; Wigmo continued to operate with cargo aircraft until late 1969, when the Congolese operation was renamed SODEMAC (Hagedorn/Hellström, p.154); our C-46 was sold to the Fuerza Aérea Mexicana as TEC-6051 in 1990; current in Sept. 93; noted in Dec. 93 in the scrap area at Santa Lucia airfield.
Curtiss C-46D B-870 22232 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-870; previously USAF 44-78409, then “409”, XT-T507, XT-808, then N8409C, XT-870

Service history: owned by CATCL, leased to CAT Inc (Air America since 31 March 59) and subleased to Asiatic Aeronautical CoLtd (Air Asia since 1 April 59) since 17 March 56; lease to Air America and sublease to Air Asia terminated on 24 October 60, when it was sold to Air Asia the same day (Letter by A. Hiatt dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1; Bill of sale dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/CIA/B9F1); offered to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez SA, Panama, a CIA front (Letter dated 12 August 1960, written by Air Asia to Los Hermanos, preserved at UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4), and officially sold to them on 22 October 60; departed Taipei on 25 September 60 for the USA (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); B-870 left Tainan on 24 September and arrived at San Antonio on 30 September 60 (Memorandum dated 7 October 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4); at that time, the paperwork for 3 of the C-46s had not yet been ready for transaction (Memorandum dated 24 October 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 4); so, B-870 was deregistered on 3 November 60 (Memorandum dated 15 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4), but the aircraft was deleted from all Company reports on 29 September 60 (Memorandum dated 21 November 60, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); used out of Retalhuleu, Guatemala (“Rayo Base”), to fly airdrops of arms and ammunition to Cuban guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains near Trinidad in central Cuba from late October 60 to March 61, as a preparation to the invasion of the Bay of Pigs on 17-20 April 61; returned to Air Asia in the summer of 1961.


C of R of Air Asia C-46 B-914, dated 15 May 1961, de-registered on 10 April 63 (both in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4)
C-46D B-914 somewhere in Laos in 1961/2
(UTD/Landry/B1F4)

B-914 22232 15 May 61 rereg'd. from Bay of Pigs operation and B-870

Service history: between 14 and 16 August 61, Ed Eckholdt flew B-914 on troop shuttles out of Bangkok; on 15 November 61, Eckholdt flew gas drums in B-914 from Vientiane to Luang Prabang, and on 16 November 61, he ferried B-914 to Tainan (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); on 8 December 61, Eckholdt shuttled gas drums from Vientiane to Luang Prang again and then made drops out of Vientiane (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); participated in the flight Vientiane-Xieng Khouang on 27 November 62, when C-123 N5004X was shot down (Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F1); a photo is preserved in: UTD/Landry/B1F4; photo on the video made by Ed Eckholdt (at 0.49.34 minutes).

Fate: officially cancelled on 10 April 1963 (e-mail dated 17 January 2011, kindly sent to the author by Yin Chen-Pong, Director General, CAA, Republic of China; Letter dated 30 April 63, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, reel 4); sold to USAID-Laos, Vientiane, on 8 March 63 (Minutes ExCom-AACL of 9 April 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2; Minutes ExCom-AAM of 11 June 63, in: UTD/CIA/B3F4; Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); probably was to become RLAF “621”, then became XW-EAA on 29 March 63; identification by letter dated 29 March 1963, sent

Air Asia C-46 B-914, de-registered on 10 April 63. Letter dated 29 March 1963, sent by USAID’s Contracting officer to Air America (both in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4)
by USAID’s Contracting officer to Air America, preserved at UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4; operated by Bird & Sons, Vientiane, and Air America, Vientiane; bore the Erawan; on 22 September 63, Air America Helio B-849 returned from Tainan aboard C-46 XW-EAA after damage repair (AAM Aircraft Availability for 21 September 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8);
sold to the Royal Laotian Government, Vientiane, as XW-PBV on 29 May 64; leased to Bird and Sons, which became Continental Air Services, Vientiane, on 1 Sept. 65, from May 64 to 1 July 69; used by Continental Air Services on 17 December 68 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); however, during that time, it was maintained by Air America including depot level maintenance at Tainan according to contract no. USAID-439-401 (Letter dated 23 March 73 sent to Paul C. Veltie by James A. Cunningham, in: UTD/CIA/B31F4; FY 72 programs, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F6); not flown by Air America on 15 June 69

XW-PBV 22232 1 July 69 RAAF “621” ntu (?); USAID-Laos XW-EAA rereg.; leased from the Royal Lao Government

Service history: not current with Air America on 15 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B), but assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane on 1 July 69 (F.O.C. of 1 July 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); two Lao paratroop trainees struck the stabilizer over Laos on 9 April 70, when they jumped against red light, while the aircraft was climbing; the two Laotians were killed, but there was no damage to the aircraft (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 14 April 70, in: UTD/CIA/B8F4); flown by First Officer James Hitner out of Vientiane (L-08) on 16 April 70 (Airnet Flight Logs, in: UTD/Hitner/B1F2); current with Air America on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); noted as “grant aircraft” in May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C); assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 for use out of Vientiane 1-30 November 73, noted as “grant aircraft”; Hamilton standard props were installed at Tainan between 22 May 73 and 26 May 73 (F.O.C. of 1 November 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); while XW-PBV, piloted by PIC A.D. Wilson and F/O D. R. Whittaker, was over the drop zone near UF 9678, Laos, on 1 November 73, the aircraft encountered severe clear air ambulance, causing the cargo to spill from the pallets; two (V. Soukanyna and B. Kalavong) of the three kickers received minor head injuries and were treated at the Company clinic upon return to Vientiane (XOXO of 1 Nov. 73 in: UTD/Hickler/B25F12); was a rice-drop plane (Robbins, Air America, p. 25).

Fate: given to Royal Air Lao on 1 December 73 (F.O.C. of 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); a photo of the tail of XW-PBV in RAL colors can be seen in: Conboy, War in Laos, back cover, damaged in a storm at Vientiane on 24 March 76; repaired; taken over by Lao Aviation, Vientiane, as RDPL-34040 in 1975 (?); reg. N9265Y reserved for J. D. Melvin Co, Glendale, CA, on 4 September 81; not taken up; candidate for reg. N9265Y again in August 84 (AMCAR 24, p. 25); US reg canx in December 85; Lao reg. canx, as it is now used on a Mil Mi 8 (see photo in Airliners, Fall 1993, p. 17).
Memorandum dated 20 April 61, sent by George Doole to Amos Hiatt
(in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel 4)

Curtiss C-46D N9894Z 32942 31 March 61 ex Southern Air Transport and 44-77546

Service history: bought by Air America’s and Air Asia’s Managing Director George Doole from Southern Air Transport on 31 March 61 (Memorandum dated 20 April 61, sent by Managing Director George Doole to the Treasurer Amos Hiatt (in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4) as a replacement aircraft for use during the Bay of Pigs operation

Fate: offered for sale to Los Hermanos Sebastian and Gómez on 4 April 61 (Letter dated 4 April 61, sent by Air Asia’s Amos Hiatt to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez (in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4) and sold to them; possibly the contact person with Los Hermanos was Jaime Camargo, reportedly, the aircraft was registered as AN-AMG for a few weeks in March/April 61, but officially not taken up (Davis/Martin/Whittle, The Curtiss C-46, p.89); believed to be the C-46 that was destroyed in Nicaragua in the summer of 1961 (Letter dated 4 January 1987 sent by Connie Seigrist to Bill Leary, p.2, preserved at: UTD/Leary/B21F11).
Curtiss C-46D  B-918  33451  1 Nov. 61  HP-314P (Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gomez), canx. 24 October 61; probably “887” in the Bay of Pigs operation; prev. N9895Z (Jaime Camargo) and USAF 44-78055

**Service history:** the identity of this aircraft is given as “1887” in all Air Asia / Air America papers; in two Los Hermanos documents, this C-46 is referred to as “Serial No.44-78055 MSG 1887”; Air Asia evidently thought that “MSG” meant “MSN”, but

The two Los Hermanos documents referring to C-46D “Serial No. 44-78055 MSG 1887”: Bill of Sale to Air Asia dated 1 November 1961 and Letter to Air Asia dated 20 November 61 (both documents preserved in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4)

...it probably stood for the pseudo-Guatemalan military serial painted on the aircraft during the Bay of Pigs operation; B-918 was issued on 9 October 61, just for the ferry flight from Miami to Taiwan (Notification no. AN-2-50-1372 dated 9 October 61 of the CAA, Taiwan, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4); Bill of Sale from Los Hermanos to Air Asia dated 1 November 61 (in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 4); was to leave the United States on or about 12 October 61 (Memorandum by Jerry Fink of 11 October 61, in: UTD/Fink/B2F15); definitely regd. to Air Asia as B-918 on 8 December 61 (Notification no. AN-2-50-1645 dated 8 December 61 of the CAA, Taiwan, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4); leased to Air America from Air Asia; reg. B-918 was cancelled on 10 April 63 (Letter dated 30 April 63, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, reel 4).
CAA-Note of 30 April 63: C-46 B-918 de-registered on 10 April 63 in: UTD/Bisson/B5, reel 4)

Fate: sold to USAID-Laos, Vientiane, on 8 March 63 (Minutes ExCom-AAACL of 9 April 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2; Minutes ExCom-AAM of 11 June 63, in: UTD/CIA/B3F4; Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); probably was to become RLAF “630”, then became XW-EAB on 29 March 63; identification by letter dated 29 March 1963, sent by USAID’s Contracting officer to Air America, preserved at UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4; operated by Bird & Sons, Vientiane, and by Air America, Vientiane; XW-EAB bore the Erawan; photos in the video tape by Ed Eckholdt, taken 1964 over Ritaville Ridge near Vientiane (at 1.01.10 and 1.15.18 minutes); this photo

USAID-Laos C-46 XW-EAB (c/n “1887”, that is 33451), taken by Ed Eckholdt (photo ex no. 1-WL1-28-26-PB412, now at UTD/Leary/B77F2)

is now preserved at UTD/Leary/B77F2 (was no. 1-WL1-28-26-PB412); sold to the Royal Laotian Government, Vientiane, as XW-PBW on 29 May 64; leased to Bird and Sons, which became Continental Air Services, Vientiane, on 1 Sept. 65, from
May 64 to 1 July 69; some damage was received to the rudder and horizontal stabilizer by a thunderstorm on 25 May 68, while XW-PBW was parked at the Air America ramp at Vientiane (L-08); repaired (XOXO of 25 May 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F13); the damage is shown on photos in UTD/Hickler/B29; however, during that time, it was maintained by Air America including depot level maintenance at Tainan according to contract no. USAID-439-401 (Letter dated 23 March 73 sent to Paul C. Velte by James A. Cunningham, in: UTD/CIA/B31F4; FY 72 programs, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F6); not flown by Air America on 15 June 69.

XW-PBW 33451 1 July 69 RLAF “630” ntu (?); USAID-Laos XW-EAB rereg'd.; leased from the Royal Lao Government

Service history: not current with Air America on 15 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B), but assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane on 1 July 69; identity still given as “1887”; (F.O.C. of 1 July 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); flown by First Officer James Hitner out of Vientiane (L-08) on 9 April 70 (Aircraft Flight Logs, in: UTD/Hitner/B1F2); current with Air America on 1 July 70 (Leary, *The aircraft of Air America*, p. 20); at Hong Kong on 22 August 70; assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-31 July 71; converted to a 69 passenger configuration on 19 July 71 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); noted as “grant aircraft” in May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C); assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 for use out of Vientiane 16-30 April 73 and 1-30 November 73, noted as “grant aircraft”; Hamilton standard props were installed at Tainan between 30 June 73 and 6 July 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14, and F.O.C. of 1 November 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); flown in Royal Lao Air Force colors in 73 (photo in UTD/Anthony/F9); slid off the runway (ground loop on touch and go) at Vientiane on 15 May 73 (XOXO of 15 May 73 in: UTD/Hickler/B25F12; photo in UTD/Anthony/F6); was a rice-drop plane (Robbins, *Air America*, p. 25).

