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From: [REDACTED] On Dec 13 00:03:50 GMT 1996 MAILSERVER Wfmlsla=142601  
Cite: 7881  
Dtg: 130002Z Dec 96  
To: Aig-711  
Prec: PRIORITY  
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Subject: NRO LAUNCH DECLASSIFICATION  
Decl: X1  
Notdelivered: [REDACTED]  
Mshosts: wfmlsla

INFO: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
FROM: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: NRO LAUNCH DECLASSIFICATION

TO: SENIOR MANAGERS AND SECURITY PERSONNEL

1. THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES NOTICE OF FURTHER DECOMPARTMENTATION AND DECLASSIFICATION OF THE NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE (NRO). PLEASE PROVIDE THE WIDEST DISSEMINATION TO BYE BRIEFED PERSONNEL.

2. THE RELEASE OF THE K-13 NRO PUBLIC AFFAIRS PRESS NOTIFICATION PACKAGE WILL DECLASSIFY THE FACT OF NRO LAUNCH AND THE FOLLOWING ASSOCIATED INFORMATION: 1) THAT THE TITAN IV K-13 BOOSTER CARRIES AN NRO SATELLITE, 2) THAT THE SATELLITE SUPPORTS THE NRO'S INTELLIGENCE MISSION, AND 3) THE NRO INTENDS TO LAUNCH FUTURE MISSIONS ON TITAN, ATLAS, AND EVOLVED EXPENDABLE LAUNCH SYSTEMS FROM CAPE CANAVERAL AIR STATION AND VANDENBERG AFB.

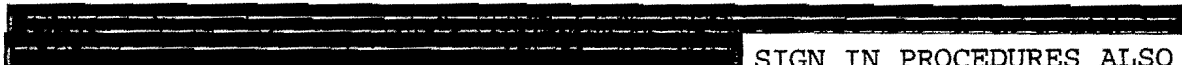
A. DECLASSIFICATION WILL OCCUR NO EARLIER THAN THE MORNING OF 16 DECEMBER. NO OTHER FACTS WILL BE DECLASSIFIED AT THAT TIME. NO FURTHER DETAILS ARE TO BE CONFIRMED EVEN THOUGH THE DOD LAUNCH COMMUNITY WILL BE KNOWN TO SUPPORT THE NRO LAUNCH PROCESS AND OTHER INFORMATION MAY APPEAR EVIDENT.

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B. THERE IS NO CHANGE IN CLASSIFICATION POLICY RELATIVE TO TECHNICAL DATA, INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM OPERATIONS, MISSION CAPABILITIES, SENSITIVE TECHNOLOGIES, AND SENSITIVE OPERATING LOCATIONS. THIS INFORMATION WILL CONTINUE TO BE CLASSIFIED/COMPARTMENTED. EVEN THOUGH CERTAIN ACTIVITIES SUCH AS LAUNCH AND EARLY ON-ORBIT OPERATIONS, COMMAND AND CONTROL, AND HEALTH AND STATUS WILL BE EVIDENT, THE NRO WILL NOT DISCUSS MISSION OPERATIONS.

C. TRAVEL BY DECLASSIFIED PERSONNEL REMAINS UNCHANGED, E.G.,  SIGN IN PROCEDURES ALSO REMAIN UNCHANGED.


D. NRO MISSION GROUND STATIONS AND OTHER SENSITIVE SITES REMAIN CLASSIFIED AND COMPARTMENTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CURRENT DIRECTIVES.

E. THIS INITIATIVE IS A CALCULATED RISK MANAGEMENT DECISION BASED ON ANALYSIS OF BOTH PRESENT AND FUTURE LAUNCH OPERATIONAL PROFILES, OPEN-SOURCE INFORMATION AVAILABILITY, AND NRO MISSION OBJECTIVES AND CRITICAL CAPABILITIES. THIS IS ALSO IN RESPONSE TO ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL INITIATIVES FOR INCREASED OPENNESS WITHIN GOVERNMENT. THE JEREMIAH PANEL'S RECOMMENDATION FOR "AGGRESSIVE ACTION ON FURTHER DECLASSIFICATION" ADDS AN ADDITIONAL IMPETUS.

3. FURTHER DECLASSIFICATION OF THE NRO LAUNCH PROCESS WILL OCCUR AT A LATER DATE. SECURITY AWARENESS TRAINING AND GUIDANCE, BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TO THE NRO, WILL BE PROVIDED DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD BETWEEN THE DECEMBER LAUNCH ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND FURTHER DECLASSIFICATION UNDER THE NEXT STAGE. THIS WILL ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION.

5. IN SUMMARY, THE FACT THAT THE SCHEDULED DECEMBER 1996 VAFB TITAN IV LAUNCH CARRIES AN NRO SATELLITE WILL BE DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED JUST PRIOR TO THE LAUNCH.

6. ALL MEDIA QUERIES SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE USAF OR NRO PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE AS APPROPRIATE. SHOULD YOU RECEIVE SUCH INQUIRIES PLEASE ADVISE THE NRO PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF AT SECURE

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[REDACTED] OR STU (703) [REDACTED] PERSONNEL ARE REMINDED THAT THEY ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO SPEAK FOR THE NRO. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT EVERYONE ACT JUDICIOUSLY AND CONTINUE TO OPERATE UNDER THE "NEED-TO-KNOW" PRINCIPLE.

7. QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS INITIATIVE SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE LAUNCH DECLASSIFICATION HOTLINE AT [REDACTED] TO NRO OSL SECURITY

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] OR TO NRO SECURITY POLICY [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]/1.5(c)/X1/NROSCG 4.0, 14Oct95

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