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C O M I R E X
SPECIAL TASK GROUP
S T U D Y

"UTILIZATION OF SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHY"

30 June 1971

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COMIREX-Special Task Group Study

SUBJECT: Utilization Of Satellite Photography

In response to tasking established in USIB-D-46.2/14, dated 12 June 1971, TCS #040-70, the following study has been prepared by a Special Task Group for COMIREX.

I. Statement of the Problem.

1. (Reference USIB-D-46.2/14)

a. Review the problems which inhibit the effective utilization of the materials derived from satellite photography within the Department of Defense and other USIB agencies;

b. Develop various alternatives for increasing the utilization of such materials; and

c. Outline the significant advantages and disadvantages of each of the alternatives with special attention to security, cost, and timeliness.

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II. Problem Background and Previous Action.

2. The TALENT Control System was first established by the Director of Central Intelligence in 1956 to provide maximum security protection and optimum controlled exploitation of the product of the very sensitive United States U-2 aircraft reconnaissance flights over denied areas.

3. On 26 August 1960, President Eisenhower, by White House Memorandum, approved the TALENT-KEYHOLE Security Control System to provide protection for the products of satellite reconnaissance and the fact of such reconnaissance. In the memorandum, the Director of Central Intelligence, in consultation with the USIB, was charged with responsibility for determining all questions involved in the continued protection and control of satellite reconnaissance material and information (Presidential Memorandum is attached at Annex A).

4. Since the inception of the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment of the TALENT Control System in August 1960, the USIB and its committees have conducted an almost continuous review of TALENT and TALENT-KEYHOLE security and utilization policies and procedures. Although some of the actions taken since August 1960 have resulted in proposals to decontrol and downgrade certain TALENT and/or TALENT-KEYHOLE controlled material and information, the only really significant liberalizing action was the development and approval of the 1965 COMOR "Manual for Sanitization, Decontrol, and Downgrading." This manual, including changes made to date, provides for limited use of TALENT and TALENT-KEYHOLE derived information at the SECRET classification level in approved intelligence products without consideration of cover sources, and for limited use of satellite photography at the SECRET classification level to satisfy specific approved (operational)

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or planning requirements.

5. A listing of the different proposals considered, and the subsequent actions taken by USIB and its committees, is contained at Annex B.

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III. Volume and Range of Intelligence Materials Derived from
Satellite Imagery.

6. At the time the TALENT-KEYHOLE Control System was established, the true potential and impact of satellite reconnaissance on the national security and the intelligence and mapping and charting communities were largely unknown.

7. In 1960, two successful missions proved the feasibility of reconnaissance by satellites. These two KH-___ missions provided ___ square miles of photographic coverage with ___ foot resolution.

8. In 1970, ___ successful missions provided ___ square miles of KH-4B (search) photographic coverage with ___ foot resolution, and ___ square miles of KH-8 (spotting) photographic coverage with ___ foot resolution.

9. As a direct result of improved search and spotting system resolution, increased ground coverage, and improved image timeliness, the role of satellite photography as a primary and unique source of timely and comprehensive vital strategic intelligence has dramatically increased.. The uniqueness and importance of reconnaissance by photographic satellite will be further expanded as the result of the additional improvements in resolution, coverage and timeliness that should accrue when the new KH-9 (search/surveillance) system becomes operational in FY-72. Development of other follow-on systems, such as a possible near-real-time system, would represent further possible technological advances which would even more identify this source of data as vital to the national security.

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10. Additional details regarding the volume and range of intelligence materials derived from satellite imagery may be found at Annex C.

11. Concurrent with NRO improving the collection systems capabilities, the intelligence community also improved its imagery exploitation and intelligence production and utilization capabilities. Details regarding the improvements in image exploitation capabilities may be found at Annex D. Details regarding the improvements in intelligence production and utilization capabilities may be found at Annex E.

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IV. Basis and Scope of Present Security Controls and Compartmentation.

12. (To be developed by NRO and TSO/BSO-CIA)

NOTE: Section IV must identify the specific material and information that is to be secured, and state why such action is required.

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V. Current Problems in Effective Use of Materials Derived from
Satellite Imagery.

___ . It is against the impressive prospects for improved satellite imagery collection that COMIREX has conducted its comprehensive review of the utilization problems.

___ . The problems identified to us in the course of this study, presented in detail at Annex F, derive from both the general and special needs of all agencies. As such, they vary widely in scope and as to the immediate utilization end sought. In general, they suggest that in all departments and agencies, the production, dissemination, and utilization of timely and responsive intelligence products are limited by unnecessary TALENT Control System policy and procedural constraints.

___ . The Study Group has developed the following summarized statement of the various specific problems identified:

a. The U.S. Government has not developed an authoritative national security policy directive which identifies the specific NRP related information and material that is to be given compartmented security protection. Similarly, the specific reason for such protection has not been identified.

b. The policy and procedures governing TALENT Control System operations are overly restrictive. As a substitute for a DCID, the 1956 TALENT Control System Manual does not establish acceptable, current, coordinated, and consolidated national security policy. Additionally,

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the procedural guidance provided no longer insures administrative efficiency or the desired level of product utilization.

c. The policy and procedures governing the sanitization, decontrol, and downgrading of TALENT controlled information and material are overly restrictive. The 1965 USIB approved "Manual for Sanitization, Decontrol, and Downgrading" of TALENT information and material is no longer acceptable as a current, coordinated, and consolidated statement of national policy. Without extensive background information and guidance, the procedures prescribed are not easily understood or implemented. It does not insure the desired level of security or product utilization.

d. The national authorities, who approve TALENT-KEYHOLE need-to-know, have not as yet acted to fulfill the urgent need to educate a broad spectrum of personnel concerning the capabilities of the National Reconnaissance Program, and the application and utilization of its products.

e. Access to BYEMAN controlled information is overly restrictive. The policies and procedures governing its sanitization and dissemination under other security controls has not been formalized, coordinated, and implemented at the national or operating level.

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VI. Range of Potential Alternatives for Increasing Use of Satellite Imagery Materials.

___ After much consideration, the study group has concluded:

- a. There are three basic alternative courses of action.
- b. The choice of a particular alternative course of action

will largely determine how much satellite photography utilization can be increased.

c. The choice of a particular alternative will be determined by consideration of various factors such as security, cost, and timeliness. However, current validated national security requirements should be the driving factor in the final decision.

___: The three basic alternative courses of action are:

a. ALTERNATIVE 1 -- Based on revalidation of national policy, first stated in the 26 August 1960 Presidential Memorandum, continue to provide TALENT-KEYHOLE Security Control System protection for the "products of satellite reconnaissance, and information of the fact of such reconnaissance revealed by the product".

b. ALTERNATIVE 2 -- Based on revision of national policy, first stated in the 26 August 1960 Presidential Memorandum, decontrol and downgrade all or part of the "products of satellite reconnaissance, and information of the fact of such reconnaissance revealed by the product".

c. ALTERNATIVE 3 -- Based on revision of national policy, first stated in the 26 August 1960 Presidential Memorandum, decontrol and declassify all or part of the "products of satellite reconnaissance, and information of the fact of such reconnaissance revealed by the product".

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VII. Assessment of Advantages/Disadvantages of Alternatives.

NOTE: Cannot be prepared until at least a draft of Section IV is available.

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