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The National SIGINT Committee

The Director of Central Intelligence
The Director, National Security Agency

13 April 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Proposal for the Declassification and Release of Information Regarding the First Satellite ELINT Collection Program (U) -ACTION MEMORANDUM

1. ~~(S-BYE)~~ **Action Requested.** That you approve the declassification and release of certain information regarding the GRAB/DYNO ELINT satellite which has historical significance, including identification of distinguished pioneers and their parent agencies, for the 75th anniversary of the Naval Research Lab (NRL), 15-19 June 1998.

2. ~~(S-BYE)~~ **Background.** On 22 September 1997, the Commanding Officer, NRL, proposed to the Director, NRO, that certain information about the nation's first reconnaissance satellite, known as both GRAB and DYNO, be declassified and released for NRL's Diamond Jubilee. The GRAB/DYNO satellite was developed by NRL; one was launched on 22 June 1960 and one on 29 June 1961. Upon approval of this proposal, this will represent the first ELINT satellite information to be officially released to the public. The NRL request was considered as part of an ongoing NRO-led review of a proposal by the Director, NSA, to declassify historically valuable information about early ELINT satellites.

3. ~~(S-BYE)~~ **Discussion.** In accordance with PDD/49/NSC/49, "National Space Policy," and EO12958, "Classified National Defense Security Information," you have the authority to declassify details of intelligence collection from space. The "fact of" overhead SIGINT collection is now unclassified. Release of information concerning GRAB/DYNO would complement the recent release of similar information on the CORONA imagery program. Historians would gain a more balanced view of early US reconnaissance efforts, while the pioneers responsible for the program's success would achieve the deserved recognition.

4. (U) The information proposed for release includes a short history of the program, selected photos and artifacts, names of distinguished alumni, and summary statements or program results and their impact on national security. Attachment 1 depicts the proposed Exhibition Package.

Derived From: NSA/CSS 123-2
Dated: 24 February 1998
Declassify On: X1, X3, X5, X6, X7, X8

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5. (S//~~BYE~~) A risk assessment by a team of technical and security experts indicates that the proposed exhibition elements and information are long obsolete and their release would cause no identifiable damage to national security. Attachment 2 is the risk assessment team's report. Guidelines were also developed to identify GRAB/DYNO ELINT satellite information of residual sensitivity that is not being released at this time and that will remain protected from disclosure. Attachment 3 contains the protection guidelines.

6. (U) The more comprehensive review for declassification of other historically valuable information about early ELINT satellites will continue.

7. (U) In addition to the normal SIGINT Committee coordination, the release proposal has been coordinated with the Foreign Denial and Deception Office.

8. (S//~~BYE~~) Recommendation. That you approve the declassification and release of the proposed GRAB/DYNO Exhibition Package for the 75th anniversary of the NRL and authorize the Chairman, National SIGINT Committee to so inform the Director, NRO, and Commanding Officer, NRL.

[Redacted Signature]

(b) (3) - P.L. 86-36

Chairman

Incl: AS

Approved:


Director, Central Intelligence

24 April 98
Date

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