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OXCARD RECONNAISSANCE
 OF
 NORTH KOREA

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GROUP 1
 Excluded from automatic
 downgrading and declassification

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I. REQUIREMENT

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A. Belligerent pronouncements by North Korean civil and military leaders, the stepped-up pace and expanded scope of North Korean probes along the demilitarized zone (DMZ), coupled with North Korean efforts to establish the structure for later guerrilla operations in the Republic of Korea have established a critical requirement for accurate intelligence to form a valid estimate of their intentions and capabilities.

B. Satellite photo missions have not provided adequate imagery of North Korea to satisfy this requirement. Ground collection of intelligence is becoming more difficult. The resulting paucity of hard intelligence has made it extremely (difficult, if not impossible, to develop the necessary valid estimates of capabilities and intentions.

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II. OPERATIONAL CONCEPT

A. Aerial reconnaissance of North Korea will be accomplished using OXCART operational BLACK SHIELD assets now in place at Kadena Air Base. Capability now exists to conduct North Korean operational missions on a twenty-four hour alert generation concept.

B. Missions are planned to cover maximum number of priority North Korean targets on each overflight. The typical route (attached) will allow three (3) photographic passes over North Korea and utilize two aerial refuelings. Routes using a single air refueling will allow two (2) photographic passes. All routes provide flexibility to adjust photographic flight lines to meet changing weather and/or target requirements. Penetration of denied territory will be accomplished at 76,000 feet or above and at Mach 3.1 [redacted] Emergency/alternate bases have been designated within South Korea in the event of emergency or missed air refueling. In all cases, launch and recovery of the OXCART vehicle is planned for Kadena Air Base.

C. [redacted]

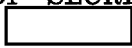
[redacted] will be accomplished in accordance with existing JCS/JRC BLACK SHIELD procedures.

(D. Use of OXCART for overflight of North Korea will not degrade existing capability for overflight of North Vietnam.)


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III. AIR DEFENSE ANALYSIS

A. There are thirteen known SA-2 surface-to-air missile sites in North Korea. 



 It should be noted that although the radar environment of North Vietnam and North Korea are similar, the number of aircraft targets and the electromagnetic jamming environment now prevailing in North Vietnam do not exist in North Korea.] Thus the possibility of a SAM weapons reaction from the North Korean SA-2 system is greater than that in North Vietnam. The OXCART flight line over the SAM-defended area will be flown at an altitude above 80,000 feet at a speed of Mach 3.2 (1840 Kts) to provide maximum invulnerability. There are a number, more than 30, of Soviet SA-2 C-band and possibly S-band sites in the Vladivostok, USSR area. The furthest south of the known sites are at 4242N/13301E and at 4252N/13219E, approximately 75 miles from the North Korean border.

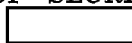
B. There are no aircraft in the North Korean air order of battle that are a threat to the OXCART vehicle. The Soviet FIREBAR aircraft has an intercept capability against the OXCART vehicle. The Consolidated Air Defense Order of Battle (CADOB)

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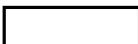
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carries 21 FIREBAR aircraft at the Spassk Dalnij East Airfield (443643N/1325320E). Considering the TALL KING early warning coverage, it is possible for the FIREBAR aircraft to react to the OXCART vehicle. This field is located approximately 175 miles from the closest OXCART flight path and 125 miles north of the North Korea/USSR border.

C. In summary, although a somewhat higher total threat potential exists for the proposed mission, as compared to North Vietnam, the surprise element may prevent its effective application during early missions.

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IV. CLIMATOLOGY

A. North Korea: September is the beginning of a transition period from the cloudy days of summer to the dry, less cloudy days of winter. In September, there is an average of 5 days of Category II or better weather. In October and November, there are 8 days of such weather in the northern interior area and 10 days in the coastal and southern interior areas. The best conditions occur in December with an average of 13 days of such weather for all areas except the northwest coastal region. There the average is 11 days.

B. Kunsan: Weather conditions are 1500 foot ceilings and 3 miles visibility or better 95% of the time for the months of September thru December. Early morning ground fog is typical during the period but does not affect aircraft operations. Prevailing surface winds are northwest at 5 knots.

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V. COVER

The cover plan for North Korean overflights will be essentially the same as the approved cover plan for BLACK SHIELD. However, in the event of a contingency requiring an official response, within the provisions of the approved BLACK SHIELD plan, the aircraft will be described as an unarmed reconnaissance aircraft engaged in surveillance of activities in the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea. Intentional overflight of North Korea will be denied.

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