



SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHIC RECONNAISSANCE

The USSR's ever increasing nuclear delivery capability, its systematic use of threats of nuclear attack, its evident intention to build situations of extreme tension as in the case of Berlin, and the gravity of the choices likely to confront our Government under these circumstances attach the utmost urgency to the requirement for improving our intelligence coverage on Soviet missile deployment during the up-coming months. CORONA is the most powerful, available tool to meet this need. Additional CORONA flights between now and the end of the year can be launched only at the expense of one or both of the ARGON shots now scheduled. Although the improved geodetic information expected to result from the ARGON flights is greatly to be desired, we believe that at this time less urgency attaches to the need for such geodetic information than to the need for CORONA-type, photographic intelligence. Accordingly the Board recommends that: (1) as many additional CORONA shots as possible be scheduled during the next three months, and that one or both ARGON flights be postponed if such postponement is necessary to accomplish this result; (2) because of its demonstrated dependability, the THOR-CORONA system be relied upon as the photographic reconnaissance workhorse while other newer systems, notably SAMOS subsystems, are in their developmental phases, and that procurement planning be based on this premise; (3) through the ordering of long lead-time items beyond the present CORONA program or, if that is impossible, by ordering additional whole CORONA systems, a sufficient number of these systems be made available to meet basic satellite reconnaissance needs until more advanced systems have been improved; and (4) steps be taken to insure launching pad availability to permit future scheduling of CORONA flights for quasi-tactical objectives.

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FOR THE BOARD

James R. Killian, Jr.
James R. Killian, Jr.
Chairman

~~HANDLE VIA TALENT KEYHOLE
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