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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
Washington

September 1, 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Reconnaissance Satellite Program

1. The National Security Council and the Director, Bureau of the Budget, at the Special NSC Meeting on August 25, 1960, took the following actions:

a. Noted and discussed a joint presentation by the Department of Defense and the Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, prepared pursuant to letters from the President dated June 10, 1960, on the Reconnaissance Satellite Program, with specific reference to SAMOS, including:

- (1) The development plan and experimental launchings.
- (2) The proposed streamlined management structure for the SAMOS program within the Department of Defense.

b. Noted the President's approval of the following recommendations submitted in the joint presentation:

(1) That the following selected components of the Air Force satellite reconnaissance program be now assembled into a program of very high priority:

- (a) A recoverable satellite-payload for high resolution convergent stereo photography.
- (b) To be recovered for the time being at sea.
- (c) To be recovered as soon as feasible on land.
- (d) To carry in some of the satellites camera and film competent to identify with certainty missile sites both in construction and after completion.

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- (e) To carry in other satellites camera and film competent to study the state of readiness, type of activity, and type of missiles. 6
- (2) That emphasis be placed on the development of more advanced recovery techniques particularly for land recovery.
- (3) That electronic read-out techniques be given lower priority but be continued as a research project, and that the extensive program for ground-based electronic read-out system be cut back very substantially and promptly.
- (4) That the so-called F payloads for gathering electromagnetic intelligence should be given lower priority than that assigned to photography.
- (5) That this program be managed with the directness that the Air Force has used on occasion, with great success, for projects of overriding priority. This can best be accomplished by a direct line of command from the Secretary of the Air Force to the general officer in operational charge of the whole program, with appropriate boards of scientific advisers to both the secretarial level and to the operational level. The general officer in command would look to associated military boards for support in the execution of his plans.
- (6) That the same organization as was used in the handling of the U-2 films be used for chemical processing of the recovered film, and that the output be distributed by a central community facility.
- (7) That this program be closely integrated with the weather services that will be associated with the TIROS project, with USAF 433-L system and other sources of weather data.
- (8) That the first scheduled experimental launching of SAMOS take place during September 1960.

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2. The above actions, as approved this date by the President, are transmitted herewith for appropriate implementation of 1-b thereof.

Signed

JAMES S. LAY, JR.
Executive Secretary

cc: The Secretary of State
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Special Assistant to the President
for Science and Technology

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