

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

DEC 10 1969

[REDACTED]

Mr. McManera has  
seen this, has not  
shown it to the President,  
and says that he does  
not plan to. He knows  
that you are getting it  
and may show it to  
the President. You should  
use your judgment on  
this latter point since  
the book is quite  
"elementary."

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

14-00000  
FORM 10-69

UNCONTROLLED

[REDACTED]

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

3 Dec 1963

[REDACTED]

Attached is a capsule  
summary of the NRP (15)  
which you may wish  
to leave with the  
President for his  
information.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Control System

[REDACTED]  
(CLASSIFICATION)

**Handle Via Indicated Controls**

[REDACTED]

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**WARNING**

This document contains information affecting the national security of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws U. S. Code Title 18, Sections 793 and 794. The law prohibits its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person, as well as its use in any manner prejudicial to the safety or interest of the United States or for the benefit of any foreign government to the detriment of the United States. It is to be seen only by U. S. personnel especially indoctrinated and authorized to receive information in the designated control channels. Its security must be maintained in accordance with regulations pertaining to the designated controls.

**This document contains information referring to Projects:**

...OXCART...

...IDEALIST...

[REDACTED]

...CORONA...

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
(CLASSIFICATION)

December 3, 1963

UNITED STATES OVERFLIGHT OF DENIED AREAS

The following summary outlines the present status of provisions for the collection of intelligence information by overflight of foreign territory. Included are descriptions of the capabilities being developed and the arrangements that have been made for supervising and managing this effort on a national basis.

Overflight by the United States of foreign territory ("denied areas") is conducted by means of special reconnaissance aircraft and satellites.

The U-2 is at present the aircraft most frequently used for such photographic reconnaissance. Over 60 U-2 photographic missions were flown in the past year, exclusive of regular surveillance missions over Cuba. Present missions are flown over Communist China; most of the rest of the 60-plus missions were in the South East Asian area.

Satellites are now the only source of intelligence photography over the Soviet Union and over its peripheral neighbors in Europe. Missions about once a month photograph a large fraction of the Soviet land mass; almost the whole Soviet Union is covered at least once during a year's operation. The satellite system used for this photography - a so-called "broad-coverage" system - photographs a swath about 100 miles wide on the ground, with an acuity or resolution sufficient to identify and locate primary military targets such as missile sites. Under good conditions, objects and features smaller than 10 feet in dimension can be identified from this photography. This resolution is considerably less than that provided by the lower-flying U-2, but the area that can be covered by this broad-coverage satellite system is very great.

Since recovery of the first successful reconnaissance satellite film in August 1960, the United States has conducted 55 successful area coverage photographic missions, which have provided the primary base of United States information concerning Soviet ICBM and MRBM deployment.

OXCART IDEALIST  
CORONA

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[REDACTED]

To replace the existing U-2, a new reconnaissance aircraft is being developed to fly at speeds of Mach 3.2 at altitudes up to 90,000 feet. This aircraft will operate entirely from bases within the continental United States, assisted by air refueling at strategic points. Special provision has been made to keep the radar cross-section quite low, which will increase the difficulty of "early" detection and hostile action. The first flight was made in April 1962. To date, 12 aircraft have been delivered to the flight test site, and over 502 flights have been made totalling 670 hours, with the longest flight being 3 hours, the highest speed achieved being Mach 3.2, and the greatest altitude 70,000 feet. On the basis of progress to date, it is expected that initial operational capability will be reached during 1964.

[REDACTED]

All film from satellite reconnaissance missions is recovered by air catch in the Pacific recovery area near Hawaii. The typical mission accomplishes its photography in about four days.

The satellite reconnaissance effort also contains payloads devoted to collection of electronic signal intelligence, which is relayed electronically from the satellite to a network of tracking stations. Lifetime on orbits of signal intelligence satellites varies from [REDACTED]

Control [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Because of the extreme sensitivity of reconnaissance over denied areas, the entire effort has been organized on a national basis under stringent security rules defined and supported by appropriate national policy. As part of this policy, steps have been taken to minimize public speculation concerning reconnaissance, and to avoid any official confirmation that the United States is engaged in such activities. With the exception of previous exposures concerning U-2 employment, and previous official acknowledgment that the United States was actively engaged in development of satellite reconnaissance capability (in connection with the project previously identified as SAMOS), all development is being carried out on a covert ("black") basis requiring centrally controlled special clearances for each witting individual. In addition to avoiding any official confirmation that the United States is currently collecting actual overflight intelligence information, every effort is made to protect, through the most stringent security procedures, any knowledge of the kind and quality of the results which have been obtained.

To avoid public speculation about or official confirmation of the overflight effort, even the name of the responsible organization - the National Reconnaissance Office - is SECRET. By agreement between the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, the National Reconnaissance Office is established as an operating agency of the Department of Defense, with membership from the several Services and Agencies whose resources are involved. The Under Secretary of the Air Force is the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office. The aircraft effort is largely delegated to the Central Intelligence Agency, with appropriate assistance from the Department of the Air Force. The satellite reconnaissance effort is carried out by specially organized units of the Department of the Air Force, with security and other assistance from units of the Central Intelligence Agency. Assistance in the field of signal intelligence comes from specially organized units of the Department of the Navy.

All intelligence collection requirements are established by the United States Intelligence Board. All photographic results are made available to the intelligence community through the

Central Office



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National Photographic Interpretation Center and the Defense Intelligence Agency. Signal intelligence results are made available through the National Security Agency. Basic operating policy and supervision is provided to the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office by the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. Higher level review and supervision is provided on a close and continuing basis by the 5412 Special Group of the National Security Council, and by the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

The entire effort is substantial [REDACTED] in fiscal year 1954, of which [REDACTED] were devoted to satellite reconnaissance) and has produced extremely important intelligence results. The security considerations associated with the effort have marked impressive technical accomplishments. The achievement of sustained level flight at over Mach 3 in a titanium aircraft involves numerous exceptional technical advances. The satellite accomplishments are equally impressive, and include successful development of orbit-adjust capability, including planned de-orbit of the entire vehicle in a remote ocean area after completion of the reconnaissance mission and recovery of the film. In addition, the photographic results obtained from altitudes of approximately 100 nautical miles have exceeded the original design specifications and represent an outstanding technical achievement. These latter results are illustrated by the following photographs obtained of

[REDACTED]

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5 photographs

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