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Functions: NPIC

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

[Redacted]

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

December 16, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, National Reconnaissance Office
SUBJECT: NRO - NPIC Relations

This memorandum is for your information.

In September shortly after my arrival, I felt it desirable to review the NRO - NPIC relationship to see whether any changes or improvements might be in order. My inquiry was provoked in part by two things. First was the fact that, while still with the Agency, I had read the IG's recent report on NPIC which contained a recommendation that NPIC should have a closer and earlier insight into the development of new photographic systems in order that their inputs bearing upon the problems of exploitation might be considered. Second, the fact that since the departure of [Redacted] from this office some months ago, there had been [Redacted] contact of an NPIC representative. This office considered [Redacted] assistance to the office to be very valuable.

In exploring these two problems with Mr. Lundahl in September, I indicated that I was pleased with the obviously successful working relationship which had grown up over the years. It seemed to me, however, that we might need some more formal method to assure and confirm that NPIC had had an adequate opportunity to express its needs in the development of a new system as well as for a guide to the handling of other matters of mutual concern. He indicated that, although he was pleased to learn that [Redacted] work was very much appreciated, he felt that [Redacted] of a specialist was not the solution since a number of different parts of his office were necessarily involved.

A week ago Mr. Lundahl sent over for perusal a draft memorandum with an attached agreement which was intended for Admiral Raborn's signature and addressed to you.

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After discussing these papers with General Stewart and four members of the Staff separately, it became clear that the consensus in this office was that NRO - NPIC relations had been so satisfactory that of all places where a formal agreement may be necessary NPIC certainly was not one of them (although it was recognized that if for some reason it was imperative there was no real objection).

In the face of the foregoing yesterday I visited Mr. Lundahl and his deputy, [REDACTED] and reviewed the situation, including what I have just indicated. They reciprocated the views of this office and suggested that we put the draft agreement in the file for six or eight months whereupon we could again review whether such an agreement was necessary or desirable. This we have agreed to do although I have urged both Mr. Lundahl and General Stewart that our respective staffs keep well in mind the need for initiative on both sides to insure that we are together keeping well abreast of developments which may have important effects on exploitation. As you know, both Admiral Raborn and General Carroll, as well as the Bureau of the Budget, are concerned about the anticipated exploitation workload in the coming years with the advent of new collection systems and the increasing amounts of information anticipated from overhead photography.

I am satisfied with the conclusion to my inquiry at this point. I do expect to hear from Mr. Lundahl in due course with regard to what mechanism he may wish to institute in lieu of the service performed by [REDACTED] mentioned in my opening paragraph.

[REDACTED]
James Q. Reber
Deputy Director
National Reconnaissance Office

cc: Mr. Lundahl

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