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(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

13 April 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs

Deputy Secretary of Defense

Under Secretary of State for
Political Affairs

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: "H" Camera Photography of North Vietnam

1. The attached document is a proposal to use an IDEALIST U-2R to obtain standoff photography of coastal North Vietnam.

2. Higher authority approved a request of the Washington Special Action Group, Working Group C, to test the capability of the "H" camera to obtain high resolution photography of North Vietnam. Subsequently, this mission was accomplished by a U-2 [redacted]. However, the haze and cloud conditions encountered during this transitional weather period, combined with some anomalies in the film processing, produced less than optimum results. The feasibility of operating [redacted] was demonstrated as well as the capability of the "H" camera to obtain coverage of significant portions of the North Vietnamese coastal areas.

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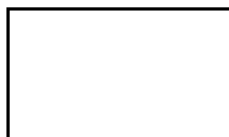
NRO review(s) completed.

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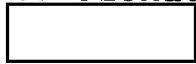
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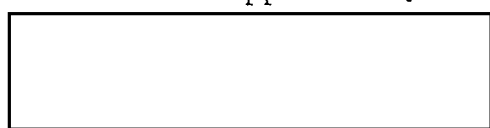


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3. It is felt that two additional flights should be flown with better weather conditions to provide a realistic and valid test of the capability of the "H" camera to obtain standoff photography of North Vietnam.

4. It is requested that the 40 Committee approve two flights to verify the capability of the "H" camera for this application.



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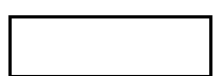
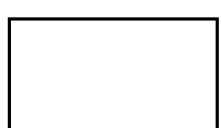
John L. McLucas

Attachment - 1
Proposal Book

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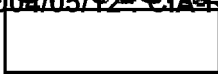
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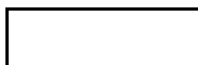
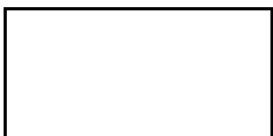


"H" CAMERA
PHOTOGRAPHY OF
NORTH VIETNAM

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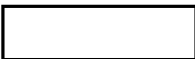
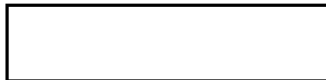
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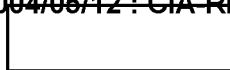


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I. JUSTIFICATION

The Washington Special Action Group, Working Group C, has directed the development of photographic requirements for Indochina subsequent to the cease fire agreement.

Part of this is a priority requirement for high resolution photography of the North Vietnamese coastal areas. Since overflight of North Vietnam is prohibited, an IDEALIST U-2R with the "H" camera represents a flexible, responsive capability to obtain this coverage.

This mission, to evaluate the capability of the "H" camera system to obtain this photography, has been requested by the WSAG, Working Group C.

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IV. CLIMATOLOGY

Coastal North Vietnam

A. GENERAL:

The transition period to a southwest monsoon begins in April and becomes southwest by the end of May. Low level winds in early April tend to be unorganized but prevail from the southwest by months end. A more westerly surface trajectory or a weakening of the east wind component tend to decrease coastal cloudiness in late March and April.

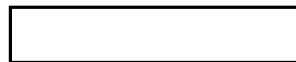
B. CLOUDINESS:

Mean cloudiness is near 80 percent in April. As a general rule, cloudiness is greatest near the coast during this month being heaviest north of 19° N. Aircraft flying at high altitudes would be expected to encounter clear to scattered conditions at individual targets on 2 to 5 days north of 19° N, and on 6 to 10 days south of 19° N.

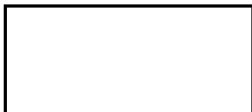
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