

TOP SECRET
SAFSS

1965 AUG 9 14 47

Lt Col Quiggins/lsw

9 August 1965

Dear Rob:

On several occasions I have expressed my concern regarding possible compromise of the National Satellite Reconnaissance Program by inadvertent or uncontrolled disclosure of photography acquired by non-NRP programs. In addition to the problems associated with security compromise, there is the equally important matter of the adverse effect such a disclosure would have on our political relationships with other nations.

I note a photograph of Cape Kennedy published in the July 9, 1965 issue of NASA's "Space News Roundup." This photograph was taken on the GEMINI IV flight by a 70 mm camera as part of the NASA flight experiments. While this particular photograph has minor intelligence or political significance, a similar photograph of certain domestic and most foreign locations could create serious problems.

In reviewing the Department of Defense sponsored experiments to be conducted during the GEMINI V flight, I find that photography is to be accomplished on a number of target objectives in this country and abroad. The camera equipment to be used--a Zeiss Contax/30" focal length Quasar lens--has the potential of producing photography of exceptional quality. In addition to the DOD-sponsored photographic experiments, I understand that NASA also plans to photograph prearranged and random targets.

I would expect the great majority of photographs acquired during the GEMINI series flights to be unclassified and suitable for public release. However, I consider it to our mutual advantage to take action now to preclude any problems by setting up procedures for reviewing all photography prior to public release.

BYE-36745/65
3
D

UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

TOP SECRET

3 5
3
BYE-36745/65

Under present procedures, all GEMINI acquired photography (both NASA and DOD sponsored) is processed at the Manned Spacecraft Center's Photographic Laboratory in Houston. I understand that the decision regarding propriety of public release of NASA sponsored photography has been delegated to the NSC. The DOD recently delegated a similar authority (for release of DOD sponsored photographic experiments) to the DOD Public Affairs representative at Houston. In retrospect, I question whether either of these delegations is appropriate to matters of potential national and international concern.

The proper review of aerial photography is a highly technical and complex process. The complexity of this function is directly related, of course, to the availability of source material (maps, collateral data, etc.) as well as the existence or absence of identifiable features on the photography.

In the Washington area, the National Photographic Interpretation Center has a unique capability for both quality processing and interpretation of aerial photographs. I believe it would be to our mutual benefit to transfer responsibility for processing, orientation, and interpretation of future GEMINI or similar series photographs from the NSC to the National Photographic Interpretation Center. Such action will provide processing service of the highest standards as well as precise definition of the coverage and location of each photograph. Upon completion, I propose that you and I review the photography, in conjunction with Mr. Lundahl (Director of NPIC), to determine the appropriateness for release. I have been assured by Mr. Lundahl that his agency can perform this function on a priority basis. I believe the great majority of NASA and DOD photographs should present no problem.

Since you will probably wish to avoid any arrangement which infers the involvement of NASA in a classified endeavor, I recommend that procedures for high speed delivery of exposed DOD and NASA film from the aircraft carrier to NPIC be arranged in a manner which will preclude contact with or reference to either the National Reconnaissance Office or National Photographic Interpretation Center by NASA personnel (or DOD personnel on duty with NASA) who are not properly cleared for REF access.

As a suggestion, it may be feasible for Colonel Sweet of your Security Staff to arrange pickup and delivery of the film. I would make arrangements for release of DOD material to him (or his representative) on the carrier.

I invite your comments on this proposal. In view of the impending launch of GEMINI V, I am looking forward to an early agreement on the best course of action.

Sincerely,

Sgd: Brock

Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office

Dr. Robert C. Semens, Jr.
Associate Administrator
NASA Headquarters
Washington, D. C. 60101

- 1. NASA
- 2. SS-1
- 3. SS-5 ✓
- 4. RF-1
- 5. RF-2
- 1A SS-3
- 2A CIA (Dir of Security)

3

HANDSOME YIP BY 1041
104104 104104 104104

3 3
2 2
4 104 36 74 10-25