

TOP SECRET

25X1


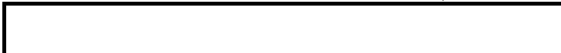


18 December 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: 303 Committee

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Retention of the CIA IDEALIST Program

25X1

1. The Agency U-2 program provides the U.S. a flexible overhead reconnaissance system with unique capabilities for high resolution  photography, 

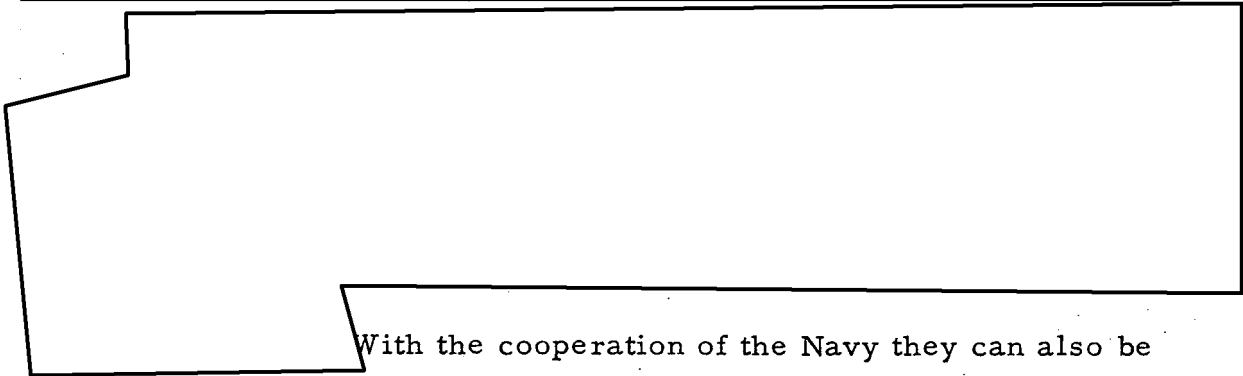
25X1

The system can react rapidly to world-wide crisis situations cheaply, effectively, and at little political risk to the U.S. Government,

25X1



25X1



With the cooperation of the Navy they can also be launched and recovered from carriers anywhere on the high seas.

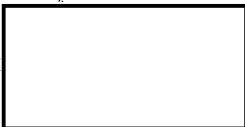
USAF review(s) completed.

25X1

NRO review(s) completed.

MORI/CDF

25X1



TOP SECRET

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC REGRADING
DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.10 DOES NOT APPLY

COPY 16 OF _____ COPIES
PAGE 1 OF 4 PAGES

TOP SECRET

HANDLE VIA
BYEMAN
CONTROL SYSTEM

This U-2 capability can be utilized on short notice with a reaction time of approximately fifty hours anywhere in the world. The current improved version of the U-2 has an average survivability better than 92.5% over a single SAM site, even if it flies directly overhead, and a survivability of about 99.6% if attacked by MIG-21's. The actual mission survivability can be made even higher by programming the flight path to avoid SAM installations. Direct costs are approximately [redacted] operational mission.

25X1

3. This program provides the U.S. Government with a low cost option for meeting future crisis situations in areas other than the more heavily defended areas of the Soviet Union. The vulnerability of satellites makes such an option especially desirable, particularly when it is recognized that neutralization of these vehicles would deny this country a high percentage of its strategic intelligence. During non-crisis periods this asset is being used to collect ChiCom

25X1

25X1

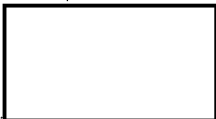
intelligence as well as to bolster [redacted] political relationships. All responsible U.S. officials [redacted] feel that

25X1

[redacted] serious political repercussions and might adversely affect other important joint intelligence projects. The program assets (airplanes, major equipment and

25X1

25X1



TOP SECRET

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC REGRADING
DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.10 DOES NOT APPLY

CONTROL NO. [redacted]
COPY 2 OF 4 COPIES
PAGE 2 OF 4 PAGES

TOP SECRET



25X1

facilities) are now paid for. The Agency program as now envisioned is projected to cost approximately [redacted] including NRO and CIA funds.

25X1

25X1

4. Agency U-2R's have a mission altitude capability of [redacted] feet and a maximum range [redacted] s, at a speed of [redacted]

25X1

The standard camera configuration provides for a swath width of 63 n.m. with 2300 n.m. of coverage in the flight direction. They have a full complement of [redacted] equipment capable of operating successfully [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

[redacted] They are the only covert reconnaissance vehicles in the NRO inventory. SAC aircraft of similar type do not now have adequate [redacted]

25X1

[redacted] The SAC U-2's do not afford this government the option of non-attributability.

25X1

5. It is the opinion of CIA that the availability of this flexible, quick reaction capability for covert reaction to world-wide crises more than justifies the cost of retention. It is recognized that broad U.S. policy considerations must govern U-2 operations and decisions, especially as far as overflights of China are concerned. And it is true that for the past few years we have been reluctant to allow overflights

25X1

25X1



TOP SECRET

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC REGRADING
DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.10 DOES NOT APPLY

CONTROL N [redacted]
COPY OF COPIES
PAGE 3 OF 4 PAGES

TOP SECRET

25X1

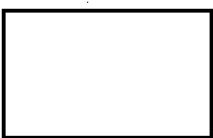


even with covert manned aircraft. However, it is important to note that in times of crisis our attitude in this regard can change rapidly. It is for such contingencies that a covert capability like the U-2 would become very important to the President. If we terminate this program now, this option will be lost.

6. It is therefore recommended that Project IDEALIST be continued.

25X1

25X1



TOP SECRET

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC REGRADING
DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.10 DOES NOT APPLY

CONTROL

COPY _____ OF _____ COPIES
PAGE 4 OF 4 PAGES

