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EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs

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1 August 1956

THE SOVIET EARTH SATELLITE PROGRAM

[redacted]
Dtd. 13 July 1956
SECRET - [redacted]
(recd. 31 July 1956)

Some very significant statements [redacted] EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs

made by Soviet Professors Leonid [redacted] EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs

Konstantin Nikitin [redacted] EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs

[redacted] 1956. Reputably, [redacted] EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs

Soviets plan to launch 12 to 14 satellite vehicles from a launching site located in the "middle" of the USSR and on such an orbit that the USSR will have "maximum length of time for observation". When [redacted] EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs whether the USSR will notify the scientific world of the launching date, "Scobv replied that the radar built by the United States will spot the Soviet satellite within a few minutes after launching". //

Of the above 12 to 14 satellite vehicles, the Soviets expect malfunction of components and errors in guidance of the earth satellites and will be satisfied if 50 per cent of the vehicles launched attain the calculated orbit. Nikitin expressed great surprise that the United States expected 70 per cent of the launched vehicles to be on orbit, and stated that he did not believe this possible.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The foregoing provides the first direct information concerning the number of Soviet satellite vehicles in their program, the first ^{announcement of} ~~specific~~ _{the general geographic location} indication of their satellite launching site, and strengthening evidence

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of the planned orbit of their satellite vehicles. It also provides the first indication by any Soviet official that they know the US EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs surveillance over an area in the USSR from which the Soviets intend to launch their earth satellites.

2. Leonid I. Sedov is Chairman of the Permanent Interagency Commission for Interplanetary Communications and known to be engaged in the Soviet earth satellite program. Konstantin Nikitin is known to be associated with the Soviet guided missile program. Both of these men are high level Soviet scientists who undoubtedly possess complete and specific details of the Soviet earth satellite program and probably considerable information on the Soviet guided missile program. Consequently, they are in a position to provide accurate information.

3. The statement that the Soviets plan to launch 12 to 14 satellite vehicles provides the first specific indication of the magnitude of their program. This program compares very favorably with the US program if the "12 to 14" figure includes test vehicles. The US announced program currently includes seven test vehicles and six actual orbiting satellites. EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs However, in light of the statements that the USSR will be satisfied if 50 per cent of their launched satellites attain the calculated orbit, it is believed likely that the stated figure of 12 to 14 vehicles includes only the actual orbiting satellites and not their test program. In this case, the Soviet earth satellite program would be about twice the size of the US program.

4. The statement that the radar built by the Uni. EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs the Soviet satellite within a few minutes after launching undoubtedly refers to the capability of the EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs radar and its surveillance over EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs

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Yar Guided Missile Test Range. Although no previous public statement by a Soviet official has referenced this surveillance, it is recognized that the radiation therefrom must certainly have been detected by the USSR and the purpose of the installation deduced some months ago. Association of Kapustin Yar with the statement that the satellites would be launched from the "middle" of Russia is not inconsistent if a rather liberal interpretation is applied to the geographical position of Kapustin Yar.

5. The statement that the Soviets plan to launch their satellite in such a manner that the USSR will have maximum length of observation is consistent with and strengthens previous Soviet statements that their satellite vehicle will be launched so as to attain a polar orbit. Such an orbit would provide for maximum observation from within the USSR. We believe that the Soviets will attempt a polar orbit on most of their satellites if their initial flights are successful. We further believe that these vehicles will be launched from the Kapustin Yar area into such an orbit.

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