

~~SECRET~~

~~AIR FORCE EYES ONLY~~  
~~LIMITED DISTRIBUTION~~

DECLASSIFIED BY AF/HOH  
IAW E.O. 13526  
DATE: 2010/1/30

PROJECT  
C ontemporary  
H istorical  
E xamination of  
C urrent  
O perations  
REPORT

APPROVED FOR  
PUBLIC RELEASE

# THE EC-121 INCIDENT

## 15 APRIL 1969

## 15 MARCH 1970

HQ PACAF  
Directorate, Tactical Evaluation  
CHECO Division

~~SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED~~  
~~NOT RELEASABLE TO~~  
~~FOREIGN NATIONALS~~  
~~The information contained in~~  
~~this document will not be~~  
~~disclosed to foreign nationals~~  
~~or their representatives.~~

Prepared by:  
  
LT COL WILLIAM C. BARNES

COPY 0009 OF 142 COPIES

70-DOTE-00044

~~SECRET~~

~~AIR FORCE EYES ONLY~~  
~~LIMITED DISTRIBUTION~~

# Report Documentation Page

Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE <b>MAR 1970</b>		2. REPORT TYPE <b>N/A</b>		3. DATES COVERED <b>-</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>The EC-121 Incident 15 April 1969</b>				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>HQ PACAF Directorate, Tactical Evaluation CHECO Division</b>				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release, distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>SAR</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>64</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET



# UNCLASSIFIED

## PROJECT CHECO REPORTS

The counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare environment of Southeast Asia has resulted in the employment of USAF airpower to meet a multitude of requirements. The varied applications of airpower have involved the full spectrum of USAF aerospace vehicles, support equipment, and manpower. As a result, there has been an accumulation of operational data and experiences that, as a priority, must be collected, documented, and analyzed as to current and future impact upon USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine.

Fortunately, the value of collecting and documenting our SEA experiences was recognized at an early date. In 1962, Hq USAF directed CINCPACAF to establish an activity that would be primarily responsive to Air Staff requirements and direction, and would provide timely and analytical studies of USAF combat operations in SEA.

Project CHECO, an acronym for Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations, was established to meet this Air Staff requirement. Managed by Hq PACAF, with elements at Hq 7AF and 7AF/13AF, Project CHECO provides a scholarly, "on-going" historical examination, documentation, and reporting on USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine in PACOM. This CHECO report is part of the overall documentation and examination which is being accomplished. Along with the other CHECO publications, this is an authentic source for an assessment of the effectiveness of USAF airpower in PACOM.



MILTON B. ADAMS, Major General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

1950



~~SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS PACIFIC AIR FORCES  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96553



REPLY TO  
ATTN OF

DOTEC

15 March 1970

SUBJECT

Project CHECO Report, "The EC-121 Incident, 15 April 1969" (U)

TO SEE DISTRIBUTION PAGE

1. Attached is a TOP SECRET NOFORN document. It shall be transported, stored, safeguarded, and accounted for in accordance with applicable security directives. Each page is marked according to its contents. The information contained in this document will not be disclosed to foreign nationals or their representatives. Retain or destroy in accordance with AFR 205-1. Do not return.
2. Reproduction of this document in whole or in part is prohibited except with the permission of the office of origin.
3. This letter does not contain classified information and may be declassified if attachment is removed from it.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Warren H. Peterson", is written over the typed name.

WARREN H. PETERSON, Colonel, USAF  
Chief, CHECO Division  
Directorate, Tactical Evaluation  
DCS/Operations

1 Atch  
Proj CHECO Rprt TS/NF/AFE0/  
LIMDIS, 15 Mar 70

~~SECRET~~

[The page contains extremely faint and illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the document. The text is scattered across the page and is not readable.]



# UNCLASSIFIED

## DISTRIBUTION LIST

1. SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
  - a. SAFAA . . . . . 1(1)
  - b. SAFLL . . . . . 1(2)
  - c. SAFOI . . . . . 2(3,4)
2. HEADQUARTERS USAF
  - a. AFBSA . . . . . 1(5)
  - b. AFCCS
    - (1) AFCCSSA . . . . . 1(6)
    - (2) AFCVC . . . . . 1(7)
    - (3) AFCAV . . . . . 1(8)
    - (4) AFCHO . . . . . 2(9,10)
  - c. AFCSA
    - (1) AFCSAG . . . . . 1(11)
    - (2) AFCSAMI . . . . . 1(12)
  - d. AFGOA . . . . . 2(13,14)
  - e. AFIGO
    - (1) AFISI . . . . . 3(15-17)
    - (2) AFISP . . . . . 1(18)
  - f. AFMSG . . . . . 1(19)
  - g. AFNIN
    - (1) AFNIEA . . . . . 1(20)
    - (2) AFNINA . . . . . 1(21)
    - (3) AFNINCC . . . . . 1(22)
    - (4) AFNINED . . . . . 4(23-26)
  - h. AFAAC . . . . . 1(27)
    - (1) AFAMAI . . . . . 1(28)
  - i. AFODC
    - (1) AFOAP . . . . . 1(29)
    - (2) AFOAPS . . . . . 1(30)
    - (3) AFOCC . . . . . 1(31)
    - (4) AFOCE . . . . . 1(32)
    - (5) AFOMO . . . . . 1(33)
  - j. AFPDC
    - (1) AFPDPSS . . . . . 1(34)
    - (2) AFPMDG . . . . . 1(35)
    - (3) AFPDW . . . . . 1(36)
  - k. AFRDC . . . . . 1(37)
    - (1) AFRDD . . . . . 1(38)
    - (2) AFRDQ . . . . . 1(39)
    - (3) AFRDQRC . . . . . 1(40)
    - (4) AFRDR . . . . . 1(41)
  - l. AFSDC
    - (1) AFSLP . . . . . 1(42)
    - (2) AFSME . . . . . 1(43)
    - (3) AFSMS . . . . . 1(44)
    - (4) AFSPD . . . . . 1(45)
    - (5) AFSSS . . . . . 1(46)
    - (6) AFSTP . . . . . 1(47)
  - m. AFTAC . . . . . 1(48)
  - n. AFXDC . . . . . 1(49)
    - (1) AFXDO . . . . . 1(50)
    - (2) AFXDOC . . . . . 1(51)
    - (3) AFXDOD . . . . . 1(52)
    - (4) AFXDOL . . . . . 1(53)
    - (5) AFXOP . . . . . 1(54)
    - (6) AFXOSL . . . . . 1(55)
    - (7) AFXOSN . . . . . 1(56)
    - (8) AFXOSO . . . . . 1(57)
    - (9) AFXOSS . . . . . 1(58)
    - (10) AFXOSV . . . . . 1(59)
    - (11) AFXOTR . . . . . 1(60)
    - (12) AFXOTW . . . . . 1(61)
    - (13) AFXOTZ . . . . . 1(62)
    - (14) AFXOXY . . . . . 1(63)
    - (15) AFXPD . . . . . 6(64-69)
      - (a) AFXPPGS . . . . . 3(70-72)



# UNCLASSIFIED

## 3. MAJOR COMMANDS

### a. TAC

- (1) HEADQUARTERS
  - (a) DO . . . . . 1(73)
  - (b) DPL . . . . . 2(74,75)
  - (c) DOCC . . . . . 1(76)
  - (d) DOREA . . . . . 1(77)
  - (e) DIO . . . . . 1(78)

### b. SAC

- (1) HEADQUARTERS
  - (a) DOPL . . . . . 1(79)
  - (b) DPLF . . . . . 1(80)
  - (c) DM . . . . . 1(81)
  - (d) DI . . . . . 1(82)
  - (e) OA . . . . . 1(83)
  - (f) HI . . . . . 1(84)

### c. MAC

- (1) HEADQUARTERS
  - (a) MAOID . . . . . 1(85)
  - (b) MAOCO . . . . . 1(86)
  - (c) MACHO . . . . . 1(87)
  - (d) MACOA . . . . . 1(88)

### d. ADC

- (1) HEADQUARTERS
  - (a) ADODC . . . . . 1(89)
  - (b) ADOOP . . . . . 1(90)
  - (c) ADLCC . . . . . 1(91)

### e. ATC

- (1) HEADQUARTERS
  - (a) ATXPP-X . . . . . 1(92)

### f. AFLC

- (1) HEADQUARTERS
  - (a) MCVSS . . . . . 1(93)

### g. AFSC

#### (1) HEADQUARTERS

- (a) SCLAP . . . . . 3(94-96)
- (b) SCS-6 . . . . . 1(97)
- (c) SCGCH . . . . . 2(98,99)
- (d) SCTPL . . . . . 1(100)
- (e) ASD(ASJT) . . . . . 1(101)
- (f) ESD(ESO) . . . . . 1(102)
- (g) RADC(EMOEL) . . . . . 2(103,104)
- (h) ADTC(ADGT) . . . . . 1(105)

