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COVERING BRIEF

TO: DIRECTOR, DEFENSE RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING

FROM: DEPUTY DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC AND SPACE SYSTEMS 3 JAN 1974

Subject: (S) Communications Security Measures for Operational Meteorological Satellites

Discussion: (S) The National Policy on the Security of Meteorological Satellite Information (USCSB 3-12, 15 April 1970, TAB B) prescribes communications security measures for meteorological satellites and assigns to the Secretary of Defense the responsibility for selecting the security means to be used for operational meteorological satellites.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the Department of Commerce (DOC) has operational satellite systems. The Policy provides two options for securing operational meteorological satellites:

- a. Equip the satellites so that they could be operated in the clear or in a secure mode on command.
- b. Equip the satellites so that useful data transmission can be selectively silenced by secure means over designated geographic areas or at specific times.

In response to a request from DDR&E (TAB C) the Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended (TAB D) that option b. be selected. This recommendation is supported in the light of the availability of meteorological satellite data from DOD systems equipped to operate in a secure mode; the cost and administrative difficulties associated with securing the data links on civil satellites; and, the selective availability of clear data over North America where intercept and relay of data would be costly.

The National Security Agency (NSA) in accordance with its responsibilities under the Policy has been working with NOAA in planning for securing the satellite command links. Although this has implied a choice by DOD no formal statement of the choice has been made.

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NOAA is ready to embark on a new series of polar orbiting satellites and this decision will permit them to incorporate provisions for the security measures with a minimum cost impact.

Recommendation: (U) That you sign the attached letter (TAB A) to the Secretary of Commerce conveying the DOD decision with regard to the security options to be applied to their operational meteorological satellites under the National Policy.

Concurrences: (U)

NSA (Comm. Sec.) \_\_\_\_\_  
DDOES/JCS \_\_\_\_\_  
ASD (C) \_\_\_\_\_  
DASD (Sec. Policy) \_\_\_\_\_  
ASD (PA) \_\_\_\_\_  
DDR&AT \_\_\_\_\_  
ASD (ISA) \_\_\_\_\_  
ASD (I) \_\_\_\_\_  
ASD (T) - DASD (systems) \_\_\_\_\_

Office of the Secretary of Defense + USC § 552  
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