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ANALYSIS OF
"A $1.5 BILLION SECRET IN SKY"
WASHINGTON POST, DEC. 9, 1973
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A $1.5 Billion Secret in Sky
U.S. Spy Unit Surfaces by Accident

By Laurence Stern
Washington Post Staff Writer

In the arcane and heavily classified world of "overhead" reconnaissance and spy satellite "intelligence, the existence of the National Reconnaissance Office has been one of the best kept trade secrets.

The name of the organization, in fact, is top secret, and, according to intelligence officials, has appeared in public print only once before—by inadvertence.

Yet the NRO, which is funded primarily through Air Force appropriations, spends an estimated $1.5 billion a year acquiring and managing the most sophisticated, elusive and expensive force of spies that has ever been recruited into the government's service.

Its customers include the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency and the White House. Its operatives bear such names as SR-71, Samos, Agena, and "the Big Bird." Its activities are screened off from all but a relative handful of specialists in the national security bureaucracy who carry some of the highest and most specialized clearances issued by the government.

Curiously enough, the only reference to NRO that has been made in a public government document was last Oct. 12 in a report of the Special Senate Committee to Study Questions Related to Secret and Confidential Government Documents. The drafters of the report unwittingly breach-ed security by listing, along with CIA, DIA and NSA on the concluding page, the National Reconnaissance Office.

And, more obliquely, Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) alluded to the NRO's mission in a recent statement challenging the appointment of Lockheed Aircraft Corp. reconnaissance satellite expert James V. Plummer as under secretary of the Air Force.

In questioning Plummer's nomination on conflict-of-interest grounds, Proxmire made a pointed observation:

"Normally, the under secretary of the Air Force has jurisdiction over certain intelligence matters and sits on a special committee that directs manned and unmanned overhead reconnaissance, including spy satellite programs. These critical projects have run into the billions of dollars—money that flows to defense contractors such as Lockheed."

Plummer has been with Lockheed since 1955. The California-based firm is the principal corporate contractor in the so-called "black" reconnaissance satellite programs carried out by NRO.

From the "skunk works," as specialists describe the facility, of Lockheed spy plane developer Kelley Johnson in Nevada also emerged the U-2 and SR-71. "The U-2 was perhaps the only government spy project to have a cost under-
run and to exceed the promised performance standards," said one expert on the program. Lockheed was also the prime contractor on the C-5A, which was plagued by $2 billion in combined cost overruns.

In addition to the conflict-of-interest issue in Plummer's appointment, congressional investigators are looking into the possibilities of overruns in the supersecret reconnaissance satellite programs under NRO's jurisdiction.

"I've never heard of one of these programs that didn't have enormous cost overruns," said one Defense Department official who has worked first-hand with some of the spy satellite operations. The opportunities for breaking cost and performance commitments are greater in spy satellite programs, this official said, because of the atmosphere of secrecy and narrow channels of accountability in which they operate.

NRO's existence is shielded from senior congressional intelligence overseers. Former high-ranking staff members of the National Security Council, who were cleared for some of the most sensitive intelligence material to reach the President's desk, acknowledged in interviews that they had not been informed about it.

"This is a black program and you're not supposed to know it exists," said one Pentagon administrator. For the past several years its supervision has nominally been in the hands of the under secretary of the Air Force. Operations and procurement have been handled through the office of the Secretary of the Air Force, according to Defense Department sources.

Its intelligence products labeled ELINT (for electronic intelligence) and COMINT (for communications intelligence) are parcelled out under special code names to the government "consumers"—such as CIA or NSA. The users may get the product of the secret reconnaissance, such as monitoring of Chinese nuclear tests, or radio transmissions in the Soviet Union, without being told of the collection techniques. This is known as "compartmentalizing" of intelligence data.

Since the inception of the U.S. reconnaissance satellite program in the mid-1950s to 1970 some $10 to $12 billion had been spent on the spy birds, according to an estimate by aviation and space writer Philip J. Klass in his book, "Secret Sentinels in Space." Since then the outlay may have grown by about $5 billion.

Overhead reconnaissance has proven of enormous value in providing more realistic assessments of such things as Soviet ballistic missile capability, both offensive and defensive. It helped, in fact, to defuse public anxieties over the missile gap in the early 1960s. The most publicized use of the program was to support President Kennedy's contention that the Soviet Union was installing offensive missiles in Cuba.

But congressional investigators in yet unpublished inquiries are raising questions about relationships between corporate contractors and the super-secret programs being carried out under the aegis of NRO and other military intelligence agencies.