### h. USAFSS

#### (1) HEADQUARTERS

- (a) XR . . . . . 1(106)
- (b) CHO . . . . . 1(107)

### i. AAC

#### (1) HEADQUARTERS

- (a) ALDOC-A . . . . . 2(108,109)

### j. USAFSO

#### (1) HEADQUARTERS

- (a) COH . . . . . 1(110)

### k. PACAF

#### (1) HEADQUARTERS

- (a) DP . . . . . 1(111)
- (b) DI . . . . . 1(112)
- (c) DPL . . . . . 2(113,114)
- (d) CSH . . . . . 1(115)
- (e) DOTEK . . . . . 1(116)
- (f) DE . . . . . 1(117)
- (g) DM . . . . . 1(118)
- (h) DOTEK . . . . . 5(119-123)

#### (2) AIR FORCES

- (a) 7AF(DOAC) . . . . . 2(124,125)

# UNCLASSIFIED

## 1. USAFE

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

- (a) ODC/OA. . . . . 1(126)
- (b) ODC/OTAD. . . . . 1(127)
- (c) OOT . . . . . 1(128)
- (d) XDC . . . . . 1(129)

## 4. SEPARATE OPERATING AGENCIES

- a. ACIC(ACOMC) . . . . . 2(130,131)
- b. AFRES(AFRXPL) . . . . . 2(132,133)
- c. USAFA
  - (1) CMT . . . . . 1(134)
  - (2) DFH . . . . . 1(135)
- d. AU
  - (1) ACSC-SA . . . . . 1(136)
  - (2) AUL(SE)-69-108. . . . . 2(137,138)
  - (3) ASI(ASD-1). . . . . 1(139)
  - (4) ASI(ASHAF-A). . . . . 2(140,141)
- e. AFAFC(EXH). . . . . 1(142)



# UNCLASSIFIED

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
FOREWORD .....	viii
CHAPTER I - RECONNAISSANCE MISSION .....	1
Scheduling .....	2
Escort .....	3
CHAPTER II - THE SHOOTDOWN .....	6
Air Force Reaction .....	7
CHAPTER III- THE SEARCH EFFORT .....	10
CHAPTER IV - FORCE BUILDUP .....	14
Rationale .....	14
Protection for PARPRO .....	18
Tactical Air Deployment .....	22
SAC Punitive Plan .....	26
Air Defense .....	22
CHAPTER V - THE CASE FOR JOINT COMMAND AND CONTROL .....	29
FOOTNOTES	
Chapter I .....	32
Chapter II .....	32
Chapter III .....	33
Chapter IV .....	33
Chapter V .....	35
GLOSSARY .....	36
FIGURES	<u>Follows Page</u>
1. 5th AF Posture Japan/Okinawa 142100Z Apr 69 .....	6
2. SAR Posture 150500Z Apr 69 .....	8
3. SAR POSTURE 160700Z Apr 69 .....	8
4. Korea Posture 150638Z Apr 69 .....	22

1950-1951

[Faint, illegible text covering the main body of the page]

1950-1951



~~SECRET~~

FOREWORD

This CHECO report addresses the events leading to the shootdown of the Navy EC-121, immediate U.S. Air Force reaction, search efforts, and retaliatory planning. The insidious nature of the current North Korean Government continues to pose a serious threat to the security of South Korea, and to the policy of the United States. Its actions, while not directed by an overall Asian Communist policy, must be evaluated in relation to the threat imposed by all Asian Communist countries. Results obtained from incidents such as the destruction of the EC-121 have in the past given North Korea considerable prestige and recognition among Communist nations, and are used to justify its requests for more economic and military aid. There are no indications the policy will change. On-going studies in the realm of Joint Command and Control are being conducted within all military services in the Pacific Command to optimize the Allied posture to counter North Korean tactics. A lectern for surveillance, these plans could be tested again.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

## CHAPTER I

### RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS

With ideologies in conflict throughout the world, U.S. Air Force authorities continue their vigilance in devising new methods to collect information which may be evaluated for intelligence purposes related to the United States national security. Of special significance in the overall reconnaissance effort is the collection and evaluation of electronic data.

Certain types of medium frequency (MF) electronic emissions and transmissions can be monitored best by airborne equipment. Other types can be gathered more effectively by ships operating on station for more extensive periods of time.

The United States Air Force has been conducting reconnaissance missions in the Far East and, specifically, in the Sea of Japan area since 1950. In 1969, there were approximately 190 such missions in the Sea of Japan through March--all without incident, without threat, and without any warning. All of these reconnaissance missions were coordinated, evaluated, and approved by appropriate military and senior civilian authorities of the U.S. Government.<sup>1/</sup>

As part of the Peacetime Aerial Reconnaissance Program (PARPRO), the Navy flew regularly scheduled missions off the coast of North Korea. The

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

call sign for this mission was BEGGAR SHADOW. No escort had been provided this mission prior to the shutdown of an EC-121M on 15 April 1969.

#### Scheduling

To conduct BEGGAR SHADOW missions, or before flying any reconnaissance missions of this type, concurrence was required at all levels of command in each of the services, as well as by the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Final approval was required at the highest level. After approval had been obtained, any changes, such as requests for armed escort, also required approval through the chain of command. If time or circumstances prevented this, any echelon of command could cancel the mission and later report the reason for this action.<sup>2/</sup>

To utilize the PARPRO resources within PACOM, Fifth Air Force sponsored a Sensitive Area Reconnaissance Scheduling Meeting at the beginning of each month. These meetings were chaired by a representative from the CINCPAC Joint Reconnaissance Center and were attended by representatives from the operational units performing the missions involved. The principal objective of these meetings was to prevent duplication of effort and avoid omitting specific areas of concern. Additionally, any missions requiring coordination among the services, such as fighter escort and tanker support, would be coordinated at these meetings. Their geographic area of interest was WESTPAC North. The schedules derived from these meetings were key punched and transmitted by Automatic Digital Network

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(AUTODIN) to the PACAF Directorate of Systems (DOCS) where they were printed and distributed to the operational units and command authorities.

Escort

As an immediate result of the Pueblo incident on 23 January 1968, the reconnaissance of North Korea (N.K.) was intensified.<sup>3/</sup> The USAF employed its RC-130 aircraft (nicknamed COMMANDO ROYAL). The COMMANDO ROYAL and BEGGAR SHADOW missions were similar. Their tracks in the vicinity of the Demilitarized Zone were well covered by friendly radar which could provide warning of impending intercept by North Korean aircraft. Some of the ROYAL and BEGGAR missions on tracks farther north, operated well outside the capability of friendly radar for a large portion of their missions, and well within the N.K. air defense environment.<sup>4/</sup>

The threat to the safety of the COMMANDO ROYAL mission was recognized within PACAF and continuous appraisals of North Korean intentions were made as indicated in the correspondence of 21 August 1968 from the PACOM Air Defense Analysis Facility to PACAF's Directorate of Operations Plans:<sup>5/</sup>

*"(U) In response to your request for an estimate of current threat to COMMANDO ROYAL tracks C3223, C-3224, and C3225, the following evaluation is submitted:*

*"a. (S) The three specified tracks generally remain a safe distance from possible North Korean Air Force (NKAF) reaction except for their position at and near the eastern boundary of the DMZ.*

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Overland they are only five miles from communist territory, and further east and northeast they are only twenty miles offshore, over the Sea of Japan. In this area they are vulnerable to communist reaction.

"b. (S) The over 400 MIGs in NKAF now include over 60 MIG-21s, most of which have been introduced since the Pueblo incident. There are also 11 primary GCI sites, three of which would be tracking the U.S. aircraft at any one time. Further, there are a total of 17 more Early Warning radar sites throughout North Korea that maintain constant surveillance of all U.S. and ROK flying patterns. This force has been training in air defense over the same area for over 13 years and they have the capability to launch any number of MIGs against real or imagined threats to their territory at any time with little or no warning.

"c. (S) The current political pressure being applied against the United States by North Korea represents a more tenuous hazard to U.S. peripheral reconnaissance than the prevailing North Korean military capability. The increasing tempo of armed incidents between ground forces in the DMZ and the conditions inhibiting the return of the Pueblo crew are indicators of hostility. If the U.S. resumes bombing of North Vietnam, the North Koreans could undertake another series of hostile acts, particularly against U.S. activity near their border.

