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11. KEY DESCRIPTORS: (48-79)  
*Open Mouth vs  
Open Skies*

12. RELATED OPERATURE CARD NUMBERS, SEQUENCE NUMBERS OR CONTROL NUMBERS: (80)  
*35 mm only*

13. APPROVED BY:  
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REPORTS: (Katz) The Open Mouth, et

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The **RAND** Corporation

Noted by the  
Under Secretary  
of the Air Force

1700 MAIN ST. • SANTA MONICA • CALIFORNIA

21 March 1961

L-5890

*AS*

Brigadier General R. D. Curtin, Director  
Office of Missile and Satellite Systems  
Office of the Secretary of the Air Force  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Dick:

Enclosed are some notes I prepared several years ago. Because they bear on items and activities of mutual interest I think and hope you and Dr. Charyk will find them of interest.

Sincerely,



Electronics Department

AHK:dle

Enclosure: One copy of "The Open Mouth Policy Versus the Open Skies Policy (U)" classified Confidential.

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If enclosures are withdrawn or not attached the classification of this correspondence will be cancelled.

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~

U.S. AIR FORCE  
*Project* **RAND**



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U.S. AIR FORCE

*Project*

RAND

THE OPEN MOUTH POLICY VERSUS THE OPEN  
SKIES POLICY (U)

A. H. Katz

May 1, 1959

COPY NO. 113

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For some years now I have been watching various projects, ideas, facts and data move directly from the top secret and secret levels into unclassified newspapers, Congressional hearings, and other open sources, with nary a pause or a wait at any intermediate level. The projects aren't declassified, but remain in a schizoid suspension.

Although a catalogue of the ways and systems which the Soviet Union must be using to get important information about us, our works, our activities, and our plans would truly be an impressively long list, I choose to make some comments only on that material which we give to them gratis, openly, and in large volume.

The lesson which I have drawn from observations like those which follow below is an extremely simple one: we cannot keep most things secret; I will not go so far as to claim that we keep no secrets, but I feel strongly that if anyone here at RAND attempts to devise a system, an operational concept, or a procedure in which secrecy about the procedure, the equipment, its location, is an important (but not crucial) part of his strategy, he ought to plainly and simply give it up. The benefits of secrecy cannot be counted on to remain plugged in direct series with the rest of the system. The possible exceptions may lie among those operations which completely fail if secrecy is lost.

It was not very long ago when a coupling of WDD with the Ramo-Wooldridge organization in correspondence required that the correspondence be classified, when even a sketch of the Atlas was classified, when pictures which I have in my office showing the Atlas being dragged across the country were marked confidential; when the words 'reconnaissance satellite' were themselves classified. The half-life of secrets of this type seems to be somewhat less than a year.

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The project I have the most information on, as far as history of releases, news leaks, etc. are concerned is the 117L reconce satellites. Under date of November 26, 1956 I wrote a memorandum, number [REDACTED] to Joe Goldsen. In it I discussed some brief history of public releases on reconce satellites up to that time (actually, there has been so much released on this in the last couple of years that I have stopped collecting clippings--I collected them when they were rare, but despite the fact that I have several filing cases, I haven't any room for any more.)

In that memo to Joe, I recounted the fact that some little while before this that Fairchild Camera Instrument Corporation sent me an unclassified teletype requesting visit approval to come in and discuss photo reconnaissance from satellites. Dick Best and I caught this security violation simultaneously, and despite the fact that the Fairchild people are good friends, we thought they should have the word, and called them on the security matter. Their response was to ship us a clipping from the Los Angeles Times dated February 6, 1956 in which a story from Washington under date of February 4 describes a statement by (the then Air Secretary) Donald Quarles on the possibility of launching a 'reconnaissance satellite' and the fact that the Air Force has long range research interests in this project. The questioning of Quarles by reporters, which brought out the material on the satellite, followed a column by the Alsops which was headlined 'Big Brother.' This appeared in their New York Herald Tribune column on February 3, 1956. The Alsops had a column on the reconce satellite under date of August 15, 1950 in the Washington Post, and Time Magazine carried articles January 10, 1949 and February 28, 1949. Sure enough, by April, 1958, Lockheed saw fit to publish a full page classified ad trying to hire engineers to work on what

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is described in extremely large type as the U. S. Air Force Reconnaissance Satellite. (See this ad on my bulletin board. It should have read Wanted: 5000 Engineers 5000.)

Now in this discussion, I am not necessarily advocating that all this material should have been kept secret. I am only illuminating the fact that with an obvious and stated intent and some matching action by the Air Force to classify this project even higher than secret, it has come pretty well un-glued in the public press.

If we try to establish a line-up of reasons for keeping anything secret, we have only one: presumed national good as reflected in secrecy. But now let's look at the big hitters on the other side. The forces which make for disclosure have been operative now for a number of years, and if I read the tea leaves correctly, will continue to be so operative. First, we have international rivalry, and the fact that a weapon is no good as a deterrent if the other fellow knows nothing about it. Of course, the reader will notice I used the word 'weapon' in the proceeding sentence whereas the previous discussion was on R and D projects. However, I have noticed that despite increasing experience, knowledge, and power, our military leaders as well as many of our civilian leaders completely fail to distinguish between ideas, conjectures, R and D projects, prototype weapons and weapons in force. These words go around in one big intellectual mish-mash and are used interchangeably. The net result is that it becomes necessary to add a new tense to the R and D language: Hitherto we have been able to describe project status by use of either past tense, present tense or future tense. To this set we must now add pretense.

