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CIA'S CLANDESTINE SERVICES HISTORIES OF CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT



HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS

These collections, centered on a theme or event and with supporting analysis, essays, video, audio, and photographs, are showcased in a booklet and DVD that are available to the academic realm and the public.

All of our Historical Collections are available on the CIA Library Publication page located at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/historical-collection-publications/> or contact us at HistoricalCollections@UCIA.gov.





The Historical Collections Division (HCD) of CIA's Information Management Services is responsible for executing the Agency's Historical Review Program. This program seeks to identify and declassify collections of documents that detail the Agency's analysis and activities relating to historically significant topics and events. HCD's goals include increasing the usability and accessibility of historical collections. HCD also develops release events and partnerships to highlight each collection and make it available to the broadest audience possible.

The mission of HCD is to:

- Promote an accurate, objective understanding of the information that has helped shape major US foreign policy decisions.
- Broaden access to lessons-learned, presenting historical material that gives greater understanding to the scope and context of past actions.
- Improve current decision-making and analysis by facilitating reflection on the impacts and effects arising from past foreign policy decisions.
- Showcase CIA's contributions to national security and provide the American public with valuable insight into the workings of its government.
- Demonstrate the CIA's commitment to the Open Government Initiative and its three core values: Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration.



The History Staff in the CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence fosters understanding of the Agency's history and its relationship to today's intelligence challenges by communicating instructive historical insights to the CIA workforce, other US Government agencies, and the public. CIA historians research topics on all aspects of Agency activities and disseminate their knowledge through publications, courses, briefings and Web-based products. They also work with other Intelligence Community historians on publication and education projects that highlight interagency approaches to intelligence issues. Lastly, the CIA History Staff conducts an ambitious program of oral history interviews that are invaluable for preserving institutional memories that are not captured in the documentary record.



The Special Collections Department is located on the third floor of the Eugene McDermott Library. The Library administration established the Special Collections Department in the mid-1970s to house rare books acquired by the library. In nearly thirty years Special Collections has grown to include the History of Aviation Collection, the Wineburgh Philatelic Research Library, and the Louise B. Belsterling Botanical Library. The History of Aviation Collection is the largest section of the department, consisting of a world-class aeronautical archive and library. The Wineburgh Philatelic Research Library is an outstanding regional resource for both philatelic and postal history. The Louise B. Belsterling Library holds an extraordinary collection of rare botanical books, including the library's oldest volume.



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Now-Declassified Secret Histories of Secret Operations

This booklet and CD represent the public release of some of the most closely held activities in CIA history concerning one of the most controversial operations in American history. Within these pages, you will find excerpts of the CIA's Clandestine Services Histories of Civil Air Transport (CAT) – the precursor to Air America. The Histories were written by Alfred T. Cox who was named the President of CAT when CIA acquired it, and guided both the covert operations side and the public commercial side of the airline for a number of years. As the name suggests, these histories are normally not released in any form to the public. In this case, time and circumstances allow us to release these particular products in concert with the 2011 CAT Association Reunion. You also will find pictures of the men and women who dedicated their lives to keeping the airline afloat through good times and bad. These people became a family in the early days and, although many of the founding members have passed on, the CAT community remains committed to the memory of the enormous accomplishments they and their families achieved with this airline.



The CSHP – Clandestine Services History Program

A Brief History

The four-volume history *Civil Air Transport: A Proprietary Airline* by Alfred T. Cox is representative of a larger collection of such works created during a decade-long period of intense historical study within the Clandestine Services of CIA. While there had been a small historical effort in the Agency since its founding in September 1947, such efforts focused on the Office of the DCI. No significant action had been taken to formally record and analyze the plans, programs, and activities of the lower echelon directorates that included the Deputy Director/ Plans [today's National Clandestine Service, long known as the Directorate of Operations or DO], the Directorate of Intelligence, the Directorate of Support, or the Directorate of Science and Technology.

With CIA's growing involvement in the Vietnam War in the early 1960s, senior CIA officers began to realize that a concerted effort should be made to record the Agency's actions in Southeast Asia, and the numerous considerations and policy decisions that specifically required the DD/P to undertake operations in the region. This recognition resulted in the assignment, in December 1963, of Dr. Kenneth K. Addicott, a senior DD/P officer, to collect historical

documents he felt the directorate needed to inform operations officers in Vietnam or those scheduled to go there. His efforts, continued through another year, so impressed DD/P seniors that they decided to extend this initial Southeast Asia focus to include the whole of Clandestine Services activities since the Agency's inception.

