

~~TOP SECRET~~

December 22, 1958

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
December 16, 1958 -- 9:00 AM

Others present: General Hull
Admiral Conolly
Dr. Darden
General Doolittle
Mr. Lovett
General Cassidy
Dr. Killian
Mr. Gordon Gray
General Goodpaster
Major Eisenhower



At a meeting with the Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities, the President questioned continuation of the overflight reconnaissance program. He pointed out that he, along with this Board, had been highly enthusiastic about the development of the U-2 reconnaissance aircraft. He further pointed out that its successor will be of even higher performance. He expressed a concern that the U-2 has been tracked on almost every mission flown west of the Urals. The question which he is facing is whether the intelligence which we receive from this source is worth the exacerbation of international tension which results. In the President's view, we have located adequate targets. In his own mind, the detection of the surprise attack is the important thing. The U-2 does not solve the problem of detection of surprise attack. Realizing that the Air Force should be provided with a certain number of the best reconnaissance aircraft, the President thought there should be a reevaluation of the U-2 program as such. From these discussions, there were indications from members of the Board that their first reaction is that they feel the intelligence is highly worthwhile.

John S. D. Eisenhower
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