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Perhaps an even more profound reason for disclosure by high military figures of projects and ideas has to do with inter-service rivalry. In my view, it is likely that most of the time the major enemy of the Air Force is not the Russians (they are a potential enemy) but rather the Army, the Navy and the civilian economy who are real and here. The terrific competition for lines in the press, for dollars, and activity, undoubtedly force, or at least put pressure on, top officials to take aside a key reporter and plant a leak.

Commercial reasons are extremely powerful. It was obvious to me long before Lockheed published these ads that they would have to publish them to attract engineers, to promote stock, to keep the people they have, etc.

In fact, Gene Root, head of the Lockheed Missiles Systems Division, said this in almost exactly the same words in his Congressional testimony before the Committee on Armed Services of the United States Senate on January 15, 1958 (for those readers who are pack rats, like the writer, this is the hearing entitled 'Inquiry into Satellite and Missile Programs' Part 2, pages 1853-1857.)

I quote here from Root's testimony:

'...and we would like to indicate Lockheed's role in the Air Force Satellite program in the same manner as others publicize their roles in the ICBM and IRBM programs, and we have such a program underway.'

I now quote again from the referenced memo to Goldsen of November 26, 1956:

'...now for the project itself. The 117L people at WDD are tightening security on the project and are attempting to raise its classification. My own view is that this will be difficult and will fall afoul of good old American business practices. What I mean is that as soon as Lockheed gets sizeable funds, they will want to advertise (you know these beautiful, institutional advertisements which are becoming a Madison Avenue art form.)

The pressure to advertise will come about because they will want to hire people, keep people, promote stock, etc. Further, everybody else advertises. From a condition a year or so ago, when the magic initials

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WDD couldn't be coupled with RW in an unclassified context, we went to the era when scarcely a month passes without the appearance of an article describing (or decrying) the organization of WDD and RW. So, I conclude the satellite will be disclosed, advertised, bragged about, discussed and analyzed--all before we build one, let alone launch it and get pictures out of it.'

A striking illustration of the argument advanced in this note is to be found in a remarkable double page spread in Aviation Week (November 10, 1958), where Aviation Week itself advertises RECONNAISSANCE SATELLITES in large headline type. The message is:

'RECONNAISSANCE SATELLITES ... Swinging over every spot on Earth, the snooper satellites of tomorrow will look down with photographic, TV, infrared and radar eyes. As they flash over the U.S., they will transmit data collected during their sweep around the globe--or film from optical cameras will be ejected for recovery.

They were first described in an exclusive AVIATION WEEK article October 14, 1957. Latest technical developments were reported in the June 16 and 23, 1958 issues of AVIATION WEEK. These reconnaissance systems are nearer than you think. The satellites are in the development stage and will use missiles for launching which are already in existence.

Even now, they affect hundreds of policy decisions and procurement awards.

Space Technology developments -- the markets of tomorrow -- are shaped by today's decisions in the Aviation industry. That's why your message, your advertisements -- your product, your company, your facility -- belong in AVIATION WEEK. It's the one publication qualified to speak to these decision makers.

.....  
Sell Today the Market of Tomorrow. SPACE TECHNOLOGY'

An interesting example of the tendency of military people to do their bragging before they have accomplished what they are bragging about is furnished by consideration of the testimony of a very sober citizen, then Major General Bernard Schriever, who, back in January, 1958, in the same hearings which Root appeared, talked about the recoverable photographic satellite, said that the Air Force intended to use a THOR-based system to

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do this, and promised the assembled senators that this system would be operational in early 1959. Another interesting aspect about this unnecessary testimony (which the reader will note did not discuss the theory of recoverability, but the fact of the existence of a program to which the Air Force was giving high priority) is that this testimony was released unilaterally by the Air Force, which release got the Senate more or less teed off at the Air Force. A new disease seems to be abroad in the land: oralgitis. It is derived from oral and G.I.'s, the latter being a common travelling man's affliction.

It is quite clear that testimony, releases, newspaper publicity, are designed not only to inform the public and the Congress, but are designed to show one service's superiority in planning over another service's, are designed to nail down funds, to secure approval for larger programs, and for other purposes, the listing of which could be extended almost indefinitely by any of the readers of this note. Again, I am not saying this is bad, just that it exists, and we'd better not ignore it.

Does this necessarily mean that no operations can be conducted secretly? Of course not. It simply means that operations and projects in which secrecy itself is not an integral part of the project or an integral purpose of the project, are likely to have secrecy removed. It may or may not be true that the success of the recce satellite project depends on secrecy. It is, at best, arguable, and one could construct an argument that it should be done openly as soon as possible and that the pictures should be published. Again, this is arguable, but I could scheme up other projects in which security and secrecy are features of the projects, and in which it would be obvious a priori that failure would result were secrecy violated or lost.

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The careful reader who also attends selected briefings around RAND (especially those who attended a recent one on security) will well realize that we do a lot of talking other than to newspapers and Congressmen. I suggest that all of the foregoing be kept in mind when any of us around here attempt to recommend the hiding of bases, the hiding of missiles, and the building of fully secret installations.

We give away so much information that except for some very special and important problems (discussed elsewhere) the Soviets have little need for participation in an 'open skies' operation over the U.S.

We need 'open skies' over there because among other reasons, the Soviets seem to have found either a preventative or a cure for oralgitis.

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