Proxmire's concern about the Plummer appointment is one example of this. Air Force Secretary John L. McLucas came to the government from the Air Force think tank, MITRE. Assistant Air Force Secretary for procurement Frank Schrartz comes from Boeing.

"There has been a tendency, stronger than ever in recent months, to put executives of contractor agencies in those key positions," said one veteran Defense Department official. "Not that there is anything personally wrong with these men. But all their attitudes have been shaped by their experience working for contractors."

The late Allen Ellender (D-La.), former chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, was one of the few members of Congress privy to some of government's best-kept intelligence secrets and rhubarbs.

"If you knew how much money we spend and how much money we waste in this area," Ellender said in a 1971 interview, "it would knock you off your chair. It's criminal."

Whatever that amount might be will probably never appear in the public domain.
Analysis of
"A $1.5 Billion Secret in Sky"
Washington Post, Dec. 9, 1973

1. **ALLEGATION:** In the arcane and heavily classified world of "overhead" reconnaissance and spy satellite intelligence, the existence of the National Reconnaissance Office has been one of the best kept trade top secrets.

**COMMENT:** Essentially correct.

2. **ALLEGATION:** The name of the organization, in fact, is top secret, and, according to intelligence officials, has appeared in public print only once before--by inadvertence.

**COMMENT:** The NRO is SECRET; the NRP is TOP SECRET, and in addition both terms are compartmented. The inadvertent disclosure referred to occurred in the Congressional Record on October 12, 1973 (See Tab F). Also, reference to the NRO appeared in the New York Times, January 22, 1971; reference to the NRP appeared in the New York Times Magazine, April 18, 1971 (See Tabs C and D). Until now the Executive Branch has not acknowledged the existence of the NRP or the NRO.

3. **ALLEGATION:** Yet the NRO, which is funded primarily through Air Force appropriations, spends an estimated $1.5 billion a year.

**COMMENT:** It is true that the NRP is funded through Air Force appropriations. The NRP total, however, has not exceeded the peak of FY 1968 (See Tab E).

4. **ALLEGATION:** Its customers include the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency and the White House.

**COMMENT:** Essentially correct, although it directly provides information to analysts of raw data, such as NSA and the National Photographic Interpretation Center. Final intelligence product flows to all intelligence agencies.
5. **ALLEGATION:** Its operatives bear such names as SR-71, SAMOS, AGENA, and "the Big Bird."

**COMMENT:** The SR-71 was developed and procured by the NRO for the Air Force. It is occasionally tasked for NRO missions; not owned by the NRO. The satellite names which appear here are in general not those used by the NRO. The SAMOS was a forerunner of the photographic reconnaissance satellite; BIG BIRD equates to the AGENA is an upper stage booster and on-orbit control vehicle, not a reconnaissance payload. All NRO programs are not identified.

6. **ALLEGATION:** Its activities are screened off from all but a relative handful of specialists in the national security bureaucracy who carry some of the highest and most specialized clearances issued by the government.

**COMMENT:** 86,000 people have access to one or more compartments.

7. **ALLEGATION:** Curiously enough, the only reference to NRO that has been made in a public government document was last Oct. 12 in a report of the Special Senate Committee to Study Questions Related to Secret and Confidential Government Documents. The drafters of the report unwittingly breached security by listing, along with CIA, DIA and NSA on the concluding page, the National Reconnaissance Office.

**COMMENT:** True (See Tab F).

8. **ALLEGATION:** And, more obliquely, Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) alluded to the NRO's mission in a recent statement challenging the appointment of Lockheed Aircraft Corp. reconnaissance satellite expert James W. Plummer as under secretary of the Air Force.

**COMMENT:** True (See Tab G).

9. **ALLEGATION:** "Normally, the under secretary of the Air Force has jurisdiction over certain intelligence matters and sits on a special committee that directs manned and unmanned overhead reconnaissance, including spy satellite programs."

2
COMMENT: True. Reference is to the Executive Committee. But it does not divulge other members, or relationships between them.

10. ALLEGATION: The California-based firm is the principal corporate contractor in the so-called "black" reconnaissance satellite programs carried out by NRO.

COMMENT: True. Lockheed Missile and Space Company has generally received approximately $1/3 of the NRP funds (See Tab II).

11. ALLEGATION: "The U-2 was perhaps the only government spy project to have a cost under-run and to exceed the promised performance standards," said one expert on the program.

COMMENT: The SR-71 under NRP management also under-ran initial cost estimates. Also, several satellite programs have under-run from a total program period standpoint.