"d. (S) While the NKAF has not yet attempted an intercept against these COMMANDO ROYAL tracks, North Korea still has the political initiative and the military capability to selectively react at any time. A diminution of escort that suggests relaxation of vigilance could provide the opportunity for further aggressive acts by North Korea."

As a result of the appraisals of the risk involved to COMMANDO ROYAL, Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) committed considerable resources to provide fighter protection for these missions. The procedures for supporting

~~SECRET~~

these missions with fighters and their tanker support were formalized in 5AF ADVON OPORD 501-68. Initially, escort was provided for the entire track, but as tension lessened this was reduced so that in addition to strip alert, "during daylight hours all missions must be covered by fighter escort or fighter CAP while over water on the Eastern leg."<sup>6/</sup>

At the time of the BEGGAR SHADOW shutdown, COMMANDO ROYAL was being escorted on random occasions during its entire track and, at all other times, the five-minute air defense ground alert unit was prepared to launch two aircraft to provide airborne escort, if the COMMANDO ROYAL RC-130 were to go over water on the Eastern leg.<sup>7/</sup>

The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command, had canceled the requirement for escort on 9 February 1969. PACAF unilaterally continued escort requirements on certain COMMANDO ROYAL missions which flew over water north of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). This was the area determined to be the most sensitive. Other COMMANDO ROYAL missions, as well as the BEGGAR SHADOW, were being flown in the Sea of Japan without escort.<sup>8/</sup>

~~SECRET~~

CHAPTER II  
THE SHOOTDOWN

A U.S. Navy EC-121M BEGGAR SHADOW mission, 52E109, with 31 crew members aboard (30 USN, 1 USMC), departed Atsugi, Japan, on a reconnaissance mission over the Sea of Japan, on 14 April 1969 at 2159Z. Its estimated time of arrival at the destination of Osan, Korea was 150639Z.<sup>1/</sup>

The requirements of this mission placed the aircraft in a racetrack orbit over international waters from a point 50 NM east of Kunson, North Korea, to a point 50 NM east of Choungjin, North Korea. During this phase of the mission, it would be well within the ground-controlled intercept (GCI) radar and air defense interceptor environment of North Korea. Additionally, on the northern end of the racetrack, the EC-121M would be well within the air defense capability of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The task to be accomplished required that the BEGGAR SHADOW aircraft remain in this environment for five hours and eleven minutes.<sup>2/</sup> During most of this period, the EC-121M would be outside the range of friendly radar and would have to rely on other means for warning of interception.<sup>3/</sup> Due to proximity of the BEGGAR SHADOW track to the North Korean interceptor bases, and because of the speed differential of the EC-121 and MIG-21, it would have been impossible for BEGGAR SHADOW to have outrun or outdistanced a determined attack.

Warning of impending intercept, Condition 3 (150 NM), was issued at 0439 on 15 April 1969, and BEGGAR SHADOW appeared to have heeded

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

5AF POSTURE JAPAN/OKINAWA 142100Z APR 69

<u>BASE</u>	<u>TYPE ACFT</u>	<u>POSS</u>	<u>NUC ALERT</u>	<u>CONVT ALERT</u>
Misawa	F-4C	25	-	-
Yokota	F-4C	24	-	-
Kadena	F-105	14	-	-
Naha	F-102	19	-	2 on 5 Min 4 on 30 Min 8 on 1 Hr
Naha	F-105	<u>2</u>	-	-
TOTAL		84		14

KOREA

Suwon	F-102	12	-	4 on 5 Min
Osan	F-106	16	-	4 on 5 Min 6 on 30 Min 5 on 1 Hr
Osan	F-4C	22	6	2 on 15 Min
Kunsan	F-4C	20	8	0
Kunsan	F-100	39	-	8 on 15 Min
Kwang-Ju	F-105	<u>10</u>	-	<u>4</u> on 15 Min
TOTAL		119	14	40

FIGURE 1

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

(Fig. 1 Cont'd.)

ROKAF

<u>BASE</u>	<u>TYPE ACFT</u>	<u>POSS</u>	<u>NUC ALERT</u>	<u>CONVT ALERT</u>
Suwon	F-5A	39	-	4 on 5 Min 2 on 15 Min 6 on 30 Min 4 on 1 Hr
Suwon	F-5B	5	-	11 on 5 Min
Suwon	F-86D	21	-	4 on 30 Min 6 on 1 Hr
Kimpo	F-86F	37	-	4 on 5 Min 6 on 30 Min 8 on 1 Hr
Kwang-Ju	F-86F	19	-	2 on 5 Min 2 on 30 Min 6 on 1 Hr
Kwang-Ju	F-5A	24	-	2 on 5 Min 2 on 30 Min 6 on 1 Hr
Kwang-Ju	F-5B	5	-	1 on 5 Min
Taegu	F-86F	20	-	-
Kangnung	F-5A	4	-	2 on 5 Min 2 on 15 Min
Kunsan	F-86F	20	-	2 on 5 Min 2 on 30 Min 6 on 1 Hr
TOTAL		194	-	84

~~SECRET~~





the warning by taking up an easterly heading.<sup>4/</sup> Condition 5 (50 NM) was first issued at 150442Z; Condition 5 was again issued at 150443Z. This was the last known transmission acknowledged by the BEGGAR SHADOW.<sup>5/</sup>

Remaining on an easterly heading, the propeller-driven EC-121M was shot down, by North Korean jets, at 0445Z on 15 April 1969, at 131° 48'E, 41° 13'N.<sup>6/</sup>

Air Force Reaction

At 150447Z, 5AF ADVON received notification from its warning center of a possible shutdown of the BEGGAR SHADOW mission. Due to the sensitive nature of the mission, there was limited information available; however, based on the warning center information, 5AF ADVON ordered the scramble of two F-102s from Suwon AB, Korea, at 150504Z. At that time, there were eight USAF and two South Korean Air Force (ROKAF) interceptors on five-minute alert. Had they been directed to scramble, their distance relative to the shutdown and speed capability would have resulted in the following time to target with 15-minute combat time and normal fuel reserve:<sup>7/</sup>

Osan	4/F-106	350 NM	30 min
Suwon	4/F-102	350 NM	41 min
Kangnung	2/F-5	260 NM	34 min

(See Fig. 1 for complete status.)

The two scrambled F-102s were directed by 5AF ADVON to take up CAP at the eastern end of the DMZ and await instructions. All echelons of

~~SECRET~~

command were alerted. PACAF headquarters received its notification at 0615Z on 15 April 1969 from its warning center. At 150553Z, two F-106s from Osan replaced the F-102s. This CAP was maintained by alternating F-102s and F-106s.

A determination as to the proper level of reaction was critical during this time frame, because it was not clear whether the possible shoot-down was an isolated incident or the beginning of a higher level of aggression by North Korea, which might be continued against a search and rescue (SAR) effort or CAP forces directed into the Sea of Japan. Coordination of an early press release was considered important so that SAR activities would not be construed as aggressive action by the governments of North Korea, Communist China, USSR, or Japan.

At 150620Z, Fifth Air Force directed the scramble of the HC-130 based at Tachikawa, Japan. (See Fig. 2 for SAR status.) It departed at 150641Z for a rendezvous with the CAP east of Kangnung, South Korea.

Action to reposition rescue forces was initiated at 150645Z. Figure 3 shows the result of this movement as of 160700Z.<sup>8/</sup>

To extend the time on station of the fighter aircraft, coordination among Fifth Air Force, 313th Air Division, 5AF ADVON, and Thirteenth Air Force resulted in a KC-135 tanker being launched from Kadena, Okinawa, at 150745Z to rendezvous with the CAP at 3900N/13030E.