Fate: given to Royal Air Lao on 1 December 73 (F.O.C. of 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); crashed 75 miles NNE of Vientiane, Laos, on 15 October 74.
**Service history:** acquired by Air Asia in “54/8”, that is in August 65 according to Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 66 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); officially regd. on 16 August 65 (e-mail sent by the Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to Martin Best on 18 October 2012, kindly forwarded to the author by Martin Best); based at Saigon on 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3); assigned to contract AID-430-1092 for use out of Saigon in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and in May 66, called thru 24 August 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herb/B2); assigned to contract AID/VN-41 at least 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); undershot the runway at Quang Ngai (V-23), SVN, on 5 January 66, damaging the landing gear (XOXO of 5 Jan. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; List “Aircraft accidents/incidents 1966”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); returned to service on 27 January 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 12 January 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); on 21 February 67, B-928 received a minor hole in the fuselage by customer laborers, while parked at Nha Trang (V-07); repaired (XOXO of 21 Feb. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); on 6 July 67, B-928 had an engine fire in the power section at Dong Ha (V-022), but the fire was extinguished (XOXO of 6 July 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1); on 20 December 67, B-928 taxied into C-47 “559” on the Air America ramp at Saigon, damaging the right wing tip; repaired (XOXO of 20 Dec. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F8); a photo taken at Danang (V-03) in March 68 by Robert Mikesh can be found in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 15; swerved to the left when landing at Quang Ngai (V-23), South Vietnam, on 20 March 68, and damaged when it struck a road grader (XOXO of 20 March 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F3); repaired; based at Saigon 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); on 16 December 69, a Land Rover of the World Relief Commission struck B-928, which was parked at Cho Reo (V-27), SVN; repaired (XOXO of 16 Dec. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F9); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); at Hong Kong on 29 December 70 (Aviation Letter 54, May 1971, p.4); in use out of Saigon at least between 12 December 68 and 6 January 72 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); assigned to contract AID/VN-100 for use out of Saigon 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C.s of 1 July 71 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); also based at Nha Trang (V-7), South Vietnam (photo in Air America Log); put into inactive storage at Tainan on 7 March 72; still there on 1 December 73 (F.O.C. of 1 November 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C).

**Fate:** scrapped at Tainan in February 74 (F.O.C.s of 1 April 74 and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C; Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F4; Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6).
Two pictures of C-46D N1383N taken at Vientiane in the sixties
(left: UTD/Anthony/F9 – right: with permission from Dr. Jonathan Pote)

Curtiss C-46D N1383N 33641 10 Oct. 63 Braniff N1383N; previously USAF 44-78245, then XT-?, then N8320C

**Service history:** regd. to Air America on 22 October 63, later revised to 10 October 63 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); transferred to Tainan on 25 October 63, still being worked on in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM Aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; AAM Aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); put into service for all-cargo operations in April 64 (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 28 April 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3); assigned to contract AID-439-342 in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in May 66, called thru 24 August 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2), in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2), 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); was at Tainan in September 64 (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); when a fully armed RLAFT-28 exploded on the ramp of Vientiane airport on 24 January 65, several more bombs cooked off, and flying metal also caused damage to a number of Air America aircraft parked nearby; in his report to the President of Air America, Dave Hickler notes that “83N” was one of the aircraft that were damaged by flying metal (Report “Blow up”, that is document no. GML-65-036H sent by Dave Hickler to Air America’s President on 28 January 1965; copy in the possession of Joe Hazen who kindly faxed it to the author on 9 May 2005); a photo showing N1383N in flood water can be found in the John Anthony collection (no. VA030982), preserved at TTU; still based at Vientiane on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); on 11 May 67, N1383N returned to Vientiane (L-08) due to hydraulic problems; repaired (XOXO of 11 May 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); flew Vientiane-Luang Prabang on 13 December 68 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); based at Vientiane 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); flight plan shown in the Air America documentary; air freight dispatcher T. Homhuan fell out of N1383N near Ban Nam Thao (LS-161), Laos, on 26 March 70, but was rescued by UH-34D H-62 (XOXO of 26 March 70, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F10); at Vientiane 1971-73 (photo in
UTD/ Anthony/F9); N1383N was assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-15 July 71, but released from the contract on 15 July 71 for storage at Tainan (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); to inactive storage at Tainan on 9 August 71 (F.O.C. of 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); was in use out of Saigon as a spare aircraft at least 16-30 April 73, 1 November-31 December 73, and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 15 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14; F.O.C. of 1 November 73, 1 December 73, 1 April 74 and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); while offloading a heavy wheel mounted pump at Battambang (C-09), Cambodia, on 21 July 74, the cargo slipped, injuring F/M Rene Ankle, but there was no damage to the aircraft; the aircraft was flown on the AID-1029 contract for the A40E customer (XOXO of 21 July 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F14; Minutes ExCom-AAVL/AAM of 23 July 74, in: UTD/CIA/B10F1); at Hong Kong in 1975.

**Fate:** was to be delivered from Tainan to the Continental US on 23 May 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2), then was proposed to Air Vietnam, Saigon (Telex dated 29 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2); was at Tainan between 15 June 75 and 30 July 75, until it was sold that day (Air America, owned aircraft as of 30 September 75, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1); but was eventually to be sold to OASIS, Manila, on 18 June 75 (Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); registered as RP-C1461 on 25 July 75; cancellation of registry requested on 4 August 75 (Letter by CS Carter, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4); withdrawn from use and stored in 1980.
Curtiss C-46D    N1386N    22265    1 Oct. 63    Braniff N1386N; previously USAF 44-78442, then Chinese Air Force, then XT-542?, then N8322C

**Service history:** transferred to Tainan on 25 October 63, still being worked on in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM Aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; AAM Aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); used out of Vientiane on USAID contract at least from late April 64, when it was put into service as an all-cargo aircraft (see Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 28 April 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3) to 1 September 64 (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); assigned to contract AID-439-342 in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); based at Udorn in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), still on 22 May 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65 and 22 May 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); assigned to contract AID-439-342 on 22 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 27 October 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F4) and in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still based at Vientiane on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); in May 66, called thru 24 August 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2), and in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herdt/B2); the chute of a sky diver failed to deploy over Laos on 3 September 64 (Aircraft accidents 1964, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); in use out of Vientiane at least between 12 November 65 and 16 November 65 (Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2); at Pakse (L-11), Laos, on 16 December 66 (UTD/Shane Tang [S.C. 5]); photos in UTD/Hickler/B28 + B29, probably taken at Udorn in 67; on 24 March 68, a fast moving thunderstorm of more than 70 knots passed thru Vientiane’s Wattay airport, damaging the engines of C-46 N1386N; repaired (XOXO of 24 March 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16).

**Fate:** crashed 2 miles from Savannakhet (L-39), 170 miles SE of Vientiane, Laos, on 25 November 68, at approximately 1533 hours local time, when an engine failed on take off; one wing separated and burned, and the fuselage inverted and broke into at least two sections; Lester M. Porter, Baltazar Reyes, Pilot in Command Emmons B. Hodgkins Jr., Jon Charles Murray, Chaveng Yuphaphin, and 19 others were killed; was operated for USAID (XOXO of 25 Nov. 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F17; Memorial; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3; Board of Review report, in: UTD/CIA/ B34F3; List “Aircraft destroyed or lost”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; CIA documents nos. c05274867, c05274902, and c05275027, online readable at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/15/c05274867.pdf, http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/15/c05274902.pdf, and http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/15/c05275027.pdf ).
Air America C-46F N67984 taken at Tan Son Nhut in Feb. 1970 by Bob Livingstone
(with kind permission from Bob Livingstone)

Curtiss C-46F N67984 22579 27 Aug. 64

Johnson Flying Service, Missoula, MT, N67984; previously USAF 44-78756, then N67984, then CF-HYU, then N67984

Service history: purchase approved on 11 August 64 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 11 August 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3); regd. to Air America on 27 August 64 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); used by Air America / Scheduled Air Services Ryukyu, Okinawa, from 1 November 64 to July 67 (Minutes ExCom AACL/AAM of 12 November 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3; Aircraft status as of 1 November 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon on 21 November 67, still in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herds/B2); on 26 February 68, N67984 received battle damage, when a rocket hit the center of the Air America ramp at Saigon, where it was parked; repaired (XOXO of 26 Feb. 68 in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); damaged by a thunderstorm on 25 May 68, while parked at Vientiane (L-08); repaired (XOXO of 25 May 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F13); in use out of Saigon at least between 16 August 68 and 1 September 68 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); based at Saigon as a spare aircraft at least 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); regd. in October 69, so possibly B-regd. for a short time (Inventory list made up by R. Dixon Speas Associates Inc and dated 10 and 11 November 1975, p. 9, in: UTD/CIA/B18 F6); a photo taken at Saigon (V-01) in February 70 by Bob Livingstone can be found in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 24; on 11 August 70, a female passenger died of cancer on board of N67984, while the aircraft was en route from Saigon to Danang (X XO of 11 Aug. 70, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F10); assigned to contract AID/VN-100 for use out of Saigon 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); in use out of Saigon at least between 20 April 71 and 24 July 71 (Saigon daily flight schedules, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1); used by ICCS Air Services, Saigon, under contract ICCS-73-008 at least 16-30 April 73, 26-31 December 73, 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 15 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14; F.O.C. of 1 November 73, 1 December 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C; photo in: Air America Log, vol. VII, no.8, 1973, pp.4-5); in use out of Saigon on 31 December 73 (Saigon daily flight schedule of 31 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Dexter/F1).
Fate: was at Tainan between 15 June 75 and 9 September 75; ferried to Roswell NM via Adak, AK (photo in: UTD/Ann Stuart [Sm.Coll.5]) between 9 and 26 September 75; arrived at Roswell on 26 September 75 (Air America, owned aircraft as of 30 September 75, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1); was to be sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington DC, at $ 25,000 according to the Sales Agreement of 13 November 75 (Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington, DC, on 2 February 76 (Properties list dated 17 February 76, in: UTD/CIA/B18F9); de-registration requested on 6 February 76 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 6 February 76, in: UTD/CIA/B16F9); sold to Lease Co General Inc, Miami, in 1976; sold to LANICA, Managua, as AN-BRG in 1976; damaged while taxiing at Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, on 22 January 77; repaired; transferred to Aeronica, Managua, as YN-BRG in May 81; withdrawn from use and stored in 87; still registered to Lease Co General Inc, Miami, FL, as N67984 in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/).
Scheduled Air Services Ryukyu C-46F N67985 on Okinawa in May 67
(UTD/Tolton, slide 5)

Curtiss C-46F N67985 22538 17 May 63 Keener/ Warner/ Sullivan/ Winslow/ Lane/ Carlson N67985; previously USAF 44-78715, then N1671M, then N67985

Service history: bought at $ 50,000 (Minutes ExCom-AAM of 14 May 63, in: UTD/CIA/B3F4); regd. to Air America on 11 June 63 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); arrived at Tainan from Oakland on 14 July 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability for 15 July 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8).

Fate: sold by Air America to Air Asia Co Ltd on 16 August 63 and rereg'd. as B-920 on 4 October 63 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3)

B-920 22538 16 Aug. 63 N67985 rereg'd.

Service history: leased from Air Asia; used out of Udorn under CEECO contract 59-069 in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; AAM aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); during an air drop over Laos, a pallet struck the empennage on 21 April 64 (Aircraft accidents 1964, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired.

Fate: sold back to Air America on 19 May 64 and rereg'd. as N67985 on 2 June 64 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3).

N67985 22538 19 May 64 B-920, rereg'd on 2 June 64

Service history: regd. in June 64 (Inventory list made up by R. Dixon Speas Associates Inc and dated 10 and 11 November 1975, p. 4, in: UTD/CIA/B18F6); used by Air America / Scheduled Air Services Ryukyu, Okinawa, from 1 July 64 to July 67 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 28 April 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3; Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 1 November 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); undershot the runway at Ishigaki, Ryukyus, on 13 August 65 (List “Aircraft accidents/incidents 1965", in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); at Okinawa in May 67 (UTD/Tolton [Sm. Coll], slide 5); a photo taken at Hong Kong is in UTD/Hickler/B34; assigned to contract AF49(604)-4395 for use out of Saigon on 26 September 67, still in May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); slightly damaged on the ramp of Saigon (V-01) on 6 June 69 (Saigon, Safety report, June 69, = CIA document no. 0000174720); assigned to contract AID/VN-41 at least 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15
June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); in use out of Saigon at least between 15 July 68 and 29 April 69 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); an Army tractor trailer ran into the wing tip in South Vietnam on 6 December 70, causing minor damage to the left wing; repaired and returned to service on 9 December 70 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 8 December 70 in: UTD/CIA/B8F4); in use out of Saigon at least between 20 April 71 and 24 July 71 (Saigon daily flight schedules, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1); assigned to contract AID/VN-100 for use out of Saigon 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); still assigned to contract AID/VN-100 for use out of Saigon 1 November-31 December 73 (F.O.C. of 1 November 73 and 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); assigned to contract AID SA-C-1029 for use out of Saigon 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 April 74 and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); seen at Bangkok on 5 April 73 (Aviation Letter 78, May 73, p.2); at Hong Kong in 1975.