12. ALLEGATION: "I've never heard of one of these programs that didn't have enormous cost overruns," said one Defense Department official who has worked first-hand with some of the spy satellite operations.

COMMENT: This is an erroneous statement. The NRP programs have generally been subject to an average 8% cost growth against contracts which includes economic inflationary trends. There have been several instances where this percentage was significantly exceeded in terms of unit costs, but not generally for a total program period. It would have been impossible to accommodate "enormous cost over-runs" and still be able to reduce appropriations from FY 1968 to 1972. The NRO is now producing more and better intelligence information than ever before, and doing so despite ever decreasing real purchasing power of budgeted dollars (See Tab I).

13. ALLEGATION: The opportunities for breaking cost and performance commitments are greater in spy satellite programs, this official said, because of the atmosphere of secrecy and narrow channels of accountability in which they operate.

COMMENT: Not true. Streamline management provides information to top level management more directly, with less chance for obscuring facts. Some of the best engineering
and financial managers, procurement specialists, accountants and auditors are assigned to the program. Also, many contracts are processed through regular channels, and are given penetrating review. All major contractors are regularly audited.

14. ALLEGATION: NRO's existence is shielded from senior congressional intelligence overseers.

COMMENT: Not true. Chairmen of Senate and House Armed Services and Appropriations Committees are fully apprised at their pleasure. Committee members are briefed at the Chairman's desire.

15. ALLEGATION: Former high-ranking staff members of the National Security Council, who were cleared for some of the most sensitive intelligence material to reach the President's desk, acknowledged in interviews that they had not been informed about it.

COMMENT: There are numerous cleared people on the NSC Staff. As elsewhere, clearance here is based on a need-to-know determination, not on the basis of position alone.

16. ALLEGATION: "This is a black program and you're not supposed to know it exists," said one Pentagon administrator.

COMMENT: No way of knowing if the statement was made. If so it was an unauthorized statement.

17. ALLEGATION: For the past several years its supervision has nominally been in the hands of the Under Secretary of the Air Force.

COMMENT: Partially true. Dr. Flax, the Assistant Secretary for R&D was the exception.

18. ALLEGATION: Operations and procurement have been handled through the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, according to Defense Department sources.

COMMENT: Operations and procurement are actually handled by field activities of the NRO, under the overall control of the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force.
19. **ALLEGATION:** Its intelligence products labeled ELINT (for electronic intelligence) and COMINT (for communications intelligence) are parceled out under special code names to the government "consumers"—such as CIA or NSA.

**COMMENT:** This information is correct. It is curious, however, in that it omits reference to photography which is the NRP's major effort.

20. **ALLEGATION:** The users may get the product of the secret reconnaissance, such as monitoring of Chinese nuclear tests, or radio transmissions in the Soviet Union, without being told of the collection techniques. This is known as "compartmentalizing" of intelligence data.

**COMMENT:** True.

21. **ALLEGATION:** Since the inception of the U.S. reconnaissance satellite program in the mid 1950s to 1970 some $10 to $12 billion had been spent on the spy birds, according to an estimate by aviation and space writer Philip J. Klass in his book, "Secret Sentries in Space." Since then the outlay may have grown by about $5 billion.

**COMMENT:** See Tabs E and F for financial program. In summary: FY 63-70 $____, FY 71-74 $____

22. **ALLEGATION:** Overhead reconnaissance has proven of enormous value in providing more realistic assessments of such things as Soviet ballistic missile capability, both offensive and defensive. It helped, in fact, to defuse public anxieties over the missile gap in the early 1960s.

**COMMENT:** True. It is the single most important espionage program of the United States Government.

23. **ALLEGATION:** The most publicized use of the program was to support President Kennedy's contention that the Soviet Union was installing offensive missiles in Cuba.

**COMMENT:** Reference here is to the U-2.
24. ALLEGATION: The late Allen Ellender (D-La.), former chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, was one of the few members of Congress privy to some of government's best-kept intelligence secrets, and rhubards.

COMMENT: Senator Ellender was fully briefed on the NRO.
Foreign Policy: Disquiet Over Intelligence Setup

Following is the fifth in a series of articles exploring the
Taco Administration's style in foreign policy.

By BENJAMIN WELLES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21—

President Nixon has become
dissatisfied with the size, cost
and home coordination of the
Government's worldwide in-
telligence operations.

According to members of his
staff, he believes that the
intelligence provided to help
him formulate foreign policy,
while occasionally satisfactory,
is not good enough, day after
day, to justify as share of
the budget.

