

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED CHANGES

Today virtually all information about the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) and its programs is classified. The exceptions are the "fact of" photo reconnaissance and certain limited facts about our photo reconnaissance satellites. This policy is stated in National Security Directive-30 (NSD-30), which also imposes severe restraints on any unclassified discussion of satellite reconnaissance.

Notwithstanding the NSD-30 restraints, substantial information about the NRO and National Reconnaissance Program (NRP) systems is in the public domain as the result of unauthorized disclosures. The existence of the NRO and some details of its history and mission are essentially open secrets. Fortunately, accurate systems information is less available-

We have examined the implications of the proposed changes for any serious negative effects and what might be done to alleviate them. Our assessment follows:

[REDACTED]

the national policy prohibiting public discussion of satellite reconnaissance is still valid and must be complied with. (We intend to propose a more liberalized version of this policy to permit approved unclassified discussions for official purposes, but it would not provide any relief for unofficial disclosures or discussions.

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

58E

WORKING DRAFT  
PAGE \_\_\_\_\_ OF \_\_\_\_\_ PAGES

ED



b. Potential Derived Disclosures: There is concern over the potential additional disclosure of the locations of MRO facilities [redacted] to include contractor locations and ground stations. We do not intend to officially disclose these locations, but some of the information released could conceivably lead to their identity. [redacted]



c. Domestic Reaction: The reaction from Congress, the media, and the public is expected to be minimal but largely positive. Concerns will likely involve why these steps were not taken sooner and why we are not releasing more information. We expect to receive a major increase in Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests (See paragraph e.)

d. Foreign Reaction: We do not anticipate any significant negative foreign reactions; however, we have asked State to confirm our assessment. Our view is based on the generally high degree of foreign acceptance of satellite reconnaissance, and the fact that we are not disclosing significant new data. [redacted]



UNCLASSIFIED



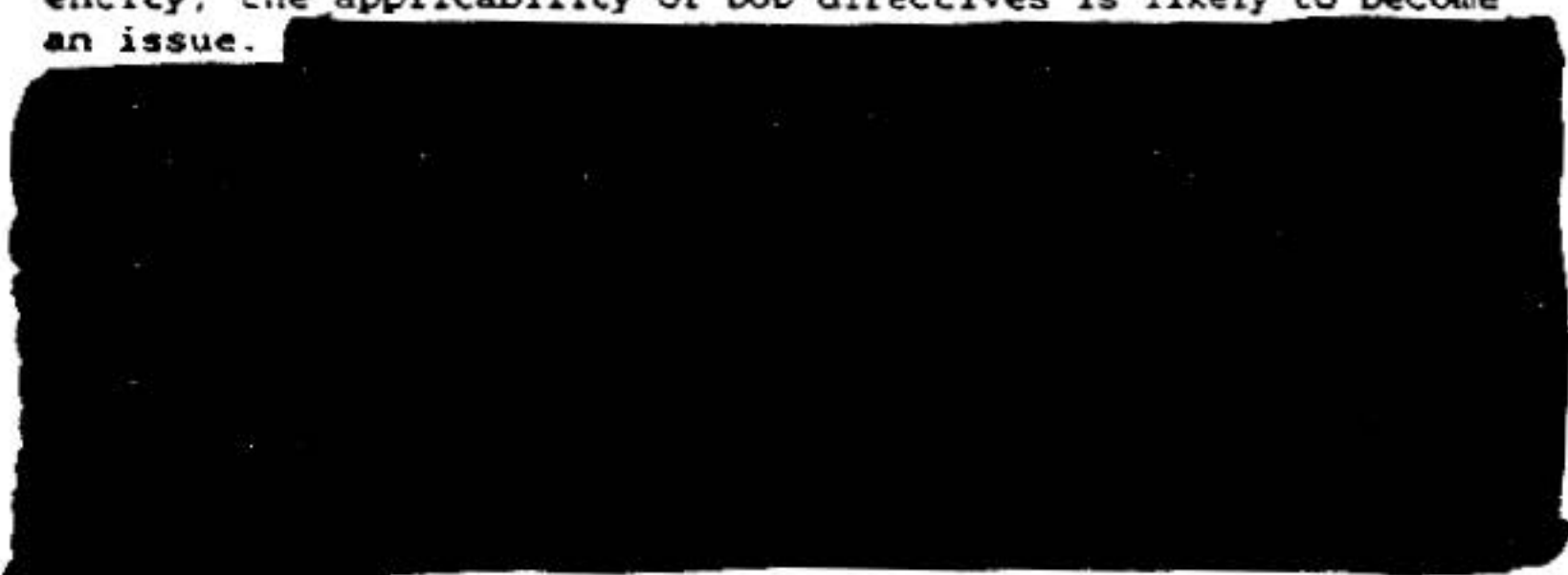
e. FOIA: We foresee a major increase in FOIA requests that will demand--even if a Congressional exemption is granted--an increase in NRO resources devoted to this subject. Legislation, comparable to that for CIA, exempting all NRO operational files from FOIA searches is required if we are to avoid diverting significant NRO resources from program activities. Passage of such legislation is far from assured.

f. NRO Management Practices:

(1) The effects on NRO management practices--particularly on the relationship to DoD staff and the applicability of DoD Directives--are expected to be significant. As outlined in the founding documents for the NRO, the DNRO is given support as required from normal staff elements of the military departments and agencies of the DoD and the CIA, but these staff elements do not participate in NRO project matters except as the DNRO specifically requests.

To minimize needless NRO involvement in routine staffing matters, the DNRO recommends that the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) and the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) reaffirm this policy.

(2) Once the NRO is announced as an overt DoD entity, the applicability of DoD directives is likely to become an issue.



He recommends that the DCI and SECDEF discuss this issue prior to any public announcement to agree on ways to minimize the potential disruption to the NRO's operation.



g. NRO Restructure: We project no significant impacts on the NRO restructure efforts, which are being implemented by agreement between the DCI and the SECDEF. We must ensure that the proposed openness permits retention of NRO management practices.

h. Military Support: Current and potential customers of the NRO, such as the operational military, will benefit in two ways. At the unclassified level there will be a generally greater appreciation of what the NRO is, what it does, and where to obtain more information. Declassification of the 'fact of' SIGINT would also enable the preparation of Secret-level information describing NRO systems and the advantages to combat forces.

i. Civil Remote Sensing: Public acknowledgement of the existence of the NRO will enable more open participation in activities related to environmental remote sensing. This capability would benefit the country as well as the NRO.

j. Foreign Reconnaissance Satellites: Public acknowledgement of the existence of the NRO would enable the NRO Director, as the DCI's functional manager for foreign reconnaissance satellites, to openly address issues relating to the sale or purchase of systems with foreign and private sector representatives.

HANDLE VIA  
CONTROL SYSTEM

~~SECRET~~  
CLASSIFIED BY [REDACTED]

CONTROL NO  
C [REDACTED]  
PAGE [REDACTED] OF [REDACTED] PAGES  
WORKING PAPERS