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Noted by Sec. Quarles.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



29 April 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT : Approval of Extension of Project CORONA

Herewith is a note, the purpose of which is to record certain decisions made some weeks ago and previously reported to you on the extension of CORONA. You will remember that following a meeting Mr. Horner and I had with you and subsequent discussion with Dr. Killian and [REDACTED] a paper recommending the extension was handed to General Goodpaster. Some days later he advised me that a favorable decision had been made which was reported to you and others in the Department of Defense. It was not until several weeks after the basic decision, however, that I received guidance from the same source on the handling of security and cover for the extended operations (as reported in the attachment). I understand there has been some uncertainty on this aspect of the matter and in any case it seems desirable to have a written record of the decisions. I am also attaching herewith in case you should wish to refer to it, the memorandum which was given to General Goodpaster and on the basis of which the decisions in question were made.

2 Attachments:

Cy [REDACTED]

w/Cy [REDACTED]

Richard M. Bissell, Jr.
RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.
Deputy Director
(Plans)

Copy No [REDACTED]

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

29 April 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT : Approval of Extension of Project CORONA

1. You will remember that, following a review of the SENTRY and CORONA Programs last fall and a series of conferences in December and January, agreement was reached among the interested agencies that it would be desirable to extend the Thor-boosted satellite reconnaissance program through the summer of 1960. A recommendation to this effect, which included an outline of the funding proposed for the extension of the program, was addressed by the Under Secretary of the Air Force to the Deputy Secretary of Defense on 11 February and was subsequently approved by the latter. This paper served as the basis for a fuller memorandum [REDACTED] which set forth the same proposal against the background of a review of CORONA. With the concurrence of the senior officers concerned, this memorandum was presented to higher authority and approval granted for the proposed extension on the terms therein set forth.

2. The proposal thus favorably acted upon requested (without recommendation) an immediate decision as to whether an effort should be made to preserve the security surrounding the CORONA Project and to maintain its cover so as to deny the true purpose of the 1960 flights as well as those scheduled for 1959. Although not stated in writing it was understood that the decision on this point might have a bearing on administrative arrangements since the decision to preserve security and cover would presumably imply the continuation of present organizational arrangements and of the present distribution of responsibility. Subsequent to the rendering of the basic decision referred to above the question of security was further considered and the decision was made to embark on the extended program with every effort and intent to conduct it in the same manner as CORONA but to review the status of security and cover in approximately six months' time. It was contemplated that if security had deteriorated, or if there had

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been a change of political policy, the decision could then be made to surface the program but that in the meanwhile security precautions should be observed and planning should be on the assumption that the security status of the program would remain unchanged through the 1960 series.

3. Therefore, it is assumed, in accordance with the above decisions, that:

a. Appropriate action is proceeding to schedule the four flights restored to the calendar year 1959 program and the eight flights proposed for calendar year 1960.

b. The Central Intelligence Agency will initiate procurement of additional payloads as needed.

c. Funding will be provided in accordance with the proposal as submitted and approved.

d. Organizational arrangements and the distribution of responsibilities for the program will for the present remain unchanged.

It is understood that the security and cover status of the program and related organizational arrangements may be reviewed at a later date.

Attachment:

Cy [REDACTED]



RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.

Deputy Director
(Plans)

cc: Director, ARPA
w/ [REDACTED] attachment.

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11 March 1959

PROJECT CORONA

1. The original outline of the CORONA Project (Document No. [REDACTED]) was submitted for approval on 15 April 1958. As then planned it called for twelve flights of the CORONA vehicle during the calendar year 1959. The total separately accountable cost was estimated as slightly over [REDACTED] made up of [REDACTED] to be provided by ARPA for second stage vehicles and 7 Million Dollars to be funded by the Central Intelligence Agency for the classified payload.

2. Under date of 8 August 1958 a report on this Project was submitted which pointed out that the original cost estimate was incomplete on two grounds. First, it contained no allowance for the Thor boosters (first stage vehicles) on the assumption that these would be furnished by the Air Force. Second, it included none of the costs that would be incurred with either four engineering flights to be carried out before the first CORONA launch as part of the development of the CORONA vehicle or the three biomedical flights planned in part for cover purposes. The revised figure of [REDACTED] as the cost of the CORONA flights including Thors but still including the associated flights referred to above.

3. Rather extensive discussions took place in the early autumn of 1958 concerning the cost of the whole program, since christened the DISCOVERY program, in the context of the ARPA budget for FY-1959. In the course of these discussions it appeared that certain cost estimates had to be revised upward. Moreover, it appeared that if an appropriate share of development and facilities costs were allocated to CORONA the total cost would come to something in excess of [REDACTED], although it was recognized that the allocation of these overhead items between related programs is essentially arbitrary. When this cost study was completed in October, it still appeared that the entire DISCOVERY program of nineteen flights (twelve CORONA plus four engineering plus three biomedical) could be funded within existing budgets.