Mr. Nixon, it is said, has be-
gun to decide for himself what
the intelligence priorities must
be and where the money should
be spent, instead of leaving it
largely to the intelligence com-

munity. He has instructed his
staff to survey the situation
and report back within a year.
It is hoped with recommend-
dations for budget cuts of as
much as several hundred mil-
ion dollars.

Not many years ago the
Central Intelligence Agency
and the other intelligence
agencies were portrayed as an
"invisible empire" controlling
foreign policy behind the
screen of secrecy. Now the pendu-
lum has swung.

The President and his aides
are said to suspect wide-
spread overlapping, dupli-
cation and considerable "boom
dogging" in the secrecy
shrouded intelligence "community."

In addition to the C.I.A.,
there include the intelligence
arms of the Defense, State
and Justice Departments and
the Atomic Energy Commissions.
Together they spend $3.5
billion a year on strategic
intelligence about the Soviet
Union, Communist China and
other countries that might harm
the nation's security.

When tactical intelligence
in Vietnam and Germany and
counterinsurgency operations
are included, the annual
figure exceeds $5 billion, exp-
serts say. The Defense De-
partment spends more than 10
percent of its $84 billion, or ab-
out $8.4 billion, about $3 billion
of it on the strategic inte-
ligence, the rest on tactical. It con-
tributes at least 1,500 (or mem-
bers of the intelligence staff,
which are estimated at 20,000
people.

Overseeing all the activities
is the United States Intelli-
gence Board, set up by secret
order by President Dwight D.
Eisenhower in 1956 to coor-
inate intelligence exchanges,
inside collection programs, ap-
plishment collection tasks and
help in what are known as na-
tional intelligence estimates.

The chairman of the board
who is the President's repre-
sentative, is the Director of
Central Intelligence, at present
R. William Casey. The other mem-
bers are Levon, Gen. Donald V.
Bennett, head of the Defense
Intelligence Agency; J. S.
Clune, director of intelligence
and research at the State De-
partment; Vice Adm. Nor-
Gaviler, head of the National
Security Agency; Howard C.
Krantz, an assistant general
manager at the Atomic Energy
Commission, and William C.
Small, a deputy director of the
Federal Bureau of Investiga-
tion.

Intelligence men are aware
of the President's disquiet.

They say that what now
halfway through this year
—he has never seriously
before the task of comprehending the
vast, sprawling communica-
tion of agencies. For, they
say, has been decided how best
to use their technical re-
ources and personnel—of
a talented—mformating po-
Wen en Point

Two Cases in Point

An Administration aide—almost
to a C.I.A. official last re-tours in
was in a certain country and
reconnaissance on a
frontline Base in the
whale area.

On August 7, 1969, a Russian
military intelligence
operation was reported
by the President the day
after.

It is, Mr. Kissinger, was
quoted in an interview with
the President's press
staff, that the President's press
staff, that the President's press
staff, that the President's press
staff, that the President's press
staff, that the President's

The President's aide on na-
tional security affairs, a C.I.A.
official observed: "President's
impatient for facts."

Estimates in New Form

In the last year Mr. Nixon
and Mr. Kissinger have or-
dered a revision in the national
intelligence estimates, which
are prepared by the C.I.A. after
consultation with the other
intelligence agencies. Some on
future Soviet strategy have
been ordered radically revised
by Mr. Kissinger.

"Our knowledge of present
Soviet capacities allows
Henry and others to criticize
us for some stringency about
predicting future Soviet pol-
icy," an informed source
conceded. "It's pretty hard to look
down the road with the same
certainty."
Part of the Administration's dissatisfaction with the output and organization of the intelligence community stems from the President's tidy departmental habits and pressing budget problems; part comes from the intellectual acuity of Mr. Kissinger, a counterintelligence sergeant in World War II and a specialist of Soviet strategy and disarmament.

On the other hand, the Administration recognizes that it must share the blame for not having come to grips with intelligence problems until now.

The President is said to have had difficulty ascertaining precisely what all the Federal intelligence agencies do—and with how much money and manpower.

"Trying to draw up an organization chart is a nightmare," a senior aide remarked. "No one seems to be in charge. That's part of the problem. Whoever winds up running this thing is clearly going to have to be someone with the President's confidence."

The intelligence units have their own problems in figuring out the White House's mode of operations. Recently an intelligence unit in the Pentagon spent a good deal of time and effort investigating, then interrogating, what functions each member of Mr. Kissinger's 110-man staff was supposed to perform.

