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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

October 12, 1960

MEMO FOR MR. CHRISTOPHER H. RUSSELL

THE WHITE HOUSE

The attached items are submitted by the Department of Defense for possible inclusion in the daily summary for the President.

Items 1, 2, and 3 have also been forwarded to Dr. Kistiakowsky.

GSB
George S. Brown
Brigadier General, USAF
Military Assistant

5 Attachment

items

3 - SN# 850
1 - SN# 851
1 - Sup 8 SN 850

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SecDef Cont. No. 5-870

R-2

06-M-0888

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2. Launch of SAMOS I. ~~(SECRET)~~

SAMOS I (Atlas 57D/Agema 2101) was launched from the Pacific Missile Range at 1633 EDT, 11 October 1960.

Primary test objectives were: to place a highly-instrumented satellite containing E-1 (photographic) and F-1 (ferret) reconnaissance payloads in a near-circular orbit about the earth at an altitude of 261 N.M.; to demonstrate capability of both payloads to read-in and electronically read-out photographic and ferret reconnaissance data.

SN# 8550

Launch was unsuccessful. Orbit was not achieved. Preliminary information indicates performance of Atlas booster was normal, and well within nominal limits. Separation and ignition of second stage occurred as programmed. Agema burn time was greater than programmed nominal; however, examination of telemetry indicated control gas pressure decayed rapidly shortly after liftoff. Detailed inspection of launch pad revealed that the Agema nitrogen gas quick-disconnect fitting was pulled from the satellite during liftoff. Complete loss of control gas followed. As a result of loss of control gas pressure, Agema engine was gimbeling abnormally during burning and vehicle attitude was abnormal. Although the Agema engine burned 122.6 seconds, these abnormalities prevented attainment of orbit. Search operations on all equipments by Kodiak, Vandenberg and Hawaii tracking stations during times predicted for orbital passes 1 and 2 were unsuccessful. From the above initial data, it is presumed that the vehicle re-entered the earth's atmosphere and burned at a presently undetermined distance downrange. Further details as to cause of failure must await detailed analysis of data.

(Carbon destroyed 10/12/60)

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DoD 10-12-60