~~SECRET~~

SAR POSTURE 150500Z APR 69

<u>BASE</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NR POSS.</u>	<u>ALERT</u>
Tachikawa	HC-130	4	1
Yokota	HH-43B	2	1
Osan	HH-43B	4	1
Taegu	HH-43B	2	1
Kwang-Ju	HH-43B	2	1
Kunsan	HH-43B	2	1
Misawa	HH-43B	2	1
Kadena	HH-43B	3	1
Naha	HC-97	2	1
	HH-3	2	1
Andersen	HC-130	4	1
Clark	HC-130	4	1
	HH-3	3	1

FIGURE 2



~~SECRET~~

SAR POSTURE 16/0700Z APR 69

<u>BASE</u>	<u>TYPE ACFT</u>	<u>POSS</u>	<u>IMMEDIATE ALERT</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
Tachikawa	HC-130	6	-	6 in Active SAR
Yokota	HC-97	2	-	2 in Active SAR
Osan	HC-130	1	-	1 in Active SAR
	HH-43B	4	1	
Taegu	HH-43B	2	1	
Kwang-Ju	HH-43B	2	1	
Kunsan	HH-43B	2	1	
Misawa	HH-43B	2	1	
Kadena	HH-43B	3	1	
Chejudo	HH-3	2	1	

FIGURE 3

~~SECRET~~



All Korea-based tactical forces were directed by 5AF to assume maximum readiness (Echo) posture at 150839Z.<sup>9/</sup> All other 5AF resources were directed to assume maximum readiness for deployment to forward operating bases at 150842Z.<sup>10/</sup>



~~SECRET~~

### CHAPTER III

#### THE SEARCH EFFORT

The first U.S. aircraft at the scene were fighters launched from South Korea. They arrived at 0753Z on 15 April (1653I) and departed at 0807Z on the same day (1707I), after reporting neither electronic nor visual contact.<sup>1/</sup>

CINCPAC and 5AF coordinated on the feasibility of using a surface fleet in the search effort. Authority to proceed with the movement of the destroyers, USS Tucker and Dale, was given at 150835Z.<sup>2/</sup>

At 150938Z, the HC-130 rescue aircraft, KC-135 tanker, and four F-106 CAP aircraft rendezvoused at CAP point 39° 39'N - 130° 30'E. The F-106s refueled and the HC-130 with CAP proceeded to the search area.<sup>3/</sup> The first SAR aircraft on the scene of the shutdown was the HC-130 which had launched from Tachikawa. It arrived at the scene at 151054Z (1954I).

Public release of information announcing a possible shutdown was made by the Defense and State Departments on 15 April 1969 at 1055Z.<sup>4/</sup>

Weather conditions for the first and second days' search were excellent. Scattered to broken clouds with bases of about 6,000 feet prevailed with some periods of clear sky and occasional cirrus. Visibility ranged from five to eight miles. The wind did not exceed 20 knots. The sea state ranged from calm with slight ripples to waves of three to five feet with occasional white caps. The sea temperature was

~~SECRET~~

40°F. Weather conditions on the third day started out with multiple cloud layers from 300 feet to 21,000 feet, but by 1200 hours Local, it had improved to middle overcast.

At the end of the first 24 hours, a total of ten sorties were flown in the search area: four HC-130 sorties, four C-130 sorties and two P-3 sorties.

The magnitude of the search effort continued to increase for the next two days. Until the search effort was suspended, the total aircraft involved directly were:

<u>TYPE ACFT</u>	<u>NR INVOLVED</u>	<u>TOTAL SORTIES FLOWN IN SAR AREA</u>
HC-130	7	21
C-130A	6	15
HC-97	Unknown	8

The Soviet Navy and Air Force also joined in the search with the probable dual objective of gaining good will and intelligence information.

The first reported sighting in the crash area was three very dim lights together. They were never sighted again, and it is possible they might have been life vest lights or even phosphorescence. On the first morning, 15 April, a P-3 spotted the crash site at 4119N/13150E, and directed Soviet vessels in the area to the scene. The P-3 reported the Soviets picked up a 20-man life raft and other debris such as aircraft insulation, cushions, life vests, etc. They also reported a possible man in a life raft, but they were unable to relocate it. Debris was reported

~~SECRET~~

as far as 60 miles from the crash site, but searchers were unable to confirm any of the sightings as other than wood and paper. In the wreckage area, aircraft crews reported orange colored objects, possibly impact opened parachutes, gloves, clothing items, sea dye marks, sheet metal, plastic, life vests, styrofoam, and other aircraft debris.

Coordination between the Russian naval units and U.S. search aircraft was difficult to establish and required some ingenuity, but this was accomplished by the rescue aircraft dropping smoke on the debris they wanted picked up by the Russians, which they then recovered.<sup>5/</sup> Later, a radio was airdropped to a Soviet vessel and contact was established.<sup>6/</sup> Hopes were raised for the possibility of survivors when flare sightings and beepers were reported, but these proved to be erroneous.<sup>7/</sup>

A COLLEGE EYE EC-121 was used to provide surveillance and F-106s, F-102s, and F-4s continued to provide CAP.

Two additional destroyers, the USS Sterrett and Mahau, were dispatched to join the USS Tucker and Dale for SAR.<sup>8/</sup>

On the morning of the 17th, the Tucker recovered two bodies wearing flight suits.<sup>9/</sup>

At 191855Z (0355I), an HC-97 while working at a 4,500-foot altitude with the USS Sterrett at 41° 31'N - 131° 36'E was apparently fired upon, but not hit, by an unidentified surface vessel. The tracers were also seen by crew members of the USS Sterrett whose position was 20 NM from

~~SECRET~~

the vessel. <sup>10/</sup>

SAR was directed to terminate on 19 April 1969 at 2203Z. <sup>11/</sup> CAP  
was maintained over the USN surface units, until they were south of  
the 38° parallel on 20 April 1969 at 0955Z. <sup>12/</sup>

~~SECRET~~

CHAPTER IV

FORCE BUILDUP

*"To enable us to turn downward the rising curve of N.K. aggressiveness in the face of continuing evidence of Kim Il Sung's fanatic and sometimes seemingly paranoid megalomania...." 1/*

--Gen. Charles H. Bonesteel, III,  
COMUSKOREA

Rationale

As soon as the rescue effort was established, actions were taken which would place U.S. forces in the optimum posture for the most probable North Korean reaction. The freeze on the movement of tactical aircraft to Korea remained in effect during the period of the rescue effort. However, numerous plans for punitive action were being readied which would allow options over a wide spectrum of conflict. In addition to the high levels of response provided in CINCPAC OPlans FRESH STORM, FREEDOM DROP, and 27 YEAR,<sup>2/</sup> CINCPAC forwarded the following options to JCS:<sup>3/</sup>

- . Seizure of the fish factory built for N.K. by the Netherlands.
- . Position a TALOS ship 50 miles off Wonsan to destroy identified N.K. aircraft.
- . Impound or harass fishing boats and N.K. coastal shipping vessels that venture beyond the 12-mile limit.
- . B-52s attack of two N.K. airfields.
- . CVA based A-6 attack on Wonsan and Sondong Ni Airfields.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

- . The use of subs against N.K. shipping.
- . The use of the USS New Jersey to fire on selected N.K. targets.
- . Support ROK raids into the DMZ and north of the DMZ.
- . Destroy targets north of the DMZ with artillery.
- . Conduct amphibious raids into N.K.
- . Conduct special operations against N.K.
- . Seizure of N.K. shipping.

At first, there was a very strong desire to "clobber them," and with considerable justification, Adm. John S. McCain, Jr., CINCPAC, on 16 April 1969 stated in a message to JCS regarding employment of CVAs: <sup>4/</sup>

*"In response to Pueblo seizure, essentially similar Navy forces were deployed to the Sea of Japan for a lengthy period. Coordinated strike plans were developed, with several options to utilize both USAF land based air from S.K. and CVA assets in destruction of important N.K. targets. None of these plans was executed and in fact tactical air was restricted from flying close to N.K.*

*"The CVAs are again steaming north to join forces with the tactical air in S.K. No guidance has been provided as to the possible mission of the CVA groups. During the elapsed transit time a mission should be assigned that will provide for positive action upon arrival of the CVA Task Groups into the Sea of Japan. This could eject an element of surprise, particularly in view of the fact that past performance might lull N.K. into false sense of security. If we operate again in the Sea of Japan only as a show of force, and without positive action, I believe that we continue to provide justification to their judgment of us as 'Paper tigers'. The end result might well be the opposite of our intended purpose and encourage rather than discourage further belligerence."*

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

As a more searching review of the possibilities was made, however, the risk of escalation and its effect on the ROK brought out a considerably more conservative point of view, and a "second look" was made by General Bonesteel, COMUSKOREA/CINCUNC, on 17 April: <sup>5/</sup>

*"Much as all of us here would like to take a crack at N.K. there are certain general considerations bearing on contingency plans that a deeper responsibility to U.S. position world-wide and more particularly to our avowed mission 'to defend the Republic of Korea against Communist aggression' requires us to set forth. Most important is question as to whether N.K. would respond to a U.S. retaliatory strike by taking retributive offensive action against the ROK. On above question it is most difficult to assess risk of N.K. retributive attack. All N.K. psywar over the last two years has been designed to create surety that 'any U.S. attack on the north would bring instantly a hundred fold retribution to annihilate U.S. forces in Korea and ROK puppets'. How much is propaganda and how much is paranoid zealotry cannot be said but there is some risk that N.K. would in actuality react militarily against ROK.*

*"Another potential impact is on the well-being of ROK economy. ROK economic growth is dependent on a sense of security in the country, on foreign investment and on internal investment. One of the N.K. clearly stated objectives is to wreck this economic growth. Thus, effect of U.S. retaliation, short and long term, pro and con on security aspects and economic growth needs careful evaluation."*

