

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~--XGDS (2)

May 11, 1978

Presidential Directive/NSC-37

TO:           The Vice President  
              The Secretary of State  
              The Secretary of Defense  
              The Secretary of Interior  
              The Secretary of Agriculture  
              The Secretary of Commerce  
              The Director, Office of Management and Budget  
              Assistant to the President for National  
              Security Affairs  
              Assistant to the President for Domestic  
              Affairs  
              Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency  
              Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
              Director of Central Intelligence  
              Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space  
              Administration  
              Director, Office of Science and Technology  
              Policy

SUBJECT: National Space Policy (U)

This directive establishes national policies which shall guide the conduct of United States activities in and related to the space programs and activities discussed below. The objectives of these policies are (1) to advance the interests of the United States through the exploration and use of space and (2) to cooperate with other nations in maintaining the freedom of space for all activities which enhance the security and welfare of mankind. (S)

1. The United States space program shall be conducted in accordance with the following basic principles. (U)

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DECLASSIFIED  
Per Archival Policy Memorandum  
#LP/LM 2014-004 (4/22/2014)  
BY: CP NARA DATE 6/17/2014  
See also MR-NLJC-2010-230

a. Commitment to the principles of the exploration and use of outer space by all nations for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all mankind. "Peaceful purposes" allow for military and intelligence-related activities in pursuit of national security and other goals. (S)

b. The exploration and use of outer space in support of the national well-being and policies of the United States. (U)

c. Rejection of any claims to sovereignty over outer space or over celestial bodies, or any portion thereof, and rejection of any limitations on the fundamental right to acquire data from space. (U)

d. The space systems of any nation are national property and have the right of passage through and operations in space without interference. Purposeful interference with operational space systems shall be viewed as an infringement upon sovereign rights. (U)

e. The United States will pursue activities in space in support of its right of self-defense. (U)

f. The United States will maintain a national intelligence space program. (S)

g. The United States will pursue space activities to increase scientific knowledge, develop useful civil applications of space technology, and maintain United States leadership in space. (U)

h. The United States will conduct international cooperative space-related activities that are beneficial to the United States scientifically, politically, economically, and/or militarily. (U)

i. The United States will develop and operate on a global basis active and passive remote sensing operations in support of civil, military, and national intelligence objectives. Such operations will occur under conditions which protect classified technology, deny sensitive data, and promote acceptance and legitimacy of such activities. (S)

j. The United States will maintain current responsibility and management relationships among the

sectors focused on civil, defense, and national intelligence objectives. (S)

k. Close coordination, cooperation, and information exchange will be maintained among the space sectors to avoid unnecessary duplication and to allow maximum cross-utilization, in compliance with security and policy guidance, of all capabilities. (U)

2. The United States will conduct those activities in space which are necessary to national defense. The military space program shall support such functions as command and control, communications, navigation, environmental monitoring, warning, tactical intelligence, targeting, ocean and battle-field surveillance, and space defense. In addition, defense space programs shall contribute to the satisfaction of national intelligence requirements. The following policies shall govern the conduct of the military space programs.

(S)

a. Security. The military space program, including dissemination of data, shall be conducted in accordance with Executive Orders and applicable directives for protection of national security information, and commensurate with both the missions performed and the security measures necessary to protect related (national intelligence) space activities.

(S)

b. Emergency Utilization of Civil Systems. The Secretary of Defense will establish a program for identifying, modifying and integrating, as needed, civil and commercial resources into military operations, or for denying their use to an enemy, during national emergencies declared by the President while, to the maximum extent possible, retaining their utility to the United States. (S)

c. Survivability. Survivability of space systems, including all system elements, will be pursued commensurate with the planned need in crisis and war, the threat, and the availability of other assets to perform the mission. Identified deficiencies will be eliminated and an aggressive, long-term program will be applied to provide more assured survivability through evolutionary changes to space systems. For critical missions, a distributed system architecture shall be considered for reducing single, critical nodes, including highly survivable emergency systems of limited capability for use in times of

crisis and to back up the first line systems in case of system failure or attack. Civil systems (e.g., communications) used for critical military functions shall have a level of survivability commensurate with their planned use in national emergencies. (S)

d. Anti-Satellite Capability. In accordance with applicable executive directives, the United States shall seek a verifiable ban on anti-satellite capabilities, excluding electronic warfare. DoD shall vigorously pursue development of an anti-satellite capability, but will not carry to production those elements which are included in any treaty with the Soviets. Beyond that, some R&D should be continued as a hedge against Soviet breakout. The progress of ASAT arms control negotiations will be reviewed annually to determine if negotiations with the Soviet Union continue to be fruitful relative to the threat posed by Soviet actions in space, and consequently to determine if the U.S. ASAT efforts are still adequate. The space defense program shall include an integrated attack warning, notification, verification, and contingency reaction capability which can effectively detect and react to threats to U.S. space systems. (TS)

