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191 NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

June 26, 1967

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POL-A-5/

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. FLAX

SUBJECT:

Decontrol and Downgrading . of Satellite Photography

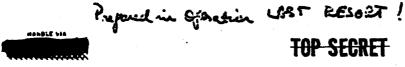
General Berg, Colonel Worthman, Mr and I have gone over the attached letter. We have concluded that we can think of no other action we could suggest to ameliorate System. the adverse effects which we foresee on the General Berg has asked Mr. The to begin at once on a care-ful study of what changes if any are required in the System.

Would you consider this letter and call upon us if you wish to discuss the matter further; otherwise, if you agree and will return the attached draft, we will put it in final form for your signature.

Since the attached USIB paper which is the subject of your letter is now out for vote slip approval, lacking I believe only the views of the DIA and the CIA, it is suggested that in responding we recommend that the attached substitute paragraph V.G., page 7, be used to replace the one in the Board's paper.

James Q. Reber

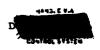
Attachments (3) Draft ltr to Helms Revised para V.G. USIB-D-41.12/28



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June 26, 1967

Dear Dick: uld like to comment or refer to the document on "Decontrol and Downgrading of Satellite Photography" (USIB-D-41.12/28) which is currently distributed to the Board for its concurrence. If this paper is approved with its provision for treating the fact of satellite photographic reconnaissance at no ac higher than the SECRET classification, it will have any impact on the Security Control System the extent of which we are currently exploring as well as what actions must be taken with regard to that System. Since the paper recommends that final USIB approval be as of the date of the signature of the new proposed Presidential letter and since it will take some time for COMIREX to provide the complete detailed instructions for the implementation of Tab 1, I would assume that between four and eight weeks will elapse before the actions of the subject paper would go into effect. It would be helpful if this office were advised if my estimate on timing is incorrect.

Since I have an obligation to you for the maintenance of operational security through the System, I must say that I anticipate an almost inovitable operational

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sccurity erosion as the fact of satellite reconnaissance and information that comes available through intelligence publications become widely known amongst individuals outside both the TALENT-KEYHOLE and the Systems. I believe that our task of adjustment to this new decision and our capability to maintain operational security would be aided and strengthened if an additional paragraph were added to the draft which is appended to the subject document.

The effect of the foregoing is to permit a recognition at the SECRET classification level that the United States has a satellite photographic reconnaissance program. However, since it is a very valuable national security asset, details are kept highly classified and are not available to personnel without special clearances. It is the national policy that the fact of such a program is not to be discussed publicly by officers of the United States Government.

Alexander H. Flax

Honorable Richard Helms Director of Central Intelligence Central Intelligence Agency Washington, D. C.

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V. G. Ordinarily the date of the information will not be more precisely defined than by month and year. In those instances where a more precise date is essential to the meaning and significance of the information, it may be used following the approval of the Senior Intelligence Officer or his designee.

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