Provided nuclear weapons were not employed, a massive logistic effort over an extended period would be required to bring the ROKA and USAK up to a level of strength that would assure a successful defense. <sup>6/</sup>

For example, a then-recent Hawk missile evaluation by USARPAC teams

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

indicated approximately 80 percent of these missiles in Korea might have been unreliable for combat use. CINCUNC had requested that 500 Hawks be shipped as soon as possible.<sup>7/</sup>

On 21 April 1969, CINCPAC also had reservations.<sup>8/</sup> If a preemptive attack was to be made by the U.S. or ROK:

*"Maximum advantage should be taken of warning time to achieve the most creditable deterrent posture, and to have an optional capability to react to renewal of aggression. The initial action taken will have a vital influence in the course of events, the conduct of possible hostilities, and the outcome of the conflict. Once the N.K. attack is initiated, the risk involved in underestimating the degree of attack, based on an estimate of whether the attack is limited or full scale, is militarily unacceptable. Failure to respond to the limit of our capabilities would allow N.K. to retain the initiative. Therefore, the response to renewal of overt N.K. aggression into S.K. should be implementation of OPlan 27."*

Additionally, CINCPAC was concerned about any change in the U.S. force status in Japan and Korea that would preclude future cooperation of these governments:<sup>9/</sup>

*"Consideration should be given to the need for prior consultation with the Government of Japan relative to increasing U.S. deployment to Japan significantly, and to use of bases in support of operations in Korea as stipulated in exchange of notes with respect to Article V of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the U.S. and Japan. The impact of actions postulated in current planning upon future use and retention of these bases should be carefully considered."*

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

General Bonesteel's position as Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command (CINCUNC), required constant consideration of ROKG policies: <sup>10/</sup>

*"We must weigh the pros and cons of purely U.S. unilateral action, imposed, so to speak, on the ROKs, as against actions undertaken under the United Nations command umbrella.*

*"It is not too well realized outside of Korea that OPCON of ROK forces is given directly by ROKG to the CINCUNC and not repeat not to the U.S. This is most meaningful to the ROKs and enables them to accept the unique compromise to their sovereignty which OPCON to a foreigner implies. To me this means that we must deal and plan closely and frankly with the ROKs-- the security of whose country is at stake--and thus by example pressure other U.S. allies in eastern Asia. This may or may not be palatable to U.S. public opinion. I should think it would be."*

The above quotations, taken out of context, may appear to imply a change in PACOM policy from one of all-out retaliation to a show of force. However, CINCPAC had maintained the position through all the provocations that if the U.S. retaliated, it should strike them very hard and accept the consequences. CINCPAC had always been against piecemeal commitment of his forces. CINCPAC recognized the necessity of bringing the ROKs into the planning phase, but higher headquarters believed it was inappropriate at the time. <sup>11/</sup>

#### Protection for PARPRO

Immediately after the BEGGAR SHADOW was shot down, JCS directed that the PARPRO mission be suspended in the area of the shutdown until suitable measures could be taken for their protection. <sup>12/</sup> The plan to be

~~SECRET~~

prepared called for escort of the missions when they were within the N.K. air defense environment.<sup>13/</sup> The monthly sortie requirement for providing four fighters to escort mission aircraft over water and two over land below the DMZ, as stipulated in the JCS request, would result in considerable expenditure of USAF resources:

<u>TYPE RECON MISSION</u>	<u>NR MSNS/MO</u>	<u>ESCORT SORTIES</u>	<u>TANKER SORTIES</u>
BEGGAR SHADOW	4	32	8
BEGGAR TROOP	7	28	7
BEGGAR WATCH	22	176	44
BEGGAR KING	10	40	10
COMMANDO ROYAL (Nr 1)	30	960	240
COMMANDO ROYAL (Nr 2)	15	120	30
COMMANDO SMOG	6	24	-
COMMANDO CLINCH	3	24	-
BURNING PIPE	8	64	8
TOTAL	105	1468	347

Based upon current program planning factors, the escort sorties indicated here would equate to approximately 5,140 flying hours/month, or 128 airframes, or the equivalent of more than five squadrons of F-4s assigned solely to the mission of escorting recon platforms. Correspondingly, tanker sorties indicated would be equivalent to approximately 2,430 flying hours per month or 26 KC-135s. Dedication of this level of assets to the escort mission was beyond the capability of then-assigned PACOM forces.

In addition to the sortie requirements enumerated here, the requirement also existed for GCI radar augmentation in the Sea of Japan to extend the necessary friendly warning and control capability throughout the

N.K.'s fighter operating range. <sup>14/</sup> COLLEGE EYE EC-121s could perform this mission but were a limited resource within PACOM. <sup>15/</sup>

An alternate plan, which was more within the capability of PACOM resources, was directed: <sup>16/</sup>

- . Station a DLG, DDG, or other GCI capable destroyer in the SOJ to optimize aircraft control and warning for PARPRO tracks and fighters operating in that area.
- . Augment present F-4 fighter force in South Korea with additional fighter resources.
- . Provide protection for reconnaissance aircraft by fighter CAP rather than escort. Instead of requiring four aircraft fighter flights, employ two aircraft elements of fighters for CAP in optimum position relative to recon aircraft so as to thwart any N.K. fighter attempt at intercept. CAP would operate similar to SEA BARCAP.
- . To extent feasible, adjust PARPRO schedule so as to take maximum advantage of protection afforded by single CAP flight, flying as many recon tracks simultaneously as collection requirements will permit.
- . Whenever possible, reroute PARPRO missions south of DMZ to minimize exposure and utilize fighters on ground alert to cover flights over the land mass of South Korea.

Flying the same PARPRO as scheduled under these guidelines, should have resulted in the following required sorties:

<u>TYPE RECON MSN</u>	<u>NR MSNS/MO</u>	<u>FTR SORT</u>	<u>TANKER SORT</u>
BEGGAR SHADOW	4	16	4
BEGGAR TROOP	7	14	7
BEGGAR WATCH	22	88	22
BEGGAR KING	10	20	10
COMMANDO ROYAL (Nr 1)	30	-	-
COMMANDO ROYAL (Nr 2)	15	60	15
COMMANDO SMOG	6	-	-
COMMANDO CLINCH	3	-	-
BURNING PIPE	8	32	4
TOTAL	105	230	62

The sortie levels indicated here equate to 805 flying hours per month, or 21 airframes or one F-4 squadron. Tanker sorties are the equivalent of 430 flying hours per month or four KC-135s.

This would have provided a substantial measure of protection for reconnaissance flights in the Korea area. It must be emphasized, however, that neither fighter CAP protection nor fighter escort could have assured the safety of the reconnaissance platform. It would have been particularly difficult to protect, to a satisfactory degree of assurance, the lower flying and slower flying platform aircraft. If the enemy had made careful plans through observation of tracks and related operations and had made a concerted effort to destroy a reconnaissance platform, chances were good that he might have succeeded even though he might have lost some of his force in the effort.

Accordingly, the protection provided must be considered a deterrent rather than a positive shield. Most significant to the protection forces' ability to do the job would be the Rules of Engagement (ROE) and

~~SECRET~~

operational guidance they follow.

Operational guidance was provided which permitted aggressive defense of the PARPRO utilizing BARCAP tactics. This provided that any aircraft track originating in North Korea which approaches a PARPRO flight within 24 miles on an intercept heading may be declared hostile without visual identification.<sup>17/</sup>

#### Tactical Air Deployment

All Korea-based tactical forces were put at maximum readiness at 0839Z on 15 April. However, in anticipation of this, force generation had already begun as indicated by the status of forces shown in Figure 4.

