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WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. LADNER
LTCOL YOSTSUBJECT: COMSEC Surveillance Survey of 6595 ATW,
23 July - 2 August 1968PURPOSE:

To evaluate the COMSEC report, and, in light of the report, to determine what action, if any, is required to insure proper security of the NRP at Vandenberg AFB.

DEVELOPMENT OF A SECURITY CRITERIA:

Proper evaluation requires the development of a security criteria which must take cognizance of the following:

- a. The NRO has been directed to conduct the NRP "covertly" under the guise of R&D.
- b. The various reconnaissance systems have been subject to a fair amount of speculation in national news media.
- c. The loyalty security program is sensitive because of the underlying constitutional questions presented.
- d. There is an existing need for protecting technological lead time in the development and operation of reconnaissance systems.
- e. There is an existing need for the protection of information which if divulged would cause reconnaissance systems to become more vulnerable to interference during.

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crisis, trans-conflict, or post-conflict periods.

THE SECURITY CRITERIA:

A realistic security criteria may be stated as follows:

- a. To keep within the "covert" system all tangible evidence of a reconnaissance effort.
- b. To keep within the "covert" system all information which prompts new speculation or tends to validate old speculation concerning the reconnaissance effort.
- c. To keep within the "covert" system all information which reveals the existence of a special security system, including personnel security investigations and clearances.
- d. To protect all "state-of-the-art" information which constitutes technological lead time in the development and operation of reconnaissance systems.
- e. To protect all information which if devulged would cause the reconnaissance systems to become more vulnerable to interference or destruction during international crisis, trans-conflict, or post-conflict periods.

COMSEC REPORT VS SECURITY CRITERIA:

It is stated in the COMSEC report that all information was developed from UNCLASSIFIED documentation. The report describes the mission of Program 846, describes the recovery operation, identifies launch dates, and reveals injection parameters. Obviously, the security system at Vandenberg AFB has not met the security criteria established above.

BACKGROUND TO THE COVERT SECURITY POLICY:

To the detriment of "covert" security, early satellite reconnaissance history is replete with instances wherein Congress and the public were given detailed information concerning the development, manufacture, and launching of the early systems. In January 1960, for example, General White discussed SAMOS before the National Press Club.

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Later in that same year, General Schriever described the SAMOS mission in open testimony before the House Committee on Science and Astronautics. Shortly thereafter, the Air Force announced the establishment of the SAMOS Project, under General Greer at El Segundo, California. Finally, the Air Force openly announced the launching of SAMOS I, II, and III from Vandenberg AFB. In other words, prior to closing the "barn door" the public's interest was whetted, and the public was officially told who, what, where, when, and how the satellite reconnaissance effort was being accomplished. Unfortunately, these early disclosures educated newsmen in satellite reconnaissance technology, and pinpointed those areas which would later serve newsmen as targets for exploitation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COVERT SECURITY POLICY:

Subsequent to these early disclosures, a decision was made at the very highest level of government to conduct the NRP "covertly"; unfortunately, however, as demonstrated by the results of the COMSEC Team survey, little effective action has yet been taken to implement national policy in a realistic manner at VAFB. The modus operandi, for instance, has not been changed substantially since it was originally announced that the SAMOS Project would be managed from El Segundo. Systems launched from VAFB are readily identifiable as being managed by SAFSP. Satellite reconnaissance system launches are being allowed to stand silhouetted against a background of other Air Force launches whose missions are for the most part well known and which from a security and public information standpoint are being handled in an observably different manner. Tour groups, newsmen, etc, are allowed easy access to the launch base environment where they can expand their knowledge of missile technology; learn the personalities, methods, contractors, and agencies involved; take advantage of official faux pas, inadvertent disclosures, and tips from dissidents; while at the same time being treated as VIPs with diplomatic immunity to talk and write about everything and anything they see or hear. Consequently, unless the COMSEC Team members were unbelievably naive, it can be assumed that prior to reaching VAFB they had read numerous "spy-in-the sky" articles, were familiar with the missions associated with most of the other launches from VAFB, and were predisposed to finding evidence of satellite reconnaissance. They did not, of course, find tangible evidence; however, they were, unfortunately, confronted with an abundance of circumstantial evidence so overpowering in nature as to be almost conclusive proof that Program 846 was indeed a photographic reconnaissance effort with some electronic reconnaissance involved.

