

~~TOP SECRET~~



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

MEMORANDUM FOR OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (DIRECTOR OF DEFENSE  
RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING)

SUBJECT: SAMOS, MIDAS and DISCOVERER Research and Development  
Programs and Development/Operational Plans for SAMOS  
and MIDAS Programs

Reference: Memorandum for Secretary of Defense from Under Secretary  
of the Air Force, subject: Transfer of the SAMOS, MIDAS  
and DISCOVERER Development Programs to the Department of  
the Air Force, dated 18 Feb 1960, and your undated draft  
response to the 18 Feb Memo from Under Secretary of Air  
Force

1. It is understood that the referenced draft memo addresses  
itself solely to the subject of the R&D programs of DISCOVERER, SAMOS,  
MIDAS and that specific comment on the SAMOS, MIDAS Dev/Ops plans is  
awaiting JCS recommendations.

2. There is irrefutable evidence of urgent intelligence needs that  
are beyond the capability of the "C" program. We are currently re-examining  
the reliability and probability of success that can be expected from both  
the recovery and early readout systems. This examination is based upon  
review of our actual experience in the DISCOVERER program and extensive  
ground tests. These tests of the E-1 were made with the actual flight  
hardware and ground support equipment. It does appear that within the  
presently authorized funds an approach based upon an increase in the  
readout offers much higher probability of obtaining the intelligence  
information in the time period rather than extending the "C" program.

3. If a "C" program extension is considered necessary, then as a  
compromise it is recommended that our R&D programs for DISCOVERER, SAMOS,  
MIDAS be approved as submitted and that the Air Force be allowed to  
reprogram FY-61 funds from non-space programs to provide the number of  
additional "C" shots directed, with the understanding that there is  
sufficient flexibility to reorient the "C" program or the readout (E-1 or  
E-2) as will be justified by future development experience.

Declassified and Released by the N R O

In Accordance with E. O. 12958

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on NOV 26 1997