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20 March 1974

Minority Report on the
Review of Security Requirements of the
National Reconnaissance Program

INTRODUCTION

The representative of the Office of Security, CIA agrees with the basic findings of the majority but does not believe the modifications of security policy and procedures proposed by the majority go far enough to satisfy the pressures of the times. The following, then, represents the proposals he offers based upon the changes noted in today's environment over those existing when tight security was adopted around the National Reconnaissance Program in 1962.

1. Time and events have overtaken and moderated the fears and concerns of 1962 which led to the imposition of compartmented security controls over the entire National Reconnaissance Program. Modifications to the BYEMAN Control System which prescribes security procedures around the NRP can be introduced which will ease the pressures of today's environment for greater candor, complement the approved modifications of security controls over satellite

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EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652 EX-
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photography, and facilitate a more reasonable administration of the BYEMAN Control System without sacrifice of essential security over operations and technology of the National Reconnaissance Program.

2. The proposed modifications are:

(a) Declassify the 1965 agreement between the Director of Central Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense which established the National Reconnaissance Program and the National Reconnaissance Office and implementing directives.

(b) Permit identification of the composition and budget of the NRO at the SECRET level.

(c) Change the BYEMAN Control System policy so as to:

(1) Establish at the government level only two compartments rather than the present eight--one compartment for protection of SIGINT satellites and one compartment for protection of photographic satellites. Do not change the compartmentation practices at the industrial level.

(2) Restate the terms of BYEMAN procedures to comply with the requirements of Executive Order 11652. In this connection decompartment and declassify codewords, mission numbers and mission nicknames.

3. The following advantages are seen:

(a) Declassification of the 1965 agreement which established the National Reconnaissance Program and Office would be a logical follow-on

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to the declassification of the NRO which occurred on 12 October 1973 in consequence of its appearance in the Congressional Record. Further, it would permit and serve as a frame of reference for release of information on the NRP without formal acknowledgement of a U.S. reconnaissance satellite program.

(b) Elimination of the present difficult cover arrangements used to conceal the NRO and its personnel.

(c) Permit opportunity to re-evaluate the desirability of formalizing the NRO management structure as a legitimate organ of the National Intelligence Community.

(d) The NRO budget could be consolidated as an official part of the National Intelligence Budget and defended before the Congress as such.

(e) Reducing the number of compartmentations within the BYEMAN Control System would permit simplification of the administration of the system at the government level where the system is criticized for requiring excessive compartmentation and too rigid control of information.

(f) A restatement of BYEMAN controls would permit opportunity to correct practices of excessive compartmentation and classification now practiced and bring the BYEMAN System into agreement with requirements and criteria of Executive Order 11652. Declassification of codewords, mission numbers, nicknames would ease the considerable security effort now expanded to control the use of these terms with corresponding savings in manpower and time.

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(g) Adoption of these modifications would make it easier in general to satisfy the desires of Congress for information about the NRP and the NRO.

(h) The needs of the civil agencies, recognized as a legitimate requirement could be satisfied as desired without imposing expensive and complex security stipulations on them.

(i) The selective use of security controls where necessary to protect essential operations and technology would increase the credibility of the needs of security and gain a greater measure of acceptance for such security.

4. The following disadvantages are seen:

(a) An increased Congressional scrutiny of the NRP and DCI involvement in the NRO.

(b) Possible difficulty in continuing use of streamlined management procedures now employed by the NRO.

(c) A possible desire by departments and agencies which now contribute to the NRO to decentralize and regularize program management along lines of other DoD programs.

(d) There will be increased pressure to officially admit the "fact of" a U.S. satellite reconnaissance program with subsequent increase of interest at international forums on the issues of legality and sovereignty.

(e) There would be an increase in the risk of unauthorized disclosures about the operation of the NRO which may stimulate countermeasures.

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(f) Modification of the BYEMAN System to establish only two special clearances would have a negative impact on the current security practices at the industrial level.

Balanced considerations of the advantages and disadvantages of easing the special security caveats placed around the NRP indicate that they can be moderated to satisfy the trends of the time without serious threat to the continued viability of the NRO and unilateral conduct of the U. S. National Reconnaissance Program.



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