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The reason that the NRP has been able to continue without the realistic implementation of covert security policy at VAFB is an interesting phenomena worthy of attention for certainly it cannot long continue if MOL is to become a reality. First, it should be understood that the threat which gave life to covert security policy was the risk of a "confrontation" resulting in the "stand down" of launches and the loss of a vital intelligence collection activity. While the NRP was still a relatively small effort, it was sufficient to concentrate on the protection of tangible evidence which might be devulged by disloyal employees, uncontrolled documentation, or open hardware. Consequently, in the past, stress was placed on the investigation, clearance, and security indoctrination of personnel, the physical protection of documents and hardware, the protection of revealing associations between contractors and government agencies, and the "sanitization" of program documents required to be used outside the "black" community. Other than a developing avalanche of newspaper and magazine articles, outside criticism and pressure was at a sufficiently low level as to be handled by the ad hoc "briefing" and "indoctrination" of persons holding strategic positions within government. Although certain news releases were cause for concern, since they were neither confirmed or denied, they died quickly due to lack of public interest in the rather sterile, undynamic character of unmanned systems. It is highly dangerous, however, to assume that this same condition will continue to exist. Particularly, when it is likely that the interest and imagination of every man in the street will be sparked by the spectacular human life and death situation presented by the first launch of a manned system from VAFB. Certainly the NRO should not take unnecessary security risks if they can be avoided.

COURSE OF ACTION:

A. No simple or easy solution to the problem is immediately available; however, there is no question but what security at VAFB should be tightened immediately. As a first step, all program documentation should be reviewed for proper classification. This review should cover UN-CLASSIFIED, ^{AS WELL AS CLASSIFIED} information, and should include but not be limited to the following:

Planning Estimate (PE)
Program Requirements Document (PRD)

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Program Support Plan (PSP)
 Operations Requirements (OR)
 Operational Directives (OD)
 Systems Test Plan (STP)
 Systems Test Objectives (STO)
 Range Safety Report
 Flight Termination Report
 Pad Safety Report
 Launch Test Directive (LTD)
 Payload Recovery Plan
 Test Procedures
 Countdown Manual
 Presto Reports
 Commander's Summary Report
 Launch Evaluation Report (Final Launch
 Report)
 Discrepancy Reports
 Scheduling Requests
 APEX BEELINE Reports

B. I believe the next important and necessary step is to completely submerge reconnaissance satellite launches deeply within all other launches from VAFB. It will no doubt be necessary to accomplish this over the objections of NASA, AFWTR, SAC, and possibly HQ USAF, a most painful exercise to say the least. To be effective all VAFB launches must be classified and handled exactly the same from a security and public information standpoint. The base must be completely closed to tour groups, newsmen, etc. No press releases can be authorized except those regarding the most mundane housekeeping chores. The industrial facilities and launch complexes must be separated from the main housing area, and all ingress must require a SECRET security clearance and "need-to-know." The closing of VAFB should be accomplished by the Base Commander at an early date so that the act is not obviously connected with MOL. With discretion, the closing should be accomplished in easy stages so as not to generate undue heat from the press or local community. The "white" rationale can be very direct and simple, in that, the previous security posture was too loose to adequately protect the vital R&D and EWO missions associated with VAFB.

C. In addition, I believe that there are possible weaknesses in the NRO approach to security which may be deserving of further study. The following will serve as illustrative examples:

(1) LATE SECURITY IMPLEMENTING PLANS - When I was assigned to the launch base, I often lamented the fact that

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security planning was not accomplished at the same time and as an integral part of the technical planning. For instance, in the case of GAMBIT³ no security plan was available until after the launch facilities had been completely built and the technical operation completely decided upon. This situation not only hurt security, but resulted in extra costs to the program. Does this same condition exist in relationship to HEXAGON and DORIAN?

(2) LACK OF CENTRAL CONTROL - There is no one individual responsible for implementing DCI security policy; consequently, there is a strong possibility that in security matters the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing, and that a certain amount of redundancy exists resulting in unnecessary security cost to the NRO or the government as a whole. For instance, within Lockheed there exists "black" SAFSP contracts and "black" CIA contracts, and each type of contract is being administered separately by their separate sponsors.

(3) PROTECTION OF TECHNOLOGICAL LEAD TIME - Since the NRO has taken the security of satellite reconnaissance out from under the normal security controls, one might well question whether or not the new security system provides protection to anything other than the "covert" aspects of the program. As an illustration, one might wonder how technological lead time is protected under the Patent Secrecy Act of 1952 (35 USC 181-188). Has someone been briefed in this area so that they can look out for NRP interests? Or has NRO "reinvention of the security wheel" caused many of the common security protective measures to fall by the wayside?

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