

~~SECRET~~

POINT PAPER

Issue: Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) request for declassification of the DYNO ELINT satellite reconnaissance program

Background: In a 22 September 1997 letter, the Command Officer, Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) requested that the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) approve the declassification of the DYNO ELINT satellite reconnaissance program in time to coincide with NRL's 75th Diamond Anniversary Jubilee in June 1998. This request was made at about the same time as an exchange of memoranda between Director, National Security Agency (DIRNSA) and the Director, National Reconnaissance Office (DNRO) directing investigation of the feasibility of declassifying [REDACTED]

Discussion: In response to the DNRO/DIRNSA request, a [REDACTED] declassification team with NRO and NSA co-chairs, established an Integrated Process Team (IPT) involving all the appropriate offices of these two organizations, as well as those from NRL, to initiate the declassification process. The product of this team will be a set of documentation for the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) for his consideration and approval or non-approval for declassification. It has been the intention of the IPT to include the DYNO program in the overall [REDACTED] declassification process, however it is doubtful that a DCI decision could be obtained in time for the NRL's June 1998 Jubilee event. Two factors argue against separating the DYNO declassification effort from the [REDACTED] declassification effort. (1) Consideration of the two programs separately will duplicate a lot of the effort which will be accomplished for both program simultaneously; and (2) Mandating a completion date is not practicable in view of the many agencies and considerations involved in the decision and implementation of declassifying a sensitive program. Under the most optimum circumstances, NRL's June deadline is unlikely to be met. However, there may be sufficient unclassified detail surrounding the DYNO program to permit an interesting story to be told at NRL's Jubilee without awaiting the declassification process. The DYNO program was not originally an NRO program, and many of its early aspects were either unclassified or not compartmented.

Recommendation: Continue the inclusion of the DYNO declassification effort [REDACTED] declassification effort, but encourage NRL to pursue a story on the DYNO program using unclassified details for their June Jubilee.

Action Officer: [REDACTED]