**Fate:** was at Tainan between 15 June 75 and 9 September 75; ferried to Roswell NM via Adak, AK (photo in: UTD/Ann Stuart [Sm.Coll.5]) between 9 and 26 September 75; arrived at Roswell on 26 September 75 (Air America, owned aircraft as of 30 September 75, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1); was to be sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington DC, at $25,000 according to the Sales Agreement of 13 November 75 (Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington, DC, on 2 February 76 (Properties list dated 17 February 76, in: UTD/CIA/B18F9); deregistration requested on 6 February 76 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 6 February 76 in: UTD/CIA/B16F9); seized by the Taylor County (FL) Sheriff at Perry Filed, FL, in June 1977, after having flown in marijuana (e-mail dated 15 November 2004 sent by Mark Sublette to Dr. Erik Carlson, who forwarded it to the author); sold to A.D. Mallard, Shelley, ID, on 3 February 78; sold to Omni Transport, Fort Lauderdale, on 16 May 78; left Miami on 18 April 79 to the Fuerza Aérea Colombiana; serial as FAC 931; leased to DAINCO Colombia / Programa Coinco, as HK-3079X in 1984; sold to Trans Oriente Colombia, Villavicencio, in March 94; sold to DAINCO Colombia / Programa Coinco, as HK-3079G in July 94; crashed into a hillside near Villavicencio, Colombia, on 9 May 95; US reg canx on 7 November 97 as scrapped.
Curtiss C-46D N9458Z 32985 10 Nov. 65 Southern Air Transport
N9458Z; previously USAF 44-78589, then N9458Z

**Service history:** regd. to Air America on 24 November 65 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); assigned to Saigon in November 65, but transferred to Vientiane on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignment for January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); flew Vientiane-Bangkok on 14 April 66 and Bangkok-Vientiane on 15 April 66 (Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); flew Vientiane-Bangkok on 3 May 66 and Bangkok-Vientiane on 18 May 66 (Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); assigned to contract AID-439-342 in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), in May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2), in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2), 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); N9458Z was assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-15 July 71, but released from the contract on 15 July 71 for storage at Tainan (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); to inactive storage at Tainan on 31 July 71 (F.O.C. of 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); a photo taken at Danang (V-03) in March 68 by Robert Mikesh can be found in: Love, *Wings of Air America*, p. 19; at Bangkok on 25 March 70 (*Aviation Letter* 44, July 70, p.2); had a ground accident at Luang Prabang (L-54) on 19 April 71, when damaged by flying fragments of rotor blade parts (XOXO of 19 April 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F11; Accident report, in: UTD/Anthony/F3; photo in UTD/Anthony/F9); repaired; photos in UTD/Shane Tang [Sm. Coll. 5] and *Air America Log*; was in use out of Saigon as a spare aircraft at least 16-30 April 73, 1 November-31 December 73, and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 15 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14; F.O.C.s of 1 November 73, 1 December 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); based at Saigon in March 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75 in: UTD/CIA/B18F2); at Hong Kong in 1975.

**Fate:** departure from Saigon to the Continental US was scheduled for 15 June 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2), but probably escaped on 29 April 75; was at Tainan between 15 June 75 and 28 July 75, until it was sold that day (Air America, owned aircraft as of 30 September 75, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1); was to be sold to OASIS, Manila, on 18 June 75 (Summary of aircraft sales in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); registered as RP-C1462 on 25 July 75; photo in *Air-Britain Digest*, Sept./Oct. 78, p. 117; cancellation of US registry requested on 4 August 75 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4); withdrawn from use at Manila in February 81.
II) C-46s leased to Air America from the Civil Aeronautics Administration of the Republic of China, Taipei:

CAT C-46F B-130 taken in the fifties
(UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29)

Air America C-46F B-130
at Tachikawa in March 60
taken by Mel Lawrence
(with kind permission from
Mel Lawrence /Airliners.net)

Air America C-46F B-130
after its crash in the Plain of Jars
on 26 November 60
(UTD/Kirkpatrick/B30)

Curtiss C-46F B-130 22379 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-130; previously
USAF 44-78556, then
XT-30, then N8388C

Service history: leased from the Taiwan CAA; a photo of B-130 taken by Mel Lawrence at Tachikawa Air Base, Japan, in March 1960 can be found in the Air America.net collection.

Fate: made an emergency landing in the Plain of Jars, Laos, caused by elevator control loss, and crashed on 26 November 60, when flying under contract 57-060; the pilot (J. R. Dexheimer) was seriously injured, the copilot (S. L. [“Eddie”] Tong) and the radio operator (K. S. Wong) were killed (Memorial; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3; List “Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Total number of company employees killed in aircraft accidents”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Operational casualties in SEA”, in: UTD/CIA/B29F1; Aircraft accidents 1960, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; List “Aircraft destroyed or lost”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); a photo of the crash site can be found in UTD/Kirkpatrick/B30.

Curtiss C-46F B-136 22465 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-136; previously
USAF 44-78642, then
XT-36, then N8390C

Service history: had been fitted with long-range tanks for Operation Repat in October
1953 (Leary, *Perilous missions*, p. 222); leased from the Taiwan CAA; flown out of “Korat” (which possibly stands for the secret base of Takhli) by Air America pilot Tom Jenny on 28 and 29 April 61 (log book of Tom Jenny, who kindly sent photocopies of those pages to the author on 22 October 2004), possibly on secret support to General Phoumi Nosavan and Major Vang Pao.

**Fate:** destroyed at Pha Khao (LS-14), Laos, near Vientiane, on 13 August 61, while dropping supplies according to the provisions of contract no. 57-060, when the wing struck on mountain ridge, killing Norwood N. Forte (pilot), Roger J. Sarno (co-pilot), David W. Bevan (kicker), Darrel A. Eubanks (kicker), John S. Lewis (kicker) and 1 passenger; the aircraft had unexplainably executed a sharp turn, so that the wing struck on a mountain ridge (Memorial; List “Deceased employees”, in: UTD/Leary/B34F1; List “Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Total number of company employees killed in aircraft accidents”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Operational casualties in SEA” in: UTD/CIA/B29F1; Aircraft accidents 1961, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; List “Aircraft destroyed or lost”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2).

---

Air America C-46F “138” in Laos in 1963 or 1964
(Photography no. 1-DH54-6-PB37 in: UTD/Hickler)

**Curtiss C-46F**

| B-138 | 22500 | (31 Mar. 59) | CAT B-138; previously USAF 44-78677, then XT-38, then N8391C |

**Service history:** flown by Air America-pilot Tom Jenny on the Bangkok-“Korat” (which possibly stands for the secret base of Takhli)-Vientiane-“Korat”-Bangkok run on 28 March 61 and “Korat”-Udorn on 10 April 61 (log book of Tom Jenny, who kindly sent photocopies of those pages to the author on 22 October 2004), possibly on secret support to General Phoumi Nosavan and Major Vang Pao; on 13 August 61, Ed Eckholdt flew C-46 B-138 several times between Vientiane and Luang Prabang, before para-dropping gas drums on flights out of Vientiane, and on 23 and 24 October 61, he flew B-138 on rice drop missions out of Vientiane; flights Bangkok-Udorn-
Bangkok and Bangkok-Vientiane-Bangkok between 9 and 14 November 61 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); leased from the Taiwan CAA; seen at Vientiane in 63; assigned to contract no. 59-069 for use out of Udorn at least 1 July to 10 September 64, when it was transferred to contract no. AID-439-342 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 4 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); assigned to contract AID-493-8 for use out of Bangkok in February 64, where it had replaced Beech Ten-Two N7950C on 24 January 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004); based at Bangkok in April 64, unassigned (AAM Aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); assigned to CEECO contract 59-069 in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); used out of Vientiane on USAID contract AID-439-342 at least 1 September 64 to 1 October 64, replacing N1386N (Availability list, in: UTD/Walker/B8F8); based at Vientiane in February 65 (Aircraft manning VTE as of 1 February 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F1); based at Vientiane in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); still in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); ferried Vientiane-Danang-Hong Kong-Tainan on 13 June 65 (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 13 June 65, copy kindly supplied by Joe Hazen); used out of Vientiane on 27 December 65 and on 25 June 66 (Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); assigned to contract AID-430-1092 for use out of Saigon in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and in May 66, called thru 8 May 66 on loan from contract AID-439-342 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); spare aircraft at Saigon in May 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignment as of 1 June 66, formerly in: UTD/Leary/Ser.I/B3F4, now B32F5?); in service out of Vientiane in October 66 (Flight Crew Manning of Oct.66, in: UTD/Leary/B56F1); on 22 July 67, Caribou “430” taxied into B-138, which was parked at Vientiane (L-08), damaging a wing tip; repaired (XOXO of 22 July 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1); used as a spare aircraft at Saigon from 13 November 67 to 14 April 68; assigned to contract AF(604)-4395 for use out of Saigon on 14 April 68, still in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); in use out of Saigon at least between 27 July 68 and 9 June 69 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); assigned to contract AID/VN-41 at least 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); current on 1 July 70 (Leary. The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); B-138 was in inactive storage at Tainan 1-31 July 71; not current on 1 November 73 (F.O.C.s of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, and 1 November 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C).

**Fate:** returned to the CAA of Taiwan in 1972 (Memorandum of 29 September 71, p. 4, in: UTD/CIA/B19F8); cancelled from the Civil aircraft register of Taiwan on 3 October 72 and scrapped (e-mail dated 8 April 2003, kindly sent by Mr. Chang Kuo-Cheng, Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to the author).

**Curtiss C-46F**

| B-146 | 22461 | (31 Mar. 59) | CAT B-146; previously USAF 44-78638, then XT-46, then N8401C |

**Service history:** leased from the Taiwan CAA; between 20 and 22 October 61, Ed
Eckholdt flew B-146 on rice drop missions out of Vientiane (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); again operated out of Vientiane in December 61 and January 62 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); seen at Vientiane in 63; in the CAT video as “146”; had a taxi accident at Bangkok on 10 March 64 (Aircraft accidents 1964, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane at least 1 July to 11 December 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 4 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); also in February 64 and in April 64, thru 9 June 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; Operations circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4), in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and 8 September 64 to 6 December 64 (Availability list of 1 Oct. 64, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); lost the left cabin emergency exit in flight en route V-13 to V-01 on 24 May 65 (XOXO of 24 May 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2); based at Saigon in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, 27 October 65, and 1 January 66, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4 and B7F8); the left aileron of B-146 was damaged on 24 September 65 while parking at Saigon (XOXO of 24 September 65, in: UTD/Walker/B24F1); assigned to contract AID-430-1092 for use out of Saigon in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); assigned to contract AID/VN-23 for use out of Saigon in?, but used as a spare aircraft at Saigon since 21 November 67, still in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); received battle damage at Nhon Co (V-21), SVN, on 23 March 66; there were no injuries; repaired (XOXO of 23 March 66 in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); photo taken at Danang (V-03) in September 66 by Tom Hansen in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 21; photo taken at Tan Son Nhut (V-01) in September 66 by Terry Love in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 23; in use out of Saigon at least between 13 August 66 and 1 March 70 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); photos in Air America Log, vol. I, no.1, 1967, p. 1, and in: UTD/Hickler/B29 (this one taken at Danang); the left tail surface was damaged while taxiing at Tuy Hoa (V-113), SVN, on 27 July 66 (XOXO of 27 July 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); returned to service on 1 August 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 3 August 66 in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); on 29 September 67, B-146, during taxi from the parking apron to the runway, had to move to side for other aircraft at Ham Tan (V-132), SVN, and so, the left main landing gear broke into a shallow appearing ditch which turned out to be full of soft ground; repaired and returned to Saigon on 30 September 67 (XOXOs of 29 and 30 Sept. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1); based at Saigon as a spare aircraft at least 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); B-146 was in inactive storage at Tainan 1-31 July 71; not current 1 November 73 (F.O.C.s of 1 July 71, 15 July 71 and 1 November 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C).

