

Back in 1991 and 1992 I discussed the possibility of a future satellite vulnerability problem with USAF Lt. Col. Mike Miller, who was at the time the action officer for space-related matters in Andy Marshall's Office of Net Assessment in OSD. He became persuaded that there was some possibility that a problem might emerge, and wrote a white paper on the topic. (It was classified SECRET so people would read it.) Since he knew a CIA officer ("John K.") who was on rotation in the NRO's Programs and Analysis Division, he shipped it over there for circulation and comment.

The accompanying draft memo is John K's response, which I think contains some interesting insights into the NRO's view of things in mid-1992. Boyd Sutton is also CIA (DI), and was, I think, head of P&A at the time. If I'm interpreting the circumlocutions correctly, "our company" in the first paragraph is the NRO, while "my parent company," "your consolidated company" and "this company" in the last paragraph are CIA, DIA and NRO, respectively.

AFAIK, none of the work John K. advocated was ever done.

A.T.

18 June 1992 DRAFT

Note to: Michael Miller

Subject: General Comments on Space Threat Paper

1. I think it is a good paper overall and one that needs to be pushed into the senior management chain. As with any new concept, there does need to be some background work for the idea to receive proper consideration. It is too easy to dismiss this new threat concept because we—the US—have not had to deal with the "new rules of the road (world)". I mentioned the idea to Boyd Sutton; his first response was that "... we would respond so overwhelmingly with a conventional strike that no one would want to risk the outcome...". In addition, I believe he feels that it is none of our company's business because none of our systems are really threatened.

2. Four major efforts need to be started:

- Which weapon systems, with or without modification, can be used to loft a payload into a path that intersects earth orbiting satellites. For those systems, what reaction times are required for targeting and launch as a probability of success.

- What warheads are readily available which could be used, for example, small nuclear devices. What readily available technology could be directed towards developing an antisatellite warhead, such as homing non-nuclear ones similar to that developed for the ———

- What is the vulnerability of US satellites to the different kill mechanisms.

- What countries, perhaps in some priority order or probability of action, might have the technical capability to effect the first two efforts. Then, which countries might have the political will to attempt such actions and under what conditions.

- A major problem is that the first two efforts are the business of my parent company and your consolidated company, the third is spread around to several different offices within this company, and the last is spread around to most of the "inside the beltway" crowd. Someone would have to manage this effort to keep the whole thing on track!

John K.