

344 to E/AE

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UN SATELLITE REGISTRATION

If we are to attempt to legitimize observation satellites a first and necessary step must be the enlargement of our UN registry list to include all successful satellite launches, without distinction as to purpose or length of time in orbit. By such registration we may hope to accomplish the following:

what is success?

1. To merge the reconnaissance operations into the totality of our space program and thus, by making them less conspicuous, reduce public speculation and comment about them.

This is already done -

2. To deprive the Bloc and others of an obvious opportunity to accuse us of bad faith on registration, and of attempting to conceal our efforts to use outer-space for military purposes.

we have already started our initial program of outer space for peaceful purposes

3. To avoid prejudicing our position that observation satellites are legal by eliminating one of the most obvious clandestine -- and by implication, illegal -- aspects of these launchings, i.e., our refusal to register them.

Not official established from basis as one of keeping track (Columbia etc)

4. To establish a background for more explicit revelations, if they become necessary or desirable, about our observation satellites without the embarrassment of a forced public explanation of our failure to register them.

no embarrassment if already established as matter for (Soviet etc)

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5. To avoid repetition of the Glenn fiasco, and the obvious disadvantages of selective "special" registrations

nothing wrong with making special reports esp. those of great interest to military planning

We do not believe that registration will of itself commit us to explain the function in detail of any specific satellite. We would propose simply to register them within the existing four categories (although we may find it in our interest to modify these categories at some future time).

We do not believe that registration would necessarily preclude or in any way restrict clandestine operations in the future. We assume that such operations would only be necessary if the Soviets threaten or actually manage to shoot down or otherwise interfere with our satellites. Our aim, of course, is to obtain world-wide acceptance of the legality of observation satellites, and thus to force Soviet payment of an unacceptably high political price to interfere with them. If we establish the legality but are unable to prevent Soviet interference, we have a clearly defensible case before the world for clandestine operations. If these operations are discovered, we can publicly argue their necessity, and defend our refusal to register them. If they are not discovered, then clearly there is no problem; for practical purposes they do not exist and thus, cannot be registered.

to counter - and possible that we were using clandestine satellites - blow to U.S. - contrary to U.S. U.S. - evidence all over - only now we have gained U.S. in breaking forth

If, on the other hand, we cannot establish an acceptable legal framework for observation satellites, the question of

already established

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the free use of outer space for reconnaissance becomes academic, and with it the issue of registration. We would then be free to register or not as we see fit, since the utility to us of registration will have disappeared.

On the question of the disadvantages of registration to other planned or theoretical counter-measures to Soviet interference, we have not heard the arguments and thus cannot assess their weight. We know of no countermeasures, however, whose effectiveness would be degraded by the act of registration under the current procedures.

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