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(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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THE NRO STAFF

15 February 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN, COMJREX
THRU: SPECIAL SECURITY CENTER

SUBJECT: Civil Applications of NRO Imaging Satellites

I asked the NRO Staff to review the legal basis of civil agency use of satellite imagery, in the context of the recently issued Executive Order. It appears unclear whether a current, authoritative legal approach for such domestic use of national intelligence assets exists.

We are advised that each civil agency is responsible for attesting to the propriety of their collection requirements and that COMJREX does not validate those requirements. Although the CIA General Counsel reportedly advised that such use of NRO-produced imagery is in consonance with current legal requirements, the thrust of the newly issued Executive Order may make it prudent to seek approval from the Intelligence Oversight Board or the Attorney General.

I recommend you review the need for legal sanction for the civilian agencies' tasking and use of NRO satellites.



WILLIAM T. SHIELDS, JR.
Brigadier General, USAF
Director



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