Except for normal rotation between the Main Support Base and the Forward Operating Base for scheduled maintenance, this force was directed by JCS to remain the same<sup>18/</sup> until approval was obtained from them to increase it to 151 aircraft.<sup>19/</sup> The tactical forces in Japan and Okinawa were cleared to fly 15 percent of their aircraft on 16 April and 30 percent of them on 17 April, to accomplish normal flying training. In Korea, only flights in support of the search were approved.<sup>20/</sup>

Plans for a punitive strike against North Korea were being readied while the search effort progressed. Particular interest was being directed in support of a CVA attack option.<sup>21/</sup> On 17 April, CINCPACAF sent the following recommendations to CINCPAC to obtain the optimum posture utilizing available forces:<sup>22/</sup>

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

KOREA POSTURE  
150638Z APR 69

<u>Air Base</u>	<u>Type Aircraft</u>	<u>Poss</u>	<u>Nuc Alert</u>	<u>Conv1 Alert</u>
Suwon	F-102	12	-	4 on 5 Min 7 on 30 Min
Osan	F-106	16	-	16 on 5 Min
Osan	F-4C	22	6	2 on 15 Min
Kunsan	F-4C	20	8	-
Kunsan	F-100	39	-	8 on 15 Min
Kwang-Ju	F-105	<u>10</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4 on 15 Min</u>
TOTALS		119	14	41

150851Z APR 69

Suwon	F-102	12	-	12 on 15 Min
Osan	F-106	16	-	16 on 5 Min
Osan	F-4C	22	6	2 on 15 Min
Kunsan	F-4C	20	8	-
Kunsan	F-100	39	-	8 on 15 Min
Kwang-Ju	F-105	<u>10</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4 on 15 Min</u>
TOTALS		119	14	42

FIGURE 4

~~SECRET~~

[Faint, illegible text]



[Faint, illegible text]

~~SECRET~~

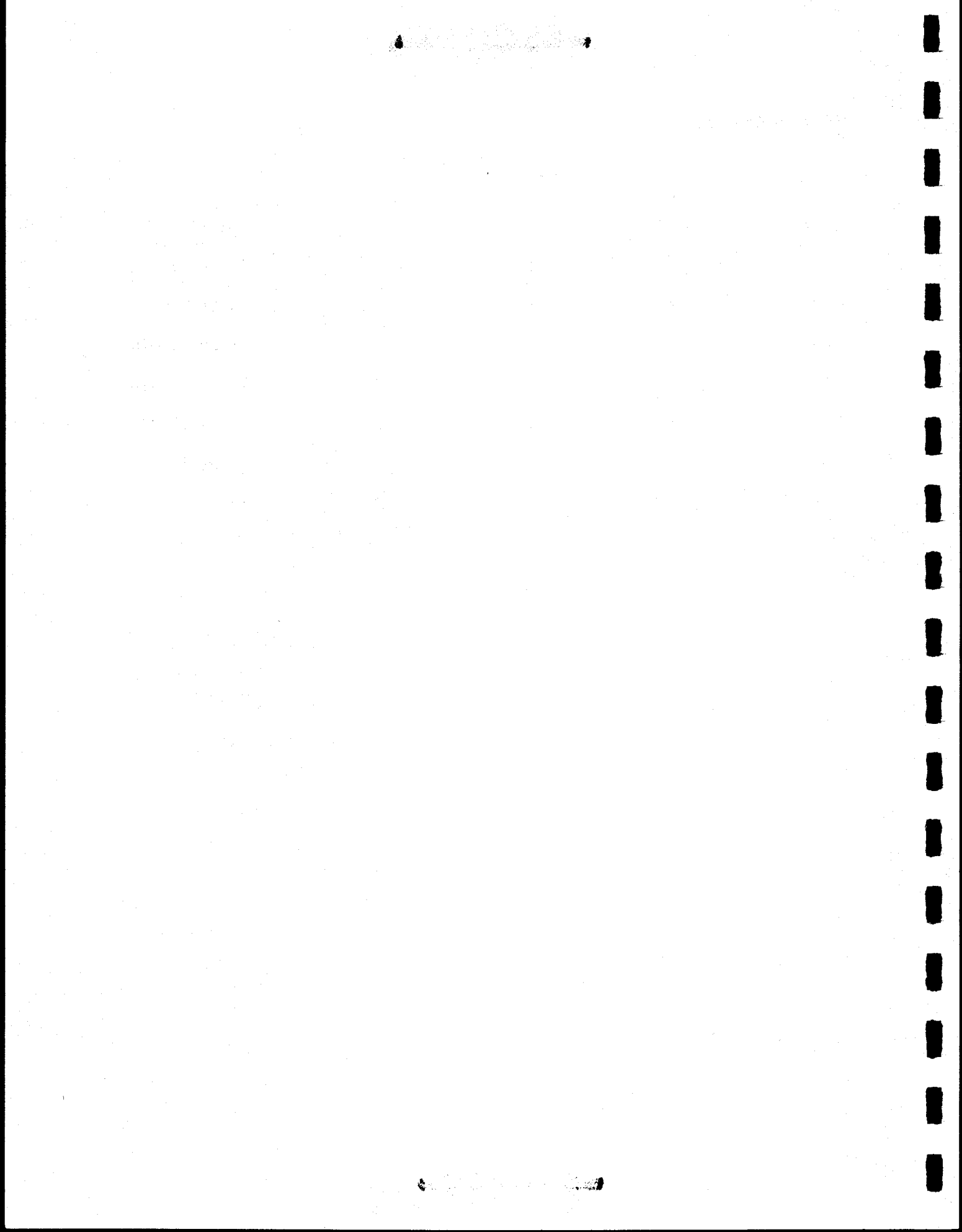
(Fig. 4 Cont'd.)

150915Z APR 69

<u>Air Base</u>	<u>Type Aircraft</u>	<u>Poss</u>	<u>Nuc Alert</u>	<u>Conv1 Alert</u>
Suwon	F-102	12	-	12 on 15 Min
Osan	F-106	16	-	16 on 5 Min
Osan	F-4C	22	6	12 on 15 Min
Kunsan	F-4C	20	8	10 on 15 Min
Kunsan	F-100	39	-	36 on 15 Min
Kwang-Ju	F-105	<u>10</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10</u> on 15 Min
TOTALS		119	14	96

~~SECRET~~





"In the event that 12 to 24 A-6s are directed to attack either Wonsan or Sondong Ni, current SIOP alert aircraft in South Korea (14 F-4s) which are targeted against North Korean airfield targets with dial-a-yeild MK-61 weapons should not be changed. These forces augmented by six additional sorties would provide a rapid launch capability with a back-up sortie on each of the 10 airfield targets under Option II of the Freedom Drop Plan. Remaining South Korean based forces will be conventionally configured. The F-4s (other than 20 with the MK-61), F-102s, and F-106s will be configured with air-to-air ordnance/missiles to counter any attempt by the North Koreans to launch an air attack against South Korean based forces. The F-100Cs will be configured with air-to-ground (A/G) ordnance for rapid response to any contingency requiring A/G ordnance. The effect of an attack by North Korea on friendly forces would be minimized by this posture and configuration, and permits us to execute Freedom Drop should it be directed to do so. The ROKAF should be advised of planning actions at an appropriate time and included in the defensive role.

"It would be necessary to deploy 25 fighter aircraft from Japan and Okinawa to attain 151 fighter aircraft in Korea. This would consist of 19 F-4s, 3 F-105s and 3 F-102s. In addition to these movements to Korea, the ANG RF-101 squadron presently scheduled to re-deploy from Itazuke to the CONUS on 20 April 1969 should remain in place and the RF-4C at Kadena would supplement this capability as required.

"a. Six EC-121 COLLEGE EYE aircraft operating from Itazuke are required to provide 24-hour early warning and control of interceptors at advanced CAP points from Yellow Sea orbit. Request four from CONUS resources. Remaining two can be provided from PACAF resources for ten-day period without seriously degrading SEA coverage. Appropriate Security Service support for Rivet Gym is highly desirable.

"b. Two EB-66C aircraft and six EB-66E aircraft would deploy from Takhli to Itazuke.

"c. All remaining PACAF fighter and air defense forces in Japan, Okinawa and the Philippines would assume suitable readiness posture and prepare for deployment to South Korea should additional deployments be required. Since the CHICOM and USSR response to an attack against a North Korea airfield cannot be determined in advance, PACAF forces should maintain capability for immediate SIOP generation to maximum readiness posture."

On 20 April, 5AF was directed by PACAF to "quietly increase force level in Korea to 151 aircraft utilizing current 5AF resources" and to have them in place by 1800L on 1 May.<sup>23/</sup>

To increase the number of fighter aircraft in Korea, the 16th Tactical Fighter Squadron was diverted to Kunsan, Korea, while en route from the CONUS to SEA. Their F-4E, equipped with the much needed air to air internal gun, substantially improved the fighter posture.<sup>24/</sup> It was in place at Kunsan on 23 April 1969.

The force disposition was then changed in the following manner:

<u>Air Base</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Nr Acft 21 Apr</u>	<u>Nr Acft 23 Apr</u>
Osan	347 TFW (F-4C)	28	28
Osan	71 FIS (F-106)	18	14
Kunsan	354 TFW (F-100)	41	36
Kunsan	475 TFW (F-4C)	9	9
Kunsan	16 TFS (F-4E)	0	20
Suwan	82 FIS (F-102)	15	13
Kwang-Ju	18 TFW (F-105D/F)	14	12
Taegu	475 TFW (F-4C)	19	19
TOTALS		144	151

~~SECRET~~

The Single Integrated Operations Plan (SIOP) commitment in Korea was augmented by six F-4C aircraft and 5AF requested the option to strike from flush in the event of a N.K. retaliatory strike resulting from U.S. proposed punitive raids. Their rationale was they had only 37 minutes of hold time after flush prior to bingo fuel.<sup>25/</sup> Permission for this was not granted.

