

C
O
P
Y

1 February 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Reconnaissance Satellite

As you know, the Air Force has had under development for some years a reconnaissance satellite. This project is under the direction of our Ballistic Missiles Division in view of the fact that the ATLAS would be the basic vehicle for orbiting the military satellite planned. The project has reached the stage where there are contracts with major concerns that are preparing the hardware for a test program.

39
In connection with this project there has been recommended to your office on November 12, 1957 the use of certain THOR missiles to place satellite components on orbit for testing before the end of this calendar year. We believe that this would substantially speed up the date when an effective reconnaissance satellite could be first orbited. You will note that the attached directive assumes approval of this accelerated program.

In view of the proposed establishment of ARPA and the reference therein to satellites, it is requested that continuation of our military reconnaissance project be clarified in the manner suggested by the enclosed draft directive. The effect of this would be to direct the Air Force to continue this project subject to the overall direction of ARPA and, pending its definitive establishment, of the Director of Guided Missiles in the same manner as has been done through assignment to the Army of the development of an anti-missile missile through your directive of January 16.

signed:

James H. Douglas

cc: AFCCS
SAFUS
SAFRD

DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR
INTERVALS; NOT AUTOMATICALLY
DECLASSIFIED. DOD DIR 5200.10

43