Fate: returned to the CAA of Taiwan in 1972 (Memorandum of 29 September 71, p. 4, in: UTD/CIA/B19F8); cancelled from the Civil aircraft register of Taiwan on 3 October 72 and scrapped (e-mail dated 8 April 2003, kindly sent by Mr. Chang Kuo-Cheng, Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to the author).
Curtiss C-46F B-148 22510 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-148; previously USAF 44-78687, then XT-48, then N8402C

Service history: had been fitted with long-range tanks for Operation Repat in October 1953 (Leary, Perilous missions, p. 223); leased from the Taiwan CAA; flew Vientiane-Pakse-Seno-Vientiane on 27 and Vientiane-Bangkok on 28 October 61 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); flown by Art Wilson and Ed Eckholdt on rice drop missions out of Vientiane on 13 and 14 December 61 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); seen over Luang Prabang in 1959 (photo in Airliners, summer 93, p. 16), and at Vientiane in 1963; assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane at least in July 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 4 July 63, and 15 July 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8).

Fate: hit a mountain in foggy weather during an airdrop mission near Ban Xieng Lom (LS-69) at Pak Tha, Laos, 200 miles NW of Vientiane, on 17 July 63, killing Gerald I. Prudhomme (pilot), George A. Verdon (co-pilot), Gideon A. Newton (kicker), Aubrey A. Wooten (kicker), Charuk Milindre (kicker) and Narong Tantilohakul (kicker); was flying under the provisions of contract no. AID-439-342; the wreckage was found on 18 July 63 (XOXOs of 17 July 63, in: UTD/Walker/B20F28; Memorial; Minutes ExCom-AACL of 23 July 63 in: UTD/CIA/B7F2; List “Deceased employees”, in: UTD/Leary/B34F1; Log book of A. Rich in: UTD/Rich/B1; List “Operational casualties in SEA” in: UTD/CIA/B29F1; Aircraft accidents 1963, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; List “Aircraft destroyed or lost”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; Board of Review report dated 1 August 63, in: UTD/CIA/B34F1).

Curtiss C-46F B-150 22526 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-150; previously USAF 44-78703, then XT-50, then N8403C

Service history: officially regd. already on 4 June 48 (e-mail sent by the Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to Martin Best on 18 October 2012, kindly forwarded to the author by Martin Best), when the aircraft was still XT-50; had been fitted with long-range tanks for Operation Repat in October 1953 (Leary, Perilous missions, p. 223); leased from the Taiwan CAA; hit a ground obstacle on 13 May 61, while taxiing at Okinawa (Aircraft accidents 1961, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; on 6 December 61, Ed Eckholdt flew B-150 Bangkok-Pakse-Luang Prabang-Vientiane, on 14 January 62 he flew Vientiane-Bangkok; on 15 and 16 January 62, Eckholdt flew B-150 carrying troops on the Bangkok-Kokethiem-Pakse-Bangkok run (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); seen at Vientiane in 63; photo in UTD/Hickler/B28; assigned to contract no. AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane in July and September 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 4 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8).

Fate: shot down on rice dropping mission at Ban Phone-Mouang, Central Laos, on 5 September 63 and destroyed, killing Captain Joseph C. Cheney and F/O Charles G. Herrick; Radio operator Yik Chiu To and kickers Eugene H. De Bruin, Prasit Promsawan, Prasidhi Thanee and P. Indradat were captured; the latter walked out later; was flying under the provisions of contract no. AID-439-342 (XOXOs of 5 to 9 September 63, in: UTD/Walker/B24F3; Memorial; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 10 September 63 and 24 September 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2; List “Deceased employees”, in: UTD/Leary/B34F1; List “Total number of company employees killed in aircraft accidents”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Operational casualties in SEA”, in: UTD/CIA/B29F1; Aircraft accidents 1963, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; List “Company...”
operated aircraft lost or destroyed”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Aircraft destroyed or lost”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; Board of Review report dated 24 September 63, in: UTD/CIA/B34F1); reg. cancelled on 14 September 63 (e-mail sent by the Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to Martin Best on 18 October 2012, kindly forwarded to the author by Martin Best).

Curtiss C-46F B-154 22370 (31 Mar. 59) CAT B-154; previously USAF 44-78547, then XT-54, then N8405C

Service history: leased from the Taiwan CAA; flown by Air America-pilot Tom Jenny out of Bangkok between 21 March and 1 April 61, mostly on routes to Vientiane via “Korat” (which probably stands for the secret base of Takhli), sometimes also including Udorn; on 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 16 April 61, Tom Jenny flew “B-154” again between “Korat” and Vientiane, Bangkok, and Udorn and on air drops out of “Korat” (log book of Tom Jenny, who kindly sent photocopies of those pages to the author on 22 October 2004), probably on secret support to General Phoumi Nosavan and Major Vang Pao; on 12 August 61, Ed Eckholdt flew B-154 between Vientiane and Luang Prabang (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); material failure resulted in the loss of control upon landing in Laos on 5 July 62 (Aircraft accidents 1962, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; participated in the flight Vientiane-Xiang Khouang on 27 November 62, when C-123 N5004X was shot down (Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F1); assigned to Booklift at least 1 July to 21 September 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability of 4 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); assigned to contract AF62(562)-656 for use out of Tachikawa on Booklift flights in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; AAM aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); still in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still used out of Tachikawa for Booklift in May 65 and out of Taipei on 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); used as a backup aircraft for CAT domestic flights and based at Tainan in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still in May 66, now based at Taipei (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); still in May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); flew Tainan-Taipei on 8 February 66 (Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); in use out of Saigon at least between 15 November 67 and 15 January 69 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); stored at Saigon 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B) and 16-31 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15August 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); in inactive storage at Tainan 1-31 July 71; not current 1 November 73 (F.O.C.s of 1 July 71, 15 July 71 and 1 November 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C).

Fate: returned to the CAA of Taiwan in 1972 (Memorandum of 29 September 71, p. 4, in: UTD/CIA/B19F8); cancelled from the Civil aircraft register of Taiwan on 3 October 72 and scrapped (e-mail dated 8 April 2003, kindly sent by Mr. Chang Kuo-Cheng, Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to the author).
Service history: as B-844 was last reported in 1960, acquired about or after that date, probably in December 60 as replacement for B-130, which had crashed on 26 November 60; official regd. on 16 March 61 (e-mail sent by the Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to Martin Best on 18 October 2012, kindly forwarded to the author by Martin Best), leased from the Taiwan CAA; flown by Air America pilot Tom Jenny from Vientiane to “Korat” (which probably stands for the secret base of Takhli) on 9 April 61, and again Bangkok-Vientiane-Bangkok on 19 April 61 (log book of Tom Jenny, who kindly sent photocopies of those pages to the author on 22 October 2004), possibly on secret support to General Phoumi Nosavan and Major Vang Pao; operated out of Vientiane into Laos on 29 May 61 (Vientiane Daily Flight Operations Log of 29 May 61 in: UTD/Lewis/B2F6); Ed Eckholdt flew B-156 on drop missions out of Vientiane on 16, 17, and 28 December 61 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); on the Aircraft list of June 62 (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane at lease from 30 January 64 to 7 November 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004), possibly on secret support to General Phoumi Nosavan and Major Vang Pao; operated out of Vientiane into Laos on 29 May 61 (Vientiane Daily Flight Operations Log of 29 May 61 in: UTD/Lewis/B2F6); Ed Eckholdt flew B-156 on drop missions out of Vientiane on 16, 17, and 28 December 61 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); on the Aircraft list of June 62 (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane at lease from 30 January 64 to 7 November 64 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004); Operations circular of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4; Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Aircraft availability list of 1 Oct. 64, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); photo taken at Vientiane in 1963 on the video made by Ed Eckholdt (at 1.02.07 minutes); when a fully armed RLAF T-28 exploded on the ramp of Vientiane airport on 24 January 65, several more bombs cooked off, and flying metal also caused damage to a number of Air America aircraft parked nearby; in his report to the President of Air America, Dave Hickler notes: “A number of our people performed well under this crisis. […] Also, during and after the bomb blasts, Captain Walker taxied another aircraft nearby and removed it from the area. He got it as far as he could before a tire blew out from a flying piece of metal”; according to the statement of D. Fisher that is part of that report, that aircraft was C-46 “156”: “Upon arriving, I observed 156 starting up; as the aircraft moved up the taxi strip the left tire blew; the pilot taxied the aircraft onto the
terminal ramp” (Report “Blow up”, that is document no. GML-65-036H sent by Dave Hickler to Air America’s President on 28 January 1965; copy in the possession of Joe Hazen who kindly faxed it to the author on 9 May 2005); photos in UTD/Hickler/B29 + B32, probably taken at Vientiane, show the aircraft as “156” only; probably the reason for dropping the “B-” was that China and Laos broke off diplomatic relations in mid-1962 which also affected the registration of AAM aircraft (see Minutes ExCom-AACL of 25 September 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1); on 13 April 65, the wing tip of C-46 B-156 touched a cargo shed at Saigon (XOXO of 13 April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2); based at Saigon in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, 27 October 65, and 1 January 66, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4 and B7F8); on 2 May 65, B-156 lost the right emergency exit hatch while on descent into V-13 (XOXO of 2 May 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2); on 16 June 65, B-156 collided with a small truck at Vientiane (XOXO of 16 June 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2; assigned to contract AF49(604)-4395 for use out of Saigon in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/ B1F1), in April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and in May 66, called thru 30 June 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/ B1F2); at Saigon on 30 July 66; on 26 October 66, B-156 struck an unlighted power unit in the run up area at Saigon (V-01), SVN, damaging the right horizontal stabilizer and the tail cone (XOXO of 26 Oct. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired.

Fate: B-156 was hit by heavy communist machine gun fire, while carrying 34 VIP passengers, and crash-landed at Tam Ky (V-40), South Vietnam, about 340 miles north of Saigon, on 17 November 66. Several passengers were injured, but none was killed; the aircraft burned, and major components were salvaged (XOXO of 17 Nov. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 22 November 66 in: UTD/CIA/B8F1; List “Aircraft destroyed or lost”, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; a photo of the crash-landed B-156 is in UTD/Hickler/B29/album “Ben-Hur”/green; another photo taken by Ward Reimer is in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 96); the aircraft had been assigned to the Logistical Support Group Contract AF49(604)-4395 (Minutes ExCom- AACL/AAM of 24 January 1967 in: UTD/CIA/B8F2); Air America had to pay $35,000 to the Taiwan CAA for the loss a of this aircraft (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 10 January 67 in: UTD/CIA/B8F2).
III) China Air Lines C-46s operated for Air America:

Two unknown China Air C-46s taken at the Air America ramp at Tan Son Nhut in February and in March 1970 by Bob Livingstone (with kind permission from Bob Livingstone)

Curtiss C-46D  B-1535  22367  Oct. 65?  China Air Lines B-1535; regd. 1 October 65; previously USAF 44-78544, then N13500, then XH-TND, then HI-14, then 5N-AFA, then HP-366, then PJ-CLA

**Service history:** leased from China Air Lines

**Fate:** coded “CA-1” in 66

“CA-1”  22367  Oct. 65?  B-1535 reregded.

**Service history:** identity given in papers referring to the accident of 28 April 66 (in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel 21); leased from China Air Lines and operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3); photo in Propliner, no. 31, p. 36; had a near miss with Air America Beech Ten-Two N137L at Saigon, piloted by Frank Bonansinga, on 20 April 1966 (email dated 2 June 2002, kindly sent by Frank Bonansinga to the author).

