

HANDLE VIA **BYEMAN**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTONCONTROL SYSTEM  
URP-A-3-4  
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OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

30 April 1969



## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

**SUBJECT:** Conversation with Dave Packard on ways of replacing the reconnaissance off North Korea which was being done by the EC-121s on 24 April

In the last day or so I have had several conversations with Dave Packard concerning my visit to the West Coast and my impressions about the space activity which we have going on out there. I said I wished that we were in as good shape in the tactical air force as we seem to be in our space program.

I mentioned specifically the request that had been received to do some collection work over North Korea with the Thresher/Reaper payload, how this request was processed, the overflight made, and the results read out to NSA in a matter of a very few hours. I said I believed this kind of activity ought to be looked at as a possible replacement for the EC-121s. He encouraged me to look into it further. I told him that with a combination of U-2s, drones and satellites we ought to be able to cover this requirement at a much lower cost than providing a whole armada of ships which would be required to provide continuous CAP over the EC-121s.

Meanwhile, Messrs. Laird and Packard have asked DDRE to see what can be done in a very short time and over a period of six months or so. Can we provide this reconnaissance by other means. Our staff, DDRE, and the Joint Reconnaissance Office are working together to see what can be produced in relatively short order.

Meanwhile, Mr. Laird has asked the JCS to see what can be done to reduce the requirements for such reconnaissance; i.e., is it really needed; what can be done with unmanned vehicles; how much can be done by surface ships. I gather from NSA that a good amount of COMINT can be collected from their ground stations

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although they do not get good coverage over the northern half of North Korea. If we had high altitude drones and perhaps one or two ships, I believe we can get the coverage we need. Our satellites will be able to provide considerable ELINT coverage, although their time over target is not as long as we would like.

M.L.

John L. McLucas

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