4. During late autumn of 1958, a further study was made of both the DISCOVERY and SENTRY (WS-117L) programs by ARPA and the Air Force. In November, decisions were made concerning the ARPA FY-1960

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include in addition to the twenty CORONA flights, four engineering flights as originally planned (one of which has aborted and a second carried out with nearly full success) and one biomedical flight which is largely for cover purposes.

7. The proposed restoration of four flights in 1959 and an addition of eight flights in 1960 will require additional funding in the amount of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The breakdown of additional cost by purpose and funding agency is shown on the attached table. In accordance with the decision made at the inception of CORONA, all of these additional funds, with the possible exception of the cost of additional payloads, will be transferred to ARPA which will authorize procurement by the Ballistic Missile Division, ARDC. Procurement of additional payloads may be undertaken by CIA (as with the initial CORONA program) or by BMD depending on the requirement for security. BMD will act as executive agent for the DOD and the CIA in the operational phase including launch, flight and recovery operations.

8. The maintenance of security, that is effective concealment of the true purpose of these missile flights, will be exceedingly difficult at best and will give rise to serious problems. The DISCOVERY series has been described as a developmental activity. Specific ostensible missions are being defined for each flight and data will be accumulated ostensibly resulting from the DISCOVERY flights to be furnished on an unclassified basis or with low classification to interested persons. No matter how carefully cover explanations are developed and supported, however, it is impossible to prevent speculation in the technical press and by Communist governments to the effect that the DISCOVERY flights involve reconnaissance of some kind. Accordingly, even if security is successfully preserved, that is any unauthorized disclosure by persons witting of the true purpose of DISCOVERY is avoided, the cover for this operation may be eroded. If it is desired to preserve the cover and deny the true purpose of the 1960 flights as well as of those scheduled for 1959, a decision to this effect should be made immediately so that administrative and security procedures may be designed with this end in view.

1 Attachment
(1 page)

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budget. As a result of these revisions, and in the light of the program review just concluded, the decision was made by ARPA to cancel four of the twelve CORONA flights and two of the three biomedical flights and thus to reduce the DISCOVERY program from nineteen to thirteen flights. This decision was influenced by the expectation that the Air Force would be prepared to fund additional flights using CORONA vehicles and payloads which would be scheduled late in CY-1959 and in CY-1960, so that the ARPA cut would be more than made good.

5. Under these circumstances, production schedules were left unchanged and development continued at full speed pending further studies of (a) intelligence requirements during 1959 and 1960, (b) the effects of modifications in the SENTRY program, which contemplates the use of an Atlas-boosted vehicle, larger payload, and more sophisticated equipment, and (c) the availability of funds. These investigations led to the following conclusions:

a. There is a high priority requirement for photographic reconnaissance of the USSR both in 1959 and in 1960. The number of flights sufficient enough to give complete coverage twice in each year. Because of the prevalence of cloud cover, twice over coverage will be required to give even moderately complete photography of the more important areas. The most important single objective is to require further evidence on the status of the ICBM program during the phase when construction of launch sites may be expected to be in progress.

b. The SENTRY program could not be accelerated to provide the required coverage in 1960.

c. The extended CORONA program can be financed within approved Air Force and Department of Defense budgets.

6. Accordingly it is proposed that the presently reduced CORONA program of eight flights in 1959 be augmented by twelve additional flights, four to be restored in 1959, and eight to be conducted in 1960. On this basis there will be a total of twenty CORONA flights. The requirement for twelve in 1959 as against eight in 1960 reflects an anticipated improvement in systems reliability and performance. The whole DISCOVERY series will

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DISCOVERER EXTENSION

SCHEDULE

CY-1959

CY-1960

8 Original

May	1
June	1
July	2
August	2
September	2

12 Extension

October	2
November	2

May	2
June	2
July	2
August	2

COST ESTIMATES

(In Millions)

<u>FY-1959</u>		<u>FY-1960</u>	
<u>OSD Emergency Funds</u>	<u>AF Funds</u>	<u>AF Funds</u>	<u>AF Funds</u>

LOCKHEED SECOND STAGE VEHICLES

- 8 Vehicles for 1960
- 4 Vehicles for 1959
- 8 Launchings in 1960
- 4 Launchings in 1959
- 8 Payloads for 1960 flights
- 4 Payloads for 1959 flights

THOR BOOSTERS

- 12 Launchings
- 12 Vehicles
- RADC
- Support

TOTAL