Helms Said to Rate High

Sources close to the White House say that Mr. Nixon and his foreign-policy advisers—Mr. Kissinger and Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird—respect the professional competence of Mr. Helms, who is 57 and is the first career intelligence official to have headed the Central Intelligence Agency. Appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in June, 1966, Mr. Helms has been essentially apolitical. He is said to have brought professional ability to bear in "lowering the profile" of the agency, tightening discipline and diverting it of many fringe activities that have aroused criticism in Congress and among the public.

Mr. Helms's authority to coordinate the activities of the other board members. He is reported to have declined.

A major problem, according to those who know the situation, is that while Mr. Helms is the President's representative on the Intelligence Board, his agency spends only about 10 percent—$500-million to $600-million—of the annual intelligence budget. It employs about 150,000 Americans, plus a few thousand foreigners.

"When you have the authority but you don't control the resources," a senior Pentagon official explained, "you tend to walk very softly."

As for the State Department, which has constitutional responsibility for conducting foreign policy, it has seen its intelligence arm gradually whittled away. In 1945 it had about 1,200 intelligence officers and now it has 300. Its annual intelligence budget is $16-million, or 0.25 percent of spending on intelligence. Recently Mr. Rogers has directed Mr. Cline to take a more vigo-rous part at Intelligence Board meetings, asserting the depart-ment's "primacy" in foreign policy, and specifically in intelligence collection and evaluation.

Mr. Kissinger is said to feel the need to settle the question of ultimate leadership. He is thought to be willing to wait until the study he ordered is completed.

Mr. Helms's control over intelligence activities is indirect and his powers are circumscribed. He is an adviser on intelligence, not on policy. He points out the likely conclusions from policy acts but he does not recommend policies unless specifically asked to by the President.

Moreover, the director, like other intelligence chiefs in the Federal bureaucracy, must "sell" his product to Cabinet-level consumers and get their consent.

"Helms has been trying awfully hard to stay out of trouble," remarked a former agency official with White House contacts. "He's had the feeling that the CIA was a place that might become a focal point of trouble in this Administration and his policy has been very cautious."

His associates also fear that his usefulness as an impartial intelligence adviser may be jeopardized if the wrangling between Secretary Laird and Senator J. W. Fulbright continues. Each has taken to citing Mr. Helms's secret testimony to buttress his case.

Bears of Bad Tidings

In addition the C.I.A. must sometimes report facts that the Administration is loath to hear—as happened last May when it told the White House, State Department and Pentagon that Vietnamese Communists had infiltrated more than 30,000 agents into the South Vietnamese Government, endangering its ability to last after an American troop withdrawal.

The lack use of the intelligence community's resources during the Middle East crisis last year illustrates a problem bothering the White House.

On June 19 Mr. Rogers urged a cease-fire; it was accepted by the Egyptians on July 22 and by the Israelis on Aug. 1. All parties agreed that it would take effect at midnight Israeli time on the seventh.

According to sources in and out of the intelligence community, Mr. Rogers and his principal deputies on the matter, Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, were unwilling to consider the possibility of violations. It was not until Aug. 10 or 11 that the first U-2's began flying from British bases on Cyprus. Even then there were problems. Weather delayed the first photographic runs. Israel resisted aerial fire—eventually by the United States—over her territory.

The delays permitted the Egyptians to continue introducing missiles batteries into the standstill areas after the cease-fire, infuriating Israel, threatening the cease-fire and embarrassing the White House.
Administration Embarrassed

Faulty coordination prior to the abortive Son Tay raid also embarrassed the Administration. There is evidence that the C.I.A., at Mr. Helms's direction, furnished the Pentagon with what information it had on North Vietnam during the early planning stages last summer. However, the Pentagon took over the planning. What went wrong is still a mystery.

Rapid intelligence, specialists insist, can afford protection to policy interests.

Before dawn on Jan. 23, 1968, President Johnson, was awakened to learn that the U.S.S. Pueblo, an electronic-intelligence ship carrying vital code-breaking devices, had been seized by North Korean pun-kers. His immediate reaction was to order an attack on North Korea to free the ship.

C.I.A. analysts in the White House situation room warned him that the North Koreans had 450 jets and 15 surface-to-air missile batteries. They also reported that a North Korean broadcast just intercepted indicated that the Pueblo had been seized 23 miles off the coast.

With that information Mr. Johnson decided against the risk of a second war on the Asian mainland and took the issue of "piracy on the high seas" to the United Nations.

"The miscalculation of the enemy of the United States is an uninformed President," Bromley Smith, a former White House aide, wrote not long ago.

A President, of course, may choose to use the intelligence resources at his command, or not. Whatever the choice, they are substantial.

