

U.S. WILL CONTINUE U-2 RUN IN EUROPE

MAY 31 1975

Purpose of Trips Is Unclear
After Crash in Germany
—NATO Approval Noted

NYTimes

WASHINGTON, May 30 (Reuters)—The United States plans to continue flights of high-altitude U-2 reconnaissance planes over Western Europe despite the crash of one of them in West Germany yesterday.

The Defense Department made this known as it said that the planes' mission was to test electronic navigation equipment.

A different explanation was given by a highly placed Government source, who said the plane that crashed was conducting a new kind of electronic surveillance with the aim of locating potential ground targets for missile or bombing strikes in any conflict between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces.

The informant said the U-2's sought through the use of special equipment to detect the presence of radar or other electronic transmitters on the ground, presumably in Eastern European countries. The plane that crashed yesterday went down near the West German town of Winterberg, about 60 miles from the East German border.

[Defense intelligence sources suggested that another mission of the U-2's might be to ascertain whether the Soviet Union had installed advanced long-range radar in Central Europe that would be capable of detecting planes beyond the horizon. The range of conventional radar is limited by the earth's curvature.]

The Defense Department stressed in its explanation of the flights that it had the permission of Western European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It said test flights were being flown by five U-2's stationed at a British base at Wethersfield, Essex.

"We don't want anyone to get the wrong impression," a Pentagon spokesman said last night. "We want to emphasize these planes are flying with the full agreement of NATO members, and the tests are continuing."

The Pentagon said the U-2's were testing advanced electronic equipment that might make possible more accurate navigational fixes for NATO planes or missile-launching submarines. Present navigation systems were said to depend on more complex and less accurate equipment.

The United States and its allies were said to be considering the use of U-2's carrying special navigation equipment until a \$2-billion so-called global positioning satellite system, now under development, can be put into place in the early nineteen-eighties.

The Defense Department stressed that the U-2's were unarmed and carried no photographic equipment.

Not Shot Down, Air Force Says

RAMSTEIN, West Germany, May 30 (Reuters)—A spokesman for United States Air Force headquarters in Germany said today that an inspection at the crash site had established that the U-2 that went down yesterday had not been shot down. He said the cause had not been determined.

The plane's pilot, Capt. Robert R. Pendleman of Tucson, parachuted to safety as the plane started down, and no one on the ground was injured.

The Air Force also rejected allegations from members of the British Parliament that the plane was on an espionage mission and reiterated that it was testing navigational equipment.

Britons Demand Ouster

LONDON, May 30 (Reuters)—Left-wing Labor party members of Parliament demanded today that Prime Minister Harold Wilson evict the U-2's from the Wethersfield base.

They said they believed the planes were used for spying and were a provocation to Eastern Europe.

CAMBODIAN FLIERS RETURN FROM EXILE

NYTimes

ARANYAPRATHET, Thailand, May 30 (AP)—Eighty-two Cambodian military men, most of them fliers, returned to their country voluntarily today after six weeks of exile in Thailand. Many who passed through this border village said they were going because they had left their wives and children behind.

"We're not afraid to go back to be ruled by the Khmer Rouge, even if we have to be forced to work in the jungles," said Group Capt. Kong Lach, who served in the Cambodian Air Force for 14 years before the Communist take-over of April 17.

The officer said he could not sleep since he had arrived in Thailand. "Most of us do not know the fate of our families, and if our families were with us we would not return to Cambodia," he told newsmen at the border bridge here.

Chai Suwan, the chief Cambodian immigration officer at the border village of Poipet, said the returnees would be taken to Phnom Penh by truck for "indoctrination."

"Everyone has to go through this before we let them see their families and they go to work for our country," he said.

MAY 31 1975