**Fate:** On 28 April 66 at 0345Z time, CA-1 experienced over speed prop to 3000 RPM on no.1 engine at 80 knots during take-off from Kontum airport (V-15), South Vietnam. As there was little runway left and US military tents and aircraft on both sides, the pilot retracted the gear and bellied into a field straight ahead. One Vietnamese child was killed, one fatally injured, one seriously injured; one US customer passenger was slightly injured. Aircraft totaled. CAL recovered as much as possible; the aircraft was lifted by crane to determine if there were any bodies under the aircraft, but there weren’t any. Parts were removed and the aircraft was abandoned due to Vietcong activity (XOXO of 28 April 66 in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16).

Curtiss C-46  “CA-1” (no.2)  ?  May 66?  China Air Lines B-?

**Service history:** leased from China Air Lines and operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3); a photo was taken at Danang on 18 December 66 by Stephen Piercey (Letter dated 14 Jan. 2004, sent to the author by Peter J. Marson, who also published it in: Air-Britain Digest, Summer 2002, p. 95); on 15 March 67, CA-1 nosed over, while landing at Tan Son Nhut (V-01), damaging both props; there were no injuries (XOXO of 15 March 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; on 23 June 67, the left hand gear of CA-1 collapsed at Vung Tau (V-05); there were no injuries (XOXO of 23 June 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); repaired; damaged by gunfire one mile southwest of Quang Ngai (V-23), South Vietnam, on 29 April 69, slightly
injuring the pilot and the co-pilot; CA-1 was temporarily repaired at V-23 and ferried back to Saigon with the same crew the same day (XOXO of 29 April 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F18); used on Air America flight from V-03 (Danang) to Saigon (V-01) on 11 May 69 (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6);

**Fate:** probably returned to China Airlines in October 70, as in October 1970, this gray and white CA-1 was replaced by a C-46 in aluminum colors (Saigon monthly base report of October 70, in: UTD/CIA/B42F2).

---

**CA-1 (no.2) at Danang on 18 December 1966**

(Stephen Piercey Collection via Peter J. Marson)

Curtiss C-46A   B-1549   30205   66

China Air Lines B-1549; regd. 12 December 67; identity confirmed (e-mail dated 21 Jan.2003, kindly sent by Mr. Chang Kuocheng, Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to the author) previously 42-96543 and N91368

**Service history:** leased from China Air Lines

**Fate:** coded “CA-1” (no.3) in 66

“CA-1” (no.3) 30205 October 70 B-1549 rereg'd.

**Service history:** had aluminum colors (Saigon monthly base report of October 70, in: UTD/CIA/B42F2); used by Air America on flights from Saigon (V-01) to Danang (V-3), Vung Tau (V-05), Nha Trang (V-07), Dalat/Cam Ly (V-08), Qui Nhon (V-13), Quang Ngai (V-23), Tam Ky (V-40), and Chu Lai (V-194) at least between 28 April 71 and 6 July 71 (Saigon daily flight schedules, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1); suffered from an in-flight fire of the right engine 13 miles northeast of Saigon on 19 May 72, but landed safely at Tan Son Nhut with the landing gear up; the aircraft was towed to the Air America west ramp (XOXO of 19 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2); the e-mail dated 21 Jan.2003, kindly sent by kindly sent by Mr. Chang Kuocheng, Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to the author, gives 20 May 72 as the crash date at Saigon; is was evidently repaired, as the Saigon monthly base reports continue to mention this aluminum CA-1 until September 72; ferried rice from Saigon to Phnom Penh between 11 and 18 September 72; due to lesser capacity needs, CA-1 was cancelled from the list of aircraft operating for Air America Saigon in late September 72 (Saigon monthly base report of September 72 in: UTD/CIA/B41F7).
Fate: probably returned to China Air Lines in late September 72.

Curtiss C-46  “CA-2”  1965?  China Air Lines B-?

**Service history**: the left wing of Air America Caribou N539Y was damaged at Saigon on 26 September 65, when China Airlines C-46 CA-2 was towed too close to the Caribou (XOXO of 26 September 65, in: UTD/Walker/B24F1);

Fate: probably returned to China Airlines and replaced by CA-2 (no.2) in late 1965

Curtiss C-46  “CA-2” (no.2)  33569  Nov. 65  China Air Lines B-1541; regd. 9 November 65; previously USAF 44-78173, then N9077R, then N671B

**Service history**: according to information from the Director General, CAA, Republic of China), C-46 B-1541 was officially regd. on 9 November 65; identity of this CA-2 given in the China Airlines accident report for the 18 February 67 accident (in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel 21); msn kindly supplied by Billy K. C. Chang (Director General, CAA, Republic of China) in his e-mail to the author dated 2 July 2007, leased from China Air Lines and operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3); CA-2 ran off the runway into soft sand at Tuy Hoa (V-113) on 21 September 66; both props were bent; CAL mechanics at the site expected 2 or 3 days for repairs and ferry to Saigon (XOXO of 21 September 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); upon landing at Tan Son Nhut on 18 February 67 after a flight from Vung Tau with 60 passengers on board, CA-2 lost hydraulic fluid so that the brakes malfunctioned and CA-2 ran into USAF C-47 0-49679, which was parked there; the damage to CA-2 was a large hole from the leading edge of the left wing thru to the landing light and so on (XOXO of 18 Feb. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; China Airlines accident report, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21); replaced CA-1 as the basically assigned aircraft in March 67 (Letter dated 11 April 67, sent by Air America to China Airlines, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21);

Fate: crashed en route Phan Rang – Pleiku, South Vietnam, on 24 October 67, killing all 16 people (3 crew members and 13 passengers) on board (for details see [http://planecrashinfo.com/1967/1967-69.htm](http://planecrashinfo.com/1967/1967-69.htm), which, however, gives B-1541 as a DC-3), possibly operating for Air Vietnam; the registration was cancelled on 28 December 67 (e-mail dated 2 July 2007, kindly sent to the author by Billy K. C. Chang, Director General, CAA, Republic of China); not current with Air America in January 68 (Saigon monthly base report of January 68 in: UTD/CIA/B42F5)

Curtiss C-46A  “CA-2” (no.3)  97  April 72  China Air Lines B-1507; regd. 6 February 60; previously USAF 43-47026 and US Navy BuA39599

**Service history**: identity of CA-2 as B-1507 in US Embassy letter to China Airlines dated 17 July 72 (in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel 21); identity of B-1507 in e-mail dated 5 May 2004, kindly sent to the author by Billy K.C. Chang, Director General, CAA, Republic of China; seen at Taipei on 15 April 72, no markings (Aviation Letter 67, June 72, p.7); leased from China Air Lines and operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 70-34; see Memorandum of 2 February
white and aluminum aircraft, added to the list of aircraft operating for Air America Saigon in April 72 (Saigon monthly base report of April 72 in: UTD/CIA/B42F1); ferried rice from Saigon to Phnom Penh between 11 and 18 September 72; due to lesser capacity needs, CA-2 was cancelled from the list of aircraft operating for Air America Saigon in late September 72 (Saigon monthly base report of September 72 in: UTD/CIA/B41F7).

**Fate:** probably returned to China Air Lines in late September 72.

Curtiss C-46 “CA-3”  
May 65?  China Air Lines B-?
**Service history:** leased from China Air Lines and operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3); gray and white aircraft, on the list of aircraft operated for Air America Saigon at least between February 68 and March 1970; no longer on the list in April 70 (Saigon monthly base reports February 68 to April 70, in: UTD/CIA/B42).

**Fate:** probably returned to China Air Lines in late March 70.

Curtiss C-46 “CA-4”  
May 65?  China Air Lines B-?
**Service history:** serial unconfirmed; if it is correct, it was leased from China Air Lines and operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3); a photo of what looks like CA-4 can be seen in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 21; the aluminum C-46 is shown landing with cargo at Danang in May 1966.

**Fate:** not current in February 68 (Saigon monthly base report of February 68, in: UTD/CIA/B42F5); probably returned to China Air Lines.

“In 1965, the Ministry of Society of South Vietnam […] asked Taiwan to help through Air America. RoCAF sent C-46s and crews to Vietnam under the cover name of China Airlines. They were named ‘Helping Vietnam Airlift Team.’ The first commander of the team was Lt. Col. Chao Jen-shia. At first the team has seven officers, three mechanics and two C-46s. They borrowed two radiomen from the 34th Sqn.” (e-mail dated 22 October 2006, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu)

Curtiss C-46 “CA-5”  
25 Nov. 65  ex RoCAF?
**Service history:** on 25 November 65, “CA-5”, piloted by Lt. Col. Chao Jen-shia, took off from Sungshan Airport, Taipei, and landed at Tan Son Nhut airport, Saigon, that afternoon; there was a reception ceremony to welcome the aircraft; merged into the 33rd Wing of the South Vietnamese Air Force; only carried out airlift missions inside South Vietnam (e-mail dated 22 October 2006, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu); operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3); mentioned in Air-Britain Digest, Summer 2002, p. 95, as an overall silver C-46.

**Fate:** flown back to Taiwan on 11 June 66 by Lt. Col. Chao Jen-shia (e-mail dated 22 October 2006, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu); not current between February 68 and January 74 (Saigon monthly base reports of February 68 to January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B42).

Curtiss C-46 “CA-6”  
25 Nov. 65  ex RoCAF?
**Service history:** on 25 November 65, “CA-6”, piloted by Captain Wang Su-ru, took off from Sungshan Airport, Taipei, and landed at Tan Son Nhut airport, Saigon, that afternoon; there was a reception ceremony to welcome the aircraft; merged into the
33rd Wing of the South Vietnamese Air Force; only carried out airlift missions inside South Vietnam (e-mail dated 22 October 2006, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu); operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3);

**Fate:** ?, probably returned to the Republic of China Air Force; not current between February 68 and January 74 (Saigon monthly base reports of February 68 to January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B42).

The identity of either “CA-5” or “CA-6” was ex RoCAF “C-46 327” with c/n 44-77?? (e-mail dated 22 October 2006, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu)

---

Curtiss C-46

**“CA-7”**

8 June 66  ex RoCAF ??

**Service history:** sent by the Republic of China Air Force on 8 June 66 to replace “CA-5”; merged into the 33rd Wing of the South Vietnamese Air Force; only carried out airlift missions inside South Vietnam (e-mail dated 22 October 2006, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu); operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3);

**Fate:** had a landing accident at Kuan Yi, South Vietnam, on 14 July 66; it landed along the wind direction and ran out of the runway; the China Airlines person stationed in Vietnam came to the scene and declared that the C-46 was damaged beyond repair (e-mail dated 22 October 2006, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu); operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 65-61 of 23 April 65, in: UTD/CIA/B40F3); not current between February 68 and January 74 (Saigon monthly base reports of February 68 to January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B42).

---

Curtiss C-46A

**“EM-2”** 30460  June 72  leased from China Air Lines B-1551, ex 42-96798 and N91370 (identity confirmed by the e-mail dated 6 Jan. 2003, kindly sent by Mr. Chang Kuo-Cheng, Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to the author)

**Service history:** operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 70-34; see Memorandum of 2 February 72, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10); not mentioned in the Saigon monthly base reports of 1972, so probably, it arrived the same month it crashed, that is in June 72; a photo of an all silver “EM-2” operating for MACV-SOG appeared in Plaster, *SOG*, p. 72; this was probably the ill-fated EM-2

**Fate:** crashed on approach to Pleiku (V-04), South Vietnam, on 5 June 72, killing 32 people, i.e. 3 CAL crew, 11 US military, 14 South Vietnamese military, 1 South Vietnamese civilian woman and 3 CAL deadhead mechanics. The aircraft had been en route Saigon (V-01) - Ban Me Thuot (V-12) - Pleiku (V-04) - Hue Phu Bai (V-06) - Ban Me Thuot (V-12) and was to fly back to Saigon (V-01); the wreckage was sighted on 7 June 72; all 32 dead occupants were transported to Saigon on 15 June 72 (XOXO of 5 June 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2; Harnage, *A thousand faces*, pp. 107/8, gives the serial as CA-2). From rescue reports from the 3rd ARR Group, Sid Nanson
adds the following details: “On VFR flight from Ban Me Thout to Pleiku. Radar contact was lost 21 miles East of Pleiku. The aircraft was on instrument approach to Pleiku and had been cleared down to 6,100 feet. Next Transmission from ‘EM-2’ said he was level at 4,500 feet and was told over guard to climb immediately to 6100 feet. No further contact was made with the aircraft. Wreckage was located at the 4,400 feet level of a mountain 2 1/2 miles SW of the last reported position.” (E-mail dated 30 October 2014, kindly sent to the author by Sid Nanson).

