

~~TOP SECRET~~HANDLE VIA
BYEMAN
CONTROL SYSTEM
GAMBIT~~(S)~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

December 22, 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR OF RECONNAISSANCE, CIA

SUBJECT: Readout Systems for Photographic Reconnaissance
Satellites

This is in reply to your memorandum of November 30, 1966 on the above subject.

I wish to assure you that I do not intend to place an overly restrictive interpretation on the ExCom decision regarding readout systems. I regard it simply as a decision not to proceed with development of an operational readout system for GAMBIT-Cubed at this time. However, I must also note from the discussion and deliberation which led up to this decision, that there was no apparent appreciation in the intelligence community as to the benefits which could be derived from an operational readout system. Further, it was not at all clear that this apparent lack of appreciation could be attributed to the fact that the readout system under consideration was near real-time rather than real-time. In fact, any consensus on the desirable characteristics of a readout system was not at all evident. In view of this environment, I believe that the NRO should not move in the direction of further or enlarged system-oriented efforts pending clarification of system objectives and requirements.

Studies and advanced technology efforts, related to future readout capabilities already underway or proposed by SAFSP or CIA-OSP, are not, in my view directly affected by the ExCom action, except for an overall limitation on the fraction of NRO resources which can be allocated to developments whose operational benefits yet remain to be defined and related to technical program objectives.



Alexander H. Flax

GAMBIT
HANDLE VIA
BYEMAN
CONTROL SYSTEM~~TOP SECRET~~

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC REGRADING

CONTROL NO. BYE 52933-66
COPY 7 OF 9 COPIES
PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES