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~~(S)~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

October 3, 1969

has seen

NOTE FOR DR. McLUCAS

SUBJECT: NRP Annex to the STG Report

In my note of September 23 (copy attached) I relayed Mr. Packard's message regarding the 303 Committee's discussion of our Annex to the STG Report.

Attached, on the right, is a copy of Dr. Kissinger's memorandum to the President on this subject, in which he recommends Presidential confirmation of our NRP goals, objectives, and capabilities; and his approval to restrict further dissemination of the Annex to the STG.

Dr. Kissinger reported on September 30 that the President had accepted both these recommendations.

William R. Yost
WILLIAM R. YOST
Colonel, USAF

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MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

2 October 1969

Colonel William R. Yost:

Appended for your information and official file is a copy of Dr. Kissinger's memorandum to higher authority re the NRP Annex to the Space Task Group Report.

Both recommendations submitted by the 303 Committee were accepted as of 30 September 1969.



~~SECRET-EYES ONLY~~



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

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WASHINGTON

ACTION

September 26, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *K*SUBJECT: National Reconnaissance Program (NRP) Annex to the
Space Task Group Report

The attached Annex to the Space Task Group Report covering the intelligence reconnaissance activities of the National Reconnaissance Program has been forwarded separately by Mel Laird because of the special security controls applied to this aspect of the space program.

The following are highlights of the annex:

The National Reconnaissance Program is covert and comprises the development, management and operation of satellites, aircraft and drones for photographic or electronic overhead (as distinguished from peripheral) reconnaissance of denied areas of the world. Emphasis is on satellite reconnaissance and the cost is \$850 million per year, 93% of the budget being devoted to satellite systems.

The program is responsive directly to the national intelligence collection requirements and priorities established by the United States Intelligence Board (USIB). Its plans and schedules for both satellite and aircraft overflights are submitted to the 303 Committee for operational approval.

Most of this nation's information on USSR strategic offensive and defensive systems has been acquired by satellite reconnaissance. The same is true of a considerable portion of other important intelligence acquired by the United States. Dependence on satellite reconnaissance would be magnified further by U.S. withdrawal from foreign bases.

Since reconnaissance satellites require a permissive environment, both political and physical, it is critically important to nourish the conditions which contribute to the kind of international political atmosphere existing today which provides all the advantages of tacit acceptance of satellite reconnaissance without the hazards inherent in open discussion or confrontation.

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The Soviets have a clear existing capability to destroy a reconnaissance satellite if they wish, although National Intelligence Estimates conclude that it is extremely unlikely they would take such steps other than as a prelude to general war. The United States has no present non-nuclear capability for intercepting Soviet reconnaissance satellites. The desirability of acquiring such a capability will be considered in the Department of Defense's contributions to the main report of the Space Task Group.

The long-term goals of the National Reconnaissance Program are to continue to:

1. Conduct a covert program to collect intelligence through the overflight of denied territory.
2. Seek methods to reduce the cost of such collection.
3. Improve the responsiveness of collection systems to intelligence needs.
4. Advance satellite reconnaissance techniques in order to improve collection capabilities and respond to new collection needs.

RECOMMENDATION:

This Annex recommends on page 21 that you confirm the goals, objectives and capabilities of the National Reconnaissance Program as presented in the report. With this guidance the Secretary of Defense will continue to make program decisions consistent with the needs expressed by the intelligence community.

The 303 Committee has reviewed this annex and believes that because of its sensitivity and lack of general applicability to the basic Space Task Group Report it should not be further disseminated to the full membership of the Space Task Group and their staffs.

The 303 Committee also endorses the above recommendation and recommends that you approve it.

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