The C.I.A. is the "central" arm, created under the National Security Act of 1947 to coordinate all overseas intelligence activities and to winnow for the President intelligence, from whatever source, affecting national security. As its head Mr. Helms is the senior intelligence adviser to the President and Congress.

The agency can conduct espionage anywhere outside the United States. It has no powers of arrest and interrogation but cooperates with the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Conversely has endowed the agency to perform services of "common concern" to other branches of government as ordered by the National Security Council. That is its charter for "covert" activities in 1952 over the Soviet Union from 1956 to 1959; ferrying agents in and out of enemy-held areas of Southeast Asia; organizing, training and supplying 35,000 anti-Communist Mao troops in Laos, where President John F. Kennedy ordered it in 1962.

Dean Rusk, former Secretary of State, told friends: "Dirty tricks form about 5 percent of the C.I.A.'s work—and we have full control over dirty tricks."

Proposals for covert actions come from the White House, the State, Defense or Justice Department and from ambassadors and military commanders overseas. All must eventually be approved by a little-known White House panel whose designation is periodically switched for cover purposes.

Known as present as theerry Committee, for the number of the memo constituting it, it consists of Mr. Helms, Attorney General John N. Mitchell, Deputy Defense Secretary David Packard, Mr. Kissinger and U. Alexis Johnson, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. If all agree on a proposal it goes forward: if not the President decides.

On the overt side the C.I.A. employs several thousand social and physical scientists to study the flood of information pouring in daily—half from open sources, a third from satellites and telemetry and 10 to 15 percent from spies.

The other agencies, notably those at the Pentagon, have less developed evaluation facilities but far greater collection tools. The Pentagon is authorized to run its own agents abroad after clearance from the C.I.A. Mr. Helms is said to have little control over its activities.

The Administration has also been embarrassed by recent disclosures that Army intelligence, assigned by the Johnson Administration to spy on civil- erns during civil disturbances starting in the summer of 1967, virtually ran wild and by late 1969 had fed 16,000 names into its computers, dossiers and files.

Neither Mr. Helms nor the Intelligence Board had any connection with this domestic counterespionage. It was an example of overlarge staffs using excessive facilities under too little civilian control.

The Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency has a staff of 3,000 and spends $500-million yearly—as much as the C.I.A.—to collect and evaluate strategic intelligence.

It uses Air Force planes to monitor foreign nuclear tests and collect air samples. Its National Security Agency at Fort Meade, near Baltimore, spends $1-billion yearly and employs nearly 100,000 cryptanalysts and supports staff to crack codes and eavesdrop on world communications. Its National Reconnaissance Office spends another $1-billion yearly flying reconnaissance aircrafts and satellites, monitoring the "north and south polar regions"—seventy-six with incredible accuracy from 300 miles up.

The results of the President's coming management survey remain to be seen. Of course, but Secretary Laird has already ordered General Benchmark to report to him instead of to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Moreover, an Assistant Secretary of Defense, Robert F. Kennedy, is expected in time to take all the Pentagon's massive intelligence machinery under his control and to sit at the Pentagon's main representative at Mr. Helms's weekly meeting of the intelligence Board.

Many intelligence men concede the need for "trimming the fat," tightening up coordination and making the C.I.A. more responsive to the formulation of foreign policy. Some, citing successes since World War II, see little chance beyond "finishing and tampering." Some at the Pentagon feel that an "in-house" reorganization, as distinct from an outside panel studied with politically prominent but substantively ineffective people, may do good and may strengthen Mr. Helms's guidance of the intelligence community.

Whatever the outcome, many career experts regard the United States system as markedly superior to its principal rivals in the Soviet Union.

One official, asked his reaction to the current study, evoked Cardinal Maury, an 18th-century French prelate who was elected to the Academy but then refused certain dignities he considered his due.

"When I look at myself I am nothing," the Cardinal remarked, "but when I look at the others I am great."
by ingrid vales

washington

"I can tell when he walks in the door what sort of a day it's been," says his wife, Cynthia. "Some days it's all his national level—totally insurmountable. I know better than to ask what's happened. I'll tell when he's ready, not before, but even when he tells he's terribly discreet."

The Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Richard Helms, apparently leads his problems home from the office like any other husband—at least to hear Cynthia telling it. And these days Helms's job is definitely one of the most problem-ridden in Washington.