Curtiss C-46 “EM-2” (no.2) ? Sept. 72 leased from China Air; former “CA-1” (no.3)  
**Service history:** operated for USAID contract AID/VN-100 between 15 and 18 September 72 for an emergency airlift requirement, a China Airlines spare C-46 no longer foreseen by contract 0023/70-34 (Letter dated 3 November 72, sent by Air America’s Saigon base manager J. R. Barnhisel to John Williams of CORDS, Saigon, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 21).  
**Fate:** returned to “CA-1” in September 72; “CA-1” was cancelled from the list of aircraft operating for Air America Saigon in late September 72 (Saigon monthly base report of September 72 in: UTD/CIA/B41F7) and probably returned to China Air Lines in late September 72.

Curtiss C-46 “EM-2” (no.3) ? April 73 leased from China Air Lines B-  
**Service history:** operated by China Air Lines under subcontract with Air America (Contract no. 70-34; see Memorandum of 2 February 72, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10); this camouflaged C-46 EM-2 was added to the list of aircraft operating for Air America Saigon in April 73 and continued to be in service until at least January 74 (Saigon monthly base reports between April 73 and January 74 in: UTD/CIA/B41).  
**Fate:** unknown

**IV) Bird & Sons C-46s operated for Air America:**

Curtiss C-46F N9473Z 22293 April 64? leased from Bird & Sons, Vientiane  
**Service history:** used on an Air America rice drop mission out of Vientiane on 8 September 64 (Vientiane daily flight schedule of 8 September 64, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8).  
**Fate:** returned to Bird & Sons in 64?; became Continental Air Services Inc on 1 September 65; crashed after engine failure near Phu Cum (LS-50), Laos, on 13 August 67.

Curtiss C-46F N9760Z 22574 April 64? leased from Bird & Sons, Vientiane  
**Service history:** used on an Air America rice drop mission out of Vientiane on 8 September 64 (Vientiane schedule for 8 September 64, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8).  
**Fate:** returned to Bird & Sons in 64?; became Continental Air Services Inc on 1 September 65; still regd. in December 70; current with CASI on 26 May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72 in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C); sold to Tri-9 Corp. in 1974; damaged beyond repair in a rocket attack at Phnom Penh on 26 August 74.
V) C-46Ds leased from the Royal Lao Government (grant aircraft):

XW-PBV: Cert. of Reg. dated 29 May 64 (Lao Government) and C. of A. dated 11 Sep.65 (both documents in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel 3)

Air America C-46 XW-PBV in 1973, probably at Udorn (with kind permission from Paul Czaplicki)

Curtiss C-46D XW-PBV 22232 1 July 69 USAID-Laos XW-EAA rereg'd.; leased from the Royal Lao Government

Service history: not current on 15 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B), but assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane on 1 July 69 (F.O.C. of 1 July 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); two Lao paratroop trainees struck the stabilizer over Laos on 9
April 70, when they jumped against red light, while the aircraft was climbing; the two Laos were killed, but there was no damage to the aircraft (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 14 April 70, in: UTD/CIA/B8F4); flown by First Officer James Hitner out of Vientiane (L-08) on 16 April 70 (Aircraft Flight Logs, in: UTD/Hitner/B1F2); current with Air America on 1 July 70 (Leary, *The aircraft of Air America*, p. 20); noted as “grant aircraft” in May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C); assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 for use out of Vientiane 1-30 November 73, noted as “grant aircraft”; Hamilton standard props were installed at Tainan between 22 May 73 and 26 May 73 (F.O.C. of 1 November 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); while XW-PBV, piloted by PIC A. D. Wilson and F/O D. R. Whittaker, was over the drop zone near UF 9678, Laos, on 1 November 73, the aircraft encountered severe clear air ambulance, causing the cargo to spill from the pallets; two (V. Soukanyna and B. Kalavong) of the three kickers received minor head injuries and were treated at the Company clinic upon return to VTE (XOXO of 1 Nov. 73 in: UTD/Hickler/B25F12); was a rice-drop plane (Robbins, *Air America*, p. 25).

**Fate:** given to Royal Air Lao on 1 December 73 (F.O.C. of 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); damaged in a storm at Vientiane on 24 March 76; repaired; taken over by Lao Aviation, Vientiane, as RDPL-34040 in 1975 (?); reg. N9265Y reserved for J. D. Melvin Co, Glendale, CA, on 4 September 81; not taken up; candidate for reg N9265Y again in August 84 (AMCAR 24, p. 25); US reg canx in December 85; Lao reg. canx, as it is now used on a Mil Mi 8 (see photo in *Airliners*, Fall 1993, p. 17).

XW-PBW: Cert. of Reg. dated 29 May 64 (Lao Government) and C. of A., date illegible (both documents in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel 3)
Service history: not current with Air America on 15 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B), but assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane on 1 July 69, identity still given as msn “1887” (F.O.C. of 1 July 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); flown by First Officer James Hitner out of Vientiane (L-08) on 9 April 70 (Aircraft Flight Logs, in: UTD/Hitner/B1F2); current with Air America on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); at Hong Kong on 22 August 70; assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-31 July 71; converted to a 69 passenger configuration on 19 July 71 (F.O.C.s of 1 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); noted as “grant aircraft” in May 72 (Company confidential dated 26 May 72, in: UTD/Hickler/F8F7C); assigned to contract F04606-71-C-0002 for use out of Vientiane 16-30 April 73 and 1-30 November 73, noted as “grant aircraft”; Hamilton standard props were installed at Tainan between 30 June 73 and 6 July 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14, and F.O.C. of 1 November 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); flown in Royal Lao AF colors in 73 (a photo is preserved in: UTD/Anthony/F9); slid off the runway (ground loop on touch and go) at Vientiane on 15 May 73 (XOXO of 15 May 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F12; photo in UTD/Anthony/F6); was a rice-drop plane (Robbins, Air America, p. 25).
**Fate:** given to Royal Air Lao on 1 December 73 (F.O.C. of 1 December 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); crashed 75 miles NNE of Vientiane, Laos, on 15 October 74.

**VI) Unconfirmed C-46s possibly flown by Air America:**
Curtiss C-46F N67987 22389 66 (?) L. B. Smith Aircraft Corp, Miami, N67987; previously USAF 44-78566, then N1811M, then N67987

**Service history:** reportedly leased from L. B. Smith Aircraft Corp, Miami (Eastwood / Roach, *Piston Engine Airliner Production List*, p. 146); official Air America records preserved at the Air America Archives (Aircraft status reports, Radio messages, Minutes of meetings) do not show any trace of this aircraft.

**Fate:** reportedly returned to L. B. Smith Aircraft Corp, Miami, in 67; withdrawn from use and stored in 71; cancelled on 18 February 71.
VII) Air America’s contribution to the Bay of Pigs operation against Cuba in 1960/1: C-46s

It is known that most of the pilots who flew in the Bay of Pigs operation against Cuba in April 1961 were Cuban exiles who had been engaged by the Double-Check Corporation.1 A list of all Cuban pilots involved in that operation can be found in document no. 141164 published on the CIA’s website.2 Since late September 1960, a fleet of C-54s and C-46s mostly piloted by Cuban exiles flew airdrops to anti-communist rebels operating in three areas of Cuba. Those transport pilots were trained by Air America pilots Connie Seigrist and William Beale who had ferried Air America C-46 B-864 from Taipei to San Jose, Guatemala, between 3 and 9 September 60 and then on to Retalhuleu, Guatemala. Later, former CAT/Air America pilot Douglas R. Price joined the training team at Retalhuleu.3 Four Air America C-46s were used out of Retalhuleu: B-850 (c/n 22451), which crashed before the Bay of Pigs operation itself, B-864 (c/n 22362), which later returned as B-916, B-866 (c/n 22366), which also crashed before the invasion, and B-870 (c/n 22232), which returned as B-914. Although these C-46s were officially registered in Panama to Los Hermanos Sebastian y Gómez, they really bore three-digit serials like “857” (former B-850), making them look like Guatemalan Air Force aircraft. When B-866 was destroyed in March 61, Air America bought N9894Z (c/n 32942) from Southern Air Transport4 and sold it to Los Hermanos, with whom it was destroyed in the summer of 1961. There were several more C-46s in the fleet, and at the end the property situation was very confusing even to Company people. So, in his Memorandum dated 11 October 61,5 Air America’s Assistant Counsel Jerry Fink commented Air America’s document IM-61-475 of 7 October 1961 (unfortunately lost) which had evidently presumed that C-46s c/n 32942 and 32992 were Air America aircraft, saying that, no, they did not belong to Air America, but “it is believed that action may be pending on these aircraft”. But while none of them joined the fleet of Air America, another former Bay of Pigs C-46 did: c/n 33451, formerly registered to Los Hermanos as HP-314P and probably painted as “887”, was definitely registered to Air Asia as B-918 on 8 December 61.6

Several C-46s and one C-54 lined up at Retalhuleu airfield in 1960/1
(with kind permission from Janet Ray Weininger)

During the Bay of Pigs operation itself, airdrops are known to have been made by the

---

1 Hagedorn / Hellström, Foreign Invaders, p. 126.
3 Leary / LeSchack, Project Coldfeet, pp.113-16.
4 Memorandum dated 20 April 61, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no.4.
6 Notification no. AN-2-50-1645 dated 8 December 61 of the CAA, Taiwan, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4.
following C-46s to the drop zones ("DZ") indicated:  

17 April 61:  
- C-46 “855”, piloted by Captain Ferrer, to DZ-3 and DZ-4, light ground fire  
- C-46 “877”, piloted by Captain Navarro, to DZ-3 and DZ-5, light ground fire  
- C-46 “788”, piloted by Captain Luaices, to DZ-3  
- C-46 “875”, piloted by Captain Tellechea, to DZ-1, DZ-2, and DZ-3; no drop at DZ-1 due to fighters, but the drops at DZ-2 and DZ-3 were ok; attacked by a Cuban Sea Fury, but escaped to witness the Sea Fury crash at sea  
- C-46 “864”, piloted by Captain Gómez, to DZ-1, the drops were ok  

18 April 61:  
- C-46 “864”, piloted by Captain Ferrer, to “Playa Ciron airfield”; the landing was aborted due to enemy fighters  

19 April 61:  
- C-46 “?”, piloted by Captain Gómez, to “Playa Ciron airfield”; recalled due to enemy fighters  
- C-46 “864”, piloted by Captain Luaices, to “Playa Ciron airfield”; the landing was aborted – but according to Persons, Bay of Pigs, pp.1+85, another C-46 landed on the beach at Girón with a load of medical supplies and communications equipment and picked up the injured crewmember of a downed B-26 and brought him back to Puerto Cabezas.  

So, as B-850 and B-866 had probably been replaced in March 61, and 2 other C-46s of the fleet (probably N9895Z and “292”) did not participate in the actual Invasion, the 5 C-46s flown during the Bay of Pigs invasion itself are believed to have been former B-864 (“864”), B-870, N9459Z (c/n 22343), N9894Z (c/n 32942), and N9935Z (c/n 32992). According to the Memorandum “JMGLOW Bonuses” of 7 September 61, that is document no. 141130 published on the CIA’s website, no Air America crews flew the C-46s during the operation. On 14 May 61, the last C-46 was flown from Puerto Cabezas to Miami.  

---

9 Persons, Bay of Pigs, p.111.
VIII) VIAT C-46s maintained by Air America according to contract no. 61-119:

VIAT or Vietnamese Air Transport,\textsuperscript{10} that is Bureau 45B – Northern Service (Biet Kích So Bac; see: \url{http://ngothelinh.tripod.com/Tribute.htm}) was a front used by the CIA and the South Vietnamese Government for commando raids into North Vietnam between 1961 and 1964. Air America had a contract with VIAT (no. 61-119) which covered call-type personnel services in South East Asia including Air America’s flight, ground, supply and maintenance personnel, as may be called by VIAT.\textsuperscript{11} The first two C-46s were probably introduced in 1961.\textsuperscript{12} They came from China Airlines and were flown by China Airlines crews.\textsuperscript{13} As John Wirén pointed out,\textsuperscript{14} William Colby himself had admitted that he had set up VIAT as a private company with pilots from Taiwan (instead of pilots from Air America) in order to make believe that the Governments of the United States and of South Vietnam were not involved.

