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POL-A-52i-

CONTROL SYSTEM

(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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THE NRO STAFF

September 4, 1970


MEMORANDUM FOR MAJOR ROSE

SUBJECT: Study on "Utilization of Satellite Photography"

In response to Mr. Ladner's memo of August 27 on this subject, I am attaching an extract from an internal document dated September 1, 1969. This extract provides pertinent thoughts on security which you may find useful as "talking words" in connection with Paragraph IV. A. and VI. B. of the Study Group's Terms of Reference.

As I have previously mentioned to you, I feel that the ultimate test to which all deliberations of the Study Group must be subjected is the question, "What impact will recommendations/decisions about downgrading the 'fact of' have upon this nation's continued ability to collect vital intelligence information that is obtainable only by satellite-borne sensors?"

Regarding Paragraph II of the Terms of Reference, I recommend that you consult a chronology in our files (POL-C-3-w) entitled, "NSAM 156 Committee Activity Related to the Study of the U.S. Satellite Reconnaissance Capability."


GORDON BASS
Major, USAF

Attachment
Extract

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Security

Until the summer of 1964, the NRO did not understand why it had a [REDACTED] security system. Prior to that time the NRO Staff thought it knew, but it was wrong.

When the [REDACTED] system was first instituted in 1962 (before that a Special Handling procedure was used), the NRO Staff was convinced that the primary purpose of special security was to protect a novel technical capability from capture or exposure. Only the United States knew that 20-foot ground resolutions could be achieved from altitudes of 100 nautical miles, that a camera could be flown "ambient" (unpressurized) in space, that cirrus clouds were usually transparent to orbiting cameras, that atmospheric radiation was not a serious problem, and most important, that a closed society could be laid open by photographic satellites.

In 1963, it became absolutely clear that we were no longer alone: the USSR was flying reconnaissance satellites. Now how much of our technology was highly privileged and unique?

In 1964, Dr. McMillan frequently queried his associates concerning the reason for [REDACTED] security, asking, "What are

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you protecting? The lens? The film feed? The emulsion? The recovery capsule?" It was soon clear to the Staff that while each of these technical elements of the program was worth protecting, there must be something much more essential that deserved protection. It was at this point under McMillan's rational probing, that the NRO Staff began to understand security as an essential device for protecting and extending a tacit international acceptance of satellite reconnaissance as a reasonable governmental venture.


The urge to disclose is very strong in the United States; U. S. citizens are possibly unique in their distrust of secrecy and their pathological anxiety to tell. Some people have considered the NRP to be a space program and have followed that false premise with the corollary that advances in space technology must be disclosed. The fact is that the NRP is not a space program; it is an espionage program. Flying through space is as incidental and unimportant to a reconnaissance satellite as to a ballistic missile. And when may one safely divulge an espionage program? Only when he has decided that he is ready to lose it.



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Today, the NRO Staff understands the reason for satellite reconnaissance security. Not many other people do. Even in the DIA and CIA, most cleared persons think the NRO is using security to protect lenses,  film, or, even worse, a franchise.

The true rationale for special security needs to be explained to all persons entering the  and TALENT-KEYHOLE security systems. This is not done now; getting a good start toward this goal should become a primary objective of the NRO Staff.  TALENT-KEYHOLE briefing books should be revised (preferably by the NRO Staff) to establish one main point categorically in the mind of every participant. Six months later, there should be a mandatory repetition of the briefing. And the briefers!--we must insure that highly qualified people (not clerks) give these briefings in a warmly persuasive manner.

The Directors of the NRO, without exception, have been bulwarks in support of NRP security, recognizing keenly that the program is extraordinarily sensitive to confrontation, either on the floor of the U.N. or in the skies of the overflown country. The DNRO, by tradition, has been a shield and



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refuge whenever questions of clearance and access arise.
Dr. Charyk originated the original test for need-to-know,
i.e., "What specific positive contribution will the candidate
make to the NRP?" This severe but necessary test must be
continued and the results enforced.

It is very easy to go limp on satellite reconnaissance
security and to end like [redacted] program with "rank" briefings,
"prestige" briefings, and "it's easier this way" briefings.
[redacted] stands in NRP security history as the most outrageously
over-briefed program in the [redacted] system. The theme, as
expressed privately by two [redacted] officials, was "One way to
conform to the [redacted] system and still 'beat it' is to brief
everybody. [redacted] tactically achieved that.