In January 1964, DD/P officer John E. Baker studied the concept of an extended series under the supervision of Philip K. Edwards, Chief, CIA Historical Staff. In May 1964, Baker produced two memoranda on his findings. First, he emphasized the necessity of forming a specialized team of researchers to examine the vast collection of DD/P records with a view to selecting and retaining, in a separate archive, those documents deemed of historic value. As to the objective given him by Edwards: "To consolidate a record of problems and solutions, failures and accomplishments, which will put the past into historical perspective as background for the current direction of Central Intelligence and provide a reservoir from which particular requirements for historical material can be satisfied," Baker responded with a second memorandum. He recommended that selected officers of the several Clandestine Services components, working under the guidance and direction of the CIA

History Staff, write studies on topics of extraordinary and immediate relevance suggested by a small Clandestine Services Historical Board that would meet quarterly. Baker concluded "...this proposal will work only if it has the clear and unequivocal endorsement of the DD/P." Creation of the CSHP and Its Relation to the History Staff.

By that fall, through the efforts of Baker and Addicott, and with the active interest of DD/P Richard Helms, the outlines of a program had taken shape, and on 30 November, the Clandestine Services Historical Program was firmly established with Addicott designated its first manager. The program's overall objective was to record the history of the first twenty years of the Clandestine Services, and then update that history in five-year intervals. The proposed historical series would consist of an eventual 500 individual papers and monographs. Four categories, deemed of most use, were chronological histories of overseas stations, the chronological and organizational histories of the headquarters components, and certain operational monographs that would detail programs and operations that the directorate determined were worthy of fuller treatment than could be given in chronological histories. In addition, the founders of the program decided that as certain previously prepared studies, operational reviews, and related documentary materials were located, and if they met the criteria as history, they would be incorporated "as is" into the program with the addition of a

historian's editorial note.

Deciding what papers and topics needed written coverage devolved to the individual Clandestine Services components acting under the guidance of the Clandestine Services Historical Board. While the Clandestine Services History Program remained focused on DD/P activities, the writers coordinated their histories with other Agency Directorates when those operations involved cross-directorate cooperation. This was especially true with the Directorate of Support which often worked closely with the DD/P. When the Clandestine Services History Program began, the Agency already had a small History Staff attached to the office of the Director of Central Intelligence. Five members of the Clandestine Services Research Group, in charge of the Clandestine Services Historical Program, were added to that existing History Staff. The officers to manage the component programs, and the writers to produce the histories, were to come from the ranks of Clandestine Services officers who were either between assignments or could be detailed for a short period of time to write on a particular subject, usually one with which they had operational experience. Soon after the program began, however, it became apparent that employing writers on a part-time, rotating basis would produce little meaningful history. Instead, the program would need officers able to serve full time for

continues...

considerable periods. Thus, it was decided that certain qualified officers about to retire, or who had already retired, would be selected as full-time writers.

The founders of the Clandestine Services History Program realized that a carefully researched and articulated story of the personnel and activities of most stations and headquarters units was a most sensitive product and devised strict controls for the protection of information. As a result, only two copies were made of each Clandestine Services history. The owning DD/P component held the original work, while one copy was stored in the DD/P vault. The only copy readily available for the cleared “need-to-know” reader was the original with access requiring supervisory approval. To obtain a document one had to fill out a circulation log with the name and location of each reader recorded, showing at any given moment if he possessed, or had read, each study.

Alfred T. Cox, Civil Air Transport, and the CSHP

In keeping with the intent of the initiators of the CSHP, that authors have familiarity – if not actual experience – with the operations described, Alfred T. Cox fit this criteria. Cox had served in the World War II Office of Strategic Services in Europe and the China Theater. In East Asia, he had met Maj. Gen. Claire L. Chennault, the commander of the 14th United States Army Air Force based in China for operation against Imperial Japan. In addition to strategic and tactical air campaigns against Japan, the 14th