Successive budget cuts, balance of payments restrictions, bureaucratic rivalries and press dissections that have hurt the C.I.A.'s public image have all reduced its operations considerably. President Nixon has recently ordered a fiscal and management reorganization into the intelligence "community," a task which may take longer and prove more difficult than even Nixon suspects because of the capacity of the intelligence agencies to hide in the bureaucratic thicket. Both Nixon and his principal foreign affairs advisor,

benjamin walker covered national security affairs as a correspondent in the Washington bureau of the New York Times Magazine.

Henry Kissinger, are said to regard the community as a mixed blessing: intrusively important to the United States but far too big and too prone to obscure differences of opinion—or, sometimes, of opinion—behind a screen of words.

Considered a cold-blooded necessity in Cold War days, the agency now seems to many students, liberal intellectuals and Congressmen, to be undemocratic, complacent, sinister.

The revelations in recent years that have made the agency suspect include its activities in Eastern Asia, the Congo, Guatemala, the Bay of Pigs, the U.S. efforts to support fighting through "local" foundations of the National Student Association plus private cultural, religious and lawyers' groups, and, finally, two years ago, the Green Berets affair.

The 56-year-old Helms knows all this better than most. As his first career intelligence officer to reach the top since the C.I.A. was created in 1947, his goal has been to professionalize the agency and restore it to respectability. In fact, one of his chief preoccupations has been to erase the image of the Director as a man who moves in which mystery, fretting surreptitiously around the world to ensure policy with prime ministers, generals and kings, and breaking codes, on the pretext of "security," the public's unique fears and Congress's problems. If Helms rules an "invisible empire," as the C.I.A. has sometimes been called, he is a very visible emperor.

While he tries to keep his hunches free for work, for example, he occasionally shows up at a restaurant with a friend for lunch: a ?-? beer, a cold plate, one eye always on the check. He patronizes the C.I.A., a tasteless, sedate restaurant near the White House where, if he happens to be good, he is likely to be less garish than he were observed entering a private house.

He likes the company of attractive women—"young or old—and they find him a charming dinner partner and a good dancer.

"He's interesting—and interested in what you're saying," said Lydia Katzenmeyer, wife of the former Democratic Attorney General. "He's well-read and he doesn't try to substitute vitting for conversing, that old Princeton '43 routine that some of the columnists around town use."

Some of his critics complain that he is too close to the press—even though most agree that he uses it, with rare finesse, for his own and his agency's ends. Some chide the frequent mention of Helms and his handsome wife in the gossip columns and society pages of the nation's capital.

Yet, if he gives the appearance of insouciance—he is wiry, gray-haired, friendly—the reserve is there, like a high-voltage electric barbed just beneath the surface. Helms is a man of grave affection—friends held, coddled, insulated and externally relaxed, absorbed in the essence yet fascinated by the trivial. A former foreign correspondent, he observes much and can recall precisely what few Americans have ever done in the first place—what goes on each woman wore to a dinner and whose shoulder strap was out of place. Nevertheless, he is more conscious than Helms, who also has the broader role of Director of Central Intelligence, of the strict security laws that designate him the official responsible for setting and enforcing security standards throughout the intelligence community.

These responsibilities often create tense moments for him, as Helms admits. He said he never talks about himself. He had taken his wife to an annual fund-raising evening at his alma mater, Williams College. After cocktails and dinner the couple and their ladies grouped together on a small wooden bench for speeches by John Sargent, the Williams president, and other luminaries. Helms and his wife were seated in the midst of the attentive throng when, to their hor-

New York Times Magazine
18 April 1971

H-I-S of the C.I.A.
the President on overseas
abroad. Probably because of his
agency's sensitive position, he tries
to stick to plain facts without recom-
mending policy, in that area, one
source says, Helms "tends to hunker
down." Here, he is s.s.a., far left,
at a meeting with Henry Kissinger,
Secretary of State Rogers, Mr. Nixon,
Secretary of Defense Laird, and Adm.
Thomas Moorer, the chairman of the
Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Intelligence and Research
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Statement on Total NRP Funding (Million $)

Since FY 1966, the NRP has not only stayed within appropriated funds each fiscal year, but has volunteered or accepted significant reductions in relation to the President's Budget. This is shown by the following tabulation:

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<th>President's Budget</th>
<th>Reduction</th>
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<td>Totals</td>
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This also indicates that from a peak New Obligation Authority in FY 1968, NRP totals successively reduced thru FY 1972, and thru FY 1974 are still below the peak year. This has occurred even though there has been continued economic escalation and the introduction of funding for new satellites, as well as changes and improvements to existing programs. During this period satellite programs have been terminated.