In response to a JCS request,<sup>26/</sup> PACAF prepared a plan based on the employment of 24 F-4s launching from either Korea or Kadena, Okinawa, striking Wonsan or Sondong Ni A/F with conventional ordnance. Configuration for 8 aircraft was to be CBUs for the parked North Korean aircraft and 16 aircraft were to use M-117s or MK-82s on the hard facilities. In good weather conditions, a low level approach over land was advisable; for poor weather conditions, a low level approach over the Sea of Japan was recommended. A last light attack was preferred because North Korea's limited night attack capability would minimize the likelihood of an immediate retaliation strike. The TOTs were to be compressed, and pop-up target tactics were to be employed with a low level withdrawal over the water. COLLEGE EYE and COMMANDO ROYAL, if available, would also be employed during the attack, and in the following period of high tension, to monitor the N.K. reactions. The attack on Wonsan was preferred, due to the shorter exposure time and better possibility of a successful SAR effort.<sup>27/</sup>

Strikes could be made from Okinawa, but this was not recommended by Fifth Air Force for the following reasons:<sup>28/</sup>

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

*"In order to be responsive to a fast reaction strike from Kadena with 12-14 aircraft, there would have to be a drawdown of Korean or Japanese-based forces.*

*"Forces could be deployed to Okinawa in times of heightened tension but this would not be responsive to 'fast reaction' and may negate any surprise.*

*"Fighter aircraft carrying a full bomb load launching from Okinawa with tanker support would give approximately 1-1/2 hours warning of an impending strike (Russian ELINT ships in area - observers at end of runway)."*

#### The SAC Punitive Plan

The JCS requested that SAC submit a plan for striking Wonsan and Sondak Airfields with conventional ordnance. SAC's proposal was to use the B-52s and KC-135 tankers based at Guam. The ratio was to be one bomber to one tanker en route to the target. They required a 30-hour notification prior to time over target (TOT) for a 20-aircraft strike and a 24-hour notification for a 14-aircraft strike to allow for preparation and flight time. With a 20-aircraft raid, they could still support ARC LIGHT with two missions of two aircraft each and with three missions of two aircraft each if a 14-aircraft raid were executed.<sup>29/</sup>

A planned descent would be made prior to the N.K. early warning radar line to 1,000'-1,200' over land, and to 600'-800' over water. A "short look" maneuver to 1,500'-1,700' would be made just prior to target. After bomb release, descent would again be made. They preferred a TOT between midnight and 0300 hours (local) and requested no additional CAP and no

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

ECM or IRON HAND to prevent compromising the element of surprise. Employing such tactics would involve considerable risk if the element of surprise were lost. <sup>30/</sup>

The Russian picket ship stationed off Guam would monitor the departure of the strike, but by standing down and launching in a manner similar to the mass ARC LIGHT strikes in SVN, the Russians would probably assume the bombers were en route to SVN. <sup>31/</sup> Later, SAC requested a plan be developed to jam the five Russian picket ships, which were with TF 71 in the Sea of Japan off Korea, <sup>32/</sup> but the resulting plan was not accepted by SAC, because it was believed the activity of the jammers would trigger the warning. <sup>33/</sup>

Additionally, there was concern over the warning which N.K. could obtain from monitoring the Japanese early warning radar nets. As indicated in a message from 5AF on 25 April 1969, considerable thought was given to this unresolved problem: <sup>34/</sup>

*"General McGehee feels there is no way to assure JASDF track suppression. In his judgment, if such an effort was made, it would require direct communications between President Nixon and Premier Sato. Unfortunately, General McGehee also feels that should such a procedure be followed and Sato took action to insure suppression, he could not survive politically."*

#### Air Defense

A fully alerted Air Defense system in South Korea was expected to exact a heavy toll on a North Korean attacking force. <sup>35/</sup> Therefore,

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

concurrently, with the strike TOT, an optimum posture would be attained.

Factors to be considered in attaining optimum posture were to be based on:

- . N.K. capability for retaliatory attack during night and weather conditions (the IL-28 force).
- . N.K. capability for retaliatory attack during daylight visual conditions.
- . Length of time alert posture was to be maintained.

Based on these factors, for night/poor weather conditions, an alert force on a five-minute reaction schedule of sufficient strength to counter an attack of up to 60 IL-28s was planned. At the approach of first light, up to 25 percent (number would depend on intelligence indicators) of the air defense force would be on Combat Air Patrol under close GCI control. Of the remaining Air Defense force, one-third would be on battle stations, one-third on 5 minute alert and one-third on 15 minute alert.<sup>36/</sup>

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CHAPTER V

THE CASE FOR JOINT COMMAND AND CONTROL

*"Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all other."*

--Winston Churchill

The same reasoning is true for Joint Command and Control; it is the worst except for all other. Throughout the entire reporting of this incident, Joint Command and Control policies and procedures came to light which may have been outdated and unrealistic. The Peacetime Aerial Reconnaissance Program worldwide has been an extremely fruitful endeavor, and certainly worthy of the risk involved. However, closer coordination among the services might have prevented this incident with relatively little additional expenditure of resources.

The numerous options available for punitive action against North Korea may not have sufficiently taken into account the status of ground units, and their ability to withstand a N.K. counter thrust, without the employment of nuclear weapons or implementation of a massive buildup of U.S. forces.<sup>1/</sup> However, the punitive actions that were developed were directed by higher headquarters and were based on the best tactical scheme of maneuver to get the directed missions accomplished.<sup>2/</sup> Had a Single Manager for Air been responsible for planning and coordination of the PARPRO and punitive actions, these actions may have been more in keeping with reality of the local situation.

~~SECRET~~



~~SECRET~~

COMUSKOREA seemed to be left in the dark on several plans that were of vital concern to him and his unique position with the ROK. Numerous messages failed to include him as an addressee: a typical example was a CINCPAC planning message (T.S. 240533Z Apr 69) for the jamming of picket ships that were monitoring Task Force 71 off the Korean coast; SAC, PACFLT, PACAF, and JCS were the only addressees. Had the jamming taken place without prior coordination with the ROK, its reaction would have been sufficient to set off the warning which the jamming was to prevent. Another example: On 22 April, CINCPAC requested the 5AF ADVON to start a six-hour situation report.<sup>3/</sup> On 23 April, COMUSKOREA had to request he be made an addressee on this vital report.<sup>4/</sup> There are 11,000 noncombatants in the Seoul area for which COMUSKOREA has evacuation responsibility under OPlan 27; the ground forces would require a massive logistic buildup.<sup>5/</sup> Information necessary for him to make timely preparations may not have been available.

On-going studies of the Command and Control structure of Korean-based forces are being conducted within PACOM which should simplify their management. Coordination between the services could be enhanced by appointment of a Single Manager for Air. Commenting on this, Maj. Gen. Milton B. Adams, Chief of Staff, PACAF, stated:<sup>6/</sup>

*"...as an alternative to the Air Component Commander exercising essential management authority with respect to the In-country air battle, PACAF can concur with the establishment of a Deputy for Air. However, the functions of the Deputy for Air should be carefully drawn to limit his authority to the In-country management problem. The management authority of the Deputy Commander for Air should be clearly inclusive with*

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

*respect to forces assigned, attached, or supporting the In-country air campaign. Concur with the position of CINCPAC that the Out-country air war (the enemy side of the line of contact or FEBA) be directed by CINCPAC through the appropriate PACOM Service Component Commander (CINCPACAF or CINCPACFLT). Where both forces are jointly involved, recommend that CINCPACAF function as coordinator of the air effort. Responsibility for air defense of land areas should continue in the PACAF chain of command."*

The Foreword to CHECO report, "The Pueblo Incident" of 15 April 1968, however, remains appropriate:

*"Certain facts are evident in close examination of the events as they occurred. First, the increasing tempo of U.S. activities within SEA, and the attendant demand for air assets have materially affected the capability of air units within WESTPAC north to respond to emergencies. Second, command arrangements and related responsibilities appear as complicated today as they did 14 years ago. Finally, the importance of achieving central control and direction of all air assets, which was so laboriously learned during the Korea action 1950-53, has been reemphasized."*

~~SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

1. (U) Msg, NMCC, 260323Z Apr 69.
2. (S) Interview, Lt Col R. S. Heyser, Chief, Special Reconnaissance Div, Directorate of Reconnaissance, DCS/Operations, PACAF, 24 Apr 69.
3. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: "COMMANDO ROYAL, 260346Z Jan 68.
4. (TS) Ltr, PACAF, DORC, subj: Report Coordination, 19 Sep 68.
5. (S) Ltr, Col R. E. Gaspard, Deputy Dir of Estimates, DCS/Intel, PACAF, to PACAF, DOPL, 21 Aug 68.
6. (S) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: COMMANDO ROYAL Escort, 032252Z Jul 68.
7. (S) Msg, 5AF ADVON, subj: Last Change to OPORD 501-69 prior to EC-121 Incident, 070231Z Mar 69.
8. (TS) Ltr, PACAF, DORC, subj: Report Coordination, 19 Sep 69.