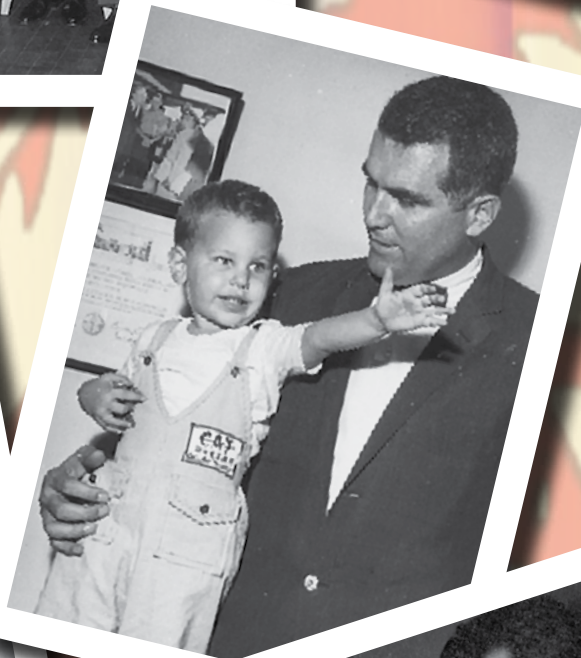
USAAF supported the training, logistical needs, and overall operations of Cox and his OSS colleagues in China and elsewhere in Southeast Asia through the end of World War II.

After the war, Cox maintained contact with Chennault who had formed, in 1946, a non-scheduled domestic airline in the Republic of China known as Civil Air Transport. Cox returned to government service in 1949 with the Office of Policy Coordination just as Chennault was urging US Government leaders to provide increased military and economic assistance to the Nationalist Republic of China under Chiang Kai-Shek in the struggle against Chinese Communist forces led by Mao Tse-Tung. When US policymakers agreed to provide increased support, and urged that OPC investigate lending assistance, Cox went to China undercover as Chennault’s special assistant to explore possibilities.

Civil Air Transport proved crucial to US efforts to assist the Chinese Nationalists, and Cox quickly became involved in day-to-day airline management and operations. When Chennault’s original CAT partner, Whiting Willauer, resigned in 1952, Cox was designated president of the airline, a position he held until 1 January 1955.

The four-volume history he wrote in 1967 is a first person perspective very much in keeping with the goals of those working in the Clandestine Services History Program.

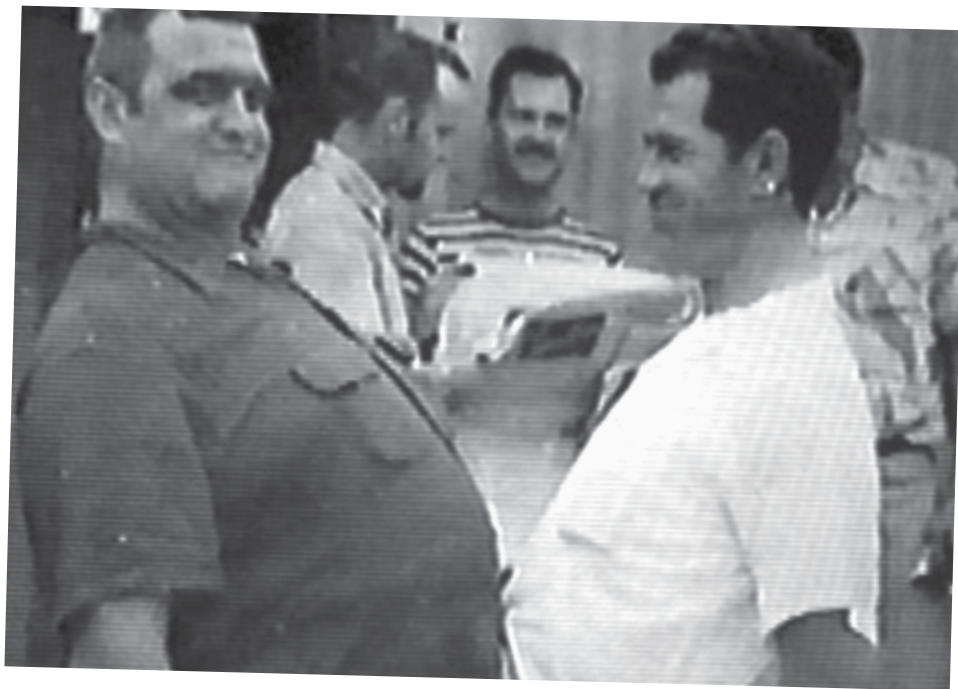
Alfred Cox, and the other writers assigned to the CSHP, fully accomplished the objectives begun in 1964, and the Clandestine Services History Program successfully completed its mission in 1974.





on the "Big Road"





