

HANDLE VIA TALENT
CONTROL CHANNELS ONLY

DRAFT
TCS-3487-58
Copy 13 of 21

25 July 1958

SANITIZATION OF ODE PHOTOGRAPHY

1. Admiral Burke in his letter to the Director poses a critical issue, namely, the release in some form of TALENT photography collected over the USSR Bloc to meet Navy needs arising from its responsibility to prepare pilots to deliver weapons against assigned targets in the event of war. While not stated officially in writing thus far, the same need exists for the Air Force.

2. The TALENT Control System does not exist for itself. Justification for it arises only from the need to protect the fact of US overflight of the Soviet Bloc (and other areas as designated) and to protect data bearing on the collection vehicle and the systems. Insofar as any form of US control overflight is highly sensitive for political and military reasons, any product which reveals that fact must be most securely handled. Release of sanitized photography from highly secure control systems can only be considered when attribution is possible which will not adversely affect the US Government position internationally or even domestically in the event of untoward exposure of material to unauthorized persons. Insofar as data can be derived from photography which discloses the characteristics of the vehicle or systems, and insofar as such vehicles or systems represent unique R & D achievement, the photographic product should be most securely handled.

3. The DCI, on advice of the agencies participating in the TALENT Control System, has authorized the release of Middle East photography in a classified SECRET NOFORN CONTINUOUS RECEIPT REQUIRED, provided certain technical steps are taken in the preparation of materials to prevent exposure to non-TALENT cleared officials of data bearing upon altitude, scale, camera configuration characteristics and track. Whereas it is presumed that the 9 x 9 format of the initial reproduction from TALENT material will allow for the plausible excuse that such format is used by

HANDLE VIA TALENT
CONTROL CHANNELS ONLY

HANDLE VIA TALENT
CONTROL CHANNELS ONLY

2

TCS-3487-58

other countries and thus cannot be pinned for certain on the US, there is room for speculation and accusations that the material resulted from US overflight of the Middle East.

4. Justification for the decision to release sanitized Middle East material from the TALENT system rests on the following reasoning:

The area overflown while not in all regards friendly at least is not considered as hostile as that of the Soviet Bloc. At any rate, no portion of the area possesses the military or the political power comparable to that of the Bloc. Furthermore, plausibility that other nations [REDACTED] have overflown the Middle East areas is much higher than in the case of the USSR Bloc. Both the Suez crisis and turbulent conditions in the Middle East since then have created pressures initially (felt by the Army and subsequently by the Navy) to engage in such planning activities as would place them in a state of adequate readiness for emergency. Such emergency has recently developed. Thus, it is judged that the circumstances outweigh the possible political and military hazard which might develop from, say, an accusation in the UN that the US had overflown the Middle East. [REDACTED]

25X1D

25X1C

25X1C

5. In the case of ODE photography, i. e., TALENT photography over the USSR and its satellites, there are no inhibitions to applying the same technical alterations to the photography for the purpose of sanitization different from the problems faced in the Middle East material. It is recognized that the highest quality of photographic material is required in nice photogrammetric interpretation and thus no degradation of the quality of the material may be tolerated. Such quality would not appear to be necessary to meet the Navy (and possible Air Force) pilot briefing requirements where landmark recognition rather than interpretation is called for. It would be feasible to make ODE material conform to all appearances to GENETRIX, to other balloon photography if available, or World War II German photography. Gross natural and cultural features of the landscape could be preserved and identified. Both GENETRIX and German photography over the Soviet Bloc are known by the Russians to

HANDLE VIA TALENT
CONTROL CHANNELS ONLY

HANDLE VIA TALENT
CONTROL CHANNELS ONLY

3

TCS-3487-58

have been accomplished although not to what extent. Furthermore, both types of photography are generally known among intelligence and operational personnel of the US Government even though they may never have seen the photography. Where isolated frames in limited numbers were made available to pilots being briefed on strike targets, there would be no exposure to track. Attribution to either GENETRIX or German photography could be plausible. The Navy request included stretches of photography of perhaps 60 to 100 miles leading to the strike targets. This need could not be safely met if track is to be protected.

6. Whereas GENETRIX photography is normally at 35° oblique, some pictures, due to the swaying of the balloon, were taken on the vertical. The coincidence of a number of prints available on the vertical need not be generally known since each pilot deals only with his specific targets.

7. If the TALENT photography were degraded to permit plausible attribution to GENETRIX (possibly other balloon) or German photography and classified accordingly (probably SECRET or CONFIDENTIAL), could the material be restricted from wide-spread circulation normally expected of materials so classified? The answer is in the negative unless the military service involved were to provide controls to ensure that the materials are retained and used only in the war planning facilities.

8. In the event that in the near future balloon photography were to become available possessing a quality as high or higher than that achieved by TALENT, it would appear that:

a. Such material must be placed in a control system with limitations comparable to TALENT (else the key and sensitive fact of overflight cannot be protected), or if no such control system is established

b. TALENT materials sanitized and in single and unrelated frames should be released in the same lower classification as the new balloon photography holds (single frame is mentioned because otherwise track could be established).

HANDLE VIA TALENT
CONTROL CHANNELS ONLY

HANDLE VIA TALENT
CONTROL CHANNELS ONLY

4

TCS-3487-58

9. Recommendations:

a. That Admiral Burke's request be approved provided all prints conform to and are labeled GENETRIX and controlled as the Admiral indicates, date being indicated as since 1953. (Note: Comparative examples of GENETRIX and TALENT sanitized photography (to conform to GENETRIX) are shown at Tab A.)

b. That if the foregoing is not acceptable, TALENT photography as required should be made to conform to newly acquired balloon photography if such photography is released under only a TOP SECRET or SECRET NOFORN classification.

c. That if neither recommendation a nor b above are acceptable, the Navy be requested to clear into the TALENT system such pilots as are required to meet their needs using unsanitized TALENT photography.

25X1A



Chairman

Ad Hoc Requirements Committee

Attachment

Tab A a/s para 9 a (NOT on draft)

JQR:cw

1-SA/PD/DCI	11-ESO
2-OACSI	12-ORR
3-ONI	13-IO
4-AFCIN	14-Ch HTA
5-AFCIN-Z	15-TSO
6-NSA	16-SO DPS/DCI
7-State Dept	17-DD/P
8-Exec Secy UAB	18-HTA/OCR
9-OCI	19-Ghmn ARC
10-OSI	20-PS/DCI chrono
	21-SO 

25X1A

MISSING PAGE

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT MISSING PAGE(S):

attachment