OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR.   February 21, 1968.

This is fine as far as I am concerned — it illustrates that economic intelligence may yet be recognized as a powerful tool in the National interest as military intelligence has been of [?]

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. FLAX

SUBJECT: Project ARGO

    Dr. Steininger left a copy of the attached for your
and my informal comments. The paper is the proposed
transmittal letter to cover the report of the Project ARGO
which has been studying the possible application of KH-4
photography to civilian uses. This project, you recall,
was established through the initiative of Dr. Hornig.

    We do not have a copy of the report and Dr. Steininger
explained the reason being that it is not yet in final
form.

    General Berg and Paul Worthman have also looked at
this paper. We see no objection to it. I recommend that
you request me to so advise Don Steininger.

    Don advises that essentially the report is an identi-
fication of seven or eight instances which, at least pre-
liminarily, suggest useful applications of the information
in KH-4 photography which could be used for civilian pur-
poses. He points out that, as the study proceeds and
assuming that additional uses are identified, there still
remains the problem of how within security such information
could be employed. He illustrated, however, that had
Secretary Freeman had better information on the world wheat
crop last year he probably would not have authorized the
increased acreage in the United States which has resulted
in a depressed market. In such a case, he indicated, all
Secretary Freeman would have needed was a number, the
source of which he personally knew.

    It appears to us that if this project showed promise
it might eventually serve as a constraining force on the
NASA Earth Resources Program.

Internal
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PAGE _1_ OF ___ PAGES

Later on, in addition to the problem of utilization of the information, there will have to be worked out many questions such as, procedurally at what point is the NRO consulted on extra "civilian" flights and who pays for them. I think we will have to wait on these.

On March 6 there is a briefing at NPIC in which the members of the ARGO Steering Committee will make oral presentations. A representative of your staff is invited. General Berg tells me that someone will attend this meeting.

James Q. Reber

Attachment
  Steininger draft on Project ARGO

Internal

2

TOP SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR

    THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
    THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
    THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
    THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
    ADMINISTRATOR, AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
    ADMINISTRATOR, NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION
    DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PLANNING

    In November 1966 we jointly initiated a study, subsequently named

Project ARGO, to evaluate classified satellite photography from the

standpoint of civilian agency needs. The work is now complete and

the final report of the project is attached. The resource experts

whom you assigned to this task have studied the material from the

viewpoint of both their discipline and their knowledge of the interests

of their parent agency. The attached document is their report to you

on their individual findings. I think your team members are to be con-

gratulated on the enthusiasm and dedication with which they have carried

this through.

    This has been a very profitable effort—as you read the investigators'

reports I think you will see that there is evidence that by-products of

the present intelligence systems might be of service to you in your

current operations. Indeed, the probability of its utility seems

sufficiently high to warrant our taking two more steps to fully exploit

the work that has already been done by the ARGO team.

First, we ought to establish a mechanism whereby your agencies can routinely make your needs and interests known to the intelligence community. As a specific proposal for your consideration, I suggest we continue the ARGO Steering Committee as a Standing Committee which would (1) collect and consolidate the needs that each of you might have for photography from the current systems, (2) see that these needs were made known to the intelligence community and (3) discuss procedures for handling classified photography for these purposes with the community. Your member on the steering committee could be the point of contact within your agency for the generation of uses to which the photography might be put. Mr. Helms has agreed to cooperate with such a group and to appoint an agency representative. I would propose that my office chair the committee until the activity gets well established but I would hope that we could eventually operate as an arm of a USIB committee. I would like to know your opinion on this, and if you agree, who your representative would be.

Second, as we intended when we initiated the program, I propose that each agency now evaluate the ARGO conclusions from the standpoint of its own interests and write a report on its findings. I think it is important to keep in mind that the ARGO team, because of its limited size and the short time available to it, may not have surfaced all the possible uses of this material, nor have demonstrated to your satisfaction those uses that they did identify. Thus, it may be that you

3

will see additional applications or will want to initiate pilot studies
to demonstrate or further define some of the uses already proposed.
Therefore, I suggest that your report emphasize the following points:
(1) the identification of additional applications; (2) the elaboration
of your requirements from the standpoint of geographic coverage,
frequency of coverage, etc.; and (3) the definition of "pilot" studies
that you plan to undertake. I would appreciate having the results
of your evaluation by 1 May. This report could then serve as your
initial input to the activities of the Standing Committee.

Donald F. Hornig
Special Assistant to the President
for Science and Technology

Enclosure