Filling in the Gaps The Declassification of the Four Volume History

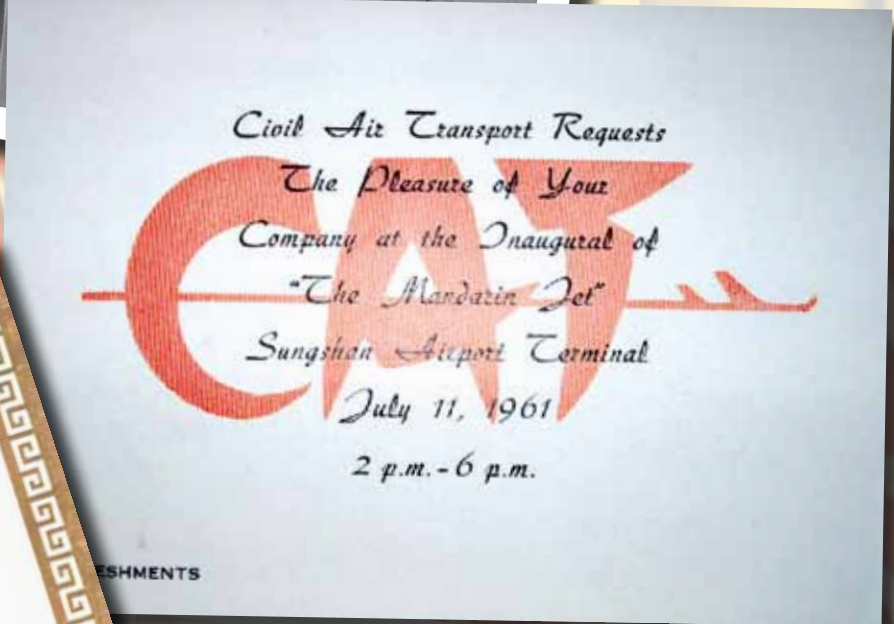
Civil Air Transport (CAT): A Proprietary Airline, 1945-1955

Historians hate gaps in documentary evidence because gaps in the record mean missing information that could make a difference in their work: the smoking gun or missing piece of the puzzle; the one piece of evidence that could make or break the author's thesis. Archivists hate gaps as well, because it is our mission to supply historians with as much information as possible for their research. This four volume history of CAT, along with documents previously released by CIA, help fill in those gaps so that a more complete and accurate picture of the relationship between CAT, Air America, and CIA can be painted. The history of Civil Air Transport is important because of CAT's involvement in the Cold War, and to uncover many accounts of heroic efforts by the men and women associated with this airline, as it performed its mission to fight communism. These people risked their lives and, in some cases, lost their lives carrying out missions that were classified and only now are beginning to surface. Their story needs to be told. The release of these histories sheds light on the official CIA point of view, and fills in some of those remaining gaps.

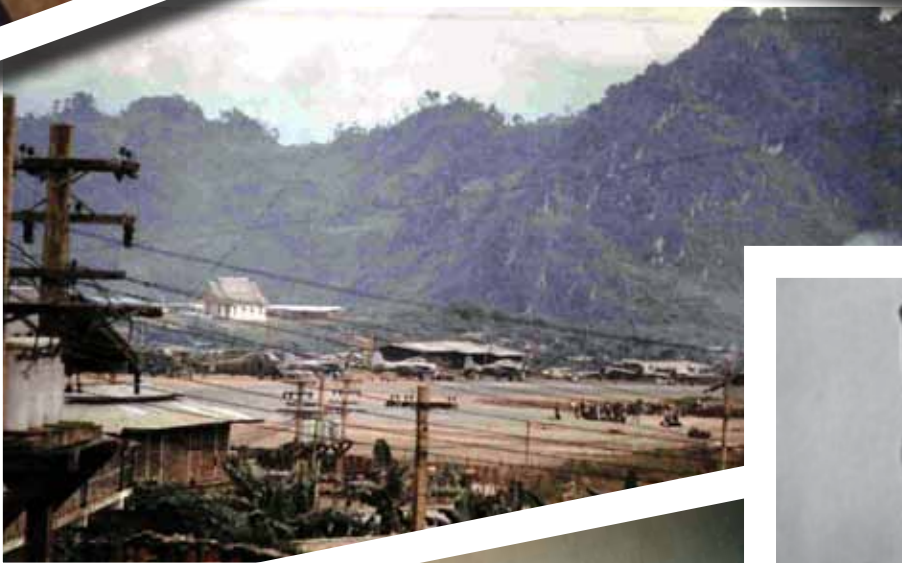
To understand the role CAT played in the Cold War, it is important to understand what was taking place in China during the time CAT operated there. The Chinese Communist forces were steadily overrunning the country while the Chinese Nationalists were struggling to hold them back. While much of this history is readily available, what has not been available - until now - is how CAT was used to support the Chinese Nationalist generals who were trying to hold the line against the Communist forces. Also unavailable have been details of how CIA purchased CAT and how they managed it from across the world; details of how CAT was used as an instrument of national policy and details concerning the key players in CAT's leadership.