3. The United States foreign intelligence program shall include a space program to acquire information and data required for the formulation and execution of foreign, military, and economic policies; to support the planning for and conduct of military operations; to provide warning; to support crisis management; and to monitor treaties. The following policies shall govern the conduct of this program. (S)

a. Protection of Sensitive Information. The nature, the attributable collected information, and the operational details of intelligence space activities will be classified, and as necessary to protect sensitive aspects, will be controlled in special compartmented security channels. Collected information that cannot be attributed to space systems will be classified according to its content. Security restrictions on intelligence space satellite products will be selectively relaxed by the DCI to implement the following changes to permit wider use of space-derived intelligence information. (S)

-- The fact that the United States conducts satellite reconnaissance for intelligence purposes, without disclosing the generic type of activity, will be classified

*technology and products*

CONFIDENTIAL (Exempt from the General Declassification Schedule) and handled outside the special security control system. (e)

-- The existing special product controls will be used sparingly, and then only for those products and data that reveal sensitive aspects of the program as determined by the DCI. (S)

-- For SIGINT, the special space-related product control system shall not be used when the DCI determines that the intelligence is protected by appropriate classification or the more general special intelligence control system. (S)

-- Operational aspects of intelligence space activities shall be afforded strict security protection within a special access program system as determined by the DCI. (S)

-- Strict control over public statements and background concerning space reconnaissance will be maintained. (S)

-- Further changes to the space intelligence security policy can be authorized only by the President. (S)

b. Support of Military Operational Requirements. Support of military operational requirements is a major space intelligence mission. National space intelligence assets shall provide appropriate support to deployed military operational forces in balance with their primary mission capabilities. In order to ensure a proper balance between the national and tactical missions of these assets, there will be military involvement in the requirements, tasking, exploitation, and dissemination functions and in the development program. The Secretary of Defense will, together with the Director of Central Intelligence, ensure that there is no unnecessary overlap between national foreign intelligence programs and Department of Defense intelligence programs, and the Secretary of Defense will provide the Director of Central Intelligence all information necessary for this purpose. (S)

c. Interactions with Civil Community. Selected space-related products and technology shall be made available to civil agencies within appropriate security

constraints. The Intelligence Community may provide radio frequency (RF) mapping and surveys for the civil community under appropriate security controls. (TS)

d. Survivability. The national intelligence program shall be configured to operate in a hostile environment. The guidance set forth in subparagraph 2c. shall be aggressively pursued by the intelligence community. (S)

4. The United States shall conduct civil space programs to increase the body of scientific knowledge about the earth and the universe; to develop and operate civil applications of space technology; to maintain United States leadership in space science, applications, and technology; and to further United States domestic and foreign policy objectives. The following policies shall govern the conduct of the civil space program. (U)

a. The United States shall encourage domestic commercial exploitation of space capabilities and systems for economic benefit and to promote the technological position of the United States, except that all United States earth-oriented remote sensing satellites will require United States Government authorization and supervision or regulation. (U)

b. Federal civil earth imaging from space, at resolutions at or better than ten meters, will be permitted under controls and when such needs are justified and assessed in relation to civil benefits, national security, and foreign policy. Appropriate controls on other forms of remote earth sensing will be established. Expanded civil use of intelligence space data and technology within appropriate security constraints is encouraged. (S)

c. Data and results from the civil space programs will be provided the widest practical dissemination, except where specific exceptions defined by legislation, Executive Order, or directive apply. (U)

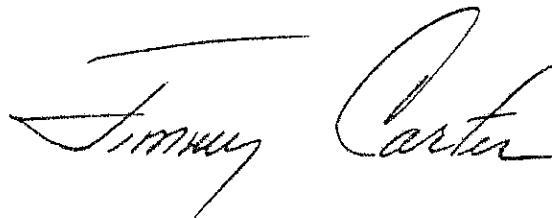
d. United States federal or private space systems identified as critical to the national defense may be equipped at DoD expense for use in national emergencies or to deny their use by an enemy in times of national emergency declared by the President. Implementation will occur as described in subparagraph 2b. The fact of or the details of such measures may be classified. (S)

e. Terrestrially-oriented federal or private radio frequency (RF) surveys in space are prohibited except through or in coordination with the Director of Central Intelligence under appropriate security controls. (TS)

f. The United States will develop, manage, and operate the Shuttle-based Space Transportation System through NASA in cooperation with the DoD to service all authorized space users--domestic and foreign, commercial and governmental-- and will provide launch priority and necessary security to military and intelligence missions while recognizing the essentially open character of the civil space program. Mission control is the responsibility of the mission agency. Military and intelligence programs may use the Shuttle Orbiters as dedicated mission vehicles. (e)

5. The NSC Policy Review Committee shall meet when appropriate to provide a forum to all federal agencies for their policy views; to review and advise on proposed changes to national space policy; to resolve issues referred to the Committee; and to provide for orderly and rapid referral of open issues to the President for decision as necessary. The PRC will meet at the call of the Chairman for these purposes, and when so convened, will be chaired by the Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy. (U)

Interagency coordinating mechanisms will be employed to review and coordinate pertinent issues and projects, make evaluations, and implement policy decisions where appropriate. Special areas of interest include security and political risks involved with technology transfer and federal and private space operations involving remote sensing and communications. Unresolved policy issues will be forwarded to the PRC for review and resolution. (e)

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jimmy Carter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.