

'Robot' Planes Over the North

Washington

The U.S. has switched to flying unmanned "robot" planes for reconnaissance missions over Hanoi's territory, to avoid incidents which might jeopardize the present peace talks.

Also put into use for manned flights is the twin-tailed, solid black SR-71 or "Blackbird" spy plane, which carries a single crewman up to three times the speed of sound and at a maximum altitude of 80,000 feet — well above the range of anti-aircraft fire and surface-to-air missiles.

Defense Department sources, who reported this development yesterday, said the robot planes were pressed into service not be-

cause of any new technological advances but because of a desire to preserve the U.S. bombing halt accompanying the present acceleration of progress in the peace talks with North Vietnam.

Since there are no manned flights in range of hostile fire, there is no need to escort them with fighter-bombers, as was previously the case. Thus, no need for what the Pentagon calls U.S. "protective - reaction raids" on North Vietnam facilities.

United Press

Bus Plunge

Tokyo

Three workers were killed and nine injured yesterday when a small bus plunged into a river north of Tokyo, police reported.

Reuters