CHAPTER II

1. (TS) Significant Item Book, "USN EC-121 Loss 14 Apr", undated. (Filed in PACAF Command Center Library.)
2. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: PARPRO Escort, 220213Z Apr 69.
3. (TS-SI) Annex I to Significant Item Book, USN EC-121 Loss, 14 Apr 69.
4. Ibid.
5. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Recap of Significant Events, 151113Z Apr 69.
6. Ibid.
7. (TS) Msg, 5AF, 190827Z Apr 69.
8. (C) PACAF, DOCS Status Reports.

~~TOP SECRET~~  
(This page is UNCLASSIFIED.)

# UNCLASSIFIED

9. (S) Msg, 5AF, subj: Assume Maximum Readiness, 150839Z Apr 69.
10. (TS) Msg, 5AF, subj: Prepare for Deployment, 150824Z Apr 69.

## CHAPTER III

1. (S) Ltr, V.C. 5AF to Commander Fleet Air West, subj: AF Search Activity, 28 Apr 69.
2. (S) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Movement of USS Dale and Tucker, 150908Z Apr 69.
3. (S) Msg, 314/4ADV, subj: 314AD Chronology, 211050Z Apr 69.
4. (U) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Public Release, 151055Z Apr 69.
5. (S) Msg, 314AD, subj: SAR Report, 160715Z Apr 69.
6. (S) Msg, 314AD, subj: Search Effort, 160355Z Apr 69;  
(S) Msg, 314AD, subj: Search Effort, 160121Z Apr 69;  
(S) Msg, 314DCC, subj: Search Effort, 160630Z Apr 69.
7. (S) Msg, 314AD, subj: Erroneous Signals, 151330Z Apr 69.
8. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: USS Sterrett and Mahan, 151344Z Apr 69.
9. (S) Msg, 5AF, subj: Search Report, 170330Z Apr 69;  
(S) Msg, 314AD, subj: Search Report, 152045Z Apr 69.
10. (S) Msg, 314AD, subj: Vessel Firing at Rescue Aircraft, 191940Z Apr 69.
11. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: SAR Termination, 102203Z Apr 69.
12. (C) Msg, 314 DDC, subj: CAP Termination, 201005Z Apr 69.

## CHAPTER IV

1. (TS) Msg, CINCUNC/COMUSK, subj: U.S. Reaction to "BEGGAR SHADOW" Aircraft Shot Down by KORCOMS, 160800Z Apr 69.
2. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Punitive Action Options, 210240Z Apr 69.
3. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Punitive Action Options, 020142Z May 69.
4. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Mission of TF-71, 160840Z Apr 69.

# UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

5. (TS) Msg, CINCUNC/COMUSKOREA, subj: Effect of Punitive Actions, 171556Z Apr 69.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Punitive Action Options, 210240Z Apr 69.
9. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Effect of Punitive Action, 180756Z Apr 69.
10. (TS) Msg, CINCUNC/COMUSKOREA, subj: Effect of Punitive Action, 171556Z Apr 69.
11. (TS) Ltr, PACAF, DOPLNN, subj: Report Coordination, 2 Aug 69.
12. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: PARPRO Missions, 151925Z Apr 69.
13. (TS) Msg, JCS, subj: PARPRO Escort, 181808Z Apr 69.
14. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: PARPRO Escort, 2201213Z Apr 69.
15. (TS) Msg, 7th Fleet, 250226Z Apr 69.
16. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: PARPRO Escort, 230231Z Apr 69.
17. (TS) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: ROE for PARPRO and 5AF OPlan 103-69, 8 May 69, 020158Z May 68.
18. (TS) Msg, JCS, 151925Z Apr 69.
19. (TS) Msg, JCS, subj: 5AF Force Posture, 191314Z Apr 69.
20. (S) Msg, 5AF, subj: Flying Activity, 161455Z Apr 69.
21. (TS) Msg, CINCPACFLT, subj: Mission Planning for TF 71, 161957Z Apr 69.
22. (TS) Msg, CINCPACAF, subj: 5AF ADVON Employment, 171948Z Apr 69.
23. (TS) Msg, CINCPACAF, subj: 5AF Posture, 300410Z Apr 69.
24. (TS) Msg, JCS, subj: Movement of 16th TFS, 201803Z Apr 69.
25. (TS) Msg, 5AF, subj: Flush Options, 221250Z Apr 69.
26. (TS) Msg, JCS, subj: Request for Plans, 170311Z Apr 69.

# UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

27. (TS) Msg, CINCPACAF, subj: Strike Plan, 100049Z May 69.
28. (TS) Msg, 5ADVON, subj: Punitive Planning, 300801Z Apr 69.
29. (TS) Msg, CINCSAC, subj: Strike Planning, 190240Z Apr 69.
30. (TS) Msg, CINCSAC, subj: Strike Planning, 172320Z Apr 69.
31. (TS) Msg, CINCSAC, subj: Plan for Jamming, 191645Z Apr 69.
32. (TS) Msg, CINCSAC, subj: Plan for Jamming, 242220Z Apr 69.
33. Msg, CINCSAC, subj: Plan for Jamming, 191645Z Apr 69.
34. (TS) Msg, CINCPACAF, subj: Muting Radar Nets;  
(TS) Msg, 5AF, subj: Muting Radar Nets, 250800Z Apr 69.
35. (TS) Ltr, PACAF, DOPLNN, subj: Report Coordination, 2 Aug 69.
36. (TS) Ibid.

## CHAPTER V

1. (TS) Msg, CINCUNC/COMUSKOREA, subj: Effect of Punitive Actions, 171556Z Apr 69.
2. (TS) Ltr, PACAF, DOPLNN, subj: Report Coordination, 2 Aug 69.
3. (S) Msg, CINCPAC, subj: Situation Report, 222101Z Apr 69.
4. (S) Msg, CINCUNC/COMUSKOREA, subj: 5AF ADVON Situation Report, 230230Z Apr 69.
5. (TS) Msg, CINCUNC/COMUSKOREA, subj: Effect of Punitive Actions, 171556Z Apr 69.
6. (TS/  
AFE0) Msg, PACAF, Chief of Staff, 132252Z Jun 69.

# UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

## GLOSSARY

Acft	Aircraft
AD	Air Defense
ADVON	Advance Echelon
A/G	Air to Ground
ANG	Air National Guard
BARCAP	Barrier Combat Air Patrol
CAP	Combat Air Patrol
ChiCom	Chinese Communist
CINCPAC	Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command
CINCPACAF	Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Air Forces
CINCPACFLT	Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet
CINCUNC	Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command
COMUSKOREA	Commander, United States Forces in Korea
CONUS	Continental United States
Conv1	Conventional
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DOCS	Directorate of Systems
DOPL	Directorate of Operations Plans
ECM	Electronic Countermeasure
ELINT	Electronic Intelligence
FEBA	Forward Edge of Battle Area
FIS	Fighter Interceptor Squadron
Ftr	Fighter
GCI	Ground-Controlled Intercept
JASDF	Japan Air Self Defense Force
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
MF	Medium Frequency
Min	Minute
Msn	Mission
NKAF	North Korean Air Force
N.K.	North Korea
NM	Nautical Mile
Nuc	Nuclear
OpCon	Operational Control
OPlan	Operations Plan
OPORD	Operations Order

UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

PACAF	Pacific Air Forces
PACFLT	Pacific Fleet
PACOM	Pacific Command
PARPRO	Peacetime Aerial Reconnaissance Program
Recon	Reconnaissance
ROE	Rules of Engagement
ROK	Republic of Korea
ROKA	Republic of Korea Army
ROKAF	Republic of Korea Air Force
ROKG	Republic of Korea Government
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SAR	Search and Rescue
SEA	Southeast Asia
SIOP	Single Integrated Operations Plan
S.K.	South Korea
SOJ	Sea of Japan
SVN	South Vietnam
TF	Task Force
TFS	Tactical Fighter Squadron
TFW	Tactical Fighter Wing
TOT	Time over Target
USAK	United States Army Korea
USARPAC	United States Army Pacific
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics



1954