The mission board of Vietnamese Air Transport, probably taken by February 1962
(photo by Capt. Su-ching Tai, kindly submitted by Clarence Fu)

Curtiss C-46D      XV-NIF (1)  33028  61?    According to a photo of
                   VIAT’s mission board,
                   XV-NIF was ex China

\textsuperscript{10} See Conboy / Andradé, \textit{Spies and commandos}, pp. 33-44.
\textsuperscript{11} “List of Air America’s contracts”, Memorandum of 27 July 62, in: UTD/Fink/B2F16.
\textsuperscript{12} See Hùng, Ngô Xuân, “Một cuộc đời cho Dân Chủ và Tư Do. Sử Bắc và cuộc Chiến Tranh Bí Mật”, in: \url{http://ngothelinh.tripod.com/TuongNiem.html} - the author wants to thank Nguyen Hung for his translation.
\textsuperscript{13} E-mail dated 5 April 2004, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu.
\textsuperscript{14} E-mail dated 30 July 2004 to the author.
Airlines B-1517 (e-mails dated 1 and 5 April 2004, and 14 November 2004, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu); for the identity of B-1517 see below under XV-NII

Service history: Air America’s contract 61-119 with VIAT was for call-type personnel services in South East Asia including Air America’s flight, ground, supply and maintenance personnel, as may be called by VIAT (“List of Air America’s contracts”, Memorandum of 27 July 62, in: UTD/Fink/B2/F16); probably all the time the aircraft was leased to VIAT as XV-NIF, it was officially also registered to China Airlines as B-1517.

Fate: in early 1962, XV-NIF was rereg. as XV-NII, as the photo of another VIAT mission board shows (e-mail dated 14 November 2004, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu); as C-54 XV-NUB, which crashed in late February 62, is still listed on that mission board, the aircraft probably became XV-NII in February 62 – possibly, because in the meantime, the registration XV-NIF had been assigned to another aircraft, that is to Cessna 310G c/n 0021, which appeared in 1962 and existed until March 1967 (Burnett / Slack / Davis, South-East Asia Civil Aircraft Registers, p.230).

VIAT C-46D XV-NIG dropping supplies in the early sixties
(With kind permission from Ngo Xuan Hung)

Curtiss C-46D XV-NIG 33017 61? According to a photo of VIAT’s mission board, XV-NIG was ex China Airlines B-1513 (e-mails dated 1 and 5 April, and
13 November 2004, kindly sent to the author by Clarence Fu). B-1513 was ex 44-77621 (e-mail dated 5 May 2004, kindly sent to the author by Billy K. C. Chang, Director General, CAA, Republic of China)

**Service history:** Air America’s contract 61-119 with VIAT was for call-type personnel services in South East Asia including Air America’s flight, ground, supply and maintenance personnel, as may be called by VIAT (List of Air America’s contracts, Memorandum of 27 July 62, in: UTD/Fink/B2F16); all the time the aircraft was leased to VIAT as XV-NIG, it was officially also registered to China Airlines as B-1513; XV-NIG was seen at Saigon on 8 July 63, all silver, bearing no titles (UTD/Kirkpatrick, slide A 5419, given in the index as “VIAT C-46”); a photo of XV-NIG dropping supplies can be seen in: Plaster, *SOG*, p. 14; the same photo can also be seen at [http://ngothelinh.tripod.com/C46.jpg](http://ngothelinh.tripod.com/C46.jpg).

**Fate:** returned to China Airlines as B-1513, possibly in 1964; in 1966 it was in service with China Airlines (Davis / Martin / Whittle, *Curtiss C-46 Commando*, p.138); in June 1968, China Airlines C-46 B-1513 was leased to Air Vietnam (Memorandum “Competitive aircraft”, dated 18 June 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); it was officially deregistered off its nationality markings on 5 February 1971 (e-mail dated 5 May 2004, kindly sent to the author by Billy K. C. Chang, Director General, CAA, Republic of China).

---

**VIAT C-46D XV-NII at Saigon on 8 July 63**

(UTD/Kirkpatrick, slide A 5420)

Curtiss C-46D XV-NII 33028 62? ex China Airlines B-1517

**Service history:** the identity of this C-46 is a mystery; according to an e-mail dated 26 Nov. 2004, kindly sent to the author by Mr. Billy K. C. Chang, Director General of the CAA, Republic of China, the official identity of B-1517 was “44-33028”; as there
was no C-46 with such a USAF serial, the msn is believed to have been 33028 (ex 44-77632, whose fate is completely unknown); according to the photo of the mission board of VIAT, probably taken by February 1962 and kindly sent to the author on 13 Nov. 2004 by Clarence Fu, XV-NII was ex B-1517 and ex 44-78221; this would make it msn 33617, which was condemned on 18 August 45 and then salvaged (Davis / Martin / Whittle, Curtiss C-46 Commando, p.104); probably, the aircraft was rebuilt from parts of both aircraft; Air America’s contract 61-119 with VIAT was for call-type personnel services in South East Asia including Air America’s flight, ground, supply and maintenance personnel, as may be called by VIAT (List of Air America’s contracts, Memorandum of 27 July 62, in: UTD/Fink/B2F16); this aircraft was at Saigon on 8 July 63, all silver, bearing no titles (UTD/Kirkpatrick, slide A 5420, given in the index as “VIAT C-46”).

**Fate:** evidently returned to China Airlines as B-1517, probably in 1963 or 1964, and officially cancelled from the civil aircraft register of the Republic of China only in 1970 (e-mail dated 26 Nov. 2004, kindly sent to the author by Mr. Billy K. C. Chang, Director General of the CAA, Republic of China).
Some Air America pilots flew C-46s as instructors for the ARC or Aviation Research Center at Charbatia Air Base (“Oak Tree”) in India, among them Connie Seigrist. Already in March 1963, “the Agency was interested in forming an associated airborne type project in India with the Indians. The Agency proposed to quickly get the operation off the ground and into the air [the best way] would be to acquire the C-46 model D readily available from the USAF storage depots. When that opportunity began to materialize the Agency gave Southern Air Transport of Miami, Florida a contract to perform a major overhaul on some C-46Ds to be flown to India for the project. Later Intermountain received part of the contract to do maintenance and flight test on some of the C-46Ds. Southern Air Transport also received the contract to deliver all of the C-46Ds to India. Air America Inc. from Tachikawa, Japan became the first proprietary involved in having received the first part of the overall contract flying three of its C-46s to Agra, India. Air America made available its American national pilots to instruct the Indian pilots on the C-46s. Air America also assigned one of their Helio Courier aircraft from Vientiane, Laos with its American pilot instructor for the project. Air Asia Co Ltd, an Agency maintenance proprietary from Tainan, Taiwan and Intermountain Aviation shared the maintenance responsibilities in India for the project. The Indians would receive ground school and line maintenance training until they were capable of managing their own maintenance. The Indian air operation was code named ‘Oak Tree’. 22 November 1963 – I test flew N-10703. It was a C-46D and our first aircraft of the Indian contract. Four other aircraft I personally flight tested were numbered N-10708, N-10710, N-10705, and N-10706.”15 The best source of information about the Indian ARC is the excellent book by Conboy / Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet. As they show in detail,16 the ARC was created on 7 September 1963 by the Indian Intelligence Bureau as a front to coordinate aviation cooperation with the CIA. Its main purpose was to train agents for infiltration into Tibet, to re-supply them at launch sites along the border, to install sensors on high mountain tops close to the border, and later to install wiretaps. In 1966, other ARC air bases like Doomdommah or Sarsawa were added for special operations. But in the summer of 1967 the CIA reduced its links to the ARC, and the Indians decided to introduce Antonov An-12s to the ARC fleet and to increase the number of Mil Mi-4 helicopters already introduced earlier. In 1969 cooperation between the CIA and the ARC still existed, but it had come down to nothing, when the war between India and Pakistan began in 1971. As to Air America, they not only supported the ARC by supplying the first 2 C-46s (VT-DRH and VT-DRI) and the first 2 Helio Couriers (VT-DRJ and VT-DRK) in September 1963, but they also sent some of their best pilots to act as instructors for the ARC crews. Head of the C-46 conversion team was Bill Welk, and the Helio Courier and later the Helio Twin Courier conversion team was headed by Jim Rhyne. Other instructors included M.D. Johnson, Al Judkins, and Maurice Clough, with Connie Seigrist and Tom Sailor providing additional C-46 training at Charbatia in early 1964.17 More C-46s were rapidly acquired: By early 1964, ARC had 8 C-46s, followed by 2 more during 1964. One of the ARC C-46s was transformed by CIA technicians into an electronic intelligence (ELINT) platform in 1964; this aircraft flew regularly along the Himalayas recording Chinese telecommunication signals from inside Tibet. Some of the remaining 9 ARC C-46s received rocket boosters in 1964 that were installed on the bottom of the fuselages to allow the aircraft to take off from some of India’s highest airfields with heavy loads.18 In 1963-65, no less than 12 C-46Ds appeared on the Civil Aircraft Register of

---

16 Conboy / Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, pp.190-242.
17 Conboy / Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, pp.191/2, 255, 286.
India. All of them were registered to the Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs; probably all of them were operated by the ARC, as ARC aircraft bore Indian civil markings, and all of them had been cancelled from that register by 1979. Except for the details about the 2 C-46s apparently loaned from Air America, the following list is mainly based on Burnett / Slack / Davis, *South-East Asia Civil Aircraft Registers*, pp. 185-88, whose civil aircraft register of India is based on official material of the Indian Dept. of Civil Aviation, with additional information coming from Davis / Martin / Whittle, *The Curtiss C-46 Commando*:

**VT-DRH**  c/n 22215 regd. 5 October 63 ex Air America B-846: used for airdrop exercises out of an airfield close to Agra in June 64; “our drop would consist of Tibetan refugees who were in paramilitary parachute training: I noticed the parked C-46s we would fly were Air America aircraft”; nearly collided with its sister ship (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, pp.69-71, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11); to Air America B-924 in September 64; etc.

**VT-DRI**  c/n 33372 regd. 5 October 63 ex Air America B-854; used for airdrop exercises out of an airfield close to Agra in June 64; “our drop would consist of Tibetan refugees who were in paramilitary parachute training: I noticed the parked C-46s we would fly were Air America aircraft”; nearly collided with its sister ship (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, pp.69-71, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11); to Air America B-922 in September 64; etc.

