

~~SECRET~~

~~ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED~~
COPY

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
Washington

Oct 10, 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Reconnaissance Satellite Program

The following actions, which were taken by the National Security Council at its meeting on 25 August 1960, and which were approved by the President, are transmitted for your information and implementation:

"1. That the following selected components of the Air Force satellite reconnaissance program will be assembled into a program of very high priority:

- "a. A recoverable satellite-payload for high resolution convergent stereo photography.
- "b. Satellite recovery at sea for the time being.
- "c. Satellite recovery on land as soon as feasible.
- "d. Some of the satellites to carry camera and film competent to identify with certainty missile sites both in construction and after completion.
- "e. Other satellites to carry camera and film competent to study the state of readiness, type of activity, and type of missile.

"2. That emphasis will be placed on the development of more advanced recovery techniques, particularly for land recovery.

"3. That electronic read-out techniques will be given lower priority, but will be continued as a research project; and the extensive program for ground-based electronic read-out systems will be cut back very substantially and promptly.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

COPY

"4. That the so-called F payloads for gathering electromagnetic intelligence should be given lower priority than that assigned to photography.

"5. That this program will be managed with the directness that the Air Force has used on occasion, with great success, for projects of overriding priority. This can best be accomplished by a direct line of command from the Secretary of the Air Force to the general officer in operational charge of the whole program, with appropriate boards of scientific advisers to both the secretarial level and to the operational level. The general officer in command would look to associated military boards for support in the execution of his plans.

"6. That the same organization as was used in the handling of U-2 films will be used for chemical processing of the recovered film, and the output will be distributed by a central community facility.

"7. That this program will be closely integrated with the weather services that will be associated with the TIROS project, with USAF 433L system and with other sources of weather data.

"8. That the first scheduled experimental launching of SAMOS will take place during September 1960."

Memorandum from the Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of the Air Force, dated September 15, 1960, subject: Reconnaissance Satellite Program, already implements that part of the National Security Council's action contained in paragraph 5 above.

/s/ Thomas⁵ Gates

~~SECRET~~