

~~SECRET~~ BYEMAN HVBCOO

Deputy Director's Note #30

18 December 1996

NRO Launch Declassified

I am pleased to inform you that effective today the following information has been declassified: 1) that the December Vandenberg AFB Titan IV launch carries an NRO payload; 2) that the satellite supports the NRO's mission; 3) that the NRO intends to launch future payloads on Titan, Atlas, and Evolved Expendable launch vehicles from Cape Canaveral Air Station, FL, and Vandenberg AFB, CA; and 4) that the NRO will consider the use of any available launch vehicle, including Shuttle, that meets its mission requirements and is cost effective. No other facts are being declassified; all information concerning the payload mission and operations remains classified.

This declassification decision officially acknowledges something which is already obvious. Moreover, efforts such as this to declassify "open secrets" are aimed at strengthening the credibility of the security system by protecting only that information which requires protection.

For those that are acknowledged NRO employees, this means that you can acknowledge to your families and friends that you are part of the team that places vital national systems into space, and that the launch from Vandenberg is such a system. We may receive national media attention for this historic NRO event.

All media queries should be referred to the Public Affairs Staff at (703) 808-1015. Personnel are reminded that they are not authorized to speak for the organization. Questions regarding security and classification issues should be referred to Office of Space Launch security officers or to NRO Security Policy.

Keith R. Hall

Deputy Director

[Director's Notes Index](#)

~~SECRET~~ BYEMAN HVBCOO

Last modified on Tue Apr 1 9:54:09 1997