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Pol-A-5
[REDACTED]

(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

August 27, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR SS-4
SS-5
[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Study on "Utilization of Satellite Photography"

The USIB has established a COMIREX Ad Hoc committee, in response to a request by DIA, involving possible downgrading of the "fact of" satellite photography as well as the downgrading of the KH-4 product to SECRET. The Ad Hoc committee is charged by USIB to investigate all aspects of potential downgrading, and to examine other possible means to establish wide distribution and utilization of TALENT-KEYHOLE photography. This promises to be a comprehensive study, and could have a substantial impact on the NRO.

It is requested that each Deputy Director review the attached outline and provide comments on Paragraphs I, V, VI and VII to SS-3 either written or informally by September 1, 1970.

[REDACTED]

GEORGE A. MILLER,
Assistant for Security

1 Attachment
Terms of Reference

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

(STUDY OUTLINE)

FOR

COMIREX STUDY ON "UTILIZATION OF SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHY"

REFERENCE: USIB-D-46.2/14, 12 June 1970

I. Statement of Problem (Reference)

- What problems inhibit the effective utilization within the various USIB agencies of the materials derived from satellite photography.
- What options are available for increasing the utilization of such materials and what are their significant advantages and disadvantages, particularly in terms of security, costs, and timeliness.

II. Problem Background and Previous Action

[COMIREX staff to prepare initial draft summarizing from reference documents listed in [REDACTED] 55-70, 28 July 1970]

III. Volume and Range of Intelligence Materials Derived from Satellite Imagery

[COMIREX staff to prepare initial draft; illustrative gross data from ICRS, DBWG, and NPIC]

A. Imagery Collection

- Film volume
- Area/target volume coverage
- MC&G
- USGS
- Other non-intelligence

TALENT-KEYHOLE
Control

B. Imagery Exploitation

First-, second-, third-phase exploitation volume

- Targets
- Reports, publications (EPDF)

C. Intelligence Production

(Member agency contributions)

IV. Basis and Scope of Present Security Controls and Compartmentation

A. Authoritative Statement of Purpose and Scope of [REDACTED] System Controls

(Contribution from [REDACTED] CIA)/NRO)

B. Authoritative Statement of Purpose and Scope of T-KH System Controls

(Contribution from TSO/CIA)

C. Current Status of T-KH and [REDACTED] System Controls

(Contribution from [REDACTED] TSO [CIA])

D. Present Extent of T-KH Control System in U. S. Government

Number of Clearances/Billets

- By Hqs. and Field components
- Trend 1968-70

Number and relative size of T-KH centers and repositories

[(Member agency TSO contribution) responsive to formatted questionnaire. Letter to be developed by COMREX staff and TSO/TCI(CIA)]

E. Status and Description of Current Sanitization and Decontrol

(SDWG contribution)

V. Current Problems in Effective Use of Materials Derived from Satellite Imagery

(Member agency contributions, with estimated cost data where possible; selected recent "case histories" or live examples can be used to supplement or substitute for cost data in both A and B below)

A. Administrative Problems

- Physical Security Requirements
- Personnel Security Requirements
- Classification (e. g., T-KH vs [REDACTED] T-KH vs SI/Collateral)

B. Effective Substantive Use

1. Finished Intelligence Production

- Estimates
- Current
- Basic (Research)

2. Command/Executive Briefing and Support

3. Policy Formulation/Implementation (Departmental/National)

4. Operations

- Targeting
- Contingency Planning
- Joint Planning (3rd country)
- Mapping/Geodesy

5. Guidance in Other Source Collection

6. Non-Intelligence/Domestic

VI. Range of Potential Alternatives (with assumptions) for Increasing Use of Satellite Imagery Materials

(COMIREX staff to prepare initial draft listing of possible alternatives for STG review and augmentation)

A. Assumption: No Change in Classification of Fact of U.S. Satellite Imagery Reconnaissance (No REVISION of Presidential Instruction, TCS-9784-61-KH)

Alternative 1:

Alternative 2:

Alternative 3:

[etc.]

B. Assumption: Downgrade to SECRET or Below, NOFORN or YESFORN, Fact of U.S. Satellite Reconnaissance. (Revised Presidential Instruction)

Alternative 1:

Alternative 2:

[etc.]

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Attachment A

VII. Assessment of Advantages/Disadvantages of Alternatives
(Cost-Security-Timeliness)

(Member agency contributions after agreed
formulation of alternatives / VI, above/)

Concept: Inclusive--not Exclusive!
Any agency can address any alternative
and have views included/

[REDACTED] 59-70
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