These histories, although heavily redacted in areas, tell most of the story and fill in many of the gaps in our public knowledge. There are still voids in the record even with the declassification of this four-volume historical work. More than likely there will always be blanks because some information remains too sensitive to declassify. Still, this work presents new information which goes a long way in closing the information gaps, and thus, helps present a more complete picture of Civil Air Transport.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is twofold: first to recount the history of Civil Air Transport (CAT), with regard to its establishment, commercial operations, provision of air support for Agency and other U.S. national objectives, and the provision of cover for Agency personnel under which they could carry on other Agency activities. This is followed by a general discussion of the factors that should be considered in the selection of any other similar air support capability.

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bulk, were flown by the USAF, but on a number of occasions, particularly after the cease-fire, CAT was called upon to operate also.

It was evident very early in the BOOKLIFT operation that there would be increasing difficulties with the Japanese Government over CAT flying aircraft with Chinese Nationalist markings and with personnel carried as employees of a Chinese company. Very quickly a Delaware corporation was established, planes were registered as American-certificated aircraft, and the personnel assigned to Tachikawa, including the flight crews, were ostensibly picked up by this new American corporation. Every effort was made to keep both companies as separate as possible, both on the books and in their activities, so as to run a minimum risk of interference by both the Japanese Government and possibly by the Chinese Nationalist Government. The latter could conceivably complain that the transfer of the aircraft had been made without approval of the Chinese Civil Aviation authorities and the Minister of Communications. It was a device which probably would not have stood up if either country had chosen to make it an issue. The Japanese Government, still under the control of Supreme Commander Allied Pacific (SCAP),

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of the man in the field. It can be that there are two versions, at times the man in the field as presented herewith, is the viewpoint of the man in Headquarters charged with the administrative details of negotiations with CAT management and eventually purchase of the airline. Although the two stories appear to differ radically, neither is necessarily true. Relationships in the field between Agency personnel and CAT management were extraordinarily harmonious

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the casual onlooker. Various departments including the accounting department, were scattered throughout the Colony, mainly on Victoria Island, in a number of residential apartments, the only properties available at the time and quite expensive. The CAT employees, particularly the Chinese, had great difficulty in obtaining residences for themselves and their families, and then usually at an exorbitant price. Eventually CAT was able to obtain almost the entire ground floor of a residential apartment house located at some distance from the business center of Hong Kong, but the location proved to be quite worthwhile, and it was possible to concentrate most of the CAT offices at that location. The cellar was also renovated to provide additional office space.

Consideration had been given to moving the CAT headquarters and its central offices to Taipei, and Chennault, who felt uncomfortable in the British atmosphere of Hong Kong, was somewhat in favor of such a move. There were, however, many things that militated against this move at that time. The future of Taiwan was extremely uncertain, particularly in view of the fact that U.S. national policy was still rather strongly opposed to the Generalissimo and the KMT

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by Mr. Wisner. 27/

On 10 October a quick move which at that time was the CAT. The fall of Canton preparations were under way to much material as possible to Hong contained a large amount of stores as equipment, and the supply barge departed on the 12th. Willauer and Cox also returned to Canton on the 13th, the day on which the Communists moved in and took over the city. There were some last-minute problems as the coolies at the airfield, trying that their source of livelihood was leaving, tried to prevent the departure of the last aircraft. Willauer made a quick trip to Canton, and by means of bonus payments was able to effect the release of the planes. Chennault and Cox proceeded to Taipei on 15 October, and were provided quarters at the Generalissimo's guest house in the sulphur springs area to the west of the city. The Generalissimo granted Chennault an interview on the afternoon of the same day. Chennault and Cox had agreed that it would be better for Chennault to go unaccompanied because of his singular personal

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