**VT-DRM**  c/n 33022 regd. 31 March 64 ex 44-77626 and N10704 of Southern Air Transport; USAF struck off charge on 16 August 63; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77626 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DRN**  c/n 33279 regd. 22 February 64 ex 44-77883 and N10703 of Southern Air Transport; test flown by Connie Seigrist out of Marana AZ on 22 November 63 (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p.67, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11); USAF struck off charge on 19 August 63; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77883 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DRO**  c/n 33377 regd. 12 February 64 ex 44-77981 and N10709 of Southern Air Transport; ferried to India via Bahrein on 9 January 64; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77981 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DRT**  c/n 33378 regd. 22 February 64 ex 44-77982 and N10708 of Southern Air Transport; test flown by Connie Seigrist out of Marana AZ (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p.67, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11); USAF struck off charge on 28 August 63; ferried to India via Bahrein on 10 January 64; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77982 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DRV**  c/n 33086 regd. 31 March 64 ex 44-77690 and N10710 of Southern Air Transport; test flown by Connie Seigrist out of Marana AZ (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p.67, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11); USAF struck off charge on 21 September 63; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77690 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DRU**  c/n 33086 regd. 31 March 64 ex 44-77995 and N10701 of Southern Air Transport; USAF struck off charge on 24 September 63; ferried to India via

---

19 Conboy / Morrison, *The CIA’s secret war in Tibet*, p. 192.
Bahrein on 29 January 64; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77995 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

VT-DRX c/n 22311 regd. 18 May 64 ex 44-78488 and N10702 of Southern Air Transport; USAF struck off charge on 3 October 63; ferried to India on 18 May 64; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-78488 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

VT-DRY c/n 33448 regd. 22 July 64 ex 44-78052 and N10705 of Southern Air Transport; test flown by Connie Seigrist out of Marana AZ. “The Indians had an airfield in the Himalayas located at about 12,000 foot elevation they wanted to service with the C-46D. They requested performance charts from sea level up to 12,000 feet. […] As a result of the Indian request the Agency awarded Intermountain a contract to conduct high altitude take-off performance tests and construct the charts for the aircraft. […] February 1964: N-10705 was made available by the Agency for Intermountain to fly the altitude tests which would enable us to construct the performance charts. Intermountain maintenance installed a 1000 gallon fuel tank aboard N-10705. The tank had a visual sight gage so that we could monitor filling the tank accurately with water to any desired level to be able to control our aircraft gross weight for take-off at different altitudes. […] The crew assigned for the tests was for myself as Captain assisted by Capt. Gearke. Gar[field Thorsrud] was overall supervisor, Intermountain President, Robert E. Roberts as performance engineer, and a loadmaster from our paraloft. […] Robert decided he would be able to complete the performance data required for each 1,000 of elevation up to 12,000 ft by interpolating from using three airfields of different elevations. The three airfields chosen as stepping stones in elevation were Albuquerque; NM 5,350 ft, Bogota, Columbia 8,000 ft, and La Paz, Bolivia 13,300 ft.” The tests were undertaken between 28 February and 30 March 64 (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p.68, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11); USAF struck off charge on 1 October 63; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-78052 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

VT-DRZ c/n 33387 regd. 1 October 64 ex 44-77991; 1045th OETG, Eglin, TL to Classified Project on 5 October 63 (63278); USAF struck off charge on 5 October 63; then N10707 of Southern Air Transport; ferried to India via Bahrein on 19 July 64; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77991 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

VT-DSA c/n 33392 regd. 5 April 65 ex 44-77996; USAF struck off charge on 26 September 63; 1045th OETG, Eglin, TL to Classified Project on 26 September 63 (63269); then N10706 of Southern Air Transport; test flown by Connie Seigrist out of Marana AZ (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p.67, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11); returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77996 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

These were the original C-46Ds supplied to the ARC by the US Government. Although Conboy / Morrison state that in 1966/67 the CIA did not budget replacements for the aircraft delivered in 1963/64, 10 more C-46Ds appeared on the Civil Aircraft Register of India between 1967 and 1969, and once again, all of them were registered to the Government

20 Conboy / Morrison, The CIA’s secret war in Tibet, p. 230.
of India. So it is likely that these 10 C-46s were also operated by the ARC, because as late as 1968, ARC C-46s were used for reconnaissance and supply flights. This second batch of C-46s comprises:

**VT-DVN** c/n 33118  regd. 7 December 67  ex 44-77722; Davis Monthan to AIIMF, Miami, on 16 February 66 (66047); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 14 April 66 (66104); returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77722 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DVO** c/n 32984  regd. 17 August 67  ex 44-77588; Davis Monthan to AIIMF, Miami, on 2 February 66 (66033); transferred (= TL) to an MAP on 18 February 66 (66049); returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77588 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DVP** c/n 32933  regd. 14 April 67  ex 44-77537; Davis Monthan transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 4 December 65 (65338); returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77537 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DVQ** c/n 32944  regd. 17 August 67  ex 44-77548; Davis Monthan to AIIMF, Miami, on 20 January 66 (66020); transferred (= TL) to an MAP on 4 February 66 (66035); returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77548 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DVR** c/n 33105  regd. 17 August 67  ex 44-77709; Davis Monthan transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 2 April 66 (66092); FAA records have the following for C-46D N54773 ex 44-77709 c/n 33105: “Application for Registration by Talaria Aircraft Representatives (New York, NY) 04Jan65; there is another Application for Registration dated 04Jan65 in the file, but by Marathon Aviation Corp; BoS from Talaria Aircraft Representatives to Marathon Aviation Corp (Miami, FL) 22Nov65; Application for Registration 22Nov65” (e-mail dated 5 August 2015, kindly sent to the author by Steve Darke); all this happened before the aircraft was officially cancelled from USAF records in April 66; Application for Airworthiness Certificate 22Oct66 (TT 4,660:20hrs); Experimental CofA issued 26Oct66, to expire 26Jan67; BoS from Marathon Aviation Corp to Tradewinds Cargo inc (Hialeah, FL) 16Jan67; CofR issued 20Jan67; Application for Airworthiness Certificate 27Jan67 (TT 4,876:50hrs); Experimental CofA issued 27Jan67, to expire 27Jly67; canx 09Mar67 to Thailand” (e-mail dated 5 August 2015, kindly sent to the author by Steve Darke); VT-DVR returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77709 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DWS** c/n 33249  regd. 7 December 67  ex 44-77853; Davis Monthan to AIIMF, Miami, on 25 February 66 (66056); transferred (= TL) to an MAP on 10 May 66 (66130); returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77853 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

**VT-DWY** c/n 33274  regd. 7 December 67  ex 44-77878; Davis Monthan transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 27 June 66 (66178); returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77878 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70

---

VT-DWZ c/n 33269 regd. 15 February 68 ex 44-77873; Davis Monthan transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 17 June 66 (66168); returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-77873 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

VT-DYW c/n 33439 regd. August 69 ex 44-78043; Davis Monthan transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 5 October 66 (66278); to N62388 of Tradewinds Cargo Inc, canx to Thailand on 20 August 68 (e-mail dated 1 August 2015, kindly sent to the author by Steve Darke); VT-DYW returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-78043 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

VT-DYY c/n 22340 regd. May 69 ex 44-78517; Davis Monthan transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 5 October 66 (66278); then possibly N9073R; returned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, as 44-78517 from GI (outside USAF) on 28 February 70 (70059); transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093).

All of these C-46s came from storage at Davis Monthan in 1965/66; some of them received maintenance and probably also some modifications at Miami, and all of them left the USAF in 1965/66. Although the USAF Aircraft Assignment Records preserved at Maxwell AFB note only in some cases that the aircraft went to a Military Assistance Program, probably all of them came to India as part of an MAP. According to microfilm reel no. AVH-13, preserved at the AFHRA, Maxwell AFB, all of these C-46Ds returned to the USAF after their service in India, and all of them were assigned to the 56th Special Operations Wing, Takhli, with their original USAF serials as “gained from GI”, that is from outside USAF, on 28 February 70 (70059). But probably, this was a nominal assignment only, as all of them were again transferred to outside USAF (= TL) on 1 April 73 (73093), probably because they were in a shape that did not allow them to return to USAF service. So the aircraft may have remained in India and were probably broken up there. However, at least one of them seems to have reappeared in Thailand: Gary Bisson recalls: “I do recall an instance of interest at the UDN base during a major contract negotiation with the USAF. When finalized I was with the USAF contracting team watching the busy activity on the tarmac when a USAF marked C-46 rolled by. The USAF officer was puzzled, stating there were no C-46s in the USAF inventory over 20 years. I understand that the C-46 was a […] plane, used in a Tibet operation out of India, heading to TNN for major maintenance. It needed USAF markings to fit nicely into a USAF contract. They would be later removed – with different markings – for flight back to India.”

There may even have been more candidates: In his e-mail dated 13 July 2007 sent to Dr. Erik Carlson, who kindly forwarded it to the author, John M. Davis mentions the following details: “C-46D N63335 c/n 33549 ex 44-78153 was landing at Kindley Field, Bermuda, at 8.55 pm on Thursday February 8, 1968, when it possibly had brake failure. It would have run into Castle Harbour but the tail wheel got caught and stopped it going into the water. Airplane was on a ferry flight from Virginia to Spain, and then Thailand. Bermuda was first night stop. Ferry flight was being made by World Aviation Services of Ft Lauderdale, FL. On 14th or 15th it was removed from the water for investigation by the USAF, and on 16th it was decided to scrap the aircraft. Serviceable parts removed by Southern Air Transport of Miami. A couple of interesting points. The FAA card for N63335 is marked ‘File in locked drawer.’ This is an indication that it was not available for public or staff viewing – and thus either CIA or Air America. Second, this aircraft was one of a number on the ‘1959 surplus list, but withdrawn from sale.’ Amongst others were the aircraft that became VT-DVP, VT-DWY.

22 E-mail dated 21 July 2015, kindly sent to the author by Bill Merrigan.
VT-DWZ, and VT-DYY. There are others with no known history – but I suspect that most of that group went to the CIA. […] Of course do not know which branch of ‘The Company’ might have been the recipient.” Possibly this C-46 was to become VT-DYZ, a registration that was not taken up in the 1968/9 period.²³

²³ E-mail dated 27 July 2007, kindly sent to the author by John Davis.
X) Air America C-46s: Problems and errors:

A) Problems contained in Air America documents:
- 1 C-46 was lost in Taiwan on 24 June 64 (Memorial; List “Company operated aircraft lost or destroyed”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10; List “Total number of company employees killed in aircraft accidents”, in: UTD/CIA/B1F10): 20 June 64 was the date when C-46 B-908 crashed, so 24 June 64 was probably the date, when some of the survivors died.
- 1 stripped (ex Air America?) C-46 hulk, which was parked at the Air America ramp at Udorn in 73, was given to the Royal Thai Army at Udorn in 73 for training purposes and airlifted there by Air America CH-47C “016” in 73 (photo in Air America Log, vol. VII, 1973): this was probably one of the two former CNAF C-46 fuselages “001” and “006”, bought in March 65 at $14,000 each to be rebuilt (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 25 February 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 8 June 65 and 13 July 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4), but probably they were never rebuilt: The project seems to have been abandoned between November 65 and April 66, as the Aircraft status list of 1 November 65 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) still lists two C-46s to be added to the fleet, which are no longer listed in the Aircraft status list of 8 April 66 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1).
- 1 stripped (ex Air America?) C-46 hulk, which was parked at the Air America ramp at Udorn in 73, was given to the Royal Thai Border Police at Udorn in 1973 for training purposes and airlifted there by Air America CH-47C “016” in 73 (photo in Air America Log, vol. VII, no.8, 1973, p. 3): this was probably one of the two former CNAF C-46 fuselages “001” and “006”, bought in March 65 at $14,000 each to be rebuilt (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 25 February 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 8 June 65 and 13 July 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4), but probably they were never rebuilt: The project seems to have been abandoned between November 65 and April 66, as the Aircraft status list of 1 November 65 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) still lists two C-46s to be added to the fleet, which are no longer listed in the Aircraft status list of 8 April 66 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1).

B) Errors contained in some publications:
- 1 C-46 was reportedly destroyed NW of Vientiane on 6 April 62, killing four people, also reported as crashed on take-off from Vientiane on 6 April 62: This was really DHC-2 “L-207” which crashed near Sam Thong (LS-20), Laos, on 6 April 62.
- 1 C-46 was reportedly hit by ground fire over South Vietnam on 4 December 66, landed, and then a wing burned off: **This was really C-46 B-156, which crashed on 17 November 66.**

- 1 C-46 reportedly crashed en route Saigon-Danang into a rain-veiled mountain during a monsoon storm, date unknown, killing 8 American college professors: **This was really Volpar Beech N91284, which crashed on 23 March 67** killing 8 prominent US educators (Minutes BoD-AAM 16 May 67, in: UTD/CIA/B3F5).

- the Lao AF C-46 which was reportedly destroyed on a food supply mission in Northern Laos on 15 October 74 having an US pilot, **was really Royal Air Lao XW-PBW**, which bore the Erawan.

- C-46Es N59483 and N62528 were reported with Air America in the early fifties: **This was really another company called Air America**, as the CIA airline was still called Civil Air Transport at that time.

- C-46 B-840 was reported with Air America: **There was never an Air America C-46 B-840; this was really C-46 B-846.** CAT had C-46 B-840 c/n 22359 since about 1950, but this was sold to Delta Airlines in 1957, long before the company was renamed.

- C-46 B-985 was reported with Air America: **There was never an Air America C-46 B-985; this was really C-46 N67985.** The false registration has its origin in the fact that the last three digits of the correct registration, painted as usually below the cockpit, were taken for a B-registration.

© University of Texas at Dallas, 2003-2015