

## ML.85.The Slow Route to Tell-Two

Madrid, ah yes, Madrid. RON'd there in early December '58 enroute to Incirlik on a C-124 from Forbes, via Dover and via Lajes, Portugal. The airplane was chock full of FAK's (fly away kits) to support the inception of the 'Tell Two' operation at Adana/Incirlik. We had dinner late – you ate dinner late in Madrid or you didn't eat – at La Botin's, famous for their roast suckling pig, then enjoyed a bit of dancing at the Pasa Pogo and Casablanca night clubs.

I was in the cockpit when we approached Torrejon and the C-124 AC turned to the flight engineer and said, "find a write up. We are staying here overnight." That was after uncountable hours in 'Old Shaky' (a well-deserved nick name!!!) One hundred eighty-five knots, unpressurized, eating flight lunches, learning how to play bridge and 'sleeping,' if you could with the noise and shaking.

From there we flew to Athens for a short stay and fuel stop, but with time to engage a taxi and climb up to the Parthenon. Then on to Incirlik. We felt like we had been born on a C-124. Funny (not), SAC wanted us there ASAP as we were the third 'Tell Two' crew to begin this new mission so they sent us on a C-124! The other two airplanes had been flown over by two guys who we're senior to my Captain A/C.



The next morning I went to the chow hall, where they had German expats as cooks, and ordered one dozen eggs. The old German looked at me with raised eyebrow, said "Ja wohl," and I filled the void. Wonderful. Cold storage eggs they were and the next day I got the infamous 'turkey trots.'

I spent almost six months on that deployment and could provide all the details from the inception on. How we set up the crew alert schedule, mission execution, inflight procedures etc., details I know have never before been discussed. Our SAC Det Commander was a crusty old WW 2 Colonel who taught me some very valuable leadership lessons which I employed throughout my career.

We had a civilian tech rep supporting the special equipment and providing very basic analysis after a successful collection mission. He was there from State College, PA under a contract the government had with the Singer Sewing machine company, and had the patience to educate an interested novice. He was a wonderful friend and a terrific instructor for my later Shemya experience where we collected both photo and radar data at the Soviet Far East ICBM impact area on Sakhalin.

- Reg Urschler