

# An Eye on Cuba . . . By Roscoe Drummond

## Overflights Deemed a Must

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THERE is a powerful and conclusive reason why the United States will continue the photographic flights over Cuba no matter how loudly Castro threatens to shoot or how loudly Khrushchev cries, "Stop!"



The reason is that we cannot rest our security on a presumption — that, after secretly putting its missiles in Cuba and then being forced to withdraw them, the Soviets won't try it again.

The reason the overflights must continue is that they are the only means open to the United States to enforce the missile-removal agreement which President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev reached.

The United States cannot risk its survival on the otherwise unverifiable good faith of the Soviet Union which has so often dispensed bad faith in the past.

These overflights are an indispensable precaution. They constitute an act of essential self-defense. They substitute certainty — that Soviet missiles are not being returned and that launching stations for their use are not being rebuilt — for guesswork.

HIGH AMERICAN officials made one perilous misjudgment in 1962. They blandly assumed that

the Kremlin couldn't possibly "make the mistake" of affronting the United States by stationing 2000-mile-range missiles in Cuba. But the Soviets did not figure that this was any mistake at all. They figured we would be too afraid of nuclear war to do anything about it, that we would protest — and do nothing. They almost got away with it. We cannot afford to make the same misjudgment again.

Possibly, the Soviets won't try it again. We can't leave it to chance. This is why President Johnson has determined that, whatever the risk, the photographic inspection of Cuba, which is the only substitute for on-site inspection, will go on.

Of course there is danger in this decision. Castro has said he would "shoot down" any U-2 planes overflying Cuba. Khrushchev has declared that continuing the U-2 flights could bring us "to the abyss of another war."

Obviously Castro and Khrushchev would like to win the battle against inspection with words. Obviously they would like to persuade the United States that the overflights are so dangerous that we ought to call them off.

MY INFORMATION is that President Johnson, Secretary of Defense

Robert McNamara, and CIA Director John McCone are at one in holding that photographic inspection is a first-line of defense against Soviet missiles. We have warned Castro that an attack on the U-2 planes will bring a military response. We have informed Khrushchev what our policy will be. Nobody is being left in doubt.

That's good. To leave any doubt over what United States intends to do would be unwise.

The prospect that the Soviet Union will go to war against the United States in order to help Castro shoot down U-2 planes is highly improbable. It is understandable that Khrushchev should continue to talk about how much he is prepared to back up Castro; he can hardly say otherwise — openly. But it is highly doubtful that the Soviet Union would allow Castro to have the power to create circumstances which could compel Moscow to confront the United States with war.

The time may not be far distant when the U-2 planes will not be needed to accomplish the inspection. There are two alternatives — radio-controlled, pilotless aircraft or low-flying guided missiles, either capable of doing all the photography of a U-2.

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