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19 April 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : SKYLAB Imagery [REDACTED]

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1. This note is to alert you and provide preliminary background information on an issue that might be raised by Secretary Rusk in your luncheon meeting today.

2. The issue arises from the fact that the recent SKYLAB mission inadvertently photographed [REDACTED] There were specific instructions not to do this. [REDACTED] was the only location which had such an instruction.

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3. This photo has been going through an interagency reviewing process aimed at a decision on how it should be handled. There is no agreement. DoD elements (USAF, NRO, JCS, ISA, all believe it should be withheld from public release. NASA, and to a large degree State, has taken the position that it should be released -- that is, allowed to go into the Souix Falls National Repository and to let nature take its course.

4. A position paper containing these various views and providing recommendations for your action is being prepared and will be forwarded through Carl Duckett within a few days. (Positions of agencies have only now come in.) A preliminary draft version is attached for your advance information with regard to today's luncheon session. Most of the viewing officials up to this point feel that the final decision should be handled at an Agency head level.

5. There are some complicated precedents which, in fairness, should be reviewed before a final decision.

a. A question of whether anything photographed in the United States can be classified if the platform is unclassified.

5-28

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b. Some complex issues in the UN concerning United States policies toward imagery from space.

c. The question of whether the photograph can be withheld without it leaking.



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TO:

		ACTION	INFO.			ACTION	INFO.
1	DCI			11	IG		
2	DDCI			12	COMP		
3	DDS&T		✓	13	SAYA		
4	DDI	✓		14	ASST/DCI		
5	DDO			15	AO/DCI		
6	DDM&S			16	EX/SEC		
7	D/DCI/IC			17			
8	D/ RTS			18			
9	GC			19			
10	LC			20			

SUSPENSE

Date

Remarks:

He did raise it - said State Dept people felt strongly but he inclined leave decision to me (DCI) - I conferred some question over need to protect since:

1. USSR has it from our sats
2. What really does it reveal?
3. IF exposed, don't we just say classified USAF work is done there? -

DCI/DDCI

4/19/74