

**Headquarters
North American Air Defense Command
Ent Air Force Base
Colorado Springs, Colorado**


16 December 1958

SUBJECT: WS-117L Infrared Satellite Program (S)

**TO: Joint Chiefs of Staff
Washington 25, D. C.**

1. On 30 April 1958, CINCNORAD wrote the Chief of Staff USAF, as Executive Agent for NORAD, recommending the accelerated development of an alternate means of detection for ICBM and suggested that a possible solution might be available in the infrared version of the WS-117L Project.

2. Since that time we have been briefed on this subject by the staff of the Ballistics Missiles Division of the Air Force and have also discussed it with Mr. Roy W. Johnson and his staff from the Advanced Research Project Agency. As a result of these discussions, it seems evident that the development of the WS-117L infrared tracking system is a feasible and practical possibility.


It is essential that an alternate means of early warning of approaching ballistic missiles, complementary to radar, be developed. If the infrared version of WS-117L lives up to its design specifications, it will meet our requirements in providing an independent system of high accuracy, reliability and immunity to known countermeasures.

4. It is strongly recommended that the development of the WS-117L infrared tracking system be treated as a matter of the highest urgency.

Copy Furnished:
C/S USAF as Exec.
Agent for NORAD

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