



~~TOP SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Declassified and Released by the NRO

In Accordance with E. O. 12958

October 6, 1961

on NOV 26 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL TAYLOR

SUBJECT: Satellite Photographic Reconnaissance (Recommandation No. 16 of the October 4, 1961, Report to the President by the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board)

In its October 4, 1961, report to the President, the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board placed great urgency on the requirement for improved United States intelligence coverage of Soviet missile deployment during the coming months -- because of the USSR's ever increasing nuclear delivery capability, its systematic use of threats of nuclear attack, its evident intention to build situations of extreme tension, and because of the gravity of choices likely to confront our Government under these circumstances.

The Board observed that CORONA flights are the most powerful tool we have to meet this intelligence need. The Board is of the opinion that additional CORONA shots should be launched during the rest of this year even though this would mean cancellation of one or both of the ARGON shots which are scheduled for the purpose of obtaining needed geodetic information.

Accordingly the Board recommends that: (1) as many additional CORONA shots as possible be scheduled during the next three months, and that one or both ARGON flights be postponed if such postponement is necessary to accomplish this result; (2) because of its demonstrated dependability, the THOR-CORONA system be relied upon as the photographic reconnaissance workhorse while other newer systems, notably SAMOS subsystems, are in their developmental phases, and that procurement planning be based on this premise; (3) through the ordering of long lead-time items beyond the present CORONA program or, if that is impossible, by ordering additional whole CORONA systems, a sufficient number of these systems be made available to meet basic satellite reconnaissance needs until more advanced systems have been improved; and (4) steps be taken to insure launching pad availability to permit future scheduling of CORONA flights for quasi-tactical objectives.

~~HANDLE VIA TALENT KEYHOLE CHANNELS ONLY~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Recommendation: that the President approve the obtaining of views of the Secretary of Defense on this recommendation, prior to taking final action thereon. (A memorandum to the Secretary of Defense is attached for use in the event that the President approves this action.)

J. Patrick Coyne
J. Patrick Coyne