This is the total funding for the NRP, and supports both the DOD and CIA activities under the NRP. The NRP total as such has not exceeded the peak in FY 1968.
QUESTIONS RELATED TO SECRET AND CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

October 12, 1973.—Ordered to be printed

REPORT

of the
SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO STUDY QUESTIONS RELATED TO SECRET AND CONFIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

In accordance with the provisions of S. Res. 13, the Special Committee to Study Questions Related to Secret and Confidential Documents submits the following report and recommendations.

The Committee was aided in its work by the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress and wishes to commend Mr. Robert Lauck and Mr. David Sale of that service for their contributions.

This report covers questions relating to (1) access to classified information by Members of Congress, (2) legal rights of an individual Senator with respect to classified documents in his possession, (3) legal rights of a Senate Committee with respect to classified documents in its possession, (4) legal rights of individual members with respect to documents on information received from foreign emissaries, (5) the declassification of documents in the possession of an individual member, (6) pending bills and proposals for Congressional machinery to oversee classified information matters and (7) recommendations by the Committee.

I. ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS


Beginning with the access problem in the context of the Freedom of Information Act, the first two questions are: (1) What limitations are provided by the Act on public disclosure of classified information? and, (2) do these limitations apply to Members and committees of Congress?
that decision might have been. The Committee suggests that the machinery be set up for questioning in an orderly manner those executive decisions to classify for reasons of National security, and we urge the Government Operations Committee to give priority consideration to bills now pending before it and discussed herein designed to accomplish this objective. We make no detailed evaluation of these bills, leaving that to the judgment of the substantive committee but urge that a complete overhaul of the classification system be undertaken at the earliest possible time.

II. The question of procedures to be followed by a member who has classified documents in his possession, prior to his disclosure of those documents, was discussed by the Committee.

The Committee recommends that individual members who have such documents and wish to disclose them, consult with the Senate Ethics Committee prior to such disclosure.

The Committee wishes to make it clear that although it recommends consultation with the Ethics Committee, any determination by the Ethics Committee would not be binding on the member. The reason for the recommendation of consultation is to permit a member the opportunity of getting the additional thinking and precedents available to him before making a final decision regarding disclosure.

III. At the request of Senator Cranston, the Committee discussed providing the Senate the overall sums requested for each separate intelligence agency. The release of such sums would provide members with the minimal information they should have about our intelligence operations. Such information would also end the practice of inflating certain budget figures so as to hide intelligence costs, and would insure that all members will know the true cost of each budget item they must vote upon.

Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the Appropriations Committee itemize in the Defense Department Appropriations bill the total sums proposed to be appropriated for intelligence activities by each of the following agencies: Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, National Intelligence Office, and any separate intelligence units within the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The Committee does not request that any line items be revealed.

The Committee also recommends that the committee reports indicate the total number of personnel to be employed by each of the above agencies. The Committee does not request any information about their duties.
FOR RELEASE AFTER 6:30 P.M. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1973 FOR SUNDAY AME

Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) in a statement from his Washington office Saturday said he had written the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee suggesting that "a possible conflict of interest makes it essential that the Committee conduct an in depth examination of James W. Plummer before accepting his nomination as Under Secretary of the Air Force.

"As Under Secretary of the Air Force, Mr. Plummer will be managing many programs he previously worked on at Lockheed Aircraft Corporation," the Senator said.

"Because of his unique background, his responsibilities as Under Secretary should be examined in great detail. There is a strong possibility of a substantial conflict of interest in this nomination.

"Without prejudging the case or the information to be developed in the confirmation hearing, extreme care must be taken in reviewing the official responsibilities of Mr. Plummer as Under Secretary. Normally, the Under Secretary of the Air Force has jurisdiction over certain intelligence matters and sits on a special committee that directs manned and unmanned overhead reconnaissance including spy satellite programs. These critical projects have run into the billions of dollars --- money that flows to defense contractors such as Lockheed.

"The Under Secretary-designate is one of the foremost experts on satellite technology in the country. Since his first employment with Lockheed Aircraft Corporation in 1955, he has provided managerial and technical support to a series of satellite programs that have been used by the intelligence community."
"As Vice President of Lockheed Aircraft Corporation and General Manager of the Space Systems Division, and as a Lockheed man for over twenty years right up until his appointment as head of the very agency that would buy from Lockheed there is a serious possibility of a conflict of interest. Based on past experience, arrangements to insulate Mr. Plummer from procurement decisions involving Lockheed are unlikely to work.

"I am writing to Senator John Stennis, the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, to ask that careful consideration be given to this nomination in view of the apparent interlocking relationships."
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Page 32

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